# The past, present, and future of the Canadian Game Awards – an interview with executive producer Carl-Edwin Michel

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With the 2021 Canadian Game Awards just around the corner, we sat down for a chat with CGA creator and executive producer Carl-Edwin Michel. The awards may be a relatively new event, but they already have quite the story behind them.

*Let's start with the trophy, and the design in particular.*

**For the trophy I contacted Society Awards. I really wanted to talk to them; to be honest, it had been a dream of mine: one day, I'm going to do a trophy with these guys. They're amazing. They've done the Emmy Awards, the Spike Video Game Awards, the Golden Globes, the YouTube plaques. I was super excited to work with them.**

**The process was really cool. My goal at first was to replicate our logo, because I'm super proud of the logo, and it means a lot to me. It represents the three pillars in gaming, and the three pillars that we're celebrating with the Canadian Game Awards: game developers, content creators, and esports. Within those groups you have a lot of categories, but I feel they represent the gaming industry as a whole.**

**When the designer created the Canadian Game Awards logo, it looked like the pillars if you're looking at them from the top. The Society Awards people replicated this design in the award by arranging the three pillars so you can see the logo when looking at the award from the top.**

The Canadian Game Awards official trophy.

**The first version of the base was pretty simple, and I wanted to have something more there. Nothing fancy, just something different. That's how we came to the idea of the steps. They represent the climb to the pillars, or in other words the drive towards excellence that the pillars signify.**

*The CGAs are a new accolade. What sets them apart from other awards events in the gaming industry?*

**It's really simple: it's all Canadian-made games, Canadian content creators, and Canadian esports professionals and events. It's really a celebration of the Canadian game industry. We are the third largest creator of video games in the world. On the content and esports side we have a lot of talent; massive, incredibly popular content creators and players who nobody knows are Canadians.**

**So the goal is really to put the spotlight on these creators, on these esports athletes and teams, on these game developers, just to say to the world: Hey, by the way, this is made here in Canada. It's also for the Canadian audience to see how many of the games they enjoy are made in Canada, and how many of the teams and content creators they follow are Canadian. It's truly a Canadian award.**

*What was the hardest part of putting together the event? Were there any surprises or unexpected hurdles?*

**I mean, it's five letters, right? It's COVID.That was the biggest challenge. We launched the Canadian Game Awards last year, and that was supposed to be a sort of big return, because the last Canadian Game Awards was in 2015, and back then it was the Canadian Video Game Awards, organized by another entity**

and other people. Over the last few years nobody picked up the torch, and I wanted to bring back the celebration of gaming in Canada. So obviously right before COVID-19 hit, we had some really cool plans to do an in-person gala event, and also an exposition attached to it. It was a big project. Since we unfortunately couldn't do it last year, we thought that this year could be the year, with the COVID-19 pandemic hopefully ending.

It did not pan out that way, so we're still doing a pre-recorded show, a little bit like a Nintendo Direct. However, this time we've managed to bump up the production. We have a new, bigger show prepared. We also have a partnership with Loto-Québec to help us produce the French version of the awards. That's something that is really important for me as a Francophone. I want to make sure that we do celebrate both French and English accomplishment. A lot of Canadian game development happens in Eastern Canada, and particularly in Québec. A lot of the video games we are celebrating are made in Québec, and that's why I think it's important to celebrate them in their language.

*What are you looking forward to with the awards next year?*

Next year is hopefully going to be an in-person event. The goal for the awards is to travel between the three major Canadian cities where video games are made: Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Next for us is making sure that we celebrate in those cities, and bring the awards to people in person.

The positive thing that happened with COVID is that we realized that remote events are a thing. And we'll try to use this in the future, for example when the Awards are in Toronto, we'll have satellite events in Vancouver and Montreal, so people can celebrate the industry from there and participate in the main event, even if they can't travel and make it in person. So we'll try to find ways to have those three hubs always celebrating at the same time. That's the next thing to work on for the future of the Awards.

*The 2021 Canadian Game Awards show will air on **Friday, April 9, at 8PM ET**. You can watch it on Twitch and GINX TV Canada. To check out the nominations for every category in advance, head over to the nominees page.*