



# THE ART OF LIVING

A PLAN FOR SECURING THE FUTURE OF ARTS  
AND HERITAGE IN THE CITY OF EDMONTON



2008-2018

Edmonton Arts Council 2008



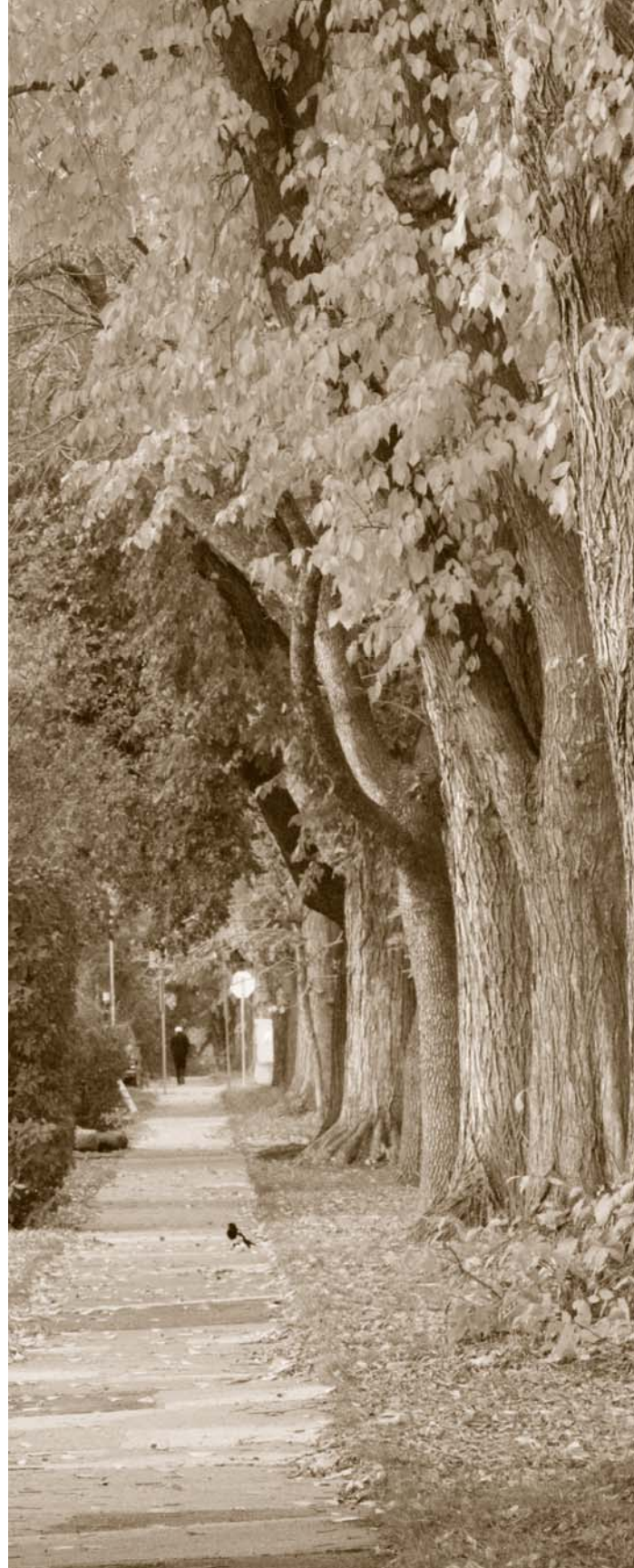
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Marc Chailoux

# Executive Summary

The need for a cultural plan for the City of Edmonton was first discussed at Edmonton City Council in December 2005 during the debate and approval of the 2006 City of Edmonton operating budget.

This need for a unified and wide-ranging cultural plan for the City was spurred by:

- an ever-increasing realization of the importance of arts, heritage and culture to the city
- an acceptance that the City has key responsibilities in arts, heritage and culture
- an appreciation that the sector is becoming increasingly complex
- an awareness that the current economic boom in Alberta has increased the pace of development in Edmonton and emphasized the need to be proactive in many areas, including arts, heritage and culture.

At the 2006 budget debate and in a subsequent City Council meeting held in April 2006, funds were allocated to the Edmonton Arts Council to develop a cultural plan for the City of Edmonton.

According to the terms of reference approved by Council, *the cultural plan will describe a unified vision for the arts and culture in the Edmonton region over the next ten years and make recommendations in a range of areas that will help to realize the vision.*

There was a discussion of the scope of the cultural plan, and it was agreed that it:

- would be a document with many voices—it would be developed in conjunction with extensive community and stakeholder input
- would focus on arts and heritage with an expectation that the Edmonton Arts Council would develop effective partnerships and sources of expertise in the heritage community in order to identify and address heritage issues in the plan
- will become a benchmark for future studies into the arts and heritage in Edmonton and provide an analysis of the current state of affairs in arts and heritage in Edmonton
- would be both visionary and pragmatic, describing overriding principles and strategic objectives but also making specific recommendations for action, including a cost estimate and identification of key organizations and City departments that would need to implement or guide the implementation of each recommendation.

The plan would not, however, describe detailed action or production plans for each recommendation. Action plans will be built after City Council has approved the plan and its recommendations.

The process began with the formation of a steering committee whose 10 members (listed in Appendix 1) were representative of a range of perspectives relevant to arts and heritage in Edmonton. Edmonton Arts Council Executive Director John Mahon was appointed to lead the development of the plan.

This was followed by public and stakeholder consultations, a review of comparable cultural plans and surveys of Edmonton artists and heritage practitioners. The process is described in Appendix 1.

This cultural plan builds on strengths, which are many including:

- Edmontonians value arts and heritage
- Edmonton has an impressive collection of arts and heritage institutions and programs
- Edmonton is home to numerous accomplished individuals who work in arts or heritage
- The City has been an active and insightful supporter of the arts over the past decade and in particular over the past four years.

The plan makes 17 recommendations for action in the arts and 11 in heritage. In general, heritage needs to build more infrastructure and the arts are building on the work done by the Edmonton Arts Council over the past 12 years. The 17 recommendations in the arts fall into five general categories:

- space
- education and mentoring
- grants and other sources of revenue

- recognition
- integration of the arts further into the civic fabric.

While all of these categories are important, space is the most urgent. The plan calls for the support of an organization dedicated to finding, developing and managing space for the arts in Edmonton. In addition, the plan recommends a review and revision of all civic bylaws and regulations that inhibit the responsible development of arts space.

Education recommendations address the need to re-examine the teaching of fine arts in schools, a review of post-secondary training in the arts in Edmonton, the value of connecting with internationally acclaimed arts mentor/artists and the need to keep “elder” artists active and engaged as mentors.

Grant recommendations include an analysis of the complexities of arts grants from all levels of government as well as private sources. The plan recommends increases to City grants for established arts and festival organizations, sustained support for all individual artists in Edmonton and increased support for community arts projects. The plan recommends strategic support of cultural industries, including direct investment in film and video production and a consideration of the creation of live music zones in the city.

Recognition recommendations include stabilizing City award programs, increasing the value

and range of City prizes in the arts, more naming recognition of artists on city streets and parks, the creation of a biennial festival of Alberta artists highlighting Edmonton as the capital city of the province and exclusive use of Edmonton-made cultural products for City gifts. Integration and climate is about imbedding arts further into the community and creating a healthy self-perpetuating environment for the arts. Recommendations include stabilization of the poet laureate position in the City and the creation of a *Cultural Cabinet* that would include the poet laureate, writer-in-exile and others; artist residencies in City departments and development of community sites for arts performances and exhibits throughout the city.

The 11 recommendations in heritage fall into four categories:

- heritage climate and development
- preservation
- interpretation
- museum advancement.

To develop heritage to a state comparable to the arts, the plan recommends the formation of an Edmonton heritage council that would have a structure and resources similar to the Edmonton Arts Council.

The plan recommends inclusion of existing heritage awards into higher-profile events and the initiation of a structured dialogue with the Province of Alberta around heritage issues including the Alberta Historic Resources Act, the Royal Alberta Museum and the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

There are three key issues in preservation: artifacts, archives and built heritage. The plan recommends immediately giving attention to the state of the City Artifacts Centre and taking care of this valuable collection. The City Archives need additional resources especially if it is to fulfill its mandate of archiving community records as well as City of Edmonton records. The plan supports the work done by the Department of Planning and Development on the City's Built Heritage Management Plan.

The plan recommends the creation of an Edmonton historian in residence as well as the establishment of consistent and professional interpretation standards for city heritage sites.

Finally, the plan recommends taking action on the development of a city museum and developing an overall museum strategy (including operating grants for museums).

This plan reflects the optimism, adventurousness, creativity, caution and concerns of Edmonton's arts and heritage communities in 2008. During the discussions and dialogue at the heart of this plan, it was noted many times how stimulating and productive it is to talk about the arts and heritage in our city and about how important it is to plan.

The City of Edmonton and the people of Edmonton must be thanked, not only for their support of this cultural plan, but for their support of the arts and heritage in general.



# Preamble:

## The Art of Living

Creativity. Innovation. Energy. Camaraderie. If you live in Edmonton, or visit long enough to talk to its artists, historians and creators or to those who enjoy the fruits of their labours, you'll hear these words over and over. The west has always been defined by its vitality, its willingness to embrace the new, to experiment, to not be afraid to fail and therefore to succeed boldly. Edmonton is the essence of this spirit, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the life force of its arts, culture and heritage.

The City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council joined forces in the spring of 2006 to begin work on creating a cultural plan that would serve the city for the next decade, to ensure that this life force is nourished, cultivated and amply supported. Through a comprehensive series of focus groups, community meetings and widespread public consultations, and an intensive steering committee dialogue, a document has been created that addresses the unique cultural milieu and attitude that is the city of Edmonton.

A frontier town that is the seat of government, a northern city with one of Canada's largest universities, a city suffused with Indigenous influences, a place of economic prosperity for many

of the one million inhabitants of the region, Edmonton is also a city with a distinctive feel to its arts, culture and heritage scene. To mention just a few highlights, Edmonton has festivals like the Edmonton Fringe, Edmonton Folk Music Festival and Edmonton International Street Performers Festival that are recognized the world over. The city boasts a roster of award-winning novelists, poets, playwrights, and non-fiction writers. It has one of North America's finest theatre scenes, many award-winning choirs, an exciting and quickly expanding music scene, one of Canada's best concert halls, a thriving ethnic-based dance community, an exhilarating new art gallery set to open in 2009 and a planned major expansion to the Royal Alberta Museum. The city also has a long and rich heritage rooted in its Aboriginal and pioneer histories, and which is alive today in the many people from all parts of the globe who call Edmonton home. In short, Edmonton is a cultural destination, not just for its size, but for a city of any size. Edmonton is a major cultural factor in the Canadian equation, making it a great place to live if you enjoy the arts and heritage.

Yet what of the future? The city is experiencing rapid growth, and the cultural sector is exploding along with every other aspect of this exciting and limitless place. Yes, the economic impact of the arts and heritage is undeniable, but there is also the question of making sure that Edmonton remains a place where artists feel welcomed and able to lead a creative life. What makes a place a great creative city is, finally, the art and heritage it produces. As much as Edmonton is a city

of great cultural vitality, it has reached but a fraction of its potential. This document is meant to act as an inspirational tool for artists, heritage workers and administrators alike, but it's also reflective of another aspect of a western, and Edmontonian, sensibility, which is this: we get things done. This plan contains dozens of action-oriented recommendations. In some ways, it is a *feel good* document, but documents are better than *feel good* if they also *do* some good.

Arts, culture and heritage are not just side benefits to living in Edmonton; they are central to the definition of what this place is. This plan is intended to direct our community's energy and passion towards the same goal—ensuring that culture continues to play a prominent role in shaping the history, destiny and feel of this unique place.

As Antonio said in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, "What's past is prologue." In other words, what Edmonton has achieved to date is nothing to underplay, but we're only just getting started. This 10-year cultural plan is a blueprint for the next phase, a phase so full of excitement and cultural vitality we can barely wait to open the gate and let it loose. Our community is vital and vibrant, and what prevents it bursting at its seams is a kind of social glue. What holds us together are art, culture and heritage, those things that identify us, inspire us, comfort us, move us, motivate us and join us together in our humanity. These things are synonymous with Edmonton, where it's all about the art of living.



# The Edmonton Story

Marc Chailoux

## Our Past

Edmonton is seen by many outside the city, and many inside it, as a new place, a place without significant traditions or history. This is misinformed and betrays a lack of insight into a deeper, richer narrative. In her opening essay in *Edmonton In Our Own Words* (University of Alberta Press, 2004), writer Linda Goyette emphasizes that this beautiful bend in the North Saskatchewan River was a gathering place for people long before contact between the Indigenous peoples of the region and European newcomers in the late 18th century. There are archaeological sites within the city that date the area's use by ancient peoples for at least the last 8,000 years.

By the 18th century, the Cree people referred to the region in their language as the Beaver Hills, or later *Amiskwaciwâskahikan*, meaning Beaver Hills House. The Nakoda, known then as the Assiniboines or Stoneys, said *ti oda*, meaning "many houses." The Blackfoot called the trade fort *omahkoyis*, or big lodge. These tribal names referred to two rival fur trading posts established in the area in 1795. A few months after the North West Company established Fort Augustus, the Hudson's Bay Company opened Edmonton House, later called Fort Edmonton. The settlement around the HBC trading post became a

town in 1892, and proclaimed itself a city in 1904. Edmonton became the capital of the new province of Alberta in 1905.

Being at the heart of exploring and settling Canada's new frontiers has always been in Edmonton's purview. In 1927 Blatchford Field became the first licensed municipal airport in Canada, and for the next decade Edmonton's famous bush pilots made aviation history with their service to the remote north. The city supplied the Northwest Staging Route during the Second World War and became an important base for the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. On a single day in the fall of 1943, 850 aircraft took off or landed in Edmonton. The city resumed its central role in Canadian aviation in the post-war period as the North opened to resource development.

But it wasn't just about aviation. In 1942 American soldiers began to arrive as the city became a war-time engineering headquarters for the construction of the Alaska Highway and the CANOL pipeline. Alberta changed forever after the war, through the Leduc oil strike in 1947 which brought on a period of prosperity and rapid growth in Edmonton, an arc that has had a few variations of boom and bust since, but which seems now to have settled into steady and sometimes spectacular economic prosperity.

### **A Civic Snapshot**

Edmonton is the sixth largest metropolitan region in Canada, and has one of the country's strongest economies, particularly as a world hub for the oil, gas and petrochemical industries. Set in the middle of Alberta's fertile aspen parkland, Edmonton is also an agri-business centre. With

140,000 students enrolled in ten universities and colleges, it is also one of Canada's research and education centres.

Throughout its history Edmonton has been a city with a number of vivid neighbourhoods, each with a distinctive identity and unique public services; this is the legacy of the community league movement that has shaped the city since 1917. Edmonton is also home to the largest stretch of urban parkland in North America, with 22 major parks laid out along 48 kilometres of forested riverbank skirting the stately North Saskatchewan River and its many ravines and creeks. Edmontonians enjoy these parks all year round, through cycling, walking, jogging, skiing, skating, snowshoeing and tobogganing. Edmonton is one of Canada's sunniest spots, and though the winters are a fact of life, the length and gentleness of our summer days more than compensate. Most Edmontonians, however, understand the climate as something that ties us directly to our heritage as a gateway to and from the north, as a launching pad for western exploration and as a hub for Aboriginal cultures. And although we enjoy long and warm summers, Edmonton is a city with a lifestyle shaped by winter; our heritage, our arts, our business and our sporting pursuits are all deeply influenced by it. Hockey is the city's passion, and many other winter sports help define the city's character.

### **The People Who Live Here**

Edmonton has always been a gathering place for different cultures, languages and religious backgrounds. Our founding citizens were Cree and Nakoda, after which came the Métis, French-speaking Canadians, the Scottish and the English



Michelle Todd  
Actor/Playwright

who worked together in the fur trade. Edmonton has been a magnet for immigration since the late 19th century. From the Ukrainian Block Settlement beginning in 1892, to the arrival of Italian, German, Scandinavian and other peoples, Edmonton has offered economic opportunities as well as democratic freedoms—factors that still drive immigration today.

The city is now a multicultural and intercultural capital. Of the roughly one million people in

the Greater Edmonton Region, almost half were born somewhere else—and one in five was born in another country. Today, the top four source countries for newcomers are China, the Philippines, India and Pakistan, although we are now also welcoming many immigrants from the nations of the Middle East and Africa. This brings an enormous richness to Edmonton's cultural life, although it's important to forever stay alive to the fragility of how these cultures evolve and grow in new environments. The balance, in both arts and heritage, must always be to support and encourage the new and the fresh, while also cherishing what our past has given us (and will continue to give us if we treat it with appropriate care).

### **It's All About the Tone**

All of the above might best be summed by one phrase or feeling, which is that Edmonton is comfortable with its identity but also comfortable with change. In cultural terms this means Edmonton has a vital independent arts scene that judges itself according to its own standards and not by comparing itself to Toronto, Montreal or even Calgary: Edmonton is unique, both in its successes and in its challenges—and so we aim to produce a plan to support a culture that is specific to Edmonton. Artists work here because they choose to (though the city must find ways to guard against our “boom” driving young and emerging artists away because they can't afford to live here any longer). Edmonton audiences enjoy the work of the city's artists, gratified in the knowledge that Edmonton is a city with layers, with secrets, with great talent realized yet much potential to be tapped.

We are an urban city with a residue of a frontier mentality. We are entrepreneurial and have a strong impulse towards innovation. We may be a northern “winter” city, but the beauty and length of our summer days and nights, when coupled with our love of winter sport, make us a people in love with the natural world and outdoor activities, and we love a good party! We are a politically moderate city, with strong elements of a blue-collar economy working alongside large government and academic populations. We are a city committed to environmental sustainability. We are a young, prosperous, complicated, beautiful city, and above all else we are a city with a promise we must fulfill. It's an exciting place, an exciting time, a turning point in the life of the city. We aim to take the proper turn.



# Vision and Values

This is a cultural plan. We recognize the broader definition of culture as laid out by UNESCO,<sup>1</sup> but every city needs to inform such definitions with those things that give a plan like this the chance to succeed and play a true role in shaping a city's distinctive cultural life.

This is a cultural plan, but our focus clearly will be the arts and heritage, and by that we mean all the ways these manifest themselves through their various disciplines and presentation modes. Of course, we want our plan to have practical considerations and recommendations supporting clear objectives. Artists understand how important it is to have a combination of inspiration and determination, a work ethic if you will. This plan will have inspiration *and* a work ethic, a kind of pragmatism girding our desire to reach our cultural goals for Edmonton.

Culture exists wherever there are people, and this cultural plan is a document the City will use

to advise and guide its support of culture. The purpose of this plan, therefore, will be to support and nurture the many different aspects of culture that come from the people in the city. The relationship of a cultural plan to a city has been compared to the relationship between a gardener and a garden. The garden will grow—it cannot do otherwise—and the gardener will attempt to produce the best possible situation for the entire garden.

While the ideal is to allow all cultural expressions to flourish, there are clearly issues of judgment where, from time to time, preference or special attention is given to certain aspects of the city's culture. The gardener may choose to prune to allow more sunlight into parts of the garden. In some cases the cultural plan will result directly in civic pol-

*The genius of the place is thus made up of the physical, biological, social, and historical forces which together give it uniqueness to each locality or region. All great cities have a genius of their own which transcends geographical location, commercial importance, and size. And so is it for each region of the world. Man always adds something to nature, and thereby transforms it, but his interventions are successful only to the extent that he respects the genius of the place.*

*René Dubos*

<sup>1</sup> The word *culture* (from the Latin *colo, -ere*, with its root meaning "to cultivate") generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance. This plan will use the term *culture* in a broad sense, to describe creative individuals and organizations as well as custodial and heritage organizations such as museums and archives.



# Foreword

## The Intersection of Talent and Planning

*Michael Phair*

Recently my brother Pat called. He lives in the American midwest. For the past 15 years or more he has spent a week in the summer visiting me in Edmonton. The conversation is the same: What are the dates of the Folk and Cariwest festivals and the dates for the Fringe Theatre festival? Every year he drives here from the midwest for one or the other, and on occasion one or more of his children come with him. One year his son from the west coast joined us to hear Norah Jones at the Folkfest. A different year his teenage son got talked into joining the Cariwest parade—in half a costume (I, of course, was in full drag). Pat and his wife were so enamoured with Stewart Lemoine's *Pith* at the Fringe in 1999 that when it appeared in print, he had me buy and send it.

My brother Pat and his family have had good times in Edmonton. Edmonton to them is music, parades, plays, festivals. And I know, looking back, that such a sense of the city as a “cultural capital” is a very recent construct. Before 1980 summers in this city had no festivals and virtually no theatre. The Winspear did not exist. There

were few recognizable Edmonton playwrights, composers or authors—but below the surface things were percolating!

From my perspective, both serendipity and thoughtful planning and support since the early 1980s are what have helped arts and culture become an integral part of the life of this city. And the growing up of this prairie city has been rapid and dramatic enough that the arts are on both the public and political agendas. For the past 15 years the City through City Council, of which I was a member, has enacted and supported numerous initiatives that have helped make the city vibrant and arts friendly. I sat on the Mayor's Task Force on Business and the Arts, set up by Mayor Reimer in 1993, and witnessed the public, in concert with the arts and culture community, rally support towards the climax of a 1995 City Council meeting wherein the Edmonton Arts Council was established by a 7-6 vote!

The financially supported birth of an arms-length Edmonton Arts Council was a watershed decision impacting both the arts and city politics. With the city's public sanctioning and commitment, years of pent-up energy and drive were unleashed,



Raffaella Montemurro  
Visual Artist / Consultant / Teacher



Mo Lefever  
Musician / Jazz Guitarist

resulting in new programs and initiatives. A fresh compact was forged between the arts community and the city. In the early 1990s, as the arts entered a particularly dark period of benign neglect (bordering on hostility) from the provincial government, both in terms of funding and importance, the City became the unofficial champion and promoter of the arts. As the debate at

City Council moved from “The funding of arts is not a City responsibility” to “How much additional money should be added to next year’s budget?” the recommendations of the Arts Council for additional funds and new programs and policies were passed and implemented.

It is often said that timing is everything. The resulting alignment, or friendship, between arts and culture and the City arose as national and international attention from economics, business and urban studies highlighted the signifi-

cance of creative cities, most dramatically captured in Richard Florida’s *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Basic Books, 2003). In short, future power centres would be the places where arts and heritage, a major university, and a progressive and dynamic city coalesced to forge a new economy, innovative technologies and contemporary social structures in the new millennium. The necessary ingredients were in place, and Edmonton was ready to transform itself into a stronghold of arts, heritage and culture. Under Mayor Stephen Mandel, the city was successful in being awarded designation as the 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada. With this honour came the understanding that, in continuing to move forward, Edmontonians again needed to be asked, “What is next for arts, heritage and culture and the city, and how do we get there?” The answer is in front of you.

A group of artists and their colleagues have assessed the past 10 years through discussion with thousands of people and have developed the future—a cultural Edmonton for 2018! Read the plan. Read the essays that inform and support the plan. We can and will make it happen. Like me, you will realize that Edmonton is transforming itself into a mecca for western Canadian arts and culture.



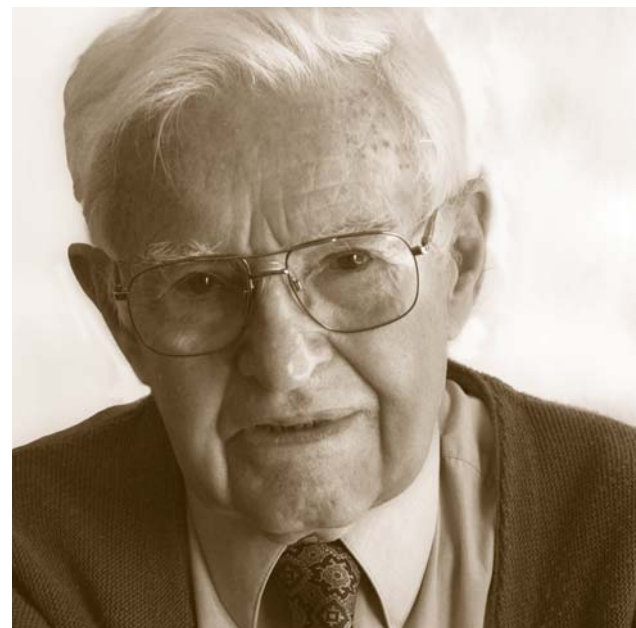
## ***River Valley***

***As a child in Edmonton  
I played in the River Valley, lay  
on its slopes, made paths  
through spruce and wild roses.  
I stole strength  
from the North Saskatchewan,  
took sun into my bones, to last  
for the rest of my life.***

***-Mary T. McDonald (b.1918)***



Tanya Lukin-Linklater  
Performance Artist / Choreographer



Tony Cashman  
Historian / Writer / Playwright



# SECTION ONE: CONTEXT

Marc Chailfoux

## Prevalent Themes

These ***Prevalent Themes*** cross all boundaries and have an impact on virtually every aspect of this plan and of Edmonton's cultural life.

### **Edmontonians Value Arts and Heritage in Their Community**

Edmontonians are proud of the work of professional artists, historians, curators, archivists and others in their community, and much of the work conducted for a recent cultural survey<sup>2</sup> bears this out. Of Edmontonians surveyed, 81% said that Edmonton was worthy of the title "Cultural Capital of Canada." The same survey revealed that three-quarters (74%) of Edmontonians think the city should aim to be ranked in the top three in Canada in its support for arts and culture. Further, nearly 80% of Edmontonians are personally interested in arts and culture. These numbers indicate a strong platform for the City's strategy in highlighting arts and heritage.

### **Edmonton Has Momentum and Energy**

There is considerable momentum in the arts in Edmonton, particularly in the last decade and most notably in the past four years. To illustrate this point, Edmonton was recognized by the fed-

eral government as the 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada, the City has created a poet laureate designation, supported a writer-in-exile program, increased grants to artists, revised its Percent for Art Policy and is working on a Public Art Master Plan, created the Edmonton Film Office at the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, supported an annual Mayor's Celebration for the Arts and integrated the arts and festivals throughout Edmonton Tourism messaging. These initiatives are acknowledged in this plan, and many of the recommendations are intended to build on them. (Comparable momentum has not been evident in heritage in Edmonton, and this is recognized as one the City's challenges.)

### **Individuals Are the Basis of It All**

We recognize the fundamental importance of each person in every goal we set in arts or heritage, be they individual artists, heritage workers or other cultural workers. We have nothing if we don't have a healthy and evolving group of masters, apprentices, renegades, teachers, archivists, critics and others, creating in sum a strong, durable human infrastructure in the arts and heritage.

### **Great Cities Are Identified by Their Arts and Heritage Environments**

The work of Richard Florida, Joel Kotkin, Jane Jacobs and other contemporary thinkers about cities emphasize that arts and heritage are essential to a successful city. Debates about the need for civic government to be involved in the arts

<sup>2</sup> Leger Marketing Survey, Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada, 2007.

# The Value of Arts and Culture in Our Society

Jeanne Lougheed

When I was asked to write this essay in support of Edmonton's *Cultural Plan* I readily accepted, and as I sat down to write it I realized that there has hardly been a moment when the arts wasn't one of the biggest aspects of my life. It has always been there, in so many forms. Music, singing, opera, ballet, the visual arts: It is not just a significant part of what I have seen in the life of this province, but it has been deeply important to my own experience of life and my life with Peter, as we've seen Alberta change from a smaller, mostly rural province to the economic giant it is today.

But is Alberta's cultural sway the equivalent of its economic sway? I don't know if I can answer that in an entirely positive way. I can't attribute the following quote directly, but I read it somewhere once and it has always stuck with me—it reads, "Writers and thinkers through the ages have written that without art, we stand in danger of being trapped in spiritual poverty."

That quote says so much to me because what it really means, at least to me, is that we can make all the "progress" we want, and become as economically powerful as we are able, but that it will all mean nothing if we don't have art and culture to enrich our lives, to add meaning to our lives, to help us understand what the value of our life is. It also says to me that if we ignore art and culture, if we don't place it in a central role in our social framework, we do so at our peril. If we disregard what the arts can

give us—the insight, the joy, the beauty, the understanding—then everything else we achieve might not mean all that much.

Certainly it has been the case in my own life that the arts have helped me understand and enjoy what it means to be human. It probably all started with music, which I think I've always had in my life. When I was a child, I studied ballet and studied piano to my Grade Eight exam, and as soon as I began attending the University of Alberta, I enrolled in Fine Arts and also took voice lessons as an extracurricular course (although I'd actually started studying voice in Grade Ten). That first year of university I joined the Mixed Chorus under Richard Eaton, and was with them for three years (during which we toured Alberta). I also joined the Music Club, in which I gave some solo concerts. I loved singing! And still do. Hearing a gifted singer still makes my heart soar, and I find it so moving, that sense of sharing, of generosity, that a beautiful voice can make us feel.

and heritage have—for the time being—been settled. Edmonton, like most major Canadian cities, has accepted that arts and heritage are central to the ongoing civic agenda and our *raison d'être*. By legislation, however, Canadian cities are limited in some areas in their ability to influence arts and heritage. Fine arts curriculum in the school system is a good example. The City must therefore view itself as a galvanizing agent and partner in the Edmonton arts and heritage scene, and effect change through direct action, direct support of others who can act and advocacy to a variety of groups, including other levels of government.

Further, The City of Edmonton recognizes and will promote the fact that it is the capital city of Alberta. This creates both opportunities and responsibilities in the arts and heritage.

## Partnerships Are Key, As Is the Role of the Edmonton Arts Council

The City of Edmonton, in establishing the Edmonton Arts Council in 1995, made a profound commitment to work with community partners in the arts.

With the founding of the Edmonton Arts Council (EAC), the City almost completely eliminated its internal staff dedicated to supporting the arts. The EAC, a not-for-profit society with a membership of over 300 individuals and organizations, is now the City's principal voice on policy development in the arts and on allocation of direct City investment in the arts (primarily through grants).

One of the motivations for establishing the EAC was to create an organization that could develop strong working partnerships among the arts, the City and the wider community—partnerships that the City, for various reasons, was unable to develop on its own. The EAC now works closely

## Points Of View

*To support and inform this cultural plan, we commissioned a series of essays from people with a strong connection to Edmonton's arts and heritage communities, whether as artists, administrators or cultural entrepreneurs (or, in some cases, all three). We set out loosely defined topics and were rewarded with a series of thoughtful and intriguing takes on what Edmonton was, is and might yet become in the realm of arts and heritage.*



Eva Colmers  
Film maker

with the many arts and festival organizations that are its core constituency but also with the Edmonton Community Foundation, provincial and federal arts and heritage funding agencies, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations and the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, as well as

with City Council and all departments of the City of Edmonton.

The plan recommends the creation and/or re-invigoration of several new organizations that will be allied to the EAC. These new organizations will become important partners with the City as well as active advocates for the betterment of arts and heritage, and of civic life in general, in Edmonton.

### **Inclusion and Cultural Respect Are Vital**

Inclusion of all people in the cultural life of the city has been identified as one of the core values in this plan. The City of Edmonton, as well as many individuals and organizations city-wide, share a commitment to creating arts and her-

itage events where there are minimal barriers to anyone who wishes to participate. Barriers can include admission charges and other economic factors, unfamiliarity with or insecurity about the location or format of an event, or general lack of awareness of specific arts and heritage events or programs. But before any considerations of barriers are made, questions of relevance must be addressed. All citizens must see themselves, and their interests and aesthetics, reflected somewhere in the arts and heritage that surrounds them. True inclusiveness is complex, and the cultural plan recognizes the need to sustain an ongoing discussion about issues of inclusion in the arts and heritage—a discussion that must involve all stakeholders<sup>3</sup> relevant to and/or interested in ensuring that arts and heritage, in general, are available and accessible to every Edmontonian.

In addition, Edmonton's Urban Aboriginal Accord states that the City respects that Aboriginal people are reclaiming their cultural traditions while looking for ways of working together with the non-Aboriginal population. We, as a cultural community, honour this.

### **Investment Is Essential**

Enthusiasm and good ideas are often free, but putting enthusiasm and good ideas into practice usually takes money. The City of Edmonton is not the only identified funder in this document; in addition to being one of many funders, the City will also lead as an advocate and adviser.

<sup>3</sup> Including but not limited to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion of the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Catholic Social Services, the ASSIST Community Services Centre, Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op Ltd. and the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee.





# Accountability Statement

Marc Chalfoux

This cultural plan is comprised of a wide variety of themes and recommendations. The Prevalent Themes, discussed previously, are overarching issues and factors that come into play in nearly every area of Edmonton's artistic and heritage environments. The Recommendations, to follow in the Arts and Heritage sections of this document, are more detailed and relate specifically to individual aspects of Edmonton's cultural life. Each recommendation in this plan is framed as a specific Arts or Heritage recommendation, and is meant to be taken as such. Some of the recommendations must, naturally, remain rooted for now in a continuation of dialogue and exploration, but most point to direct courses of action. With this comes accountability. Accountability takes a variety of forms, but can essentially be reduced to three questions: *Who is going to do the work? When is the work going to be done? And, Who is going to pay for it?*

These questions get answered in the details of the majority of the recommendations as they are presented in the plan. However, it is important to still delineate overall accountability. There are major players running through most recommendations, and the majority of the responsibility for the success of this plan rests with them.

## *The Value of Arts and Culture in Our Society continued*

It was right around that first year of university that Peter began "courting" me and I suppose as a way to show his sincerity with his affections he attended many of the concerts I was involved with or that I wanted to see. The first one he came to might have actually been one of the first concerts he ever attended. I thought it was very sweet, and so as a kind of *quid pro quo*, I attended his football games with the Golden Bears, and of course he went on to play for the Edmonton Eskimos. I attended most of those games, too!

But Peter also kept on attending cultural events with me, and he grew to love them. In our early years together he attended Harvard and when he completed his studies, we decided that we were halfway to Europe anyway and so we thought we might as well go all the way over. I remember that we arrived in London and the very first thing I did was purchase tickets for the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden. The opera was Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, a thrilling piece of work, although it still makes me smile to report that Peter fell asleep in the middle of it. His head kept lolling over onto the shoulder of the woman sitting next to him. She was not amused.

Once we'd made our way over to Italy, I thought I'd give it another try, and so we went to a performance of *Aida* in a Roman amphitheatre. It was a grand production, replete with elephants. Peter thought this "was more like it," and he has been enthusiastically attending the opera, ballet and symphony with me ever since that day.

I thought about it then, and have thought about it many times since, but travelling throughout Europe for the first time really brought home the importance of art and culture to me, because of course what you do as a tourist anytime you go to a new city is pick up a travel guide and find out what the city has to offer in the way of cultural experiences. You check out the museums and galleries. You find out what sort of concerts are taking place. You look for the thriving local culture, the great libraries, the inspiring architecture (not to mention things like wonderful restaurants and local markets). And it seemed to me then—a feeling that has only grown stronger over the decades—that Alberta's future must be tied to making sure we can offer up a thrilling and high-quality cultural experience to the people who visit here and the people who live here. Tourists seek these things out, and the benefits back to the community are almost beyond measure.

When the Progressive Conservative party formed the government in 1971, Peter, as Premier, appointed Horst Schmidt as Alberta's first Minister of Culture. Peter and Horst were able to see clearly the logic and importance of developing cultural and artistic institutions in our province. One of the most important initiatives of the Minister of Culture was the introduction of the concept of "matching grants." Thus, an individual had the knowledge that any donation made by them would effectively be doubled, because of the matching government contribution (up to a maximum of 20% of any organization's budget). This initiative had a very positive effect on Alberta

**The Artist and the Audience:** Individual artists have a responsibility, and that responsibility—perhaps the only one they ought to be held to—is to work on bringing their vision and talent to life, for their own benefit, to benefit their art form and for the benefit of their fellow citizens. And although this is in no way an additional “responsibility,” there is nevertheless the hope that artists can contribute even more to their

community through teaching, mentoring, sharing and remaining open to collaboration. Providing these things to their community will make it all the more likely that Edmonton will establish itself as an arts beacon.

Audiences also have a responsibility to support their local artists, provided it’s art worth supporting. Nepotism and provincialism don’t do anyone any good: artists should not be celebrated merely because they

happen to be from your hometown—they should be supported and celebrated because they are gifted and committed. Fortunately, Edmonton audiences are blessed with a wealth of artistic talent to choose from; the trick is getting audiences to act in ever-greater numbers with ever-greater frequency. The responsibility

the Edmonton audience has, then, is to support the city’s talent, whether established talent or emerging talent. An arts plan might succeed masterfully in creating an increase in art production, but this will have a stunted meaning if there is no local audience to appreciate and enjoy the work.

**Heritage and the Audience:** Like artists, those involved in heritage also have a responsibility, namely, to work on understanding, preserving and interpreting the wide range of heritage issues for the benefit of their fellow Edmontonians. They also have a responsibility to assist their community through teaching, mentoring, sharing and remaining open to collaboration. Providing these things to their community will help ensure that Edmonton establishes itself as a leader in heritage activities. Edmontonians also have a responsibility to heritage, not unlike their responsibility to the arts community, which is to engage in heritage issues and activities, to value and appreciate the depth and meaning of our past and to validate how much this will matter to Edmontonians of the future.

**Edmonton’s not-for-profit arts, festival and heritage organizations** have been developed for the benefit of the entire community. They have a responsibility to stay strong and viable with healthy boards of directors, staff and volunteers, and to recognize that they will be inherited by future generations of artists and audiences.

**The Edmonton Arts Council (EAC):** The EAC recognizes that it is likely to be the primary body



Lorraine Shulba  
Visual Artist

overseeing the enactment of this plan. The board and executive of the EAC acknowledge that it is their responsibility to ensure that they both perform their roles and duties as stipulated in this plan and act wherever necessary as an advocate and galvanizing force. Many of the other bodies and constituencies listed as having a role in carrying out the recommendations are under no legislative or budgetary onus to do so. The EAC (along with the City of Edmonton) will have a key role to play in acting as an intermediary, a negotiator and a motivator. When it comes to the creation of committees, boards and advisory groups, the EAC will be a significant force in matching people to roles.

In general terms, on top of its responsibilities listed herein, the EAC will also be the “oversight body,” continually assessing the progress and success of this plan. (This ongoing assessment will be conducted jointly with the proposed Edmonton heritage council, once that body has been formed.) This is a document for all Edmontonians, and at any point throughout the life cycle of this plan any Edmontonian may, and should, feel free to contact the EAC or the proposed Edmonton heritage council and request an update on the progress of any recommendation.

In all instances, in each recommendation, where there is no specific body or agency or level of government listed as being accountable for enacting that recommendation, the EAC will be the default responsible party.

**The Heritage Community:** In the past, the heritage community has been passionate in its vision and advocacy, though perhaps not as cohesive as the arts community. The heritage community is making a commitment to alter this path, and the proposed creation of an Edmonton heritage council will greatly assist in this regard. As alluded to above, once established the heritage council will carry the

## *The Value of Arts and Culture in Our Society continued*

culture, since it substantially increased private sector support for the arts. I remember the early 70s as a time of tremendous enthusiasm for artistic and cultural development in the capital city, since Edmontonians were great supporters of plays, concerts, opera and the ballet.

When Peter and I attended the Alberta Scene in Ottawa as part of Alberta’s Centennial Year in 2005, I was overwhelmed with the richness and depth of Alberta’s performing artists. It’s clear to me that over time there has been a tremendous broadening of artistic expression in our province, but this expression needs constant support and nurturing in order for it to reach its best and fullest potential. And it matters because this potential expression is of huge benefit to all of us. We gain inspiration through the richness of societies that embrace classical music, jazz, folk, world music, rock, hip hop, soul. We can be thrilled by classical ballet, and by modern dance in all its myriad interpretations. We can be deeply moved by painters, poets, photographers, playwrights, architects, writers. The desire we all have to achieve more, to do better, to be better—whether in our social lives, business lives or family lives—all these aspirations are assisted by and inspired by a vibrant, rich and meaningful artistic stream that courses through our daily lives.

The desire for self-expression has been part of our identity since cavemen first drew pictographs, since Aboriginal cultures first drummed and danced, since the first stories were told. And these impulses have continuously enriched us, defined us, and this enrichment is without limit, without end. The great capacity we have for imagination needs to be allowed to thrive. The arts can easily be justified on economic grounds, in that they bring enormous financial benefits to a community. Without doubt we must make sure that we grow the opportunities for our school children to expand and nurture their gift for creativity and expression. More broadly, we can certainly make a case for “rebranding” a city like Edmonton as a place people can come to *for* the arts. These are good and welcome things.

But the reality, as I see it, is deeper and even more urgent, especially now that our province is in a time of such economic expansion. It comes back to the quote I mentioned earlier, about spiritual poverty and how we ignore the arts at our peril. Alberta is a place of tremendous and unique spirit. It is like nowhere else on earth, and the potential we have to make our cultural life the equivalent of our economic life is great. But if we miss that opportunity we risk a fate that ought to sadden all of us. I have faith that Albertans will not let it happen. The development of a cultural plan, as the City of Edmonton is doing herein, is a fine step in ensuring that the place of arts and culture remains central in our lives. But it’s only one step. We must keep moving forward. Always.

*Jeanne Lougheed is a proud supporter of the arts in Alberta and Canada*

primary responsibility for overseeing the aspects of this plan relating to heritage.

**The City of Edmonton:** The City is the driving force behind this plan. The Mayor and City Council have recognized and acknowledged that one of the most important things the City can do to make itself the vital, vibrant, modern

city it wants to be, is to make us an arts and heritage leader. The City must remain supportive of this plan, not only upon its release but throughout the life cycle of the plan.

This comes with responsibilities, including a commitment by all City staff to participate when and where required and contribute to the success of the plan. The City of Edmonton also understands that financial obligations come attached to this plan,

and when the City endorses this plan it is in effect supporting the allocation of adequate resources to bring the recommendations to fruition (in instances where the City is identified as the primary funding body).

**Other Stakeholders:** There are many other parties involved in making Edmonton a great place for arts and heritage. They range from other levels of government and their funding bodies to a wide variety of foundations, the business community, the city's educational institutions, the philanthropists living in our midst and the media. Each and every one of these participants has a role to play in this plan. To a very real degree, the success of this plan depends on every stakeholder—in other words, every single person who cares about Edmonton and about the arts and heritage in Edmonton—not sitting back and waiting to judge the success of this plan and receive its benefits, but rather deciding in which way he or she can be proactive and *participate* in making this plan a reality. In this regard, there is no Edmontonian who is *not* a stakeholder in this plan.

This cultural plan is the culmination of two years of work by the Edmonton Arts Council and the Cultural Plan Steering Committee, but it is also a beginning. Approval of the intent and recommendations in this plan will be followed by detailed development of a series of specific action plans for each recommendation. Where necessary or appropriate further reports, including City budget recommendations, will be made to City Council for their information or approval.



Jesse Gervais  
Actor



# SECTION TWO: ARTS

## Focal Points and Arts Recommendations

When you invite the general public and the arts and heritage community to tell you what they want in a cultural plan, you will receive a multitude of insights, concerns, stories, directives, expressions of frustration and expressions of enthusiasm. That was certainly the case in the consultations around this cultural plan.

Many people spoke to us and their thoughts were recorded and then considered as a whole. As that consideration took place, it became clear that the feedback and viewpoints fell naturally into five categories or Focal Points.

- 1) Space
- 2) Education, Training and Mentoring
- 3) Grants and the Economics of Arts and Heritage
- 4) Recognition
- 5) Integration and Arts Climate Development

These focal points should be viewed as areas of concern and opportunity—areas in the arts where planning is required for the City of Edmonton. The structure follows these focal points in the Arts section (different focal points

## Boom, Bust

*Todd Babiak*

I know a visual artist who is in love with construction sites. He loves the cranes, exposed beams, dirt and rubble. The chink-chink-chonk and mysterious thumps, random calls: "George!" Men in hard hats and fluorescent vests, leaning on giant wings of steel and eating ham sandwiches. Porta-potties and white, humming trailers. He loves the feeling of transition, from parking lot to condominium, from old to new. But when the work is completed, and it invariably fails to meet his expectations, he mourns.

It's bracing, as an artist, to live in the midst of a chaotic transformation. As the city changes and grows around you, the spiritual landscape changes with it. Edmontonians complain about traffic, and all these new people, house prices and power centres and poor restaurant service with a hint of smugness in their voices. For once, in this northern city without an identity or a mascot, we're the centre of something spectacular—even if its most poignant representation is the giant, new diesel truck driving 40 kilometres over the speed limit.

But it's also an ugly and contingent time. The centre of an economic expansion is not a welcoming place for artists, many of whom make less in a year than what it costs to fuel up and insure a giant, new diesel truck. There is money for new freeways but the lease on ArtsHab—a successful experiment in cooperative living—runs out in 2009. More condos, plastered with vinyl siding. The provincial government, eager to encourage economic expansion and please their conservative voting base, is interested in every community but the cultural community.

As rents have risen, writers and musicians and filmmakers and painters have fled to Saskatoon and Winnipeg. Or to Toronto and Vancouver, where rents are at Edmonton levels and opportunities are more plentiful. If you're going to be poor, you might as well be poor in a city with a good architecture, with publishers, with live venues. There is no statistical evidence of this, only anecdotes. But if a thing is repeated enough times, especially on CBC Radio, it becomes something like true.

Edmonton's inferiority complex is as deep and murky as the North Saskatchewan River flowing through the middle of it. While it can be disturbing, even dangerous, an inferiority complex is much more appealing than unearned arrogance. The city itself is appealing in the way a construction site is appealing. Edmonton is a city in renewal, and for the first time in a generation its citizens are talking—at times, loudly—about culture.

Arts revitalization areas like the downtown east side and 118th Avenue show enormous potential to solve crises like the loss of ArtsHab to condo development and rising rents. Film is coming back to life, after the provincial government banished it to Vancouver and Toronto in 1996. For those who are not artists, wages

emerged for the Heritage section).

**Focal Point: Space**

The first area of focus is that of space for artists and arts activities of all kinds. This

issue was the most frequently mentioned in consultations with stakeholders. A recent survey of Edmonton artists<sup>4</sup> indicated that almost 28% of artists currently living in Edmonton are considering leaving the city. The main factor is identified in the survey as a current lack of affordable space to live and work as an artist in Edmonton.



John Hudson  
Theatre Director

While these results are cause for concern, much is already being done. In keeping with the preva-

*It's becoming increasingly difficult to carry on with sculpture of any size because of the amazing increases in studio rents in the last few years. I'm very concerned that this is going to result in an exodus of not only established artists, but certainly the emerging artists. The talk is where are you going to go?*  
*Focus group participant*

lent theme of partnership, community groups have developed some notable arts facilities in the city over the past 15 years, including the Winspear Centre, TransAlta Arts Barns and the Art Gallery of Alberta. In these cases the City has provided significant support but has not been the leader of the project. It is expected that community groups, in partnership with the City, other levels of government and the private sector will continue to develop new facilities and that the City of Edmonton will continue to support these important new initiatives from the community on a case-by-case basis. Some examples that were raised in consultations around this plan include a dance rehearsal space and theatre, a city museum, a media arts centre, a circus arts teaching and performance venue, a writers' centre, an Aboriginal arts and cultural centre, a chamber music hall and a theatre with features similar to those of the Kaasa Theatre that was lost in recent renovations to the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium.

The same survey noted that 63% of arts and heritage organizations in Edmonton expected that in the next five years there will not be ample administrative, production and presentation space in Edmonton and region for their activities.

In 2008 the City funded a grant program that will directly support the day-to-day operations of public facilities that are owned or controlled by arts or museum community groups. This grant

<sup>4</sup> Heritage Community Foundation 2007, Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada program, City of Edmonton Cultural Inventory.

program will significantly assist in the maintenance and community accessibility of those facilities.

Individual artists are independently finding studios in new locations in the city and are being assisted by organizations like WECAN (Harcourt House) and the Society of Northern Alberta Print Artists (SNAP).

But the question of space cannot be answered simply with one or two specific actions, no matter how grand in scale those may be. It is about the many ongoing relationships between arts activities and the owners and providers of space in the city. It is especially complex during an economic boom where working, exhibiting, performing, teaching and rehearsing space for the arts is hard to come by, and expensive when it can be found. Edmonton has had a reputation as an “affordable” city for artists, in terms of space, not to mention a rather distinguished history of accessing “found” space for artistic activity (the Walterdale Theatre, the new Varscona Theatre, the Yardbird Suite, the Third Space and the Alberta Aviation Museum, to name but a few). These traditions must be protected and, even in this boom, there remains much underused space in the city—space in community league buildings, churches, schools, even empty spaces in downtown Edmonton.

Arts space is also complicated by the fact that every arts discipline has essential but different space requirements. Painters need ventilation and natural light, dancers need special flooring,

## *Boom, Bust continued*

have risen sharply in Edmonton—and with it, disposable income.

If the city and the province can help artists market themselves and their work, writers and painters and dancers and film directors could certainly benefit. Edmonton has a strong and tenacious arts community; what it needs, more than anything, is a mature and hungry arts audience.

The Edmonton International Fringe Festival, the biggest and best festival of its kind on the continent, has not discovered a way to sell more tickets—sales have been flat for the last 10 years, even as the populations of the city and of the Fringe grounds have increased. This is a microcosm of Edmonton’s urban potential.

The trouble with a boomtown, without a cultural plan, is that it can be faceless and neutral. In times of scarcity, the arts are at the bottom of every deep list of priorities. What a city needs in order to benefit from a boom is physical and virtual arts infrastructure—an effort to produce a legacy. It may be expensive now, but it will never be cheap. Nothing worth having is cheap.

Of course, there is still time to benefit from the boom. All the city needs is a plan, and the political will to follow it, forcefully. While Edmonton may not have a catchy slogan or an easily encapsulated identity, it has soul. The challenge is animating it.

*Todd Babiak is a novelist, screenwriter, essayist and journalist. He is the Culture columnist at the Edmonton Journal.*

## Our Generous Spirit— An Insider’s Perspective on Edmonton

*Marty Chan*

Edmonton’s arts and culture scene is a jar of sea monkeys. To those on the outside we may seem like insignificant brine shrimp, but to those on the inside there’s a teeming artistic community with a desire to not only survive, but thrive.

Take for example our city’s theatre community. Edmonton boasts one of the higher theatre-per-capita ratios in Canada. How can so many companies survive in a small marketplace?

I suspect it might have something to do with Edmontonians’ goodwill and generosity. Our city has a welcoming environment for budding theatre artists. What else could explain the explosion of homegrown talent? Playwright Vern Thiessen won the Governor General’s Award for his play *Einstein’s Gift*. Stewart Lemoine has become a fixture of Edmonton theatre with his 25-year-old company, Teatro La Quindicina. Writer Paul Mather has worked on two of the most successful Canadian television sitcoms, *Corner Gas* and *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. Fringe Festival icon Chris Craddock wowed New York audiences with his gay rapper play, *Bash’d*, which is scheduled for



Godwin Friesen  
Singer / Pianist

sculptors need access for large objects.

But there are solutions as well as much potential for success if we recognize the need for an organization dedicated full-time to working on the many facets of this issue.

Tim Jones, president and CEO of Artscape (a Toronto-based provider of affordable arts spaces drawing international

attention for what Jones calls “culture-led regeneration,” [www.torontoscape.on.ca](http://www.torontoscape.on.ca)), provides an example of this. In 2007 Jones was named a finalist for the Schwab Foundation’s first annual Canadian Social Entrepreneur of the Year award. The Artscape model provides a way to create work and living space for artists so that districts can transform themselves into thriving cultural areas such as the arts-led redevelopment of Toronto’s historic Distillery District, and the re-imagination of the Toronto Transit Commission streetcar repair barns, which had sat empty for three decades, by turning them into a community centre. Artscape has a \$4-million operating budget and 25 staff members, and close to 300 artistic tenants work or live in Artscape-developed buildings in Toronto.

## **ARTS RECOMMENDATION #1**

*Fund and reinvigorate the Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton (ArtsHab).*

The City of Edmonton should, by providing operating funds, directly support the pre-existing Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton (ArtsHab), so as to broaden its capacity to find, develop and manage space for the arts in Edmonton—space for artists’ studios and live/work space as well as space for production, presentation, teaching, meeting, archiving and storage.

ArtsHab was founded in 1996 after working with consultants from Toronto’s Artscape. Although ArtsHab’s original vision was to use the power of the arts as a catalyst for developing neighbourhood and community identity and activity, and to be an active and effective partner in city revitalization and development projects, ArtsHab never secured the resources needed to accomplish these goals. Currently, ArtsHab only deals with one live/work space for artists. This is located in Edmonton’s downtown and holds ten live/work studios and three work studios. The building is privately owned, and ArtsHab has a 10-year lease due for renewal in September 2009. ArtsHab is entirely volunteer run, with no paid or professional staff.

A reinvigorated ArtsHab will have an active board of directors and expert staff that will reflect the multiple sides of the business of arts space in a large city. Like Artscape in Toronto, ArtsHab will do many things, including develop-



ing, managing and owning live/work and studio spaces for individual artists in all parts of the city. Examples of current or expected opportunities for this include the Connaught Armoury in Old Strathcona, the Grant MacEwan campus in the west end and the former Alberta Cycle Building on 118th Avenue.

In addition, ArtsHab will maintain a database so as to remain consistently aware of the available inventory of space, including production space, rehearsal space and studio space in the city, information that it would make freely available on an electronic, easy-to-access and user-friendly database.

As an advocate, ArtsHab will encourage businesses with property and community organizations such as churches and community leagues to make space available. ArtsHab will assist businesses and community organizations to understand the value and complexities of having artists using and sharing their space. ArtsHab will need to achieve and maintain expertise on space issues having to do with artistic practice, city bylaws and zoning, grants available for space-related issues, and the practicalities of physical space maintenance and construction. It will become the clearinghouse on all such issues of space for artists, so that any question or concern an artist may have can be answered by calling ArtsHab. And, ArtsHab will work closely and share expertise with other city agencies whose purpose involves housing for people or activities.

Since ArtsHab will act as a property manager, the City should expect the organization to eventually maintain itself with earned revenue, but it will initially need operating funding for two full-time staff

## *Our Generous Spirit—An Insider's Perspective on Edmonton continued*

an Off-Broadway run in 2008.

Their successes were mainly due to their talent and hard work, but I'd like to think that their growth as artists was the result of working in a city that celebrated new works and supported its artists. To paraphrase the Ashanti proverb, it takes a village to raise a playwright. I've worked with a nation of actors, directors, designers and technicians, and without their support I doubt if I'd still be working in theatre today.

The turning point in my career came at the Edmonton Fringe Festival. I had been producing my own plays at the festival for about four years, relying on friends and university classmates to work on my productions. My early plays went mostly unnoticed, and I was debating whether or not I had made the right career choice or if I should stick with my government day job.

On top of this frustration, I found myself short two actors for a romantic comedy called *Polaroids of Don*. My wife and I brainstormed potential actors to fill the roles, and our list became a wish list of the who's who of actors. Like a lottery ticket buyer, I daydreamed about landing stars such as Jeff Haslam and Marianne Copithorne. These veterans had appeared on every stage in Edmonton and many outside the city limits. I imagined these actors making my dialogue sound fresh and funny instead of stale and flat.

Who was I kidding? Jeff and Marianne were the busiest actors in town and probably received tons of phone calls from new playwrights looking for actors and emails from stalkers seeking fingernail clippings. Plus, I had no credentials. I'd doubted these actors would even return my calls let alone consider working on my play.

My wife pointed out that we'd never know unless we asked. So she phoned Jeff and Marianne. To my surprise, they not only returned our calls but, after reading the script, agreed to do the play. Because of them, I was able to produce the show. Edmonton audiences embraced *Polaroids of Don*, making it one of the hits of that year's Fringe Festival and kick-starting my playwrighting career.

If not for Jeff and Marianne's belief in me, I probably would have pulled out of the festival and returned to my safe government job without another thought about becoming a full-time playwright. I'm sure they saw a bit of themselves in me as they watched me try to break into the business, and they realized how one act of kindness can make a huge difference. I suspect that's why they offered a helping hand (plus, I wisely decided not to ask them for fingernail clippings).

Since then, I've seen countless examples of community spirit which abound not only in Edmonton's theatre scene, but across our city's arts and culture landscape. These generous acts can be as simple as the board members of a writers' group working the casino for a dance company, or as grand as the city's four major arts institutions (Winspear, Citadel, Art Gallery of Alberta and Edmonton Public Library) teaming up to lobby the City to declare the downtown core

and activities. It is expected that this will be \$225,000 per year for the first three years. A review will be made in Year 4 to determine funding support from the City from that point. The

Edmonton Arts Council will provide organizational support and mentorship to ArtsHab as it establishes itself in its augmented capacity.

The charts included with each recommendation identify potential stakeholders who will further develop and implement the recommendations. A projection of required resources (personnel, finances, influence) is included where applicable. Priority is determined by the degree of risk of unfavourable consequences if no action is taken and whether the recommendation is a prerequisite to other recommendations—high priority does not indicate a recommendation is more important overall. Timelines are variable and, to some degree, flexible. Significant action on all recommendations should be underway by 2011.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 1		Organizations directly affiliated with the City of Edmonton	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	Edmonton Arts Council (EAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Services</li> <li>- Asset Management &amp; Public Works</li> <li>- Planning &amp; Development</li> <li>- City Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton (ArtsHab)</li> <li>- Developers, property owners, BOMA</li> <li>- Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs)</li> </ul>
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Finances	Personnel

Priority – high.

Additional annual funding – \$250,000 (staff, office, programs) in 2009 and 2010 City operating budget, re-evaluation in 2011

### ARTS RECOMMENDATION #2

*Redraw zoning bylaws and other city practices to stimulate arts activities.*

The City of Edmonton will review and, where applicable, redraw zoning bylaws or other civic regulations that inhibit the effective but responsible development of space for arts programming, buildings and living space, including, for example, rezoning light industrial areas to

include artists’ live/work studios. An unsympathetic legislative environment is one of the greatest drawbacks to the effective use of space for artists, whereas a sympathetic environment is an extremely effective catalyst in developing space for artists.

Creating this kind of environment will mean reviewing the civic zoning and regulations that work as incentives for the development of arts

spaces in comparable cities, and making a commitment to redrawing the zoning regulations in Edmonton so that they also responsibly favour and promote artists, owners and developers in creating and accessing space for arts activities. There should also be a commitment to clarifying the existing zoning regulations around arts studios and the legitimate use of out-buildings

The City should also look at instituting a mandate stipulating that all new and renovated City buildings such as libraries and recreation centres include customized space for arts activities as well as being built to a high standard of architectural excellence.

*Our Generous Spirit—An Insider’s Perspective on Edmonton continued*

the Arts District.

Why the camaraderie? Perhaps the collaborative nature of the arts spurs people to look beyond their own artistic backyards. One would think that the limited resources in a smaller centre would incite artists to compete rather than cooperate with each other, but our artistic leaders recognized the value of partnerships, especially when they worked together to successfully lobby our city’s council to increase arts funding. One voice can be lost, but a chorus will always be heard. To their credit, our civic leaders voted for the increases to let artists know they mattered. Ultimately, it’s easier to work together as an artistic community when artists believe they belong to the community.

*Marty Chan is a playwright and young adult author. His latest book is **The Mystery of the Mad Science Teacher**.*

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 2		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	EAC	- Planning & Development - Community Services - City Manager’s Office (CMO)	- ArtsHab - BRZs
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel	Personnel

**Priority** – medium

**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required

**Focal Point: Education, Training and Mentoring**

Training, inspiring and retaining the next generation of artists and heritage professionals was the second most-mentioned topic in the consultations around the cultural plan.

Throughout every artistic discipline it is acknowledged that you are unlikely to find a vibrant and innovative sector unless the infrastructure around that sector is also actively engaged in education, training and mentoring, not only of its young but among peers as well. Young and emerging

A Great Arts Scene:  
Hype and/or Reality  
*Catrin Owen*

Those of us in the marketing and communications fields are always looking for the elusive key message, unique selling proposition or brand characteristic. In an effort to distinguish products, services and places, we crave the ability to occupy a territory that no one else can claim. It’s one of the ways that we sell.

In Edmonton, patrons of the arts have for a long time known that there was a great arts scene here—lots to see, hear and do—and much of it of a calibre that by no means required any explanation or caveat. (We didn’t say, “It was a great night at the theatre—well, by Edmonton standards.”) Indeed, for decades Edmonton audiences have been delighted (and challenged) by the range, quality and frequency of arts experiences to be had here. And we felt no need to compare ourselves to other cities, provinces or countries. We were

*I don't worry whether all the kids we teach will turn out to be filmmakers. I just want them to experience the joy of making something.*

*Focus group participant*

artists need a variety of educational settings to choose from, they need teachers who are themselves skilled and qualified, and at some point in their training and education they need to be mentored in a close relationship with an established artist. This is a pattern that artists throughout time have sought and benefited from. Not only that, effective and inspirational education and training programs do more than just help create good artists. They can also create

informed and captivated audiences; schools such as the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta train actors, directors and designers, but they also create excitement in the broader community.

Education, training and mentorship is about fine arts fully integrated into the school curriculum from kindergarten to grade 12, nationally recognized post-secondary institutions, excellent private teaching, a complete array of artist residencies, master classes and mentorship programs. It is both formal and informal. It involves training in specific artistic skills and techniques, and nurturing creativity. Another way to capture this is by recognizing the need to provide comprehensive training and exposure to the fine arts for our youth, to attract internationally acclaimed artists to work with our established artists, and to retain and support our "elder" artists who will be an inspiration and mentors for us all.

Alberta Education has stated their commitment to the holistic education of a child and creative processes as part of the outcomes desired for each child in Alberta. However, the mandatory inclusion of visual, performance and literary arts in the K-12 core curriculum has not been achieved to date. In the elementary program of studies (Alberta Education, 1999), music and

*The Saskatchewan Arts Education program has been an example of cooperation and partnership between the Saskatchewan Arts Board, University of Regina, City of Regina, City of Saskatoon and provincial service organizations such as Dance Saskatchewan. Other partnership initiatives in Saskatchewan have resulted in ArtsSmarts funding and Artists in Schools projects.*



Jayleen Gordey  
Dancer



*Artists and people who work in heritage are well educated. The Edmonton Cultural Inventory indicates that 60% of our artists and heritage professionals have completed at least one university degree and 21% have completed a technical institute certificate. And, 59% of the artists and heritage professionals working in Edmonton also received their education in their field in Edmonton. If they train here, they tend to stay here.*

Heritage Community Foundation,  
Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital  
of Canada Inventory

visual arts are considered core subjects and must be taught.

At the junior high level, fine arts classes are clustered as options, and at the senior high level, fine arts classes continue to be available as options. In order to graduate, students are required to have two credits from a cluster of applied arts/fine arts subjects.

In Edmonton, because of site-based management, schools such as Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts (K-12), Virginia Park Elementary School

and Afton School of the Arts (K-6) offer an expanded fine arts and arts education program. Edmonton has an open boundary system, so theoretically these programs are available to all students. In practice, demand for places may necessitate selection.

Within Canada, Saskatchewan was the first province to legislate K-12 arts education as core curriculum, mandating programs in music, visual arts, drama and dance with an

### *A Great Arts Scene: Hype and/or Reality continued*

a creative city, not because Richard Florida had recommended it, but just because . . . because there were creative people living here, eager to express themselves, and there were creative audience members here, interested in doing more than working and watching TV. Our arts scene grew—organically, naturally, as part of a community becoming comfortable in its own skin and eager to tell its own stories along with the great, universal stories of opera, symphony, visual arts and theatre.

It seems quite possible to me that it was only when the communicators and politicians got a hold of our arts scene and started to commodify it and see it as an important sales advantage, did we start to get self-conscious and confused about whether our arts scene was truly great. We started to ask questions like: *Great compared to what? Better than New York City or Toronto?* And artists, always questing for the elusive perfect performance, started to chafe at the corporate communicators' description of our "world-class" arts scene, because, as they know only too well—you can't ever rest on your laurels—and every artistic moment, even as the applause is still ringing in your ears, can always be better. Artists, much to the chagrin of the communicators, asked awkward questions like, *Is the Edmonton scene really great? Or is that just brand positioning?*

That's the wonderful point about artists—and why we need them to keep us honest. They ask, and answer, difficult questions and they expose hype by training a spotlight on reality. What matters is not how we measure up to other places, but that the arts in Edmonton be an authentic expression of what our magnificent artists are striving for. Of course, it helps to attract business and tourism to Edmonton by touting our great scene, but more important than this "unique selling proposition" is the "unique artistic proposition": that artists must create and will do, scene or not...

Because of this inevitable urge to create, ours is a city replete with arts choices for everyone—the hip-hop fan, the café poet, the dinner theatre devotee and the opera buff. The day, recently, that I opened the newspaper to read the reviews of Yo-Yo Ma playing with the ESO and Beyonce wowing fans at Northlands' Rexall Place, made me smile—not least because the "biggies" were in town, but because that night there were so many other fabulous things to choose from. Edmonton really was living up to its hype.

Cities are shaped by their geography, their age and their population. Edmonton is the most northerly major city in North America with a metro population of over one million—and this fact, along with our youth (only a city for just over 100 years), define the kind of place we are—and the kind of art that is created here. It's foolish for us to compare ourselves to London or New York or even Toronto. Finding an exact comparison is tough, if not impossible. Perhaps the more important point is that this young, northerly, mid-size city has a lot going on in the arts—and that what happens here is of a very high quality. Add to that the fact that we "grow" many of our own artists in K to 12 and post-secondary programs here, making the arts scene that much more sustainable—and what you have is the recipe for a



Louis O'Coffey  
Painter

integrative thread of language and literary arts emphasis throughout. Similar mandated arts education and fine arts core curriculum has developed in the City of Vancouver, and is currently developing in Winnipeg.

In Edmonton there are gaps and inconsistencies in training and preparation for aspiring professional artists and arts educators. At the

University of Alberta within the Faculty of Education, there is no comprehensive arts education program, and course offerings in the fine arts for emerging educators are limited, and in some cases not available (as is the case with dance).

For prospective actors, the Department of Drama, University of Alberta, houses one of the best professional acting and theatre programs in Canada. The university also offers an established music and visual art and design program in the Faculty of Arts. MacEwan College offers professional programs in theatre arts, music and visual/media arts and arts and cultural management. There is no professional dance program at MacEwan or the University of Alberta and there

is no professional school of architecture and urban design in Edmonton. Consequently, there are challenges around these disciplines to keep the communities vibrant and satisfied, and to keep innovation at the leading edge.

So although Edmonton has some strong attributes in this area, there are notable gaps.

The key question in this Focal Point is "What can and should the City bring to this issue?" The City, unlike the Province, has no legislated power over education or post-secondary institutions and the City does not own or operate schools. The City, however, can urge the Province to address fine arts education and demonstratively support the province in its newly announced Cultural Policy<sup>5</sup> to ensure fine arts education becomes a priority for action by the Province. The City has only its influence, but that influence is strong, and it is important for the City to advocate for effective fine arts (and heritage) education in the school curriculum.

*The City must take a strong leadership role in petitioning the Province to rethink how we appropriate arts into the schools and the curriculum, and make more funding available to support the arts. Because what happens in schools reverberates out.*

*Focus group participant*

<sup>5</sup> Spirit of Alberta, [www.tprc.alberta.ca/culturalpolicy/default.aspx](http://www.tprc.alberta.ca/culturalpolicy/default.aspx).

*I would like to see specialists in elementary schools, because in the system now you typically find generalists teaching subjects that they may not have a background in, so the kids don't get the benefit of the experience and passion of a specialist. By junior high and high school, we've lost a lot of kids because they haven't had a positive enough experience.*

Focus group participant

**ARTS RECOMMENDATION #3**  
*Establish a joint task force on the arts in schools and post-secondary institutions.*

The City should use its influence to establish a task force to begin a productive discussion with key partners<sup>6</sup> about the place of the fine arts, now and in the future, in K-12 schools in Edmonton, as well as in the current programs of post-secondary institutions in the city. Particular attention should be paid to areas that have been identified as gaps, including dance, architecture and urban design.

*A Great Arts Scene: Hype and/or Reality continued*

thriving, complex and satisfying arts scene that's as real as we need it to be.

What's sometimes easy to forget when we are busy turning arts into an asset is that our arts scene is about the artists. It is their unyielding spirit of creativity and expression we must nurture—and while our “creative capital” is a valid tourism and lifestyle message, what's so much more important is making it possible for the reality to outstrip the propaganda. We have to do all that we can to keep artists here. They are precious. We can't live as well without them. And no amount of touring productions from Broadway will make up for locally grown brilliance. Quite simply, there is no “arts scene” unless the artists can be seen. And so our focus should be less on arts consumers and more on arts producers (artists). The best scene that we could create here is one of a welcoming city for artists to live in. The legacy of our Cultural Capital designation should be that that we made it more possible for artists to work, live, thrive and prosper in this the most northerly major city in North America. That we consider artists important, valuable and sage members of our society should be reflected in our financial support, our commitment to arts spaces, our urban planning considerations and our public art.

A city for artists is inevitably a great arts city—and that's a designation that never ends, and a claim that can never be refuted. As we define our cultural direction for the future, it's our real, concrete, tangible commitment to artists that must shine through. That's not hype or reality; it's necessity.

*Catrin Owen is a consultant with Calder Bateman Communications. She is past-chair of the Edmonton Arts Council.*

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 3		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	EAC	Mayor's office	- Edmonton Public Schools - Edmonton Catholic Schools - University of Alberta - MacEwan, NAIT and other post-secondary - Province of Alberta - Arts organizations
	Resources	Personnel	Influence	Personnel

**Priority** – high  
**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required

<sup>6</sup> Including but not limited to Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Grant MacEwan College, the University of Alberta and the Province of Alberta.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION #4

Create an Edmonton international mentorship prize.

Working closely with the arts community and major post-secondary institutions, the City should support the development of an Edmonton international mentorship prize, which will draw internationally recognized artists to Edmonton for periods of one to six months to mentor, inspire and teach local artists. Our post-secondary institutions are active in bringing guest artists to Edmonton to teach for short terms, but more could be done here. The City can provide status and some resources in the expectation that the Edmonton international mentorship prize will be constituted as a major international award that would rotate between artistic disciplines such as dance,

*To me, to be able to locate artists who are miles ahead of us and to learn from them is extraordinary. International exchange is crucial. Ultimately, there should be resources to facilitate these kinds of activities and the physical exchange because the payoff is colossal.*  
Focus group participant

architecture, literature, music, painting and so on. Attached to the acceptance of the mentorship prize would be residency obligations, so that the recipient of the prize, for a time, becomes a member of the Edmonton community. The amount of the prize would have to be substantial enough to make it attractive for artists of renown to come and be part of our community in legitimate and tangible ways. As well, the prize will lose a great part of its appeal and utility for the Edmonton community if it remains unknown elsewhere. An aggressive communications strategy must be developed to ensure that the prize has name recognition at home and abroad.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 4	ARTS RECOMMENDATION #4			
		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	EAC	- Corporate Services - Community Services - City Council	- Arts organizations - Educational institutions - Corporate and business partners
	Resources	Personnel	Influence/Finances	Personnel/Finances

**Priority** – medium: first prize awarded in 2011  
**Additional annual funding** – \$100,000 (professional fee, travel, accommodation, events, marketing and communication)



## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #5

Support programs to retain “elder” artists.

The City should use its influence to help create and provide support for programs that keep our senior artists and mentors residing in Edmonton. Part of this is making sure that they are comfortable enough in their livelihoods to remain involved in the city’s artistic life.

One opportunity is to support the development of a Performing Arts Lodge in Edmonton. “PAL Canada Foundation (affectionately called PAL Canada, [www.pal-canada.org](http://www.pal-canada.org)) is a national organization dedicated to providing affordable housing and care for older members and associates of Canada’s entertainment industry, especially in the areas of health and well-being. The first residence, PAL Place, was built in Toronto in 1993 with PAL Vancouver opening its doors in May 2006.

PAL Canada is rapidly expanding with chapters in Halifax, Toronto, Stratford, Calgary, Vancouver and, most recently, Winnipeg. Edmonton has been meeting with the various areas of the arts industry with a view to attaining PAL chapter status.”

	City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
<b>Implementation</b>	EAC	- Community Services - Asset Management & Public Works	- ArtsHab - PAL Canada - Actors’ Equity and comparable unions and professional associations - Seniors’ support organizations - Arts organizations - Post-secondary institutions
<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Personnel/Influence/Finances	Personnel/Finances

**Priority** – medium

**Additional annual funding** – undetermined until more parameters are developed.

## Edmonton Exists—An Outsider’s Perspective

Ian McGillis

They say you never really know your hometown until you recollect it from afar, but I’m not so sure about that. I think I knew Edmonton pretty darn well for the 35 years I called it home. My subsequent decade in Montreal, during which I’ve often been put in the position of unpaid defender of all things Albertan—I can’t even say all things Edmontonian, since Quebecers generally don’t distinguish the capital from the province—has reinforced my feelings about the place without altering them in any special way. The same is true for my annual Christmas visits. But I do know, now, that Edmonton has changed in a way that goes much deeper than the cosmetic architectural alterations wrought by the latest boom. I knew it when I realized that my favorite hip-hop album of 2006 was by an Edmontonian.

I speak, of course, of *Breaking Kayfabe* by Cadence Weapon. The first few times I spun it I was digging it so much on a purely musical level that I didn’t notice what now seems so obvious: just how unassumingly Edmontonian in its references and tone the album is. Oliver Square, the Number 7 bus, pitchers at the Strath, those unmistakable local vowel sounds: it couldn’t be any more E-town if Bryan Hall popped up for a guest rap. Yet it’s an indisputably cutting-edge example of a form we associate almost exclusively with a handful of American cities. That’s an achievement no less remarkable for its air of inevitability. Cadence Weapon deserves a key to the city if he doesn’t already have one.

A small part of my response to *Breaking Kayfabe* comes, I must admit, from a personal connection. (Two degrees removed, yes, but allow me my vicarious moment.) Cadence Weapon is the *nom-de-rap* of Rollie Pemberton, whose father, the late and much-missed

Teddy, had a weekly show on CJSR-FM in the 80s called *The Black Experience in Sound*. I did shows at CJSR for 12 years, and for a couple of those years my slot came right before Teddy’s. Teddy, as I recall, was pretty much a straight-ahead R & B man who viewed the dawning of hip hop with a wary if affectionate eye. That his son is now putting

Edmonton on the black music map worldwide is one of those rare developments so perfect and poetic that it gives me a feeling akin to scoring an overtime goal on a penalty shot. Which I’ve never actually done.

### **Focal Point: Grants and the Economics of Culture**

Arts grants are typically distributed to individuals or not-for-profit organizations. In some cases, for-profit organizations involved in the cultural industries such as sound recording companies are also recipients of grants. Edmonton artists can apply to all three levels of government for a grant. Community foundations like the Edmonton Community Foundation, private foundations like the Bronfman Foundation and corporate foundations like the RBC (Royal Bank) Foundation also give grants to the arts.

The Edmonton Arts Council currently has 12 City grant programs and three grant programs developed with private funds. The provincial and federal governments have even more arts grant programs, and the resultant matrix is complex (see Appendix 4).

Most granting bodies have very specific purposes and outcomes for their grants, which typically include providing stability to an established core of arts and heritage activities, programs or individuals; stimulating the development of new activities, programs or individuals; supporting connections and relationships between specific community groups or interests and the arts; or providing support for organiza-

tional stability and development, and organizational rescue when necessary.

In the arts grant world, all three levels of government are continuously evaluating the purpose and effectiveness of their existing grant programs. As with everything else in today's cultural landscape, that of the arts grant is becoming increasingly complex, with more grant programs having more diverse purposes. There are many things to consider such as the support of emerging artists, the support of new forms of artistic expression and media, the support of artists and arts organizations from communities or places that have been under-represented (including, for example, young artists, Aboriginal artists and artists who work in languages other than French

*What is a grant? A grant should not be confused with commissions, contribution agreements, contracts for service, and prizes or awards. A grant recognizes and supports the ongoing operations of an organization or a specific project of an organization or an individual. The direct beneficiaries of this action, however, are generally deemed to be the public—not the grantor.*

or English), the process of awarding multi-year grants to established organizations and, finally, a demand for increased awareness of suitable governance practices and accountability from boards of directors of not-for-profit arts and festival organizations.

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #6

*Increase grant support for established arts and festival organizations.*

Edmonton has close to 130 established not-for-profit arts and festival organizations and they arguably are the foundation on which the arts community is built. They produce countless shows and exhibitions annually, engaging and entertaining millions of people.<sup>7</sup> Many of these organizations are civic treasures that must be kept vital for future generations. They are the primary employers of artists in Edmonton and they represent us nationally and internationally. Setting suitable targets for City grants for established organizations is challenging. Targets such as a per capita allotment or a set percentage of the overall civic operating budget have been suggested in the past as possible guides. However, neither of these methods is directly tied to the actual activity of the organizations in question. A more appropriate determination model to use is a set percentage of the aggregate annual revenue of the applicant organizations based on the previous three years' average.

In 2007, close to 100 of Edmonton's not-for-profit arts organizations received about 4.5% of their combined annual operating revenue of approximately \$48 million from City/Edmonton Arts Council grants; for festival organizations that number was 9%. This recommendation calls for targeting the City operating grant support for arts organizations at 8% of their combined annual operating revenue and 12% for festivals. (The recommended festival funding

<sup>7</sup> In 2005, 3.9 million people attended an event produced by an established arts or festival organization in Edmonton. The total economic impact on Edmonton was \$123.7 million. Economic Impact of Arts and Culture in the Greater Edmonton Region 2005 (Edmonton Economic Development Corporation).

## *Edmonton Exists—An Outsider's Perspective continued*

The relevance of all this? Only that it emphatically underlines something I'd been suspecting for some time: Edmonton is shrugging off its cloak of cultural deference, and none too soon. For me, growing up as a voracious pop culture consumer, it was as if my home didn't exist. So keen was my need for validation that I would seize on the slimmest of morsels: Mordecai Richler inserting a very brief Edmonton scene in *Solomon Gursky Was Here*; Leonard Cohen's liner note on the back of his *Best Of* album telling how "Sisters of Mercy" was written in a local hotel room; reading in *Rolling Stone* that Janis Joplin got at least one of her many tattoos here. Then there was SCTV, in its time easily the hippest show on TV, actually coming to Edmonton for a year in 1981 to base its production at ITV's studios. But Edmonton, in those immortal sketches, was always posing as somewhere else. Rick Moranis as Woody Allen would stroll down a "Manhattan" streetscape and only we precious few would recognize that leafy block behind him as Beaver Hill Park.

Never discount the importance of what I'm talking about here. People need to see their lives reflected in art. It's a need we often don't recognize until we see it satisfied and feel that thrill of recognition. My interior life is largely located between 97th and 82nd streets and 127th and 144th avenues. When I dream, even when the circumstances of the dream are clearly those of my present life in Montreal, the landscape is that of north central Edmonton. If I have a personal compass centre, it's the small strip mall at 132nd Avenue and 91st Street. For years, though, whenever the impulse to write fiction struck me, some insidious inner self-censor would tell me that those very streets were not worthy literary settings. With a wrong-headedness that now causes me acute retrospective cringing I would either strip the writing of all local references or desperately attempt to put my callow narrators in New York or London. Or at least on a farm somewhere. Anywhere but where I knew. How sad is that?

At some point, perhaps through exhaustion as much as anything else, I got over it. I wrote a very location-specific novel about being nine years old in north Edmonton in 1971. And, not to blow my own horn, but I take great pride in knowing that *A Tourist's Guide to Glengarry* was, for many of its readers, the first work of fiction they had ever encountered set in an Edmonton they knew. I know this because people have come up to me and told me so, to my face. I didn't *plan* the novel with that kind of response in mind—I didn't think it would get any response at all, frankly—but wow, what a lovely bonus. While I can't speak for Cadence Weapon—or Minister Faust or Maria Dunn or Stewart Lemoine or Todd Babiak or any of the increasing numbers doing kindred things—I'll bet they've had similar responses and I'll bet they're tickled too. And while prognostication is a mug's game, here's betting that it won't be long before the very notion that Edmonton artists were once afraid to represent their home will have the ring of a distant, far-fetched legend.

*Ian McGillis is the author of A Tourist's Guide to Glengarry, a novel about growing up on the city's north side. He lives and writes in Montreal, and gets back to Edmonton as often as possible.*

is higher because of the lower level of grant funds currently available to them from the other two levels of government.) If this guide had been applied in 2007, it would have increased City of Edmonton Community Investment grants to \$3.2 million (from \$1.76 million) for arts organizations and \$1.44 million (from \$1.06 million) for festivals—a total increase of \$1.82 million.

This formula approach will not mean successful applicants will automatically receive a set percentage of their organization’s annual revenue from this grant program. Edmonton Arts Council peer juries will continue to use an average percentage as one of the guides in determining their grant recommendations for each applicant. Other guides will include the historical funding level for the applicant, the quality of work and future plans of the applicant, community impact and fiscal responsibility.

It is expected that this approach will provide increased stability as well as adequate funds for emerging activities. If this recommendation is enacted, there would no longer be an automatic

annual cost of living increase to Community Investment Grants for Arts and Festival Organizations. Any increases would need to be justified by an actual increase in the aggregate financial activity of the sector.



Keith Walker  
Glass Artist

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 6		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	EAC	City Council	
	Resources	Personnel	Finances	

**Priority** – high  
**Additional annual funding** – \$1.82 million: could be phased in.



## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #7

*Sustain grant support for individual artists and keep the grants open to all artists.*

There has been a notable increase in grant programs for individual artists in the past four years. The City of Edmonton first approved a grant program for individual artists in 2006, and 2008 will see the implementation of the Alberta Creative Development Fund (a joint project of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts and Canada Council for the Arts with an emphasis on grants to individual artists in Alberta).

There is also a strong commitment by all government funders to find a balance between supporting established and emerging artists. Support of established artists invests in proven excellence. Support of new artists is riskier, but it invests in the future and new forms of artistic expression. Even established and well-known artists are not necessarily financially secure. A survey of individual artists conducted as part of the Cultural Capital of Canada cultural inventory project indicates that the average annual arts income of a professional artist in Edmonton is less than \$20,000.

It is recommended that City of Edmonton Community Investment Grants to Individual Artists remain open to all applicants and no preference or bias be made in favour of any one group of artists, for example, by age, previous success in securing grants, ethnic background or artistic discipline. Increases to this grant fund for the next two years should be the same as the increase to the annual cost of living. A review of this grant amount should be made in 2011. It is expected that Edmonton's established artists will continue to be successful in their grant applications to the core programs of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts and the Canada Council.

## Why Mentors Matter

*Greg Hollingshead*

When I first came to the University of Alberta in 1975 as an assistant professor of 18th century literature, it was fresh from four years living in the English countryside, another world. I had grown up in Toronto, but I had lived in England for five years; this was the first time I had been to the Prairies, in fact the first time I had been west of North Bay. I wasn't quite sure where I was. That first year I spent most of my time preparing lectures. My main recreation was hanging out with the university's first writer in residence, Matt Cohen, the novelist and short-story writer. It was a tremendous pleasure to find that he was here. It made me feel that I had come somewhere where intelligent choices were being made, and the best people just might be.

Matt Cohen was, to me, here, at that time, what I think many artistic mentors have been over the years to aspiring artists in this city: a living connection to the artistic life. A model, a critic, an advisor, an immediately present human being, a mentor. Mentoring is tutoring, one-on-one consulting. Working well as an artist is in large part a matter of craft, and in any craft, skill is taken to a new level by a teacher/student relationship of trust and respect. I say teacher when really I mean *master*, as in *master craftsman*, and I say *student* when I mean *novice*, or *apprentice*. At its best, mentoring is that kind of relationship, involving the transmission of more than mere "craft." The full development of skills entails the whole person—mind and heart—in a way that mastering a field of academic knowledge does not.

There is the importance to a developing artist of coming face to face with, and being spoken to by, and listened to by, and having his or her work examined carefully by, a genuine working artist. And then there is the close operation of an intelligent, formally sophisticated, technically sensitive mind upon the student's own work. And this connection, the mind of the master responding with its own intelligence to the work of the apprentice, is a deep and transformative one, and is at the heart of this whole endeavour of mentoring. Artists learn by keeping their eyes open when they are not studying art and keeping their eyes open when they are making art. Beyond this, they need that rarest of all commodities—rarer than life, rarer than theoretical instruction: an intelligent, objective, formally conversant response to their work.

For the past 32 years, writers in residence at the University of Alberta, and more recently at MacEwan College, the Faculty of Extension, the University Bookstore and the Edmonton Public Library, and artists in residence at such venues as Harcourt House and the SNAP Gallery, as well as the many writers and artists of all kinds who have appeared for longer or shorter visits in our schools, have been pure breaths of fresh air: artists in a public role, often but not always from outside the city, or the province, whose presence helps us to see ourselves as nothing else could, whose ongoing artis-



Hank Zyp  
Painter

This recommendation is made with an expectation that the new City of Edmonton Multicultural Outreach program (2008) will reach many individual artists who are not yet familiar with EAC or Canadian grant procedures and that the Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund (EATF) will be successful in increasing the amount of its annual grants to individual artists over the next five years.<sup>8</sup> The EATF will continue to place a priority on supporting less-established artists.

The Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) will also continue to support the Alberta Creative Development Initiative, helping to ensure this grant program continues to focus on artists who have not previously received grants from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts or the Canada Council.

Finally, while workshops and guidance on completing grant applications are routinely offered by EAC staff, some artists and organizations, because of conceptual and cultural barriers, are less successful in competing for grants. Assisting these artists and organizations in applying for grants will be one of the priorities of the EAC over the next two years.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 7		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	EAC	City Council	
ARTS RECOMMENDATION 7	Resources	Personnel	Finances	

**Priority** – medium  
**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required in 2009 and 2010 City operating budget. To be reviewed in 2011.

<sup>8</sup> The Edmonton Community Foundation has set a target of \$10 million in the EATF endowment, which will generate \$450,000 in grants annually to individual Edmonton artists. The current endowment holds \$1 million.

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #8

*Increase grant support for community arts projects.*

Community arts is one of the fastest growing fields of artistic endeavour in Canada. The term *community arts* refers to a collaboration between professional artists and community groups—groups defined by factors such as a common ethnic background, living conditions, location, age, or social or economic strata. Community arts uses artistic activities and expressions to support the development and improvement of the quality of life of a community particularly where there are social, cultural or environmental issues. Edmonton has an active group of artists who are rapidly becoming adept at working in this challenging field. Examples include the artists at Nina Haggerty Centre, ihuman and Artists on the Ward at the University of Alberta Hospital. Support of these programs emphasizes the City's commitment to making the arts part of the fabric of our everyday lives, in every corner of our community.

The Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada program included a one-time community arts grant program called *Voices Less Heard*. It distributed over \$385,000 to 26 community arts projects. The success of that one-time grant program is an important legacy of the cultural capital year but there are not adequate grants funds currently available to build on this legacy. The City has only one grant program dedicated to community arts totalling \$104,000 in grants in 2008. In addition, the Lee Fund for the Arts (\$55,000 in 2007) held by the Edmonton Arts Council at the Edmonton Community Foundation is dedicated to the support of community arts. The City program is relatively new and confined to projects that result in public visual art. The grants, however, should be opened to community arts projects using a wide range of artistic practices including video, music, dance, etc. It is therefore recommended that the

## *Why Mentors Matter continued*

tic endeavours meld and clash in often fascinating ways with the rich commotion of life as it is lived in this city. Often part of the mandate of the artist in residence is to offer talks or workshops or exhibitions to the general public. In a city such as Edmonton, these, if properly publicized, tend to be popular events. This is a city with a relatively high level of cultural sophistication without too many time- and energy-stealing features—traffic volume, say, or a prohibitive cost of living, or “too much going on”—that plague other cities. The result is an ideal environment for artist-in-residence programs to ripple out in thousands of ways into the wider community.

One thing I myself have learned as an artist in a public role is that most people here are in some way artists. What many people here self-deprecatingly call a hobby is often a lifetime dedication to a craft. You can tell this simply by how informed, or intelligently critical, or appreciative members of the public can be. We tend to think of the arts as a peripheral human activity, but for the majority it is close to the centre of their lives, however invisible it may be to others.

Mentoring programs are valuable to the institutions that host them; valuable to the artists who hold the position, because most artists in this country, no matter how brilliant or famous they are, live poor and need the work; valuable to the artists who receive their assistance; and valuable to the community, for this is outreach in a real, hands-on way and will continue to be so for as long as people take up paintbrushes or chisels or unfold laptops to express their visions. This is culture as it actually is. A moment at the heart of the culture of this city.

*Greg Hollingshead is a writer. A professor emeritus at the University of Alberta, he is currently director of writing programs at the Banff Centre.*

## Steering the Flagships

*Tony Luppino*

Thomas Hoving, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, said that a museum has “great potential not only as a stabilizing and regenerative force in modern society, but as a crusading force for quality and excellence.” I believe that one could apply this to any “flagship” arts institution. That is certainly what the Alberta Gallery of Art strives to be, and how I believe we can best serve our community at home and enhance how it is seen from afar—whether from Calgary or Beijing. I don't think it is presumptuous of me to suggest that the Winspear, Citadel or Royal Alberta Museum would feel comfortable with applying this criterion to their organizations.

Hoving chose his words carefully—in the way that an organization

City increase its grants for community arts by \$200,000 in 2009 and then by the annual cost

of living for the next two years. A review of this grant amount should be made in 2012.

<b>ARTS RECOMMENDATION #8</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	City Affiliates EAC	City Departments - Community Services - City Council	Community Partners - Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op, Assist Community Services Centre, and other comparable organizations - Ground Zero Productions and other comparable arts and community organizations
	<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Finances	Personnel

**Priority** – high

**Additional annual funding** – \$200,000 in 2009 and 2010 City operating budget. To be reviewed in 2011.

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #9

*Sustain and explore support for cultural industries/entrepreneurs.*

Grants are fundamental to sustaining an arts community, but artists are also proudly independent and entrepreneurial. They want people to purchase tickets to their shows, to buy their videos and CDs, to buy their paintings and books. This is an important aspect of the arts economy in Edmonton. The City has been an active participant in some areas of the arts marketplace and is exploring its place in other parts. The City, for example, contracts professional artists to perform in the City's outreach and hospitality programs. Edmonton Tourism's Festival City in a Box program is an excellent example of this. In 2007 close to \$110,000 was paid directly to nearly 140 artists who were part of the festival city activity. This should continue.

The City's Percent for Art in Public Places program is another notable source of income for Edmonton's visual artists. In 2007 that program purchased over \$150,000 worth of professional services from Edmonton artists. The Percent for Art policy will be even more effective in future years with the revisions to the policy instituted in September 2007 and the anticipated adoption of a Public Art Master Plan currently being developed by the Edmonton Arts Council.

Exploring new ground is the recent venture partnership with the television and film company, Lionsgate Entertainment. The Edmonton Film Office (Edmonton Economic Development Corporation) has invested in the production of two 13-week TV series on NBC prime time. This is forecasting \$70 million in business for the city and gives the Film Office a 15% share in net proceeds from the series. The City and the



Edmonton Arts Council should carefully monitor the effectiveness of the Lionsgate contract and determine if this is an effective way of supporting arts and economic development through support of a cultural industry. If applicable, the principles that make this activity or agreement effective should be identified and applied to other types of cultural activities, including book publishing and sound recording.

The Edmonton Film Office further recommends the creation of a “film friendly” City policy. This, in a general sense, includes working collectively to provide a supportive civic environment for the screen production sector, including local, national and international productions. Specifically, *film friendly* means an easily accessed and focused point of contact within the City where a producer can negotiate for all services and support required from City departments.

In addition, some American cities have created music commissions that are comparable to the Edmonton Film Office. Through the work of these bodies, “live music zones” have been created in those cities. This can include incentives for local bars, lounges and restaurants to contract local musicians. Further study of this in a Canadian context is recommended in partnership with Edmonton Tourism, the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, the food and restaurant industry, Business Revitalization Zones, the Edmonton Musicians’ Association and other stakeholders.

Steering the Flagships continued

might agonize over its mission or vision statement. A flagship must be both stabilizing and regenerative, though these measures may appear to be at odds with each other. For example, what is the balance an arts organization must maintain between bringing new audiences to the “classics” or “canon” and introducing new works and emerging artists to the community? The idea of quality and excellence may be obvious but the idea of “crusading” is less so, though even more important. What is most striking about Hoving’s comments is that he envisions the flagship as a “force” rather than a place or an institution.

The real value of a flagship is to be a force within the community it serves and a force that represents its community with the world at large. A flagship arts organization must in its essence be a part of the development of its community, a building force, rather than merely reflect the community’s established values.

My thoughts always begin from the area with which I am most familiar so I must refer again to the museum and art gallery world for specific reference though I believe it can be applied equally to all arts organizations. The magazine *Architectural Record* proclaimed in 2006, “Museums with their malleable programs, have enabled architects to interpret contemporary reality, to create emblems of who we are, [my italics] and to redefine the meaning of physical places we inhabit.” One of the reasons that architecture of cultural institutions has become so important in recent years, is its ability to give visible form to the idea of the arts institution as a force. Think of what the Sydney Opera House did for the image of Sydney and Australia back in its day. Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Museum brought the city of Bilbao to world attention and reshaped the context for Basque identity to make it relevant in the 21st century. Though the AGA has taken this path with its new building to help Edmonton and Alberta to “create an emblem of who we are,” it is not the only path.

What the flagship institutions in Edmonton deliver also shapes the image of who we for ourselves and for those outside our borders. In this respect, one has to question what the concept of “flagship” means in today’s arts community. Doesn’t the Fringe say as much about Edmonton’s theatre identity as the Citadel, the Folk Festival as much as the ESO, public art as much as any exhibition at the AGA?

As a flagship institution it is our job to nurture and be nurtured by these “other” arts groups. In fact, a flagship’s most important role in the community may be to act as a sounding board for the evolution of the community’s arts identity by how its relationship to other arts

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 9		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- EEDC (Edmonton Film Office) - EAC	- Planning & Development - City Manager’s Office	- AMPIA, ARIA, Book Publishers Association of Alberta and other professional organizations - Private industry partners - BRZs
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel	Personnel

Priority – medium  
Additional annual funding – no additional funds required.

**Focal Point: Recognition**

Artists focus on the work. Often with no real promise of reward, recognition or even making a decent living, artists put their hearts and minds into producing something they want to share with the world. It's about communication, generosity, making a connection with someone somewhere so as to say, "We're in this together, and I've made this thing to help both of us make sense of it all." When they succeed in pulling that idea out of their heads, and when the audience succeeds in finding the art and connecting to it, the result is magical. And sometimes the results are so extraordinary that a larger acknowledgement seems warranted. This is where the Focal Point of Recognition comes into play.

Awards and prizes have been around almost since the day artists and their audiences first started weighing the merits of one thing over another. Even though the production of art is inherently a non-competitive and highly subjective activity, the disbursement of prizes and awards has become an important aspect of the arts scene, for a number of reasons. First, awards and prizes are potent symbols of how much a place values the arts; they can bring significant external recognition to a city, through demonstrating such a commitment to the arts. No less important is the fact that significant cash awards allow artists to keep on working, and to have the time and ability to innovate, experiment and

imagine beyond their previous margins of experience. This can lead to notable advances in artistic practice.

Awards also have a considerable impact on public perception and consumption of the arts. Though awards and competitions do sometimes have the unfortunate side effect of creating "winners" and "losers" there is no doubt that they create keen interest in the public eye. Such prizes as the Giller Prize or the Griffin Prize in literature, the Turner Prize for art in the UK and the Governor General's Literary Awards in Canada all engender considerable buzz in the public domain. This can only be a good thing for artists generally, as is graphically shown when an Edmonton artist wins one of the Governor General's awards or major provincial awards like the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Arts Awards.

But, recognition is not just about prizes and awards. It also involves pride in letting the work of our artists represent us and promote our city—to trust our artists to share what makes Edmonton special and interesting. The Focal Point of Recognition addresses the fact that Edmonton is uniquely placed—with a strong economy, a wealth of talented artists and a community that so demonstrably values the arts—to create an artistic environment wherein artists of achievement and stature are publicly acknowledged for what they have created.



David Rojas

Musician (violin, cuatro, charango, guitar)

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #10

*Ensure official City gifts are made by local artists.*

This city is blessed with an abundance of artistic talent, and the City of Edmonton should make a commitment to ensure that all official City gifts are locally-made cultural products. There is no reason to bestow upon visitors, various dignitaries and others a gift or memento from the City of Edmonton that isn't made in Edmonton.

Besides books, videos and sound recordings, some customized options should be considered, including the creation of an Edmonton Reader, a book that would include an appropriate selec-

## Steering the Flagships continued

groups evolves. In a world where the AGA may present the same artists as an artist-run centre, one has to ask both, "Do we still need artist-run centres?" and "Why is the AGA showing these artists?" If a play moves from the Fringe to the Citadel, does that somehow give the writer a legitimacy the Fringe cannot bestow? Or does it mean that the Fringe has lost the edge that is supposed to be at its core? Maybe this confusion is an essential characteristic of Edmonton's cultural identity.

Is it indeed the flagship organization's responsibility to "create emblems of who we are?" And who is "we" anyway? Edmontonians, Albertans, western Canadians, Canadians, all members of the human race in the 21st century?

"We," of course, are all of those groups depending on where you stand and when you ask the question. In the year 2500, if the new AGA building is still there—and I'm an optimist that it will be—"we" means "people in 2009." In Toronto today, whether in music, the visual arts, poetry or theatre, "we" probably means "them"—Edmontonians, Albertans, western Canadians. This is at the base of why a cultural plan is so important. It's a big deal and has broad and lasting impact.

In the context of the 10-year cultural plan for Edmonton, "we" is very much Edmontonians, but only in the same way that the "we" of the Louvre is Paris or La Scala is Milan. The presence of a great art institution makes of a place a symbol of itself *and* its context—geographically, politically, temporally and culturally. An arts institution conjures up a special world that expresses a combination of *zeitgeist* and local specificity, reflecting, in our case, Edmontonians' take on the world and what is important in it at the beginning of the 21st century.

If we claim to be "a stabilizing and regenerative force," an arts flagship must open opportunities for local and international artists, create emblems of who we are that are as vital and evolving as our society, revitalize the city core through our programming, and put the transformative power of art in the hands of the people of our community.

As a "crusading force for quality and excellence" our arts organizations are not only the best possible ambassador for Edmonton and Alberta, but also create a context of excellence in which locally generated arts and artists connect to the great art of the world in time and space.

How we build and support our cultural infrastructure will either culturally and spiritually nourish or starve the citizens of Edmonton. Which path we choose will determine the vision of Edmonton we send out to the world and feel in our souls.

*Tony Luppino is executive director of the Art Gallery of Alberta. He speaks frequently on art and museums and is a regular contributor to many art publications, nationally and internationally.*

tion of the best work of past and present Edmonton writers. Other possibilities are a book featuring work from the city’s visual artists, an Edmonton CD similar to the Edmonton Reader;

garments that are designed and made locally and a video highlighting thumbnail sketches of the city’s past, its present and its cultural life.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 10		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- EAC - Edmonton Tourism	- Corporate Services - City Council - Mayor and Councillors Offices - City Manager’s Office	- Arts organizations - Individual artists
	Resources	Personnel/Influence	Personnel/Influence	Personnel

Priority – high  
Additional annual funding – no funds required in addition to existing funds.



Junetta Jamerson  
Singer / Choir Director



## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #11

*Stabilize arts awards and increase cash prizes.*

If Edmonton is to be, and be seen as, a significant arts locale, it must properly recognize the achievements of its artists, at both the “single piece of work” level (the publication of a particular book or the creation of a specific film, for instance) and the career level.

The City currently offers a roster of awards and recognitions to artists (as well as others participating in the cultural sector such as volunteers and philanthropists). These include the Salute to Excellence awards, the Cultural Hall of Fame and the Edmonton Book Prize, which is the only prize of its kind in Edmonton—there is no comparable Edmonton music prize or Edmonton dance prize.

In addition, the theatre community honours its own and produces the annual Sterling Awards. The Mayor’s Celebration of the Arts, a co-production of the Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton (PACE) and the Mayor’s office, annually presents five cash awards to artists, with funds provided by corporate sponsors. The Edmonton Urban Design Awards—administered biannually by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada—was supported by the City of Edmonton Planning and Development department in 2005 and 2007, but this support has not to date been considered ongoing.

These are all worthy programs, but they do not

# Rx: Arts in Healthcare, Is Art Good for You?

*Susan Pointe*

Imagine a civic arts community where artists are in constant demand by health and social service organizations. At the University of Alberta Hospital (UAH), five professional practicing artists are permanently employed to work one-on-one at the bedside with adult acute care patients. A musician, writer/poet, illustrator, painter and sculptor facilitate conversations with patients and staff about the arts and creative expression. They lead patients in painting, sculpting, writing, singing, playing and composing. Ultimately, the artists aim to facilitate an interest and comfort level in the patients where they would continue to create on their own.

It’s not surprising that the UAH is the host of such an innovative program. At the time of its major renovation in 1986, the hospital became the home of the McMullen Art Gallery funded by the Friends of UAH, a well visited, purpose-built art gallery exhibiting local and national art exhibitions. And the UAH is the host of an original art collection now grown to over 1200 pieces.

The UAH has been a part of a collection of hospitals and healthcare agencies in North America and Western Europe that value the benefits the arts, practicing artists, original artwork and creative expression can offer to their clients and staff. A growing body of research articles has become readily available through the Washington-based Society for the Arts in Healthcare.

From this research we know that creative expression allows us to journey inward, find peace and joy, and even inspire humor. Creative expression can offer us opportunities to escape, albeit for a moment, to reminisce about good times. It offers us an opportunity to express our individuality or identity; or discover a new one. In the hospital, creative expression can lower cortisol levels, release endorphins, increase blood flow. And, perhaps most important, it can alleviate boredom, anxiety and physical pain, and—research is showing—improve medical outcomes.

Clinical research is supported by the anecdotal information. A UAH physician wrote:

Patients...are under a great deal of stress, very anxious about their lives. The interaction with the artists seems to give them a sense of control, purpose and accomplishment that brings balance back to many of them. Clearly, physical healing is only one aspect of well-being and I think the [Artists on the Wards] program plays a significant role in the psychological healing associated with disease... (D. Lein, Letter to the Friends of UAH, June 15, 2000).

Rather than focusing on what is wrong with a patient, the artists seek out what is right. It is clear to us that the success and ability to affect



Jon Paterson  
Actor

sufficiently represent the range of artistic achievement that exists in the city and, other than the Salute to Excellence and Hall of Fame programs, are not firmly established within the city. The Writer’s Guild of Alberta administers the Edmonton Book Prize, and a local independent bookseller provides the cash award. The Mayor’s Celebration of the Arts—although in its 21st year, beginning as a Luncheon in 1987—remains contingent on the interest of the mayor

of the time. Perhaps even more significantly, the current level of cash prizes is below that of many other constituencies around the country, which is problematic under any circumstances but particularly so given Edmonton’s fortunate economic position. Related to these points, the awards do not have a high enough profile nationally or even in Edmonton.

Two immediate steps should be to establish the Edmonton Urban Design Awards as an ongoing City-supported event and to increase the size and profile of the Edmonton Book Prize that, at \$2,000, compares unfavourably to the \$15,000 Toronto Book Prize. In addition, the Edmonton Book Prize in the City should be examined, and steps taken to stabilize its position within the Edmonton Arts Council or City administration. Similar prizes should be inaugurated for other arts disciplines.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 11		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EAC</li> <li>- Salute to Excellence Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corporate Services</li> <li>- City Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton</li> <li>- Writers Guild of Alberta and comparable arts organizations</li> <li>- Corporate and business partners</li> </ul>
	Resources	Personnel	Influence	Personnel/Finances

**Priority** – high  
**Additional annual funding** – \$10,000 in 2009 building to \$50,000 by 2011



Akiko Kohana  
Potter

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #12

*Create a biennial arts festival with Edmonton as the “Capital City Stage.”*

Edmonton, the capital city of Alberta, should assert its role as capital city by recognizing Alberta artists and inviting them to come to Edmonton to perform on “Capital City Stages.” This is a concept comparable to the *Alberta Scene* event that took place in Ottawa in 2005 and would build on the excitement associated with Alberta artists featured at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. in 2006.

It is recommended that the City and the Edmonton Arts Council lead the creation of a biennial three-day

## Rx: *Arts in Healthcare, Is Art Good for You?* continued

patient outcomes is directly related to the experience, training and skill level of the artists on staff. The visual artists involve the patients in drawing, printmaking, bookmaking, beading and origami. Patients have painted gowns, pillowcases, ceiling tiles, wall tiles, windows and their own bodies. They have made murals, dream-catchers, mandalas, mobiles, collages and hope jars, to name a few.

The writers read to patients from literature that celebrates strength, hope, joy and humour. They offer blank journals and autobiography guides that contain questions to encourage reflection and evoke positive memories. They involve patients and staff in composing or selecting poems for the multitude of whiteboards installed all over the hospital. The writers have set up a public journal for anyone who would like to leave his or her words or story. The stories recorded are very poignant, and readers respond to each other with words of encouragement. One of the patient’s caregivers returned to write in the journal on the anniversary of her sibling’s death.

In 2001 patients’ and staff members’ poems were published in *Read Two Poems* and *Call Me in the Morning*, and others’ prose was exhibited on the walls of the Poet’s Walk, located on a busy pedway. The feedback to our collection has shown it is very affirming for patients and their caregivers to see their artwork or writing displayed. It captures the our need to make a mark, to say, “I exist! I am here.”

For patients who are physically unable to create, the artists create for them—the most obvious being our musicians who perform daily for patients. The musicians take requests, play their own compositions and certainly invite their audience to sing along if able. The feedback showed us never to underestimate the power of creating for those who cannot create themselves.

After his wife’s death, a gentleman wrote to the UAH poet: “I want to thank you for your great kindness to my wife during her long and horrible ordeal...I am sure you noted the warm and radiant smile with which she greeted you...your visits meant much to her. The words you have written give me solace and were enormously appreciated by both of us. The hospital is made more tolerable by your happy presence.”

Hospitals are not the only Edmonton healthcare organizations to incorporate the arts. The work of the Nina Haggerty Centre, ihuman, the Alberta Brain Injury Society, the Bissell Centre and Alberta Mental Health, to name a few, is gaining recognition in the international arts in healthcare communities.

At the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts, through creative self-expression, people with developmental disabilities are enabled to grow and learn within their community, and to experience joy and fulfillment. The centre offers two large studios, supplies and ongoing access to resident professional practicing artists. The centre also hosts gallery space and coordinates a diverse exhibition program.

festival celebrating Alberta artists, to take place in Edmonton beginning in 2010.

Running in conjunction with the above will be the City’s assertive steps to brand and leverage

Edmonton as the “Capital City Stage,” an identification that will connote not just Edmonton’s place in Alberta politically, but its place in Alberta and Canada as one of the capitals of arts and culture.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 12		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- EAC - Edmonton Tourism	- Civic Events Office - Corporate Services - City Council	- Festival and arts organizations - Corporate and business partners - Province of Alberta
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Finances	Personnel/Finances

**Priority** – medium: first festival in 2010

**Additional annual funding** – \$2 million gross every second year (production, marketing, administration); revenue from multiple sources with direct City support not to exceed \$500,000.



Flavia Robles  
Flamenco Dancer



ARTS RECOMMENDATION #13

Include artists in City naming opportunities.

Many city parks and streets are named after artists and arts developers, including Shoctor Alley, Tommy Banks Way and Beatrice Carmichael Park. This should be continued. But, while very suitable locations for the persons honoured, these are small localized places and to date no major city park or street has been named after an artist. This is not the case for past political leaders or sport figures. The City's Naming Committee should take this into consideration when choosing names for major new parks, streets or sites.

Rx: Arts in Healthcare, Is Art Good for You? continued

Public display of clients' artwork is a sharing of artistic expression, which is an extremely important part of the process. The artwork is a source of pride and self-worth for the artist. Exhibitions create awareness and change perceptions within the general public.

The ihuman Youth Society's mission is to work with high-risk youth, invite them off the street and promote their reintegration into the community through arts-based programs involving crisis intervention, mentorship and life skills development. Over a three-year period, ihuman provides the youth with constant support and guidance, as they transition into independent living and steady employment.

Edmonton's Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts describes it best: Creativity lies within all people and must be expressed for well-being and growth, both for the individual and for society. Emphasis on creativity and self-expression supports basic human aspirations for freedom and order. The arts, in any form, provides an ideal mechanism to develop and express one's uniqueness, identity and diversity. Each person is capable of artistic achievement at some level, regardless of ability, and can participate in all activities. When people are allowed to develop their creative talents transformation occurs: for the artist, the teacher and the viewer.

ARTS  
RECOMMENDATION 13

	City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
Implementation	- EAC - City Naming Committee		Heritage and arts organizations
Resources	Personnel		Personnel

Priority – medium  
Additional annual funding – no additional funds required.

Focal Point: Integration and Arts Climate Development

If a city has the space its artists need to do their work and then showcase it, if it can help provide stable incomes for its artists, if it can provide programs to assist emerging artists, if it can offer suitable recognition for high levels of artistic achievement, then the

Imagine a civic health and social sector with professional artists involved—a civic arts community where artists are in constant demand by health and social service organizations for their leadership, specialization and creativity. If a professional musician at a

UAH patient's bedside can reduce the use of sedating medications, is it not possible that expenditures in the arts in healthcare could result in a savings in healthcare? The positive physical effects of creative expression is well documented. Imagine artists hired to facilitate creative expression to increase patients' self-healing capacity and reduce patient's length of stay. Imagine...

Susan Pointe is the former Art Advisor to the University Hospitals, directing the McMullen Art Gallery and the Artists On the Walls. Currently she is the Arts Consultant to Cohos Evamy *integratedesign* and Capital Health for the Lois Hole Hospital for Women.

one thing it still must seek to do is to properly integrate all this artistic activity into the broader community. This cultural plan has a wealth of information and recommendations surrounding the place of the arts in Edmonton, but this Focal Point expressly concerns itself with finding ways to ensure one simple thing: that the artist and the audience meet, both literally and figuratively. It's about fostering a full integration of the arts into Edmonton, so that artists and their audiences know when, where and how they can find one another, and why they ought to.

The City can help create channels of connection that flow both ways, a fluid stream of art production and art consumption that will benefit both ends of the process. This Focal Point section puts forward ways of “embedding” artists and art into the broader community, so that the arts becomes not just a peripheral “drop-in” component of community life in every sector of the city, but a central, day-in, day-out aspect of how communities operate.

We can identify many initiatives of the Edmonton Arts Council and the City that are already operational in this sphere, including, for example, the recently revised Percent for Art in Public Places policy, EdmonTunes in City Hall, TIX on the Square and the City Store on Churchill Square and the poet laureate. In addition, there has already been some preliminary discussion of artist residencies in City departments and festival producers have for some time been included on Edmonton Tourism committees.

Members of the broader arts community have also been active. They have organized around the Edmonton Arts Council and are ready to add their voice to any forum when invited, and to take leadership in calling others together at times and around causes deemed important by the arts community. Many connections have already been made and strong partnerships are evolving between the arts and the city—partnerships supporting, as examples, programs at the Nina Haggerty Centre and Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.

Finally, the integration of the arts into the community is aided by assertive and well-orchestrated planning in the ongoing aspect of what we call the *arts climate*. This means remaining alert to the fact that the arts cross many boundaries, and that there is much to understand and coordinate in our shared support of the arts. All three levels of government are supporting the arts. Because of its proven record of community spirit and support, Edmonton's private sector is a key player in its interaction with the arts, and non-government agencies and voluntary-sector organizations are close colleagues of many arts organizations. Making sure that the City and the Edmonton Arts Council are current with every development in the public and private sectors, and that the best and most advantageous partnerships are created, is key to integrating the arts into the community through what we are calling *arts climate development*.



Aaron Au  
Violinist / Artistic Director

### ARTS RECOMMENDATION #14

*Stabilize the poet laureate position  
and create a Cultural Cabinet.*

Edmonton's poet laureate program began on July 1, 2005. It is a two-year appointment with an annual honourarium provided by a private sponsor. Besides official duties, the laureate is encouraged to use the position to further his or her own interests related to the position. For example, the first poet laureate was interested in public outreach through a poetry festival and contact with schools; the second is interested in the many languages that Edmontonians speak and how to connect people to their ancestral tongue. Edmonton's poet laureate position is

## The Nature of a Festival City

*Terry Wickham*

In 1986, while working as a music programmer at the Calgary Centre for Performing Arts, I was invited to meet a delegation from Edmonton's festivals. The concept was that we would learn from their experiences and thus inspire Calgary to emulate the success of Edmonton's premier festivals.

My initial skepticism ("That's a bit rich, thinking they can come to Calgary and teach us") was immediately overcome when I realized how knowledgeable and open the festival directors were. Indeed, they were able to teach us something of great value.

They had passion. They believed in cooperation, not competition. They wanted to help, believing that stronger festivals in Calgary would also be a benefit to Edmonton's growing festival scene. The seed that would later grow into the Calgary Children's Festival was planted that day.

After this visit I started to think not just about concerts but also about music being presented in a festival setting. Road trips from Calgary to Jazz City and the Folk Festival in Edmonton later that year confirmed my feelings. Concerts can bring excitement and professional pride in a job well done. Festivals however, bring large urban communities together in celebration, much like a barn raising or a community crop harvesting brings rural communities together. I was hooked.

A Festival City is simply made up of its component festivals. Why and how does a festival start and how does it grow and thrive? To understand a Festival City, we must understand its individual festivals.

If you look closely at the founding of any Edmonton festival, you will find that it was driven by one individual who gathered others around a shared passion. Thus we have a group of "festival founders." Jazz City, the Blues Festival, the Folk Festival, the Street Performers, the Fringe and The Works all started this way. In rare cases an organization may play the founding role; the Citadel with the Children's Festival and the ESO with Symphony Under the Sky are examples. But even then it is usually the vision of one person in that organization that gets the snowball rolling.

So it has started. Now it has to grow and thrive. There are always growing pains. Starting a festival is akin to getting a 747 Jumbo into the air. It takes a huge amount of energy to get it off the ground but once it is up and running a festival flies very well. These days, funding doesn't kick in until you have proved yourself for two years. Back in 1980 there was seed money available at the provincial and federal levels, but not now. It is also crucial that the "founder" adapt



Keith Fernandez  
Actor

about integration; the role is larger than that of the traditional poet laureate, which has more to do with ceremony and marking official occasions. This requires constant attention to the evolution of the position as different poets from different backgrounds assume the role. It is therefore recommended that the poet laureate position be stabilized in the City without losing the profile and impact it

has had to date at City Hall and in the larger community. This involves assigning responsibility for ensuring that the funding continues if the current private source becomes unavailable, providing administrative support, directing an ongoing evaluation of the impact of the position

on the city and guiding the overall direction as different poets assume the post.

Building on the role of the poet laureate, it is recommended the City institute a Cultural Cabinet, wherein distinctive artists from various disciplines, including the existing poet laureate and writer-in-exile, as well as new comparable positions such as a city historian, will form a collective cultural body to represent the city and to have the city represented back to itself. There are various models of this in operation such as the *Aosdána* in Ireland or “National Treasures” in Japan. These people and this cabinet will be valued not only for their professional skill but also for the contribution they bring to our civic discourse. Their influence and mandate should not be formally confined to arts or heritage issues. Such a body could, and should, be utilized by the City, by the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, by the Edmonton Arts Council, all as part of understanding Edmonton as a creative capital.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 14		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Public Library Board - EAC	Mayor and Councillors offices	Arts and heritage organizations
	Resources	Personnel	Influence/Finances	Personnel

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – undetermined until more parameters are developed.





Judy Berghofer  
Heritage Volunteer

### ARTS RECOMMENDATION #15

*Create artist-in-residence programs in City departments and agencies.*

In August 2006 the Edmonton Arts Council assisted Shell Chemicals (Scotford plant) in finding an artist to be resident at a turnaround at their Fort Saskatchewan operation. The project required not only the recruitment of an artist but also an exploration of the specific role of the artist while on site. In the words of the chosen artist, photographer and visual artist Ted Kerr:

Turnaround is a period in which an industrial site shuts down parts of the plant to do maintenance. Turnaround 2006 was Scotford's biggest in its history. All three of the major systems were shut down, the work force increased from around 150 to 1500 and the total cost was over \$50 million. Then there was me: an artist with no prior experience on an industrial site, with a camera

### *The Nature of a Festival City continued*

to a management role as the festival becomes community-based with a board of directors, volunteers, audited statements and government funding.

The correct demographics have to exist to provide the critical mass of patrons, volunteers and all the first-world technology and infrastructure that a world-class festival needs. Edmonton has all of this. There are possibly 30 categories that a festival must excel at to be first class. That list runs from volunteer recruitment and media relations, all the way to hospitality and clean toilets. Good luck is also an asset. There are two necessities without which any festival will ultimately struggle. The product, albeit music, theatre, visual art or food, must excite the community, and the festival must have a special venue to create the ambiance and enhance the overall experience. Try to imagine the Folk Festival at Goldbar Park or the Fringe on 124th Street.

Our long winters have led to a specialization in outdoor summer festivals. The spirit of volunteerism garnered for the 1978 Commonwealth Games is also often cited as a positive factor in our festival's growth. I believe the presence of CKUA and the University of Alberta are two more major factors.

At this point I want to look into the inner workings of festivals and their inner cultures. I am a firm believer that the "name" of a community-based festival is not for sale. These are Edmonton festivals supported by the City of Edmonton, the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada. I understand the temptation to seek a "title sponsorship," especially if there is not a strong box office component in the festival. However, a dependency on corporate sponsorship will leave a festival vulnerable to decisions made in far-off boardrooms. Examples would be the demise of First Night and the travails of Jazz City after the change in advertising rules for tobacco eventually led to Du Maurier pulling their sponsorship. Besides which, I think citizens are tired of the names of public institutions being sold to the highest bidder. Let us, as festivals, be different. We are not "properties" in the parlance of sponsorship deals.

Festivals must have a commitment to strive for excellence in all areas. Our audiences are patient but they demand constant improvement, at the very least. This philosophy must be instilled at all levels of the festival. It is human nature to seek improvement.

An Edmonton festival is confident without being arrogant. As a result, the festival is cooperative, shares ideas and resources and is open to ideas from within and from outside the festival. Ideas can float upwards versus a management from-the-top-down approach. The festival must be democratic and treat all interested parties with respect.

An Edmonton festival is also accessible to the whole community, both physically and financially. A society can be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members. Well, a festival is a society also.

in hand and permission to embed myself in the turn around process. The potential risks were high, but so was the payoff.

My embedded involvement enabled me to understand that the success of the residency was not really about me. The true beauty about having a resident artist is not the work that the artist creates, but how an artist-in-residence program invigorates and inspires the soul of a team. I saw three positive impacts on the team: it enabled and empowered people to claim their own sense of creativity, it helped employees feel understood, and it showcased the talent and skills of the workers to themselves and to their peers. Understanding this helped shape my experience but also my work (“Winning from the Inside: An Artist-in Residence Program,” 2007).

Based on the success of the Scotford project, as well as on the positive outcomes of other such residencies, it is recommended that resident artists be placed in selected City departments



Alison Wells  
Theatre Artist

and agencies. The purpose of the residency would be specific and include acting as a catalyst for the creativity already in the department, identifying and engaging civic employees who are also artists, and producing at least one artistic work that reflects and showcases the talent and skills of the people in the department.

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 15		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Police Commission, Fire Department and comparable City agencies - EAC	All City Departments	- Arts organizations and individuals
	Resources	Personnel/Finances	Personnel/Finances	Personnel

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – undetermined until more parameters are developed.



Viraj  
Middle Eastern Dancer  
Performer / Instructor

## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #16

*Establish neighbourhood artist awareness programs and sites city-wide.*

The Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada Inventory has shown that artists are living in all parts of the city. Just as the city takes pride and identity in being associated with successful resident artists, individual communities do as well. The Arts on the Avenue organization is producing successful community events on Alberta Avenue using professional artists who live in the neighbourhood. Several years ago, a group in Riverdale organized a weekend festival at their

## *The Nature of a Festival City continued*

Think of how many festivals have a large free-admission component, and even when an admission price is charged there is usually an opportunity to volunteer and thus gain admission. Festivals must “make a living, not a killing.”

Our festivals have naturally developed unique traditions such as ticket lineups at the Fringe or candles at Gallagher Park. They also recycle and are leaders in clean energy. This is now an expectation of our patrons.

Since Edmonton has an excellent reputation for hospitality, a smart festival will build on that foundation. A festival’s reputation for hospitality will spread to other artists around the world, making it easier to attract the best to our city.

What does the future hold? Well, there will always be a desire for humans to celebrate as a community, especially so in a “virtual” world. The demographics of Edmonton provide support for festivals that is now stronger than ever. The question of government funding often comes up, but there are also examples of festivals that have succeeded without any government funding, such as the Blues Festival. A critical mass of knowledge, interest and resources has been built in Edmonton, making it easier for a new festival to succeed, providing it is the right idea at the right time in the right setting. As an extra bonus to the overall cultural sector in Edmonton, our festivals will continue to build audiences for other presentations of music, art and theatre.

Close your eyes and think of Hawrelak Park without the words of Shakespeare, without the sound of a blues riff or the Symphony, without the sights and food of Heritage Days. Do the same for Churchill Square, Gallagher Park, Old Strathcona and various other festival locations. Imagine them all emptied of our festivals.

Well, that was a drab and scary moment indeed. Edmonton becomes so much less colourful in such a scenario. It is the challenge of every Edmonton festival to survive and to thrive, to grow without losing its vision and to change without losing its traditions. The added challenge is to help foster the growth of new festivals. I believe our festivals can continue to meet these twin challenges.

*Terry Wickham has been the artistic director/general manager of the Edmonton Folk Festival for 20 years, is booking the Winspear Presents Series for the 2008-09 season and is a consultant to the Calgary Folk Festival.*

community league hall using only professional musicians and poets who were Riverdale residents. This notion of connecting artists to local communities and neighbourhoods has a good track record in other cities and will resonate well in Edmonton, which has a long history of community league strength. This is a model that has been successfully developed in Montreal, for instance, where their “network of *maisons de la culture* ensures that citizens across the city have access to cultural events. There is a *maison de la culture* located in various neighbourhoods throughout Montreal” (<http://english.montrealplus.ca/feature/maisons-de-la-culture>). Programs like this, and like the Riverdale project, can be implemented at sites throughout the city and then expanded to include an annual Edmonton tour of the best of Edmonton artists to sites established in and by communities.



Eunice Scarfe  
Fiction Writer / Teacher

ARTS RECOMMENDATION 16		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- EAC - Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues	Community Services	- Arts organizations and individuals - Corporate and business partners
	Resources	Personnel/Finances	Personnel	Personnel/Finances

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – undetermined until more parameters are developed.



## ARTS RECOMMENDATION #17

*Reaffirm the position of the Edmonton Arts Council in the city and foster a healthy, evolving climate for the arts in Edmonton.*

Ensuring that partnerships remain vital is crucial to fostering a favourable arts climate in Edmonton. But nurturing partnerships and challenging them to work towards new heights takes skill and resources from all parts of the matrix. A key organization identified throughout this plan is the Edmonton Arts Council (EAC), and it is recommended that the City continue to strongly support the EAC by providing annual operating funds and appropriate access to all City departments.

The Prevalent Themes section of this plan describes the essence, organizational status and civic role of the EAC. The formal relationship between the City and the EAC is defined in the service agreement between the two organizations. This agreement was first signed in 1996 and has been renewed three times since then with no substantial changes. The current five-year agreement expires at the end of 2010. (See Appendix 3 for a summary of the Service Agreement.)

The Edmonton Arts Council must continue to be an effective voice for Edmonton artists; provide expert, objective advice and analysis to City on arts issues; and support the arts in Edmonton in every way possible. As well, the EAC will mentor new organizations, engage in all suitable civic forums and discussions, and commit to

# Profiting From the Artist as Prophet

*K.J. (Ken) Chapman*

Reflecting on the place and purpose of the artist in our society today, I glanced back to Ralph Waldo Emerson. I found his 1844 essay “The Poet” a productive place to start. He focused on poets but his context could apply to any contemporary expressive artist.

Emerson’s integral view was of the Knower who loves truth, the Doer whose love is for the good and the Sayer who loves beauty. He saw the poet/artist as a Sayer who “knows and tells.” Emerson’s Sayer is “the beholder of ideas and the utterer of the necessary and causal and the interpreter of the secret and the profound.”

Emerson acknowledges that artistic talent may be no more than “frolic and juggle” but when it is “genius” it “realizes and adds.” It is when the artists’ genius emerges to “realize and add” that they make their invaluable contribution to our insight and our awareness about ourselves.

The public’s gratitude to the artist can be at the entertainment level of “frolic and juggling.” But the place of our artists should also be more fundamental and our gratitude more profound, especially when we experience the artist at the genius level. Art at its genius level not only entertains and informs, it can also transfix and transform us. That is when we owe the greatest debt of gratitude to the artists in our midst.

The core genius of the artist is the ability to express unreserved truth. That artistic ability is enough to alter our entire culture by changing our orienting stories and our binding societal myths. An accomplished artist is a Sayer and also a prophet. Artists/prophets are the change agents who bring truth to power more often than being the leaders of change themselves. Historically, the destiny of a prophet was to be stoned for their truths. Modern artists/prophets risk contemporary stoning by being misunderstood, belittled and ridiculed for the truths in their works. Such is the enduring lot of the artist as prophet.

Leaders are often limited in their ability to see the truths that an artist/prophet can envisage. If they are wise enough to see the artist’s truths they are often caught in the compromise between such truths and man’s receptivity to them. Consequently, a leader’s public proclamations always risk sacrificing the truth to expediency in ways that do not always serve the best interests of their cause.

Leaders need artists/prophets to help them see and understand these unreserved and often troublesome truths. There is always an inevitable resistance to new ideas or thoughts, but the artist/prophet does not have to present the truth with a full frontal attack. The artist as a prophet can engage the leader with the unreserved truth in a variety of ways. There are many styles of being a prophet available

**ARTS**  
**RECOMMENDATION 17**

developing even more effective partnerships with business and the voluntary sector in Edmonton while reaching to all parts of this exciting and growing city.

As mentioned in the Prevalent Themes section on the EAC, many effective, active partnerships have been formed, but this should only be a beginning.

The basis of the evolving symbiotic partnership between the arts and Edmonton's corporate and business sector is a realization that over the past 10 years there has been an increasing understanding of how much more complex and potentially rich that relationship has become. This includes not only the verifiable economic impact of the arts on Edmonton but also the ever-present discussion around quality of life and how that attracts and retains workers and leaders for businesses—and about how creati-

ty works and crosses traditional borders between sectors.

The basis of the evolving symbiotic partnership between the arts and Edmonton's not-for-profit and voluntary sector is a conviction that the arts play a particular and unique role in building civil society. The Community Arts movement described in the grants section of this document is vivid evidence of this role. In addition, not-for-profit arts organizations share with other voluntary organizations a common interest in governance, funding, volunteer support and other issues.

It must be emphasized that these comments about arts climate and the importance of the arts in general are also applicable to heritage. The next section of this plan addresses heritage directly.

	City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
<b>Implementation</b>	- EAC - EEDC	- City Council - City Manager's Office - Community Services - Planning & Development (public art)	- EAC members (organizations and individuals) - Edmonton Chamber of Commerce - Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Personnel	Personnel

**Priority** – low: next scheduled review in 2010 for renewal in 2011

**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required.



Patricia Darbasie  
Theatre Artist



Mark Henderson  
Artistic Director / Actor

## *Profiting From the Artist as Prophet continued*

to the artist in doing this important and culturally creative work.

For example, there is the Jester prophet who is at least tolerated and sometimes even favoured “at Court.” He has great influence due to his position and proximity to power. He tells his truth through wit and humour and sometimes via clever insults directed at patrons and authority.

There is the Innocent prophet who has the freedom to state the obvious but which runs counter to conventional wisdom. They are the ones who comment on what the rest of us know but are too fearful to say. They observe the obvious loudly by expounding that the Emperor has no clothes and will even risk saying it in the very presence of the Emperor.

Then there are the Truth Refiner prophets, who are the gurus, wizards and public intellectuals. Their truth is about reforming and reframing our ideas and beliefs and then providing us with different ways of thinking, seeing and interpreting them. They not only play the unreserved truth game, they change the rules of the game itself. They include novelists, playwrights, poets, painters and other expressive creators.

Finally we have the Truth Designer prophets who are the new model makers and the thought pioneers at the leading edges or the margins of our society. They are explorers of new knowledge and diviners of new insights. They push their limits and their creativity into entirely new realms. They bring us different kinds of consciousness as they discover previously unknown truths. This style of prophet is the creator and explainer of their new truths. They are the most likely to be seen as heretics and the most at risk of being figuratively stoned in today’s world—and perhaps sometimes literally under harsher regimes.

Today, our three orders of government apply the public purse as a major source of arts and culture patronage. While society is the benefactor, there is a tendency for government and our elected leader servants to expect artists to be manifestly grateful for receiving this public largess. We tend to see culture grant monies as social policy akin to charity and not an investment in our artists and their works. As a result we also tend to discount the benefits those artists and their works bring to society.

There is an increasing requirement for governments to account for the taxpayer’s dollar. This quantitative exercise is dominated by management processes and procedures that are best described as “the hardening of the auditors.” The result is that we know a great deal more about program costs and not very much about the social value of the program outcomes. Such accountability is necessary, but when overdone it diminishes our relationships with art and the artists, devalues their roles and depreciates the benefits that artists provide to our society.

Funding arts and culture must always be a symbiosis between artist and patron. Therefore the respect, admiration and gratitude between the artist and the patron ought to be mutual. Sadly, that is not always the case. I believe the default position ought to be that our society expresses its gratitude to our artists first and foremost. This generosity of our personal and public spirit should be present regardless of funding models and sources.

We all profit when our artist/prophets apply and advance their genius as a result of our investments in them. This profit is especially significant when they bring unreserved truths to us through their works. So I implore you to be generous and to show your gratitude to our artists as truthsayers and prophets. Please support, celebrate and salute them. In the end we will all be better for it.

*Ken Chapman is a public policy advisor and political consultant, and a founding principal of Cambridge Strategies Inc.*



# SECTION THREE: HERITAGE

Marc Chailoux

## Focal Points and Heritage Recommendations

### *Preamble*

Heritage is vital to any healthy community's sense of itself. It is a wide-ranging concept that includes literally everything that has been or may be inherited. The broader definition of heritage includes all aspects of natural heritage (everything that comprises our natural environment) as well as human heritage (the arts and sciences, religion and spirituality, built places and things, and archives and artifacts).

In this plan, and as part of our heritage recommendations, we are focusing primarily on human heritage, including:

- artifacts, photographs, documents and records in a range of media
- built heritage, including streetscapes
- significant landscapes and special places
- organizations and institutions that preserve, study and interpret heritage, including museums, historic sites, archives and historical societies
- community organizations that represent ethno-cultural heritage
- heritage personnel, including curators, archivists, historians, programmers and interpreters, exhibit developers, researchers, marketers and web developers.

Edmonton City Council asked that both arts and heritage be addressed in this cultural plan. The combination of heritage and arts in a cultural plan is not unusual, although some cities have developed a separate heritage plan complementary to its arts plan that recognizes the complexity and size of a city's heritage activities. The Edmonton cultural plan has devoted a distinct section to heritage.

There are many notable overlaps between arts and heritage. Perhaps the most obvious is that heritage is often captured, expressed and shared in the dance, music, language, stories and visual expressions of a people. In a related sense, art is interwoven into spirituality, custom and ritual. Artworks and artifacts from the past are considered to be key evidence of heritage; and contemporary artists often use heritage themes for their work.

There are also significant differences between arts and heritage. Relative to this plan, the City of Edmonton has a core role in heritage activities, arguably more so than in the arts simply because the City has legislated responsibility (and power) for City archives, artifacts, cemeteries, buildings, viewpoints, parks and wildlands, cemeteries, monuments, archeological sites and so on. Also, the City owns and operates some notable heritage venues and sites, including Fort Edmonton Park, the John Walter Museum, the Valley Zoo and the John Janzen Nature Centre. Edmonton is also the province's capital city. There is an expectation in the city that some functions related to heritage will be handled by



the province, which creates an ongoing need to work with the province in this area. Provincial institutions like the Royal Alberta Museum, while legitimately seen as “jewels in the crown” of the capital city, should not be viewed as replacements for civic institutions and, in general, a caution must be made that civic heritage is not always the same thing as provincial heritage.

The Edmonton Cultural Capital program brought together artists and communities (often communities defined by a shared heritage). This has revealed a great interest and enthusiasm among our artists for heritage themes and stories from distinct groups such as the Caribbean community that settled in the Edmonton region in the 1960s or the folk dance traditions of Franco-Albertans. This enthusiasm is exciting, and collaborations should be nurtured. But before embarking on an artistic expression of a heritage theme or story artists must also be educated about the issues intrinsic to heritage, including respect for cultural ownership and the need for thorough research,.

There are notable trends in heritage that are important to bear in mind. Clearly, globalization and the “threat” of a global monoculture put many heritages at risk. There is also a recognizable trend towards a *commodification* of heritage and slick packaging of heritage interpretation and presentation. In many cases this has resulted in entertainment becoming more important than research and authenticity. It has also triggered an appropriation of heritage and careless or indifferent interpretations of those “stolen” heritages.

As a response to this, there is an increasing recognition of the critical value of cultural diversity and of the central role and right of a specific heritage’s community in ensuring the authenticity and therefore the “heart” of their heritage.

# Forever Tomorrow Country

Catherine C. Cole

Edmonton’s early history as an Aboriginal gathering place, a fur trading post and a destination for immigrants who settled at the turn of the last century established its frontier heritage. Yet the city’s heritage evolves as time passes and the population changes. Shortly after becoming a city, Edmonton was chosen as the capital and the centre of Alberta’s political, economic and cultural life. Depending upon your perspective, it may be considered the gateway to the north—or the gateway to the south for Aboriginal people. Today, being an urban, northern, pluralistic city defines Edmonton as a place.

While its roots are long and deep, Edmonton is in many ways a young city. In the post-World War II period, Edmonton grew from a small city into a major urban centre with the influx of immigrants, initially from Europe and more recently throughout the world, newcomers who often have no knowledge of Edmonton’s early history but contribute their own heritage to the mix. As a result, Edmonton has become a city with a character different than that of any other Canadian city.

Migrants and immigrants alike come to Edmonton for opportunity. In some ways Edmonton may always be “tomorrow country.” Edmontonians are future-oriented, but we should not neglect our past. Edmonton’s past has shaped its present as our collective history defines and grounds us. It is City Council’s responsibility to protect our community heritage.

For many, an interest in heritage begins with an interest in family and cultural heritage rather than community heritage. Our personal heritage impacts our perception of our shared heritage. For example, whether one is male or female, rich or poor, Aboriginal, French-Canadian, or schooled in another province—or country—impacts our interpretation of historical events and contested history. Which are the authentic voices? Edmonton’s heritage must be inclusive enough to respect differing perspectives, and sometimes to acknowledge mistakes made in the past.

As time passes we should not lose sight of the meaning of a place, as the City did with the Fort Edmonton Cemetery and Traditional Burial Ground in Rosedale. The City neglected the sacred site, marked on early maps of the city, and in the memory of longtime residents. The City built the bridge, power plant and roadways through the graves of our ancestors, leading to a fractious commemoration process over the past few years.

Heritage activists save evidence of what makes us unique as physical evidence and illustration of how we came to be the way we are today. By preserving archaeological sites and the cultural landscape

*At its best, the study of heritage is not just another discipline in the range of subject areas included in the curriculum at whatever level. It informs all subjects because it is really the study of human generations—their work, their understandings and preoccupations. It dwells on the matter of continuity between generations. Equally, it is the knowledge of the watersheds in human experience that provide the framework for how communities and individuals understand themselves. It goes beyond the narrow study of history or the activities of museums, historical societies, archives and other heritage organizations.*

Heritage Community Foundation,  
[www.heritagecommunityfdn.org](http://www.heritagecommunityfdn.org)

Further, although the growing predominance of electronic or new media is challenging traditional archiving and record-keeping practices, it is also creating a type of democracy in expressing and sharing heritages. At one time the cost of the basic equipment required to make feature films combined with a monopoly-like film distribution network confined that activity to a relatively small group of people. Technology is now available to many, and the Web has helped make more accessible the work of filmmakers,

including those from diverse heritages. For example, films by Zacharias Kunuk (*Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner*) were made by Inuit filmmakers and authentically based on their heritage. They were distributed worldwide through standard as well as new distribution channels being developed by Kunuk for Aboriginal filmmakers.<sup>9</sup>

There has also been an increasing recognition that many heritage practices require extensive

professional training. Heritage must be seen as a whole “system” and not a set of distinct viewpoints or technical expertise.

Heritage in Edmonton demonstrates much strength, including an impressive array of professional personnel and institutions and an active and informed group of citizens devoted to preserving and understanding the heritage of their city and community. The University of Alberta with its collections, archives and scholars is an important component of the heritage community. But the heritage community in Edmonton is, by its own admission, not as united as the arts community, and it has not made comparable progress in achieving a civic profile. This plan, therefore, addresses several basic organizational questions for the heritage community and must be seen as a beginning point. This may mean a second heritage plan, based on the foundation of this plan, will be required several years from now.

Although it is possible to group heritage issues into the same five Focal Points as the arts issues (space, mentorship, grants, integration, recognition), the world of heritage in Edmonton has areas where specific attention needs to be paid. The Focal Points used here are:

- 1) Heritage Climate and Development
- 2) Preservation
- 3) Interpretation
- 4) Museum Advancement

<sup>9</sup> The Internet has also made it possible to create dynamic websites that explore all aspects of individual and unique heritages as well as the creation of digital archives. The Edmonton-based Heritage Community Foundation is a national leader in the creation of digital heritage resources. See Appendix 6 for a description of the Heritage Community Foundation. <[www.heritagecommunityfdn.org](http://www.heritagecommunityfdn.org)>

## Focal Point: Heritage Climate and Development

### HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #1

*Create and support an Edmonton heritage council in a manner similar to the City's support of the Edmonton Arts Council and Edmonton Sport Council.*

To unify and support the heritage community, give it an advocacy voice and develop programs that are of benefit to the heritage community (and through this stimulate the interests of Edmontonians in heritage), the City will create and support an Edmonton heritage council. Over a two-year incubation period, the Edmonton heritage council will be guided by the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council, and at the conclusion of this period it will have evolved into a unique, self-contained organization. If the heritage council models itself after the Edmonton Arts Council or Edmonton Sport Council, it will have a membership, an independent board of directors primarily elected by the membership with several appointed positions reserved for the City, and a relationship to the City of Edmonton defined by a service agreement.

The creation of an Edmonton heritage council will result in a clear collective identity and voice for heritage in Edmonton, will ally heritage with other comparable communities and organizations in the city (including the Edmonton Arts Council, Edmonton Tourism and the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation), and will increase the general awareness of Edmonton's

## Forever Tomorrow Country continued

that surrounds us, we receive strength from those who walked these paths before us. The river valley is more than a recreational and environmental asset.

By preserving heritage buildings, we preserve a tangible connection to those who built the city. We maintain liveable neighbourhoods in a human scale. We benefit the environment by reusing buildings rather than sending them to landfills. We retain vernacular architecture that reflects this place and makes the city look as unique as it is. As globalization results in more and more repetition of building types throughout the world, it is our heritage buildings that are distinct.

If we obliterate all evidence of our roots, Edmonton appears much like any other North American city. Currently, the Legislature and Government House dominate as evidence of Edmonton's status as the provincial capital; early buildings in Old Strathcona reflect the early frontier town, the few remaining heritage buildings downtown reflect its manufacturing, warehouse and distribution role; and modern architecture reflects Edmonton's post-war growth.

Many of the names of major roadways have a heritage value that reminds us of our roots: Jasper Avenue was the road to Jasper; Calgary Trail the road to Calgary; St. Albert Trail the road to St. Albert. Controversies arise over decisions to rename heritage roads because they devalue the past. St. Albert is more than a bedroom community—it is a city with a rich French-Canadian, Métis and Roman Catholic legacy. There's no question that Mark Messier should be honoured in his own community, but changing the name of St. Albert Trail to Mark Messier Drive is a questionable choice that merits public debate. Gateway Boulevard?

We need to be more thoughtful in choosing how we honour individuals generally. We lose sight of the significance of people and events for whom we name parks, schools and major streets. Without some form of interpretation, we forget who these individuals were, or why we honoured them in the first place. Louise McKinney Park was named in honour of McKinney as a member of the Famous Five, one who fought to have women recognized as persons in matters of law. We forget that the reason Emily Murphy invited her to join in the Persons Case was that she had gained public prominence through her role as the head of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. How can we talk of putting a licensed restaurant in Louise McKinney Park and honour her memory?

We need to think about cultural appropriation, about the adoption of symbols and forms that have a specific meaning in another culture. In a conversation about traditional Inuit culture, an Inuk with a pointed sense of humour asked, "What do you call an Inukshuk that was not made by an Inuk? A pile of rocks." Whether one acts out of respect or ignorance, actions may be misinterpreted.

Museums and archives by definition collect, preserve, study and interpret objects and, in the case of archives, records of the past. As



Linda Turnbull  
Dancer / Choreographer / Curator

heritage through advocacy, awards and education. It will also provide general support to all Edmonton and region heritage organizations, individuals and activities. Like the Edmonton Arts Council, an Edmonton heritage council may develop grant programs, incubate new projects and assist in developing space for heritage.

The Edmonton Historical Board (EHB) is the closest existing counterpart to the Edmonton Arts Council. Members of the EHB were consulted in the development of the Heritage section of this plan. The EHB has indicated its members sup-

port an Edmonton heritage council as described and will be a key resource in the development of that organization. Appendix 6 includes a summary of the mandate of the Edmonton Historical Board as well as other existing heritage organizations in the Edmonton region.

It is expected that, in its starting years, the Edmonton heritage council will require three permanent staff members and an annual operating budget of \$250,000. An alternative to providing all the resources required in direct cash would be to second a City staff person to work at the EHC for the one or two years. This strategy was used in the first year of the development of the Edmonton Arts Council.

The recommendation to establish an Edmonton heritage council is made first because it is clear that such an organization would be a key tool in enacting the remaining recommendations in this section.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 1	City Affiliates			City Departments		Community Partners	
	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Edmonton Historical Board</li> <li>- EAC</li> <li>- City Archives</li> <li>- City Artifacts Centre</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Services</li> <li>- Planning &amp; Development</li> <li>- City Manager's Office</li> <li>- City Council</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heritage organizations</li> <li>- Individuals</li> </ul>	
	Resources	Personnel		Personnel/Finances		Personnel	

**Priority** – high

**Additional annual funding** – \$250,000 (staff, office, programs) in 2009 and 2010 City operating budget, re-evaluation in 2011.





Kristi Hansen  
Actor / Writer

## HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #2

*Incorporate Edmonton Historical Board awards into the City's Salute to Excellence program.*

The Edmonton Historical Board has developed several award and recognition programs for heritage in Edmonton. These awards do not, however, have the profile they deserve. It is recommended that the Edmonton Historical Board awards be incorporated into the City of Edmonton's Salute to Excellence program and Halls of Fame (which currently honour individuals and organizations in the arenas of arts, sport and community service).

Additional awards should be considered, including, for example, a major City "heritage award" that could be presented annually to the person or organization that best exemplifies the qualities of dedicated heritage activity. This might be a city historian who publishes a significant and acclaimed work of history; it might be an archivist or cura-

## *Forever Tomorrow Country continued*

the community's safe deposit box, museums and archives preserve community memory. Archives provide access to primary sources of information about our past. As society becomes more media-focused, museums provide one of the few safe, real-time environments for people to share interactive and intergenerational experiences. Heritage unites visitors. Museums provide opportunities for immigrants to understand Canadian values.

Ultimately, heritage is not just about the past but about the future; it is the legacy we choose to leave to our children.

*Catherine C. Cole is an Edmonton-based heritage consultant working nationally. She is the chair of the board of the Heritage Canada Foundation.*

## Should I Stay Or Should I Go Now?

*Lori Gawryliuk*

At the beginning of the 21st century it was refreshing to see many young artists choosing to stay in Edmonton. For most of the nineties, emerging artists had little choice but to leave for larger markets, cities with established entertainment industries and thriving cultures for the arts. Circa 2000, E-town's emerging artists enjoyed a low cost-of-living and an abundance of studio space, plus they had technology on their side. The Digital Revolution was theirs; it changed how art and music was created, marketed and sold. No longer did an artist need to be in the epicentre of industry to sustain the creation of meaningful work. The independent arts scene in Edmonton was free to entertain itself and build strong networks and organizations, presenting a unique and fresh face to Canadian music, theatre, film and visual arts. Edmonton even started to attract established artists (back) to this fair city to live and create.

But the mass exodus has begun again. The economic boom of the last few years has resulted in a near bust for emerging artists in Edmonton. Over the past few years, I have said goodbye to many up-and-coming artists with whom I have collaborated, and they are off in all directions. Some have opted to move to smaller cities, where the cost-of-living is less than in Edmonton. The lower overhead of a smaller market presents more occasion for emerging artists to hone their craft, produce their own films, make their own albums, thus allowing them more creative control over projects,

tor who presents a noteworthy exhibit; it could even be a filmmaker who makes a documentary having to do with the city’s history. This award might very well overlap with arts awards, but

this will only serve to highlight the connection between the arts and heritage, and how both combine to create a cultural landscape.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 2		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - Salute to Excellence Committee	- City Council	- Heritage organizations - Corporate and business partners
	Resources	Personnel	Influence	Personnel/Finances

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – no additional funds required in existing program; \$25,000 for major heritage award by 2010.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #3

*Initiate and develop an ongoing structured dialogue with the Province about heritage issues.*

An agenda for the creation of an ongoing dialogue with the Province will address cooperation on a number of items, including the Alberta Historic Resources Act, the Royal Alberta

Museum and the Provincial Archives of Alberta. The motivation for this dialogue is to reinforce effective communication and working relationships between city and provincial heritage personnel, to identify gaps and synergies in their programs and institutions, to ensure these institutions and programs are adequately supported, and to reinforce Edmonton’s role and profile as the provincial capital.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 3		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- City Archives - City Artifacts Centre - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	- Community Services - City Manager’s Office	Heritage organizations
	Resources	Personnel	Influence	Personnel

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – no additional funds required.



Stefan Dzeperoski  
Theatre Director / Dramaturge / Educator

### Focal Point: Preservation

#### HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #4

*Recognize the Artifacts Centre as a major asset to the city. Resources are needed to stabilize and upgrade the environmental conditions of the current building, or to relocate the collection and to provide additional staff.*

The City's Artifacts Centre is located in an extended 1894 brewery on Fort Hill. It is home to 45,000 artifacts, many of which are treasures that speak to Edmonton's history. Its mandate is to collect artifacts for Fort Edmonton Park and the John Walter site, and to collect artifacts significant to the history of Edmonton. There are three staff on site and it has a small operational budget for supplies. An additional 50,000 artifacts are held at Fort Edmonton Park and stored there during the off-season. This is a major heritage resource, not just for Edmonton, but for all of western Canadian history. It needs to be recognized as such,

### *Should I Stay Or Should I Go Now? continued*

breeding innovation and giving them the opportunity to establish roots. Others have relocated to larger cities with better-established industries for music, theatre, film and television production. Edmonton can't compete with the opportunities and amenities offered to a young artist in "the big city." Internships and apprentice positions with professionals are largely missing components in the education and development of our young talent. Edmonton's housing costs are on par with larger cities, and many of our arts spaces—both studios and historic venues—have been demolished or turned into condos.

As historic buildings come down, and arts space and community are downsized, our emerging young artists turn their sights to distant horizons and the city turns its back on their legacy. Edmonton needs a plan that facilitates arts space not only for world-class productions and exhibits, but also low-cost space where emerging talent can work, and, further, to help find the audience for that work.

Current plans to develop The Quarters (Edmonton's downtown east-side) and The Avenue (118th Avenue) are prime opportunities for Edmonton to honour its vital independent arts scene. For years, as developers focused on sprawling the city outwards, these inner-city areas became do-it-yourself Arts Habitats for emerging artists. Art and music studios, non-profit societies, and an independent underground arts scene emerged in derelict downtown warehouses and discarded historic buildings. In the past few years, rents for these spaces have quadrupled and as plans are drawn up for these areas, arts space and low-cost housing are not abundant enough to sustain the arts community. Buildings like those in front of the Stan Daniels Healing Centre—where musicians and artists have rehearsed and created for decades—should be preserved and incorporated into plans for the future.

Edmonton has a chance to reverse its boom time trend. Through recognizing established communities and retaining historic buildings it has a chance to house hope for the future, and to give emerging artists the needed space to create, perform, produce, work, live and dream for generations to come.

*Lori Gawryliuk is a drummer for Edmonton's all-female indie band Pangina, the CEO and sound engineer of Noise Lab Industries Ltd. and the owner of The Artery, an independent art centre for emerging artists, curators and musicians to exhibit, collaborate and experiment.*

through an increase in resources to stabilize the physical environment of the current building or to relocate the collection, and to provide additional staff.

Following this first step, a permanent home for this vital collection should be found or built. Such a facility would need to be purpose-built or renovated specifically with the interests of the collection in mind. A suitable collections management policy for the Artifacts Centre, including policies and procedures on acquisition, de-accession, standards of care and registration/records should be developed and followed for the Artifacts Centre. Further, the current relationship of the Artifact Centre to Fort Edmonton Park and John Walter

*Without archival sources, you can't do anything, and the same is true for three-dimensional objects. You cannot understand your past without them, and if the City continues to regard them the way it has, there won't be anything there to interpret in any city museum. Because (if) you've only got one Edmonton Grad shirt, when it's gone, it's gone.*

*Heritage group consultation participant*

Museum and potential relationship to a city museum described later in this section should be considered in the review and development of the Artifacts Centre's acquisition and de-accession of collections policy and procedure.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 4	Implementation			
	City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- City Artifacts Centre</li><li>- Fort Edmonton Park and John Walter Museum</li><li>- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council</li><li>- City of Edmonton Archives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Community Services</li><li>- Asset Management &amp; Public Works</li><li>- City Council</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Corporate and business partners</li><li>- Province of Alberta, Government of Canada</li></ul>	
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Influence/Finances	Finances

**Priority** – high

**Additional annual funding** – undetermined until more parameters are developed.





Gail de Vos  
Storyteller / Writer

## HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #5

*Establish the City Archives' role in archiving private and community records.*

The Edmonton City Archives stated mandate is to “provide a planned program for the acquisition, preservation and provision of access to historical records of the corporation, City officials, City-sponsored organizations and events, organizations connected with the city, and from public and private collections relating to the history of the city when deposited by the owners.”

However, in practice, the primary responsibility of the archives is to look after corporate records of the City that are deemed to be of long-term historical value. The majority of the Archives staff time and most of the program budg-

# Aboriginal Arts and the Civic Citizen

*Marilyn Dumont*

“With the number of Aboriginal people in Edmonton, why doesn’t it have an Aboriginal theatre company?” I ask two other Aboriginal artists who are seated with me around a kitchen table in one of their homes while their children play in an adjoining room. We are referring to the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Centre in Saskatoon and comparing that to what Edmonton doesn’t have.

There is a tacit understanding among us that having the children nearby is the only way this meeting is even possible, despite the fact that they are both established artists. One is a choreographer, writer and performance artist with a Master’s degree in Education from the University of Alberta and an honours undergraduate degree from Stanford University in theatre and Native American literature. The other is a writer, singer and previous director of Blue Sky Theatre, a short-lived Aboriginal theatre company in Edmonton. Despite our shared dismay at the current lack of support for Aboriginal art in Edmonton, Tanya Lukin-Linklater, Anna Sewell and I forge on. We meet for eight months planning and producing a multidisciplinary art project combining, textile installation, poetry, dance and song. Called *Honour Songs*, the project when performed during the 2007 Edmonton Poetry Festival Word Gala receives a standing ovation.

Nevertheless, the small ripple our performance makes does not diminish my perplexity at the absence of an Edmonton Aboriginal arts scene. And as I look through the section on Arts and Culture in the *2007 Guide to Aboriginal Edmonton* produced by the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee and the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative, I see that it identifies one art gallery devoted to Aboriginal artists, two dance troupes (one Métis, the other First Nations), the Dreamspeakers Film Festival, the Sun and Moon Visionaries Aboriginal Artisans Society, along with the websites of a few high-profile Aboriginal artists. I am struck by how stark the Aboriginal arts scene looks in Edmonton.

In a city with the second largest Aboriginal population in Canada, one would think that Aboriginal art would be more celebrated and visible. But, having lived in Edmonton for 23 years, I don’t recall a time when there has been an identifiable Aboriginal arts scene. But then the very term *art* is a narrow social construction.

Art defined by European traditions immediately eliminates Aboriginal traditional dance, story, song and handcrafted items and places them in categories consistent with material culture, thanks to ethnography in the field of anthropology. Visual art produced by Aboriginal artists has been socially sanctioned as art and commodified as Inuit art or images consistent with Norval Morrisseau and the Woodland tradition.

It seems to me that any initiatives to turn the spotlight on Aboriginal

et are devoted to this function. Given the current level of resources, this means that the archiving of private and community documents and records (the last two of the mandated collection areas) can only be carried out on an ad hoc basis as time and other resources allow. But a civic archive is also in some ways the private journal of a place, a detailed record of who lived in a city and what they did to help create it. It is a vitally important part of a city’s collective personality, even its soul. This means that a comprehensive civic archives program should not concentrate solely on corporate records. In this respect, archives programs are no different from civic museum or built heritage programs, neither of which concentrate on City-owned or created objects or civic buildings.

It must be decided what function the City Archives will play in archiving private and com-

munity records to ensure that those records remain preserved and publicly available for future generations. If that role is to increase, more resources are required. If the Archive does not have a role, an alternative process to support and encourage the creation and support of other community and organizational archives to undertake this vital work must be identified.

In addition, The City should work closely with the City Archivist to address the future storage and program needs, either through the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of space in the Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre or off-site, and to address staff and funding levels at the City Archives especially in addressing issues of processing backlogs of records and the overwhelming challenge of the long term preservation of digital records.

<b>HERITAGE</b> RECOMMENDATION 5		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	<b>Implementation</b>	- City Archives - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	-Community Services -Asset Management & Public Works	Community archive organizations and individuals
	<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Personnel	Personnel

**Priority** – medium

**Additional annual funding** – undetermined until more parameters are developed.



Christine Sokaymoh Frederick  
Theatre Artist / Dancer / Writer / Singer

## HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #6

### *Support the Built Heritage Management Plan.*

This cultural plan endorses the work of the City of Edmonton's Planning and Development Department on the Built Heritage Management Plan that has occurred simultaneously with the work on this cultural plan. The Built Heritage Management and Business Plan's principal focus is on the identification, protection and management of physical structures, most notably buildings. That plan was last updated in 1995. As some of the incentive programs are obsolete and references and guidelines outdated, the need to standardize some guidelines with national ones and explore greater creativity and initiative possibilities to protect heritage resources required a review of the plan.

There remain limitations on this initiative, however. The limitations are in part related to the provincial legislation that governs this activity, which can inhibit a municipality's

## *Aboriginal Arts and the Civic Citizen continued*

arts in the Edmonton community have been ambitious individual undertakings that sooner or later flag due to the administrative and financial pressures of publicly championing art while also trying to produce it as an individual artist.

Some years ago Peace Hills Trust sponsored a visual artists challenge where emerging Aboriginal visual artists were awarded cash prizes. This seemed to generate a buzz in the city around Aboriginal visual art. And there have been flurries of Aboriginal arts celebration when Gil Cardinal premieres a new film or when Tomson Highway visits Edmonton, or when Alex Janvier, Jane Ash Poitras or Joanne Cardinal Shubert mount shows, or when Lorne Cardinal acts in a local play, or when Tantoo Cardinal is starring in a movie.

Not surprisingly, there are many Aboriginal artists in Edmonton. There are visual, textile, dance, theatre, performance and literary artists, but there is no identifiable centre to the Aboriginal arts scene. One would logically assume that Aboriginal art would be fostered in institutions like the Canadian Native Friendship Centre, the Art Gallery of Alberta or the Faculty of Native Studies, but not so.

One of the contributing factors to this absent Aboriginal arts scene stems back to the nature of the first relationships established between "explorers"/fur traders in the 17th century and Aboriginals and continued between Aboriginals and settlers to the West in the 18th and 19th centuries. Those initial economic partnerships between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals during the fur trade era were regarded as necessary economic exchanges between Christians and "heathens." This uneasy relationship positioned non-Aboriginals safely within the confines of fort settlements, away from the uncivilized hunter/gatherer Aboriginal peoples who continued to migrate seasonally or gradually began to settle just outside the walls of Fort Edmonton as "home-guard" Indians. While increasing numbers of Aboriginals were adversely affected by the influx of settlers and land displacement, disease, the diminishing fur trade and the lack of food, perceptions of Aboriginals as uncivilized, indolent, and improvident mounted and made it socially acceptable for influential individuals such as Frank Oliver, the owner of the *Edmonton Bulletin*, to "agitate for the natives' complete removal" and state, "The land is needed by better men."

Such attitudes about Aboriginal peoples, unfortunately, have not disappeared, but are central to what it means to be "civic" or one of the "civilized" within the walls of the fort of the city limits. Aboriginal peoples belonged to reserves or Métis settlements rather than to municipalities. From pre-contact, Aboriginal peoples have not been included in the civic structure. To be Indian was to be "other," initially regarded as allies and under the jurisdiction of the Department of National Defence or, later, Indian and Northern Affairs.

decision to designate buildings or sites as heritage sites. (The provincial legislation requires that compensation be made to the owner of the site or building when a heritage designation is made by the municipality.) In addition, this management plan does not directly deal with icons, modern buildings, corridors and some cultural landscapes. This should be noted and consid-

ered in later developments related to that plan. Some discussion has indicated that these areas fall into the category of urban design case studies rather than heritage matters (although they are very closely related).

See Appendix 7 for more information on the Built Heritage Management Plan.

<b>HERITAGE</b> <b>RECOMMENDATION 6</b>		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	<b>Implementation</b>	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	- Planning & Development - Asset Management & Public Works - City Council	- Heritage organizations and individuals
	<b>Resources</b>	Personnel/Influence	Personnel/Influence	Influence

**Priority** – medium  
**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required

**Focal Point: Interpretation**

**HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #7**

*Establish a City historian-in-residence program.*

History is the story of how we became who we are, and if a city is to fully know what it is and what it is to become, it must know and understand its own story. The City of Edmonton will institute the position of a City historian-in-residence similar to the poet laureate. This person should possess the necessary qualifications set

forth by an adjudicating body formed to pick the candidate. The successful candidate should not only possess the stated “paper” qualifications, but also have the ability to interact formally and informally with the community on all matters of heritage and history. This should be a two-year appointment. So as to recognize the rich and complex nature of Edmonton’s heritage, the position should be held by a series of recognized historians from diverse backgrounds.

<b>HERITAGE</b> <b>RECOMMENDATION 7</b>		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	<b>Implementation</b>	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	- Community Services - City Council	- Historical organizations and individual historians - Corporate and business partners
	<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Influence/Finances	Personnel/Finances

**Priority** – medium  
**Additional annual funding** – \$7,500.





Katherine Goertzen  
Painter

### HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #8

*Develop consistent interpretation practices for heritage.*

Possessing a vibrant historical record and a fascinating palette of heritage opportunities will have reduced meaning if the community at large does not know how to access these treasures or how to accurately interpret them once they find them. The City should develop and uphold consistent interpretation practices for heritage.

As noted by Virginia Stephen, chair of the Edmonton Historical Board, “We interpret our heritage through signs, publications, audio and video presentations, wayfinding programs, site

### *Aboriginal Arts and the Civic Citizen continued*

Is it any wonder a strong Aboriginal arts scene doesn’t exist in Edmonton?

My prognosis is that Edmonton’s Aboriginal art “scene” will continue to exist outside the civic structure. Aboriginal artists will be fragmented into identifiable artistic disciplines consistent with arts funding and further fragmented by interests that may issue from First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations.

Edmonton needs to acknowledge its Aboriginal citizens as contributing, “civic” members, not only to the establishment of the city itself but to the ongoing arts and cultural vitality of this community. As part of this, I imagine something akin to the Roundhouse in Vancouver, whose mission is “to celebrate the diversity of people, values, ideas and activities.” But with one exception. That exception would first be the acknowledgement of an Aboriginal peoples arts and cultural space within Edmonton’s civic boundary, which could also be shared by all other growing cultural groups. Edmonton, unlike any other urban centre in Canada, could boast of a unique arts and cultural centre that would allow for cross-cultural exchange between Aboriginals and all other cultural groups. Such a centre could offer facilities for daycare, studios, workshops and performance and gallery space for artists from different disciplines and cultures to showcase their work individually and collaboratively. What I imagine is, finally, this: a shared cultural space that acknowledges the undeniable role and position of Aboriginal peoples in this country while also celebrating the cultural diversity of Canada’s growing population.

*Marilyn Dumont is the author of three award-winning collections of poetry. She is the Edmonton Public Library’s 2008 Writer in Residence.*

*I would like to have ideas put in place, so that people can begin to imagine their history and their city differently. That they look at a space and can see what the fur trade looked like or what the Ukrainian community looked like. There are all these different layers that interact, and somehow that's got to be put on the landscape, not just in a museum or a building. They have to be given a real life—some kind of interpretative activity that allows people to access this heritage. Some way, we've got to cultivate pride and excitement in who we are, and it has to start with knowledge.*

Heritage group consultation participant

markers as well as through museum exhibitions, and these can be produced by heritage organizations as well as developers, communications officers, volunteers, City planning departments and outside contractors resulting in various levels of accuracy and effectiveness. We need an interpretation plan to establish standards for the development of content, research and approval of these materials and the integration of these

into urban and environmental planning. Our citizens and visitors deserve to access information through media that reflect the best practices in heritage interpretation.”

Some of the key issues that should be addressed include building plaques, naming city sites and ensuring the name on a city site matches the legacy of the person honoured.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 8		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - City Naming Committee	- Planning & Development - Community Services - Corporate Services - City Council	- Heritage organizations and individuals - Private land developers - community organizations
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Influence	Personnel

Priority – medium

Additional annual funding – no additional funds required.



Melissa Walker  
Musician / Bass Player

### Focal Point: Museum Advancement

#### HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #9

*Develop an overall museums strategy.*

There are 23 museums in the city of Edmonton. “Museums by definition collect, preserve, study and interpret objects. They perform a role similar to that of an archive in preserving community memory. They are a city’s safe deposit box, where tangible cultural heritage is retained and intangible heritage studied and interpreted.”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Cole and Associates, Preliminary Assessment of a City Museum in Edmonton, 2007.

# Public Libraries— Enriching People’s Lives

*Linda Cook and the Edmonton Public Library Board of Trustees*

As the Edmonton Public Library heads toward its 100th birthday in 2013, it enjoys very high levels of acceptance and support from Edmontonians. But there is always more that can be done to meet the needs of the people of Edmonton. While still important, the traditional roles of the public library are changing, and the interaction of Edmonton’s constituents with their libraries is also changing. Library customers are more diverse than ever, and their needs and expectations have changed over the past decade. There now exists an entire generation who have grown up on the Internet, connectivity and social networking, and have come to expect instantaneous access to information. Public libraries today have to meet the needs of this new generation as well as the needs of their parents and grandparents. In addition, despite Edmonton’s economic prosperity there are many who are dealing with issues such as low income, low literacy levels, the need for educational and skills upgrading and/or lack of computer access to information from within the home.

Another group that will continue to be vocal in the next several years is the baby-boomer generation, many of whom are entering retirement. They are more active and better educated than previous generations, and they will live longer. They will require library services and programs that reflect their active lifestyles and broad interests. Increased numbers of immigrants and new Canadians, along with the influx of Aboriginal peoples to the city, are resulting in a rich and unprecedented growth of ethnic diversity in the City of Edmonton. Special collections and programs are required to meet the needs of this important group.

To be relevant to this wide-ranging, diverse clientele, Edmonton’s public library system constantly adapts its services to meet the changing needs and expectations of its customers. It is difficult to keep up with all the changes, but new technologies have made the task somewhat more manageable.

It is a myth that public libraries view the Internet and new technologies as competitors, making their services irrelevant. There is no doubt that technology has had an enormous impact on the provision of services in libraries, but this impact has been positive. It has provided libraries with enormous opportunities to connect users with information, making barrier-free access a reality. Technology is an opportunity, in a number of essential ways, to add value to library services. It is another tool that libraries have embraced in order to be relevant in today’s environment.

For example, with the advent of RFID (self-service check-out) in Edmonton’s library system, customers are getting more help from staff—help in finding information, using computer workstations,

The museum landscape in Edmonton is extraordinarily rich and varied, but there is no comprehensive strategy for coordinating the goals and processes of the museums in the city. It is therefore recommended that an overall museums strategy be developed. This strategy would address funding, marketing, professional standards and a sense of how all 23 museums plus a

proposed city museum fit together in mandate, interpretation and programs.

An overall city museum strategy would also include the museums and museum activities undertaken directly by the City of Edmonton, including Fort Edmonton and the Artifacts Centre.

<b>HERITAGE</b> RECOMMENDATION 9		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	<b>Implementation</b>	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	Community Services	- Museum Organizations - Alberta Museums Association
	<b>Resources</b>	Personnel	Personnel	Personnel

**Priority** – high: prerequisite to recommendations #10 and #11  
**Additional annual funding** – no additional funds required.



Karen Cantine  
Silversmith



Robert Shannon  
Theatre Designer



## HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #10

*Have the City support the development of a city museum.*

The City should support the development of a city museum. A preliminary assessment has been completed as part of the development of this cultural plan (Cole and Associates), and the key recommendations in that report should be followed. Those recommendations, in short, call first for developing strong support for the idea of a city museum as a dynamic, community-driven organization that would interpret large and inclusive themes. The next step would be to develop the museum incrementally, beginning in a temporary facility, and to then build momentum for a purpose-built or retrofit facility. At every stage the exhibition and research should conform to the highest standards of contemporary museum management. See Appendix 8 for the executive summary of that study.

The idea of establishing a city museum has arisen many times over the past 60 years and with recurring frequency during the past decade. The high cost of building an actual museum without any real understanding of its benefits has been a deterrent. Although a strong desire prevails in the community, a city museum needs to be very carefully conceived, and developed in stages.

The city museum would focus on Edmonton as a place. As the report states, "It would be a focal point for a comprehensive local history and for a range of heritage activities. It should have the capacity to be a public forum for learning about Edmonton's past, present and future through provocative displays and public programs that chronicle, respond to and challenge myths and realities. A city museum would therefore attempt to fill in the gap in collecting, preserving and interpreting objects and stories about life in Edmonton that are not held or told by small, local museums or other cultural institutions. Examples of themes are:

## Public Libraries—Enriching People's Lives continued

getting recommendations for "good reads," connecting kids to homework resources and more. This is a direct result of the library's wise, well-planned and integrated approach to technology and electronic resources. Once fully implemented, staff will be able to spend more time moving beyond the walls of the library and into the community to make connections with community organizations, agencies and associations. Consequently, the library will have a greater capacity to tailor services, collections and programs to meet community needs, including those of low-income families and individuals, persons with disabilities, the Aboriginal community, and immigrant and visible minority populations.

Needless to say, the users of libraries will be instrumental in determining the future of libraries. Within the next few years the Edmonton Public Library Board is determined to ensure that library funding from both levels of government is appropriate, sufficient and sustainable, enabling it to fulfill its role within Edmonton's many communities. Once this goal is reached, new branches will be built and others will be renovated, upgraded and/or expanded to meet community needs. Hours of opening will be adjusted to accommodate new customer demands: there will be some late-night and early-morning hours of operation, increased hours at most branches and longer Sunday hours.

Growing numbers of Edmontonians will be able to make virtual trips to the library to access collections, electronic resources, services, programs and staff help 24 hours a day. This around-the-clock service provision will be made possible through the library's own excellent resources and staff expertise, as well as through service agreements with the library's partners within Alberta, across Canada and internationally.

In spite of the many demands on their time and the busy lifestyles of their families, children will find it easier to attend library programs owing to the variety of times they are offered: weekdays, weekends and evenings. These programs will consistently reflect the literacy, reading, learning and self-education support roles of the library.

Members of Edmonton's growing multicultural and Aboriginal communities will feel comfortable and at home in the library. Owing to the library's collection revitalization initiatives, these customers will find collections that reflect their diverse cultures and contain appropriate levels of resources for people in the City's largest non-English language groups. The Edmonton Public Library will be seen as a critical part of Edmonton's civil society and be widely regarded as one of the leaders in the delivery of public library services in Canada.

None of this will be possible without a creative, energetic and committed workforce, many of whom are already in place. With sustained funding, there will be sufficient staff at the appropriate levels to enable the library to fulfill its many roles within the community, including the trained staff necessary for meeting the diverse needs

Edmonton: The Northern City; Edmonton: The Modern City; Edmonton Neighbourhoods; and Edmonton: The City of Champions.”<sup>11</sup>

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 10		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	- Asset Management & Public Works - Corporate Services - Community Services - City Council	- Heritage organizations - Corporate and business partners - Province of Alberta, Government of Canada
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Influence/Finances	Personnel/Finances

Priority – medium  
 Additional annual funding – undetermined until more parameters are developed.

**HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION #11**  
*Establish a museum operating grant program as a Community Investment Grant.*

As part of the museum strategy, a museum operating grant program should be established by the City as a Community Investment Grant (CIG) similar to those available to arts and festival organizations. All eligible museums should be evaluated using criteria such as governance, mandate, community benefit, accessibility and sustainability.

This is in addition to the now-established CIG Arts and Museum Facility Grant program which will provide up to 25% of the annual operating

expenses directly associated with the museum buildings (not the programming or content).

Direct grant support for museums is much less than that available for arts and festivals. Currently no City of Edmonton programs exist for this. See Appendix 5 for a description of grants available to Edmonton museums.

Finally, grant programs for other types of heritage organizations and personnel should eventually match the various grant programs available to the arts through the Edmonton Arts Council.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 11		City Affiliates	City Departments	Community Partners
	Implementation	- Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - EAC	- Community Services - City Council	Museum organizations
	Resources	Personnel	Personnel/Finances	Personnel

Priority – medium  
 Additional annual funding – undetermined until more parameters are developed: will not exceed 25% of the combined annual operating expenses of eligible organizations.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



Gabriela Andrea Rosende Gonzalez  
Visual Artist



James DeFelice  
Theatre Artist / Teacher

## Public Libraries—Enriching People's Lives continued

of the multicultural community. Staffing resources and plans will be in place to carry the library successfully into the future. The best years of public libraries are ahead of us.

Public libraries will continue to provide access to information to their communities regardless of age, income or ability. However, they are more than repositories of information and community meeting places. They can also be cultural centres, connecting with the character and soul of the distinct communities they serve, ensuring that the resources considered important are available. Libraries have always been in transition and have always been redefining themselves. That is why they will continue to remain current and relevant in today's ever-changing environment.

*Linda C. Cook is the CEO of the Edmonton Public Library, one of the largest and busiest systems in Canada. She is also an adjunct professor for the Faculty of Education, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta.*



# Walking the Line

Caterina Edwards

*I dream a city where the telling of one story does not silence all others. A city that contains other cities. A border city.*

Since the first scouts from the Hudson's Bay Company stepped from their canoes onto the shore, since the first trading post was raised, Edmonton has been at a crossroads, a place of contact for diverse peoples. It remains a space between, an intersection of opposites, a frontier, a precarious balance between natural and man-made, wild and settled, past and future. A borderland, not yet a border city.

The concept of the border city, now in vogue among the practitioners of cultural theory, posits that in this time of mass migrations such cities are, or will be, sites of great artistic production and creativity. Unlike the great cities of the past, border cities are not at the centre of power, but peripheral, even marginalized. They do not simply contain peoples of different heritages; the ethos must be tolerant, encouraging interaction, not isolation. An example is Trieste under the last years of Austrian rule when three major

European cultures—German, Italian and Slav—cross-fertilized, producing a flowering of literature. Stuparich, Slatapeter, Svevo (born Schmidt) and Saba: the writers were of differing ethnic heritages, but they entered the canon of Italian literature by inscribing their difference, not denying it.

*I dream a city where the past is present, each era concurrent. I dream nothing has been lost.*

I confront Edmonton's heritage every day when I walk the dog. We've stayed in our house for a quarter of a century, even when it made sense to move, because we are half a block from an off-leash park and a trail that leads down through the woods to the river. Close to the centre of a city of a million people, I can feel the wild and hear the coyotes' chorus. Fort Edmonton Park is just past the horse stable and a stretch of green, and though it is a reproduction it serves as a reminder of the city's beginnings.

But the borderland is fragile. One day three tall pines and a strand of poplars are hacked down. The next week giant machines dig a deep trench, the first stage in the building of a freeway ramp off or onto Fox Drive. My neighbourhood is under construction, which brings destruction, dust, noise, dump trucks, cement-mixers, bobcats, cherry-pickers and earth movers. The chaos feels both interminable and ever-changing: the way into the area has been at least partially blocked for two-and-a-half years. A road is ripped up, smoothed and repaved, only to be ripped up again two months later. A crosswalk



disappears, lanes shift, all turns are blocked. Nothing is safe.

*I dream a city where walls are built to stand a thousand years, not 25.*

The city needs new storm sewers, pothole-free roads, efficient interchanges and an extended LRT. I am wary of the edgy energy engendered by the current boom, but I acknowledge that the work is necessary. (Not as necessary is the tear-down of modest, post-war houses or the new enclave of monster homes.) Doing nothing does not preserve the old neighbourhood; it leads to decrepitude and decline. In the same way, under the pressures of an exploding population, the heritage of the city can weaken and fall away. The infrastructure of culture must also be refurbished, renewed and reinvented, so the past will be available to the present and the future.

*I dream a city where I can foxtrot at the Trocadero Ballroom, skate on McKernan Lake, watch Sarah Bernhardt at the Empire Theatre. Where I can read Euripides in the original Greek, barter buffalo hides for food, build glass pyramids, recite the old, dark stories in the light of the campfire.*

*I dream a city where I can play the accordion, drink illegal homemade wine, sing an aria, join a chorus. Va pensiero: go, fly. Dream.*

Our heritage feeds our creativity; the result becomes the heritage of the future and the source of new inspiration. In this potential bor-

der city, the heritage that the artist draws on is multiple, the result a hybrid. Rudy Wiebe, for example, creates the story of Big Bear, inspired by historical heritage and native cultural heritage, but the form of the novel is inspired by American literary heritage, and Wiebe's sentences, his word choices, are shaped by both his first language, Low German, and his later one, Canadian English.

I most self-consciously wrote out of my ethnic heritage in a play, *Terra Straniera*, Foreign Land. I wanted both to capture a moment of Edmonton's history and to memorialize the tens of thousands of Italians who immigrated here post-war, bearing witness to the dignity and resourcefulness with which they adapted to their new home. It is not my style to take on the task of giving voice to a group that had been previously voiceless, their story silenced. But I felt it was my duty to do so. Although the people I wanted to honour would not read a book I might write, they would attend a performance. The play was produced at the Fringe Festival in 1986 to sold-out houses.

To my surprise, sitting in the theatre, listening to the audience respond to the actors recreating my scenes was the most exciting and satisfying experience I've ever had as a writer. Nothing in the 20 or so years since has matched it. Why? The books I've written are read in private. The play involved collaboration and sharing; it was public art in a public space. (Even the subject was a community rather than an individual.) Briefly, I was aware of being part of the cultural

life of Edmonton. If not for the infrastructure of the Fringe, I doubt *Terra Straniera* would have ever been put on. During the years since, the play was published under the title *Homeground*; it received excellent reviews in national drama and literary magazines and is on the curriculum of various university classes, but it has never been remounted. The small theatres of the city saw it as an ethnic, not an Edmonton, story. Several times I've been contacted by groups in other cities that want to put it on. Each time an element of support was missing, and there was no opening night. I suspect now *Terra Straniera* would find no place at the Fringe. The cultural infrastructure is aging, as well as still partial.

*I dream a city shot through with bright spaces. In each one, history or art, a different past or a possible future.*

Spaces must be created, maintained, supported, rebuilt and re-imagined. Along with the hybrid writers who invigorated Italian literature, Trieste celebrates as one of its own James Joyce, who wrote *The Dubliners* and *Portrait of An Artist* there. During his 16 years in the border city, Joyce played a part in the intellectual life. In cafes, taverns and theatres, the writers met and argued ideas. They encouraged and supported

each other. And the people of Trieste also understood the importance of their artists. When Joyce left, he took Trieste with him. Certain areas are transported to Dublin in *Ulysses*, and the polylingual streets inspired *Finnegan's Wake*, which contains many passages in Triestin dialect.

*I dream a city dotted with theatres, art galleries, studios, cafes, piazzas, markets, places where artists can argue, interact, create. Spaces where all citizens can meet and create new conjunctions. Heritage does not pave the roads, build the walls, raise the roofs. It bequeaths the bright spaces, or the possibility of such.*

Every day, I walk the line, houses on one side, the river and its valley on the other. This morning the wind was unrelenting. I commiserated with each of the other walkers I met. We knew by tomorrow there'd be ice and snow. I came home and turned on my espresso coffee machine. I can feel a story coming: a tale of the borderland.

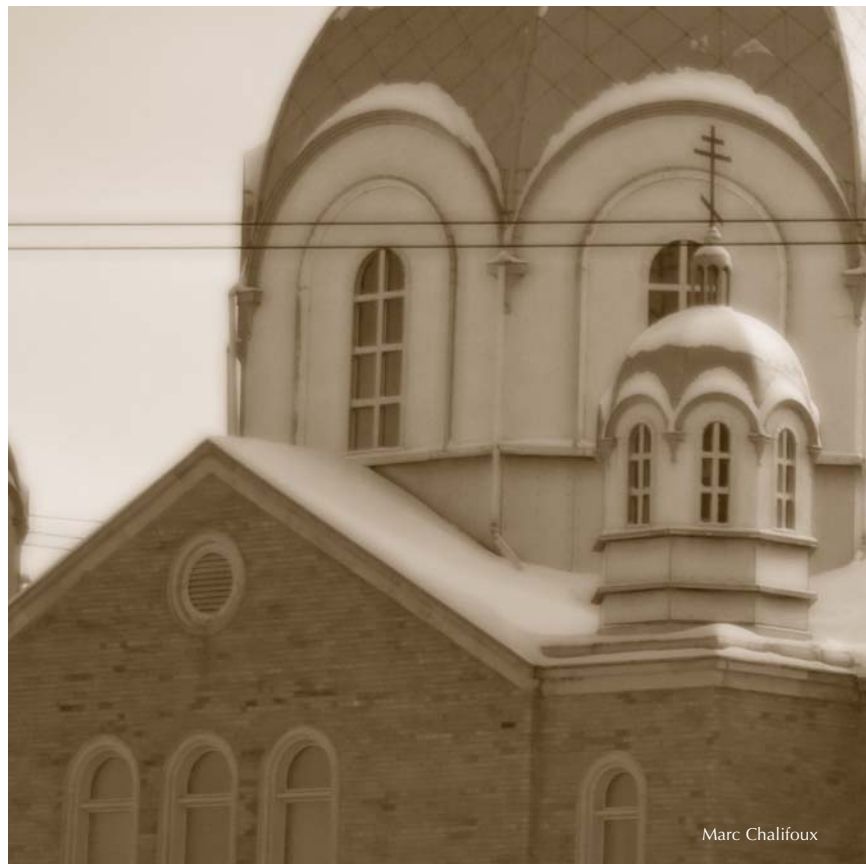
*Caterina Edwards is an Edmonton writer who has published in various genres. She avoids the singular approach or point of view, writing about our multiple identities and cultures.*



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Marc Chalifoux



Marc Chalifoux





# Credits and Acknowledgements

Cultural Plan Steering Committee  
Chair • Catrin Owen  
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to November 2007 and Councillor  
Ben Henderson after November 2007  
City of Edmonton Administration • Carol Watson  
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Business community • Denise Assaly  
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## Appendix 1

### Cultural Plan Terms of Reference and Process

The Cultural Plan process began in April 2006 with approval of terms of reference by City Council.

#### Terms of reference

- Describe a unified vision for the arts and culture in the Edmonton region over the next ten years and make recommendations in a range of areas that will help to realize the vision.
- The scope of the plan will be to look at all aspects of the arts and cultural life of Edmonton, recognizing that there are arts and culture elements in many aspects of Edmonton's fabric, including, for example, tourism, multiculturalism, and heritage.
- The development of the plan will be consultative and inclusive with every stage of the plan subject to input from a range of stakeholders.
- The project will be guided by a volunteer steering committee recruited through the Edmonton Arts Council and constituted as follows:
  - Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) appointed Chair
  - Second EAC appointee
  - Edmonton City Council appointee
  - City of Edmonton administrative appointee
  - Heritage community representative
  - Business community representative
  - General community representative
  - Multicultural community representative
  - Working artist (established)
  - Working artist (emerging)
- The steering committee's role will be to guide the development of the cultural plan, connect with key stakeholders and champion the plan upon completion.
- The planning process will be in alignment with the City of Edmonton's Public Involvement Procedure and all existing City plans and by-laws.

The Steering Committee met 16 times.

A review was made of cultural plans from other places as well as past and present City of Edmonton documents related to cultural planning and planning in general.

A series of six community consultations were held—one in each Ward of the City. These were open to all citizens. The

vision statement and value statements were developed and verified at these sessions. Specific ideas about arts and heritage programs and initiatives were also collected at these sessions. An outside consultant was contracted to organize, lead and summarize these sessions. City of Edmonton staff assisted at the sessions.

Twelve scans were commissioned. They focused on the state of specific art forms (music, dance, literary arts, theatre, etc.) and heritage activities in Edmonton. These were intended to be documents that would stimulate more extensive discussion among active arts and heritage practitioners. They were identified as opinions of credible persons and not established positions of the steering committee.

Ten group discussions focusing on a particular aspect of the arts or heritage in Edmonton were held. Each discussion was relevant to one or more of the scans that were distributed to the participants in advance. The groups were small and participants were invited. An outside consultant was contracted to organize, lead and summarize the discussions. Participants were asked to comment on the vision and values developed at the public sessions and to provide detailed and specific thoughts on the current state, potential and obstacles in their field of arts or heritage in Edmonton.

Four surveys were conducted. These were done in conjunction with the Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada program. The four surveys were:

- A general survey of the importance of arts and heritage to Edmontonians.
- A survey of individuals working in the arts and heritage asking about their annual income from activities as professionals in their field, training, and attitude about being a professional cultural practitioner in Edmonton.
- A survey of arts and heritage organizations asking about current space for their activities, their history, and attitude about Edmonton as a place for arts and heritage.
- A survey of organizations that managed arts and museum facilities in the city.

Also in conjunction with the Edmonton 2007 Cultural Capital of Canada program, a city-wide inventory of arts and heritage assets was compiled.

A "Preliminary Assessment of the Feasibility of a city museum" was commissioned.

A series of on-going meetings and presentations were held with representatives of key organizations including the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee, Edmonton Historical Board, Next Gen Committee, Alberta Museum Association, Downtown Business Association, Edmonton and District

Historical Society, Edmonton Public Library Board, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, Office of Diversity and Inclusion of the City of Edmonton.

A series of on-going meetings with key individuals were held.

Web-based submissions were accepted throughout the process.

Input was received from many individuals who attended either a public session or stake-holder session including:

Al Chapman	Christine Prokop	Jan Randall	Linda Rubin	Peter Gerrie
Al Reynolds	Christy Holtby	Jane Heather	Linda Turnbull	Peter Jansen
Alexandra Munn	Chrystal Seutter	Jane Ross	Linette Smith	Rebecca Starr
Alice Major	Colin Atkins	Jane Steblyk	Lionel Rault	Richard Toszczak
Alison Campbell	Curtis Gillespie	Janet Buckmaster	Lisa Maltby	Rob Churchill
Alison Turner	Cynthia Grant	Janine Andrews	Liz Grieve	Robert Sadowski
Amy Neufeld	Dana Rayment	Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull	Lynette Bondarchuk	Robert Wilde
Andrea Lefebvre	Darci Mallon	Jasieck Poznanski	M Jennie Frost	Rose Ginther
Andrea Martinuk	Darlene Bryant	Jay Bardyla	Manola Borrajo	Ryan McCourt
Ann McCluskey	David Barnett	Jeff Collins	Maralyn Ryan	Sally Ogden
Annette Loisel	David Cheoros	Jeff Page	Marc Carnes	Sam Oboh
Arthur Dyck	David Holdsworth	Jessice Tse	Marcia MacLean	Sharon Budnarchuk
Barb Dacks	David Murray	Jim Gurnett	Marcus Alexander	Sharon Fitzsimmons
Barbara Ursuliak	Denise Roy	John McPherson	Margaret Siebold	Sharon Klein
Bard Golightly	Diane Pedersen	Jonathan Christenson	Margaret Witschl	Sharon Pasula
Barry Davis	Don Bouzek	Josephine van Lier	Maria Massimo	Sheri Somerville
Belinda Cornish	Donald McCarthy	Julian Mayne	Marian Bruin	Shirley Serviss
Bert Yeudall	Donna Clare	Junetta Jamerson	Mariette Krohn	Steve Hoose
Bobbi Westman	Doug Elves	Karen Brown Fournell	Marsh Murphy	Steve Piro
Brad McDonald	Erin Madsen	Karen Johnson	Marty Chan	Stewart MacDougall
Bradley Moss	Eva Cairns	Karen Sprague	Mary Jane Kreisel	Stuart Adams
Brenda Philp	Eva Colmers	Karrie Darichuk	Mary Joyce	Tamara Bliss
Brett Fraser	Frances Swyripa	Karyn Stirling	Megan Christensen	Terri Cooper
Brian Deedrick	George Knowles	Kate Boorman	Michelle Domskey	Theresa Baxter
Cara-Marissa Albo	Gerald Osmunde	Kate Collie	Michelle Todd	Tim Folkman
Carina Cojeen	Gerry Morita	Katherine Shute	Mieko Ouchi	Tim Mariott
Carol Selfridge	Gerry Potter	Kathy Ochoa	Miranda Jimmy	Todd Janes
Catherine Burgess	Gordon Gordey	Keith Turnbull	Nancy Heule	Tom Hendricks
Catherine Cole	Grace Law	Kelly Cormack	Nicole van Kuppeveld	Tom McFall
Catherine Crowston	Graham Guest	Kent Sangster	Nik Kozub	Tony Luppino
Cathleen Rootsart	Heather Taschuk	Kerri Long	Norton Mah	Tracy Carroll
Chelsey Hoople	Heidi Bunting	Kristine Nutting	Olga Fowler	Usha Gupta
Cheryl Mahaffy	Helen Gerritzen	Larissa Stetzenko	Pamela Anthony	Vince Gasparri
Christie Jones	Henry Maisonneuve	Leslie Tomlinson	Patricia Darbasie	Virginia Stephen
Christina Tozer	Inger Lorisognol	Linda Collier	Paul Bellows	Wayne Arthurson
Christine Frederick	Irene Mortenson	Linda Knopke	Peter Field	Wei Yew

## Appendix 2<sup>1</sup>

Creative Edmonton: Envisioning a Culturally Vital Community: City of Edmonton Cultural Inventory Report.

Heritage Community Foundation in partnership with Edmonton Cultural Capital of Canada 2007 project.

### Executive Summary<sup>2</sup>

#### Introduction

The City of Edmonton Cultural Inventory component of the Cultural Capitals of Canada project is a legacy piece that identifies cultural indicators for the City and undertakes benchmarking. Together with the Cultural Plan, it will help to create a blueprint for future development. The intent, once all of the events and performances of Edmonton's year as Canada's Cultural Capital are over, is to learn from the experience and to build capacity for the future. The Cultural Inventory will become an integral part of present and future cultural planning for the City of Edmonton and will serve to bridge the past, present and future. It will be the keystone in an integrated cultural management system embracing the public and private sectors, and involving stakeholders and the citizenry of Edmonton.

#### Project Scope

In 20th century western democracies, the role of the arts and culture has continued to be questioned and the movement from representational to non-representational art has led to the perception that art is for elites rather than ordinary citizens. While governments, whether civic, state/provincial, or national, continued to fund arts and culture, such funding was questioned, and, the latter half of the 20th century saw a movement towards measurement of performance of entities receiving public funding. Thus, we have seen a range of economic impact studies, resulting in movement further and further away from the intrinsic value of the arts as essential to defining the nation, the city or whatever other political grouping of human activity is under scrutiny. All activities receiving both public and private-sector funding increasingly are looked at through a lens of economic determinism. The arts and cultural sector has been no exception.

The "Creative Cities" movement, which has emphasized the importance of the "creative class" to community building, has given this belief tremendous impetus in the last 10 years. A solid cultural inventory provides concrete data that defines what a creative city is and underscores the redeeming and transforming power of the arts, heritage and culture. It is from this premise that work on Edmonton's Cultural Inventory began.

There are myriad definitions and differences in the value assigned to the arts and culture. Thus, there is no one universally accepted definition or measure. Closely related to defining the field is the equally thorny debate as to the nature of cultural activity to be inventoried. For the purposes of the City of Edmonton Cultural Inventory, the UNESCO definition was chosen, which is as follows:

...the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that such an encompassing definition of culture moves away from the narrow scope of artistic activity (i.e., creative activity) focused at the functional level (e.g., literary arts, performing acts) to embrace and involve the entire community (i.e., the public, public and private funders). Thus, the arts are subsumed in culture, which UNESCO and other experts consider the factor that integrates all human activity and links it to the natural world in which we live.

Having shed some light on definitions of the arts and culture and the cultural inventory process, it is important to determine reasons for doing this work. Objectives include:

- Determination of the extent and nature of the sector (i.e., benchmarking)
- Determination of the health of the sector (i.e., a report card)
- Establishment of performance measures specific to the sector

<sup>1</sup> Author, Adriana Davies, Ph.D. Heritage Community Foundation

<sup>2</sup> The complete report is available from the Edmonton Arts Council.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon and Beilby-Orrin, p. 5. The UNESCO definition of culture is drawn from *Rethinking Development: World Decade for Cultural Development 1988-97* (1994), Paris, UNESCO, p. 6.



- Obtaining of data to assist in policy making, strategic planning and allocation of funding
- Providing a direction, i.e., blueprint for strategic development and strategic investment
- Increased understanding of the importance of the arts, heritage and culture in the life of the community
- Vehicle for public education and engagement

The cultural inventory can be seen as a barometer of cultural activity.

It is important to note that the cultural indicators tracked in the inventory are now not only used by cultural practitioners, they are also frequently used by urban planners, community development practitioners, private developers, politicians, policymakers and others. These include “creative economy,” “creative class,” “creative cities,” “cool cities.” They also frequently relate to the revival of urban neighborhoods. This thinking has created a window of opportunity for the arts and heritage to integrate themselves in a range of community activities. All the materials that we have seen about definitions, indicators and, now, models for cultural inventorying emphasize the democratization of the arts, heritage and culture. In fact, most inventory models now acknowledge that, while the “economic importance” of culture, viewed as economic impact linked to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is an aspect of the quantitative measurement of culture, the importance of culture goes well beyond its GDP contribution to the very health of a democratic society.

### Key Findings

The Cultural Inventory research process has involved:

- Examination of other relevant studies and creation of discussion papers on key issues
- Designing and implementing individual and organizational surveys to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data
- Designing and implementing a searchable database of cultural organizations and institutions, i.e. the Organizational Directory

Based on this range of activity, the following trends have been noted.

#### 1.1 Growth and Social Change

It is evident that Edmonton is a city that, not for the first

time in its history, is experiencing an economic boom. This means:

- Increasing population growth
- Pressure on social services, health care, housing, etc.
- Rise in the cost of living
- Infrastructure problems (roads, sewers, electricity, water, etc.)
- Inner city decay
- Challenges presented by the Information Age and New Technology
- Global competitiveness

#### 1.2 The Arts and Heritage and Other Cultural Expressions as Barometers of Societal Well-being

At a time of intense change, culture is seen as both something that helps to define a city and also a way of connecting nationally and internationally. Creativity in all of its forms is seen as a social and economic good that brings benefits to cities and citizens alike, and helps to position them internationally.

#### 1.3 Cultural Worker Profile

While in the past 20 years various studies relating to the arts and culture have been undertaken in Edmonton, there has never been a comprehensive survey of cultural workers until the present process. The Individual Survey reveals a typical cultural worker as being middle-aged, well-trained (locally, nationally and internationally), valuing what he/she does but whose remuneration is not commensurate with his/her training and experience. Survey respondents believe Edmonton is a good to excellent place to be a creator but express concern about the pressures of the boom economy. They note that space may not be available for studios or the creation of new production and performance facilities, and they may be forced to move to other centres where these costs are lower and/or there are greater opportunities for employment.

#### 1.4 Cultural Organization Profile

Edmonton is blessed with many cultural institutions and organizations, local, provincial and national in nature and mandate. The year 1975 was a bumper year for the creation of such organizations and it would appear that funding regimes (provincial and federal) were responsible for this phenomenon. Organizations appear to be well-run though finding special project funding and fundraising is a challenge. Core operating funding is an ongoing issue.

### *1.5 Location, Location, Location*

It would appear that Ward 4, which embraces the centre of the City, is Edmonton's "arts ward" with many institutions and organizations located within its boundaries. Heritage and arts precincts and/or districts have existed for some time (for example, Old Strathcona) but there is a thrust to create new entities in other regions of the City. These pressures come not only from the arts and heritage communities but also from the City of Edmonton itself which has espoused Creative City values.

### *1.6 Culture in the Spotlight*

While many cultural workers have traditionally viewed their activities as being marginalized, the recent Edmonton Cultural Capital, Leger Marketing study indicates a pride in Edmonton's federal designation. In addition, 87% of respondents believe that the arts and culture play a positive role in bringing together Edmonton's different cultures. Artists and heritage workers who took part in focus groups and surveys indicate excitement at being involved in the cultural inven-

tory and planning processes. There is a definite buzz.

### *1.7 The New Urbanism*

More and more, creative individuals are being called upon to partner with urban planners and designers, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, new media specialists and others in envisioning a new urban ideal. The laissez faire attitude and incremental growth, which has been the experience of the past, is being challenged with the need to plan to ensure sustainable growth. There is also an intersection between for-profit and not-for-profit entities collaborating for the benefit of all. There is also a greater societal value assigned to creativity, ranging from individual creativity to group to community. The thrust is to bridge the past, present and future resulting in livable communities. While there seems to be a consensus being struck among the cultural sector, civic politicians and administrators, and the business community, a fiscally conservative populace is still focused on a narrow definition of core services and fiscal responsibility narrowly defined.

### Appendix 3<sup>4</sup>

#### Edmonton Arts Council/City of Edmonton Service Agreement Summary

The City provides the Edmonton Arts Council with an annual operating grant; the EAC provides the following services to the City:

- **Allocation of Arts/Festival Grants.** The Arts Council shall make annual funding recommendations and administer the funding for City of Edmonton Community Investment Festival Operating Grants, Community Investment Arts Operating Grants, Community Investment Festival SEED Grants, and Community Investment Travel Grants, Community Investment Major Parade Grant, Project Grants and Emergency Fund Allocations and any new Community Investment Grant programs developed by the Arts Council and the City. These recommendations shall be made in accordance with any bylaw or policy dealing with Community Investment Grants.
- **Emergency Funding Requests.** The Arts Council shall advise the Municipal Council of the City, at their request, on emergency funding requests received by the Municipal Council of the City from outside the Community Investment Program funding process.
- **Advice.** The Arts Council shall provide informed and timely advice to the Municipal Council of the City regarding the City's annual investment in the arts and festival communities. This service shall include input into budget materials and participation of the Arts Council in the preparation of the City's annual budget for investment in the arts and festival communities of Edmonton.
- **Consultation.** At the request of the Municipal Council of the City, or the City Manager, the Arts Council shall provide expert advice to the Municipal Council of the City, and all its agencies, on arts and festival policies and on issues which impact upon the health and vitality of Edmonton's arts and festival sectors.
- **Assistance and Support.** The Arts Council shall assist art and festival organizations in obtaining support from other levels of government, foundations, the private business sector and the general public.
- **Project Assistance.** The Arts Council shall assist arts and festival organizations in initiating and implementing special projects to assure that a healthy infrastructure exists to benefit Edmonton's arts and festival communities.
- **Promoting Awareness.** The Arts Council shall promote greater awareness in Edmonton and elsewhere of the high quality of work being produced in Edmonton and generally shall create a greater awareness among the residents of Edmonton of the value of arts and festivals.
- **Resources.** The Arts Council shall act as a resource to those City staff providing support to recreational arts at the neighbourhood and district level as well as to general arts production by the City.
- **Economic Development.** The Arts Council shall assist the City and its economic development agencies in attracting and retaining industries, including cultural industries to Edmonton including reasonable participation in delegations, committees and partnership initiatives.
- **Data Base.** The Arts Council shall maintain an up-to-date arts and festivals data base.
- **Percent for Art Program.** The Arts Council shall, in conjunction with the City, advise and assist the City in the development and effective implementation of the City's Percent for Art policy and other matters related to public art.
- **Other City Policies.** The Arts Council shall, in conjunction with the City, advise and assist the City in the development and effective implementation of other City policies and other matters that include an arts component

<sup>4</sup> Edmonton Arts Council/City of Edmonton Service Agreement 2005-2010

## Appendix 4

### Overview of Grant Support—Arts and Festivals

The City of Edmonton provides the majority of its grant support to the arts and festivals through the Edmonton Arts Council (EAC).

The Edmonton Arts Council's grant programs have expanded in the past 10 years.

In 1997:

- The EAC had 4 grant programs—all City of Edmonton Community Investment Grants. In 2007, the EAC had 13 grant programs including 3 generated by private funds. In 2008 the EAC added 2 new City grant programs.
- EAC grant funds totaled \$1,472,500; in 2007 this was \$3,579,000.
- EAC grants supported 65 arts organizations; in 2007 this was 98
- EAC grants supported 21 festival organizations; in 2007 this was 39
- EAC travel grants went to 20 individual artists; in 2007 the EAC supports over 65 individual artists through 4 of its grant programs.

Additions since 1997 to City of Edmonton Community Investment Grants have been:

- City of Edmonton Project grants to organizations (2000)
- City of Edmonton Major Parade grants (2002)
- City of Edmonton Emergency grants (2003)
- City of Edmonton Individual Artists grants (2006)
- City of Edmonton Organizational Support grants (2006)
- City of Edmonton One Day Celebrations (2006)
- City of Edmonton Community Public Art grants (2006)
- City of Edmonton Arts and Museum Building Operating Grant (approved in 2007 with funding of \$1 million starting in 2008)
- City of Edmonton Multicultural Outreach (approved in 2007 with funding of \$100,000 starting in 2008).

#### City Of Edmonton Community Investment Grants 2007

**Arts Operating**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$1,763,000

To provide annual operating assistance to not-for-profit organizations whose primary activities are in the arts within the corporate limits of the City of Edmonton. The grant cannot exceed 25% of the total operating budget of the applicant.

**Festival Operating**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$1,029,000

To provide operating assistance to not-for-profit organizations that produce a festival within the corporate limits of the City of Edmonton. The grant cannot exceed 25% of the total operating budget of the applicant.

**Festival Seed**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$35,000  
To provide assistance to not-for-profit organizations to fund new or emerging festivals taking place within the city of Edmonton. The grant cannot exceed 25% of the total operating budget of the applicant.

**Travel**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$18,000  
To assist an individual or organization with travel costs from Edmonton to a destination for the purposes of training, development, presentation or marketing in the arts or festivals. Normally the maximum grant per person is \$500 and only covers actual transportation costs. Applicants must be residents of Edmonton.

**Project For Organizations**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$46,000  
To support a not-for-profit organization undertake projects that will contribute to the development of an artist, art form, artistic process, and/or the Edmonton arts community. The maximum grant is \$5,000.

**Project For Individual Artists**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$204,000  
To support the creation, development, curation, exhibition or production of work any art form by an individual artist. To be eligible, an individual artist must be an aspiring or established professional artist who resides in the City of Edmonton. The maximum grant is \$25,000.

**Major Parades and Celebrations**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$51,000  
To support not-for-profit organizations in the production of major parades and celebrations within the City of Edmonton. “Major Parade” means major road event attracting large spectator crowds, generating wide public interest and entertainment. “Celebration” means a one-day event actively programmed around a theme, anniversary, or other occasion with a significant cultural component in the broadest sense. The grant cannot exceed 25% of the total operating budget of the applicant.



**Community Public Art**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$86,000

To provide funds to Edmonton community groups or organizations which, through the creation of public art, wants to address social issues, celebrate their community or cultural identity, beautify public spaces, commemorate an event, or increase the appreciation of public art in general. The project must result in a piece of public art in the city of Edmonton. The maximum grant is \$45,000.

**Organizational Support**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$5,000

To support the cost of hiring a consultant who brings an outside perspective and/or expertise to help with a particular challenge or opportunity that an organization is facing. Preference will be given to locally based expertise. The applicant must be a not-for-profit organization. The maximum Organizational Support Grant will not normally exceed \$1,500.

**Emergency**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$5,000

To provide for one time emergency funding requests from not-for-profit arts and festival organizations with an emergency being described as a unique, critical situation caused by an action or event that was unforeseeable; and, if not dealt with, will jeopardize the artistic standard or overall health of an eligible arts or festival organization. Maximum grant will not normally exceed \$5,000

In 2007 Edmonton was recognized as a **Cultural Capital of Canada**. This brought \$2 million in federal funds to Edmonton as a one-time infusion of money. The City also provided \$667,000 in cash. Part of the Cultural Capital program included two one-time grant programs:

- **Explorations Grants for Individual Artists**—\$540,000 to support the creation of new work by individual artists and collaborations between individual artists fostering, in particular, the development of unknown or under-recognized talent as well as allowing established artists an opportunity to address their audience in new and interesting ways. The maximum grant was \$30,000.
- **Voices Less Heard**—\$385,000 to use the arts to give expression to voices less heard within our community. The project involved community based organizations,

gathering culturally interesting and diverse stories, as contained within Edmonton's varied communities. Collaboration then occurred between the community and professional artists, curators, art historians and researchers for the purpose of presentation and portrayal of these stories. The ultimate goal of the process was to promote understanding between members of a particular community, then to share that understanding with other communities in the city. This new understanding will form part of a process of social change, creating better conditions for the communities as well as for all Edmontonians.

**Edmonton Artists Trust Fund**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$85,000

The Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund (EATF) is a joint project of the Edmonton Arts Council and the Edmonton Community Foundation. EATF awards can be used to offset living and working expenses so that artists can devote a concentrated period of time to the creation and development of a new body of work. An artist must reside in Edmonton while using the award. The maximum grant is \$10,000.

**Lee Fund for the Arts**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$55,000

The Lee Fund for the Arts is a joint project of the Edmonton Arts Council and the Edmonton Community Foundation. It builds on the legacy of the Clifford E. Lee Foundation that ceased operation in 2003. The maximum grant is \$15,000.

**Transalta Festival City Program**—Total funds expended in 2007 were \$180,000

This program is a joint program of TransAlta and the Edmonton Arts Council. The TransAlta Festival City Enhanced Operational Grants are intended to enhance the capacity of a festival to achieve, in the immediate future, a recognizably higher level of accomplishment. Grants are also available for mentoring and partnerships between festivals. This is a three-year project from 2006 to 2008 with intent to renew it for a second three-year term in 2009. Edmonton-based festivals and festivals in northern Alberta are eligible to receive grants. The maximum grant is \$60,000.

**Province of Alberta** support for the arts and culture comes through the Alberta Lottery Fund. The Alberta Lottery Fund

(ALF) is made up of the government's share of net revenues from video lottery terminals (VLT), slot machines and ticket lotteries. ALF expenditures are allocated throughout the province's departments by provincial legislation. Under the Department of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture the primary granting agency from the province in arts and festivals is the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA).

In 2006-07, the AFA awarded \$20,691,028 through 33 grant programs. Edmonton organizations and individuals received \$8.017 million of that. Ten years ago, the AFA awarded \$15,071,654 through 48 grant programs, and granted \$6.57 million of that to Edmonton organizations and individuals.

At this time, the AFA provides a wide range of grant programs to organizations and individuals including operating grants, project grants, grants to community presenters, grants to for-profit cultural industries, and grants to specific groups such as Aboriginal artists.

The AFA has a policy of only one grant per year to an organization or individual. To illustrate, if an organization receives an operating grant from the AFA, they are not eligible to also receive a project grant. Or, if an organization produces both an arts season and a festival, they can be funded by the AFA as either an arts organization or a festival but not as both. This is different from City and federal government arts funding bodies.

The AFA is currently in the middle of a comprehensive evaluation of all their programming with the intent to review and revise funding priorities based on an understanding of the needs of Alberta's artists and arts organizations. That process is due to be complete in April 2009 with implementation in the spring of 2010.

Many organizations also access significant funds via the province through bingos, casinos and raffles. These games of chance are open to not-for-profit organizations whose programs benefit the general public. Organizations whose activities are considered to be primarily for the benefit of the organization's members are denied gaming licenses. In addition, uses of funds are restricted and are generally confined to those programs that have a clear benefit to the public. At this time an organization can expect to hold a casino every 2 years. Winnings are pooled so, in recent years, a guaran-

teed return of about \$30,000 per year is available to Edmonton organizations that hold a casino.

Not-for-profit organizations can access up to \$75,000 from the Alberta Lottery Fund for project-based initiatives through the Community Initiatives Program (CIP). The CIP allocated just over \$1 million to Edmonton arts, festival and heritage organizations in 2006/07. CIP funding is approved on a matching grant basis. The matching requirement may be met in the form of any contribution of money, volunteer labour, services, or donated materials or equipment for the project.

Another program of the ALF is the Community Facilities Enhancement Program, which provides support for the expansion and upgrading community-use facilities.

Additionally, organizations can access Alberta Lottery Funds for specialized areas or projects through agencies such as the Alberta Film Development Program.

The province also provides limited support to the arts through other departments including employment grants to arts and festival organizations. These grants have been relatively small and are meant to support summer student employment under the Student Temporary Employment Program.

The primary grantors to the arts and festivals from the **Government of Canada** are the Canada Council for the Arts and Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH). In general, the Canada Council supports professional arts organizations and individual professional artists while DCH supports presenters including professional arts-festivals and series. Another key to understanding the difference between these two parts of the federal government is the Canada Council funds the creation and development of artistic works and artists; the DCH funds the presentation of artistic works/artists.

The DCH is engaged in the arts in many ways supporting the many cultural programs and agencies of the Department including, for example, the National Film Board, the CBC, the Cultural Capital of Canada program, and the national galleries.

In 2006-07, the Canada Council had 130 grant programs

with a total grant budget of almost \$140 million and, granted \$3,576,000 of that to Edmonton organizations and individuals. Ten years ago, the Canada Council had 36 grant programs with a total grant budget of just over \$101 million and granted \$2,265,000 of that to Edmonton. Canada Council for the Arts had its base-funding increase by a further \$30 million in July 2007.

In October 2007, the Canada Council released its Strategic Plan titled “moving forward”. This plan reinforces the Council’s fundamental commitment to artistic merit—or excellence—as its most important consideration in awarding grants. In addition, the Council has made important commitments to “putting individual artists at the centre of its thinking and investing directly in them” and “to diversity and equity reflecting Canada’s rich and complex cultural reality”.

Three DCH grant programs that are regularly accessed by Edmonton arts organizations include Arts Presentation Canada, Cultural Spaces Canada, and Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program (Capacity Building and Endowments). In addition, the DCH has recently announced a new program called Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage which financially supports local celebrations and milestone anniversaries (100 years and over with 25 year increments) that utilize local performing arts/artists or local heritage artisans or activities within their events.

Arts Presentation Canada began in 2001 and in 2007-08, awarded grants and contributions totally \$636,500 to 15 Edmonton organizations. These are mostly for festivals and relate to the overall purpose of DCH programs to support presentation rather than creation. It is important to note that festivals, compared to arts organizations, receive very little or no support from the Canada Council and most of their federal support comes through the DCH. Not all Edmonton festivals are, however, eligible for DCH support under this program that also places emphasis on presenting artistic experiences originating from more than one province or territory. Smaller and emerging festivals that use local talent cannot meet this requirement but may be eligible under a new Departmental Local Arts Festivals Component.

Cultural Spaces Canada began in 2001 and since then, has granted \$2,456,750 of approximately \$148 million available

nationally to Edmonton organizations. The program supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, and the acquisition of specialized equipment as well as conducting feasibility studies.

Western Economic Diversification has provided some funding in the past to Edmonton arts organizations, particularly organizations like the Alberta Craft Council which operates a retail type of enterprise selling fine craft created by Albertans. That source of funding is currently not significant for arts and festivals.

The recently announced Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage increases opportunities, through festivals or other events and activities, for local artists and artisans to be involved in their community and for local groups to commemorate local history and heritage. This is a balance to the Arts Presentation Canada grants which do not support festivals or events that do not present artists from other provinces or territories. In the Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage program eligible events and activities must be local—created by and for the applicant community. They must be open and accessible to the public and strongly encourage and promote the participation of everyone in that community.

The International Cultural Relations Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade provides grants to Canadian groups and individuals for the promotion of Canadian culture abroad.

The federal government through the DCH also provides grant/contribution support to specialized sectors like film (Telefilm Canada) and publishing (Book Publishing Industry Development Program). In addition, federal grant programs such as Development of Official-Language Communities Program and Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages support Francophone organizations. Aboriginal organizations are able to access grant programs through Canadian Heritage Aboriginal Affairs.

The **Alberta Tri-Funders** group brings together the AFA, Canada Council, DCH, EAC and Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA). This group meets three times a year to discuss and compare grant programs and initiatives. Much of

the work of that group has been around identifying gaps in their combined grant programs as well as developing consistent practices in granting.

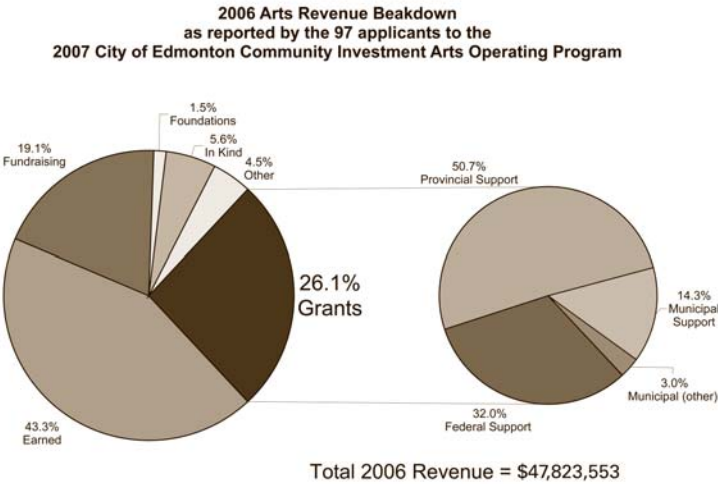
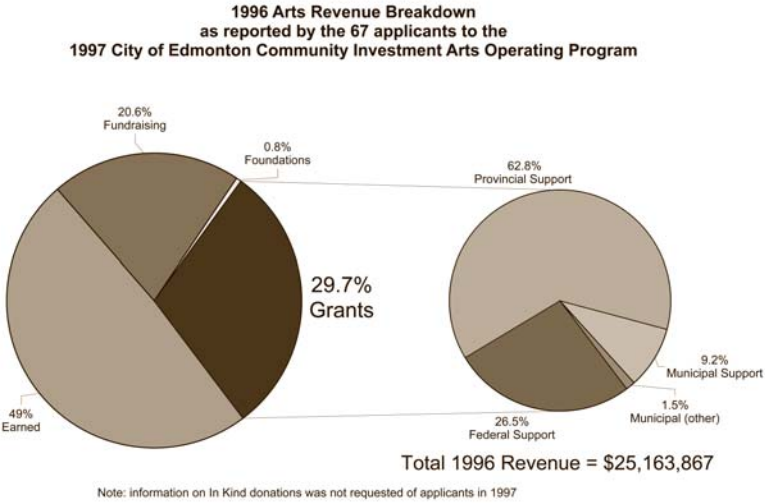
The Alberta Tri-Funders group has been key in the development of one combined grant program that was announced in 2007—the **Alberta Creative Development Initiative**. The Alberta Creative Development Initiative (ACDI) is a partnership between the Alberta Foundation for the Arts and the Canada Council for the Arts in collaboration with the Calgary Arts Development Authority and the Edmonton Arts Council. Funding is provided by the Canada Council and AFA and is \$2 million per year for three years (2008-2010) with the possibility of a subsequent two-year extension. The

EAC and CADA personnel have been active in developing the purpose and application process for the ACDI.

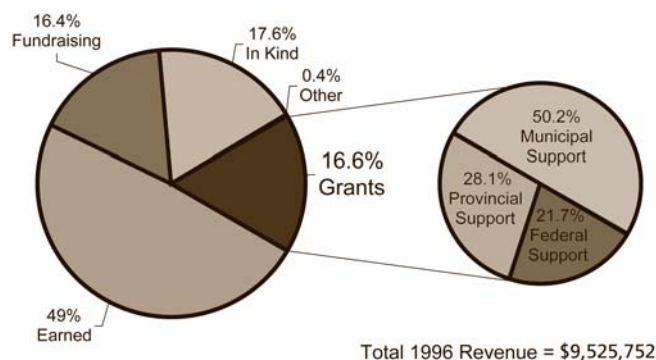
Funding priority will be given to Alberta-based professional artists and arts organizations of high artistic merit that:

- have not previously been supported by the Canada Council or by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts; and/or
- are Aboriginal, culturally diverse, or working in an official-language minority community; and/or
- are working in new or innovative arts practices within or across artistic disciplines.

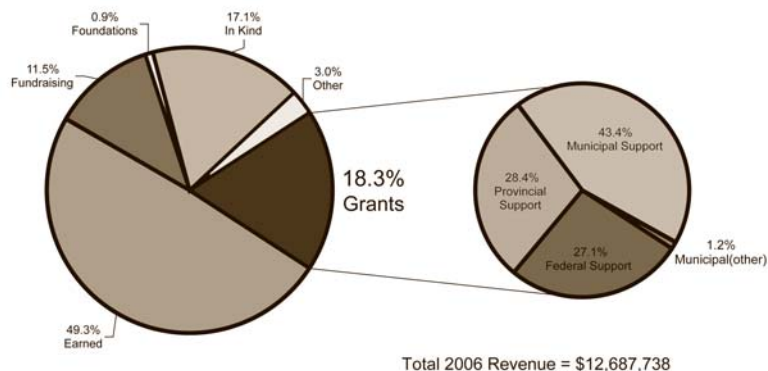
This is a three-year initiative (2008-2010), with the possibility of a two-year extension.



**1996 Festival Revenue Breakdown**  
as reported by the 15 applicants to the  
1997 City of Edmonton Community Investment Festival Operating Program



**2006 Festival Revenue Breakdown**  
as reported by the 32 applicants to the  
2007 City of Edmonton Community Investment Festival Operating Program



## Appendix 5

### Overview of Grant Support: Museums<sup>5</sup>

Direct grant support for museums is much less than that available for arts and festivals. Currently no **City of Edmonton** programs exist for this.

**Province of Alberta** funding available to Edmonton museums includes:

Alberta Museums Association Grants which offer:

- \$1,500 per year for basic operations (utilities, insurance, etc.)
- up to \$25,000 per year for staffing (starting in November 2008)
- up to \$12,000 for specific projects.

Aside from Alberta Museums Association basic operation and staffing grants, there is no other provincial operational funding for museums.

### Government of Canada grants include:

Museum Assistance Program offers 70% of project costs (up to a maximum of \$200,000) for specific projects. This is a highly competitive process, made even more challenging given that in 2006-07 the federal government cut the amount available each year by 50% and museums must have at least one full time staff members to even qualify.

Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program offers 50% of project costs (up to a maximum of \$250,000) for projects that address Stabilization, Business Development, Endowment Incentives, and Networking Initiatives. Funding is limited to a handful of projects across Canada each year and a large number of Edmonton museums would not even qualify.

<sup>5</sup> Author, Alberta Museums Association



## Appendix 6<sup>6</sup>

### Heritage Organizations

There are a range of heritage institutions and organizations in Edmonton and their mandates range from the local to the provincial including:

- 23 museums in Edmonton that are members of the Alberta Museums Association (AMA)
- 4 historical societies that are registered as not-for-profit organizations and
- 10 archival institutions in the city that are members of the Archives Society of Alberta (ASA).

The Archives Society of Alberta (ASA) < [www.archivesalberta.org](http://www.archivesalberta.org) > provides support and leadership for its members (including training programs), and there is a strong, positive relationship among the Edmonton archival institutions.

The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) <[www.museum-salberta.ab.ca](http://www.museum-salberta.ab.ca)> is an umbrella organization that provides grants and advisory services to the Province's over 200 museums. The Association also delivers training workshops and operates the Excellence Program, a museum accreditation program.

The Edmonton Historical Board <[www.edmonton.ca](http://www.edmonton.ca)> is a City Council appointed advisory board created first in 1938 and mandated under Bylaw 13601 to:

- advise Council on matters relating to City of Edmonton historical issues and civic heritage policies; and
- encourage, promote, and advocate for the preservation and safeguarding of historical properties, resources, communities, and documentary heritage.

The Edmonton Historical Board coordinates award programs for heritage, places plaques on historic structures, undertakes projects and publications that add to Edmontonians'

access to their stories, reviews and recommends buildings proposed for inclusion on the City's inventory of heritage resources. The Board has representation on the City's Naming Committee, which approves names for development areas, City facilities, parks and roads.

The City's Planning and Development Department's policies have an impact on the city's built heritage. Following national and provincial standards, its Register of Historic Buildings and its Resource Management Program are effective tools to identify and manage historic structures in the city.

The Heritage Community Foundation <[www.heritagecommunityfdn.org](http://www.heritagecommunityfdn.org)> links people with heritage through discovery and learning. It is a national leader in the creation of digital heritage resources. The Foundation brings heritage to the mainstream by creating dynamic digital resources that provide:

- authoritative information about Alberta's historical, natural, cultural, scientific, and technological heritage
- educational materials
- virtual exhibitions
- heritage and cultural tourism materials
- online catalogues, searchable databases, and web tools.

In partnership with museums, archives and other heritage and community organizations, the Foundation has created 77 multimedia websites. These make up the Alberta Online Encyclopedia <[www.albertasource.ca](http://www.albertasource.ca)> and have made Edmonton an international centre for web publishing. Alberta has more authoritative web content of any province or state. The Foundation created and gifted to the City of Edmonton, the City of Edmonton Archives Online Catalogue. A range of other websites deal with City of Edmonton content and make it accessible provincially, nationally and internationally.

<sup>6</sup> This information has been derived from material developed by the Heritage Community Foundation as a part of the Edmonton Canada's Cultural Capital 2007 project.

## Appendix 7

### Built Heritage Management and Business Plan<sup>7</sup>

Department of Planning and Development City of Edmonton

The Built Heritage and Business Plan's principal focus is on the identification, protection and management of physical structures, more notably buildings. The plan has four principal areas of activity that are being reviewed and amended that will direct and guide future efforts to protect heritage resources. In brief they involve:

#### Register

The continual work to update and identify process that ensure significant resources are identified and recorded on the City's Inventory, which enables appropriate efforts and policy to be put in place to protect and incorporate resources facing ongoing development pressures.

#### Incentives

Identification and creation of appropriate resources and policies to restore and rehabilitate heritage resources. These may vary from financial incentives, zoning relaxations to greater direct involvement by the City itself.

#### Promotion

The ongoing need to raise the profile of the benefits heritage brings to the City at large and enabling individuals to access appropriate resources to enable them to protect or account for heritage resources in future plans.

#### Monitoring

Continuation of putting in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure heritage resources are accounted for in the development process and enabling the long term management of existing resources.

The plan was last updated in 1995. As some of the incentive programs are obsolete and references and guidelines outdated, the need to standardize some guidelines with national ones and explore greater creativity and initiative possibilities to protect heritage resources required a review of the plan. The new plan has been subject to 3 visioning workshops and circulated to Heritage stakeholders for input and the result is

a comprehensive list of objectives and directives that if all followed would result in Edmonton having a very comprehensive heritage program and profile. The objectives range from short to long term and will be listed and identified in the plan. Some of these will have longer term implications to processes currently followed and will need to be addressed in the future, such as matters related to Provincial legislation.

The Plan will seek to expand some areas of current activity to enable the program to be more proactive and broaden some areas of activity. There is also need for the heritage fund to be allowed to fund ongoing maintenance work of protected resources and for it to fund expert services that relate to restoring or preserving resources (engineering etc).

The fund should also allow for the ongoing research and identification of new resources. There is also a strong desire that the program be more enabling, by giving it the ability to purchase or take on projects either directly or indirectly in partnerships with other City departments or outside agencies, this may range from acquiring a resource to working with developers or training agencies to train owners or new trades.

The budget allocated to the Historic Resources Management Program appears to be sufficient, but there is a need, as mentioned above, to enable some of its resources to be redirected or to be flexible enough to enable initiatives outside of 'bricks and mortar' funding to be perused that will directly result in the designation (protection) of identified resources.

The plan also identifies the need for greater consideration to be given to land surrounding those 'heritage' buildings, corridors, icons and landscapes in the planning processes. This area falls primarily in ongoing monitoring work and the planning and development processes that affect heritage resources. The need to promote the program and heritage issues related to 'bricks and mortar' heritage is recognized as one that needs improvement and assistance.

However, there remain some notable limitations on this programs area of activity. The key limitation appears to be related to the provincial legislation that governs heritage activity

<sup>7</sup> Author, City of Edmonton Department of Planning and Development

and inhibit a municipality's decision to designate/protect heritage buildings or sites. This is because the provincial legislation requires compensation be made to the owner of the site or building when a municipality wishes to designate a resource.

## Appendix 8

A "Civic" or "City" Museum in Edmonton

Catherine C. Cole & Associates

Final Report May 2007

Preliminary Assessment for a "Civic" or "City" Museum in Edmonton<sup>8</sup>

### Executive Summary

This preliminary assessment examines the possibility of establishing a "city" museum for Edmonton. It also considers the need for a support program for local museums. The idea of establishing a city museum has arisen many times over the past 60 years and with recurring frequency during the past decade. The high cost of building an actual museum without any real understanding of its benefits always was a deterrent. Nevertheless, a strong desire prevails in the community but a city museum needs to be very carefully conceived and developed incrementally.

This conclusion is based on initial consultations with a range of stakeholders, including local museums; on a preliminary assessment of collections currently owned by the City and local museums; on previous studies; on capital, operating and visitor estimates; and on a survey of best practices in cities in Canada and elsewhere. The assessment also considered the development of a "civic" museum that focuses exclusively on municipal services but this option is not regarded as viable by stakeholders or supported by other sources and studies consulted.

The city museum envisioned would focus on Edmonton as a place. It would be a focal point for a comprehensive local history and for a range of heritage activities. It should have

There are also external influences which have and could delay some areas of policy, such as the standardization of heritage standards and guidelines across Canada, the lack of Federal incentives and escalating costs in the development industry.

the capacity to be a public forum for learning about Edmonton's past, present and future through provocative displays and public programs that chronicle, respond to and challenge myths and realities. A city museum would therefore attempt to fill in the gap in collecting, preserving and interpreting objects and stories about life in Edmonton that are not held or told by small, local museums or other cultural institutions. Examples of themes are: *Edmonton: The Northern City*; *Edmonton: The Modern City*; *Edmonton Neighbourhoods*; and *Edmonton: The City of Champions*.

As the assessment indicated, much current enthusiasm for city museums comes from capital cities, whether provincial or national, which already have major institutions, such as the Royal Alberta Museum, in Edmonton's case, but are now taking their local history more seriously. Seen in this context, an Edmonton city museum has the potential to be a unique legacy whose mandate is to convey the city's many legacies. In this respect, and as confirmed by other assessment findings, the museum could be much more than a heritage facility by having outreach programs throughout the city and by playing a role in heritage planning and in preserving the built environment. It should also ensure that all Edmontonians see themselves in the museum, whether Aboriginal people, other ethno-cultural groups, newcomers, young or old.

Indeed, there was strong support for the very idea of a city museum, particularly when it was described as a dynamic, community-driven organization that would interpret large and inclusive themes. Initially, many people—even those working in local museums—had a limited notion of what a city museum could be. Several people commented that if a

<sup>8</sup> The full report is available from the Edmonton Arts Council

museum were to be created it had to be done well. It therefore became evident that initially building a museum facility is not the sole and predictable option. A museum can proceed in stages from a preliminary series of exhibitions and programs in temporary accommodations to a purpose built, or retrofit facility, but at every stage the work should be of excellent quality.

Consequently, this assessment recommends a bottom-up strategy. The museum should be incorporated and seed funding provided by the City to enable the incremental development of exhibitions and programs while building a profile and momentum for the project over a 5-10 year period. This would also entail creating and articulating a compelling vision; establishing a governance structure; establishing a preliminary budget and program; building a diverse and multigenerational audience; assessing collections; identifying potential champions and patrons; and determining an initial and permanent location.

While establishing a city museum is a priority, the assessment also recommends creating a support mechanism for existing local museums. A funding program should be developed that provides project and/or operating support for existing museums to collect and interpret aspects of the history of Edmonton. Requests for capital funding should continue to be assessed individually on the basis of merit. All eligible museums should be evaluated by a rigorous peer review process using criteria developed by the City that would include governance, mandate, community benefit, accessibility and sustainability. The proposed program will require an office to administer it—either a cultural affairs office or city department, an arms-length heritage council, or a department in the city museum.

Existing museums should also be encouraged to develop a network to further facilitate funding, shared marketing and programming. Where possible, collections should be consolidated to reduce duplication but existing museum organ-

izations should maintain control over their collections. The incremental development of a city museum could shepherd the activities of local museums and also address the pressing state of extant collections, including the City's holdings in the Artifact Centre which require urgent attention.

There are a number of museum projects currently in development: the Royal Alberta Museum, the Art Gallery of Alberta, the University of Alberta's Curatorial Research Facility, and the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum. As well, Fort Edmonton Park continues to grow, filling in the gaps in its master plan. Each of these institutions has its own unique mandate that must be considered in establishing and planning a city museum. They could benefit its evolution in the same way that the many cultural expansion projects in Toronto are being called a renaissance, or they could detract, with the museum regarded as further competition for funding and audience. The difference between all facilities, including their needs and benefits must become very clear to all citizens in order to gain support for a city museum.

Ultimately, there are risks if the move to establish a city museum does not happen imminently. First, and as noted above, City-owned collections are in crisis due to inadequate storage. Second, there have been far too many failed, yet understandable, attempts at developing a museum. There is now momentum which is widespread due to many factors, among them Edmonton's designation as a 2007 Cultural Capital. Third, Edmonton's current economic growth, while challenging in many respects, particularly in the case of housing and other rising costs, has created a climate of confidence, determination and multiple opportunities. Consistent with this situation is a museum committed to being an active community-driven organization that seeks to convey Edmonton's past, present and future to its citizens. In the final analysis, there is more than sufficient room and opportunities for a city museum that focuses on Edmonton as a distinctive and growing metropolis.

