

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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Artists sought for Edmonton's first curated Aboriginal Art Park

Edmonton – Professional Aboriginal artists from across Canada are invited to submit their portfolios and letters of intent to the Aboriginal Art Park call for Expressions of Interest – the call is open until September 28, 2015. Please visit publicart.edmontonart.ca/calls/.

The City of Edmonton's Aboriginal Art Park will be located in upper Queen Elizabeth Park, north of the former Queen Elizabeth Pool site.

The Aboriginal Art Park was approved as part of the Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan in August 2013. Planning for the art park began with a weekend "visioning workshop" in September 2013. Funding for the art park was approved by City Council in December 2014. The Aboriginal Art Park is anticipated to be unveiled in 2017.

Local, regional and Canadian Aboriginal artists working in diverse mediums as well as contemporary and customary (traditional) disciplines will be asked to create artworks that "tell the story of this place." Shortlisted artists will be required to participate in a site visit and a workshop facilitated by Curator Candice Hopkins, anticipated to be held the weekend of October 31 – November 1, 2015. Hopkins is a member of the Carcross Tagish First Nation in the Yukon, Gaanaxádi clan, a member of the BC Métis Association, and the Chief Curator of the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts

"The Aboriginal Art Park is unique and the first initiative of its kind in Canada," said Curator Candice Hopkins. "For artists, it offers the opportunity to create new works of art, and through these artworks, to tell stories, to share knowledge, and experiences that emanate from the rich history of these lands. I believe that the Aboriginal Art Park will create a platform for Aboriginal voices, through artworks that will provide a vision for the future."

A Steering Committee that includes representation from the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, Métis Nation of Alberta, Elders, Aboriginal artists, the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, and community members provides leadership, strategic direction and advice to the project team as well as ensuring protocols are observed.

Up to six artworks will be selected for the Aboriginal Art Park. Selected artists will be required to engage with Treaty No. 6 First Nations, Métis people and other Aboriginal citizens of Edmonton, and to work with Aboriginal knowledge holders and/or Elders to ensure that the artworks will be relevant and meaningful to this place.

"Public art helps to shape our stories and the ways in which we perceive ourselves," said Paul Moulton, Executive Director, Edmonton Arts Council. "The Edmonton Arts Council is thrilled to participate in this project, as part of our continuing outreach to, and engagement with, Edmonton's Aboriginal communities. We are eager to discover how Aboriginal artists here at home and from across Canada, will perceive this place and its stories."

Shortlisted Artists will be notified by mid-October. Members of Edmonton's Aboriginal communities will be invited to attend various community engagement events held by each selected artist in the development of his or her project.

To learn more, interested artists and community members are invited to attend an information session on August 20, 2015 at the Canadian Native Friendship Centre.

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The Edmonton Arts Council is a non-profit society and charitable organization that supports and promotes the arts community in Edmonton. The EAC works to increase the profile and involvement of arts and culture in all aspects of our community life.

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