

**Media Release**  
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## **Edmonton Arts Council Recognizes Arts Awards Recipients**

**Edmonton , City Hall** – The Edmonton Arts Council hosts a reception today (City Room, 11am) in recognition of the recipients of the 2011 *Cultural Diversity in the Arts Awards* and the 2011 *Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund*. Award presenters include City of Edmonton Councillor Amarjeet Sohi, and Penny Omell, Chair of the Edmonton Community Foundation Board of Directors.

"Individual artists are the life-blood of the arts community in Edmonton", says John Mahon, EAC Executive Director. "Their courage, dedication and creativity nourish the organizations and festivals for which this city is renowned. Since the creative process of an individual artist is often solitary, the Edmonton Arts Council is pleased to see a spotlight shone on their achievements, and to support their endeavors through these awards programs."

The ***Cultural Diversity in the Arts Program***, now in its fourth year, provides awards of \$7,500 to encourage and support Edmonton artists from diverse cultural backgrounds. The recipients in this program come to Edmonton from countries around the world, and demonstrate a strong dedication to continuing their artistic practice in their new home.

The ***Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund***, established in 1997, provides awards of \$7,500 to invest in emerging and established Edmonton artists, allowing them a concentrated period of time to devote to their artistic work. Funds may support artistic renewal, a change in the direction of the artist's career, work with an artistic master or the creation of new work.

### **Recipients of the 2011 *Cultural Diversity in the Arts Award*:**

**For more detailed artists profile see: [http://grants.edmontonarts.ca/2011\\_cda\\_recipients/](http://grants.edmontonarts.ca/2011_cda_recipients/)**

**Achol Dau Bileu** is originally from Sudan. As a child she developed a strong interest in singing, and at age 15 she became a public singer in the community. She later formed a jazz band that performed at events in Southern Sudan. She came to Edmonton as a refugee in 2003.

**Sofia Cristanti** is a visual artist whose medium has expanded to art installation, performance art and video. She was born in Indonesia, and arrived in Edmonton in 2010.

**Litza Periera Dias** is a visual artist, and a visual arts instructor. She comes to Canada from Brazil, where she began *The Orchid Project*, an action to preserve and restore the natural habitat of the orchids and bromeliads in the Atlantic Forest with proceeds from the sale of her artworks.

**Oleksiy Karpenko** is a visual artist from the Ukraine, where he was a grand prize winner of a national design competition. After immigrating to Canada in 2003, he has been establishing his artistic path as a graphic designer.

**Aastha Khajuria**, originally from India, has been practicing Kathak, a North Indian Classical dance form, for eighteen years. She came to Edmonton in 2008 by way of Winnipeg and Toronto, and quickly connected with the Indian Dance community here. She continues to train and perform, seeking collaborations with Edmonton artists of all practices.

**Amson Saintime** is a musician who emigrated from Haiti, and is also the Executive Director of the Arbre de Vie Fine Arts World Fellowship. This organization started in 2005, working to help youth avoid engaging in high-risk lifestyles, through several arts-based programs.

**Jianping Shao** is a musician, and was a university music teacher in China before moving to Edmonton two years ago. She currently is the President of Edmonton Chinese Philharmonic Association, and a member of the Electroacoustic Music Association of China.

**Misook Song** is a visual artist, born in South Korea. She moved to Canada in 2000. She continues to explore new media and techniques to be able to express her inner self to share with others.

**Alfredo Villanueva** is a musician. Born in the Philippines and now a Canadian citizen, he has been a member of Pro Coro Canada in Edmonton since 2007. He also serves as assistant conductor to Concordia Symphony Orchestra.

### **Recipients of the 2011 *Edmonton Artists' Trust Fund Awards:***

*For more detailed artists profile see: [http://grants.edmontonarts.ca/2011\\_eatf\\_award\\_recipients/](http://grants.edmontonarts.ca/2011_eatf_award_recipients/)*

**Kyle Armstrong** is a filmmaker working predominantly in short non-narrative film. His work has been screened at various galleries, during live performances and in traditional cinemas across Canada.

**Nathan Cuckow** is an actor, producer, writer, and co-Artistic Director of Edmonton's critically acclaimed, independent theatre company, Kill Your Television. His work is internationally acclaimed.

**Beth Graham** is an Edmonton based theatre artist who acts and writes. She has performed on stages across the country and has also toured internationally to the U.K., Australia and the United States.

**Thom Golub** is a string bassist, who can be heard in many venues across Canada and on many recordings. He has also had his original compositions performed, recorded and broadcast in North America and Europe.

**Gary James Joynes** (aka Clinker) is a sound artist, composer and visual artist who has exhibited his audiovisual and installation works internationally.

**Lindsay Knox** is an artist whose interdisciplinary practice employs sculpture, drawing, painting, sound and assemblage into larger installations or environments that conceptually explore themes of home and displacement, analyzing the interrelations between the human body and infrastructure.

**Amy Loewan** is a dedicated visual artist and cultural ambassador. Many of her works illustrate the integration of her Chinese heritage with western postmodernist art practices.

**Mieko Ouchi** is an actor, writer, and director who works in both theatre and film and TV. Her award winning documentary, narrative and experimental films, as well as her plays, have reached audiences across Canada and the US, as well as internationally.

**Josée Thibeault** is an author, director and actor who has been active in the francophone artistic community for more than ten years.

**Amy van Keeken** is an Edmonton musician and songwriter. Throughout her career in the Edmonton music community, she has been involved in a number of highly acclaimed collaborative projects across a variety of genres.

*More information* about the Edmonton Arts Council's Awards Programs can be found at: [grants.edmontonarts.ca](http://grants.edmontonarts.ca)

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### **About the Edmonton Arts Council**

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.

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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