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EXPLORATIONS GRANT PROGRAM

Edmonton artists encouraged to be adventuresome and tread new territory.

The Edmonton Cultural Capital Program (ECCP) awarded \$312,964 to sixteen Edmonton artists in the second round of the Explorations grant program. In this round the ECCP office received 141 applications with total requested support being close to \$2.8 million.

All funds in this grant program have now been dispersed. The total money available and awarded over the two grant periods was \$540,000.

Round Two Grant Recipients

Kyla Fischer (Visual Arts) is an emerging artist who will produce and present printworks. After photographing images from nature, surfaces are stripped away to produce abstractions. Kyla's work reflects freshness and boldness within a contemporary approach.

Jennifer Berkenbosch (Visual Arts) will create *Project Radiant* consisting of 20-30 pieces of artwork of various sizes. These works will be exhibited on the outsides of vacant buildings along 118 Avenue.

Kristine Nutting (Theatre) will produce a new interdisciplinary twelve person spectacle show called *Pig*. This new young author, performer and artistic producer focuses on creating Alberta work, which is image based and provocative, and projects a personal aesthetic.

Jessica Carmichael (Theatre) and a group of Edmonton artists called Theatre Rien – Pantoute, will perform *1984/Untitled*. This adaptation for stage, of George Orwell's novel *1984*, will bring forward the novel's female voice and incorporate techniques from Theatre of the Oppressed, to engage the audience in the performance.

Marty Chan (Theatre) will workshop and present a reading of *The Forbidden Phoenix*, a fusion of Chinese opera and western musical theatre. A cast of singers, actors, musicians and acrobats will test production elements within a genre that is new to North American audiences. The play is a political allegory about the plight of Chinese immigrant men building Canada's railroads.

Glen Halls and Garry Checora (Music) together with The Edmonton Creative Musicians' Collective, will produce an avant garde concert series. The concerts will bring forward new compositions using classical and jazz forms, with a strong focus on improvisation.

Don Ross (Music) will present *The End of Time Project*, a multimedia re-creation of the work *Quartet for the End of Time* by Olivier Messiaen. The intense musical score, written and premiered in a German prisoner of war camp in 1941, will be layered with dance, video projection, narrative and lighting.

Marlon Wilson (Music) will produce a CD called *Griot*. Edmonton hip-hop group "Politic Live" will aim to give voice to Edmonton's growing African and Caribbean community, pushing the limits of hip-hop lyrically and musically.

Eric Cheng (Theatre) will present *Willkommen in Spreepark*, a musical theatre production that will bring together Edmonton musicians, actors, installation artists, and others, to transform a local performance space into an interactive amusement park.

Shabnam Sukhdev (Media Arts) will create a film called *Veiled Voices*. This insightful documentary will profile East Indian women, telling stories and raising issues of identity. It will reveal what it means to be an East Indian woman in a new culture.

Mark Templeton (Media Arts) will produce *Surrounding Sight and Sound*, six short films and music pieces that explore and interpret environment through the use of visual and audio mediums.

Beth Wishart-MacKenzie (Media Arts) will create a documentary film called *Unforgotten*, which tells the story of a colourful and aging cowboy named Roy. The film poignantly reveals the changing face of the Canadian west and explores Métis culture and its impact on a community.

Mohammed Al-Nassar (Literary Arts) will publish a poetry book called *Untimely Departure* that will showcase poems written in Arabic and then translated into English. The poems will be set side by side throughout the anthology and will deal with a wide range of subject matter across race, colour and nationality. There will be a launch of the anthology bringing together the Arabic and English communities.

Jocelyn Brown (Literary Arts) will research and stage an event with Ground Zero Theatre to re-enact the events of Edmonton City Council, 1933-45. This most interesting period in the history of City Council will focus on a young and radical councilor, Margaret Crang and her controversial support for the anti-fascist movement in Spain.

Linda Turnbull (Dance) will choreograph and perform *Masking*, in collaboration with costume designer and creative artist, Miya Turnbull. The human body and face will be distorted through the use of plaster, and through movement and dance, concepts of beauty will be examined.

Kathy Ochoa (Dance) will use the Shumka outdoor stage and the Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to present *Spring Triptych/the Down from Downtown Dance Project* - a weekend of eclectic dance performance. The show will blend professional dancers, inner city youth, hip-hop dance, and musicians from the Edmonton arts community.

Many of the Explorations grant recipients are up-and-coming artists and stated that the grant funds enabled them to remain in Edmonton and gave them a kick start professionally. Visual artist and grant recipient Laura O'Connor reported:

Not only do I feel more connected within the Edmonton art community, I feel like I have something to offer it as well.

O'Connor recently completed her grant project on the *Patron Saints of Modern Times*, and will be publicly displaying her work in March.

The Exploration grant program encouraged innovation and supported artistic boldness. This, it was believed, would allow artists to broaden their creative scope and more fully develop as creators of new work for Edmonton. Eva Colmers, established theatre artist and filmmaker, collaborated with Eileen Sproule on a video poem project. Colmers reports:

It truly made me realize how rarely artists ever have a chance to 'play', explore and grow with the other wonderful artists in town. I felt very proud to be an Edmonton artist.

The short video poem will be submitted to word festivals around the world and is being sold on DVD.

Junetta Jamerson, of the Black Pioneer Heritage Singers, received an Explorations grant to create the first recording of the folk and gospel songs of Alberta's Black Pioneer community:

The Explorations grant has opened up a new world of opportunities and experience for me. It has allowed me to surround myself with some of the best professionals here in town to fulfill my vision of a recording of the music of Edmonton's historical black community. We will be able to share this bit of Alberta's history with listeners the world over. (Junetta Jamerson)

It is clear that the Edmonton Cultural Capital's Explorations grant program is fulfilling a need in Edmonton's art and cultural community. If you require more information on the Exploration grant program, or need contact information for individual projects please contact:

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