

# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

MANITOBA  
ARTS COUNCIL  
2001/02  
ANNUAL REPORT



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*design:* DOOWAH DESIGN INC.

*printed in Canada by:* KROMAR PRINTING LTD.

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The Manitoba Arts Council is an Agency of the Province of Manitoba funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism and the Lotteries Distribution System.

**Manitoba  
Culture, Heritage  
and Tourism**





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September 15, 2002

Honourable Gary Doer,  
Premier and President of the  
Executive Council

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of An Act to Establish the Manitoba Arts Council,  
I present this report on behalf of the members of the Manitoba Arts Council, covering  
the activities of the Council from April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads 'Judith N'.

JUDITH FLYNN,  
CHAIR

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# REPORT FROM



*A YEAR AGO*, Council's emphasis was on developing a cohesive approach to the promotion, preservation, and support of the arts as central to the quality of life of all the people of Manitoba. Council had also established the priorities needed in order to achieve that vision through a strategic management plan. Those priorities included supporting diversity and arts education as well as providing effective funding for and promotion of the arts. The past 12 months have been dedicated to working to achieve those priorities, while ensuring that our overriding commitment to artistic excellence was fulfilled in all aspects of Council policy.

In its Annual Report last year, Council acknowledged that it needed to do a better job of including aboriginal artists and aboriginal arts groups as well as more diverse artists, particularly those from rural and northern communities, within its mandate. I am pleased to report that there has been considerable progress in both of these areas during the past year.

We had also identified community consultation as an important element in developing those priorities. As a result, we held several conversations with a variety of representatives within the professional arts community along with representatives from the broader community. Council has moved forward with other consultation initiatives since then.

Given that it had been a year since they were appointed, the Board members decided it would be a good idea to evaluate how they worked together as a Council, beginning with a self-assessment of its governance practices. This helped to identify areas that required clarification, either because of an absence of governance policy or because of a need to update an existing governance directive.

## FULFILLING OUR PRIORITIES

Early in the year, Council moved ahead to address those areas requiring special attention — the professional arts in rural, northern, and Aboriginal communities. Through an initial analysis of where grants were distributed during a five-year period, Council learned that while one-third of professional artists live in Brandon or rural communities, less than 7% of all grants to individual artists were awarded to artists living outside of Winnipeg.

Clearly, there was a gap between the provincial mandate of the Council and the reality of access to Council programs. In order to determine why this gap existed, the Board of Directors undertook a series of public meetings in rural and northern communities.

These meetings were important in identifying areas that Council needed to

address to better meet the needs of professional artists in all corners of the province. Council members attended gatherings in a variety of locations to hear local artists talk about the issues that were important to them.

The final report of those meetings led Council to approve policies for pilot initiatives in the areas of funding rural and northern artists, always, of course, within the context of artistic excellence.

The rural gatherings were part of an overall long-term consultation strategy that included changing the appointed Multidisciplinary Advisory Panel to an elected Arts Advisory Panel. Further details on this process and its results are found on page 4.

Council members are passionate about the value of arts education in improving the quality of life for all Manitobans. We continue to be dedicated to ensuring that all children, even those living in the smallest communities, have an opportunity to experience the joy of creating and appreciating art. However, we needed to find a way to share that passion with others who could help to increase access to arts education at all levels.

The opportunity to begin the conversation on this important issue came when a small group of Council members brought

# THE CHAIR

together a group of individuals actively involved in arts education. With Council's blessing and financial support, this group organized a conference on education and the arts held in February 2002 — "For the Love of the Arts: Education and the Arts 2002". At that event, 200 representatives from the education and the arts communities came together to share insights and ideas.

One significant outcome of the conference was the creation of the Manitoba Alliance for Arts Education, an organization dedicated to a sustained advocacy strategy for arts education. This umbrella group of individuals and institutions plans to work to inform the community of the importance of a strong arts education to our children and the society of the future.

Finally, but no less importantly, Council continued to recognize the needs of professional arts organizations through the funding of management and governance projects as well as repeating the Incentives Initiative, piloted in 2000-2001. The latter provides arts organizations that are receiving annual or operating funding from Council with an additional 5% to undertake initiatives to develop artistic or administrative strategies for the organizations.

## GOVERNANCE

In parallel with the development of a management and governance program for the arts organizations, Council established a process for self-assessment of its own Board policies and actions. Initially, members completed a self-assessment questionnaire about their procedures and policy development.

The objectives of the self-assessment were to:

1. improve the effectiveness of Council as a whole
2. improve the effectiveness of individual members of Council
3. test an assessment tool that could be used by other arts organizations

The results of this questionnaire formed the basis of a day-long governance session in Brandon in the fall. The goal was to come to an agreement about governance issues that needed to be addressed.

Among other things, the Board came to clear decisions concerning its responsibilities, both collectively and individually. Over the course of the year, and under the direction of a Change committee, some changes were made to the Board's committee structure. We have now approved a new structure which includes



Council member Derek Smith listens to input from representatives of professional arts organizations.

an Executive Committee, an Audit, Finance, and Human Resources Committee, and a Governance Committee to monitor compliance with governance policies. In addition, Council will deploy working groups as needed to develop policy and to review issues highlighted by the Strategic Plan.

As is customary with most boards, the Board will continue to conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director against the Council's annual objectives, the ED job description, and the financial targets for the Council. In addition, however, the Chair and Board committees will

also be subject to an annual review of their performance.

Council members re-affirmed the existing Communications Policy and a commitment to updating the Communications Strategy to reflect Council priorities and the Vision of Council.

While governance issues are not as exciting as funding the arts, meeting with the community or learning more about the creative process, the Board recognizes that it has a major obligation to ensure that the Manitoba Arts Council is being managed in an effective, efficient manner.

# REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Clearly defined responsibilities enable us as a Council to focus on those priorities that help to sustain a vibrant province-wide arts community. By doing our jobs and ensuring the Council staff have the tools to do theirs, we know that the trust placed in us by the Province of Manitoba, and ultimately, by Manitobans, is being honoured.

Our goal is to encourage artistic excellence by providing effective support to the professional Manitoba arts community. Effective management will guarantee that we make the most we can of every dollar we receive from the government so that artists and arts organizations can continue to grow and prosper here.

Three members of Council have decided to pursue other interests and therefore, have resigned from Council. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheila Gordon, Cory Lussier, and Jean-Louis Hebert for their dedication and commitment over the past two years and wish them the best of luck with their future endeavours.

On a personal note, I have had the privilege of meeting many members of the Manitoba arts community, from Thompson to Hamiota, and of seeing the range of art that is being created throughout the province. The creative passion is alive and well everywhere and was in particular evidence when we hosted a reception for Brandon and area artists during our planning visit last fall. Their enthusiasm and support for the arts was repeated in many small towns that I have been able to visit over the last two years.

Manitobans can be proud of the wealth of arts activity in a province known mainly for its weather and mosquitoes. Our next challenge is to have the rest of the world acknowledge Manitoba as the cultural centre we know it is.



JUDITH FLYNN, CHAIR

## ARTS ADVISORY PANEL

The election of the Arts Advisory Panel is a new approach for Council. It was developed through consultations with the arts community in the previous year and was designed to improve upon the existing practice of Council selecting individuals to attend one meeting and provide advice. Under the new system, members would be elected for a two-year term.

This new approach included a nomination process launched in January, followed by a mail-in ballot. Once the nomination process and elections were held, 11 members out of a possible 21 members, were in place. Council appointed individuals to fill the remaining 10 vacancies to ensure representation from all arts disciplines and regions as well as a balance between organizations and individuals.

The mandate of the Arts Advisory Panel is to:

- provide a forum for open discussion and exchange of ideas, alerting Council to major issues, concerns and opportunities in the arts
- Encourage communication and foster partnership
- Provide a link back to the community when members report back to their respective disciplines
- Provide broad and direct knowledge of the arts community

The Panel will meet twice a year and members of the arts community are encouraged to bring issues to their attention as well as get updates on the discussions of the Panel.

Manitobans will also have an opportunity to provide input to the Panel through the Council web site.

# 2001 HIGHLIGHTS

## IMPROVED ACCESS

- Established a toll-free number for inquiries from outside of Winnipeg.
- Created new position of Program Officer, Aboriginal Arts, in order to increase access by professional Aboriginal artists to Council programs.
- Developed a Community Connections Pilot Project initiative with input from community representatives.
- Expanded French language services to include simultaneous translation at community events and more guidelines available in both English and French.

## ARTS EDUCATION

- Provided funds to "For the Love of the Arts: Education and the Arts 2002", a conference to promote the value of an arts education.

- Allotted additional funds to Artists in the Schools program to respond to increased demand, particularly from northern and rural schools.

## CONSULTATION AND PROMOTION

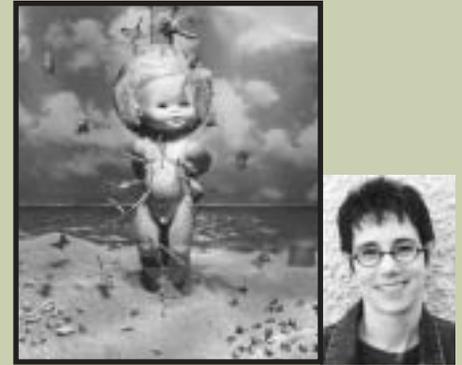
- Released Community Connections report on the needs of artists and arts organizations in rural communities.
- Implemented a long-term consultation plan with the creation of the first Arts Advisory Panel to include members nominated and elected by the professional arts community.
- Incorporated an events calendar into the Council web site in order to promote upcoming events organized by professional arts organizations in Manitoba.

## EFFECTIVE SUPPORT

- Developed and implemented a Management and Governance initiative to assist professional arts organizations in meeting management and governance needs.
- Expanded the Public Readings program to include storytellers and workshops.
- Provided the provincial contribution to the Manitoba Arts Stabilization Initiative and appointed a member to sit on its board of directors.
- Approved the creation of three Aboriginal arts programs: Travel Grant, Creative Development Pilot Projects, and Mentorship, Training and Development.

## COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

- Developed governance policy for Council.



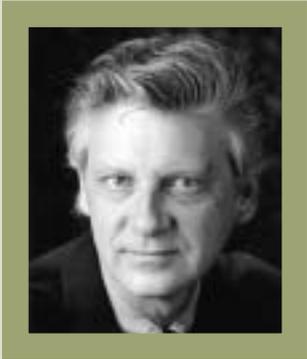
## MAJOR ARTS RECIPIENT

VISUAL ARTIST/PHOTOGRAPHER  
**DIANA THORNEYCROFT**

## PROFILE

Awarded a major arts grant to further her work using the skin of dolls like the blank surface of a canvas, Dianna Thorneycroft has generated both praise and anger throughout her illustrious career. Her work is thought provoking and controversial, often resulting in a strong reaction from those who view her photographic essays. Since her graduation from the University of Manitoba fine arts program and the Masters of Art program at the University of Wisconsin, Diana has been featured in over 50 shows in more than 35 cities around the world. Her solo exhibitions have appeared in Tokyo, Boston, Moscow, Edinburgh, Sydney, Guadalajara and major centres across Canada. In 2000, "The Liminal Body" opened in Sydney, Australia as part of an international group exhibition running parallel to the Olympic Games. Her most recent exhibition is "The body, its lesson and camouflage" at the Art Gallery of Hamilton in 2002. A companion book on this work was published in January of 2000 by Bain and Cox.

# REPORT FROM



## *ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE*

is at the heart of our work at the Manitoba Arts Council. We deliver over 40 programs, implement new policies and respond to the changing needs of the professional arts community so that as many dollars as possible go towards the creation of contemporary, innovative art.

Within the arts community and for us at MAC, we collectively face the challenge of ensuring that there is open access for all professional Manitoba artists and arts organizations, at all levels of development.

Under the umbrella of funding artistic excellence, the directors of Council have identified key priorities that address access, cultural diversity, education, and promotion of the arts. Over the past year, this has resulted in new programs, new staff, and new challenges.

Those challenges included engaging the community in a conversation about the value of the arts; provoking connections and communication between and about the arts community; and finding ways to celebrate the unique identity of Manitoba as defined by the arts.

We have made great strides in those areas by initiating dialogue with various groups throughout the Province. Community Connections, an initiative that took Council to rural communities to provide information about MAC, also

helped us to learn about the needs of professional artists living outside of Winnipeg. This initiative not only provided us with insight into what actions Council must take to meet those needs, but it also inaugurated conversations among different artists and arts groups.

After consultations in 20 communities, including representatives from another 42 communities, a final report provided us with eight areas of consideration. (see sidebar for report summary)

Initial responses to these areas included the establishment of a toll free number and a broader distribution of the Council newsletter to participants in the consultations. We also implemented a Community Connections Pilot Project initiative to strengthen the link between the professional and emerging artist and provide artists in smaller communities with professional development opportunities. Council officers have also made an effort to travel to more communities during the course of the year to attend arts events and meet with artists and arts organizations.

We are also working to address the special needs of the francophone, Aboriginal and northern artists through expanded services in French, Aboriginal programming and programming changes to compensate for the high costs of creating art in northern Manitoba. The hiring of a Program Officer, Aboriginal Arts, enabled

us to proceed with the second phase of Community Connections which included consultations with the Aboriginal and remote communities. These discussions also included Aboriginal artists living in Winnipeg and Brandon and made it possible for us to provide them with information about Council programs and to identify potential jurors for future program deadlines. In addition, the officer has been bringing together partners from other levels of government to work with the Aboriginal arts community on specific initiatives.

The insight these initiatives brought back to Council, along with the realization that Council had to find a way to address the unique needs of the Aboriginal arts community, resulted in three pilot programs. The programs provide funds for travel, creative development, and mentorship and training within the context of the Aboriginal culture and the broader commitment to fund artistic excellence.

The consultations with the Aboriginal community represented a portion of the conversations that we initiated with the arts community. Through working group discussions on issues relating to touring, arts education, funding for arts organizations and funding of individual artists, we were able to provide Council with the information it needed to identify priority actions for the long term.

# THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A management and governance initiative was also announced in the fall to assist professional arts organizations in dealing with management and governance issues. Organizations could apply for funding to obtain the assistance of experts in helping to address issues relating to board development, strategic planning, human resource management, and the development of marketing plans. A total of 18 organizations applied for funding and 16 organizations were awarded grants.

Work has begun on a more interactive web site that will be launched early in 2002-2003. An electronic newsletter, an expanded events calendar, and the Arts Advisory Panel forum will be key components of the new web site. Links will also be expanded to provide more resources for the community.

This past year has been a challenging and exciting one. Through our community consultations we have been able to build bridges between arts disciplines, between Council and artists living in rural and northern communities, and between the arts and education. We are also beginning to build new partnerships as we move to face the challenges of the future.

The volume of applications and requests for funding support has increased, as have requests for assistance in grant writing. We are committed to developing

workshop and guidebook material that will assist in helping applicants to understand the granting process.

Last year, we handled over 800 applications for funding through 47 programs. We awarded over 280 grants to individuals and over 190 grants to professional arts organizations, excluding Artists in the School. This includes 21 grants for unique initiatives through the Arts Opportunities Fund and pilot projects. In addition, a total of 238 residencies to 23 artists or ensembles were awarded under the Artists in the School program. The Bridges program was wrapping up with all projects due to be completed by year end. The results of that program are highlighted elsewhere in the report.

The adjustments in the community have also been reflected at Council with changes in the staff. The addition of a Program Officer, Aboriginal Arts, has opened up new possibilities. The illness of Svetlana Zylina, Theatre officer, resulted in the introduction of Susan Israel as an interim officer. Finally, Christian Delaquis, Community Connections officer, and Louise Fiset, Arts Development Officer left the Council for other opportunities.

In addition to changes in staff, we have also faced challenges in the changing role of the Council. As a result, we started a review of the role of the officer

to ensure that it reflects the kind of advice and support needed by artists and arts organizations.

The Council offices also underwent renovations to make them more efficient and enable us to have meeting space that is more adaptable to our needs, thereby reducing our need for space in other venues.

Throughout this change, we continue to strive to meet the needs of the community. We have been able to make adjustments to programs that will improve delivery and respond to concerns raised by applicants.

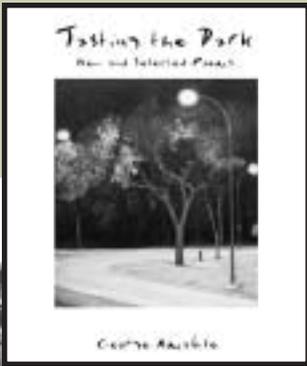
We are fortunate in Manitoba to have been able to provide support to so many artists and organizations. It is important that we continue to recognize and promote the benefits of that support, to encourage new audiences to appreciate the arts, to ensure equal access and to build new bridges. Looking back, we can be proud of our accomplishments. Looking ahead, we can see more opportunities.



DOUGLAS RISKE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS REPORT SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1. Community art/professional art** — The distinction between these two forms of art is not always clear.
- 2. Feeling of isolation** — Artists in smaller communities feel isolated from other artists and often live in communities where sports are a higher priority.
- 3. MAC's presence in the community** — Few participants were aware of Council programs thereby demonstrating a need for more communications.
- 4. Feeling left out of the loop** — Participants felt that Winnipeg artists and arts organizations control who gets funding.
- 5. Exposure** — Smaller communities lack the resources for exhibition or performance space as well as access to marketing support.
- 6. Clearinghouse of information** — They are looking for information about all opportunities to access funding and resources.
- 7. Special needs** — Some communities (francophone, Aboriginal and northern) have needs unique to those communities that need to be addressed.
- 8. Supporting emerging artists** — Many suggested possible programs that would provide professional development and arts education opportunities for artists living in smaller communities.



MAJOR ARTS RECIPIENT

AUTHOR  
GEORGE AMABILE

PROFILE

A writer of poetry, fiction, and some non-fiction for nearly thirty years, George Amabile has just published a compilation of new selected poems, "Tasting the Dark" (The Muses Company, 2001). George holds a Master of Arts degree from the University of Minnesota and a Ph. D. in literature from the University of Connecticut and has taught at universities since 1960. Prairie Fire magazine devoted a special issue to the author and his work, (Vol. 21, No. 1, May 2000). He was Writer-in-Residence at the Winnipeg Centennial Library in 2000-2001. A winner of the Canadian Authors Association National Prize for literature in 1983, he also won first prize in the Sidney Booktown International Poetry Contest in 2000.

He has published five books of poetry and a collection of four short stories about childhood. He also recently published Rumours of Paradise/ Rumours of War, a large collection organized into interconnected thematic groupings. (McClelland & Stewart, 1995) George was awarded a Major Arts Grant to write a fiction novel about youth.

BRIDGES

The Bridges program, launched in December of 1999, was completed in March of 2002. Twenty-three proposals were funded over the two-year period for a variety of projects from web site development to marketing opportunities. In 2002, a final report will be provided to Council on the impact of these funds. Following are a few highlights to date of those projects:

The development of a comprehensive audience development/marketing plan enabled Groundswell to increase attendance at its events by 10%. The plan included an audience survey, the development of new logo and marketing materials, and further development of their web site.

A joint initiative between Edith Regier and the Elizabeth Fry Society, the Crossing Communities Art Project offered art collaboration programs to women in conflict with the law. The project included a series of collaborations explorations workshops that featured sculptor Aganetha Dyck, performance photographer Diana Thorneycroft, ceramic artist Grace Nickel, performance artists Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan and new media artist Reva Stone. The project also included a Studio Program in the Exchange District where women could participate in weekly studio sessions. A final exhibition of the work created during the project was held in the fall at Gallery C103.

Prairie Theatre Exchange used their Bridges grant to fund Audience Development for a Brighter Future. This marketing initiative included audience surveys following the conclusion of each Mainstage series, television advertising and transit shelter advertising. This generated a 2.4% increase in subscribers and a small budget surplus.

Signature Editions produced a dynamic web site profiling its published works with its \$9800 Bridges grant. Formerly called Nuage Editions, the publishing firm provides information on their site about upcoming book launches, new publications and what authors need to know about submitting manuscripts. As a result, visitors to the site increased from less than 10 to over 56,000 within 8 months. Visit their web site at [www.signature-editions.com](http://www.signature-editions.com).

The Manitoba Theatre Centre was awarded \$30,000 to assist them in developing and implementing an Endowment Campaign. The funds enabled them to hire staff dedicated to this task, helping them to attract \$1.3 million in contributions to the Endowment Fund.

Arts and Cultural Industries Team of Winnipeg used their \$39,000 grant to develop a training plan for administrators of arts and culture organizations. This included the creation of a professional development day held in January. Over 120 participants attended and a majority indicated it was a

worthwhile event with an interest in future workshops or information.

INCENTIVES INITIATIVE

HIGHLIGHTS OF INCENTIVES AWARD 2001-2002

For the second year, the Council was able to provide professional arts organizations with an Incentives Award. This provided



them with an additional 5% of their annual or operating grant to undertake management and administrative strategies that would benefit the organization in the long term. The following are examples of how the incentives award was utilized during the past year:

YEAR

**Manitoba Association of Playwrights** used their allocation of \$2,200 to assist with the costs of a dramaturge for "Springboards", a program aimed at bridging the gap between the student and the young emerging, professional playwright and create a new dynamic amongst young playwrights in Manitoba.



**Manitoba Writers Guild** used the Incentive grant of \$3,900 to develop school kits about the Guild's services and how to set up writing groups for students. This is a follow up to the Words Rule in School initiative, which is generating more requests for programs for young writers.

**Ruth Cansfield Dance** used their grant of \$3000 toward the development of a website.

**Manitoba Chamber Orchestra** used \$4,825 for extra rehearsal in preparation for a new CD recording and to develop a tour of Western Canada in 2003.

**Les Éditions des Plaines** attended the book fair in Rimouski in November for the first time. The objective was to develop new markets through contacts made at the Fair.

### MANITOBA MOVERS AND SHAKERS

**Margaret Sweatman**, was awarded the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize worth \$10,000 for her latest novel: *When Alice Lay Down with Peter*. Sweatman began the novel in St. Norbert, on the southern edge of Winnipeg, where her studio overlooked the Red River. During the writing, her house flooded twice and was eventually lost to the river.

The Council for Business and the Arts awarded **Israel Asper** the Edmund C. Bovey Award. The \$20,000 prize honoured his years of patronage of the arts.

Winnipeg filmmaker **Cordell Barker** was nominated for an Oscar for his animated short *Strange Invaders*. The film won a Golden Gate Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival.

**Sean Garrity** won the Best First Canadian Feature award at Toronto Film Festival for *Inertia*. Deco Dawson (**Darryl Kinaschuk**) won the Best Canadian Short Film award at the same festival for *Dzama*.

Author **Miriam Toews** was the big winner at the Manitoba Writing and Publishing Awards. She won the McNally Robinson book of the year award and the Alexander Kennedy Isbister non-fiction award for *Swing Low: A Life*. The novel is written in the voice of her father who committed suicide after a life-long battle with depression. She was the first author in the history of the awards to win the book of the year award for a second time.

**Jan Horner** was named Canada Council for the Arts/University of Western Ontario writer-in-residence for 2001-2002.

The **Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra** hired Andrey Boreyko as its artistic director beginning with the 2001-2002 season.

Manitoba Theatre for Young People Artistic Director **Leslee Silverman** and Winnipeg Art Gallery Communications Director **Marilyn Williams** were recognized for their work at the 25th Annual YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction Awards.

**Guy Maddin** won a Genie award for *Heart of the World*. The award was in the category of Best Live Action Short Drama. The film was originally commissioned for the 2000 Toronto International Film Festival.



(Insomniac Press: 2001)

## MAJOR ARTS RECIPIENT

AUTHOR  
**LYNNETTE D'ANNA**

### P R O F I L E

The author of five published novels, Lynnette D'anna, was awarded a Major Arts grant in 2001 to complete work on *til death do us part*, a prose fiction about a reunion of five high school friends after several decades apart.

A graduate of the Creative Communications Program at Red River College, she has mixed a journalism background with her creative writing projects. Working in various genres, Lynnette is a self-described minimalist and creator of contemporary urban fiction. She acts as a mentor to aspiring writers in various genres, both independently and through the Manitoba Writers' Guild Mentor Program. She was President of Prairie Fire Press (1992-95) and has been a contributing writer for several Manitoba periodicals. In 1993, she was short listed for the John Hirsch Award for Most Promising Manitoba Writer. Her latest published novel is entitled *vixen* about battling demons of obsession and deception, lust and loneliness.

# I N R E V I E W



## MAJOR ARTS RECIPIENT

VISUAL ARTIST

**AGANETHA DYCK**

### PROFILE

A sculptor/installation artist who works collaboratively with bees, Aganetha Dyck has taken her unique creations to galleries throughout Canada and abroad. In 2000/2001, she completed a three-month residency in France and mounted a traveling exhibition during her stay. The major Arts grant awarded to her in 2001 enabled her to focus on the honeybee's communications system, ink drawings of bees and further research to enable her to develop a further set of drawings. These drawings, created on Braille text and Braille paper, were given to the bees that then added their own wax. In the past, her work has married fashion with bees and sports with bees. Aganetha has had many solo exhibitions as well as group exhibitions throughout the world, including England, Germany, France, and The Netherlands. During the past two years, in addition to her work in France, she has also had solo exhibitions at the De Leon White Gallery in Toronto. Aganetha has upcoming exhibitions at Tom Thomson Memorial Gallery in Owen Sound (Ont.) during the summer of 2002 and at the Hamilton Art Gallery in August 2003.

**Fubuki Daiko** won the Prairie Music Award for *Fubuki* in the Instrumental Recording category.

**Larry Desrocher** took over the helm of the Manitoba Opera Association and directed the season opener.

The Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba acquired **Gordon McDiarmid** as its new Executive Director and moved into a new facility in downtown Brandon.

The Ian Ross play, *Farewel* went to Scotland for the 54th annual Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the largest fringe festival in the world, in August 2001. *Farewel* won the 1997 Governor General's Award for drama.

**McNally Robinson Booksellers** won the 2001 National Post Award of Distinction for Business in the Arts for its marketing partnerships with local arts groups.

Recording group **Eagle and Hawk** won a Juno award for Best music of Aboriginal Canada recording for their CD *On and On*. The group combines the traditional sounds of Native people with a modern pop-rock sense.

The **Manitoba Chamber Orchestra** celebrated 30 years of performances with two works by Canadian composers: *In This World*, Raymond Luedeke (September) and a commission by Walter Buczynski (March).

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Dracula* became a television movie, directed by Guy Maddin. The \$1.6 million production aired on CBC in February.

**Wanda Koop** took her show *In Your Eyes* to Venice for presentation in the Arsenale at the same time as the 49th Venice Biennale took place. This led to other exhibitions in southeast Asia later that year.

Brandon University professor **Denis Combet's** *In Search of the Western Sea: Selected Journals of La Vérendry* was selected as one of the Globe and Mail's top 100 books of the year.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

### WORDS ON WHEELS

**Words on Wheels** was a collaborative effort that began with Prairie Fire Press' millennium project "First Voices, First Words" a special issue featuring the work of Aboriginal writers. It culminated in two tours of four Aboriginal authors (a northern tour and a southern tour), which visited a total of 16 communities, connecting with over 2300 rural, remote and First Nations children, seniors and adults.



A scene from The Manitoba Opera Association production of *Carmen*.

The tour exposed communities to successful Aboriginal writers who in turn were able to connect with a larger audience. It provided youth and adults living in isolated communities with role models



Dr. Elliot Eisner speaks on the value of an arts education.

that inspired them to create. It also promoted ties between diverse communities and improved the access to the arts for rural, remote and Aboriginal communities. Council provided funding of \$25,000 through Community Connections pilot initiatives.

#### CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

The opportunity to begin the conversation on arts education came when a small group of Council members brought together a

in February. The conference was organized to bring together individuals involved in education and the arts to explore the need to provide a strong arts education for all children in Manitoba.

Keynote speaker Dr. Elliot Eisner, Professor of Education and Professor of Art, Stanford University, California, kicked off the conference with an eloquent presentation on the value of an arts education. Other speakers of note included Ana Serrano, Director of

and Tourism as well as the Department of Education, the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg.

The conference led to the creation of The Manitoba Alliance for Arts Education. The Alliance's goal is to build partnerships to support and sustain arts and education experiences throughout the province. It will work to inform the community of the importance of a strong arts education to our children and the society of the future.

#### WAPANOHK - EASTWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL

This school is the first only Cree Immersion School in Manitoba. It was awarded a pilot project to utilize 5 northern professional Aboriginal artists with a professional artist from the AIS program to undertake a 12 residency. This project provided an opportunity to examine the future possibility of using local artists in AIS programs, a suggestion heard from several participants in the Community Connections consultations.



Author Lee Maracle tells a story to northern students.

group of individuals actively involved in arts education. This group organized a conference on arts and education.

Over 200 participants attended "For the Love of the Arts: Education and the Arts 2002" at the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg

h@bitat, the new media training centre at the Canadian Film Centre in Toronto, and Dr. Rena Upitis, Professor of Arts Education, Queen's University.

The council provided funding in partnership with the Department of Culture, Heritage



#### MAJOR ARTS RECIPIENT

GLASS ARTIST

### IONE THORKELSSON

#### PROFILE

A 2000 finalist for the Bronfman Award, Ione Thorkelsson is an established glass artist. Her research into new glass-blowing and molding techniques has enabled her to move to a new dimension in the creation of semi-mythical creatures. The Major Arts Grant enabled her to work on a new series incorporating soft tissue organ shapes into her blown and kiln cast pieces. Her innovative work has appeared in exhibitions in major Canadian centres as well as Hong Kong, New York, and Duluth. Several national collections, including the Canada Council Art Bank, hold pieces of her work. In 1998, she published "The unwilling Bestiary" in co-operation with Lea Littlewolf (Turnstone Press). Ione also designed and produces the Blizzard award for the Manitoba Motion Picture Industries Association. An active member of the Manitoba Crafts council, she has also been involved in other arts disciplines. She runs her own glass studio. For more information, visit [www.thorkelsson.com](http://www.thorkelsson.com)

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## *THE BOARD OF THE MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL*

consists of 15 members, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. They are responsible for developing policy and approving the expenditure of funds that support Council's mandate and reflect the public trust.

The mandate of Council was established in 1965 by the Arts Council Act. The Act requires Council "to promote the study, enjoyment, production and performance of work in the arts."

Council makes its funding decisions at arm's-length from the provincial government and the arts community. The relationship is balanced with ongoing consultations with the arts community in order to respond effectively to changes in the arts community and to make well-informed decisions.

The Executive Director of the Council oversees the operation of Council and ensures that the policies of Council are implemented. There is a staff of 16, including five program officers who manage the granting process and act as liaison between the arts community and Council. The officers also provide assessments and report to the Council committees for their consideration. Another key role for officers is helping applicants to understand the granting process.

## *THE PEER ASSESSMENT PROCESS*

The Council makes every effort to operate in an objective, transparent and equitable fashion. A key principle in achieving that goal is to make decisions at arm's-length from the government and from the arts community. At the same time, Council is accountable for how it makes those decisions. It must continually balance the need to support artistic expression while ensuring the money is spent effectively.

Every year, the Council receives over 800 applications and awards over 500 grants. To ensure that its limited financial resources are used wisely and that decisions are made fairly and objectively, Council uses peer assessment as a cornerstone of the granting process.

The main criterion for determining which applications are funded is artistic merit. Several other criteria, such as vitality, originality, relevance, creativity, novelty and experimentation as well as technical and professional expertise, are also used to assist peers of the applicants in making an objective decision.

Peers are defined as qualified artists or arts professionals with expertise relevant to the applications under consideration.

The Council uses the peer assessment process in three ways:

1. juries award grants to applicants to specific deadlines and programs
2. assessors review specific applications and provide recommendations to Council
3. advisory panels meet with Council to discuss trends and concerns in the discipline.

Jury and assessment panel recommendations are forwarded to Council for ratification.

Council members, staff, jurors and assessors are all required to abide by a Code of Ethics and a Confidentiality policy as part of Council's objective in maintaining an impartial, transparent granting process.

# *L W O R K S*

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*Derek Smith*

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*Miriam Baron*, MUSIC AND TOURING OFFICER

*Joan Colnett*, DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR

*Joel Crisp*, SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR (September to March)

*Marc Danis*, RECEPTIONIST

*Jazz De Montigny*, PROGRAM OFFICER, ABORIGINAL ARTS (November to March)

*Christian Delaquis*, PROJECT OFFICER, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (March to July)

*Cathy Elchuk*, PROGRAM ASSISTANT, ARTS DEVELOPMENT

*Louise Fiset*, ARTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

*Richard Holden*, VISUAL ARTS OFFICER

*Pat Ihme*, PROGRAM ASSISTANT

*Susan Israel*, PERFORMING ARTS OFFICER (INTERIM) (August to March)

*Mark Morton*, WRITING AND PUBLISHING OFFICER

*Valerie Rentz*, PROGRAM ASSISTANT

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