



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

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

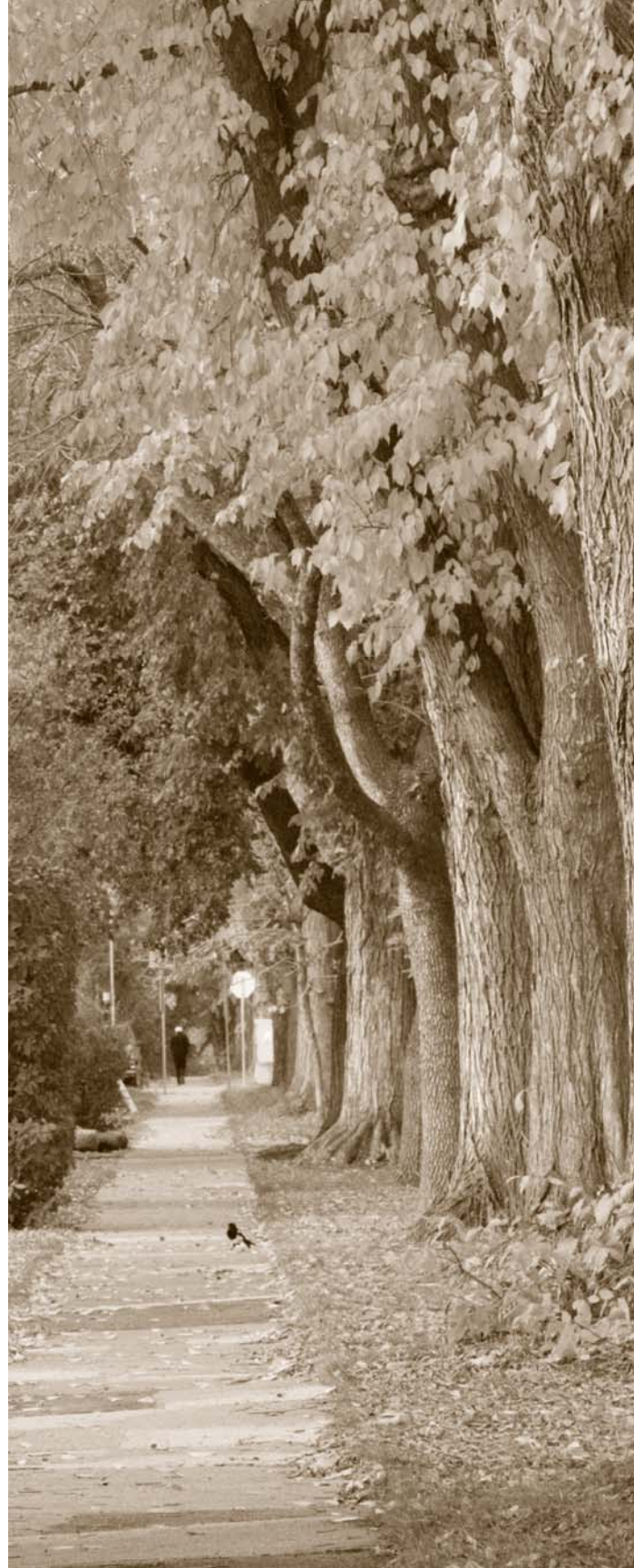


Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	p.4
PREAMBLE: The Art of Living	p.7
THE EDMONTON STORY	p.8
VISION AND VALUES	p.11
FOREWORD: The Intersection of Talent and Planning <i>Michael Phair</i>	p.13
SECTION ONE: CONTEXT	p.16
1. The Cultural Plan's Prevalent Themes	p.16
2. Accountability Statement	p.19
Points of View	
• The Values of Arts and Culture in Our Society <i>Jeanne Lougheed</i>	p.17
• Boom, Bust <i>Todd Babiak</i>	p.23
• Our Generous Spirit—An Insider's Perspective on Edmonton <i>Marty Chan</i>	p.25
• A Great Arts Scene: Hype and/or Reality? <i>Catrin Owen</i>	p.29
• Edmonton Exists—An Outsider's Perspective <i>Ian McGillis</i>	p.35
SECTION TWO: ARTS	
Focal Points and Arts Recommendations	p.23
1. Space	p.24
2. Education, Training and Mentoring	p.29
3. Grants and the Economics of Culture	p.36
4. Recognition	p.44
5. Integration and Arts Climate Development	p.51
Points of View	
• Why Mentors Matter <i>Greg Hollingshead</i>	p.39
• Steering the Flagships <i>Tony Luppino</i>	p.41
• Rx: Arts in Healthcare, Is Art Good For You? <i>Susan Pointe</i>	p.47
• The Nature of a Festival City <i>Terry Wickham</i>	p.53
• Profiting From the Artist as Prophet <i>Ken Chapman</i>	p.59
SECTION THREE: HERITAGE	
Focal Points and Heritage Recommendations	p.62
1. Heritage Climate and Development	p.65
2. Preservation	p.69
3. Interpretation	p.74
4. Museum Advancement	p.77
Points of View	
• Forever Tomorrow Country <i>Catherine C. Cole</i>	p.63
• Should I Stay Or Should I Go Now? <i>Lori Gawryliuk</i>	p.67
• Aboriginal Arts and the Civic Citizen <i>Marilyn Dumont</i>	p.71
• Public Libraries—Enriching People's Lives <i>Linda Cook</i>	p.77
• Walking the Line <i>Caterina Edwards</i>	p.82
CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	p.86
APPENDICES	p.87



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 Chailfoux

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 multi-cultural 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,¹ 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

¹ 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 Chalfoux

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 survey² 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

² 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 1* 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 City Council and all departments of the City of Edmonton.

The plan recommends the creation and/or re-ignition 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-

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

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 stakeholders³ 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.

³ 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



Lorraine Shulba
Visual Artist

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

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 THREE: HERITAGE

Marc Chailfoux

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 Rosssdale. 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

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.⁹

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

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,

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

⁹ 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>

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	- Edmonton Historical Board - EAC - City Archives - City Artifacts Centre	- Community Services - Planning & Development - City Manager's Office - City Council	- Heritage organizations - Individuals
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	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - Salute to Excellence Committee	City Departments - City Council	Community Partners - 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	Implementation	City Affiliates - City Archives - City Artifacts Centre - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	City Departments - Community Services - City Manager's Office	Community Partners 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 Artifacts Centre - Fort Edmonton Park and John Walter Museum - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - City of Edmonton Archives	City Departments - Community Services - Asset Management & Public Works - City Council	Community Partners - Corporate and business partners - Province of Alberta, Government of Canada
	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 Morriseau 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.

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

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

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 7	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	City Departments - Community Services - City Council	Community Partners - Historical organizations and individual historians - Corporate and business partners
	Resources	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	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - City Naming Committee	City Departments - Planning & Development - Community Services - Corporate Services - City Council	Community Partners - 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.”¹⁰

¹⁰ 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.

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 9	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	City Departments Community Services	Community Partners - Museum Organizations - Alberta Museums Association
	Resources	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.”¹¹

HERITAGE RECOMMENDATION 10	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council	City Departments - Asset Management & Public Works - Corporate Services - Community Services - City Council	Community Partners - 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	Implementation	City Affiliates - Edmonton Historical Board: Edmonton heritage council - EAC	City Departments - Community Services - City Council	Community Partners 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.

¹¹ 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 poly-lingual 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.

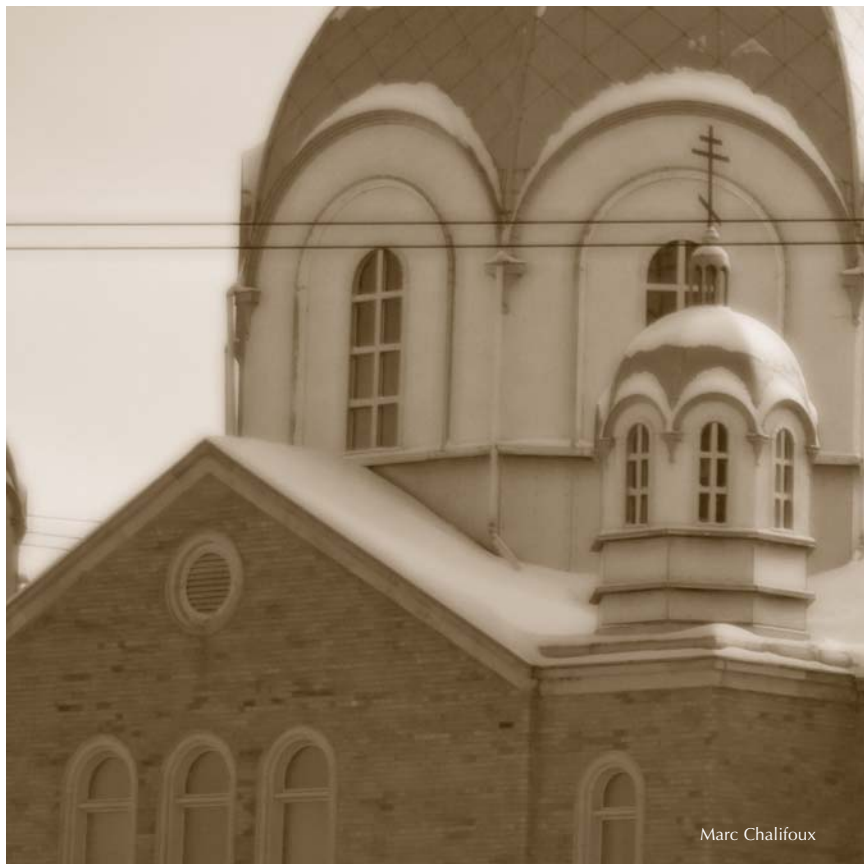
Caterina Edwards is an Edmonton writer who has published in various genres. She avoids the singular approach or point of view, writing about our multiple identities and cultures.



85



Marc Chalifoux



Marc Chalifoux