



Press Release

Region of Waterloo Arts Fund Celebrates 5 Years of Making Art Happen

Injects Over \$650,000 Into Local Community In Past Five Years

Kitchener (March 14, 2008) -- The Region of Waterloo Arts Fund is helping to make art happen locally and has distributed \$655,939 to 149 individual artists and arts organizations since its first grants were made in the spring of 2003. Board Chair Judith Stephens-Wells commented on how exciting it is to see that this relatively new arts organizations is already “making an important difference” for the local arts community by helping to support a wide variety of outstanding arts initiatives, many of which would not have taken place without the Fund’s support. “We are so fortunate to have a Regional Council with the foresight to support the creation of the Arts Fund, an exceptional arts community that generates outstanding project ideas, and a hardworking 14-member volunteer Arts Fund board with a broad range of arts experience. It is the combination of these three elements that has made it possible to get the Arts Fund up and running, supporting exciting projects that “make art happen,” noted Stephens-Wells.

Some highlights of past projects supported by the Arts Fund include:

- The New Quarterly’s trio of features “Art for Arts Sake”, “Howling in the Wilderness” and “Dramatis Personae” on the conjunction of word/image/sound, and focused on artists and performers from Waterloo Region;
- Visual artist Isabella Stefanescu’s interactive, multi-media installation “The Notebook” developed in collaboration with Nick Storrington, Rob Gorbet and Nathan Saliwonchyck;
- The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery’s web-based projects “Mark and Dedicated Man of Fashion” created by Wendy Morgan, and “Mark; My Words” written by Elmira playwright Don Druik;
- Poet Rae Crossman’s commissioning of R. Murray Schafer to compose music for the clarinet to accompany Crossman’s poem “From the Bow”;
- Lost & Found Theatre’s workshops on Gary Kirkham’s “Lockerbie Boy” (subsequently renamed “Falling: A Wake”);
- Sculptor Jane Hook’s completion of figurative works for her solo exhibition at the Cambridge Galleries;
- Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery’s presentation Chicago in Glass;
- The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony’s bi-annual Open Ears Festival;
- and many more.

Created in 2002, the not-for-profit corporation is comprised of 14 community arts enthusiasts who volunteer their time to assess two different rounds of applicants and award grants to a wide variety of artists and organizations representing the performing, visual and literary arts in the Region of Waterloo. The Arts Fund invites applications in the spring and fall of each year. Applicants are first asked to submit a brief letter of intent (maximum two pages) outlining their project. Based on review of those letters, a short list of applicants is then asked to submit more detailed proposals.

The objective of the Arts Fund is to “make art happen” (i.e. stimulate arts activity), both in the next 12 months and with projects that will enhance an individual artist’s or an arts organization’s ability to make more art happen in the future.

Applicants are encouraged to create new work, to bring art to the public, to benefit the Region of Waterloo and create works that either might not happen, or might not happen as well, without Arts Fund support. Applications in all arts disciplines are welcomed from individual artists and arts organizations in the Region of Waterloo (comprised of the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo and the townships of Wilmot, Woolwich, Wellesley and North Dumfries).

The next deadline for applications to the Arts Fund is Friday March 7th, 2008. A brochure outlining criteria for applicants and submission information can be downloaded at the Arts Fund website at www.artsfund.ca. Listing of all the projects supported to date by Arts Fund grants is contained in the press releases posted on the website. Through its brochures, website, and periodic placement of ads, the Arts Fund is striving to ensure that all artists and arts organizations in the Region are aware of its grants program and upcoming application deadlines

For further information, please contact: Judith Stephens-Wells, Chair (519) 742-0191

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Summary Background Information on Arts Fund Grants (2003 – 2007)

- Received requests totaling \$2,795,226
- Received a total of 400 applications
- Given a total of 149 grants
- Given grants totaling \$655,939