

Arts Connect



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

[HOME](#)

[NEWS](#)

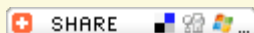
[DATES TO REMEMBER](#)

[RECENT RESULTS](#)

[SPOTLIGHT](#)

[ARTS NOTES](#)

Arts Connect - Winter 2012



Stay connected! Subscribe to our [RSS](#) feeds, or find us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Myspace](#)

[In this issue...](#)

News

- [Greetings from Peter Caldwell](#)
- [Martha Durdin Reappointed Chair of the Ontario Arts Council](#)
- [Albert Alexanian Reappointed to OAC Board](#)
- [John Brotman Bids Farewell](#)
- [New Aboriginal Arts Award](#)
- [OAC Embarks on Equity Planning Process](#)
- [Community Arts Councils Convene from Around the Province](#)



OAC Director & CEO
Peter Caldwell

[back to top ^](#)

Dates to Remember

- Click here for [Upcoming Program Deadlines](#), including [Arts Education Projects](#), [Compass](#), [Dance Organizations](#), [Media Arts Projects](#) and [Organizations](#), [Literary Festivals and Organizations](#), [National and International Touring](#), as well as [Ontario Touring](#), [Orchestras](#) and [Theatre Organizations](#), among many others.
- New deadlines for [Projets de service aux arts franco-ontariens](#) (program available only in French), [Community Arts Councils](#), [Ontario-Quebec Artist Residencies](#), [Jets de théâtre](#) (program available only in French), [Northern Arts](#) and [Chalmers Professional Development](#).

[back to top ^](#)

Recent Results

Grant results are mailed once decisions are made, approximately three months after the deadline. They are posted on the website one month after that, listed by deadline date. [Click here for a listing of grant recipients](#).

[back to top ^](#)

Spotlight

Artists in the GTA: [Rebeka Tabobondung's Work Bridges Traditional and Urban First Nations Life](#)

[back to top ^](#)

Arts Notes

- [Aboriginal Arts Presenters Handbook Now Available](#)
- [Ontario's Literary Community Shines at the GGs](#)
- [Congratulations to OAC Grant Recipients on Their Juno Nominations](#)
- [Shauna Rolston Honoured with Oskar Morawetz Award for Excellence in Music Performance](#)
- [ArtsBuild Ontario Launches Facilities Portal](#)
- [Ontario Arts Council Employees Join AMAPCEO](#)
- [Staff Comings and Goings](#)

Photos and Videos

- [Community Arts Gathering](#)
- [OAC Festival Management Workshop](#)
- [John Brotman's Farewell Event](#)
- [OAC Board Members in the Community](#)
- [VIDEO: John Brotman Farewell Speech](#)

[Send Us Your Photos for Publication!](#) If you have a Flickr

account, please tag your **OAC-funded artistic project** photos "OACAOphotos" and feel free to [add us](#) to your list of Flickr contacts.

When you send your images, please let us know. Contact: Ashleigh Hodgins, Communications Assistant, 416-969-7462 / 1-800-387-0058 ext. 7462, ahodgins@arts.on.ca.



A large crowd of friends of the Ontario Arts Council gathered at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts to wish John a fond farewell.

[back to top ^](#)



The Ontario Arts Council is an agency of the Government of Ontario

[External Links Disclaimer](#)

© 2010 Ontario Arts Council



[HOME](#)

[NEWS](#)

[DATES TO REMEMBER](#)

[RECENT RESULTS](#)

[SPOTLIGHT](#)

[ARTS NOTES](#)

News

- [Greetings from Peter Caldwell](#)
- [Martha Durdin Reappointed Chair of the Ontario Arts Council](#)
- [Albert Alexanian Reappointed to OAC Board](#)
- [John Brotman Bids Farewell](#)
- [New Aboriginal Arts Award](#)
- [OAC Embarks on Equity Planning Process](#)
- [Community Arts Councils Convene from Around the Province](#)

Greetings from Peter Caldwell

Since my appointment as Director & CEO of the Ontario Arts Council was announced last October, I have had the good fortune to travel extensively before taking up my responsibilities on February 6, 2012. With this perspective, I have never been more appreciative of the vibrant arts and cultural communities of this province than I am now. These travels reinforced for me Ontario's reputation as a highly desirable place to live, work, study, invest in and visit – a reputation that is tremendously enhanced by the arts.

I want to thank all of you for the warm welcome I have received. I'm excited by the opportunity to lead such a vital organization. The Ontario Arts Council plays an important role in strengthening, supporting and advocating on behalf of our arts sector. I look forward to meeting and reconnecting with many artists, arts administrators, government colleagues and arts supporters over the coming months.

All the best,

Peter



Peter Caldwell

[Top](#)

Martha Durdin Reappointed Chair of the Ontario Arts Council

Martha Durdin has been reappointed Chair of the Ontario Arts Council by the Government of Ontario until **February 9, 2015**. Martha was named to the [Board of Directors](#) of the OAC in 2004, appointed Chair in 2006 and first reappointed in 2009. During her tenure, OAC's funding has increased by \$20 million, bringing the Government of Ontario's total investment in the Ontario Arts Council to over \$60 million per year. Martha has also played a key role in the delivery of funding initiatives such as the Government of Ontario's three-year [Arts Investment Fund](#) launched in 2010. Her work in the arts community includes past board positions with Opera Atelier and Factory Theatre. In addition to the OAC board, she is a director with [Business and the Arts in Canada](#), the [Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund](#), the [Runnymede Health Centre](#) and [The Writers' Trust of Canada](#).

[Read the press release here.](#)



Martha Durdin

[Top](#)

Albert Alexanian Reappointed to OAC Board

Albert Alexanian has also been reappointed to OAC's board, until **February 3, 2015**, by the Government of Ontario. The Hamilton-based board member was first appointed in February 2009.



Albert Alexanian

[Read the full bio.](#)

[Top](#)

John Brotman Bids Farewell

On January 24th, John Brotman, former OAC Executive Director, bid a fond farewell to the Ontario's arts community at a public event held at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto.

The following quotes are from his farewell speech. You may [watch the entire speech on our YouTube channel](#).

"I cannot tell you how much I've enjoyed my years at the Ontario Arts Council, not least because I've been able to experience work of such interest and quality by Ontario's artists. From my early days in OAC's music office through the past decade, I've been privileged to attend, watch, listen, see and discuss your work, and I – and my wife Sara – have grown hugely in understanding because of that. In my time at OAC, we have always tried to respond fully to the work of the arts sector, and I have always felt this to be a reciprocal relationship."



Martha Durdin, Chair of the OAC Board of Directors says a few words about John Brotman.

"What is less known is how creative and intense are the lives of artists and organizations in more remote parts of Ontario. From my own early experience in northern Alberta, I've been conscious of how artists need to feel connected with their colleagues and with support systems in the larger centres. My OAC colleagues know how often I go on about the arts I've experienced in northern Ontario and in the east and the southwest, how often I bewail the difficulty of alerting people in Toronto or Ottawa to all that amazing work."

"I see this as a huge challenge facing all of us – the challenge of finding ways for the public to share and engage in all that great activity throughout the province and to highlight the work of contemporary, indigenous, culturally diverse and francophone artists with the same focus given to the celebrity commercial culture we find ourselves in. We all have a role to play in that endeavour, and I want to acknowledge the efforts that many of you put, at substantial cost, into presenting and touring in order to share your work with others."

[Top](#)

New Aboriginal Arts Award

The Ontario Arts Council recently launched the **Ontario Arts Council Aboriginal Arts Award**. The

\$7,500 award will celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal artists and arts leaders in Ontario. Beginning this year, the award will be presented annually to an Aboriginal artist or Aboriginal arts leader in Ontario to honour his or her significant contributions to the arts.

Nominate an Aboriginal artist or Aboriginal arts leader before **April 2, 2012**.

[Read the press release here.](#)

[Top](#)

OAC Embarks on Equity Planning Process

Following the internal equity audit that OAC undertook last year, we have begun developing an OAC Equity Plan, which will provide us with a blueprint for implementing equity goals over the next three years. In December, OAC's board approved the following vision statement, which will underpin the plan as it is developed.

OAC Equity Vision

We are inspired by and value Ontario's artists, who help shape our thriving and diverse society and express the richness of our stories, histories and cultures. Therefore, as a public agency, funder and employer, OAC will lead and be responsive and inclusive in supporting diverse artists, artistic practices, arts communities and our own organization.

[Top](#)

Community Arts Councils Convene from Around the Province

This past November, more than 30 arts council leaders from around the province participated in **Convening for Learning: Community Arts Councils Networking for Change** over two days at Toronto's Currie Hall.

Community arts council leaders discussed current trends, practices and challenges within the sector. Participants showed enthusiasm and commitment to furthering the development of arts and culture in their communities. Facilitated by Alan Kay of The Glasgow Group, the event laid the groundwork for new partnerships and future conversations.



Community arts council leaders working together.

This was also an opportunity to discuss the report findings of **Fostering Arts at a Local Level: A Review of Community Arts Councils in Ontario**. This survey of community arts councils in Ontario looked at the number and types of councils that exist throughout the province, the contexts in which they operate, the roles they play in their communities and the range of activities they undertake in response to their region.

[Read the report.](#)

[Top](#)



The Ontario Arts Council is an agency of the Government of Ontario

[External Links Disclaimer](#)

© 2010 Ontario Arts Council

Arts Connect



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

[HOME](#)
[NEWS](#)
[DATES TO REMEMBER](#)
[RECENT RESULTS](#)
[SPOTLIGHT](#)
[ARTS NOTES](#)

Spotlight

Artists in the GTA: Rebeka Tabobondung's Work Bridges Traditional and Urban First Nations Life

Rebeka Tabobondung and David Shilling's Beverley Street apartment doubles as the office of [Muskrat Magazine](#), a new online arts, culture and living publication. Visitors quickly find that their home, just like their magazine, is a stimulating blend of ancient First Nations tradition and contemporary urban family life.



(Photo: Voula Monoholias)

A pair of finely beaded leather gloves hangs inside the sneaker-crowded entranceway. Betty Crocker's *More Slow Cooker Recipes* sits on a shelf alongside an Ojibwa language dictionary. A photo of an inukshuk is mounted next to bottles of olive oil, while a piece of decorated bone dangles close to the espresso maker. A Malcolm X portrait painted by David's uncle, the late Ojibwa artist [Arthur Shilling](#) – famed for melding European and First Nations influences – overlooks the living room, where tidy baskets hold toy trucks belonging to Zeegwon, Tabobondung and Shilling's young son.

"More than 50 per cent of Canada's indigenous people live in urban centres," says Tabobondung, *Muskrat's* editor and curator, as she settles in at her kitchen table-cum-desk while Shilling, art director and webmaster, works in a nook upstairs. "There's rich history for us even in the heart of the city. My son's great-great-great-grandfather is buried at Yonge and Bloor."

Spadina Avenue, just five minutes away, is named for an Ojibwa word (ishpadinaa) meaning "up a hill," which makes sense because it leads up to Casa Loma, an old camping ground that offered a great vantage point. This history infuses contemporary Toronto, raising questions about stereotypes around First Nations people and "modern" urban settings.

"I find so many times in conversations around identity, health, politics – anything really – there's polarizations between 'on reserve' and 'off reserve,'" says Tabobondung. "I think *Muskrat* is bridging that divide, in a way."

Tabobondung and Shilling's own lives also blur the distinction between urban and non-urban Aboriginal life. This fall, they returned to the city after three months in the home they've recently built at Wasauksing First Nation near Parry Sound.

"In Aboriginal and Canadian media, there isn't a lot of representation of voices of artists and other individuals who are going back to the land, whether physically or in terms of values," says Tabobondung. When she's editing *Muskrat*, city-balcony container gardens of traditional medicines are of just as much interest as the wild-rice farming resurgence on rural reserves.

"With *Muskrat*, we wanted to create a space to profile people like that in a way that could be inspiring to the Aboriginal community in Canada and beyond."

The first issue, which went live last November, reflects that unique mission. One video features [Kai Zygoniuk](#) – a Toronto chef of West Indian, Native Canadian and Polish descent who's worked at the Four Seasons – cooking a traditionally themed meal of wild salmon, sweet potatoes and green beans. Another video looks at Ojibwa artist [Keesic Douglas](#), who last year [canoed](#) from Rama First Nation near Orillia to The Bay on Queen Street West, where he tried to trade his great-great-grandfather's Hudson Bay Blanket for beaver pelts.

"I got the sense in early discussions that *Muskrat* wasn't going to focus on how 'deficient' First Nations people are – their disasters and problems – but rather focus on contributions they can make to broader society," says [Deborah McGregor](#), interim director for Aboriginal Studies at the University of Toronto. McGregor contributed an [essay](#) to the debut issue tracing the Ojibwa re-creation myth in which the muskrat – among the smallest and most humble of animals – is the only one brave enough to dive into deep waters after a massive flood and bring up soil for a new land to be built.

The muskrat's parable of great ends from inauspicious beginnings is a powerful one for Tabobondung, who was kicked out of high school before graduating. At 19, while on an exchange program for indigenous youth from Guatemala and Canada, she had a revelation that changed the direction of her life.

"That was the first time in my life I'd ever heard of an indigenous perspective of history," she says, recalling the youth program's visits with Aboriginal groups in B.C. "I realized the Aboriginal experience of colonization in Canada is not a perspective that is included within the education system, within media and general Canadian consciousness. I began to understand the power of media and the importance of indigenous people to control their own stories, to tell their stories the way it happened to them."

Her passion sparked for media and education that includes Aboriginal perspectives, Tabobondung moved back to her ancestral lands in Ontario and returned to school, where she helped plan the University of Toronto's first powwow. She began to study film and created a documentary, *Original Summit*, about indigenous people and globalization at the 2001 FTAA summit. Around the same time, she and Shilling co-founded [Maaiingan Productions](#), a collective of Aboriginal writers, editors, photographers and designers that does work for clients ranging from Canadian Tire to the University of Toronto's [First Nations House](#). When one of those clients, *Spirit* magazine – an artsy, urbane take on Native life – closed its doors in 2008, Tabobondung and Shilling recognized there was a void in the community and the city.

Though the reception they've had for the new magazine is widely positive – both the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council have supported the project – tight budgets have slowed their planned biannual publication schedule. "We [at Maaingan] have worked as a team for other magazines, which lends us strength, but this is our first independent one," says Tabobondung. As a result, there's been some shuffling of roles between the first and the second issues.

The November 2011 issue continued to blend the traditional and contemporary. With a theme of food, it profiled Toronto's new Aboriginal restaurant [Keriwa](#), showcased national Aboriginal food swaps where online networks are used to exchange sugarbush, wild rice and wild salmon and examined tradition-inspired ways to fight the alarming diabetes rate in Aboriginal communities. Quarterly updates of some sections are planned, as well as the creation of an annual print edition aimed at libraries and schools.

"Through our experience of colonization here in Canada, much history has been silenced... through residential school, through shaming, through language loss," says Tabobondung. "I feel compelled to document those knowledges that we do have remaining in our communities – I see media as a tool for documenting that, and I see art as a way of revitalizing that knowledge."

[Leah Sandals](#) is a freelance writer and editor who lives in the Leslieville neighbourhood of Toronto.



The Ontario Arts Council is an agency of the Government of Ontario

[External Links Disclaimer](#)

© 2010 Ontario Arts Council


[HOME](#)
[NEWS](#)
[DATES TO REMEMBER](#)
[RECENT RESULTS](#)
[SPOTLIGHT](#)
[ARTS NOTES](#)

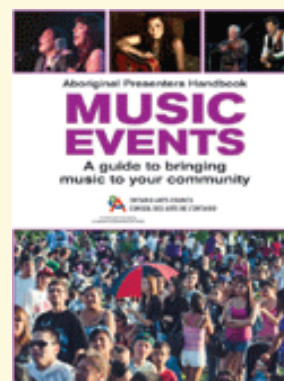
Arts Notes

- [Aboriginal Arts Presenters Handbook Now Available](#)
- [Ontario's Literary Community Shines at the GGs](#)
- [Congratulations to OAC Grant Recipients on their Juno Nominations](#)
- [Shauna Rolston Honoured with Oskar Morawetz Award for Excellence in Music Performance](#)
- [ArtsBuild Ontario Launches Facilities Portal](#)
- [Ontario Arts Council Employees Join AMAPCEO](#)
- [Staff Comings and Goings](#)

Aboriginal Arts Presenters Handbook Now Available

Our new handbook, *Aboriginal Arts Presenters: Music Events* is now available in PDF on the website. This guide is a practical resource guide for Aboriginal presenters who wish to put on music events in their communities.

[Click here to access the PDF.](#)



[Top](#)

Ontario's Literary Community Shines at the GGs

Ontario's fine literary output was prominent at the 75th anniversary Governor General's Awards for Literature ceremony last November. The GGs, as they are fondly known, are administered by the Canada

Council for the Arts, and provide close to \$450,000 in prize money and gifts to a diverse list of Canadian books each year.

Including authors, illustrators and publishers (winning publishers receive a small cash award to help them promote the winning book), this year's final English-language list featured several categories in which Ontario talent had an opportunity for a win. OAC has a direct funding history with 5 of the writers and 5 of the publishers involved!

This is marvelous national recognition for both the Ontario writing and publishing community and the public arts funding that supports and nurtures it.

Congratulations to [all the winners of this year's Governor General's Literary Awards](#), and a great big Ontario Arts Council shout out to:

- Toronto writer and historian **Christopher Moore** and Toronto publisher **Tundra Books**, who won the English language children's text award for Moore's children's book *From Then to Now: A Short History of the World*.
- Perth poet **Phil Hall** and his Toronto publisher **Book Thug**, who won the English language poetry award for his collection *Killdeer*.
- Toronto playwright **Erin Shields** and Toronto publisher **Playwrights Canada Press**, who won the English language drama award for Shields's play *If We Were Birds*.
- Peterborough writer **Charles Foran**, who won the English language non-fiction award for his biography *Mordecai: The Life & Times*.
- Toronto visual artist **Cybèle Young** and Toronto children's publisher **Kids Can Press**, who won the English language children's illustration award for Young's book *Ten Birds*.

And while we can't claim B.C. born author Patrick deWitt, his English language fiction award winner *The Sisters Brothers* was published by Toronto's **House of Anansi Press**.

We would also like to note a little cross-border recognition for a recently funded project. Congratulations to authors **Misha Glouberman** and **Sheila Heti**. Their co-written book, *The Chairs Are Where the People Go*, was chosen by *The New Yorker* magazine as [a reviewer's favorite for 2011](#). *The Chairs Are Where the People Go* was awarded a Writers' Works in Progress grant in 2010.

[Top](#)

Congratulations to OAC Grant Recipients on Their Juno Nominations

The Ontario Arts Council would like to extend warm congratulations to the following artists and grant recipients on their recent Juno nominations for OAC-funded projects:

ELECTRONIC ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Austra

Feel It Break

RECORDING PACKAGE OF THE YEAR

ALTERNATIVE ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Timber Timbre

Creep on Creepin On

ABORIGINAL ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Flying Down Thunder and Rise Ashen
One Nation

CLASSICAL ALBUM OF THE YEAR: VOCAL OR CHORAL PERFORMANCE

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Daniel Taylor
J.S. Bach: Cantatas 70 & 154; Concerto 1060; Orchestral Suite No. 2

INSTRUMENTAL ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Andrew Collins
Cats & Dogs

Stretch Orchestra
Stretch Orchestra

TRADITIONAL JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Kirk MacDonald Orchestra
Deep Shadows

We will keep our fingers crossed for you on April 1!

[Read the full list of nominees here.](#)

[Top](#)

Shauna Rolston Honoured with Oskar Morawetz Award for Excellence in Music Performance

Retiring Executive Director John Brotman's final public event was presenting the [Oskar Morawetz Award for Excellence in Music Performance](#) to Toronto-based cellist [Shauna Rolston](#). The \$20,000 award was presented on Monday, January 30, 2012, at the [Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's New Music Festival](#), where Shauna performed a world premiere of Vincent Ho's cello concerto [City Suites](#).

[Read the press release here.](#)



Juno nominee for Classical Album of the Year (Vocal)

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra & Daniel Taylor
recording of

*J.S. Bach: Cantatas 170 & 54; Concerto 1060;
Orchestral Suite No. 2*

(Image courtesy of Analekta)



Shauna Rolston

[Top](#)

ArtsBuild Ontario Launches Facilities Portal

The [ArtsBuild Ontario Facilities Portal](#) is the first and only tool developed to provide a dynamic and continually updated inventory of the facilities used and needed by Ontario's non-profit arts organizations. The portal's most important aspect will be its ability to report accurately on the state of non-profit arts facilities in Ontario thanks to the information gathered. This is essential to strengthen and support increased investment in safe, green and adequate cultural infrastructure.

The portal was launched by ArtsBuild in January 2012. Throughout the first few months, they'll be working with arts organizations to help build and populate it. Your invitation to register will follow. ArtsBuild urges organizations to sign up at that time. ArtsBuild is planning a launch celebration on April 1. In the meantime, they'll be hosting workshops across Ontario to educate and raise awareness, as well as give participants a sneak preview of the portal. If you'd like to attend one of the remaining workshops listed below, please contact Lindsay MacDonald at Lindsay@artsbuildontario.ca.

February 24 – North Hastings

March 1 – Lambton

March 7 – Pembroke

March 21 – Midland

March 30 – Hamilton

[Top](#)

Ontario Arts Council Employees Join AMAPCEO

On February 6, 2012, employees of the Ontario Arts Council voted in favour of joining the Association of Management, Administrative and Professional Crown Employees of Ontario (AMAPCEO), a bargaining unit that represents 12,000 professional and supervisory public servants, most of whom work in the Ontario Public Service (OPS) of the Government of Ontario.

The board and staff of the Ontario Arts Council remain committed to serving Ontario's artists and arts organizations. This is an internal shift and will not change our relationships with the arts community.

[Top](#)

Staff Comings and Goings

We are pleased to announce that **Martina Roncarelli** has moved from an interim Program Assistant to the permanent **Franco-Ontarian Arts Program Assistant**. We also welcomed **Carolyn Augusta** as the new **OAC CADAC Coordinator** on January 26th and **Barbara Gilbert** as **Artists in Residence (Education) Francophone Coordinator** and **Arts Education Organizations Program Officer** on February 6th. Welcome Carolyn and Barbara!

Our peripatetic **SharePoint Administrator, Vivian Goffart**, has left us to pursue other ventures. All the best, Vivian!

Finally, as we say goodbye to **Executive Director John Brotman**, who has retired after 23 years at OAC, we are delighted to extend a warm welcome to our new **Director and CEO, Peter Caldwell**, as his replacement. Read Peter's [welcome message to the Ontario Arts Community](#).

[Top](#)



The Ontario Arts Council is an agency of the Government of Ontario

[External Links Disclaimer](#)

© 2010 Ontario Arts Council