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Bushra Junaid, Outreach and Development Manager & Access and Career Development Program Officer, welcomes Access Ignites participants.

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- Click here for [Upcoming Program Deadlines](#), including [Chalmers Arts Fellowships](#), [Periodicals](#), [Popular Music](#), [Public Art Galleries](#), [Public Art Galleries Projects](#), [Theatre Projects](#), [Visual Arts Projects](#) and [Writers' Works in Progress](#).
- New deadlines for [Aide à la diffusion artistique](#) and [Chalmers Professional Development](#).

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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](#).

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[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.

Yaovi Hoyi and Le Band get participants on their feet during Access Ignites!

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.

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Ontario Arts Council Budget Stable but Funding Demands Growing

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) was fortunate to have its budget allocation from the Government of Ontario maintained at **100 per cent** for 2012–13. We were extremely pleased to learn this, given the Government's current fiscal environment. We are grateful to our colleagues at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and especially to Minister Chan himself, who worked hard to advocate on our behalf, and appreciate the Government of Ontario's continued support for the arts.

While the Arts Investment Fund, launched more than two years ago, has injected much-needed new funding into arts organizations, OAC's base funding has remained constant for the past four years. However, costs have continued to rise, and there have been an ever-increasing number of applicants – more than **175 new arts organizations** across the province have received ongoing operating funding during this period. While our budget is stable this year, we cannot predict how the province's economic future will affect us. At the same time we see that demand continues to grow. Things would have been much more serious for us all had our funding been reduced this year.

Recently, the OAC Board of Directors approved our 2012–13 budget and the following funding framework. In 2012–13, **all** organizations that are receiving operating funding and **meet assessment standards** will receive **100 per cent** of their previous year's grant. This is great news. But it comes with more stringent

funding reduction policies that have already been implemented. Organizations that fail to meet standard, through peer adjudication, in either or both categories – artistic quality and contribution, and organizational effectiveness – will see reductions as follows:

- 0 to 5 per cent reduction: below standard on one assessment category reserved for strategic priority organizations and/or operating organizations that were new within the last three years.
- 10 to 20 per cent reduction if the organization falls below standard on one assessment category for the first time.
- 20 to 30 per cent reduction if an organization falls below standard on both assessment categories for the first time.
- 30 to 50 per cent reduction if an organization falls below standard on one assessment category for the second time in the last five years.
- 50 to 100 per cent reduction if an organization falls below standard on both assessment categories for the second time in the last five years.

Over the last three years, project applications to OAC have increased by **32 per cent**. As a result, creation project programs are being protected through strategic reductions to a small number of programs, including a 50 per cent reduction to Compass.

- **The Compass program now has two deadlines: July 3, 2012 and November 1, 2012.**

In the years ahead, OAC will continue to find ways to contain expenditures while still nurturing new arts activity throughout the province – particularly the next generation of young artists and organizations that will become the creative infrastructure of tomorrow.

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Access Ignites!: A Day of Sharing, Learning and Connection

On March 28 and 29, 2012, the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) hosted **Access Ignites!**, a gathering of [Access and Career Development program](#) grant recipients at Toronto's Arcadian Loft. It was an opportunity for these artists to attend workshops; network with other artists, arts service organizations and OAC staff; and see showcased work.

Peter Caldwell, making his first official appearance as OAC's new Director and CEO, welcomed and introduced Philip Akin, artist and artistic director of Obsidian Theatre, for the first keynote address. Philip spoke passionately about the barriers faced by artists of colour and the value of an artist's legacy. Samina Mansuri, an interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto, followed Philip and spoke about residencies and other networking opportunities. The following morning, Jani Lauzon emphasized the importance of mentorship and mentors and shared stories from her own journey as an actress and singer/songwriter.



Dan Commanda, artist and elder, gives an Anishnaabe welcome.

The day-and-a-half event inspired lively conversations about identity, working in Ontario as an Aboriginal

artist or as an artist of colour and about the different ways in which people reach out to audiences and to the arts community. Performances and presentations by Access program grant recipients included Maria Pino, Dan Commanda, Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Yaovi Hoyi, Diana Tso and William Lau, Mallarvilly Varatharaja, Mitra Ghavamian, Tamara Z. Sanowar Makhan, Sharada K. Eswar, Olga Barrios, Lua Shayenne and Miranda Liverpool, and Veronica Johnny.

Access Ignites! was organized by OAC's Outreach and Development office, led by Bushra Junaid and coordinated by Nazanin Shoja. OAC Granting Officers were on hand to facilitate discussions, listen to feedback and connect with artists from Toronto and across the province.

Participant quotes:

"I felt overwhelmed with joy ... and I was inspired by other people's experiences, stories, works, ambition, passion... I could go on and on and on about the energy at this event, and I wouldn't do it justice."

– **Yaovi Hoyi, musician**

"I found the Access Ignites! event to be educational, inspirational and fun. I greatly appreciated the positive feedback I received for my film. The opportunity to present was a much needed confidence booster."

– **Tamara Z. Sanowar Makhan, filmmaker**

"It was a very refreshing, empowering and inspiring day. It's not often that you get to be in a room full of other artists who have faced many of the same types of barriers as you."

– **Ariel Smith, media artist**

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New Cultural Animator in Windsor

Alana Bartol has been hired as Cultural Animator by the Arts Council, Windsor & Region, with funding from the Ontario Arts Council (OAC). She is responsible for promoting community-engaged arts practice in the region. Artists, arts organizations and non-arts groups interested in developing community arts projects can look to her for assistance. Her role also includes providing advice to people interested in applying to OAC's [Artists in the Community/Workplace](#) program as well as to artists from other disciplines who want to know more about OAC programs.

Alana's experience as an artist, educator and career counselor have provided her with the mentoring and relationship-building skills needed for this role. As an artist active in Windsor and Detroit, she has established connections within and outside of the arts community.

Alana can be reached by email at cultural.animator@acwr.net or by phone at the arts council office at 519-252-6855.

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Why I dance... Pourquoi je danse... Video Celebrates Why We Are All Dancers!

We marked [International Dance Day](#) on April 29 with the video release of [Why I dance... Pourquoi je](#)

[danse....](#) This video, created for the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) by filmmaker [Gloria Ui Young Kim](#), has had remarkable success so far, with over 175 000 views on YouTube.

The video grew out of OAC's very successful [Ontario Dances](#) program, which aims to increase the range and diversity of dance available to Ontario communities outside of Toronto. Through the program, the public has access to dance classes, workshops with artists-in-residence as well as performances by Ontario-based professional dance artists. North Bay's Capitol Centre is one of 11 Ontario presenters involved in this program. Dee Adrian, general manager, sent us a report on their involvement in the Ontario Dances program:



Photo credit: Gloria Kim

Still image from *Why I dance... Pourquoi je danse...*

"SuperNaturalz is a very young (under 30) hip-hop/break dancing group that we included in our program. I felt it would have universal appeal because of the music, the moves and the athleticism. We did four school workshops. We also included a public workshop which was absolutely packed. It was scheduled in our brand new hospital and more than 100 administrators, doctors, nurses and patients attended.

"A final showcase at the Capitol Centre was included as part of our 25th anniversary celebrations. Close to 600 people turned out to see Supernaturalz, and not only did they bring people up on stage to do a workshop within a showcase, they remained afterwards to sign hundreds of autographs and participate in photo-ops. The success of this venture was overwhelming and I can't wait to continue in this program."

[Why I dance... Pourquoi je danse...](#) is a celebration of dance participation in Ontario and features dancers, both amateur and professional, reflecting on why they dance. It is a moving tribute to an art form enjoyed by many Ontarians and captures the diversity of dance expression in this province.

[Read the news release here.](#)

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Culture Days Workshops Offered Across Ontario

Culture Days (Ontario) is offering **skills-development opportunities** for artists, professional and volunteer-run cultural groups, libraries, museums, municipalities and anyone wishing to present an activity during the cross-Canada celebration of arts and culture next **September 28–30**. A variety of community workshops designed to help participants increase the impact and success of their Culture Days activities will take place from **mid-April to early June**. [Click here](#) for the list of Ontario communities hosting workshops, along with event details.

2012 Culture Days Workshops in Ontario include:

- On **May 25**, a [one-day French-language symposium](#) exploring topics related to community arts, outreach and arts education will be presented at the **National Arts Centre in Ottawa**. This unique event is produced in partnership with Quebec's **Culture pour tous** (producers of Les Journées de

la culture), the **Fédération culturelle canadienne-français** and the **National Arts Centre**.

- Community arts councils and municipalities will be hosting more than **20 information sessions** in communities across Ontario. Culture Days staff will share tools and resources available to participants while encouraging networking and collaboration in the community.

ABOUT CULTURE DAYS

This year's Culture Days weekend will take place on September 28, 29 and 30, 2012. Each province has a Culture Days coordinator to help those interested in organizing Culture Days activities. The **Ontario Arts Council's** involvement in **Culture Days** includes hiring **Catherine McLeod** as Ontario's Culture Days Animator/Coordinator for the next six months. Working in partnership with **Aubrey Reeves, Culture Days Ontario Manager**, and the volunteer **Ontario Culture Days Task Force**, Ms. McLeod's primary role is to provide advice to Ontario-based communities, artists, arts groups and municipalities interested in organizing activities for Culture Days.

Culture Days will feature free, hands-on, interactive activities that invite the public to participate "behind the scenes" – and to discover the world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators and designers at work in their community.

In 2011, the second annual Culture Days event took place in more than 800 Canadian cities and towns, with attendance topping 1.2 million. Last year, more than **1,265 activities** were presented across Ontario, a **36% increase** over the first year's participation levels.

For more details about Ontario Culture Days announcements, please visit www.on.culturedays.ca. Connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) and [YouTube](#).

Culture Days in Ontario is supported by the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Government of Ontario in recognition of Celebrate the Artist Weekend.

For more information about Culture Days in Ontario please contact:

Catherine McLeod, OAC Culture Days Animator/Coordinator

Email: on@culturedays.ca

Telephone: 416-961-1660 ext.5124

Toll-free telephone: 1-800-387-0058 ext. 5124

Aubrey Reeves, Ontario Culture Days Manager

Email: aubreyreeves@culturedays.ca

Telephone: 416-646-7469

Toll-free telephone:1-800-387-0058 ext. 7469

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Gathering of Northern Emerging Visual Arts Professionals at OAC

On March 14 and 15, 2012, emerging visual arts professionals from northern Ontario gathered at the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) for two days of networking, information exchange and resource sharing as well as peer-to-peer inspiration. Attendees work as curators, programmers and educators and often

volunteer in other arts organizations in their communities. The OAC hosted the meeting to connect talented professionals in the north with each other and with resources useful to them and their work.



Northern Emerging Visual Arts Professionals at OAC

Feedback on the day included, "It was an amazing two days of energy and provided a pulse to keep us going. The dedication and energy the participants displayed for their organizations really stirred the encouragement to continue. Seeing the diverse ideas, the hard work and the dedication to keep the arts as part of northern Ontario was very important – it let me know that others are fighting the same fight and I know some of them now. They are available for questions, ideas, partnerships, etc."

Attendees included

- Amanda Burke, North Bay
- Alex Maeve Campbell, North Bay
- Rose-Anne Cardinal, Sudbury
- Jackie Carter, North Bay
- Alana Forslund, Thunder Bay
- Lindsay Hamilton, Fort Frances
- Nadia Kurd, Thunder Bay
- Jean Marshall, Thunder Bay
- Suzanne Morrisette, Thunder Bay
- Lora Northway, Thunder Bay

Speakers included

- Jennifer Bedford, Oakville Galleries
- Vicky Moufawad-Paul, A Space
- Christy Thompson, Power Plant
- Kathryn Townshend, Ontario Arts Council

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Interpreting Arts Engagement

On February 28, 2012, Loree Lawrence, Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Officer, and Nasreen Khan, Arts Education Officer, focused on arts engagement during a presentation to a group of 40 emerging arts administrators at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus. Participants spent the two-hour workshop exploring their own history of arts participation, reviewed the [Ontario Arts Engagement Study](#), which examines how Ontarians participate in the arts, and looked at how they could use this information as arts administrators in program design. The Ontario Arts Council released the research commissioned from WolfBrown last fall.

[Read the research.](#)

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OAC Podcasting

In this newsletter, we are launching the first in a series of podcasts on specific programs. To help you make the best application possible, granting officers will answer the most frequently asked questions about specific programs in their sectors. We are starting with the [Compass program](#). Although the program has had its [budget reduced](#), there are two new deadlines: July 3 and November 1, 2012, still to come.

[Listen and subscribe to our podcast series here.](#)

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Spotlight

Artists in the GTA: Dorsey James' gods, goddesses and wizards unveil the mythology in mundane places

Tell most people that you've found paradise in Pickering, and they'd likely look askance. But artist Dorsey James seems to have discovered it. And you just might feel the same way after visiting his light-filled studio.

Housed in a converted garage on a quiet street along Dunbarton Creek Ravine, the bright, white space is filled with well-used carving tools and fresh sawdust smells. African masks, sketches and inspirational quotes (like Henry Miller's "Art teaches nothing, except the significance of life") hang from the walls. Wooden sculptures in various states of

development rest on workbenches, shelves and floors, while offcuts fuel the brass and iron stove, creating a cozy retreat from winter's cold—one that James' friendly black lab, Merlin, and golden-eyed cat, Boo, often avail themselves of as well.



Photo credit: Voula Monoholias

"This is my Shangri-La," James says with a smile. "But be careful of Merlin—he might just lick you to death."

This is pure James: a mix of centuries-old mythical references and warm, down-to-earth presence. That characteristic combination threads through more than 30 years of his artworks, from a small in-studio

sculpture that renders Greek gods Selene and Endymion in glowing blonde ash wood to a totem-pole-like public piece at [Alex Robertson Park](#) that depicts Demeter and Persephone etched out of flame-coloured cedar.

It's also provided a surprisingly effective foundation for James' equally long career as a high-school art teacher; for a recent Grade 9 workshop, he requested that students carve symbolic portraits of their families using archetypal emblems like pyramids, eagles and yin-yang symbols.

"Mom was a great storyteller," says James, explaining his long-time fascination with ancient lore. "We never could afford a TV set, but we had mom!"

James grew up poor in Philadelphia during the 1950s, years filled with the kind of discrimination and racial tension that prompted him to "embrace the Air Force and get out of there." He spent four years as a military airplane mechanic, traveling all over the world and honing the inborn spatial visualization abilities that now make him such a proficient sculptor.

"Very seldom do I have to draw anything out," says James. "I can see it much better in my mind, and turn it around and play with size, just with a thought. I think that had a lot to do with mom telling stories—[listening to those] exercises that whole mechanism that allows you to manipulate imagery inside your mind. But it was also the same mechanism I used in the military to see the inside of an aircraft and explain what was wrong."

After leaving the military, James moved to the GTA, seeking respite from his home country's 1960s conflicts of "young against old, Catholic against protestant, black against white." He continued working as an airplane mechanic at De Havilland and Douglas Aircraft, and started a family.

For all his visualization abilities, James didn't actually see art in his future until, dissatisfied with his job at Douglas, he decided to take advantage of the US Veterans' education benefits and go to university. A related aptitudes assessment directed him to the fine arts—"the silliest thing I'd ever heard," he laughs. He'd thought of journalism (a good fit for his storytelling side) or architecture ("a pleasant blend between a strong technical ability and an aesthetic side I'd been ignoring"), not art. But family necessity—one small baby in the house, and another on the way—kept him at Toronto's York University for what he thought would be preliminary year in fine arts before transferring to the University of Western Ontario's journalism program in London.

But just as in one of James' much-loved ancient tales, the fates had other plans. Once in the program, James realized art really was for him. And then there was another happy accident—starting woodcarving. It wasn't an area of instruction for York's Faculty of Fine Arts, but when James was experimenting with a piece of wood one day, the building's janitor noticed and gave him some advice, eventually introducing him to a props builder, who also coached him.

"I learned the aesthetic of the work that I do from the pros," says James, "but I learned to work with wood from the caretaker and the carpenter."

"Do you ever think, when you find yourself in various situations, that it's a portal?" he muses. "People can act as portals, too. They open doors for you. I think I've been very lucky that way."

It's clear that James, in turn, has tried to act as or provide a portal for other people, often through his teaching, which he was engaged in full time at Markham District High School from 1977 to 2003, and which in recent years has taken place in workshops and stints at [Durham Alternative Secondary School](#), [Durham Integrated Arts Camp](#) and Dunbarton High School, among other venues.

"He's not just a fantastic artist, but a fantastic human being," says James Klodnicki, vice-principal of [Oshawa Central Collegiate Institute](#) and a past employer at DIAC. "The kids learn without realizing they

are learning."

"Dorsey brings a quality of patience, gentleness, and calmness that allows students to focus on what's important," says Andy Barber, program facilitator at the Durham District School Board. "For one student we had, the change in confidence was visible to everyone—he seemed to grow a couple of inches."

James has also provided all Pickering residents with a permanent marker for transformation in the form of his Home Place installation at Alex Robertson Park. Installed in 2001 and renewed in 2011, the installation consists of a "portal" constructed of carved poles at the top of a hill, a walking path lined with totems depicting deities from the Norse Thor to the African Chiwara, and another path where faces of wizards and leprechauns are carved directly into dead trees.

"What I have found is that people have a need to believe in something, to believe they have a telephone to the gods, as it were, so they will latch on to things like this," says James. "These are universal stories. It doesn't matter where you're from; everyone goes through things like this."

[Leah Sandals](#) is a freelance writer and editor who lives in the Leslieville neighbourhood of Toronto. This article was originally published by [Yonge Street Media](#).



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Alise Marlane Wins Colleen Peterson Songwriting Award

The [Ontario Arts Council](#) is pleased to announce [Alise Marlane](#) as the recipient of the **Colleen Peterson Songwriting Award** for her song "L'aurore boréale."

[Read the news release here.](#)



Photo credit: Franziska Heinze

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Conductor Nathan Brock Receives Heinz Unger Award

Montreal-based conductor **Nathan Brock** is the recipient of this year's [Heinz Unger Award](#). Ontario Arts Council Board Member Verlyn Francis presented the **\$8,000** award on **March 24, 2012**, in Toronto at a [Toronto Symphony Orchestra](#) concert.

[Read the news release here.](#)



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Call for Nominations: 2012 Leslie Bell Prize for Choral Conducting

Nominations for the [2012 Leslie Bell Prize for Choral Conducting](#) are open. The prize celebrates the achievements of an Ontario-based emerging choral conductor.

The **closing date** for receipt of nominations is **1 p.m. on June 29, 2012**.

All nominations must be submitted to

Leslie Bell Prize for Choral Conducting

Choirs Ontario
A-1422 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON M4G 3A7

[Read the news release here.](#)

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John Hirsch Director's Award Presented to Louise Naubert

Toronto-based **Louise Naubert** is the recipient of the [John Hirsch Director's Award](#). The **\$5,000** award was presented on April 23, 2012, at the [Alliance Française de Toronto](#).

[Read the news release here.](#)



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2012 Short List for Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children’s Book Awards Announced

The **2012 short list** for the **Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children’s Book Awards** was revealed on April 24, 2012. The **2012 winners** will be announced at Toronto’s [Parkdale Junior and Senior Public School](#) on **May 31, 2012**.

ABOUT THE 2012 BOOKS

This year's short list represents some of Canada's best-known children's book authors and some new names. The **Children's Picture Book** category showcases diverse illustration and story styles, ranging from stories of migration, adventures on two wheels and tales of mischievous animal characters to picturesque evocations of Canadian flora and fauna. The **Young Adult / Middle Reader** category challenges its jury with historical novels and stories from abroad, as well as thrilling mysteries and a celebration of women authors.

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K.M. Hunter Artist Award Winners Announced

The seven recipients of the 2012 K.M. Hunter Artist Awards were honoured at an event at the Gladstone Hotel on May 14, 2012.

A prize of **\$8,000** was awarded in each of six artistic disciplines to

Dance	Darryl Hoskins , Toronto (co-winner of \$4,000) Heidi Strauss , Toronto (co-winner of \$4,000)
Film and Video	Ayelen Liberona , Toronto
Literature	Shani Mootoo , Toronto
Music (Classical)	Paul Frehner , London
Theatre	Rosa Laborde , Toronto
Visual Arts	Jean Marshall , Thunder Bay

These annual awards are given to Ontario residents to support mid-career professional artists who have a reasonable body of work and a fair degree of public exposure, who have made an impact in their chosen field, and who demonstrate an original artistic voice within their artistic tradition. Given at a critical moment in the artists' careers, the awards are a means of encouraging them in their craft and propelling them to the next level. They are funded by the [K. M. Hunter Charitable Foundation](#).

[Read the news release here.](#)

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Staff Comings and Goings

We are pleased to announce that **Jessica Deljouravesh**, former **Music Program Assistant**, has been appointed as the **OAC Cross-Sectoral Associate Officer** and former **Human Resources Manager, Nina Small**, was named **Director of Human Resources**.

Stefanie Pantalone will be taking over receptionist duties in May.

Virginie Lesperance, former **Granting Support Assistant**, became the **Dance and Awards Program Assistant** on March 2, and **Carolyn Gloude** went from being **Awards Coordinator** to **Associate Awards Officer** on April 2. We also welcomed **Catherine McLeod** as the new **Culture Days Animator/Coordinator** on March 19.

Finally, our heartfelt congratulations to **Gouled Hassan, Northeastern Consultant**, on becoming a new father. Gouled is on a [leave of absence until June 15](#).

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