

Okanagan Arts Awards Nominees Announced



Media Release

For Immediate Release: The Arts Council of the Central Okanagan is pleased to announce the nominees for the 3rd Annual Okanagan Arts Awards. In total 25 nominations were received and all honourees will be given recognition for their commitment and excellence in the arts at the Okanagan Arts Awards on Thursday, March 4th, 2010 at 6 pm.

"We are incredibly thrilled with the slate of nominees this year," says Sharon McCoubrey, Chair of the Okanagan Arts Awards and President of the Arts Council of the Central Okanagan. "These people represent a wide range of visual, performing and literary artists, from communities throughout the Okanagan, and they reflect the depth of talent in the region."

The Arts Council of the Central Okanagan created the Okanagan Arts Awards to celebrate excellence in the arts in the Okanagan. The awards serve to underline the importance of the arts to the people and communities in the Okanagan. The Arts Awards recognize individuals and groups for their outstanding achievement in the arts; for their significant contribution to the arts; or to their noteworthy support of the arts.

The Lifetime Achievement Category has the most nominees with Leonard Camplin (Chilliwack), Joan Heriot (Vernon), Roslyn Frantz (Kelowna), John Lent (Vernon), Geert Maas (Kelowna) and Mary Smith McCulloch (Kelowna) all being recognised for their many years of commitment to the arts.

The Literary Arts feature Nancy Holmes (Kelowna) and Devon L. Muhlert (Vernon) with Renee Burgess (Kelowna), Karen Close (Kelowna), Sara Lige (Kelowna) and Leroy Wiens (Kelowna) nominated in the Arts Educator category. Josette de Roussy (Kelowna), Tancha Dirickson (Summerland), Bob Kingsmill (Coldstream), Geert Maas (Kelowna) and Gary Pearson (Kelowna) are nominees in the Visual Arts while Cynthia Leigh-Ann Bjalek (Kelowna), Haley Blais (Kelowna) and Anna Jacyszyn (Kelowna) will compete in the Music Category.

The slate of Nominees is rounded out by Jody LaFontaine (Lake Country) and Gayle Stephenson (Kelowna) for Supporter of the Arts; Louise Sjoquist (West Kelowna) and Leif Thordarson (West Kelowna) for Theatre; and Tanya Bakala (Kelowna) for Dance.

For the first time the awards will be held in West Kelowna at the Westbank Lions Hall at 2466 Main Street. The evening features a Reception, Silent Auction and Showcase Performance along with the Awards presentations. At the Awards, the winners are presented with an original award created by an Okanagan artist. The 2010 Award is an original bronze sculpture created by Jeanne Bates entitled 'Unity'.

"The Awards night is a fun night on the town and such a great way to meet and mingle with the Nominees and to celebrate the arts and the positive impact they have on our region," adds McCoubrey. "We are so pleased the District of West Kelowna has stepped up to host the awards this year and the Committee has been working hard to create a very special evening of celebration."

Tickets for the Okanagan Arts Awards are \$30 and available through Select Your Tickets (Rotary Centre for the Arts) at www.selectyourtickets.com Phone 250-717-5304 ; or through the Westbank & District Chamber of Commerce at #4-2375 Pamela Road Phone 250-768-3378.

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Contact:

Sharon McCoubrey
President, Arts Council of the Central Okanagan
Phone: 250-766-4406

Arts Council of the Central Okanagan
#100 – 1690 Water Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 8T8
T/F: 250-861-4123 E: info@artsco.ca W: artsco.ca



2010 Okanagan Arts Awards Nominees

Lifetime Achievement (artist who has dedicated a life time to the arts)

Leonard Camplin, Chilliwack
Joan Heriot, Vernon
Roslyn Frantz, Kelowna
John Lent, Vernon
Geert Maas, Kelowna
Mary Smith McCulloch, Kelowna

Literary Arts (fiction, non-fiction, news, webblogs)

Nancy Holmes, Kelowna
Devon L. Muhlert, Vernon

Arts Educator (a teacher in any context, public schools, community)

Renee Burgess, Kelowna
Karen Close, Kelowna
Sara Lige, West Kelowna
Leroy Wiens, Kelowna

Visual Arts (all forms and types of visual art)

Josette de Roussy, Kelowna
Tancha Dirickson, Summerland
Bob Kingsmill, Coldstream
Geert Maas, Kelowna
Gary Pearson, Kelowna

Music (singing, song writing, performance)

Cynthia Leigh-Ann Bjalek, Kelowna
Haley Blais, Kelowna
Anna Jacyszyn, Kelowna

Supporter of the Arts (through financial, volunteer or other contributions)

Jody LaFontaine, Lake Country
Gayle Stevenson, Kelowna

Dance (performance, choreographers, companies)

Tanya Bakala, Kelowna

Theatre (producer, director, actor, company)

Louise Sjoquist, Kelowna
Leif Thordarson, West Kelowna

2009 Okanagan Arts Awards Winners:

Music: Susan Aylard

Visual Arts: Jock Hildebrandt

Dance: Ballet Kelowna

Literary: Sharon Thesen

Media Arts: Rick Sagayadan

Theatre: Theatre Kelowna

Arts Educator: Tina Siddiqui

Arts Supporter: Mary Jo Schnepf

Lifetime Achievement: Francine Gravel





What: Okanagan Arts Awards

Honoring 25 nominees in a variety of disciplines, the Okanagan Arts Awards celebrate excellence in the arts. Featuring the Okanagan Arts Awards presentations as well as a Silent Auction, Reception and Showcase Performances, this is a great night to celebrate the arts and the people who make them come alive in our Valley.

Date: Thursday, March 4, 2010

Time: 6:00 pm Reception
7:00 pm Awards & Showcase Performances

Where: Westbank Lions Hall
2466 Main Street, West Kelowna

Tickets: \$30
Select Your Tickets (Rotary Centre for the Arts)
P: 250-717-5304
W: www.selectyourtickets.com
OR Westbank & District Chamber of Commerce
#4-2375 Pamela Road
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