

# *Culture Builds Community!* **Engage**

FALL 2013  
VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1



Sask **Culture**

## What's Inside:

Artists 'animate' Culture Days  
Gateway Festival has positive community impact  
Oskayak Culture Camp connects youth to tradition

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FALL 2013  
VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

## Engage

Published by  
SaskCulture Inc.,

is designed to  
**highlight**  
the work of  
cultural leaders,  
volunteers  
and the  
**diversity**  
of activities  
supported by the  
Culture Section of  
Saskatchewan Lotteries  
Trust Fund for Sport,  
Culture and Recreation.



On the cover: Musicians Kufre Silas and Malika Sellami perform on 20th street in Saskatoon during Culture Days. Photo by Matt Ramage.



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Print copies of this publication are circulated for free to SaskCulture members, partners and through community outreach activities as determined by SaskCulture Inc. **Engage** is also available in PDF version on the SaskCulture web site at [www.saskculture.sk.ca](http://www.saskculture.sk.ca). **Engage** is published thanks to financial support from Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation. The publication does not currently accept paid advertising. Article ideas for future publications can be submitted to [saskculture.info@saskculture.sk.ca](mailto:saskculture.info@saskculture.sk.ca) or by calling (306) 780.9289.

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# President's Message

**There is no doubt that Autumn can be a busy season, yet it's often when we're bogged down in the business of life that it's most important to reflect on our lives and our actions. There is no greater instigator of reflective thought than the arts.**

Art is for people. It's there to make us ask questions. It is a method of thought, question and exploration that in many ways reminds me of a scientific method, but whose scope goes far beyond physical phenomena. Just as the scientist tests observations and assumptions, so too does the artist question and test our social mores. Without questioning, without new perspectives, without a little revolution now and then, it's hard to grow in any of our faculties.

I can still very vividly remember my summer days as a youth spent soaking in the Festival of Words in Moose Jaw (which I only later serendipitously discovered was supported in part by the Saskatchewan Lotteries).

My lifelong love of writing was tended by this community event: All the new sounds, novel phrases, and abiding questions these writers and speakers shared sparked a sense of wonder and a purpose.

Another community event (again, that I only later discovered was also supported by Saskatchewan Lotteries) that greatly informed my early development was the Motif multicultural festival. Multicultural festivals are another place where community arts abound, from the craft of the clothing, the skill of the dance, to the visual art and other cultural artifacts. This event provided more than just an awareness of the cultural mosaic in our province. It was an entry point for deeper questioning about my personal heritage, the history of Saskatchewan and migratory patterns of its people, the arts and histories of many other homelands, and more. Most of all it taught me that there was so much more beyond what I had ever personally seen and experienced: that personal knowledge is systemically incomplete and that only through community can real understandings surface.

Just as the arts have a capacity to influence individuals and a community, so too should the artist keep a finger on the pulse of their community. A common tenet of writing is to "write what you know". That's not only because it makes for more believable stories, but it also breeds a relevance and connects to shared experiences that are more compelling and provocative for an audience. Through various form and craft, the arts are communication and the audience has an important role in interpreting and responding to the message.



**TOP:** SaskCulture's President James Ingold speaks at the 2013 Gathering in Moose Jaw. **CENTRE RIGHT:** SaskCulture's Past President's are awarded honorary lifetime memberships. (Left to right) Bryan Foran, Peter England, Anne Kipling Brown, Cheryl Bauer Hyde and Jan Siebel. **CENTRE LEFT:** Outgoing SaskCulture board members. (Left to right) Joseph Otitoju, Bula Ghosh, Laurel Reimche, David Cormican and Brenda Shenher. **BOTTOM:** Robert Sirman, director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts addresses delegates during the President's luncheon at the 2013 SaskCulture Gathering.



# OSAC

## connecting communities with the arts for 45 years!

BY MICHELLE BROWNRIDGE

**T**he Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils (OSAC) has been making the arts more accessible to the people of Saskatchewan for 45 years and recent initiatives are ensuring that OSAC's programs and services will continue to remain relevant well into the future.

OSAC acts as an umbrella organization for community arts councils and schools across the province. It assists arts councils in bringing the arts to communities by organizing tours of performing artists and visual arts exhibitions and assisting in and streamlining the booking process.

Kevin Korchinski, executive director, says "The impact OSAC has on the province can clearly be seen in the numbers. We have an extensive provincial reach." In the 2011/12 season alone, there were 154 performances, by 43 different artists in 29 communities, with an audience of almost 30,000, and that is just the Stars for Saskatchewan program! The Junior Concerts program, which connects performers with schools presented 153 performances, in 73 communities, to an audience of over 33,000. Through the Arts on the Move program, 14 visual and media

arts exhibitions toured 76 venues and were viewed by almost 24,000 people.

There are a number of new ideas that OSAC is developing to help move into the future. "A large part of the picture is helping our arts councils build capacity through strategic and succession planning sessions," says Korchinski.

In 2012, at the annual Showcase conference, OSAC offered succession and strategic planning workshops to delegates from around the province. "We had such a positive response to the workshops. We ended up with requests from people wanting to hold more extensive planning sessions in their communities," says Korchinski. "In the end, there were an additional six workshops that happened in different locations across the province last year. There are several more lined up for this year as well," he adds.

OSAC is also forward thinking when it comes

to technology. Aside from introducing a new website, e-mail newsletter, increasing their presence on social media and launching extensive rebranding, the organization has begun an online ticketing pilot project with some of their arts councils. "We've partnered with TicketPro to sell single tickets in seven different communities. The idea is that this will encourage people from outside of the arts council's regular market to purchase tickets and attend concerts," says Korchinski. "There are a lot of great acts that tour rural Saskatchewan through our program. We hope that by making ticket purchasing more accessible, that we will be able to increase attendance at performances."

OSAC is supported by funding from the Saskatchewan lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

For more information about OSAC, visit [www.osac.ca](http://www.osac.ca) or find them on Twitter at @OSACsask.

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OSAC staff from left to right: Marianne Woods (Performing Arts Coordinator - Junior Concerts/Membership Liaison), Catherine Tomczak (Operations Coordinator), Skip Taylor (Performing Arts Coordinator), Rosemary McCallum (Administrative Assistant), Frances Taman (Visual & Media Arts Assistant), Zoë Schneider (Visual & Media Arts Coordinator), and Kevin Korchinski (Executive Director).





**L**ive theatre has the power to touch audiences in a way few other art forms can. The play *The Trial of Louis Riel* has been reaching out and touching people with its story for 47 years.

The play was written by John Coulter, an Irish playwright who wrote three plays about the Canadian West. It was commissioned as a 1967 Centennial project based on the transcripts of Louis Riel's 1885 trial in Regina. The words of Riel still move audiences more than a century later. Peter Champagne, the show's producer says, "Louis is still alive and well in many respects today. The issues of rights, land, language, religion, culture and race, and the issues of 1885, are still very relevant."

The play produced by Rielco Productions runs for school audiences for a week every May and for general audiences for three weeks from the middle of July until the long weekend in August. All regular shows are performed in the Shumiatcher Theatre at the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina. *The*

# Production shares important Métis history

BY DANICA LORER

*Trial of Louis Riel* has been recognized in travel guides as one of the top things to see in Regina and has attracted an audience of over 50,000 since it began. The show has toured parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. It has been performed in Ottawa and plans are currently underway to take it west to Vancouver for a run. School audiences enjoy an opportunity to see their social studies lessons brought to life.

Several generations of theatre-goers have attended the summer productions. Audience members who attended as children sometimes return years later with their own families. Champagne explains, "It was particularly interesting when the show toured to Winnipeg in 2010 and a descendant of Joseph Riel, Louis' brother, was in the audience." He adds, "It was such a great example of how the play has had an impact over the years because he told us that he had attended a production in 1970 as a 7 or 8 year old."

Champagne has been involved with the production for about 15 years. He has played many of the roles and in 2005 he bought the rights to the play. *The Trial of Louis Riel* is still going strong but the production is not without challenges. "Raising money and sponsors is always difficult, as well as finding new audiences to introduce to this important dramatic, iconic, story and part of our history. Renewing the production and finding new quality, committed, actors is also a challenge," he said.

New performers are important but experienced cast members are an integral part of the production's success. "One of the strengths of

the cast is that virtually everyone can play all of the roles," he said. The piece has a cast of 25 characters and one actor, Bill Hayes, has played every one in his 30 years with the production.

Plans are already underway for special events to celebrate the production's 50th year in 2017 as *The Trial of Louis Riel* moves forward into the future with a story that connects generations and cultures and raises issues important to yesterday, today and tomorrow.

## PRESERVE HERITAGE.

In 2012, traditional skiff building was part of an Elders' Gathering in Pinehouse, SK, funded through the Métis Cultural Development Fund.



## MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the

**Métis Cultural  
Development Fund**

Supports activity that helps to preserve and pass on  
Métis culture and traditions.

Deadlines: Oct. 31 & April 30



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT **LOTTERIES SK**

Visit [www.saskculture.sk.ca](http://www.saskculture.sk.ca) for details.

Peter Champagne (Producer) as Dr. Willoughby in the long-running production of *The Trial of Louis Riel*.





# Oskayak Culture Camp connects youth to tradition

BY DAMON BADGER HEIT



In May 2013, students from Oskayak High School in Saskatoon travelled north to the shores of Waterhen First Nation by the Meadow Lake Provincial Park. Oskayak, which means “young people” in Nehiyawewin (Cree language), is a unique high school where ‘Culture and Academic Excellence Meet’. Recognizing

that many urban youth have been disconnected from their communities and cultures of origin, the school aims to complement the required academic undertakings of a high school education with opportunities for awareness building experiences in First Nation cultures.

With the assistance of an Aboriginal Arts

and Culture Leadership grant, Oskayak school coordinators, Elders at Oskayak and the Waterhen First Nation, selected Waterhen Lake to host a four-day culture camp.

*The goal of the culture camp was to mentor and support Indigenous youth in acquiring cultural competencies to strengthen an individual and collective sense of identity.*

Elders and cultural resource peoples from multiple communities, including Waterhen First Nation, Kawacatoose, Sucker River and Muskoday, collaborated to provide a well-rounded experience for the youth to develop as emerging leaders.

“We want to help the youth retain Cree culture in their contemporary lives,” explains Sid Fiddler, one of the camp coordinators. “We know for many of them that the language is lost, but they can still carry on traditional Cree values that will help them in their everyday lives.”



Youth were provided opportunities to engage with Elders, ask questions and learn. Workshops in traditional craft, snaring and cooking also provided for some hands-on learning. Late into the evening, round dance songs could be heard across the lake as the youth sang and shared with one another. For some, this was another milestone in their own journeys of rediscovering their cultural identities. For others, it was an entirely new experience.

Rachel Fiddler, another of the camp coordinators, describes how non-native youth have begun to register as students at Oskayak. "First Nations culture resonates with them. It's really good to see non-native youth connect to our culture and way of life." With multiple Elders and cultural resource people on hand, the camp provided a lot of experiences and teachings that will be useful throughout participants' lives.

"We had a phenomenal chance to connect with our traditions, our Mother Earth and our ancestors," describes Rachel Fiddler.

"Students came back from camp completely transformed, with awakened spirits and a yearning to learn more. The culture camp was a highly effective means of teaching youth about culture, holistic health and taking care of their spirit within," she adds.



PREVIOUS PAGE: Students from Oskayak high school in Saskatoon at the Culture Camp at Waterhen First Nation. PREVIOUS PAGE BOTTOM: Students learn the art of soapstone carving. TOP: Youth work alongside Elders to learn how to build a sweat lodge. CENTRE: Setting up a tipi. ABOVE: Students learn how to bead.

## BUILD LEADERSHIP.

In 2012, youth in Cumberland House, SK, participated in a Media Arts & Traditional Storytelling Workshop, as part of a project supported by an Aboriginal Arts & Cultural Leadership Grant.



## MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

Funding available from the  
**Aboriginal Arts & Cultural  
Leadership Grant**

Supports opportunities for First Nations and/or Métis youth to demonstrate leadership skills through cultural mentorships.

**Deadlines: Oct. 15 & April 15**

Sask **Culture**

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# Artists ‘animate’ Culture Days in Saskatchewan

As in past years, this year’s Culture Days Animateurs continued to generate a great deal of enthusiasm for cultural activity as they toured the province. Since 2010, SaskCulture has hired Saskatchewan artists, from a variety of disciplines, to interest people – planners and public – in participating in Culture Days, a three-day event held late September, that encourages residents to explore the cultural life of their community. In 2013, four artists – Carol Daniels, Matt Josdal, Karlie King and Shayna Stock – set out to “animate” Culture Days, and encourage even more Saskatchewan people to try a new cultural activity and get engaged with culture in their community.



## Carol Daniels

a Cree and Chipewyan artist with roots in Sandy Bay Saskatchewan.

**I always held the belief that Saskatchewan is truly a magical place.** It is why I live here. Having the wonderful opportunity to work as an Animateur this past summer has shown me exactly why that belief is true.

I visited many communities, including: La Ronge, Prince Albert, Gull Lake, Beaver Flat, Fillmore, Moose Jaw, Gravelbourg, Assiniboia, Little Black Bear, Piapot, Whitewood and many others in between. I have met thousands of people; each proud to share their culture by telling me a story, taking part in celebrating my own First Nations drumming traditions and by seeing their own community as a place where cultural magic happens. For example, in Ituna, we did a blanket creation project – where participants engaged by recounting stories about the historic significance of their town. We re-created museum artifacts and sat down to a potluck of home-made breads, jams, preserves, and of course, perogies.

I visited several schools across the province, where children of all ages were mesmerized by the heartbeat sound of my hand-drum. They were then invited to join, trying the drum for themselves and having fun creating their



own songs. I hope that in my travels across the province this summer, especially in the schools where I did drumming workshops, that I have left

an appreciation and interest in culture that extends beyond my visit, because at the heart of it – every day is a celebration of culture.

Carol Daniels travelled throughout the province including stops in Ituna (top left), Gravelbourg (top right) and Piapot First Nation (bottom). Photos courtesy of Carol Daniels.





## Matt Josdal

theatre artist from Saskatoon.

**As an Animateur, I was able to spend time with community theatre groups throughout the province.** I was struck by the wide variety of people who “LOVE” theatre. From a woman in her 90's, who I'm sure could be a very successful stand-up comic, to two young girls aged 11 and 13, I saw people from completely different backgrounds coming together to learn and play in the theatre.

I think one visit that will stick with me is my time spent in Churchbridge. There,

they have a relatively young theatre group, that is only going into its third production. Instead of doing a structured workshop as planned, we talked about choosing plays, holding auditions, the financial viability of owning versus renting a sound system, how to create community participation in a theatre group, stage construction... basically, you name it, we talked about it.

This workshop was one of the best attended I held all summer, in one of the smallest towns, with some of the least amount of collective experience. It was wonderful, simply because the room was full of people who were excited to be



there, excited to make theatre, and excited to find ways to make their group thrive. I thank them for letting me be a part of it.



ABOVE LEFT: The stage is set for a theatre workshop in Weyburn. ABOVE RIGHT: An enthusiastic workshop participant in Balgonie, SK even showed up in costume as George Burns! Photos by Matt Josdal.



## Karlie King

multi-media artist from Mervin.

When asked to select “my favourite aspect of Culture Days” I went through my list of activities: paper gardens, piñatas, print making en-masse, image transfers, origami, book forts, kites, edible art class, papier-mâché flash mobs, decoupage, and so on.

Choosing one of these activities wasn't a fit for “my favourite.” Ironically, the best part of this experience, for me, was the spontaneous moments when “culture just happened”.

It was the little girl who in the middle of a street festival broke out in dance (like no one was watching). It was the kids who (without knowing each other's names) played games in one room, while a fiddler played music in another. It was the Elder



Tipi and Tibetan prayer flags at Bogart's Bay Coffee Roasters during Culture Days near Medstead, SK. Photo by Karlie King.





who stopped me before getting in my car, with the classic conversation starter "Where ya from?" and then telling me all about the "good-ole" days.

It was the couple that is neither Tibetan, nor First Nations, who have a teepee strung with prayer flags in their yard, for moments of solitude and prayer.

These, and other similar instances, are my favourite moments of "culture"—period, so, it makes sense that they would also be my favourite moments as a Culture Days Animateur.



LEFT: Little girl dancing during a street festival. ABOVE: Children playing games during an old-fashioned house party in Delisle, SK during Culture Days. Photos by Karlie King.



## Shayna Stock

**spoken word artist from Regina.**

My goal as an Animateur, in addition to promoting Culture Days, was to engage people in new and creative ways in the art of poetry. My approach was two-pronged: spoken word workshops, and an activity I'm calling "eavesdrop poetry".

The workshops, which were mostly in high school classrooms, youth groups and summer camps, allowed me to share my passion for performance poetry with young people who, for the most part, hadn't heard of "spoken word". By introducing them to this more interactive and animated type of poetry, I hoped to demonstrate that there's a lot more to poetry than sonnets and metaphors.



Students perform their work after participating in a spoken word workshop. Photo by Shayna Stock.



I facilitated over 30 workshops with various groups of young people in grades six and up. One highlight that sums up many of the responses I received from students was a comment made by a Grade 10 Moose Javian, who said after my workshop, "That was actually pretty good." She said she thought they'd "just be writing poetry all day" and was surprised that she'd actually had some fun.

Eavesdrop poetry is a type of found poetry I developed to engage people at public events such as festivals. Participants jot down things they overhear in the crowd, bring their contributions to me, and at the end of the event, I compile a poem from them. The process of collecting these lines of poetry allows event-goers to listen to, and interact with; their surroundings in a more creative way, flowing from the concept that poetry exists everywhere; it is the poet's job to find it (and we are all poets). All of the eavesdrop poems I compiled this summer are on my blog at [www.shaynastock.com](http://www.shaynastock.com).



## I was raised by...

By Talia Oudie

I was raised by a standing-strong, no-backing-down, laughing kind of mother.  
 I was raised by a rod-reeling, line-hooking, fish-catching kind of father.  
 I was raised by bannock-slapping, flour-spreading, dough-kneeding, grease-splashing kind of grandmas.  
 I was raised by bingo-playing, slots-enjoying, country-music-loving kind of grandpas.  
 I was raised by a story-telling, Traditional dancing, Elvis-loving kind of papa.  
 I was raised by ice-scratching, puck-hitting, goal-winning, ball-hitting, base-touching, glove-smacking kind of uncles.  
 I was raised by child-loving, food-making, movie-watching kind of aunties.  
 I was raised by game-playing, joystick-holding, button-pressing kind of cousins.  
 I was raised by pet-loving, free-running, adventure-having kind of friends.  
 I was raised by a strong-standing, fish-catching, bannock-slapping, bingo-playing, storytelling, goal-winning, ball-hitting, food-making, game-playing, adventure-having kind of FAMILY.



TOP: Poet Tara Willet and Shayna Stock after performing at Perchfest at Katepwa Lake, August 2013.  
 ABOVE: Audiences at Perchfest at Katepwa Lake enjoy the good weather, spoken word poetry and music.  
 RIGHT: A poem written by Talia Oudie during one of Shayna's spoken word workshops.  
 Photos by Shayna Stock.



# Culture Days Q & A with the St. Walburg Allied Arts Council

BY MICHELLE BROWNRIDGE

**St. Walburg, Saskatchewan was a cultural hot spot this year during Culture Days. With a variety of activities planned throughout the Sept. 27 - 29 weekend, from interactive ceramic workshops, cake decorating, museum tours, visits to the Chuck Wagon Interpretive Centre, as well as tours and other onsite activities at the historic Imhoff Gallery, visitors had plenty of culture to see and experience.**

The St. Walburg Allied Arts Council (SWAAC) was a first-time Culture Days activity organizer in 2013. Culture Days is devoted to providing Canadians with opportunities to participate in, and appreciate, all forms of arts and culture. Through an annual three-day national celebration each September, hundreds of thousands of artists and cultural organizations in hundreds of cities and towns come together and invite Canadians to participate in free interactive and “behind the scenes” activities to discover their cultural spirit and passion. Phyllis Imhoff, SWAAC member and volunteer administrator of the Imhoff Gallery in St. Walburg recently spoke to SaskCulture about the community's Culture Days experience.

**SC: What would a visitor have experienced when they visited St. Walburg during Culture Days?**

**PI:** “The Imhoff Gallery was open by special arrangement for the Culture Days weekend. The Gallery is usually closed by this time of year because it is not heated. However, for Culture Days, we purchased heaters to temporarily heat the building to facilitate a more comfortable environment for Culture Days visitors. Free tours of the Gallery were given by very energetic student tour guides. They were able to tell visitors about some of the history of Imhoff’s life and his work.



TOP: The Little German Band from Humboldt performs at the Imhoff Gallery during Culture Days.  
ABOVE: The historic Imhoff Gallery and studio, built in 1920, is open to the public throughout the summer.  
Photos by Michelle Brownridge.



“We set up a tent to host some performing artists. We had a local band play and also brought in a German brass band from Humboldt. This was in celebration of German culture, which was the first language and native country of Mr. Imhoff. The music definitely got people dancing! We also offered free food in the form of a barbecue and refreshments.

“Many other diverse and interesting activities were organized for Culture Days in St. Walburg. It was important to us to have free, interactive, art workshops, such as painting and ceramics done by professional artists. We also offered cake decorating, which was a hit with young people.

“The Chuck Wagon Interpretive Centre also has a vast display of chuck wagon artifacts that have been donated by the owners. There is so much to see in the Interpretive Centre in regards to the cowboy and chuck wagon history of St. Walburg. Many professional wagon drivers have come from St. Walburg and the surrounding area. It is great to be able to celebrate this part of our community’s heritage at the Centre.”

**SC: Do you consider your Culture Days experience a success?**

**PI:** “Yes, I would say it was a huge success simply by the number of people that took part in all the activities. Throughout the three days, in all of the venues combined, we had a total of 911 participants. Our Culture Days events were for all ages - young, old and in between. We made sure no one age group was left out. I think that helped contribute to the success of Culture Days in St. Walburg.”

**SC: What about Culture Days was valuable or positive for the Imhoff Gallery and the SWAAC?**

**PI:** “For the Gallery, it was wonderful that so many people came to visit and learned about Mr. Imhoff and his contribution to the arts in Saskatchewan. Culture Days created interest in the art gallery. Many people, some of whom were locals who have lived close by for years, had never taken the time to stop and find out what the Gallery is all about.

“None of the students we hired to give tours in the gallery throughout the weekend had ever been there before.

*Continued on page 14*



## Make the Imhoff Gallery part of your travel plans...

The Imhoff Gallery, a dedicated provincial heritage site, is one of Saskatchewan’s oldest and most unique tourist attractions. The Gallery’s historical site tells the story of Berthold Von Imhoff, a prolific and critically acclaimed painter who emigrated from Germany in the late 1800’s to Reading, Pennsylvania, and eventually settled in St. Walburg, Saskatchewan in 1914.

Imhoff’s large scale, realist paintings, both on canvas and in over 100 churches and other buildings are an incredible legacy - albeit little known - to this province. The story of Berthold Von Imhoff, a man whose artistic talent earned acclaim in Europe, prestige in America, and honour by the Vatican, has been described as remarkable, awe-inspiring and - more than 70 years since the artist’s death - has left a legacy well worth including in your future travel plans.

For more information about the gallery and Berthold Von Imhoff, please visit <http://www.imhoffgallery.com>.







TOP: A display at the Chuck Wagon Interpretive Centre in St. Walburg. ABOVE: A volunteer at the St. Walburg and District Historical Museum demonstrates using an antique treadle sewing machine during Culture Days. Photos by Michelle Brownridge.

*Continued from page 13*

It was interesting to see their initial reaction, which was not much different from any other visitors that just happen to discover our Gallery is full of paintings. It is always a reaction of great amazement and excitement. They were so excited to be able to take visitors on tour. This is very positive for us at the Gallery. Every year, the Imhoff Heritage Society hires a summer student and it is reassuring to know that there are interested young people out there who are keen to work in this area.

“For the SWAAC, it was also a very positive experience. Celebrating Culture Days helped all of our new members realize how valuable it is to have an arts council in our town and to see how so much can be accomplished by a few people working well together. This past spring, the SWAAC was planning to shut down completely. It seemed such a shame that an organization such as this, should be allowed to die out. Eventually, the right people who were interested in, and concerned about, maintaining the arts council were able to come together. Rather than shut down, SWAAC is now revitalized with new members and a new executive.”

**SC: Do you have any advice for first time Culture Days activity organizers?**

PI: “We didn’t get working on our Culture Days plans until May. Although we seemed to do very well in a short period of time, I think it may be better to start thinking about next year’s Culture Days a little earlier.

“Also, don’t be afraid to ask for either financial or in-kind donations. We managed to raise a good amount of funds (besides the grant we received from SaskCulture) through corporate sponsorship and local donations. Some of the grocery stores in Lloydminster were very generous. Sobey’s donated ten dozen hotdog buns. One of the Tim Horton’s donated two days’ worth of coffee including all the cups, sugar, cream and stir sticks! This is just two examples. There were more in-kind donations like this.”

**SC: Do you plan on participating in Culture Days next year?**

PI: “If the majority of arts council members are in favor of doing something again for 2014 Culture Days, then we will. Some members are already talking about what we can do next year, so it sounds likely to me that we will be participating again.”



# Mann Art Gallery

## engages community through art

BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH



**People of all ages from the Prince Albert area have been discovering their inner artist thanks to a partnership between the Mann Art Gallery and a local business.**

Though an ArtsVest grant, the gallery partnered with Victoria Square Compounding Pharmacy a little more than a year ago to promote and display art in the business. This seemingly unusual pairing resulted in the highly successful Artist Trading Cards program.

According to Twyla Exner, gallery educator, Mann Art Gallery, the Artist Trading Cards program came about from the pharmacy's desire to display fun and interesting art that engages people from the Prince Albert and Lakeland District area. Funding for the Gallery's outreach programs is made possible by the Lakeland for Sport, Culture and Recreation District, supported by the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

Starting in February 2013, the Mann Art Gallery began working with school,

community and senior groups to create the individualized collection of Artist Trading Cards. Participants, who ranged in ages from three to 93 years old, were encouraged to let their imagination run loose on each of their own pocket-sized cards.

*"The participants loved making the cards," said Exner. "I think artist trading cards are such a wonderful activity because they are a very approachable format. It is something you can do fairly quickly and it's something you can do using any medium."*

Some of the cards featured painting, embossing, low-relief sculpture and print

making techniques. For inspiration, students used curriculum-based themes, which included: pattern, community, environment, Saskatchewan, pop culture, identity, place and social issues.

During this past May, approximately 800 cards were on display in the pharmacy. The exhibition grew while it was on display as visitors were encouraged to make their own Artist Trading Cards which were then added to the show.

A big reception where participants swapped their trading cards with other artists' cards helped wrap up the exhibition at the end of May. People who couldn't attend the reception were mailed another participant's trading card.

Exner said the Artist Trading Card program was a huge success and it was great that it had so much local support.

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Some creative examples of the Artist Trading Cards that were created by participants in the Mann Art Gallery's Artist Trading Card program. Photos courtesy of Twyla Exner.





# Gateway Festival has positive community impact for nearly a decade

BY MICHELLE BROWNRIDGE

**For almost ten years, the Gateway Music Festival held in Bengough, SK has been entertaining audiences and providing a unique opportunity for Saskatchewan musicians to play alongside internationally acclaimed artists.**

Michael Dawson, artistic director, Gateway Festival, says, "From a programming standpoint, it is a magic moment for me when I can put dozens of Saskatchewan artists on the same stage as our head liners and watch them 'blow away' a few thousand people."

Carol Cairns, the founding artistic director, explains how the festival got its start. "It was becoming apparent that there was a need to develop an artistic community in Bengough. The Reeve of the rural municipality and the Mayor of Bengough were talking about how to bring arts and culture into the community and I had purchased a building with the intent of

creating a community arts centre and gallery," she says. "We all got together and formed the Bengough Municipal Arts Council. One of the first events we held was a one-day outdoor concert."

The first outdoor event, held in 2004, was a huge success. "At the time, there were a lot of young musicians and bands around the community and they were having these huge, out-of-control parties where 200 people would show up," she says. "The one-day event, formatted as a 'Battle of the Bands', allowed the youth to showcase their talent to the community in a more positive and organized way." The event wrapped with a performance by

popular country artist Corb Lund. "Ending the event with a performance by a well-established artist brought it all together, showing the young artists what is possible and providing a great concert for audience members," adds Cairns.

The festival continued to grow from that point on, progressing to a full three-day event with over 60 performers in just three years.

Fast-forward to 2013, a hugely successful year for the Gateway Festival. With over 6,500 people in attendance throughout the weekend and big name head-liners such as Steve Earle and Corb Lund sharing the stage with local Saskatchewan talent,





such as Rah Rah, Zachary Lucky, Indigo Joseph, Jeans Boots and many more, it was a landmark year for the festival.

Dawson says, "I think there were a number of factors that contributed to the growth of the festival in 2013. First and foremost, the generous support of our funders and sponsors played a role in allowing us to extend both our programming and marketing." He adds, "It was my first year as artistic director and I focused on new branding that celebrates the incredible Big Muddy and Castle Butte region where the festival takes place.

"I am also well aware that former artistic director, Carol Cairns, had created a 'sleeping giant', so to speak, that was incredibly successful at attracting audiences from all over the surrounding area. It was only a matter of time before word spread," he says.

The Gateway Festival has had a tremendous impact on the community of Bengough and the surrounding area. Not only does it bring together people from all of the neighbouring communities, but it creates an avenue for people from all across the prairies and beyond to visit Bengough and the Big Muddy region. "Last year brought many first-time attendees, including people who drove from BC just for the festival," says Dawson. "Beyond showcasing how fantastic the area is, it also creates a positive financial impact. For many locally-owned businesses, the festival weekend is their busiest time of year.

"2014 marks the tenth anniversary of the festival, so we plan to celebrate in a major way," says Dawson. "Expect lots of announcements early in the new year!"



The Gateway Festival is supported by the SaskFestivals Grant Program delivered by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, with funding from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

For more information about the Gateway Festival, visit [www.gatewayfestival.ca](http://www.gatewayfestival.ca) or find them on Twitter at @GatewayFestival.

## Partnerships support arts and culture

The Saskatchewan Arts Board is pleased to partner with SaskCulture Inc. and Saskatchewan Lotteries on programs and initiatives that build a strong and vibrant arts and culture sector.

[www.artsboard.sk.ca](http://www.artsboard.sk.ca)



SaskFestivals   Gallery and Media Arts Organizations  
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Rah Rah (top) and Yukon Blonde (bottom) were some of the crowd favourites to take the stage at the 2013 Gateway Festival. Photos by Chris Graham.

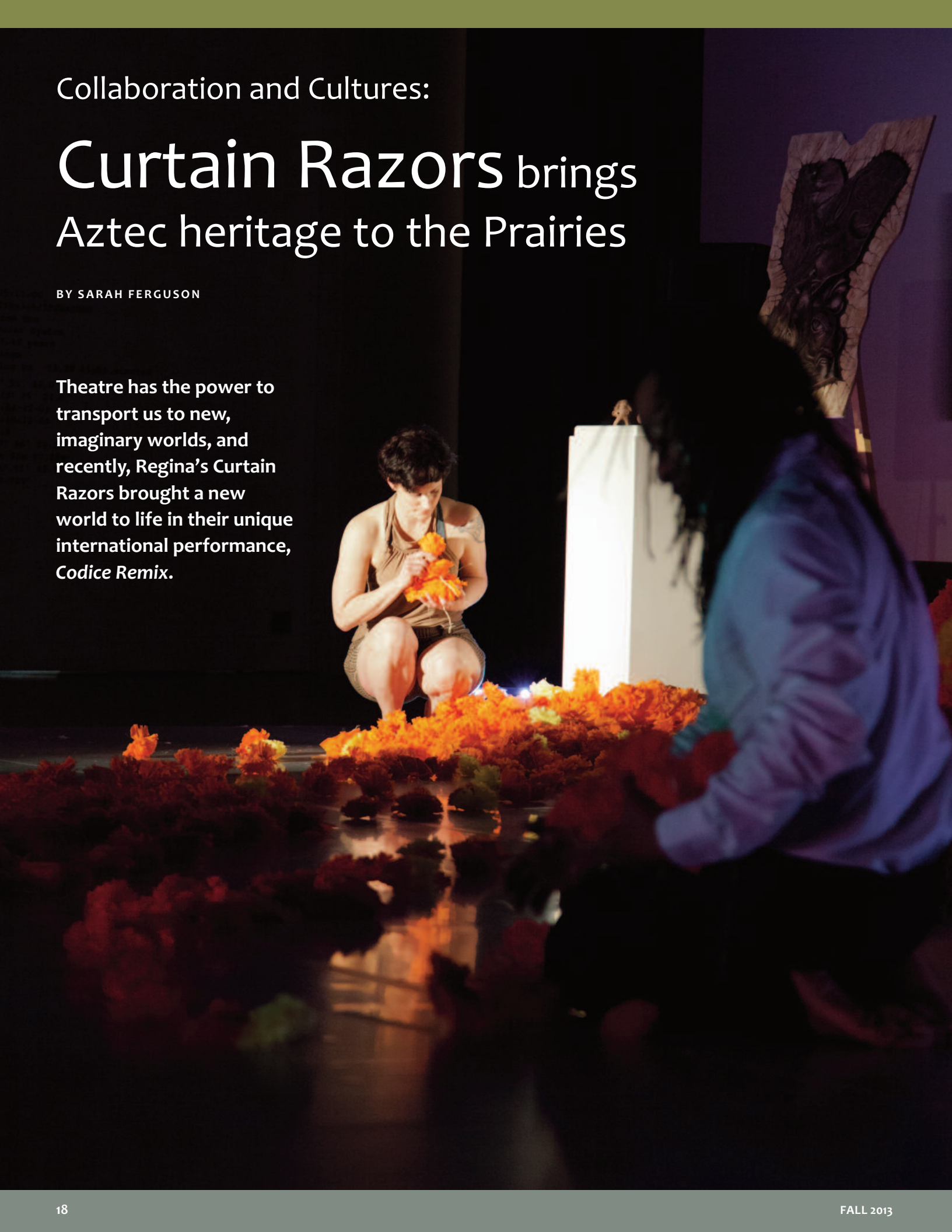


Collaboration and Cultures:

# Curtain Razors brings Aztec heritage to the Prairies

BY SARAH FERGUSON

Theatre has the power to transport us to new, imaginary worlds, and recently, Regina's Curtain Razors brought a new world to life in their unique international performance, *Codice Remix*.







*Codice Remix*, which took over two years to create, was co-produced by Curtain Razors (an experimental theatre group) and Sâkêwêwak Artists Collective, and took place from March 14-16, 2013 at the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina, SK.

Working with the concept “one world in which many worlds fit”, Michele Sereda, artistic director of Curtain Razors, and Danilo Villalta, a San Salvadoran artist, partnered to create a visual enactment of the Aztec/ Maya *Codice Borgia*. “The *Codice Borgia* is a Mayan and Aztec pictorial code that documents agricultural systems,” says Sereda. “These include the making of the calendar, and ceremonial links to land-based ways of being with the natural, supernatural, and living world. It’s where all of their histories come from.”

Using an interdisciplinary approach, Curtain Razors combined poetry, ceramic installation, movement, spoken word, ocarinas (clay flutes crafted by Villalta), drums, and guitar to juxtapose the Aztec legend of the Tiger of Sumpul. The performance ends with a Cree tale known as the *Medawin Star Story*, told by First Nations performer Erroll Kinistino. Kinistino’s storytelling was accompanied by Spanish guitarist Ramses Calderon and blues musician Billy Hughes. Dancers

Meredith LaRoque and Chancz Perry were also part of the performance.

Laroque describes her involvement, “I really loved the interconnectedness of all the [artistic] elements. It’s beautiful to be in something that so many people have a hand in, however different.”

Sereda explains the unique juxtaposition of the two stories and cultures. “The Tiger of Sumpul is an oral legend that tells the story of the history of San Salvador and El Salvador. It also tells the mythic history of two [Aztec/Mayan] icons, the tiger and the deer,” she adds.

In contrast, the *Star Story* is about light—it talks about two Cree women looking up at the stars, the stars connect to the Aztec idea of universe and creation.

“The meshing of the stories... works well,” says Sereda. [First Nations culture] works with ideas of duality... moon and sun, light and dark, and ultimately, those ideas are happening with the Aztec culture too.”

Sereda says the collaboration between herself and Villalta, who is also an independent expert on Aztec culture, began when the two artists met at a music performance. “Michele was interested in my work with ocarinas, and then we began a series of deep communications,” Villalta explains.

Sereda says, “Sâkêwêwak Artists Collective asked me if I would be interested in creating a project with them. I told them I would be interested in doing something involving Mayan or Aztec culture... and I was interested in

working with Danilo,” she says. “What fascinated me most [about Aztec culture] was the subject of agriculture and development of the calendar.”

The key word that describes *Codice Remix* is ‘interrelationship’. “[The performance covers] the relationship between Saskatchewan and San Salvador, [as well as] the International First Nations Corridor,” Sereda says, adding that *Codice Remix* also addressed relationships between intercultural activity, being together and letting people tell their stories.

Villalta feels the performance is a profound experiment. “It allowed me to expand my spirit and my mind.”

Sereda adds that “Ultimately, the project was about how we learn through beauty and art to create tolerance with one another.”

## SHARE CULTURE.

Spring Free from Racism organizers received a Multicultural Initiatives Fund grant that enables them to showcase the diversity of cultural heritage living in their community.



## MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

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# White City School sings the blues

BY SARAH FERGUSON



**It is said that music changes lives, and a musical collaboration between a local school teacher and an internationally acclaimed blues musician has done just that.**

This past February, White City School teacher Danyelle Armbruster partnered with Brooklyn-born blues musician Shakura S'Aida, and the Regina Folk Festival, for a series of songwriting workshops. The school-based workshops, which ran from February 25-28, provided an opportunity for many of the school's 800 students in grades 6-8 to compose and perform their own "protest" songs in front of their peers. The project culminated with several of the students performing their songs at S'Aida's show in March at The Exchange in Regina.

S'Aida, a blues, jazz and R&B artist, has been involved in the Canadian music scene for almost 25 years. A Juno Awards nominee, she was chosen to take part in Armbruster's project because of her passion for children. "Working with children is one of the most important things in my life... probably even more important than singing," S'Aida says. The singer also brought her mother Gloria, who was part of the Black Panther movement during the 1960s, to the workshops to share her story with the students. "I feel it's really important that we bring back the idea of elders telling their stories into the schools," she says.

S'Aida's passion for justice left an impression on the students, and got them talking, said Dayle Schroeder, Program Coordinator for the Regina Folk Festival. "She went around to every grade 7 and 8 classroom and the kids each had to explain something they believed in," she says. "It got them thinking, and it also got a discussion happening within their peer group."

S'Aida stressed that "What a person believes in is a very important part of song writing."

She adds, "I think the most special part was that the kids got to speak for themselves."

The social justice-themed workshop, funded in part through the ArtsSmarts program, also allowed students to address school issues like bullying through song writing.

Armbruster, who teaches Kindergarten through Grade 8, approached the Saskatchewan Arts Board with the idea for an ArtsSmarts project last November. "To have a performer in the classroom who

sings the blues is powerful," she says. "When you can connect [the students to] an actual person instead of a book, it means so much more."

S'Aida's visit coincided with Black History Month, a fact that Schroeder, says was essential. "There's not a lot of cultural diversity in that school, so it was important for students to learn about African Canadian history," she said.

Risa Payant, Arts and Learning Consultant for the Saskatchewan Arts Board says, "It was a real collaboration between all the partners involved—collaboration was the key word."

"This project is just one example of how teachers are changing the lives of their students. It's really worth taking the time to get that money into your school and that artist into your classroom," says Payant.

ArtsSmarts is funded by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education and SaskCulture thanks to the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.



Blues artist Shakura S'Aida works with students at White City school to explore song-writing as a form of artistic expression. Photos courtesy of Danyelle Armbruster.



# New home, new name for the Regina Plains Museum

BY SHAUNNA GRANDISH



**The Regina Plains Museum is now called the Civic Museum of Regina. Besides a new name, it also has a new address.**

For over 50 years, the museum has been located in the heart of downtown Regina; but during the past year, the museum has been in the process of moving to a new location in the city's Warehouse District with the goal of reopening to the public in late fall of 2013.

"It's definitely been exciting," says Shari Sokochoff, executive director, Civic Museum of Regina. "But wow! What a year it's been! It's been a lot of work."

For the past 15 years, the majority of the museum's artifacts have been housed in a warehouse on Winnipeg Street.

According to Sokochoff, visitors to the museum's old location only had the opportunity to see about 1,400 out of 19,000 artifacts on display. The remaining pieces resided at the warehouse location where they were subjected to water and humidity issues, and were unseen by the public.

With the new location at 1375 Broad Street,

the museum has room to display significantly more, up to 30 to 40 per cent, of the entire collection. It began to move artifacts from the Winnipeg Street warehouse.

"This was such a huge project," explains Sokochoff. "Not just because of the time involved, but the magnitude of moving these huge artifacts."

Sokochoff further explained that a huge fur press had to be transferred down the street by a forklift because it was so massive.

The other big change for the museum is its name: the Regina Plains Museum will now be referred to as the Civic Museum of Regina.

The name change was initiated by a lack of public understanding about what the Regina Plains Museum was all about, said Sokochoff.

Sokochoff further explained that despite the name change, the museum is still very

much a pioneer collection. The museum hasn't actively acquired new items over the past two decades, but it intends to change this practise.

"The collection will get you to think about how Regina has changed over the years and how it has grown. What is this place I call home all about? I think the Museum has a serious role and responsibility to all the citizens and guests visiting the city, who not only want to learn more about its pioneer roots, but also its more contemporary history," adds Sokochoff.

In the new location, people will get the chance to see little known pieces of more recent Regina history such as the first ATM Machine, with technology pioneered by Conexus Credit Union.

"To tell the story of the past, we have to be able to appreciate culture and heritage," says Sokochoff. "But moving forward, it's just as important today to reflect today's more recent history that is being created."



**TOP LEFT:** The new name brought a new logo and branding for the museum.

**ABOVE:** Shari Sokochoff, executive director, and Rob Deglau, board chair, in the new location.

Photos courtesy of Shari Sokochoff.





## #iheartculture contest winners

This past summer, SaskCulture ran a social media contest as a part of Culture Days in Saskatchewan asking residents to share what they love about culture by posting their photos, videos, poems or stories on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram using the hashtag #iheartculture or submitting their entries through [iheartculture.ca](http://iheartculture.ca).

The 12 winners were selected by a random draw from the hundreds of submissions of Saskatchewan photos, poems, videos and essays. A few are showcased here. To see the rest, visit [iheartculture.ca](http://iheartculture.ca)

1. Faith Logan, Regina
  2. Regan Hinchcliff, Regina
  3. Crystal Frombach, Edenwold
  4. Nichole Huck, Regina
  5. Chloe Rolufs, Arcola
  6. Risa Payant, Regina
- Nick Faye, Regina  
Amanda Halkett, Regina  
Jennifer Hoesgen, Humboldt  
Sandra Knoss, Rockglen  
Matt Kruchak, Saskatoon  
Brienne Maher, Regina

A huge thank you goes out to the sponsors who provided a variety of great cultural experiences as prizes for the #iheartculture contest, including:

Allan Sapp Gallery  
Conexus Arts Centre  
Craven Country Jamboree  
Globe Theatre  
Long Day's Night Music Festival  
Ness Creek Festival  
Persephone Theatre  
Pumpkin Hollow  
Queen City Exhibition  
Regina Folk Festival  
Regina Fringe Festival  
Regina Public Library Film Theatre  
Regina Symphony Orchestra  
Saskatchewan Express  
Saskatchewan Festival of Words  
Station Arts Centre  
Summer Solstice Festival d'été  
The Bruno Arts Bank  
Theatre Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra  
Windscape Kite Festival  
Yorkton Film Festival

**5**

**Saskatchewan**  
By Chloe Rolufs

The only place where minor hockey is more popular than the N.H.L.  
A place where we skate on dugouts,  
Until the darkness descends and consumes us for another twelve hours  
Somewhere where we learn to skate before our second birthdays,  
and five foot snow banks are to be expected in May.  
A place where people take two months off work for harvest  
You learn to drive as soon as you can sit up on your own,  
and your first vehicle costs no more than eight hundred dollars  
The kind of place where we back down Main Street to talk to an old friend,  
and everyone knows you by your first name  
The only place in the world that people willingly put a fruit on their head to cheer on a football team,  
and agribition is like a provincial holiday  
Where the first rain of the year marks the beginning of stuck trucks,  
And muddy boots  
Where summer bonfires last until the sun comes up,  
And the coolers are all empty  
The only place where people run their dogs from the front seat of their pick ups  
Where everyone knows everyone and can talk to them for hour,  
A place so many call home  
But only in Saskatchewan ...







## Prairie Wind and Silver Sage conserve prairie landscapes

BY MICHELLE BROWNRIDGE

**T**his past summer, Prairie Wind and Silver Sage was excited to launch phase one of their ecomuseum project exploring the unique character of the Grasslands, Val Marie and the surrounding area by highlighting artifacts, mapping, photography, sound and stories.

In 2012, Prairie Wind and Silver Sage (PWSS), a non-profit, volunteer organization that works to conserve the native prairie landscapes while inviting the exploration and appreciation of prairie culture and natural history, received a Capacity Building Grant from SaskCulture to rejuvenate their museum display.

Shortly after receiving the funding, they attended a presentation by Glenn Sutter from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum about the concept of ecomuseums. Ecomuseums are designed to share the experience of place, community, people, and their natural and cultural heritage. They provide the opportunity for communities to actively participate in developing dynamic and fluid relationships and to share and learn about their stories in their own ways.

The board members of PWSS were inspired by Sutter's presentation and decided to pursue the idea of ecomuseums further to see if they could incorporate it into their museum in Val Marie.

PWSS also receives operational funding from Stream II of SaskCulture's Museum Grant Program. For more information about Prairie Wind and Silver Sage and their ecomuseum exhibition project, visit [www.pwss.org](http://www.pwss.org)

Prairie Wind and Silver Sage board members Heather Sauder, chairperson of the Museum Exhibition Committee, and Laureen Marchand, board chairperson, with the newly launched Ecomuseum Exhibition in Val Marie, SK. Photo by Dennis Garreck.





Artist Bruno Hernani paints on the Scarth Street Mall in Regina during Culture Days as a part of BuskFest. Photo by Shawn Fulton.



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