

**Nina Haggerty
Centre for
the Arts**

Nina News

Special 4-page Anniversary Edition

February 2006



NINA HAGGERTY
CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

**THE NINA NEWS IS PUBLISHED
6 TIMES A YEAR
BRINGING NEWS TO MEMBERS AND
FRIENDS**

In this edition:

**Lieutenant Governor
helps celebrate our
birthday: The Centre
Turns Three!**

**Nina Hosts Book
Launch**

**Paula Simons on
Emmanuel Bara**

**Next in the Gallery:
Art Matters**

Nina Joins PACE

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Lieutenant Governor helps celebrate Nina's 3rd birthday

The Honourable Norman L. Kwong, shares an anniversary with the Nina Haggerty Centre. The day we turned three, he celebrated his first anniversary as Alberta's Lieutenant Governor!

Mr. Kwong was pleased to attend a luncheon in celebration of the happy occasion on January 19, 2006. The Stollery Gallery, doubling as a bistro, provided a lovely setting for the event. Invited guests enjoyed a preview of MOTIVATIONS, an exhibition of colourful abstract work by artist Emmanuel Bara Layila. (See page 2)

The Lieutenant Governor praised the Centre for its successes and contribution to the community, and to its support of artists.

He spoke of his life, of being a young person who happened to be good at sports.

"I could play football. Thanks to that gift, I had a pretty successful career and good life. But I don't know where I would be today if I didn't have support... someone standing behind me, helping me to make the most of my gift."

He compared this to the artists of the Nina Haggerty Centre.

"They (the artists) have a gift as well. They may face challenges that not all of us face. But they also have something that many of us lack...the ability, the talent...and the desire...to create beautiful works of art."

Centre artist Paul Bellemare enjoyed discussing a shared passion for sports with His Honour over lunch. "We had a good chat!"



"I would like to leave you with a few words...from famous sculptor, Henry Moore: "To be an artist is to believe in life." Let me add only this. "To support an artist is to also believe in life."

Event supported by impressive guest list

Key supporters came out to help celebrate. Robert Stollery (Stollery Charitable Foundation), Martin Garber-Conrad & staff (Edmonton Community Foundation), Don Risdon (Chair, PDD Community Board) & fellow board members, and SKILLS Board Executive were there. John Mahon, Director Edmonton Arts Council and Heidi Bunting, President of PACE (Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton) represented the arts community. Representing the Centre were members of the Advisory Board, director, staff and artists. Capital City Savings and CIBC Wood Gundy were also represented. Master of Ceremonies for the event was Walter Pavlic, a partner of Parlee McLaws Lawyers.



Artiste Judy Billard (centre) poses with His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta and Aide de Camp Staff Sergeant Pat Harris.

Paula Simons Paints a Compelling Picture of Sudanese-born Artist

Paula Simons strutted her artistic side in Saturday's Edmonton Journal (January 28th), painting a vivid and compelling picture of artist Emmanuel Bara Layila. The following is a summary of her article.

At 14, Layila fled his home city of Juba, long at the centre of Sudan's bloody civil war when a dream told him to go to Khartoum, the capital. There he worked his way through university, studying drama, then photo-journalism and art. His art work won him exhibitions, but his outspoken politics (Layila was black and Christian in a predominantly Arab Muslim country) roused the ire of the government.

On the strength of a new dream, this one of Cairo, he left Khartoum for Egypt. There he met his wife, taught art, and earned the representation of the Townhouse Gallery, the most prestigious centre of contemporary African art in Cairo.

But last February, Layila and his wife left Cairo for Edmonton. They were looking for a safe place to raise their two young sons. The transition hasn't been easy, but Emmanuel is hopeful for the future and has already found champions for his artwork in Edmonton. Heather Hamel, Director of Art Sales and Rentals at the Art Gallery of Alberta, was "blown away" by his work. She now rents and sells his work through the Gallery. "It's very powerful, high impact work. He has a vision and he can articulate it in paint," she explains. The work he has made in Canada includes brightly coloured abstracts. "Colour is a language to me", he says. So he puts layers upon layers to get the colours he wants. For Layila, blue is the colour of peace, yellow the colour of warning. Several of his Canadian pieces are brilliant cerulean blue, but with slashes of yellow peeking through. "We have peace here in Canada. But yellow in warning of the damage done to our community, when people don't connect." It worries him to see immigrants living in such separate communities.

The Nina Haggerty Centre was proud to feature Layila's artwork in MOTIVATIONS (January 6—February 10), an exhibition dedicated to his colourful abstract work on paper. Much of it is created on recycled trash, paper and file folders procured during Emmanuel's night shifts working as a janitor at the University of Alberta. "What he really needs now is a patron," says Nina Haggerty Director Wendy Hollo. "Someone to buy him canvases and paint." Or they can buy his work. Emmanuel is a bit ambivalent about selling his work—he likes to have it at home, but concedes, "... if someone takes my painting and puts it in a good place on the wall, then we are connected."



Photo scanned from the Edmonton Journal

"Colour is a language to me. I struggled and struggled to make it beautiful. The paper kept killing the colour, killing the colour. And then, finally, it worked."

Artist Emmanuel Bara Layila on working with discarded material, plucked from campus trash bins.

How to get from 3 to 30...

The Nina Haggerty Centre has enjoyed tremendous success since its humble beginnings three years ago. It seems like only yesterday that Judy Billard and Paul Freeman spent that first week together in the partially renovated studio.

An Alberta Lottery Fund grant allowed us to finish renovations and to create the wonderful exhibition space in the gallery, and funders have stepped up to provide start up and operating funds.

We could never have done it without Clifford E. Lee (our first supporter), the Stollery Charitable Foundation, and the

Edmonton Community Foundation (still providing support).

PDD has also provided sustaining funding—their support is essential to the Centre's existence. And of course, SKILLS Society made the whole thing possible.

However, financial support remains a critical issue for the Centre. We have a short fall for the current year, and need to raise at least \$100,000 to balance the budget for 2006-2007. The annual operating budget for the Centre is approximately \$300,000, plus an additional \$30,000 for Community Art Night and special projects.

Charitable receipts are provided for all donations!

River City Launches Autobiography Determination in the face of personal odds

Larry Marcotte hates the word "special." Growing up with a developmental disability, and streamed into "special education" classes, all he wanted was to be treated like everyone else. So when he developed a passion for ballet, he fought to be accepted into regular ballet classes

He put up with being in classes with much younger students, being treated less seriously, or completely dismissed, by instructors and fellow dancers.

This extraordinary book, 'Beyond the Barre, is Larry's story, in his own words, accompanied by archival and commissioned photographs of Marcotte's life, in dance and beyond.



Larry Marcotte at the barre

March PDD Board Meeting to be held at Nina Haggerty

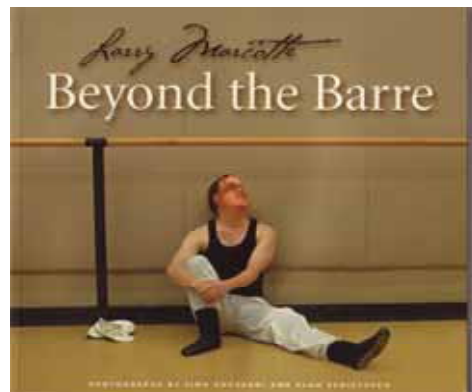
March 15 is the date for the next public meeting of the Edmonton Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Community Board. All interested public are welcome to attend. The meeting runs from 6—9 and will be held in the Gallery. Mark your calendars if interested, and if you don't have a calendar, pop by the Nina Haggerty Centre and buy one of our limited edition Art Calendars for 2006!

Nina Haggerty Centre Proud to Host Launch

On Thursday, February 16, the Nina Haggerty Centre is pleased to host the launch party for this engaging and important book.

Join author, Larry Marcotte and his publisher in the Stollery Gallery at the Nina Haggerty Centre from 5:00—6:00 p.m.

Take home an autographed copy of this story of determination and perseverance in the face of personal and societal odds.



"All my life people have called me stupid, a retard, dummy! They kept telling me what I could and couldn't do, that I would never amount to anything. I always had to listen to them, and sometimes truly believed them. No one has ever taken me seriously, truly believing that I could be a dancer..."

Nina Haggerty Joins Arts Coalition

The Nina Haggerty Centre has become the newest member of PACE, the Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton. PACE is a not-for-profit arts advocacy organization, run by a volunteer executive board and one part-time staff member (one-time SKILLS employee, Cindy Burgess!). Its membership consists of professional arts organizations and independent professional artists from Edmonton and the surrounding area. Serving the professional arts community in the greater Edmonton area since 1986, PACE produces the annual Mayor's Evening for the Arts, coordinates the Art Vote Campaign at election times, and conducts advocacy campaigns throughout the year.

PACE President Heidi Bunting welcomes the Nina Haggerty Centre to the organization. She recently attended the Anniversary Luncheon with the Lieutenant Governor, held in the Stollery Gallery at the Nina Haggerty Centre in January.

The Nina Haggerty Centre recently joined PACE—the Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton



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NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

*"Creativity lies within all people and
is best expressed through the arts."*

We're on the web!
www.ninahaggertyart.ca

Introducing the Advisory Board

The Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts is in the process of separating from its parent organization, SKILLS Society, to become an independent society with its own charitable status under Revenue Canada.

Much still remains to be done, but we do have a core group of fearless leaders ready to form the Advisory Board! Board Vice-Chair and co-founder of the Centre, **Curtis Gillespie** is on board. He is a writer and brings lots of experience to the table. Another founding member, **Jeni Adler-Magat**, a community liaison worker, has agreed to stay involved. **Dr. Harold Pearce**, an art educator (University of Alberta) and artist and **Virginia Stephen**, Arts Consultant, along with filmmakers **Yvonne DuBourdieu** and **Brenda Terning** (ArtHOUSE Productions) add a wealth of arts experience to the mix.

Once established, the Advisory Board will also include 2 artists from the studio collective, and additional representatives from business and/or the arts.

Up Next in the Gallery: Art Matters New art by Nina studio artists

The Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts is pleased to announce the next exhibition to be featured in the on-site Stollery Gallery. ART MATTERS will feature new work by Nina Haggerty Centre studio artists. There will be new work by some of the artists you have come to know, as well as some new discoveries. Every week, new artists visit the Centre and many stay to explore their artistic potential.

The new exhibition will be up in time for the Book Launch on March 16th for **Beyond the Barre** by Larry Marcotte. The show should provide a nice backdrop for this exciting event. The Centre congratulates Larry on his incredible success.

The Artists' Reception (artists in attendance) for ART MATTERS will be held between 4 and 7 pm on Thursday, February 23. Refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to the general public. Please join us.

Remember, "to support an artist is to believe in life!"



Visit the Gallery:

Mon-Fri 9:30 am - 2:30 pm
Tuesday 6:30 - 8:30, pm
Thursdays 6:00 —8:00 pm

Call 474-7611 for more information, or check the website at

www.ninahaggertyart.ca

Artists included in Edmonton Learning Community Project

Leona Clawson and James Doran recently spent time with Edmonton writers Allan Chambers and Susan Ruttan (Edmonton Journal). They will be among 20–25 Edmontonians featured in a new book, as yet untitled, that will share inspiring stories of people with intellectual disabilities.

The book, and accompanying short documentary film, is a project of the Edmonton Learning Community. This is a group of parents, self-advocates, service providers, government employees and educators interested in promoting positive images of people with disabilities within the community. The project is paid for by a community capacity building grant provided by the Edmonton PDD Community Board.

A very exciting aspect of the book is that most of the writing will be done by professional local writers, many of whom have not had much experience with disability. They will be approaching the topic with fresh eyes, and it will be interesting to meet these individuals from their perspective. An impressive roster of writers is already on board for the project, including Poet Laureate Alice Majors, Linda Goyette, Myrna Kostash, Curtis Gillespie, Cheryl Mahaffy, Caterina Edwards, Christine Wiesenthal, Heather Boyd and Lorie Miseck. Filmmaker Yvonne DuBourdieu will be producing the documentary.

Leona and James will be in good company. Many amazing stories have already emerged. The book and film will be launched at a gala public event in November 2006.