



THE HNATYSHYN FOUNDATION

PRESS RELEASE

THE HNATYSHYN FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW PRIZE FOR EMERGING CANADIAN VISUAL ARTISTS

OTTAWA, October 24, 2012 – Gerda Hnatyshyn, C.C., President and Chair of the Board of The Hnatyshyn Foundation today announced the creation of a new Visual Arts Prize. The Charles Pachter Prize for Emerging Canadian Artists will be awarded annually for three years beginning this year.

The prize consists of three awards of five thousand dollars each to support a young emerging visual artist whose practice shows potential. The recipients are professional Canadian artists under 30 years of age as of December 31, 2012 whose body of work incorporates specialized training, has a public presence and has received peer recognition. These are emerging artists deemed to have the determination and talent to contribute to the legacy of art in Canada. Each year, the recipients will be selected by a recipient of the mid-career Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence.

“I am pleased and flattered that The Hnatyshyn Foundation has created this prize for emerging Canadian artists in my name. As I enter the fifth decade of my professional life as a visual artist, I can well remember how difficult career challenges were when I was starting out. Young artists need all the help they can get, both spiritual and practical. So these prizes are a fine way to nurture emerging talent. I send my best wishes to the winners. May you be inspired to grow and flourish in all your creative endeavours.”- said Mr. Pachter.

The awards will be presented at a private ceremony today at Mr. Pachter’s Moose Factory Gallery in Toronto. Transportation for the recipients has been generously provided by Air Canada. The inaugural recipients were chosen by Philip Monk, who is Director of Art Gallery of York University and 2011 recipient of the Hnatyshyn Award for Curatorial Excellence.

Jordan Bennett is a multi-disciplinary visual artist of Mi’kmaq descent from the west coast of Newfoundland. He is presently the first Indigenous Artist in Residence at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. Having shown extensively over the past few years across Canada and abroad, his work is derived from a combination of popular and traditional cultural reflections, taking the form of sculpture, digital media, text based media, installation, painting, endurance performance and various others. Jordan strives to push boundaries and play with the ideas of re-appropriation, reclamation, participation and the artifact within traditional aboriginal craft, ceremony, and contemporary culture.

“It would be easy to say that Jordan Bennett combines Mi’kmaq craft traditions with skateboard culture to create cool objects. Instead Jordan makes highly articulated artifacts that create a common ground between First Nations’ culture and contemporary sub-cults - except that in the process he subtly asserts the ethos and technical precedence of his people’s traditions that have been generously given to and unconsciously absorbed within Western culture.” - Philip Monk

Born in 1983, **Philip Gray** began learning how to carve at age fifteen under the direction of Salish artist Gerry Sheena. He has increasingly endeavoured to incorporate the unique design elements of the Tsimshian style into his practice.

Philip initially assisted, during summer seasons, in the carving of three totem poles which now stand at various locations in Vancouver, while also working on community development projects. He has subsequently become more focused on improving his skills, taking an advanced design course by Robert Davidson, and completing the Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts Program at the Native Education College in Vancouver, under Kwakwaka'wakw/Haida artist Dan Wallace. His artwork can be found in both local galleries and international venues, including Malaysia, Poland, China, the United States, and Canada.

“Traditionally trained and carving in wood in Tsimshian style, Philip Gray demonstrates that, on the west coast of Canada, the opposition between traditional and contemporary art makes no sense. Philip continues and contributes to the luminous renaissance of First Nations carving, proving it to be a signal achievement in contemporary art.” - Philip Monk

Meryl McMaster, an Ontario-based artist and BFA graduate from the Ontario College of Art and Design University (2010), is the recipient of various awards and scholarships including the Canon Canada Prize, OCAD Medal, and the Doris McCarthy Scholarship. Exhibited in various galleries including the Katzman Kamen Gallery, Gallery 44, MacLaren Art Centre, and the Station Gallery, her work is also in private collections, the Canada Council Art Bank and the Donovan Collection. Meryl's work goes beyond straight photography by incorporating manual production, performance and self-reflection to talk toward the ideas of identity, perception, myth, narrative, and the environment.

“Situating her work in the in-between space of the liminal, Meryl McMaster has used her heritage to explore the creative mixing of our culture specific to our place in Canada. Meryl's performative portraiture is a bi-cultural dialogue within the present tense that, nonetheless, brings the past into the present and receptively enacts the possibilities of our divided personas.” - Philip Monk

The Hnatyshyn Foundation offers it sincere congratulations to this year's recipients.

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About The Hnatyshyn Foundation

The Hnatyshyn Foundation is a private charity established by the late Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, Canada's twenty-fourth Governor General, to assist emerging and established artists in all disciplines with their schooling and training, and promote to the Canadian public the importance of the arts in our society. Its programs are funded by donations from government, foundations, corporations and individuals. The Department of Canadian Heritage has provided \$2.4 million in matching funds to the Foundation.

Information about *The Hnatyshyn Foundation Visual Arts Awards* is available at the Foundation's website www.rjhf.com, or by contacting:

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