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The Road to the Esplanade...

ESPLANADE ART GALLERY ACHIEVES GREAT SUCCESS through Canada Council Grant, AFA Grant, and Design Award

Medicine Hat – The Esplanade Art Gallery (formerly the Medicine Hat Museum & Art Gallery) is being nationally and internationally acclaimed for a number of recent successes.

The Esplanade Art Gallery has been awarded a **\$50,000** two-year operating grant from the Assistance to Art Museums and Public Galleries program administered by the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

Joanne Marion, Curator of Art for the former Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, and now the Esplanade, has been working towards this esteemed grant since 1999.

“This is the first time we have been successful for multi-year support,” Marion says. “It means that the Art Gallery is now being nationally recognized for the quality of our programming and exhibitions.”

Adjudicators of the fund specifically cited *the responsibility with which the institution carries out its civic role* as one of the deciding factors in awarding the grant.

The Assistance to Art Museums and Public Galleries program supports the work undertaken by these institutions to advance knowledge about and promote the enjoyment of contemporary visual art. For this program, visual art includes architecture, fine craft and photography.

The Esplanade Art Gallery continues to receive multi-year funding from The **Alberta Foundation for the Arts**, with a Public Gallery grant of over **\$45,000** for the 2005/2006 year.

“We are proud to have been recognized by the AFA as a public gallery worthy of ongoing support for over a decade,” says Marion.

The Medicine Hat Museum & Art Gallery/Esplanade has also been recently recognized with a prestigious **American Institute for the Graphic Arts (AIGA) Design award** for the 2004 Susan Shantz exhibition catalogue designed by FISHTEN of Calgary, AB. The jury of “365: AIGA Annual Design Competitions 26” selected the catalogue, named *technologies of tenderness*, as one of 106 winners out of 4,500 entries of outstanding design produced in North America in 2004.

The publication also won numerous awards, including Best Catalogue and Best Overall Craft Design at the Calgary Ad Rodeo.

“We’ve received a number of awards for work with the Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, but the AIGA is definitely the Oscar,” says Kelly Hartman of FISHTEN. “Working with the Art Gallery really allows us to stretch our boundaries, which is why our catalogues set such a strong precedent, and give Medicine Hat the recognition it deserves in the international art community.”

Medicine Hat art catalogues designed by FISHTEN have also been featured in two British publications: Graphic Designers Guide to Effective Visual Communication (Rotovision Publishing, Switzerland) and Layout: Making it Fit (Rockport Publishing, England), both by authors Carolyn Knight and Jessica Glaser.



Susan Schantz Catalogue, *technologies of tenderness*, FISHTEN

The AIGA jury's selections will be mounted as a public exhibition scheduled to open at the AIGA National Design Center in New York in December 2005, and will also be available in hard cover book format. Copies of the *technologies of tenderness* catalogue will be available, along with all other Art Gallery publications, at the Esplanade Gift Shop in October.

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