

Companies celebrated for their support of the arts

By Dawn Walton

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Even in tough economic times, there's reason to rejoice as Canadian businesses continue to support the arts. And in more creative ways than just signing a cheque.

The Toronto-based Council for Business & the Arts in Canada, a national association of companies that support the arts, has announced the winners of the 16th annual Business in the Arts awards.

Firms of all sizes were nominated for the awards, which are sponsored by The Financial Post and the Canadian Conference of the Arts.

"The fact that corporations have maintained the same support from year to year is reason to rejoice," says Blair Mascall, CBAC president.

"What excited me more this year than last year was the breadth of entries from coast to coast, not just southern Ontario."

According to a soon-to-be-released CBAC survey, donations to the arts from all levels of government increased marginally in 1992-93 over 1991-92, while donations from business remained flat.

Individuals and companies gave \$26 million in sponsorship and donations to the performing arts in 1992-93, while government pitched in \$104 million. During the same period, museums and galleries received almost \$60 million from the private sector, while \$296.3 million came from government.

In this year's Business in the Arts awards, 50 companies were nominated in each of three categories: innovative support, community support and sustained support.

Canadian Salt Co. Ltd. won in the innovative support category for donating a \$12,000 block of salt from the Ojibway Mine in Windsor to the University of Windsor for use in a student sculpture contest.

Drew Ellwood, the winning student artist, travelled to the mine to choose the saltblock he wanted and the company even gave him the tools.

"Salt is a very difficult material to work with. If you hit it the wrong way it would break into a hundred pieces," says mine manager Ron Ellis.

About three months later, the two-tonne block was finished, placed in a highly polished wooden case and illuminated to illustrate its beauty. It's now displayed in the Faculty of Education at the university.

"It's finally nice to see somebody in Windsor is reaching out to the arts community, because we don't have that much support," Ellwood says.

Since the donation, Ellwood has become a local celebrity. "I was in Becker's once and the girl behind the counter said, 'Hey, you're the guy with the salt from TV,'" he recalls.

The CBAC awards also show you don't have to be big to make a difference in the arts.

"I was impressed with the number of small businesses and family-run businesses that are supporting the arts," says Angela Rebeiro, executive director of the Playwrights Union of Canada and head of the judging committee.

That was true of Henry and Cheryl Kloppenburg, of the Saskatoon law firm **Kloppenburg & Kloppenburg**, who won the community support award for giving money and time to the visual arts, music and literature in Saskatoon.

Grain, a literary magazine with circulation of about 1,500, was one of three organizations that nominated the Kloppenbergs.

"With small literary periodicals, funding is an effort. Corporate funds are hard to solicit because there's little glory in this. They have to be doing this for the love of art," says Steven Smith, the magazine's business manager.

Henry, 48, says his love of the arts goes back to his school days and was nurtured during his travels abroad.

"Instead of spending an hour commuting, we live close enough to work to walk. So, Saskatchewan's quality of life allows us to spend more time with the arts," he says.

The Kloppenbergs were also nominated by the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Symphony.

Although a one-cheque hit is always welcome, for the arts to flourish in a community long-term

support is needed. And that's what **Power Corp. of Canada** has meant to the Montreal music scene.

Power Corp. won the sustained support award for long-time contributions to the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. Since 1980, it has provided almost \$1.5 million by sponsoring such events as the annual summer festival held in the city's majestic Notre-Dame Basilica.

"Not only do they give us financial support, but moral support as well," says Robert Spickler, manager director of OSM. "You really get the feeling they care about what we are doing."

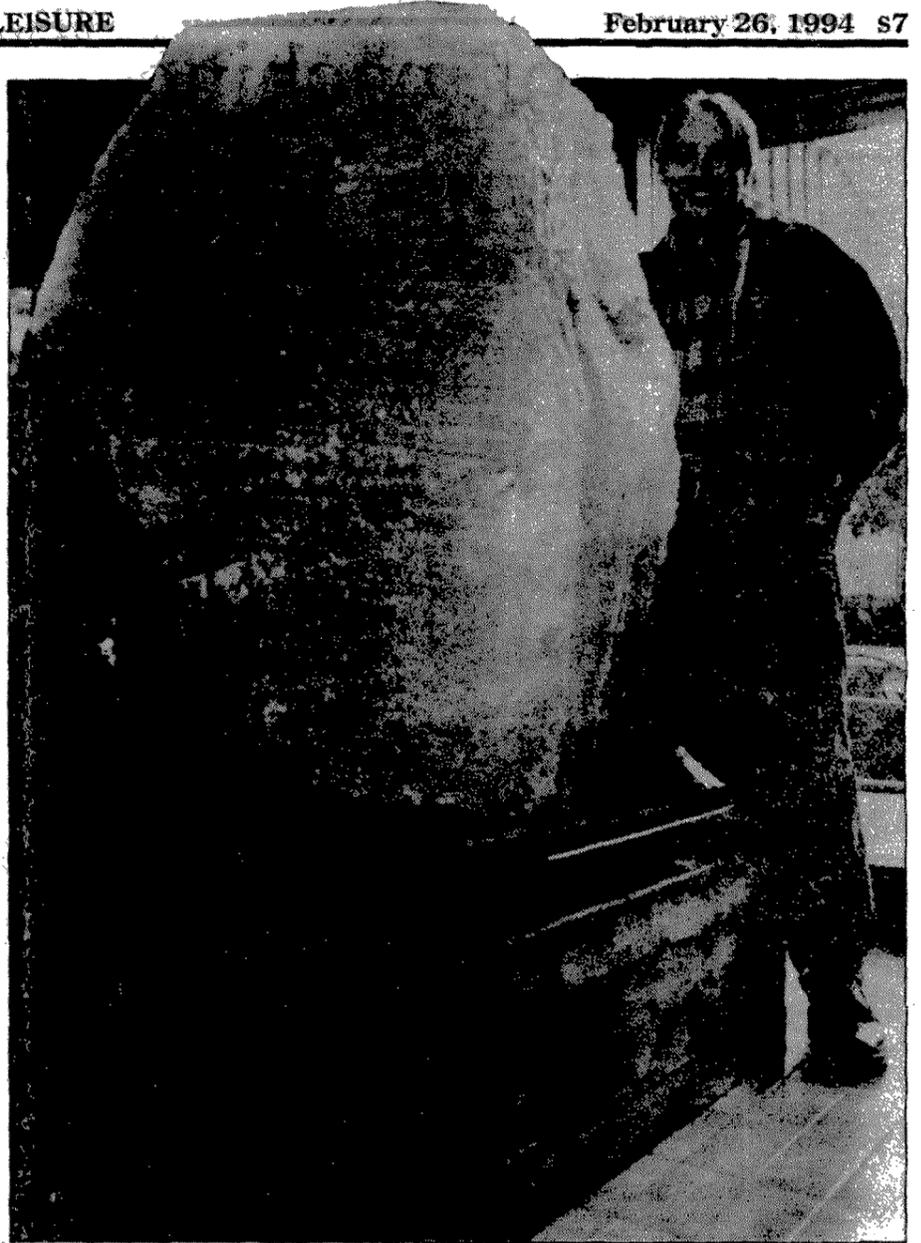
The runner-up award of distinction for innovative support went to Calgary's **Chevron Canada Resources** for establishing a playwriting competition.

"We decided to pursue the field of education more strongly and not just give money. We actually wanted to help people learn more about theatre," says Chevron spokesman Charlie Stewart.

Aspiring writers tested their skills and fortitude when Chevron asked them to write an entire play in 24 hours as part of Alberta Theatre Projects' annual play festival.

Chevron was also nominated by the Glenbow Museum in Calgary.

Cadillac Fairview Corp. Ltd. won the community support award of



Graduate student Drew Ellwood with saltblock sculpture.



GLEN BERGER

Henry and Cheryl Kloppenburg: Community support award.

distinction for its efforts to preserve the arts in Sarnia, Ont.

Another winner in that category was **Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd.**, named for its generosity to several cultural organizations. Weyerhaeuser has supported the Okanagan Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Kamloops Art Gallery, Saskatchewan Theatre Festival and a myriad of other performing arts groups.

Besides Rebeiro, judges for the awards were: Rex Anthony, president, Anthony Management Inc., St. John's; Richard

Giguère, Université de Sherbrooke; Roger Phillips, president and CEO IPSCO Inc., Regina; and Susan Popescu, development officer, Fort St-John, B.C.

At the awards ceremony, which will be held in Halifax in June, **Imperial Oil Ltd.**, **Joseph E. Seagram & Sons Ltd.** and **Shell Canada Ltd.** will be honored as holders of awards of excellence. Awards of excellence are given to companies that have been winners in all three categories in the past. No award of excellence will be given this year.