

# Awards of Excellence

The purpose of the Ontario Museum Association Awards of Excellence is to:

1. Recognize outstanding contributions to the Ontario museum community, with emphasis on innovation;
2. Advance the museum profession in Ontario;
3. Encourage high standards of excellence in the museum field.

The OMA is pleased to announce the following recipients of the 2014 Awards of Excellence!

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## Distinguished Career Award of Excellence

### Janet Cobban

John R. Park Homestead Conservation Area

*The OMA Distinguished Career Award of Excellence is presented to individuals who, over an extended period of time, have created a lasting and meaningful legacy in the Ontario museum community.*

Janet Cobban's dedication to the museum field has been evident throughout her extensive career. She has always believed in a strong connection between museums and their local communities. Janet has dedicated her career to promoting the value of historical sites and museums of south western Ontario, in particular the John R. Park Homestead, where she has worked for over 25 years. Janet also believes in promoting good scholarship in the museum field and she often organizes educational sessions for local museums to increase the skills of the mostly-volunteer led museums across the county. Innovation is evident in Janet's skilful incorporation of environmental and living history goals at the John R. Park Homestead. Janet's expertise in the merging of these twin goals have enabled her site to remain relevant and valued within south western Ontario.



*"Janet is in fact regarded as one of the senior "matriarchs of museums" in Windsor/Essex. She is constantly being asked by other local institutions for advice on various museological matters..."*

- Madelyn Della Valle, Curator, Windsor's Community Museum

## Promising Leadership Award of Excellence

### Dr. Shanna Dunlop

Fanshawe Pioneer Village

*The OMA Promising Leadership Award of Excellence is presented to emerging professionals, of any position or institution, who have shown promising leadership within the museum community.*

Dr. Shanna Dunlop has accomplished remarkable work in artifact storage and collections management at her site. Shanna is continually researching grants and funding programs to aid her mission of moving the curatorial program forward. Shanna is also a model example of good community practice and never hesitates to share her enthusiasm and wealth of information on organization skills and sector knowledge. As both a university professor and a Certificate in Museum Studies course director for several years Shanna has given herself the platform needed to share her extensive knowledge. Shanna was also one of nineteen emerging professionals from across Canada chosen to participate in the 2011 NextGen: Canada Program, an intensive curriculum designed to develop leadership skills and abilities. Shanna never hesitates to seek the advice of colleagues who can help her improve for the benefit of others or to better inform her own decision-making, in part to why she is much respected within the museum sector.



*"I predict that, in a few years, Shanna will be the Director of an Ontario museum and our sector, and the community in which she works, will benefit still further, having identified her now as deserving of the OMA Promising Leadership Award of Excellence."*

- Cathy Blackbourn, Museum & Heritage Advisor, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

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## Excellence in Programs

### Summer Institute for Elementary Teachers Canada Science and Technology Museum

*The OMA Award of Excellence in Programs is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies for programming that creatively engages new audiences, or provides exemplary service to existing ones.*

The Summer Institute for Elementary Teachers (SIET) at the Canada Science and Technology Museum offers innovative, hands-on, and high energy workshops for elementary teachers from across Canada. Educators explore how to make science come alive for students, discovering new ways to have students apply their knowledge. Teachers leave the SIET equipped with information and resources to share with other teachers in their home communities. Participants have traveled from as far as British Columbia, Yukon, and Newfoundland and Labrador to partake in this unique program. The workshops cover a variety of topics from algebra to electricity and are facilitated by experts in topics from geological science to astronomy, as well as by the Museum's enthusiastic team of educators and curators. Along with the workshops, "Special Access" opportunities included after-hours Museum visits, behind the scenes collection access, and a field trip to nurture teachers' personal interest in science and technology. The unique opportunities provided at the Summer Institute for Elementary Teachers separate it from other professional development opportunities currently offered by the formal education community.



*"Since attending Summer Institute for Elementary Teachers [at the Canada Science and Technology Museum], I have reached several thousands of students and hundreds of teachers, all of which have benefited from what I learned during the Institute."*

- Karen Yetman, Program Specialist for Primary/Elementary Programs with the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District

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## Excellence in Exhibitions

### **[No] Vacancy: Honeymoon Suites or By-the-Week, Motel Culture in Niagara Niagara Falls History Museum**

*The OMA Award of Excellence in Exhibitions is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies for the creation of an exceptional and engaging exhibition.*

No exhibition on Niagara's once significant motel culture has ever been attempted. At *[No] Vacancy* visitors are immersed in a nostalgic, familiar, and interactive experience with intimate stories that resonate throughout the exhibition. Galleries include artefacts from the motel history of Niagara, a 1950s dress up in section that allows the visitor to reflect the motel building boom, and architecture that has been left behind from this vital part of Niagara Falls tourism history. Combining the conventions of gallery installations and public learning, the Niagara Falls Museum exhibition flows from past to present, conveying a strong sense of local history and the mythology accruing from Niagara's motel culture. It is the outcome of teamwork by the museum's curatorial staff, local artists, and the committed local collectors who provided loans. The exhibition has garnered press coverage, spirited conversation among viewers, heritage officers, members of Ontario's oldest historical society, and Canadian and International visitors.



*"The museum has demonstrated its institutional capacity to mount an ambitious, accomplished show, working with artists and community, to widen public understanding of Niagara's motel culture."*

- Joan Nicks, Retired Associate Professor, Department of Communication, Popular Culture and Film, Brock University

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## Excellence in Community Engagement

### aMUSE

#### St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre

*The OMA Award of Excellence in Community Engagement is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies that have increased the community's engagement with the museum or institution.*

The St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre is geographically located in a tricky location, not being on a public transportation route nor in the downtown core. The St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre is tackling this issue by taking their exhibitions on the road for a new and innovative series of one night, pop-up museum experiences. This project titled: aMUSE, brought items from the museum's collection out into a social atmosphere to engage the community, to discuss, interact and share their stories about the items in the collection. The museum has



successfully completed aMUSE: Exhibits Unleashed and aMUSE: Collected is currently underway. Each event brought the objects from the St. Catharines Museum out of the collection and into the public eye for an exciting night at a local café. The success of this project has led to increased awareness of the museum, engagement of an under-served youth demographic, and excitement about what the museum has to offer in its collection!

*"So, [we] went out with the intention of dropping by, asking a few questions and snapping some photos. We ended up staying a couple of hours, enjoying the great selection of food and beverages, listening to live music and, of course, taking in the crowd and the conversation about the exhibit itself."*

- Embrace Niagara News

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## Excellence in Special Projects

### David Cronenberg: Evolution, David Cronenberg: Virtual Exhibit, Body/Mind/Change

TIFF

*The OMA Award of Excellence in Special Projects is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies that have developed an innovative initiative, or new approach or technique that advances the museum profession.*

This year's award winner has assembled the unification of three projects under one massive initiative. Included in this tribute are a major retrospective exhibition, a virtual exhibit, and a game that combined online engagement with real-world experience and tangible results.

Toronto International Film Festival's (TIFF) first major original exhibition, David Cronenberg: Evolution, parallels David Cronenberg's evolution as a filmmaker with his longstanding fascination with the possibilities and perils of human evolution itself. The exhibition traces the development of the director's evolutionary themes across his filmography through more than 300 original artifacts, visionary designs, and rare and unseen footage. Visitors were able to get a keen insight into the mind and genius of Cronenberg through well written and accessible material, beautifully displayed artifacts and props, and engaging multimedia elements.



David Cronenberg: Virtual Exhibition (<http://cronenbergmuseum.tiff.net>) is an online source containing scholarly essays, an interactive map and timeline, rare behind-the-scenes footage and interviews with Cronenberg's collaborators past and present, and is an invaluable resource that will stimulate ongoing research and interest in Cronenberg's films. David Cronenberg: Virtual Exhibit is an extraordinary blend of art, technology, scholarship and partnership in a way that is not merely forwardly innovative, but is incredibly attractive and very accessible to a wide range of viewers.

Body/Mind/Change (BMC), a digital extension of David Cronenberg: Evolution, immerses audiences in a "Cronenbergian" world inspired by the film Videodrome, re-imagined for the 21st century and brought to life across three platforms — online, mobile, and real-world — through an "artificial intelligence recommendation engine" called POD (Personal On-Demand). Body/Mind/Change pushed the limits of what a digital exhibition can be by relentlessly questioning the boundary between our digital lives and our physical lives. Body/Mind/Change brought Cronenberg's work to life by making users complicit in the breakdown between man and machine.

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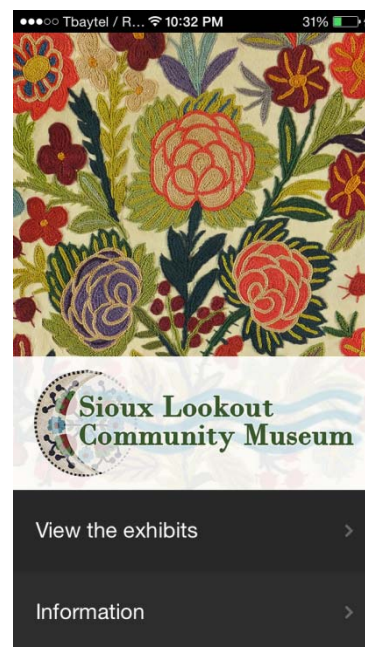
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## Excellence in Publications

### Sioux Lookout Community Museum's Mobile App Sioux Lookout Community Museum

*The OMA Award of Excellence in Publications will be presented to individuals, institutions, corporations or agencies for materials that are distinguished by their design and content.*

The Sioux Lookout Community Museum's Mobile App, has given the museum the ability to share its collections with individuals throughout the province while the museum has been in a time of transition. As the Municipality was exploring options for a new, permanent home for the Sioux Lookout Museum the staff at the museum were still hard at work. Using their digitized collection to create many virtual exhibits the museum was able to create a presence in the community and in Ontario in a time when they had no permanent home. The new app allows a user to browse select exhibits from anywhere! Start exploring using the well laid out menu and easy to use navigation. The user can effortlessly check out the information section for regular updates about the Museum and community events in Sioux Lookout or view the exhibits that take you through many high definition photographs. Since the app is available to be downloaded and used by anyone in the world with a smartphone or a tablet, the Museum has been able to reach people far beyond the borders of Sioux Lookout. In Northwestern Ontario this is a very important benefit, since there are many remote, Northern Communities that are tied to Sioux Lookout culturally, economically, and historically.



*"The Mobile App has already proven to be a very useful tool for connecting people in Sioux Lookout and throughout the province, and has the potential to be a useful tool in educational settings."*

- Matthew Culham, Educator, Information and Communication Technology, Queen Elizabeth District High School, Sioux Lookout

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