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ArtCulture

Yukon Prize launches 2025 celebration of the arts

Kaicheng XinAugust 5, 2024

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YUKON ART COLLECTORS – David Trick, a co-founder of the Yukon Prize, and wife and co-founder Julie Jai are two enthusiasts of the Yukon arts. They're seen last Thursday in Whitehorse. (Kaicheng Xin / The Yukon Star)

Artists across the Yukon can begin submitting their works to the Yukon Prize for Visual Arts.

The organization is preparing for the 2025 Yukon Prize for Visual Arts, to take place on Oct. 3 to 5 2025. The deadline for submitting art works is Nov. 15.

By next February, up to 12 finalists will be selected, in recognition of a larger number of talented artists. A short-list of six finalists will be announced on March 31, 2025.

"The long-listed artists will be announced in early February 2025," the organization said in a release.

The prize is open to a variety of media used to create the work. Those include painting, carving, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, electronic media, photography, textiles, glass, regalia, jewelry and drawing.

The intention of the event is to get the word out about Yukon talent and to promote the territory's art growth.

“One of the goals of the Yukon Prize is to connect the Yukon artists with that larger art world nationally and internationally,” Julie Jai, the co-founder of the organization, told The Yukon Star last Thursday.

The Yukon Prize Weekend is a way to showcase what Yukon artists can offer to collectors, appreciators and curators, which are high-quality artwork and the unique standpoint of talent from the Yukon.

“One of the things that we are trying to do with the Yukon Prize, is show people that arts in the Yukon is not the same as in Nunavut, or in the Northwest Territories,” co-founder David Trick – also Jai’s husband – told the *Star*.
Trick emphasized that people might think all northern art looks the same like Nunavut art, but that’s not the truth.

The organizers have tried their best to have a “dream team of jurors” participate in the event, held every two years.

This year, they have the chance to involve Jean-François Bélisle, the director and CEO of the National Gallery of Canada, along with Heather Igloliorte, the Canada excellence research chair with Visual Arts at the University of Victoria, and Sarah Moore Fillmore, the CEO of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

The prize was created in 2021. Though many things have been planned by the organization, COVID-19 tossed a monkey wrench at organizers, causing the event to be delivered via videotape or online.

Things improved in 2023. Jai said she saw a good number of people come and take part in the event during the whole weekend.

The organization will also pick some of the Yukon’s artworks to show in other places world-wide.

The population of the territory is small, Jai noted, and the ability to sustain local artistsi is limited, so having Yukon artists exposed to the broader world is beneficial.

Yukon Prize for Visual Arts

Kaicheng Xin

New reporter for The Yukon Star, Kai began his journalism career in Yellowknife with CBC North, then went to Black Press for community news and investigative journalism. In Whitehorse he is covering city council and other local news.