

2025-2026 AIYAF

Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

HANDBOOK

Organized by

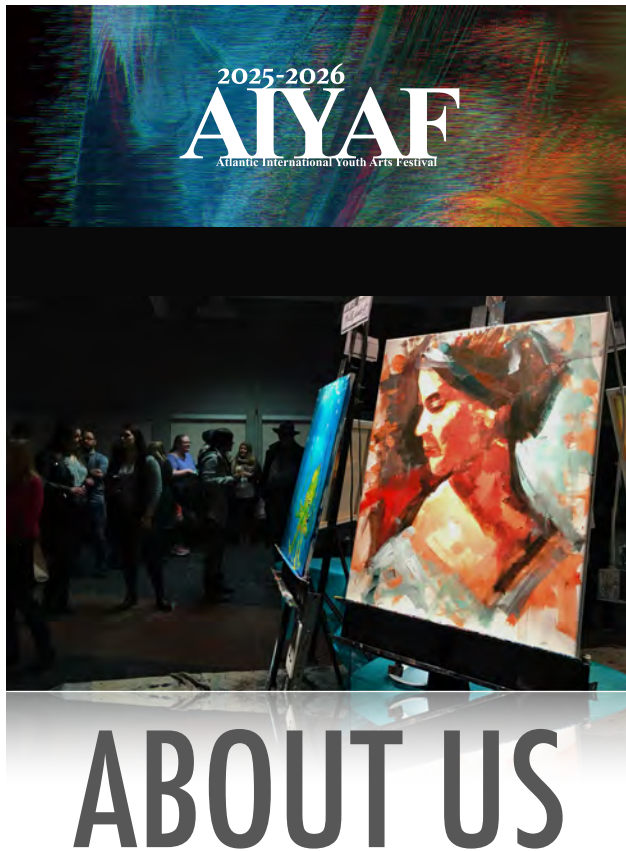


Presented by



Co-organized by





ABOUT US

Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival (AIYAF) is a global youth arts initiative organized by the Canadian Network for Imagination and Creativity (CNIC) and the National Cultural and Creative Association of Canada (NCCAC). The festival aims to establish a long-term international platform dedicated to young artists worldwide.

The CNIC is composed of leading art and creativity educators from Canadian universities. It is active in global arts education, creative practice, and international collaboration, with a focus on empowering the next generation through art and creativity while building a cross-cultural arts education network.

The NCCAC is committed to bringing together professionals with expertise in culture, arts, and education within a globalized context, leveraging strengths in cross-cultural understanding and creative expression. Through the planning and implementation of multidimensional and multimedia cultural and artistic projects—both online and offline—it actively promotes cross-cultural learning and exchange.

Festival Mission

The festival invites young people worldwide to participate, offering a professional and international platform that highlights the unique value of art and creativity in the AI era. Through competitions, international collaborations, youth exchanges, exhibitions, workshops, and masterclasses, participants can interact with leading artists and scholars and embark on a meaningful journey of artistic exploration.

A core component of the festival is the annual Global Youth Visual Creativity Competition, which promotes youth creativity worldwide and fosters artistic intelligence for the “empathy era.”

Each year, internationally active artists, scholars, and professors serve as rotating chairs, assembling a panel of top experts to select the year’s outstanding works. Winners receive signed certificates, recommendation letters, and artistic scholarships.

Participants also gain access to international masterclasses, lectures, and workshops, and may have their works featured in the festival’s annual publication and international exhibitions.



Festival Permanent Programs :

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

A global call for entries with clear categories, rigorous judging, and authoritative awards, aiming to discover and nurture the artistic potential of young people worldwide.

International Youth Art Exhibition

Selected works will be displayed in major Canadian art museums. Participants will receive official certificates and opportunities for academic recommendation and media exposure.

International Masterclasses & Lectures

Led by renowned international artists, these sessions—offered both online and in-person—focus on themes such as creative expression, artistic language, and cross-media experimentation.





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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART I

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

Age Groups

Children's Group: Born on or after January 1, 2011

Junior Group: Born between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2010

Youth Group: Born between January 1, 1997 and December 31, 2006

Art Categories

Painting: Includes oil painting, tempera, acrylic, sketching, colored pencil, comic art, watercolor, ink painting, printmaking, and mixed media (collage, paper art, and other combined materials).

Digital Art: Includes digital painting (created on tablets or computers), 3D modeling and animation (3D models, character design, short animated films, etc.).

Traditional Arts: Traditional folk and regional arts.





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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART I

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

Timeline

August 1, 2025 — Global Call for Entries Opens

November 30, 2025 — Submission Deadline

January 1, 2026 — Finalist Announcement

January 30 — February 2, 2026 — Online Masterclasses/Workshops

May 2026 — Finalist Exhibition in Canada

Entry Guidelines

All submitted works must meet the following requirements:

- Entries must be original works created by the artist, with the longest side not exceeding 1.8m.
- Each work must be labeled with the participant's age group and art category; there are no restrictions on subject matter.
- The copyright of each work must be fully owned by the participant.
- Any works involving cultural appropriation, hate, or discriminatory content will not be accepted.
- An independent jury will select finalists based on submitted images and artist statements. During final judging, jurors will only have access to the artwork image, dimensions, and statement (no identifying information).
- Award-winning works and selected exhibition pieces will be announced separately.

All entries will be reviewed for eligibility, and the organizing committee reserves the final decision.



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PART I

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

Judging Criteria

Creative Expression (30%)

- Originality and uniqueness of concept and visual style.
- Depth and creativity of theme and content.
- Authenticity, avoiding imitation or plagiarism.

Artistic Quality (30%)

- Visual appeal: color, lighting, and composition.
- Detail and refinement of elements.
- Consistency and coherence of overall style.

Technical Skills (20%)

- Proficiency with tools, media, digital software, or AI tools.
- Innovative use of techniques.
- Resolution and clarity (for static works) or smoothness (for animations).

Emotional Impact (20%)

- Ability to evoke emotional response (e.g., inspiration, joy, reflection).
- Storytelling through visuals or narrative.
- Depth of meaning beyond surface aesthetics.

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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART I

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

Entry Requirements

- Each work must be submitted individually through the festival's official website, along with a completed entry form.
- Entry fee: **CAD \$60/piece (including HST)**.
- Payment and submission can be completed directly at **www.visualartfest.com** or through an official partner organization in your region.
- Only digital photos are accepted for judging. Each work must include 3–5 images (full view, close-up details, and scale reference).
- Accepted file formats: **JPG, PDF, TIFF, CR2**; file size **2–20 MB**, resolution at least 300 dpi.

Participant Benefits

- Each participant will receive an **official festival entry certificate**.
- All participants may join the **online masterclasses**.
- Winners will receive **professional feedback from the jury**.
- Winners may be recommended for publication in Canadian art journals and have the opportunity to **apply for inclusion in the international AIYAF exhibition**.
- Participants may **request a festival recommendation letter** to support art school applications, professional programs, or artistic credentials.

Copyright & Originality Statement: All participants must register with their real name and valid contact information. If anonymity or a pen name is required for artistic reasons, prior approval from the committee is necessary. Collaborative works must list all creators, and any awards will be issued to the work as a whole. If the work includes tribute, adaptation, or use of others' materials, the original sources and creators must be clearly credited in the artist statement. Copyright remains with the artist, but the organizers may use images and related materials for festival promotion, exhibitions, publications, and non-profit communications, without commercial use.



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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART I

International Youth Visual Arts Competition

Awards

Festival Grand Jury Prize (Platinum Award)

Children's Group | Junior Group | Youth Group

Festival Gold & Silver Awards

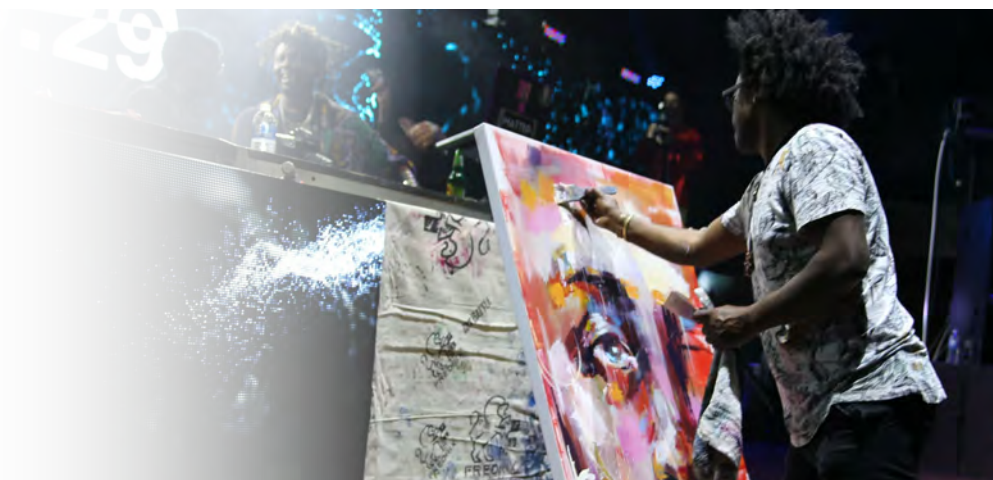
- Painting: Children | Junior | Youth
- Digital Art: Children | Junior | Youth
- Traditional Arts: Children | Junior | Youth

Aurora Awards

- Best Creativity Award
- Most Promising Artist Award
- Best Technique Award

Lighthouse Award (Best Instructor Award)

- Winners receive a certificate signed by renowned art educators
- Opportunity to join the Global Visual Arts Study Camp and Seminar





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PART II

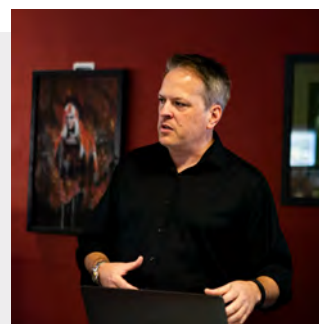
International Masterclasses and Lectures

In late January 2026, renowned artists will host online masterclasses, and interactive lectures open to all participants.

The sessions will offer feedback on selected works and discuss global art trends, education, and the art market, providing a platform for young artists and educators to learn and connect.

Art Creation Masterclasses (3 sessions)

Jury artists will review each winning and exhibited work, providing detailed analysis, highlighting strengths, and offering professional advice for improvement.



Art Study Abroad & Career Lecture (1 session)

A session focusing on art education programs, trends, and study-abroad opportunities in Europe and North America, featuring university art faculty and education consultants, with interactive Q&A.



Cross-Cultural Exploration Session (1 session)

Young artists from leading art institutions worldwide will share their study experiences and artistic journeys, offering insights into cutting-edge art education and global art trends.





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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART III

International Youth Art Exhibition

Exhibition Information

The festival exhibitions will be held at university art galleries, as well as national and provincial art museums and cultural centers.

Exhibition Date: May 2026

During the exhibition period, activities such as art seminars, welcome receptions, and press conferences will be arranged. All details are subject to change based on actual circumstances.

Exhibition Requirements

- An independent jury will select works for the award exhibition based on submitted images and artist statements.
- Works must be insurable and transportable for display and potential sale during the exhibition.
- **A 35% commission** will be charged on artworks sold or consigned during the festival exhibition. Final prices will be agreed upon by both parties.
- Framed dimensions must not exceed **180 cm (H) × 150 cm (W)**.
- Works must be securely framed or stretched, ready for installation, and equipped with a proper hanging system. Works that cannot be safely installed may be disqualified.
- Any unconventional display methods must be communicated in advance to ensure proper installation.
- The organizers reserve the right to withdraw works that pose health or safety risks to the public, volunteers, or staff, or that violate occupational health and safety guidelines.





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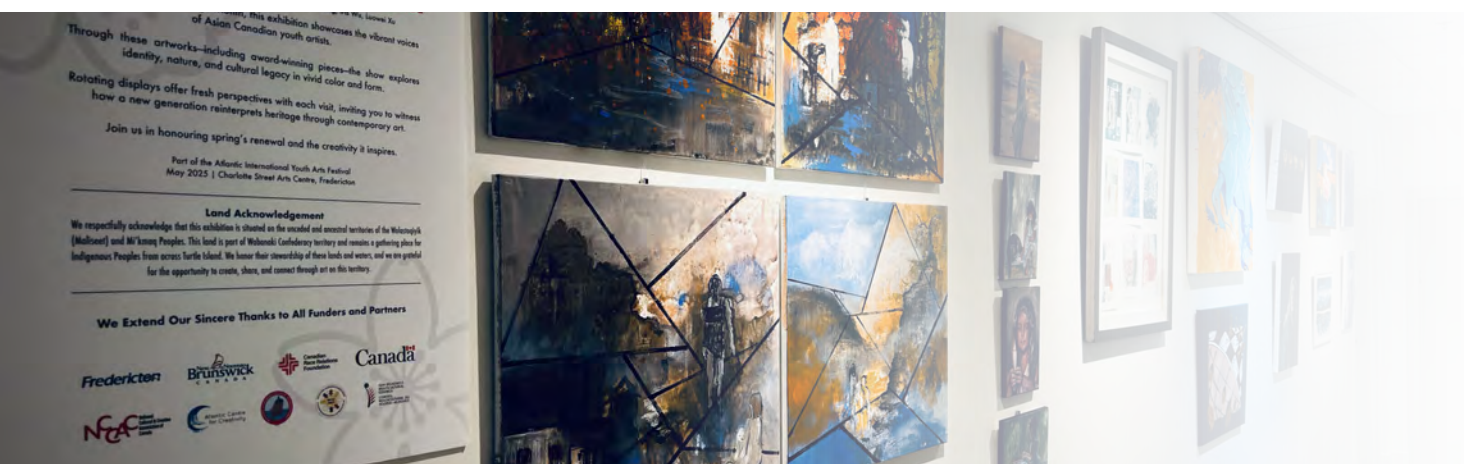
PART III International Youth Art Exhibition

Exhibitor Benefits

- All exhibitors will receive an **official exhibition certificate**, a **recommendation letter signed by the Art Committee**, and have the opportunity to be featured in the CNIC academic journal special issue and online exhibitions.
- For works selected for the annual exhibition (excluding Grand Jury Prize winners), an **exhibition fee of CAD 500/piece** is required. This covers curation, local transportation in Canada, installation, and insurance.
- For participants from Mainland China, artworks must be mailed to a designated location in China, after which the committee will arrange bulk sea shipment.

Release Statement

- **Partner Organizations:** Media outlets, cultural institutions, museums, art galleries, professional art organizations, and university associations in China, Canada, and worldwide.
- All finalists agree that the organizing committee may use their artworks, portraits, and related exhibition information in print and digital media for event promotion, publicity, and display on the official website.





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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART IV

International Youth Visual Arts Study Camp

2026 Study Camp Base

Canada Atlantic Coast Arts & Humanities Camp

Focus: Visual Creativity • Arts & Humanities • Portfolio Development

Duration: Summer 2026 (14 days)

Highlights

- Masterclasses
- Visual Creativity Workshops
- On-site Art Museum Research
- Award Ceremony

Led by experienced scholars, the camp is a research-oriented program. Each participant will receive a **research participation certificate** and may have the opportunity to obtain a **professor's recommendation letter**.





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PART V

Artistic Committee & Jury Panel

Art Committee, Selected Jury Members & Masterclass Instructors



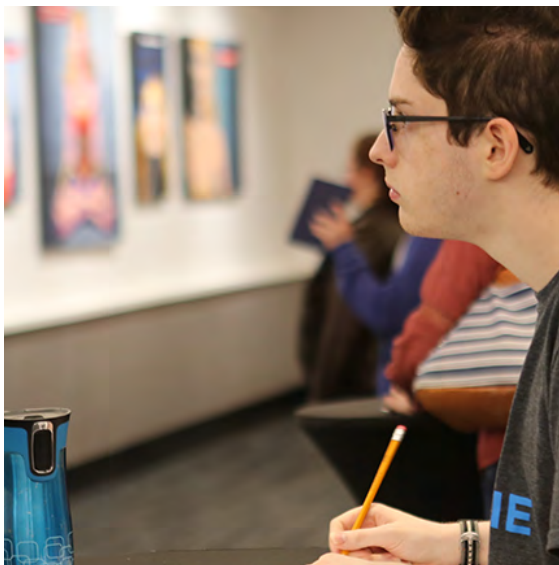
Artistic Director | Dr. Mary Blatherwick Professor, Art Educator, and Painter

Dr. Blatherwick is dedicated to art education and creative practice, with numerous solo exhibitions in the UK and North America. She has published extensively in art education and innovation and is a recipient of the Canadian Art Education Lifetime Achievement Award. Her students are active across the Americas, Europe, and Asia.



Gerard Collins Visual Artist (Canada)

An internationally acclaimed independent artist, Gerard Collins is known for his witty and insightful explorations of everyday life. He studied at Central Saint Martins in London, UK, and later at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in West Germany under renowned artist Gerhard Richter. His works are widely collected by major institutions, including the National Gallery of Canada, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Owens Art Gallery, Global Affairs Canada, the Canada Council Art Bank, and the New Brunswick Art Bank.



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Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival

PART V

Artistic Committee & Jury Panel

Art Committee, Selected Jury Members & Masterclass Instructors



Dr. Danielle Hogan

Ph.D., Art Researcher & Artist (Canada)

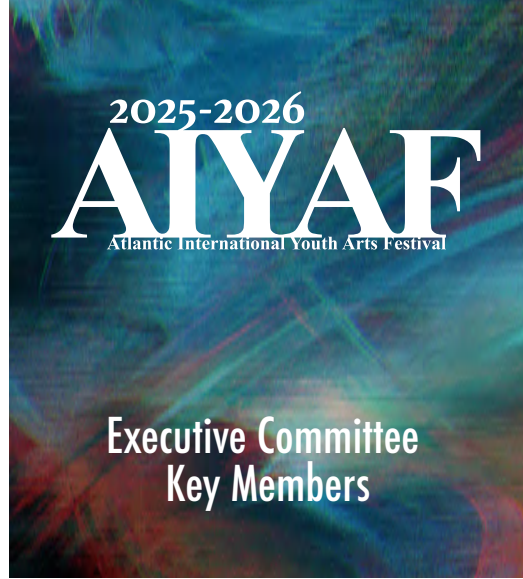
An expert in creative visual studies, Dr. Hogan earned her interdisciplinary Ph.D. from the University of New Brunswick and degrees from Emily Carr University and the University of Victoria. She has led international art projects in Canada, Spain, and Italy and is Lead Researcher at the New Brunswick Arts Research Association.



Dr. Jean Rooney

Head of CEAD at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Dublin, Ireland

Graduate of the National College of Art and Design (Ireland) and Trinity College Dublin, Dr. Rooney is dedicated to studio practice, art education, and community-engaged work. For over two decades, she has regularly exhibited her work and taught courses in visual arts practice.



Nadia Khoury
Executive Director of the Festival

For over 30 years, Nadia Khoury has been dedicated to public and commercial arts. She was on the Executive Committee for the Cultural Human Resources Council of New Brunswick and Past chair of the NB Foundation for the arts.



Andrew Yang (CA)
Competition Director



Rosalba Santori (Italy)
Deputy
Executive Director



Wei Li (CA)
Deputy
Executive Director



Lijing Chen (CA)
Director of Education
Planning



Iris Wu (CA)
Exhibition Executive



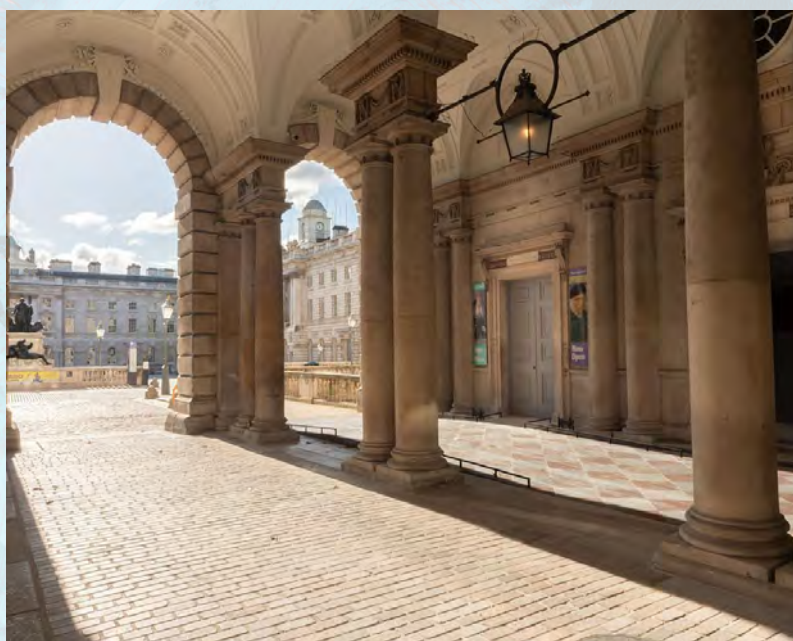
Alycia Comire (CA)
Festival Executive



Emily Hare (CA)
Festival Executive



Ronnie Shen (CA)
Technical Executive



2025-2026
AIYAF
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CHECK 1

DETAILS

Atlantic International Youth Arts Festival Executive Committee

Organized by



CANADIAN NETWORK FOR
IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY



National
Cultural & Creative
Association of
Canada

Presented by



STUDIO

Co-organized by



McKENZIE
COLLEGE



Mountie Edu