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Illuminating The Alberta Order Of Excellence



Synopsis

The Alberta Order of Excellence is the highest honour the Province of Alberta can bestow on a citizen. Members of The Alberta Order of Excellence come from all walks of life. Their careers range from medicine, science, engineering, law, and business to politics, education, agriculture, and the arts. The one thing all members have in common is that they have made an outstanding provincial, national, or international service contribution.

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Customer Reviews

The contributions of the recipients of membership into the Alberta Order of Excellence are chronicled in this oversized volume (12.25x11.25 inches), with essays documenting the careers and achievements of each member in areas that include industry, music, health sciences, nursing, justice, and preservation of the art and culture of Native Peoples. The essays are presented with a photo of the recipient and a color plate of the hand-lettered scroll of the order made by Healy- Tobin. The scrolls are a remarkable example of calligraphy and illumination, worthy of William Morris himself. Distributed by Michigan State U. Press. (Annotation ©2009 Book News Inc. Portland, OR)"This is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the University of Alberta, and as part of its celebration the school has produced this wonderfully illustrated compendium of all of the members of the Alberta Order of Excellence. The one-page biographies, one for each inductee, faced by the handcrafted commemorative scroll by Cora Healy-Tobin, are generally summaries of the citations. I

suspect that the book will likely be of greatest interest to those who have been nominated and their families, however it does give some sense to what Alberta's elite has valued since the creation of the order in 1981. There are the usual politicians, but few Aboriginal leaders, artists, musicians, or writers of fiction. It was great to see John Snow, the great print maker, Tommy Banks, the musician-politician, and Dave Leonard, the provincial historian, included. However, these exceptions aside, what Alberta does appear to value is philanthropy, academics, medical research, and entrepreneurship. And I suppose to that end the volume may be considered by some to be an accurate reflection of Alberta's reality. Alberta has had the good fortune to have an aggressive group of entrepreneurs who have, in the end, given back considerably to the province, including, for example Ron Mannix, Francis Winspear, Ted Reynolds, and Harry Hole. The book is as much about the art of Cora Healy-Tobin, Alberta's calligrapher, who has designed and illuminated the scrolls for the Alberta Order of Excellence since 1981. The essay by Allison Sivak on Cora's work is appropriately laudatory. If the various biographies seem after a while repetitive, the individual scrolls that have been so carefully designed to reflect the personality of the recipient emerge as real pieces of art in their own right." - Frits Pannekoek, University of Calgary

FRONT FLAP: Membership of The Alberta Order of Excellence is the highest honour the Province of Alberta can bestow on its citizens. Members of The Alberta Order of Excellence come from all walks of life – from medicine, science, engineering, law, and business to politics, education, agriculture, and the arts. The one thing all members have in common is that they have made an outstanding provincial, national, or international service contribution. Upon induction, each member of The Alberta Order of Excellence receives a hand-crafted scroll made by the celebrated calligrapher and illuminator, Cora Healy-Tobin. Illuminating The Alberta Order of Excellence is a fine tribute to Healy-Tobin's work and to the individuals who have done so much to improve the lives of Alberta's citizens. "[T]heir stories read as embodiments of the Alberta spirit: a great vision for the community, a singular determination, and the knowledge and ability to make that vision reality." – The Honourable Norman L. Kwong, CM, AOE, Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta "This book is a tribute to those individuals who have dedicated their lives to realizing the opportunities they saw to create better communities for so many Alberta citizens." – Premier Ed Stelmach

BACK FLAP: Allison Sivak is a librarian with the University of Alberta's Learning Services. She has a BFA (Writing) from the University of Victoria. She lives in Edmonton. Cora Healy-Tobin was born in Ireland. She is a graduate of Hornsey College of Art in London, England, where she majored in heraldic illuminated arts and

calligraphy. Her works hang in the United States, Europe, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada. She lives in Calgary, Alberta. BACK COVER: Cora Healy-Tobin's high artistic standards and her belief in community suggest that it is particularly fitting that she has spent the last quarter century paying tribute to those Albertans who have made key contributions to the social, economic, artistic, and political spheres of this province through The Alberta Order of Excellence scrolls. Cora has designed and illuminated the scrolls since the beginning of the Order, in 1981. In the first years of the awards, she would conduct an in-depth interview with each of the recipients, to gain a closer understanding of not only their achievements, but the recipients as individuals. When she talks about those whom she has interviewed, such as Dr. Robert J. Church and Francis Winspear, she reveals her deep respect for their accomplishments, but also for them as people. She speaks of their friendliness, their personableness, their humility. She says, "The calibre of the people was such that I felt it was an honour for me to design scrolls for them."

from the Introduction: The Work of Cora Healy-Tobin in Context

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