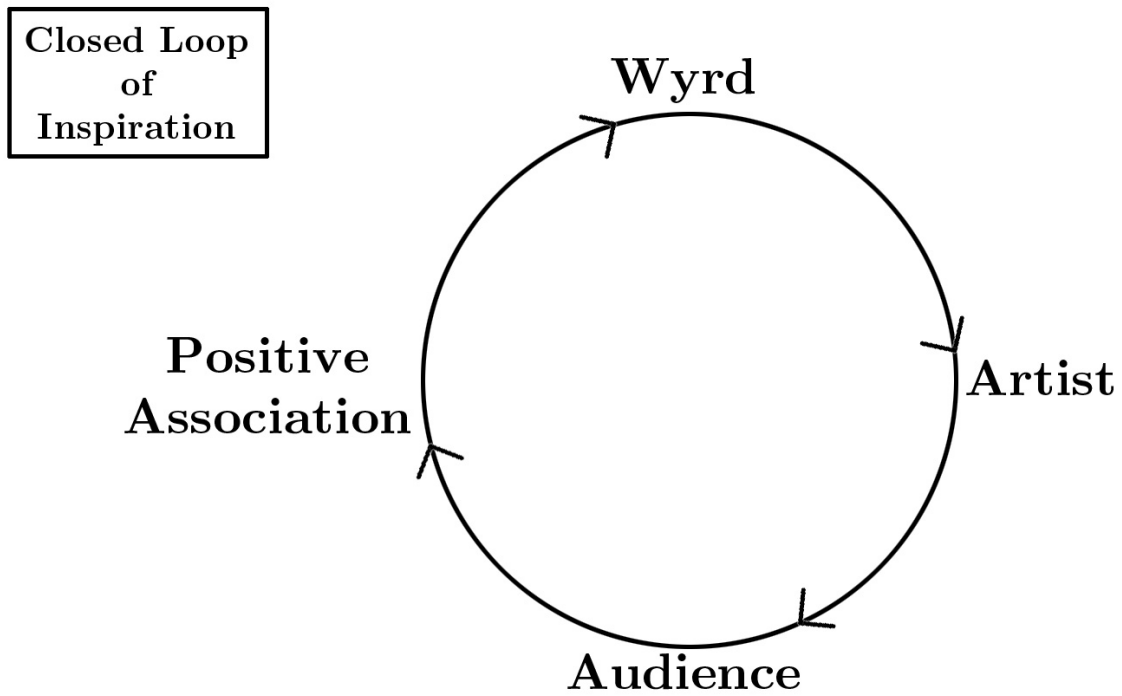


WYRD III

Reinforcing Creative Discovery



Introduction

Wyrd is the physical manifestation of the Edmonton-based digital publisher Weird Canada (www.weirdcanada.com). As a digital publisher whose ethos is to curate the emerging trends in independent, DIY, local/regional/Canadian music and expose them to audiences in an environment that encourages discovery, Weird Canada created Wyrd to take this ethos of discovery into the physical world.

In the same manner that Weird Canada presents massive amounts of curated media in condensed bursts of images, texts and sounds, so does Wyrd present large groups of musical performances in short bursts of visuals, movement, and sounds. This is achieved by employing a two-stage setup, alternating performers back and forth between stages, creating a continuous stream of musical exposure.

Wyrd has become a multi-city, double-stage musical marathon featuring over eighteen emerging Canadian musical acts from coast-to-coast in an explosive happening of physical euphoria. Edmonton, Calgary, and Vancouver play host to the Wyrd experience, offering a singular opportunity for Edmontonians to explore and discover new music in a live performance setting.

Why Wyrd Is Approaching the Edmonton Arts Council

Previous incarnations of Wyrd have resulted in overwhelming positive experiences by audiences, performers, and organizers and Wyrd was on track to exceed these expectations in 2011. However, owing to unforeseen circumstances surrounding venue policy and legal ambiguity in the agreement with the Edmonton venue (Dinwoodie Lounge), operation costs were doubled and capacity was limited at the last minute, putting Wyrd in grave financial difficulty.

Wyrd's Organization: Artist (Aaron Levin) and Collective (Weird Canada)

Wyrd operates under a unique organizational model, whereby Aaron Levin acts as Curator and Weird Canada acts as a collective managing, organizing, and promoting Wyrd.

The Weird Canada collective consists of Edmontonians Jenni Roberts (Social Marketing and Web Editor), Marie Lef (Public Relations), Jared Majeski (Writer), Jessica Faulds (Writer), Michael Deane (Writer), and Landon Speers (Photographer). In addition to the Edmonton members, the Weird Canada collective includes Jesse Locke (Managing Editor, Montreal) and a team of additional writers located across Canada.

Impact of the grant on quality and viability

Validity

Being awarded the MicroGrant will put the Edmonton incarnation of Wyrd in a sound financial position. This has a direct impact on the current and future viability of organizing, curating, and hosting Wyrd in Edmonton.

Additionally, a large part of the success of Wyrd is the perceived value from the performers. Without adequate financial compensation, it is difficult to attract emerging artists to participate in Wyrd. Adequate compensation will result in continued support from performers, ensuring Wyrd is successful in the future.

Quality

With sound finances, Wyrd organizers can ensure the audience experience is smooth and unfettered. As Wyrd's ethos is to establish and reinforce the idea of discovering new music through exposure to live performance, it's important for the audience to associate positively with the event so as to reinforce this philosophy. Additionally, much of the venue cost goes to ensuring patrons, both adults and minors, experience the event in a safe and welcoming environment.

Potential Benefit to the applicant's practice or career

Artist

Wyrd is the embodiment of Aaron Levin's philosophical approach to curation. Success for Wyrd allows Aaron Levin to further explore his ethos of discovery.

Wyrd has the additional benefit of traveling between several Canadian cities, breaking the inherent geographical barrier of live performances and therefore circulating Aaron Levin's name and ideas as a curator into other municipalities.

Collective

Wyrd is the physical manifestation of Weird Canada, an entity that exists digitally. Success for Wyrd ensures that audiences continue to explore the work and writing of the collective online.

A successful Wyrd further inspires and encourages the work of the collective by experiencing tangible, physical benefits in real time. Examples of these benefits are:

- witnessing the physical manifestation of their digital work being positively and safely experienced by the audience
- seeing the growing audience explore Weird Canada after experiencing Wyrd
- attracting audiences in demographics outside of Edmonton to Weird Canada

Performer

While the grant guidelines don't specifically look for the benefit to the performers, it's worth noting that a successful Wyrd will allow Edmonton performers to bridge vast geographical distances via Wyrd's traveling caravan to reach new audiences, practice their art, become inspired and exposed to other performers, and increase the market for their merchandise.

Potential Benefit to the Edmonton arts community and/or engagement with Edmonton audiences

Audiences

Wyrd is an ambitious engagement with Edmonton audiences:

- a double-stage setup creating a continuous stream of live music
- diverse programming across all genres
- reinforcement of artistic discovery
- an intimate environment where patrons interact with artists at an emerging level, resulting in real and measurable inspiration

Edmonton audiences will leave with an inspiration to continue to explore art and music and will overcome the barriers against creative discovery.

Community

Over 30% of the performers are based in Edmonton. Since Wyrd gathers performers from all over Canada and takes this unique presentation of music to multiple cities, this allows the Edmonton performers to showcase their skills in other municipalities with similarly engaged audiences and to other artists with similar scope and mandate.

Wyrd also presents a unique way to collaborate with local arts organizations. Wyrd is partnering with the following entities:

- **Latitude 53**
Wyrd is partnering with the artist-run, community art gallery Latitude 53 in the hopes of reaching new, cross-disciplinary audiences interested in creative discovery.
- **Students' Union of Alberta**
Wyrd will encourage the student demographic to creatively explore outside of their academic studies, regardless of discipline.
- **CJSR FM 88.5**
A partnership with CJSR is a natural alliance as CJSR's mandate is to challenge audiences with a diverse mix of news and music programming that is otherwise marginalized in the mainstream media. Wyrd hopes to encourage its audiences to continue with the philosophy of discovery outside of Wyrd using other formats like radio.

- **Pop Echo Records**

Wyrd's partnership with Pop Echo Records is a welcomed alliance with another curated publisher of local music. Our collaboration is mutually beneficial.

With these partnerships and the unique type of engagement Wyrd offers Edmonton audiences, Wyrd will make a lasting impression, allowing participants to take their new found appreciation of discovery and interact with other Edmonton art organizations.

The degree to which the project has planning and commitments in place

For the Edmonton date (to which these funds are being used):

- Venue (Dinwoodie) has been booked, signed, and deposit has been made.
- Flights for artists have been paid.
- A few performer guarantees have been paid.
- Insurance application has been accepted.

The degree to which the applicant's previous record of activity and achievement demonstrates that they warrant public support

Artist

As founder, chief editor, and writer for Weird Canada, Aaron Levin has shown a strong record of activity and achievement through Weird Canada, culminating in Weird Canada being named "Best Indie Music Website in Canada" by CBC Radio 3. Weird Canada has become the leading authority on emerging, do-it-yourself art produced in Canada. Aaron Levin has been interviewed by over fifteen different newspapers, magazines, and blogs on the subject of curation, new music, and discovery.

Aaron Levin has successfully curated over fifty unique, musical performances in Edmonton within the last four years. His specialty has been presenting emerging performers in unique spaces and thereby encouraging new audiences to discover blindly.

Aaron Levin has been invited to Montreal (Pop Montreal), Halifax (Obey Convention), and Calgary (Sled Island) to participate in artist talks and discussions surrounding the current wave of emerging music in Canada.

Collective

The collective managing Weird Canada and Wyrd has previously organized two successful Wyrd events. Both events were sold out, including new incarnations in Calgary and Lethbridge. This manifestation of Wyrd sees a successful expansion into

Vancouver and Montreal by partnering with the Waldorf Hotel (Vancouver – venue and collective) and Suoni Per Il Popolo (Montreal – world class music month-long festival presenting left-field musicians of all genres).

The collective managing Weird Canada and Aaron Levin (as curator) have collaborated with:

- **SOS Fest** (Edmonton - July 2010)
Aaron Levin was a curator and organizer programming over six performances from artists based in Western Canada.
- **Sled Island** (Calgary - June 2009, July 2010, June 2011)
Weird Canada has collaborated with Sled Island, Calgary's premier art and music festival, on a number of occasions, including Wyrd II. Weird Canada has presented several showcases and participated in artist talks and discussions.
- **Pop Montreal** (Montreal - October 2010, October 2011)
Weird Canada has a continuing relationship with Pop Montreal similar to Sled Island above. Aaron Levin participated in several discussions on the subject of do-it-yourself music in Canada.
- **NXNE** (Toronto - June 2011)
Aaron Levin was asked to curate two musical events and participate in a discussion on blogs and new media.
- **Ghost Throats** (Edmonton - May 2010, May 2011)
Weird Canada is assisting with operations, promotion and media coverage for this new post-hardcore music festival occurring in Edmonton.
- **Obey Convention** (Halifax - March 2010, March 2012)
Weird Canada presented two showcases during Obey Convention and Aaron Levin participated in a discussion on emerging music in Canada.
- **X Avant** (Toronto - October 2011)
Aaron Levin has been asked to curate a selection of vintage experimental music from Canada and present it to an audience in a dynamic and interactive environment.

Is Wyrd a Festival? Or a project?

Weird Canada and Wyrd aim to reinforce a new way to interact with media; this is our philosophy of discovery. As new generations grow in an environment where media is consumed in vast quantities decided by outside interests (advertising, commercial media sources, etc.), the act of searching and discovering new media is slowly waning. As independent and emerging audiences rarely have the resources to present their art to audiences at a level competing with corporate interests, they rely on individuals capable and interested in seeking out and discovering new stimuli. As these audiences decrease, so is support for new and emerging art.

Weird Canada and Wyrd counter this by presenting media in easy, fast, and unique ways. Weird Canada takes advantage of simple design philosophies and new media

technology to achieve this, while Wyrđ presents live performances in similarly short, well-organized bursts.

However, Wyrđ's style of organizing is unfamiliar to new audiences. Wyrđ has overcome this hurdle by adopting language that is easily understood by participants. This has manifested itself with Wyrđ referring to the project as a "festival." The connotation of celebration greatly assists in overcoming the barriers of creative exploration, discovery, and experience.

Recognition to the EAC

If Wyrđ is awarded this grant, we will ensure that all patrons, performers, and organizers are aware of the significant contribution of the Edmonton Arts Council. In doing so, Wyrđ will expose the benefits of the MicroGrants program to a demographic of do-it-yourself artists active in the local arts community yet existing outside of traditional funding streams.

Additionally, as Wyrđ travels from city-to-city, so will word of this new unique granting program that assisted in saving the Edmonton Wyrđ incarnation.

Wyrđ History

Wyrđ began in Edmonton in November 2009 as the culmination of two touring caravans of musical performers. After a sell-out event, the Weird Canada collective began planning the second incarnation of Wyrđ. To take Wyrđ's ethos of discovery beyond the bounds of the Edmonton municipality, Wyrđ II brought together sixteen musical performers and organized Wyrđ events in Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. Based on Wyrđ II's success (sell-out shows in all three cities), Wyrđ III planning started immediately.

Wyrđ Press

Wyrđ II

- Beatroute Magazine :: (Alberta)
http://www.beatroute.ca/view_archived_article.php?id=64§ionID=19&articleID=3018
- SEE Magazine :: (Edmonton)
<http://www.seemagazine.com/article/music/music-feature/wyrd2-0429/>
- Fast Forward :: (Calgary)
<http://www.ffwdweekly.com/article/music/music-previews/keeping-alberta-weird-5597/>
- City TV / Breakfast Television :: (Edmonton)
<http://blogs.btedmonton.ca/owen/wyrd-alberta-hype>
- Calgary is Awesome :: (Calgary) :: <http://calgaryisawesome.com/?p=6816>
- The Reflector :: (Canada) ::

- <http://www.thereflector.ca/2010/05/02/feeling-wyrd-sled-island-warm-up-a-sneak-peek/>
- Lethbian Love :: (Lethbridge)
<http://www.lethbianlove.ca/2010/03/31/powers-combine-wyrd-alberta-mammoth-cave-fest/>
- New Canadian Modern :: (Calgary)
<http://newcanadianmodern.org/2010/04/27/friday-1-legion-wyrd-fest-2010-interview-w-collaborator-paul-lawton/>

Wyrd I

- Exclaim! :: (Canada)
http://exclaim.ca/News/exclusive_wyrd_fest_brings_shearing_pinx_moby_dicks_gobble_gobble_more_to_edmonton_this_weekend
- Edmonton Sun :: (Edmonton)
http://www.edmontonsun.com/entertainment/columnists/fish_griwkowsky/2009/11/13/11731336-sun.html
- SEE Magazine :: (Edmonton)
<http://www.seemagazine.com/article/music/music-feature/Something-Wyrd-This-Way-Comes-1112/>
- VUE Weekly :: (Edmonton)
http://vueweekly.com/music/story/wyrd_fest_wyrd_scenes_inside_etown/
- VUE Weekly :: (Edmonton) :: Photo Summary
http://vueweekly.com/slideshows/slideshow/vuefinder_wyrd_fest/
- TheEdmontonian :: (Edmonton) <http://theedmontonian.com/tag/wyrd-fest/>

Weird Canada History

Weird Canada was founded by Edmontonian Aaron Levin in March 2009. Weird Canada is visited by over 20,000 individuals every month seeking to explore new streams in emerging, Canadian music.

Weird Canada Press

- CBC Radio 3 :: Searchlight Victory
<http://radio3.cbc.ca/#/blogs/2011/3/Edmontons-Weird-Canada-named-Best-Canadian-Music-Site>
- Edmonton Journal :: Searchlight Victory :: (syndicated nationally)
<http://www.vancouversun.com/entertainment/Edmonton+music+website+wins+contest/4418824/story.html>

Aaron Levin Press

- Profile Edmonton :: Generic Interview
<http://www.profileedmonton.com/profiles/aaron-levin>

Wyrd Expenses

Expenses

Performers and Volunteers

- Artist Guarantees: \$4,000

Operations

- Venue Rental: \$1,700
- Insurance: \$300
- Sound: \$600
- Lighting: \$100
- Posters: \$125
- Promotion: \$125
- Incidentals: \$100

Total Expenses: \$7,050

Revenue

Maximum Ticket Sales: \$6,000 (300 @ \$20 ea. – venue capacity is 300)

Total Maximum Revenue: \$6,000