

StArts Fest starts ticket sales for gala

BY SCOTT HAYES
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Tickets are now on sale for one of the city's premiere events. The Mayor's Celebration of the Arts Gala is the opening night celebration that kicks off this year's third annual StArts Fest.

The gala of accolades is the city's way of honouring and acknowledging the people, businesses and organizations that have made significant contributions to the arts community in St. Albert. Apart from the trophies, the evening promises to provide enough entertainment to satisfy the crowd in between the seven arts awards presentations.

"This year's showcase will feature some of the finest homegrown talent the area has to offer," elaborated Nancy Watt. The enthusiastic gala chair explained that this year's lineup of performers would feature an exciting mix of dance, music and poetry.

StArts Fest begins with the gala on Friday, Sept. 30. There will be a cocktail reception from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the lobby of St. Albert Place. The main event then runs from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Arden Theatre.

The entertainment roster includes Edmonton singer Aly Yusuf, a former winner of the Rose Bowl Scholarship at the St. Albert Rotary Festival.

Also performing is Edmonton's Cite Ballet, the performance-based dance company making its gala debut. Pro Coro Canada, one of the country's few professional chamber choirs, will perform a variety of choral music.

Others to take the stage include The Dykstra-Watt Duo, Jeff Stuart and The Hearts, and poet Anna Marie Sewell.

The two-hour program should go a long way to jumpstarting the energy for the other two days of the festival.

"The gala really is a celebration of the artists in our community and a recognition of what they do to make our community so great," Watt continued. "It's like a big hip-hip-hooray and then away we go with lots of events for people to explore and participate in."

The rest of the StArts Fest festivities run until Sunday, Oct. 2. There is a full listing of events covering categories like Film/Media, Visual Arts, Literary and Theatre, Music and Dance, and Family Events.

Tickets are now on sale for \$50 each. They can be purchased at the Arden Theatre box office at 780-459-1542 or online at www.ardentheatre.com.

For more information about the festival or the gala itself, visit www.startsfest.ca.

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