Call for Submissions
The Collective Memory Project:
Responses to Eugenics in Alberta

Artists and community members are invited to submit artwork to a forthcoming exhibition addressing the legacy and future inheritance of eugenic ideas in Alberta. Exploring forgotten narratives, lost histories, and contemporary anxieties, The Collective Memory Project will investigate and make visible the process through which personhood is unequally distributed in society.

Broadly understood, eugenics consists of policies, practices and attitudes that seek to foster or deter certain human traits in a population. Eugenics can take the form of genetic engineering, the encouragement or repression of cultural practices, and the privileging of certain forms of social units. Often intermingled with heterosexist, racist and ableist attitudes, eugenics was taken to its most extreme under Nazi policies of racial and mental hygiene. While the example of the Holocaust is well known, Canada’s own participation in eugenic practices remains largely absent from our collective understanding of national history and identity. The Chinese head tax, the residential school system, and the 2834 individuals sterilized in Alberta between 1929-1972 are all eugenic in various subtle to extreme degrees.

While the logic behind historical eugenics is widely condemned today, eugenic practices nevertheless persist in many morally unexplored dimensions. The rhetoric of family values, selective immigration policies which screen-out the disabled, and disproportional incarceration rates in Aboriginal populations can all be seen as contemporary manifestations of the desire to exclude the ‘unfit’ from the social body. Looking to the future, the intersection of eugenic values and developing genomic technologies presents new philosophical quandaries. The rise of ‘designer babies,’ the loss of human biodiversity, and unequal access to scientific advancement all pose serious ethical dilemmas that require a critical understanding of the past and present of eugenic ideas.

It is with this goal in mind that the Collective Memory Project was created. Artists and community members are encouraged to reflect on these themes in their practice and submit work that speaks to the subjects of eugenics, memory, and the relationship of technology to the body.
EXHIBITION: The Collective Memory Project will be installed at the Faculty of Extension Galleries in Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave, Edmonton, AB. The exhibition will run from October 23rd 2011 to November 23rd 2011.

MEDIA/SPECIFICATIONS: Work of any media may be submitted. Work should be original and not exceed 6 feet in any dimension, or weigh more than 100 lbs.

DEADLINE: Friday October 1th 2011 by 5 pm.

METHOD OF SUBMISSION: Digital submissions of work is highly preferred, though CDs and DVDs will also be accepted. Please include no more than 5 works in your submission, formatted as pdf documents or high quality jpeg files. Film and video works should be digitized and sent in full. Please include a brief artist statement and biography with your work.

Please send submissions to:
Anne Pasek
pasek@ualberta.ca
13623-100 Ave
Edmonton, AB T5N 0J1

Please place Collective Memory Project in the submission subject line.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Works will be selected for gravity of response, formal design, original ideas, feasibility of execution, engagement with the project’s goals, and critical perspective. Applicants will be notified no later than Sunday, October 9th.

NOTE FOR SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS: If selected, individuals will be responsible for the transportation of their work in and out of Enterprise Square. Work must remain in the Faculty of Extension Galleries for the duration of the exhibition and must be retrieved promptly. Work left after November 30th will be destroyed unless prior arrangements have been made. Work must arrive ready to display and fully assembled. Due to budgetary constraints, no artist fees will be rewarded for participation in this project, however, exhibited work will be documented and high-quality installation photos will be taken to thank artists and community members for their contributions.
PUBLIC WORKSHOPS: To facilitate on-going discussions and familiarity with this subject matter, several workshops will be offered at The Faculty of Extension open to artists and members of the public.

– **Discussion groups**, featuring films, testimonies and an opportunity to share perspectives will be offered on the last Tuesday of the month, on July 26<sup>th</sup>, August 29<sup>th</sup>, and September 27<sup>th</sup>. The group will meet from 7-9pm at the Faculty of Extension in room L-136, 10230 Jasper Ave, Edmonton, AB. Light refreshments will be served and all are welcome.

– **Open studio time** will be offered on Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5pm-9pm at the Faculty of Extension in room 2-901, 10230 Jasper Ave, Edmonton, AB. This time has been made available for artists and community members with limited access to studio facilities to have a space to work. In addition, photocopies of archival visual cultural material that pertains to the history of eugenics will be made available for anyone wishing to incorporate historical documents into their work.