
Elora Centre for the Arts and Riverfest Elora Announce OMBIIGIZI as the 2024 “Creative Roots Artist of the Year”



OMBIIGIZI (photo courtesy of Victory Pool Music)

ELORA, ONTARIO, August 12, 2024 — The Elora Centre for the Arts and Riverfest Elora are pleased to announce [OMBIIGIZI](#) as the recipient of the 2024 “Creative Roots Artist of the Year” award.

Presented annually to an artist or group performing at Riverfest Elora (Aug. 16-18), the award recognizes artists who have built strong creative roots in their community — by inspiring, nurturing or mentoring fellow artists, supporting creative community-based initiatives, and blazing a creative trail for the next generation of artists to follow.

The Creative Roots Artist of the Year award is a nod to the creative roots of Riverfest Elora, [which began in 2009 as a one-night fundraiser for the Elora Centre for the Arts](#). Since then, it has grown to become one of Ontario’s premiere music festivals and continues to support the local arts community to this day.

OMBIGIZI (pronounced om-BEE-ga-ZAY) — meaning “this is noisy” — is the project of Canadian duo Adam Sturgeon (Status/Non-Status) and Daniel Monkman (Zoon), Anishnaabe artists who explore their cultural histories through sound.

Their JUNO-nominated and Polaris Prize–short-listed debut album, *Sewn Back Together*, was produced in part by Broken Social Scene's Kevin Drew at the Tragically Hip's Bathouse Recording Studio. Their highly anticipated follow-up album will be released later this year.

Individually and together as OMBIGIZI, Monkman and Sturgeon exemplify dedication to community building through creativity, their programming initiatives and community stewardship.

Sturgeon is the founder of [Rezonnance Printing](#), a screen-printing shop in London, Ontario, that provides Indigenous youth with paid internships that bridge the gap between culture, art and entrepreneurship.

Monkman, who grew up near Winnipeg, has spoken openly about his journey of overcoming addiction and trauma, and has worked with organizations such as [TakingITGlobal](#) and [Connected North](#) to serve as a role model for Indigenous youth in remote communities in Nunavut.

Together, Sturgeon and Monkman use music and storytelling to amplify personal narratives and cultural histories.

In the words of [Waubgeshig Rice](#), Anishinaabe journalist and author of the acclaimed novel *Moon of the Crusted Snow*:

“[Sturgeon and Monkman] have come together in the spirit of making noise in a good way for our people. They have documented this moment in time while paying homage to the ancestors who kept our language and stories alive. There is embedded in it a deep respect and love for Anishinaabe sounds and voices. They proudly tell family and community stories, and they exquisitely conjure a hopeful future that will result from our current collective efforts to share our realities with each other and the world.”

“OMBIGIZI are truly deserving recipients of the Creative Roots Artist of the Year award,” said [Lianne Carter, executive director of the Elora Centre for the Arts](#). “While they’ve garnered national and international attention for their music, they still find time to give back to their communities by supporting young people and nurturing the next generation of artists.”

“I have been fortunate to have seen OMBIGIZI develop as a musical project and as people since the project began,” said [Riverfest Elora's Executive Director, David Lander](#). “Their dedication to their communities and each other continues to astound me. It's an absolute honour to have them play this year's festival, and I can't think of an artist more deserving of the Creative Roots Artist of the Year award than them.”

The Creative Roots Artist of the Year Award will be officially presented to OMBIIGIZI on Saturday, Aug. 17, at Riverfest Elora, where they'll be performing on the Koop Tent stage at 8:25 pm.

For additional information and/or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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About the Elora Centre for the Arts

The Elora Centre for the Arts is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to igniting creativity, fostering connection and building community through the arts.

Whether it's the making of art or appreciating the work of others, we believe that creativity is for everyone, and that participation in the arts is integral to the well-being of our communities.

As an arts and culture hub for Wellington County, we attract more than 20,000 visitors annually, offering exhibitions, performances, community events, summer camps, office and studio space for local artists and arts groups, and a range of programs and services for all ages.

Find yourself at the Centre: eloracentreforthearts.ca

About Riverfest Elora

Riverfest Elora is a three-day festival that takes place annually in August in Bissell Park. The festival was founded by Elora artist Marilyn Koop in 2009. Koop passed away in 2012 and, since then, the festival has continued in her memory.

Over the years, Riverfest Elora has brought an impressive array of musicians to the small town including City and Colour, The Flaming Lips, Carly Rae Jepsen, MGMT, Arkells, July Talk, Gogol Bordello, Chromeo, Metric, Blue Rodeo, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, The Reklaws, Walk Off The Earth, Talk, Charlotte Cardin, The Halluci Nation, Sam Roberts Band, The Glorious Sons, The Sheepdogs, Monster Truck, Charles Bradley, Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings, Bruce Cockburn, Hey Rosetta!, Feist, The Beaches and many more.

Riverfest Elora 2024 is August 16th, 17th and 18th at Bissell Park, and will feature performances by Fleet Foxes, Josh Ross, Violent Femmes, Sudan Archives, Bully, Corb Lund, Treble Charger, Moneen, Ombiigizi and many more! riverfestelora.com