

# Ed Video Media Arts Centre (EVMAC)

## Code of Conduct and Ethics

Ratified June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006

### Ed Video Media Arts Centre Mandate

Ed Video Media Arts Centre is a non-profit, artist-run centre providing video production facilities, media arts training, and a public exhibition program. The centre supports the creation, exhibition, and appreciation of contemporary video and media arts. Ed Video's primary objective as a media arts access centre is to support artistic objectives in media arts. The centre also facilitates critical discourse on media arts in the local and regional community, and provides opportunities to bring that discourse to a wider audience.

Our vision as an access centre includes specific measures that address barriers to media artists from communities under-represented in both mainstream media and independent video production. These measures encompass both production and exhibition at the centre to address existing structures of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and elitism within the organization and the larger society.

### Section A: Introduction

Upholding the principles of our mandate and reinforcing policies that ensure the safety of all individuals, the conduct of responsible and ethical business practices, and maintaining the trust and confidence of our community are essential elements to our centre's continued growth and success.

For this reason, EVMAC has created a Code of Conduct and Ethics which describes the standards of conduct that we expect from members, staff, visitors and the Board of Directors, along with an outline of procedures to be undertaken in resolving issues of conflict or misconduct.

### Section B: Our Principles and Values

There are key values that guide our organization and have been instrumental in the design of this document.

Humanity, Equality, Integrity, Excellence and Accessibility are the ethical principles upon which EVMAC stands. As members, employees and representatives of Ed Video, it is our obligation to uphold each of these in all affairs relating to the centre.

#### **Humanity and Equality**

- Treat everyone respectfully, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, culture, religion, sexuality, political beliefs, or physical appearance, while respecting their rights, dignity and right to self-determination.

#### **Integrity**

- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Honour all laws, statutes, ethics, regulations and contractual obligations.
- Never disclose sensitive or confidential information
- Never seek to reduce openness or fairness with other artist-run centres
- Maintain artistic integrity by supporting diversity and freedom of expression
- Meet all commitments to arts councils, funding agencies, members, staff and our community
- Protect EVMAC's assets and use them responsibly
- Conduct business in a socially responsible manner.

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### **Excellence**

- Strive for continuous performance improvement through planning, evaluation and skill development.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues
- Strive to provide members with state-of-the-art production facilities and information

### **Accessibility**

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for all staff, members and visitors
- Treat all people with respect, compassion and dignity
- Commit to providing members with resources that meet their needs and are economically accessible
- Commit to removing social or economical barriers to the creation and appreciation of the arts

## **Section C: Standards of Conduct**

### **1. Safety and Health**

Conduct business in a way that most effectively protects the safety and health of all persons. All use of EVMAC facilities and assets must be conducted with regard for the safety of persons and property. This includes, but is not limited to, adherence to health and fire regulations, applicable laws, policy and direction from staff or BOD, respect for individual ability, and the careful creation of exit plans and event procedures.

EVMAC is committed to adhering to regulations and guidelines presented in federal and provincial acts and law.

### **2. Interacting with one another**

All members, staff and visitors shall commit themselves to behaving in a courteous and professional manner, while respecting privacy, safety, diversity and personal choice. In our actions, it is essential that we respect the perspective, experience and background of each individual who takes part in our centre.

### **3. Commitment to Diversity**

EVMAC shall not discriminate in hiring, in issuing memberships or in any of its activities based on grounds prohibited by applicable law. These include, but are not limited to, ethnic origin, ancestry, place of origin, sex, marital or family status, disability, sexual orientation, creed, religion, political beliefs, ability, appearance or citizenship. Furthermore, EVMAC will strive to create a workforce, programming schedule and governance which reflects the diverse community in which we operate.

### **4. Youth at EVMAC**

As an organization which provides services, programming, resources and work experience to minors, it is the responsibility of staff, members and visitors to conduct themselves in a manner which is suitable to the presence of minors, respectful of their sensibilities, and in adherence to applicable laws.

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### **5. Personal Conflict, Harassment and Violence**

Treat all persons who use or work at EVMAC with respect for their physical and mental well-being. Violence and harassment can not and will not be tolerated at EVMAC, in any capacity.

For the purposes of this document, violence is described as any behaviour which intentionally threatens or causes physical harm to another person, and will not be tolerated.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviours:

- Repeated contact (physical, verbal, or written) when it has been expressed that such contact is unwelcome
- Sexual harassment
- Issues of slander, libel, public humiliation, or interpersonal behaviour which violates law
- Any behaviour which can be clearly interpreted as a threat or action against the physical, mental or social well-being of another person and jeopardizes their sense of security and safety at EVMAC or in the community
- Discriminating or demeaning behaviour

In the event of violence, the police will be contacted and the Board of Directors will determine any further course of action.

In the event of harassment, the police may be notified, and the Board of Directors will determine any further course of action.

Report all incidences of violence or harassment to the Executive Director or Chair person. When issues of personal conflict arise, the parties involved should first approach the problem on an individual basis and find resolution with respect for one another. In some situations a third party may be necessary in finding a resolution, and it is under these circumstances that the persons involved should contact the chairperson of the Board of Directors, or the Executive Director. In this event, an appropriate procedure for conflict resolution shall be determined by the Board of Directors, as outlined in the final section of this document.

### **6. Materials and Performance**

While EVMAC supports freedom of speech and artistic expression, materials used in the context of the centre should be sensitive to the diversity, safety, and sensibilities of those who frequent it and live in our community. Any performance or materials taking place or presented in the centre should be approved by the Executive Director, staff, or programming committee in advance. Materials include any media or documents used in workshops and instruction, advertisements, or any item displayed in or on behalf of the centre. Performances are any musical stage or otherwise live exhibition. Report any issues, perceived, actual or potential, to the person (s) considering your material or performance for approval.

### **7. Proper use of Facilities and Assets**

As an artist run centre, it is necessary to use all of our assets in the most responsible manner possible. Therefore it is the responsibility of every person to protect the property owned or entrusted to the organization from theft, destruction, infringement, neglect, misuse which might result in the harm of any person, or violation of the law.

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It is recognized that on occasion there may be a need for the use of organizational assets for personal reasons, or to perform service for another community organization. This usage of EVMAC assets must be responsible, limited and approved in advance by staff.

### **8. Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest is any situation where personal interest interferes with the interests of EVMAC.

Guidelines for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest when conducting EVMAC-related business

- Base any decision made for EVMAC on merit and in the best interest of the organization
- Do not take part in or influence any decision that might result in financial advantage for you, family, or friends.
- Give and receive business-related gifts or hospitality only when there is a benefit to EVMAC, and never when it may compromise or appear to compromise the ability to make objective decisions.
- Gifts should be refused with thanks, or suitably distributed within the community and never accepted based on personal benefit.
- Employees have the right to choose how they spend their non-working hours, but outside or personal business must not conflict with the ability to perform duties as an EVMAC employee. Likewise, EVMAC employees should never perform outside or personal work on EVMAC time.
- When acting as a representative for another organization, or when participating in political activity, it must be clear that you are not acting on behalf of or for EVMAC.
- Do not abuse position, role or power in order to exert influence over any member, employee, or in outside business in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Disclose or declare any potential conflict of interest, perceived or actual, to the Executive Director or Chairperson. When in doubt, or if you suspect conflict of interest, consult the Executive Director or Chairperson.

### **9. Sensitive or Confidential information**

Sensitive information is proprietary, financial, business or personal information that requires confidentiality, and must be protected to ensure EVMACS assets, obligations and interests; and to preserve the privacy of members, staff and partners. Know what information must remain in confidence and protect it from inappropriate access or misuse. Do not divulge confidential information relating to EVMAC, members, staff or partners unless approval from the individual (s) concerned is obtained.

### **10. Business Relationships**

The way EVMAC conducts business with suppliers, services and partners is integral to our success and standing in the community, therefore it is essential that we interact with other organizations and businesses in a courteous, fair and professional manner, and never base business decisions on favouritism, prejudice or personal gain.

### **11. Finances, Accounting and Reporting**

When incurring or approving business expenses, exercise prudence and sound judgement.

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Expenses must be reasonable and necessary for the business of EVMAC, in accordance with financial planning, policy and applicable bylaws. When conducting financial, accounting or reporting business, do not engage in practices which may jeopardize EVMAC's status as a not-for-profit charitable organization.

Never establish undisclosed funds or accounts, and handle all cash and transactions in an appropriate and legal manner that avoids suspicion of infringement or impropriety. Ensure that all EVMAC documents accurately and clearly represent the relevant facts and relevant information of a transaction. These documents may include but are not limited to affidavits, timesheets, sales reports, financial reports, expense reports, charitable reports, GST filing, sales tax and tax accounting.

#### **12. Donor Rights**

As an organization with charitable status, EVMAC must outline the behaviours that dictate our ongoing relationship with donors. Donors have the following rights in interacting with EVMAC:

- The right to be informed of the organization's mission and purpose and to become a member of the organization if the donor so wishes
- The right to know the identity of the organization's officers and members of the Board of Directors and to expect that they act with the greatest transparency, integrity and discernment in implementing the organization's mission and purpose for the best interests of the community
- The right to have access to the organization's annual financial statements and to easily obtain a copy
- The right to know how donations, directly or indirectly contributed to the organization are distributed, and to be assured that donated funds are used as intended by the donor
- The right to be treated with consideration and respect by the organization and to receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition
- The right to confidentiality regarding personal information about donors and facts about their donations
- The right to expect that all relationships between the organization's representatives and the donor, will be professional in nature
- The right to be informed of the exact nature of the relationship which exists between fundraisers and the organization
- The right to expect that the organization will not share or sell a mailing list which includes the donor's name
- The right to ask questions of the organization and to expect prompt, truthful and complete answers in an easy-to-understand manner

While donors may expect rights and privileges such as those outlined above, donors may at no time be permitted to interfere with or influence the work created by EVMAC members through the centre, or EVMAC's mission, mandate or vision.

#### **13. Misconduct**

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to: wilful damage of property, theft, violence, harassment, falsification of information or accounts, breach of confidentiality, misuse of alcohol or drugs, abusive language or treatment, and exhibition of disruptive behaviour.

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Misconduct could lead to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors as outlined in the final section of this document and in the EVMAC bylaws.

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### Section D: Compliance with the Code of Conduct and Ethics

In order to ensure the success of the Code of Conduct and Ethics, it is necessary that all staff and members have access to a copy of this document, and must confirm that they have reviewed, understood and will comply with the standards and terms described within.

This must be done at the time of membership purchase or renewal, or upon the commencement or renewal of employment. Failure to do so will result in the invalidity of the contract or membership. Those who do not wish to do so may request a meeting with the Board of Directors to discuss their reasoning.

If at any time the Code of Conduct and Ethics is revised and approved, notice will be given to all members and staff, and copies of the revised document will be made available.

#### **Consequences for Misconduct**

Those who do not comply with the standards of behaviour and business conduct described in the Code of Conduct and Ethics will be subject to disciplinary procedures outlined in EVMACS policies, Bylaws, membership agreement, employment contracts, and in this document. In circumstances that require immediate intervention such as violence, theft, harassment or other security-related matters, the police will be notified.

#### **Procedures for defining standards and resolving issues of misconduct or conflict**

The EVMAC Board of Directors has the power to prescribe standards of conduct for its membership and staff, and to make decisions as to what constitutes grounds for disciplinary action.

Each grievance, conflict or occurrence of misconduct will be evaluated on an individual basis, considering all available facts and information. The Board of Directors will use the Bylaws, the Code of Conduct and Ethics, and its best judgement to determine the most appropriate and reasonable course of action needed to reach the best outcome for EVMAC, its members, its staff and the parties involved.

Available courses of action include, but are not limited to: mediation, the meeting of an executive committee, the calling of a special members meeting, outside consultation, or in more extreme cases, the suspension or refusal of membership, termination of employment, or legal action.

There may be occasions when the Code of Conduct and Ethics, Bylaws, and policies of EVMAC do not have the answers to ethical questions, or there may be a difficult judgement to make with respect to the application of the Code. In these cases, consult with the Executive Director or the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

*Trinity Square Video's Code of Conduct was used with permission as a template for EVMAC's Code of Conduct and Ethics. The United Way's section on donor rights was also used as a reference.*

*EVMAC greatly appreciates the help and support of TV's and the United Way.*