



The Ontario Council of Folk Festivals

Ontario's Folk Music Association

508-B Gladstone Avenue Ottawa, ON K1R 5P1

Phone: 613-560-5997 Toll-Free: 1-866-292-6233

www.ocff.ca

Renowned record and radio producer and folk community leader Paul Mills honoured with Estelle Klein Award by OCFF

OTTAWA, July 15, 2011 – Paul Mills is the recipient of the 2011 Estelle Klein Award from the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF).

The award recognizes the work of an individual or group that has made significant contributions to Ontario's folk music community. It is given in memory of Estelle Klein, a long-time advocate of Canadian folk music and one of the early founders of the folk festival scene in this country.

OCFF Executive Director Peter MacDonald says, "I knew Paul by his excellent reputation before he joined the OCFF Board of Directors. He dove right into the task of renewing the organization. My working relationship with him took a new, vibrant turn when the Board hired me as Executive Director and he became my supervisor. Paul was encouraging and supportive. As Past President, he continues to challenge the staff and his Board colleagues to keep the OCFF membership primary in our focus. Paul always gives his very best to the folk community – often at the expense of his own dreams and goals!"

Paul Mills is a graduate engineer, musician, musical arranger, graphic designer, and record producer/engineer. This combination of skills has resulted in a varied career. He joined CBC Radio in 1972 as a music producer and later moved over to the Radio Drama department as producer and executive producer. As a music producer for CBC Radio in the Seventies, he conceived and produced a national folk music program called "Touch the Earth" which was hosted by Sylvia Tyson. Later, he was put in charge of planning the radio facilities in the new CBC building in Downtown Toronto and eventually took on senior management roles for CBC Radio including Director of Planning and Technology and Head of the Production Centre. In 1996 he left the CBC to dedicate his energies to full time record production and within a couple of years had established his own production company and recording studio aptly called "The Millstream".

Paul Mills' outstanding reputation has been earned over the course of a long and accomplished career. He has been an important part of the Canadian folk music scene and recording industry for almost forty years. He has produced well over one hundred and fifty albums working with artists such as the late Stan Rogers (all but one of Rogers' albums were produced by Mills), Sharon, Lois and Bram, Tanglefoot, Ron Hynes and John Allan Cameron. He is also one of the founding partners of the folk music record label, Borealis Records.

Albums produced or engineered by Paul have earned four gold records (sales over 50,000), two platinum records (sales over 100,000), 5 Juno nominations and 5 East Coast Music Awards. Natalie MacMaster's record, "My Roots are Showing", which Paul engineered, won the 1999 Juno award for best instrumental album. Sharon Lois & Bram's recording "Skinnamarink TV", co-produced by Paul won the 2000 Juno for "Best Children's Album". Ron Hynes' CD "Get Back Change", received the East Coast Music Awards nod for Best Album and Best Country Album of the year in 2004. Hynes' 2006 release, "Ron Hynes" also produced by Mills earned him the ECMA Male Vocalist of the Year award.

Paul is also an accomplished performer and songwriter and has extensive experience both in bands and as a solo act. His primary instrument is guitar but he is also accomplished on mandolin, banjo, bass and ukulele. He has played small clubs, concert halls and folk festivals all over Canada. In 2006, Paul released a solo album, "The Other Side of the Glass" to wide critical praise. It received extensive airplay on folk and roots radio programs all over North America and in February of that year was the most played CD by North American folk DJs. He is currently performing extensively with Joanne Crabtree in the duo Crabtree & Mills who are just completing their third recording together.

In addition to his work as a producer and performer Paul has contributed much to the betterment of the folk community in Canada. He has served on the Board of the "Ontario Council of Folk Festivals", two years as its President, and is currently active on the Board of Directors of "Folk Music Canada".

The Estelle Klein Award is named in honour of the long-time artistic director of the Mariposa Folk Festival. Klein joined the festival in its early days and guided its development for 16 years. Her work is widely regarded as having set the model for Canada's folk festivals. Past recipients include Estelle Klein (2000), Jackie Washington (2001), Ian Tamblyn (2002), The Friends of Fiddler's Green (2003), Sylvia Tyson (2004), Ken Whiteley (2005), Richard Flohil (2006), Stan Rogers (posthumously 2007), Bernie Finkelstein (2008), Sharon, Lois & Bram (2009) and Grit Laskin (2010).

The Ontario Council of Folk Festivals supports the growth and development of folk music in Ontario by supporting the growth and development of presenters and performers, and is the largest member-based not-for-profit organization of its kind in Canada.

Paul Mills will be presented with the Estelle Klein Award at the Gala Dinner during the 25th annual OCFE Conference to be held in Niagara Falls, ON October 13-16, 2011.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
Peter MacDonald, Executive Director, OCFE
Phone: 613-560-5997 Email: pmacdonald@ocff.ca

Hi-res photos of Paul Mills and of the Estelle Klein Award (crafted by luthier Glen Reid) available upon request.