

For immediate release

**CULTURE DAYS UNVEILS PLANS FOR SECOND ANNUAL CANADA-WIDE
CELEBRATION OF ARTS AND CULTURE**

*Annual event inspires creators and public to discover and share in the creativity of
communities from coast to coast to coast*

Vancouver, BC (May 9, 2011) – Today marks the launch of the second annual Culture Days campaign – a collaborative, grassroots Canada-wide movement to raise the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of all Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities. At events in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, it will be announced that the second free Culture Days event weekend will take place in every province and territory, simultaneously on September 30, October 1 and 2, 2011 and is expected to see hundreds of communities take part with more than 300 activity organizers in 122 cities and towns already having pre-registered across the country. The cross-Canada celebration represents the largest-ever collective public participation campaign undertaken by the arts and cultural community in this country. The inaugural Culture Days celebration was held in September 2010 over three days in more than 700 Canadian cities and towns of all sizes.

“The enthusiastic response and widespread participation that the inaugural Culture Days event garnered in communities across the country highlights that arts and culture play a very meaningful role for millions of Canadians,” said Antoni Cimolino, Chair of Culture Days’ national Steering Committee and General Director of Stratford Shakespeare Festival. “This year promises to further showcase and celebrate the vast and diverse artistic and cultural talent that contributes to the vitality of our communities.”

To be attended by Ministers of Culture, event organizers, local performers and artists, the announcements will call on the arts and cultural community to build upon last year’s momentum and success to once again offer free, hands-on, interactive activities that invite the public to participate “behind the scenes” and discover the world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators, and designers at work in their communities. Interested artists and organizations can register online at www.culturedays.ca. Those who register activities will benefit from a national marketing and communications campaign as well as access to free materials and support to help promote their activities within their communities.

The public will also be provided with new online tools to help them find activities in their neighbourhoods as well as plan their Culture Days weekend. Provincial micro web sites will offer news and information tailored to that specific region while an online calendar/planning tool will help the public plan, organize and personalize their weekend online.

Inspired by Québec’s annual *Journées de la culture* event, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, and its efforts at democratizing culture in that province, Culture Days was also spurred on by the success of *Alberta Arts Days* initiated in 2008. Existing provincial initiatives, notably *Journées de la culture* and *Alberta Arts Days*, will be part of the annual celebration again this year and existing local events, festivals and activities that meet Culture Days programmatic criteria are also encouraged to join the movement.



Based on an independent survey, those who organized activities during the Culture Days weekend last year expressed a wide variety of motives for getting involved. These include: the desire to support the vision of promoting access to arts and culture, the chance to reach new audiences, to be part of a large movement happening throughout the country, and to tap into new networks interested in promoting the arts and culture. From media to corporate leaders and community partners, the widespread interest already expressed in supporting the second annual Culture Days confirms that the time is right for all Canadians to come together and celebrate the artistic and cultural vibrancy and diversity of their neighbourhoods. This interest bodes well for the continued growth of the Culture Days movement for years to come.

"Since signing on last year as Lead Founding Visionary Partner, we have been delighted by Culture Days' ambition and by the enthusiasm with which the movement has been received across Canada," said Tom Bogart, Chair of Culture Days' Council of Corporate Champions & Executive VP of Sun Life Financial. "Because Culture Days helps raise the profile of artists and cultural organizations of all types in communities across Canada, the movement provides a tremendous opportunity for businesses to make a valuable contribution to nurturing Canada's creative talent and increasing accessibility to arts and culture. We are very pleased to continue our involvement with the ongoing growth of Culture Days and I urge other organizations to support this distinctly Canadian movement."

To follow the development of the celebration, learn more about the Culture Days movement or to register an activity please visit www.culturedays.ca. For regular updates, please 'follow' [@CultureDays](https://twitter.com/CultureDays) on Twitter, 'like' Culture Days on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CultureDays) and sign up for the [e-newsletter](#).

About Culture Days

Launched in 2010, Culture Days (culturedays.ca) is a collaborative Canada-wide volunteer movement to raise the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of all Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities. Culture Days was initiated by four *Founding Partners*: The Canadian Arts Summit, Culture pour tous (producer of *les Journées de la culture*), Canada Council for the Arts and The Banff Centre. National partners supporting the development of Culture Days are: *Lead Founding Visionary Partner* Sun Life Financial, *Founding Visionary Partner* The Audain Foundation, *Visionary Partners* Aeroplan and Endeavour. *Federal Government* support is provided by Canadian Heritage. *National Media Partners* are: CBC, The Globe and Mail and St. Joseph Communications. *Provincial Partners* are: Government of B.C., Government of Alberta, SaskCulture, Government of Manitoba, Government of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Trillium Foundation, Government of New Brunswick, Government of Prince Edward Island, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador and the Government of Northwest Territories.

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Photos, artist biographies and video are available upon request. For more information or to coordinate interviews, please contact:

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