

## **CULTURE DAYS**

Invites Canadians To Get Ready For A Love Affair With Culture This Fall  
*Momentum Builds for 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Canada Wide Celebration of Arts and Culture*  
**Friday, September 28 – Sunday, September 30, 2012**

**(June 18, 2012)** – Have you ever wanted to compose your own song? Experience some of Canada's great works of art? Be the star in your own film? Take a dance class from a member of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet? Whatever your passion or curiosity, indulge it during [Culture Days](#), Canada's annual country-wide celebration of arts and culture, returning this fall for its third edition from Friday, September 28 – Sunday, September 30, 2012.

A weekend in the life of arts and culture across Canada, the third annual Culture Days will be celebrated in hundreds of cities and towns from coast to coast to coast, with thousands of free activities from a wide range of disciplines including: visual arts, music, dance, theatre, architecture, heritage, film and video, literature, culinary arts and new media.

1.2 million Canadians participated in over 6,000 activities spanning over 800 communities during Culture Days 2011. The momentum continues to build in year three and participation in Culture Days 2012 is anticipated to surpass last year's. Registration to date of artists, creators of all sorts and organizations who have committed to host activities during Culture Days 2012 is up 65%.

"Now in its third year, Culture Days has clearly demonstrated how deeply the arts and culture are woven into the fabric of Canada, and the everyday lives of Canadians," says Antoni Cimolino, General Director and Incoming Artistic Director of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and Chair of Culture Days national Steering Committee. "Together with the collaboration and participation of artists, arts organizations, municipalities, the provinces and business, Culture Days has fostered a grass-roots movement focusing the country's attention one weekend a year on the creative vitality of their communities."

Culture Days has rallied national corporations, local businesses, business associations and tourism agencies, underscoring the vital contribution artists and the cultural sector make to a thriving economy.

"As a company committed to making the arts accessible to Canadians, Sun Life is very excited to be involved with Culture Days again this year," says Mary De Paoli, Executive Vice-President, Chief Marketing Officer and Public & Corporate Affairs. "Culture Days is a special way to connect Canadians from all walks of life to arts and

culture in all its forms. I can think of no better way to bring creativity, life, health and vitality to our communities."

During Culture Days, the public are invited to participate in free hands-on and behind the scenes activities and discover the world of artists, artisans and cultural organizations in their neighbourhoods, communities and cities.

Among the more than 1.2 million Canadians who participated in 2011 Culture Days activities, an overwhelming 98% reported satisfaction with their Culture Days experience; approximately one-third made Culture Days a family affair including at least one person under age 18, and parents across Canada reported that they specifically sought out Culture Days activities with a child-friendly focus. Two-thirds noted that they'd discovered local artists and arts organizations they weren't previously aware of; 75% of 2011 attendees said they better appreciated how artists and arts organizations contributed to their communities; 70% were eager to seek out and participate in more arts and cultural activities; and 90% expressed their desire to participate in Culture Days 2012!

A sneak peek at some of the free activities planned for Culture Days 2012 so far include:

- **Dance Downtown**, presented by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, brings together professional and non-professional dancers of all styles and backgrounds for an afternoon of performances, free demonstration classes for all ages, and a display of Ballet costumes and shoes for kids to try on.
- **Come Play the Steinway**, presented by Cowichan Theatre in Duncan, BC offers a chance to play a 1927 Steinway Grand D piano and share the experience of musicians all over the world who prefer to play a Steinway for their performances.
- **Paint in an Artist Studio**, presented by Susan Christensen Art Gallery in Green Gables PEI, invites visitors to try their hand at painting on collaborative works of art.
- **The Anatomy of a Song – Songwriting 101 with Kev Morse**, a workshop organized by Arts Milton. Accomplished singer/songwriter Kev Morse will work with you to create a rough draft of your own original song.
- **Backstage tour & artist chat at The Cultch**, in Vancouver hosts a behind-the-scenes tour exploring stage lighting, sound, and the performing arts industry as well as a chat with artists from the productions White Rabbit, Red Rabbit and Blind Date in the Vancity Culture Lab.

- **Art Bank Open House**, presented by The Canada Council Art Bank, which is celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a special exhibit of 40 key artworks from their collection of 17,000 pieces by some 3,000 Canadian artists.
- **Pop Goes the Easel! music and art presentation**, by Symphony Nova Scotia, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and Long & McQuade in Halifax. The whole family is invited to this hands-on arts exploration! “Pop Goes the Easel!” takes the Art Gallery’s hit “Family Sundays” program and gives it a musical twist. This session features a live, interactive performance from Symphony Nova Scotia musicians. Following the performance, participants can express their creativity by making music in Long & McQuade’s Musical Instrument Petting Zoo, and by creating an original art piece in an artist-led Art Gallery workshop!
- **Film Fun**, from the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). A special behind the scenes program of film craft activities for families during Culture Days.

Launched in 2010, Culture Days is a civil society driven initiative overseen by a National Steering Committee and volunteer Provincial Task Forces whose members come from a variety of backgrounds including cultural programming, tourism, municipal cultural planning and public engagement who rally their arts and cultural communities to promote the event to the public at the local level.

Culture Days provides artists, artisans and cultural organizations with an exceptional opportunity to enhance their profile and grow their audiences within their communities.

*“I Love Culture*, the Culture Days 2012 multi-platform marketing campaign, is an open invitation for all Canadians to create, participate and celebrate arts and culture across the country,” says David Moss, National Director of Culture Days. “All artists and communities hosting Culture Days activities can access [free branded campaign tools and resources](#) on-line at [culturedays.ca](#) to facilitate local campaigns and support their outreach efforts to the public.”

Municipalities, local arts councils and other volunteer community organizers play an increasingly vital role in the implementation of Culture Days in their cities and towns, helping to champion the event by mobilizing artists, organizations and local partners to participate and promote their events.



## About Culture Days

### **About Culture Days**

Culture Days is a collaborative Canada-wide volunteer movement that is raising the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of all Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities. Culture Days was inspired by Quebec's annual Journées de la culture, founded in 1997 and the success of Alberta Arts Days (now Alberta Culture Days), founded in 2008. Culture Days was initiated by four Founding Partners: **The Canadian Arts Summit, Culture pour tous (producer of *Journées de la culture*), Canada Council for the Arts and The Banff Centre**. National partners supporting the development of Culture Days are: Founding Visionary Partner **Sun Life Financial**, Visionary Partners **Endeavour** and **The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation**, and Community Partners **BMO, RBC Foundation, TD and Fairmont Hotels**. Federal Government support is provided by **Department of Canadian Heritage**. National Media Partners are: **CBC** and **The Globe and Mail**. Provincial Partners are: **Government of British Columbia, Government of Alberta, SaskCulture, Government of Manitoba, Government of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Government of Québec, Government of New Brunswick, Government of Nova Scotia, Government of Prince Edward Island, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council and the Government of Northwest Territories**. The 2012 Culture Days Weekend is taking place September 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> across Canada.

To follow the development of Culture Days between now and Sept 28 and to register an activity or event please visit [culturedays.ca](http://culturedays.ca). For regular updates please 'follow' @CultureDays on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CultureDays), 'like' Culture Days on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CultureDays) and sign up for the [e-newsletter](http://culturedays.ca) at [culturedays.ca](http://culturedays.ca).

- 30 -

To download Culture Days Press Kit, and supporting press materials (Backgrounder, Fact Sheet, Early 2012 Registrants, Partner List, 2011 Report) [please click here](#):

### **For further information and to book an interview:**

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