



CULTURE DAYS LAUNCHES NATIONAL CONGRESS: THE ART OF ENGAGEMENT, FINDING, IGNITING AND KEEPING AUDIENCES

Ellis Jacob to give keynote speech

Toronto, April 2, 2013 – Now in its fourth year, Culture Days is launching an annual **National Congress on Culture**. Bringing together a wide diversity of leading experts, artists and cultural organizations, business and public sector leaders and decision makers from across the country, this first event of its kind will elevate and provoke the discussion of the most vital topics affecting public engagement, funding, marketing and sustenance of the cultural sector.

Taking place on **May 23 and 24, 2013** at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto, the day-long event will offer in-depth panels and question/answer sessions, concluding with an awards dinner in which Culture Days organizers will be honoured for their exemplary work.

For more information and to register, visit culturedays.ca.

Keynote speaker Ellis Jacob, CEO of Cineplex, will kick off the event by sharing how he turned the national theatre chain into a massive success story – by enhancing the audience experience and attracting new audiences through innovative marketing to alternative programming. Following Ellis Jacob, high profile speakers and panelists will dig into challenges confronting Canadian artists and cultural organizations today and share best practices from across the country.

Among the invited speakers and moderators are **Gabe Gonda** (Arts and Life Editor, The Globe and Mail), **Eli Singer** (Founder and CEO of Entrinsic), Antoni Cimolino (Artistic Director, Stratford Festival), **Lorne Manly** (Deputy Editor of the Culture Department, The New York Times), **Branislav Henselmann** (Executive Director, Ballet BC), **Marc Lemay** (Director General, Arts Policy Branch, Canadian Heritage), **Che Kothari** (Photographer and Executive Director of Manifesto Community Projects), **Robin Mirsky** (Executive Director, Rogers Group of Funds), **Janice Price** (CEO, Luminato), **Barry Avrich** (Partner, BT/A), and **Louise Sicuro** (President & CEO, Culture pour tous). A lunchtime Keynote address will be given by **Robert Sirman**, Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts.

“In the three years since its launch, Culture Days has been embraced with incredible enthusiasm not just by artists and cultural organizations but also by the general public,” says Antoni Cimolino, Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival and national Chair of Culture Days. “Arts and culture, and the issues that surround them, are of vital importance to individuals and their communities 365 days a year, so clearly it’s time to elevate the national conversation beyond the Culture Days weekend itself. We’re thrilled to be able to

bring together our country's rich diversity of interests and expertise in a national forum that is open to all."

Since its launch in 2010, there has been a 47% increase in registered activities for the annual Culture Days weekend with an estimated 600,000 artists and cultural organizations voluntarily welcoming 1.6 million Canadians to their 7,000 registered Culture Days activities in 850 cities and towns across the country during the 2012 event. This year's Culture Days weekend will take place September 27, 28 and 29, 2013.

National Congress on Culture Program

ELLIS JACOB: THE CINEPLEX BLOCKBUSTER, SUCCESS FRAME BY FRAME **Keynote address by Ellis Jacob, President and CEO, Cineplex Inc.**

Ellis Jacob is easily one of the most successful and powerful entertainment executives in North America. Respected by not only Canada's top film studios but also revered by Hollywood's most prominent directors for his dedication to enhancing the audience experience and attracting new audiences into Cineplex theatres, Ellis Jacob has turned the national theatre chain into a massive success story. From innovative marketing and alternative programming, Ellis Jacob has created an enviable methodology to attract audiences by the millions. Before Cineplex, Ellis co-founded Galaxy Cinemas that was highly successful in bringing superior film experiences to smaller markets.

IGNITING PASSION

Panel discussion moderated by **Gabe Gonda**, Arts and Life Editor, *The Globe and Mail*

Ellis Jacob will be joined by well-known leaders in their field for a moderated discussion where participants will react to, challenge and debate participation and engagement issues confronting the arts and culture today. More than ever, independent artists and cultural organizations of all sizes across the country face daunting challenges to attract, engage and keep audiences in ways that transcend traditional marketing strategies and techniques, and the cultural experience itself. Drawing from their own experiences, perspectives and insights, this panel will provoke a stimulating discussion followed by a Q&A and talk-back with delegates.

Panelists:

Ellis Jacob, President and CEO, Cineplex Inc.

Marc Lemay, Director General, Arts Policy Branch, Canadian Heritage

Robin Mirsky, Executive Director, Rogers Group of Funds

Branislav Henselmann, Executive Director, Ballet, BC

Keynote address

Robert Sirman, Director and CEO, Canada Council for the Arts

While the Canada Council for the Arts focuses its support on professional arts practice, the artists and arts organizations it funds are also preoccupied with "finding, igniting and keeping audiences", consistent with the theme of this Congress. As outlined in the Council's October 2012 discussion paper and blogs on [Public Engagement in the Arts](#), a major challenge for the arts sector at large is how to build on the success of initiatives like Culture Days and les Journées de la Culture to engage people more fully in the arts and in

the cultural life of our communities. Council Director and CEO Robert Sirman discusses the context and opportunities for the sector in meeting this challenge.

MARKETING CULTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES, BREAKING NEW GROUND

Panel discussion moderated by Janice Price, CEO Luminato

In a world filled with seemingly endless distractions, as on-line and social media channels compete aggressively with traditional marketing and media for our attention, where are the opportunities for emerging and established artists and cultural organizations alike to stand out from the crowd today? What works, what doesn't, and what factors should artists and cultural organizations consider in choosing the right marketing mix today?

Panelists:

Barry Avrich, Partner, BT/A

Eli Singer, Founder and CEO of Entrinsic

Jeannette Hanna, Vice President, trajectory

Lorne Manly, Deputy Editor of the Culture Department, The New York Times

Che Kothari, Photographer, Executive Director, Manifesto

Followed by a Q&A

CULTURE DAYS SUCCESS STORIES: EFFECTIVE MODELS OF CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Panel discussion moderated by Henk van Leeuwen, Executive Director, CulturePEI

From independent artists and cultural organizations of all sizes and types, community groups and creative industries, to municipalities, libraries and universities, a wildly diverse range of stakeholders engaged in arts and culture have championed Culture Days activities and events in their local community, provinces and on the national scene. Panelists will discuss their challenges and successes in making Culture Days a reality, the lessons learned and impacts during and beyond the annual Culture Days event.

Panelists:

Louise Sicuro, President & CEO, Culture pour tous, QC

Jean Giguère, Co-Chair, Culture Days Manitoba Task Force

Liesl Jauk, Manager, Cultural Development, Richmond, BC

Rosemary Polegato, MBA, PhD, Professor of Commerce, Mount Allison University, NB

Shannon Thunderbird, Coast Tsimshian First Nations, Artistic Director and Educator,
Teya Peya Productions, ON

Followed by a Q&A

About Culture Days

Culture Days is committed to reaching the goal of having all Canadians in every community declaring "I Love Culture" and making culture a daily habit.

Founded in 2009, Culture Days is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a national network of cultural connections devoted to providing Canadians with opportunities to participate in, and appreciate, all forms of arts and culture. Through an annual three-day national celebration each September, hundreds of thousands of artists and cultural

organizations in hundreds of cities and towns come together and invite Canadians to participate in free interactive and “behind the scenes” activities to discover their cultural spirit and passion.

As a leading national voice for the active and engaged cultural life of all Canadians, Culture Days provides support, tools and resources to a wide variety of artists and cultural organizations to help them unite the country through engagement in culture.

National Congress Partners: Culture Days would like to thank the following partners for their support: J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Canadian Heritage, BT/A and the Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

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