

National Congress on Culture Sparks Canada-Wide Conversation *Over 1,500 participate in Winnipeg and via Livestream*

For Immediate Release, *Winnipeg, Manitoba / Toronto, Ontario – May 27, 2014* – Culture Days is pleased to announce that over 1,500 people participated in its second national Congress, [*Culture: Everyday. Everywhere. Creating and Sustaining a Daily National Habit*](#), held in Winnipeg on May 22 and 23.

Some 250 delegates and speakers from across the country gathered at the Winnipeg Art Gallery while another 1,300 participated in the bilingual moderated [livestream](#) of the event from across Canada and abroad, including the U.S., England, France, Sweden, Germany, Hong Kong and Russia. Participants were inspired by informative keynotes from The Honourable **Shelly Glover**, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, **Chris McDonald**, President of Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, and **Gail Asper, O.C., O.M.**.

Delegates also heard from a diversity of experts and respected practitioners in their fields through panel discussions and breakout workshops on subjects ranging from *Making the Most of Your Relationships with Sponsors*, *The Digital Marketing Primer* and *Culture Days Success Stories*, to *Municipal Engagement – Mobilizing Your Community*, *Connecting New Canadians to Canadian Culture* and *Canada Council for the Arts Granting Programs*.

“The Congress hit the mark both for delegates and speakers. As the only event of its kind, it provided a unique opportunity for artists, cultural organizations and funders to address issues and topics head-on that are vital to everyone who is passionate about creating and promoting arts and culture across Canada,” commented David Moss, Culture Days National Director. “We are delighted that the Congress is a valued annual forum to exchange stories and knowledge while sharing best practices and tools to enhance public engagement skills.”

The Congress was also a great national showcase for the Winnipeg community, which boasts one of Canada’s most engaged and dynamic arts and cultural scenes. **Jean Giguère**, co-chair of the Culture Days Manitoba Task Force and Congress and National Board member, gave a special talk entitled *Voluntarism: Engines of Our Communities*, sharing her insights into how vital volunteers are to community engagement throughout the year. Jean Giguère is the recipient of the [2014 Governor General's Ramon Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in The Performing Arts](#).

“We were delighted to host the Congress in Winnipeg and just thrilled with the overall program quality, the engagement of the speakers and participants, and that the rest of the country had a chance to get a sense of just how passionately committed to arts and culture we are here in Manitoba,” commented Jean Giguère and Congress co-chair Sylviane Lanthier.

The event culminated with an awards dinner in the beautiful Concert Hall of the Fort Garry Hotel. Hosted by [Marci Ien, co-host of CTV's Canada AM](#), the evening featured moving performances by [Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet](#) and rising Winnipeg singer [Rayannah](#). The 2013 award winners were recognized for exemplary initiatives taken to engage the public during the 2013 edition of Culture Days last September.

Marci Ien also hosted a private mentoring session for journalism and media students who participated in a Culture Days and Bell Media [Student Reporters Internship](#) program that was introduced as part of the

National Congress. The student interns also had a private behind-the-scenes tour of the CTV Newsroom in Winnipeg during the morning newscast on Thursday.

The dynamic conversation was also highly active and engaged on [Twitter](#), with the Congress trending in Canada on both days of the event.

The 2015 Congress will be held in Alberta. Dates and location to be announced. The fifth anniversary edition of the Culture Days weekend will take place on [September 26, 27 and 28](#). For more information about Culture Days, please visit [culturedays.ca](#).

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. 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 are Sun Life Financial and The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. National Broadcast Partner is Bell Media (CTV). Creative Partner is BT/A. Federal Government support is provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage. Congress livestream partner: Canada Council for the Arts.

Provincial Partners are: Government of British Columbia, Government of Alberta, SaskCulture, Government of Manitoba, Manitoba Arts Council, Government of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, 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 the Northwest Territories.

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