

## Notes For Culture Days B.C. Task Force Meeting

September 11, 2009

In Attendance: Axel Conradi, National Steering Committee, Culture Days; Howard Jang, Arts Club Theatre; Amir Ali Alibhai, Alliance for Arts and Culture; Wendy Newman, Arts Starts; Andrea Henning, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts; Jeremy Long, B.C. Arts Council.

Via Teleconference: Scott Walker, ProArt Victoria; David Moss, Culture For All

The meeting began by welcoming Andrea Henning and Jeremy Long as members of the Task Force. During the course of the meeting both made it clear that their organizations are wholly supportive of the Culture Days initiative which is very much in line with the B.C. government's policy priorities for the arts. While no promises of government funding support were asked for or made at this meeting it was pointed out that the prospects would be better in 2011 than 2010.

It was fully recognized that B.C Arts Week was going to keep with its spring time schedule which reinforced an earlier understanding that Culture Days would work with the organizers of B.C Arts Week ( Arts Starts and the Assembly of B.C Arts Councils ) to see how best to make the two separate events complementary given Culture Days September timeframe. It was made clear by both Jeremy Long and Andrea Henning that B.C. government support for one definitely did not preclude support for the other i.e. this is not an either/or situation. A discussion of how to engage schools in Culture Days activities included sending artists into the schools and bussing students to Culture Days events. It will be worth following developments in Alberta where the government has challenged schools and libraries to think of ways to participate in September's Alberta Arts Days.

Much of the meeting was taken up by a discussion of whether B.C. should try to be part of the inaugural 2010 launch of Culture Days or whether it would be best off deferring its first participation to 2011. The big factor favouring 2011 is the difficult arts funding environment which was pre-occupying many arts groups and would make raising funds for a major new endeavour very challenging. The City of Vancouver would likely be more favourable to a 2011 launch as it will then be celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On the other hand it was agreed that the current funding environment only reinforced the need for an event such as Culture Days whose purpose is to broadly engage the public and in the process reinforce how important arts and culture are to the lives of all citizens and to our communities. It was also felt that it would be a shame for B.C not to be part of Culture Days from the outset. The sentiment in the room was leaning to a " soft start " in 2010. What this would like, the budget needed to support it and how to come up with the needed money clearly needs some more thought.

There followed a discussion of additional organizations/people to try and recruit as Task Force members and/or Culture days community leaders.

A discussion of the ultimate name for Culture Days, which is currently a working title, clearly favoured Culture Days over My Creative Canada. There was a strong feeling that the word “ culture “ needed to be in the name. Other names put forward were ???