



MEDIA RELEASE III

March 25, 2008

A Place To Be ~ A Place To Work Creative Spaces For Creative People

Event: The Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity Symposium

Dates: April 28 to May 01, 2008

Venue: Fairmont Chateau Laurier in Ottawa

Information: www.cultureandcommunities.ca

Artists seldom go to work on the 8 am express and return by 6 pm for dinner and family time. In fact, their hours of business as well as their work and living space needs vary widely and, almost always, can't be accommodated within the constraints of mainstream civic infrastructure planning. Fortunately there are new ideas and examples of smart ways to solve this problem. As a result, some communities are able to retain the creators in their midst.

Delegates gathering in Ottawa April 28 through May 1, 2008 to take part in the Creative Construct: Building For Culture and Creativity symposium will hear about a number of initiatives, highly creative in themselves, for creating spaces where artists can be artists, supported in their daily lives by both accommodation, work, and exhibition infrastructure designed with their needs in mind.

With the aim of helping transform the way our community planners, educators and elected leaders think about our cultural future, Creative Construct, organized by the Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities at Simon Fraser University and the City of Ottawa, brings together noted speakers, experts and artists from across Canada and around to world to examine the role and value of cultural infrastructure in furthering culture and the creative economy in cities and communities.

Among the workshops and panel discussions addressing the issues of artist's living, working and exhibition facilities will be:

- **Artist Housing and studio space: A cornerstone of creative infrastructure:** Moderated by Andrew Lee of the Ontario Social Housing Services Corp., this session will hear from, among others, Kelly McCray of Toronto's Active 18 Group, who will share her organization's experiences in getting developers to replace disappearing low-cost artist live/work spaces in the red-hot real estate market of Toronto's Queen West Triangle. Barbara Koenen, a cultural planner from the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, discusses her work in developing affordable artist housing and creative industry spaces in that city. And Jason Schupbach of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's ArtistLink will discuss how his organization works with artists, real estate developers and municipalities in developing artist spaces.

- **Artist Centres as cultural incubators: Models & experiences:** Sue Beal, chair of Melbourne's Cultural Development Network, will describe how the City of Melbourne's Arts House project has developed flexible performance, exhibition and office spaces in two venues.

Artist Centres as cultural incubators continued ...

Matthew Kwatinetz, artistic director and CEO of Seattle's Capitol Hill Arts Center, will talk about his experiences in developing a home for three performance venues that supports emerging artists and fosters community growth and artistic exchange, based on a unique for-profit business model. From Quebec City, Jocelyn Robert of the MEDUSE Co-operative will tell delegates about that group's encouragement of cross-disciplinary work while providing ten arts organizations with exhibition and performance space, as well as living spaces for artists-in-residence. Louise Matte, Agente culturelle at the Maison de la culture Frontenac, will describe how Montreal's network of Maisons de la culture ensures that citizens across the city have access to cultural events in their own neighbourhoods.

- **Alternative urban scenes: Protecting in-between spaces and alternative users:** Kate Shaw of the University of Melbourne will discuss her work in preserving unrecognized or alternative cultural spaces from broad-brush redevelopment. McGill University's Will Straw will bring to the session his experiences as a member of a five-year research project on The Culture of Cities and share insights from his work on music production and informal cultural scenes. Alan Stanbridge, of the University of Toronto at Scarborough, and Scott Thomson, a Toronto-based musician and composer, will discuss situations where artists have developed their own small-scale venues for presenting contemporary music.

Attending Creative Construct will be cultural planners and policy-makers, civic leaders and elected officials, architects, cultural sector leaders and entrepreneurs, educators and urban theorists interested in sharing ideas and learning about the latest innovations and developments from around the world.

Additional workshops and panel discussions will address such themes as cultural convergence with industry and science, urban renewal, and alternative financing and partnership. The symposium promises to be a turning point in the way we understand the importance of Canada's cultural infrastructure.

For further information visit www.cultureandcommunities.ca.

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Research References:

Active 18 Group	www.active18.org
ArtistLink	www.ArtistLink.org
Capitol Hill Arts Centre	www.capitolhillarts.com
MEDUSE Cooperative	www.meduse.org
Arts House	www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/info.cfm?top=186&pg=2163