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GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR CULTURE QUEST GENERATES ARRAY OF PROJECTS

WHITEHORSE – With the 2007 Canada Winter Games only 18 months away, the third season of Culture Quest has kicked into high gear soliciting new projects from the culture community.

The government’s annual investment of \$157,000 in Culture Quest has proven very successful in the past two years. Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor is encouraging the arts and culture community to become even more involved leading up to the 2007 games.

“The Yukon Government has made it a priority to maximize the benefits of the 2007 Canada Winter Games,” Taylor said. “It is clear that the Yukon is rich in cultural vitality. That excitement has translated into a number of projects which provide opportunities for artists, youth, First Nations and communities to encourage creative expression and celebrate what makes life in the Yukon unique.”

Culture Quest will continue to support new works with an arts or heritage focus for presentation at special events such as the 2007 Canada Winter Games and the 2010 Olympics.

“I am impressed with the variety of projects underway and the community pride they represent,” Taylor said. “Culture Quest complements Decade of Sport and Culture with projects that provide substantial, lasting and meaningful value to Yukon artists and cultural groups today and into the future.”

Culture Quest projects can include performing, visual and literary art projects, First Nations traditional and contemporary practices, and heritage projects that animate Yukon history.

Culture Quest was initiated in celebration of Yukon’s Decade of Sport and Culture and developed as a strategic initiative with the Yukon Arts Centre managing the program on behalf of the Department of Tourism and Culture. To learn more about the program, contact the Yukon Arts Centre Community Programs Coordinator at 393-7109 or visit the Yukon Arts Centre web site at www.yukonartscentre.org/quest.htm.

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Attachment: Confirmed projects list.

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ATTACHMENT – CONFIRMED CULTURE QUEST PROJECTS

First Nations Tour, Oct. 2004: Folk singers Don Freed, Leela Gilday and hip-hop sensation Slangblossom toured Yukon communities and schools for presentations and workshops in Oct. 2004.

Short Film reflections of Yukon communities, started Oct. 2004: The Klondike Institute of Art and Culture is collaborating with Yukon community filmmakers to create short films about their towns. The project teaches filmmaking fundamentals with digital video technology and creates an image bank for future broadcasts.

Picture Teslin photo event, started fall 2004: To mark the 115th anniversary of Tlingit photographer George Johnston's birth, residents were issued cameras to record a week in the life of this diverse community. The project created civic pride, an exhibition and awarded prizes. Project sponsor, the George Johnston Museum, showcased the work in Teslin and organizers are looking for additional opportunities to display the photos.

Creative competitions, summer and fall 2004: Two Yukon-wide creative competitions "Yukon in Action" (photography) and "Your Story" (writing) netted more than 150 entries. The work was celebrated at an event in October 2004 and writing entries were published in *Yukon News*.

Caribou Records northern sound recording project, started Dec. 2004: Caribou Records is partnering with Culture Quest towards a developmental project that involves featuring young artists from across the north. A compilation CD will be created for national distribution to promote and showcase the emerging sounds of the north.

"Why Campfire Smoke Follows the Guilty One," contemporary dance piece, started spring 2005: Yukon storyteller, Sharon Shorty, was inspired by a family story told by her Northern Tutchone grandmother, Gertie Tom, and is developing a group dance that includes renowned dancer and choreographer, Robin Poitras.

Breakdancing Yukon, April 2005: Groundwork Sessions (GWS) worked with Toronto-based Abstract Breaking Systems to train and choreograph a one hour live show which toured Yukon communities for workshops and presentation. GWS member, Nick Robinson, represented the Yukon at the National Artist Program, at the 2005 Regina Jeux de Canada Games, and performed at the closing ceremonies. Further training and workshops are scheduled for Yukon communities in summer 2006.

MegaBYTE CD, May 2005: The Bringing Youth Towards Equality Society produced a variety show and an interactive CD/DVD to showcase young Yukon talent.

Web Adventures, March 2005: An interactive website for children and youth, centred on Yukon art and featuring the work of six contemporary Yukon artists, is currently under construction. One of the interactive features allows kids to create and post their own piece of art on the website. The website will be live by summer 2006 and linked to the Yukon Arts Centre website.

Yukon PIPE, summer 2005: Performance in Peculiar Environments (PIPE) is the bold mandate of a Calgary-based young professional theatre company, which traveled to Whitehorse to instigate a theatre production with local Yukon youth. A piece was performed as part of Longest Days Street Fair and to inspire further projects.

Raven Spirit Dance, The Luk Cho project, started fall 2005 for summer 2006 premiere: The residents of Dawson City will combine talents and experience to create a new dance piece and a mural themed around a northern First Nation tale about a young girl transformed into a salmon.

Giant Owl Story, summer 2005: The Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry interpreted a Southern Tutchone story for a theatre production that played at events including National Aboriginal Day and Canada Day celebrations in Whitehorse.