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David Usher headlines the 2008 Junction Arts Festival

Toronto, ON, July 24, 2008 – The 2008 Junction Arts Festival (September 3 to 7), produced by the Junction Forum for Art & Culture, announces multi award winning recording artist David Usher as the headlining act, who will explode onto the Main Stage in the “Junction City” Square (2960 Dundas St. West at Pacific Ave., Toronto) on Saturday, September 6 at 10:00 p.m. at this year’s extravaganza.

Now in its 16th year and attracting 150,000 visitors annually, the 2008 Junction Arts Festival is set to throw the party of the year expanding to five days of free fun and creativity as the Junction celebrates its centennial of becoming the City of West Toronto in 1908.

The 2008 Junction Arts Festival will take place along one kilometre of Dundas Street West between Keele Street and Quebec Avenue, and will feature eight distinct categories; the **Visual Art Exhibits** (starting Wednesday, September 3), the **Movieola Movie Night** (Thursday, September 4), and the **Live Music Stages**, the **Dance/Street Performance Artists**, the **Poetry Peepshow**, the **KidZone**, the **Green Village**, and the **Historic City** (happening during the weekend street closure on Saturday, September 6 and Sunday, September 7).

JFAC Chair Councillor Bill Saundercook (Ward 13, City of Toronto) states, “As Chair of the centennial events and the 2008 Junction Arts Festival, I am very excited over the upcoming events. Make sure you mark these dates on your calendar as a **MUST ATTEND!** My many thanks go to all volunteers of the Junction Forum for Art & Culture (JFAC) Board, our dedicated staff and our Junction BIA.”

States Festival Executive Producer Michael Menegon, “As with any birthday milestones, 16, 21, 50 or 75, what many people do is go all out and throw a big party; do something out of the ordinary; invite huge amounts of people; have a feast and mark the occasion with an event that they won’t soon forget. Well, that’s what we’re doing at the Junction Arts Festival for the Junction’s 100th birthday! We’re putting on a huge art meets street party to celebrate the Junction’s proud independent and artistic heritage, and we’re inviting everyone to join us; the doors are open and the party goes until they shut us down.”

Five-time Juno winning Canadian recording artist David Usher headlines: Sept. 6 at 10pm

David Usher, who will perform on the Main Stage on Saturday, September 6 at 10:00 p.m., has deep roots in Canada and with his band and solo efforts has had huge chart topping success with international and domestic record sales in excess 1.3 million units.

David Usher is on the verge of releasing his new and sixth full-length record called ‘Wake Up And Say Goodbye’, due for release on September 23, 2008, and his first single “Kill The Lights” is out now.

The Live Music Stages will rock the festival on three days: Sept. 5, 6 & 7

Junction native Justin Rutledge will kick off the Main Stage concerts on Friday, September 5 at 9:30 p.m. in the “Junction City” Square, which will act as the heart to the festivities at Dundas Street West and Pacific Avenue, hosting the new Friday night concert, Saturday’s headline concert (September 6) and the Sunday afternoon jazz concert (September 7), starring the Junction’s own Brownman Electric Trio.

The new Junction Stage (Dundas St. West and Mavety St.) will feature a line-up of musical performers that are native to or live in the Junction (afternoons, September 6 and 7).

Full line-up schedules will be announced soon.

The Visual Art Exhibits ignite the party: Beginning Sept. 3

The Juried Art Exhibits will launch the festivities starting on September 3, and the pieces this year were submitted based on three categories of choice; photography, sculpture and painting/drawing.

Work from over 70 visual artists, selected by the 2008 Juried Art Exhibits Committee, will be exhibited in traditional art gallery settings at the Academy of Realist Art and the Urbanscape Gallery and at a number of Junction shops and venues, and the winners will be announced on Wednesday, September 3.

Additionally, the 2008 Junction Arts Festival proudly announces Junction visual artist Robert Hilts’ art installation, which will be specially erected for the festival and with the spirit of the Junction’s centennial celebration in mind.

Robert Hilts’ installation will be designed as mediated pavilions built using materials found in Junction residences, industry or commercial spaces, and will be conceived as a streetscape of building interiors that the public can step into to gain framed views and experience a manipulated sense of the historical industrial processes and working methods used in the Junction over periods of time. It will also provide dispatches of the entertainment and household lifestyles of the area.

Movieola Movie Night: Black & white short classics under the stars, Sept. 4

New this year, the Junction Arts Festival presents Movieola Movie Night, sponsored by Channel Zero Inc., broadcaster for Movieola – The Short Film Channel and Silver Screen Classics.

On Thursday, September 4, starting at 7:00 p.m. in the “Junction City” Square (Dundas St. West and Pacific Ave.), watch under the stars the brightest of Hollywood's actors in classic black and white short films from the golden era of movie making.

Dance/Street Performance Artists animate the festival’s weekend streetscape, Sept. 6 & 7

Ten dance-music and theatre companies, whose expertise is street performance, will be transforming and animating the sites and sounds of the Junction Arts Festival weekend celebrations (September 6 and 7).

The performing artists will include, springing to life for the second year, The Larchaud Dance Project; combining the fundamental elements of break dance with modern technique to create repertoire based on strength, agility and gravity-defying movement and, from Halifax, artist Veronique Mackenzie with her work ‘Citizens’.

Poetry Peepshow: A glimpse into a poet's life, Sept. 6 & 7

For the first time the Junction Arts Festival proudly presents Poetry Peepshow during the weekend festivities on September 6 and 7.

In true voyeuristic style, a roster of 12 different writers, for a period of time, will each display their individual and usually private creative processes. The viewer will be offered an intimate experience with writers and poets in the midst of their work.

The KidZone: The Junction Arts Festival welcomes the Art Gallery of Ontario, Sept. 6 & 7

The KidZone (supported by Scotia Bank of Canada) will present the Art Gallery of Ontario's mural program; brand new to the festival this year.

The popular family friendly KidZone (September 6 and 7), beginning at Dundas St. West and Quebec Avenue (west entrance), will also feature the Academy of Realist Art painting/drawing workshops, the National Film Board animation workshops, the Junction community stage and the Toronto Aerial Dance Company circus workshops.

The KidZone's hands-on policy encourages interactivity for the young and young at heart to discover, create and participate in activities that engage, teach and entertain.

The Green Village: Home Green Home, Sept. 6 & 7

The second annual Green Village, presented also for the second year by Bombardier Inc., is back (September 6 and 7) and the theme this year is Home Green Home, which will demonstrate and inspire positive methods of how to incorporate green conscious living into everyone's home and lifestyle.

Starting at the east end of the Dundas West festival footprint (Keele Street entrance), a number of environmental organizations, guest speakers and community groups will present information, daily lectures, workshops and demonstrations on ways to reduce your ecological footprint. Save money with eco- renovations and ways to reduce energy consumption, discover government programs, alternative energy sources, city planning initiatives and more.

The Junction Arts Festival practices and encourages reducing, reusing and recycling throughout the entire festival location.

The Historic City: Happy 100th to the Junction, Sept. 6 & 7

In 1908, the Junction officially became the City of West Toronto by the Province of Ontario and in 2008, to mark this special occasion, the Junction is celebrating its centennial for the entire year, and the 2008 Junction Arts Festival will feature a new zone to honour this event consisting of everything historic.

Centred at High Park Avenue and Dundas Street West (September 6 and 7), the Historic City will present Boom Times Cabaret, Heart of the Junction Talk Show (with local actor/historian Neil Ross as A. B. Rice), plus West Toronto Junction Historical Society walking tours, archival photo exhibits, special street performances and more.

Please note: Visit the Junction Arts Festival website regularly for more details and updated schedules of all events at, www.junctionartsfest.com.

The 2008 Junction Arts Festival will be supported by title sponsor the Junction Business Improvement Area, and Department of Canadian Heritage Anniversary program, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, Toronto Arts Council, NOW Magazine and insidetoronto.com.

The Junction Forum for Art and Culture (JFAC) is an arts presenting organization whose main project is the annual Junction Arts Festival. JFAC was incorporated as a non-profit group in February 2004. The people who make up the Board of Directors of the Junction Forum for Art and Culture are dedicated cultural producers, artists, residents, business owners and politicians all of whom are connected in some way to the Junction.