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DANCE and STREET PERFORMERS COME ALIVE at the 2008 JUNCTION ARTS FESTIVAL

Toronto, ON, August 18, 2008 – The Junction Arts Festival (September 3 to 7, 2008 in Toronto), produced by the Junction Forum for Art & Culture, presents a cultural explosion second to none and the outdoor dance and street performances will burst to life during the weekend street closure on Saturday, September 6 (12:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.) and Sunday, September 7 (11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.).

Now attracting 150,000 visitors annually, the 2008 Junction Arts Festival is set to throw the party of the year as the Junction celebrates its centennial of becoming the City of West Toronto in 1908.

Throughout the one kilometre festival footprint on Dundas Street West (between Keele Street and Quebec Avenue), local and national dance groups, specializing in street performance, will present site-specific, random and roaming flash performances, contemporary interpretive pieces, street theatre pieces, performance art pieces and improvisational ensemble pieces spontaneously animating the Junction Arts Festival streetscape.

Former artistic director of fFIDA International Dance Festival (16 years) and Junction Arts Festival executive producer Michael Menegon states, “The one thing that people have repeatedly talked about and was hugely popular from last year’s festival were the dance street performances. So, for 2008 we’re bringing back some of last year’s groups and adding some new ones; all specializing in street performing. They will transform the street into a carnival of surprises and everyone loves a surprise!”

WEEKEND DANCE/STREET PERFORMER LINE-UP (listed in alphabetical order)
Saturday, September 6 (12:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.) and Sunday, September 7 (11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.):

ASM Dance (featuring Jasmyn Fyffe, Adene Blackwood, Andrew Blackwood, Ashlee Deweerd, Solange Fermin, Kathy Lewis, Amanda Nicole).

BAIN & BERNARD COMEDY (featuring Warren Bain, Matthew Bernard).

JAY9 DANCE PROJECTS (featuring Jannine Saarinen, Anton Pasquarella, Tara Roberts, Jeff Stevenson).

LARCHAUD DANCE PROJECT (featuring Robyn Alfonso, Jase Cozmic, Markus Laczk, Mayumi Lashbrook, Jennifer Robichaud, and youth performers Dylan Harding, Kacy Temple, Sidney Temple).

NAGBOT – New Age Ghetto Ballet of Toronto (featuring Eroca Nichols, Kristina Udegbumam).

OCTAMEROUS (featuring Brodie Stevenson, Amanda Acorn, Emily Law, Jennifer Lécuyer, with original music composed by Christopher Willes).

PRAIRIE SKY PRODUCTIONS (featuring Catherine George McLaughlin, Kate Stashko).

R.A.D. (featuring Laura Bolender, Julie Grant, Ivana Matovina, Liisa Murray, Zita Nyarady).

TORONTO AERIAL DANCE.

VERONIQUE MACKENZIE’S CITIZENS (featuring Veronique Mackenzie, Lisa Phinney, Susan Cook, Melissa Lively, Jacinte Armstrong, Kim Kraushar).

Ten ensemble companies from Toronto and provinces including Alberta and Nova Scotia will showcase unique performances.

ASM Dance founded by Jasmyn Fyffe presents a piece which explores the meaning and idea of materialism and addresses the societal norms and behaviours associated with the obsession of material things. Using contemporary movement, text/poetry and songs the idea of obsession and possession over material goods is displayed.

Bain & Bernard; a high-energy vaudevillian duo perform a comedy sketch. Drop by their wooden wonder cart and sample their “This Thing, That Thing, Everything Anything Elixir”.

Jay9 Dance Projects present the amazing automatons in “Wound About”, where life-sized wind-up toys come to life and dance around when audience members are invited to wind them up.

The Larchaud Dance Project will succeed once again in astounding all with their extreme physicality and unstoppable presence imagining what would happen if individuals of the punk movement were to travel back in time to influence the future and formation of society.

“NAGBOT”, described as beat impromptu and superheroes of rhythm, have united into one tribe and will make their way as nomads across the universe taking over one street corner at a time.

Octamerous uses a group choreographic process and presents a site-specific installment entitled “Everything Ordinary”, in which a group of strangers arrive in an alien culture and must learn how to make their way in this new environment.

Prairie Sky presents “Lucy’s Living Room”, which is structured improvisation and a choreographer’s play with words, based around the central idea of urban green space and inspired by a game of Boggle.

r.a.d continue to create relationships with those who are not usually exposed to dance and will perform “Any Woman, Any Time” (four different comical vignettes), which will serve a taste of female etiquette and its evolution over the past century.

The Toronto Aerial Dance will present “Century”; a performance art piece retelling the story of the Junction Triangle in Toronto. Inspiring aerial choreography is woven with innovative modern dance to a back drop of projected images and original visual arts depicting the region.

Veronique Mackenzie’s “Citizens”, inspired by the flash mobbing phenomena, will gather in an undetermined location perform some brief action, and then quickly disperse. As quickly as people realize there is something going on, the performance will have scattered only to reappear somewhere else.

PLEASE NOTE: For more details, artist biographies and updated schedules of all dance/street performance artists and all events please visit www.junctionartsfest.com.

The 2008 Junction Arts Festival will take place along Dundas St. West between Keele St. and Quebec Ave., and will feature free fun and creativity in eight distinct categories; the Visual Art Exhibitions (starting Wednesday, Sept. 3), the Movieola Movie Night (Thursday, Sept. 4), and the outdoor Live Music Stages, the Dance/Street Performance Artists, the Poetry Peepshow, the KidZone, the Green Village, and the Historic City (during the weekend on Saturday, Sept. 6 and Sunday, Sept. 7).

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 The Villager.

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.