

May 7, 2009

10th anniversary of Doors Open Toronto, May 23 and 24

- Free admission to more than 175 buildings

Doors Open Toronto celebrates 10 years, offering its biggest roster of buildings ever and showcasing venues of architectural, historic, cultural and/or social significance - all opening their doors on Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24.

Among the exciting 52 new buildings this year are the retro Shamrock Bowl; Stantec, a high-tech heritage building - former home of MacGregor Socks; and two venues from of the world's oldest fraternity, Toronto West Masonic Temple and Scarborough Masonic Temple, complete with symbolic furniture, art, regalia and secrets. Returning to the roster for the last time before redevelopment is the 1860s Don Jail - the public's most requested Doors Open Toronto building.

Doors Open Toronto marks its 10-year anniversary with the finale of Lit City - Toronto Stories, Toronto Settings, a three-month festival that honours literary writers who find inspiration in Toronto and use the city as a setting in their work.

At Lit City, books meet buildings with site-specific events at Doors Open Toronto buildings. Old City Hall becomes a place of mystery with Robert Rotenberg reading from his popular legal thriller, *Old City Hall*. Anthony De Sa leads a tour through *Little Portugal*, the Toronto setting in his 2008 Giller Prize-nominated book, *Barnacle Love*. Toronto Public Libraries not only showcase their varied architecture but also host events. Young Adult fiction authors Jennifer Cowan, Vivian Meyer and Ellen S. Jaffe will provide insights into Kensington Market at the Lillian H. Smith branch on May 23.

Children will enjoy the wonders of ballet with readings and crafts May 24, including *Prima Ballerina* Veronica Tennant reading from *On Stage Please* at one of Toronto's latest treasures - Canada's National Ballet School.

And throughout the weekend, the comings and goings of Union Station will inspire readings, performances, drama and spontaneous outbreaks of theatre presented by *Diaspora Dialogues*. These events and many more throughout the Doors Open Toronto weekend connect Toronto authors with architecture, and pages with places. More details: www.toronto.ca/litcity

The revitalized Regent Park welcomes visitors on May 24 to its first completed building, where displays tell the story of the entire project and explain green features. Other "green firsts" for Doors Open Toronto 2009 include the Wind Turbine Generator at Exhibition Place, Artscape Wychwood Barns (Christie and St. Clair) and the University of Toronto's Exam Centre, adapted by Montgomery Sisam. Also new on the roster is the Canadian Film Centre - at the Windfields Estate. And the mechanically inclined won't want to miss visiting TTC Eglinton Garage/Division and TTC Greenwood Maintenance Shop, or trying their hand in the operations room on the ship's bridge simulator at Her Majesty's Canadian Ship York near the foot of Bathurst on the lakeshore.

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Popular returning favourites include the breathtaking temple at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir - last year's most popular site, Toronto's Art Deco gem the Carlu at College Park, Kensington Market's pristine 1917 Kiever Synagogue, the Junction's Riwoche Tibetan Buddhist Temple, the Horse Palace at Exhibition Place and several National Historic Sites such as Osgoode Hall, Old City Hall, the Distillery Historic District, and the John Street Roundhouse (with tours of Steam Whistle Brewing). Pre-1834 sites such as Fort York National Historic Site, Black Creek Pioneer Village and Campbell House speak to the 175th anniversary of Toronto.

Doors Open Toronto kicks off on Friday, May 22 with festivities at the Royal Ontario Museum - free admission 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. Join Mayor David Miller and host Mary Ito, CBC Radio One 99.1 FM, at 6 p.m. for 10th anniversary celebrations that begin with middle-eastern music from Maza Meze, Lit City readings and a panel with authors Dionne Brand, Barry Callaghan, Amy Lavender Harris and Paul Quarrington at 6:30 p.m., as well as a concert by Porkbelly Futures at 8 p.m. Attendees can test their Toronto literary knowledge with the possibility of winning great prizes from Open Book Toronto throughout the evening. All museum galleries will be open.

The new Doors Open Toronto Headquarters is located at one of the city's most distinctive landmarks, City Hall (designed by Finnish architect Viljo Revell), 100 Queen St. W., where a spectacular 400-square foot floral installation of more than 15,000 flowers (created by the Garden Club of Toronto) will be on display in the rotunda in honour of Toronto's 175th anniversary. City Hall Headquarters is open Saturday and Sunday, May 23 and 24, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weekend-only public hotline: 416-397-5023

Note: Most buildings are open on one or both days from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with exceptions. Please confirm times for each venue. No pre-registration or tickets are required. See the complete program at www.toronto.ca/doorsopen. The official program guide will be in the Toronto Star on Thursday, May 21.

Doors Open Toronto is produced by the City of Toronto and sponsored by the Toronto Star. Media sponsor: CBC; program sponsor: Woodcliffe.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years, Toronto has won more than 70 awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

Media contacts:

Jane French, Doors Open Toronto and Lit City, 416-338-0496, jfrench@toronto.ca

Vanessa Higgs, Program Development Officer, Cultural Services, 416-338-0045, vhiggs@toronto.ca