



Celebrate Friendship and Understanding at the *21st Annual First Peoples Festival*

Date: Thursday, September 2, 2010

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — This Sunday, the diverse, rich and thriving heritage of Canada's First Peoples will be showcased at the *21st Annual First Peoples Festival* in Spirit Square. This free, family-friendly event will feature over 30 First Nations artists, children's activities, and cultural music and dance performances.

What: 21st Annual First Peoples Festival
When: Sunday, September 5, 2010, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Spirit Square (next to Victoria City Hall)

Sunday's event will kick off at 10 a.m. with a welcome by Bruce Parisian, Executive Director of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and Mayor Dean Fortin, followed by the release of eagle down to officially open the festivities. Eagle down is sacred among many of the First Nations in Canada, and is a symbol of peace.

The *Unity Drummers* will open and close the festival, with a variety of First Nations music and dance performed throughout the day, including long-time festival participant, the *Khowutzun Tzinquaw Dancers* of Cowichan, BC.

The bustling artist market will feature original artworks by native carvers, jewellers, weavers, and Cowichan knitters, as well as traditional practitioners of Aboriginal medicine. Artists will range from internationally renowned Kwaguilth artist Richard Hunt, the first native artist to receive the Order of British Columbia, to Jonathan Todd, a 16 year old Cree country-folk musician from Vancouver who recently published a CD.

Children will have fun participating in face-painting, traditional beading, and land based canoe racing.

The festival aims to create better understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; provide opportunities for the development of Aboriginal leadership in the community; and to encourage open-minded inquiry into the needs of people of Aboriginal ancestry.

The 21st Annual First Peoples Festival is presented by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and the City of Victoria. For more information, visit: www.victoria.ca and click on *What's New?*

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:

Artist Richard Hunt is available for interviews today from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at his studio. To arrange an interview, contact Gail Price-Douglas at 250.361.0358.

— 30 —

For More Information:

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