



The Arts and Heritage in Recreation

Of Special Interest:

- For Information on the Recreation Leadership Diploma program at Langara. See <http://www.langara.bc.ca/management-business/recreation/programs.html>
- Students are introduced to arts programming through hands on engagement.

The role of the arts in recreation has expanded greatly over the past ten years. In addition to the age specific, arts-based workshop model typically offered in recreation centers, community arts programming has extended to include an artist in residency model which engages multi-aged members in collaborative models of art-making processes informed by issues central to their lived lives. This process of community engagement is commonly understood as Community Cultural Development (CCD). The scope and breadth

of the CCD work being developed throughout Canada is as diverse as the community members themselves.

Artist and community collaborations require a different kind of infrastructure to sustain a project than a 12 week workshop model in a recreation facility. As noted by Lata Pada of Sampradaya Dance Creations;

"the effort that is required in building relationship with a community organization and a group of people to develop a project can

be daunting, and must be approached with sensitivity and patience...An artist working in community needs to have the tenacity, perseverance and conviction that this work is important." (1)

Often these projects continue over a sustained period of time, involve any number of diverse community members, are created through multi-disciplinary approaches, require specific funding, facilities and a well intended, committed, facilitator and artist(s). The artistic form varies with each project,



2000 Views of Strathcona: is an example of an art-piece that resulted through a Community Cultural Development Project funded through the City of Vancouver Parks Board and Strathcona Community Center.

The turn of the millennium inspired neighborhood artist Martin Borden to celebrate Strathcona by creating an unusual mosaic of small photo "tiles" suspended on wall hooks. Designed as a dynamic reflection of Strathcona's history, culture and ongoing change, the text and digital images of the composition reflect the idea of diversity within the community.

including; theatre, dance, visual arts, music, spoken word, hip hop and media arts, just to mention a few. In this ever-expanding approach, however, not only is the development potential and benefits for community recognized in the field of recreation, it is attracting attention from other disciplines; from urban planning to health care to popular education and research.

Closer to home, it is noticeable how this current trend has influenced program development in Recreation Centers in Vancouver. Often, workshops and classes link to ongoing artist collaborative project such as, *lantern making*, for the Winter Solstice Festival hosted by the Roundhouse Community Centre in Vancouver. This festival brings together over 3000 community members to mark the astronomical beginning of winter through a lantern lit procession on the banks of False Creek; to smaller intimate pieces that involve community members in performance pieces, such as *Take a Breath*. This multi dimensional theatre piece attempted to build community onstage by 25 community members who answered the question 'What is important to you?' through minute

long, physical creative expression. In this community work it is not only the 'end-product' that determines the success but rather, it is in the relationships that are built through the creative process.

"The art is in the relationship, which is what I think is meant when artist's insist that the process of community engaged art is just as or more important than the product. This doesn't mean that there is no final artist product. The initial impulse to do this work is an aesthetic impulse to connect with a particular community to explore and create something together." (2)

In the Arts and Heritage class that I currently teach in the Recreation Leadership Diploma program at Langara, the objective is for students to become familiar with the spectrum of arts programming offered in the field of recreation. Not only do we investigate the burgeoning artist and community collaborative approach; students are introduced to the vast and growing range of classes offered as a leisure choice. We look at programming in relationship to targeting specific groups such as; youth at risk, after school programming, seniors in the afternoon,

to parents and tots in the morning. This intention guides programming towards meaning and relevancy for that specific community group led by qualified instructors who understand their disciplines and the developmental age groups they are teaching.

Students are introduced to arts programming through; hands on engagement with art-making processes, hearing from guest speakers who are leaders in the field of community cultural development including artists, administrators and facilitators, to attending live collaborative art events in the community. The goal of this class is to instill and enhance recreation students' value for the arts in our society and the role it plays in developing healthy communities for which they will be responsible in the near future.

Cyndy Chwelos, Instructor,
Arts and Heritage in
Recreation Service

References:

(1) (2) McGauley. Laurie,
Imagine; An external Review of the Canada Council for the Arts', Artist and Community Collaboration Fund, 2006, pg.14.

Retrieved October 2007,
http://www.canadacouncil.ca/NR/rdonlyres/6966C549-4266-44D5-84F8-9C58582AD90B/0/ACCF_Review.doc

First Year Outdoor Field School

This year's Outdoor Field School, which was held from September 24th-27th, saw 24 first-year Recreation Leadership students head out to Chilliwack for a great adventure. The trip was led by Pinnacle Pursuits, a local outdoor adventure company that specializes in team building. The students were divided into two groups, and spent the first day at a "base camp" learning the basics about packing a 50-pound backpack, doing some team building exercises and a leadership assessment, and basically figuring out how they were going to survive in the great outdoors for the next three days! The following day they set out, hiking in opposite directions around a loop from Lindeman Lake to Greendrop Lake, ending at Flora Lake. Halfway through the second day, the groups met up at the middle point of the trail for a very chatty lunch, where each warned the other of what lay ahead. The terrain changed often, and the students hiked through everything from lush, old-growth forests to immense boulder fields to alpine shrubs along a steep ridge with breathtaking views of the valley below. In fact, at times the views were so stunning that it seemed we were lost in the Himalayas, and



Backpack: Jeremy thought Michelle couldn't weigh more than his backpack - so he dumped out his stuff and tested his theory!

not hiking in our own Chilliwack River Valley!

The Outdoor Field School is an integral part of the RECR 1162 course, Direct Leadership in Recreation, as well as an important part of the overall Recreation Leadership program. Some of the learning outcomes for the trip include building community, challenging adversity, experiencing direct leadership from others and participating in leading oneself, and demonstrating active play in an outdoor environment. I think it's fair to say that these outcomes were met after spending four days outside together, as the students supported and pushed each other to achieve what some thought wasn't even possible at the outset of the trip. The students rose to the challenge, despite

long days, rainy weather, and trails that were very difficult at times. In reflecting on the trip, one student commented that, "I learned that when things get hard, I can push through physical and mental strain and come out of the experience stronger". Another said that, "this experience has taught me that we can count on each other and we will make it through the next two years with each other's support". Another student found that "being outdoors was just amazing and really gave me a chance to open up and learn so many new things about myself and nature." As their instructor, I went along on the trip as a participant and a support, and I was really proud of how the students each stepped outside of their comfort zones and pushed



Ridge: The students hiked straight up this ridge for 8 hours - all on the first day! (At least they saw a bear). 4) Summit: Jesse, Witten, Tom and Andrew show us their pipes at the highest point of the trip - Flora Peak.



The Summit: A job well done!

themselves into new territory. It was so interesting to see all the different levels of challenge throughout the group; for some, the hiking itself was challenging, while for others, the challenge came from being in such close proximity to others for such a long time, with no personal space or time. Yet others had fears to overcome: the fear of wild animals, the fear of being away from friends and family, and simply the fear of the unknown. What was so beautiful about this experience, for me, was witnessing each student wrestling with their particular challenge, only to discover, by the end of the trip, that they were stronger than they had originally thought they were. I believe that



Lindeman Lake: The "Facesavers" at the beautiful Lindeman Lake.

this experience will be one that the students will be able to reference often in their lives and in their journeys as recreation leaders, as they come to see just how resourceful, capable

and strong they really are.

Shannon Wall, Instructor,
Direct Leadership in
Recreation

Update on the Bachelor of Recreation Management Degree

The Bachelor of Recreation Management (BRM) degree completion program underwent an external review in early September and came through the process with flying colors. We expect to receive official approval from the Advanced Education Department Minister, in the next couple of months.

In anticipation of receiving this approval, Langara will be offering two degree level courses beginning in January. These are RECR 3260 Managing Cultural Programming in the Community and BUSM 2200 Organizational Behavior. Both will be offered fully-on-line.

To be added to our listserv and receive information and updates on the BRM degree, please email: recreation@langara.bc.ca

RecWeb Site Update

RecWeb is a website maintained by the Recreation Department at Langara College. www.langara.bc.ca/recweb

The purpose of the site is to help people stay connected with the two-year Recreation Leadership Diploma Program. It offers a chance for people to post job and volunteer positions which are open to our students and also practitioners who are working in the recreation field. There is also a page that highlights possible Internship opportunities for second year students doing their Internships in the spring. We welcome you to send in any job or volunteer positions that you wish to post on the site by emailing them to: recreation@langara.bc.ca

We are also trying to build a continuing relationship with our grads from the program. We are encouraging our grads to send in any class group photos which are not currently on the site as lasting memory of their time at the college. Also, we are collecting emails from grads as we continue to grow our email data base. Any past grads wishing to make contact with us can do so by emailing: recreation@langara.bc.ca