

THE RIDEAU CANAL FESTIVAL...NOT ONLY UNIQUE IN ONTARIO — IT'S ONLY IN OTTAWA

(Ottawa, July 26, 2011)

The Rideau Canal Festival opens at 11AM Thursday July 28 at Confederation Park on Laurier Avenue. Now in its 4th year, the Festival is bigger, better and bursting with more art, entertainment and heritage events than ever before. Keeping within its original theme, the Rideau Canal Festival celebrates Ontario's only World Heritage site, with a cornucopia of new and original activities combined with past year favourites, listed at www.rideaucanalfestival.ca.

A \$20 festival passport (valued at \$100) buys unlimited access to Confederation Park and Bytown Museum sites. Daily passes are \$5 and after 6PM, it's \$10 to get in to the Park. Featured this year are giant interactive art installations at Canal ART, entitled Connections where local artists display their views and perspectives of the importance of the Rideau Canal.

The World Heritage Stage, also in Confederation Park, is a tribute to the Canal Builders every night with performances from Yvan Vonné, Herringbone, and Searson. Monday will feature the Festival's first Rideau Canal Song Sing-Along with Robin Averill and honorary Choir Master Max Keeping.

The festival abounds with activities for children from teaching them about Ottawa's World Heritage site and how to protect and preserve it to getting them involved in understanding the importance of World Heritage sites around the globe. Lots of activities take place at the Bytown Museum, with Colonel By Celebrations on Monday August 1.

On a more funky and upscale note, new to our city, the festival features the very first Bicycle Chic Fashion Show, hosted by celebrity fashion writer Julie Beun, writer and news editor for People magazine. Beun has covered everything from the latest celebrity fashion to serial murders. She's also been health editor at Family Circle and now writes for Canadian Living, Homemakers' magazine, Reader's Digest and the PostMedia Network.

Back by popular demand, is the Ecosphere Environmental Fair with more than 30 green exhibitors. This event speaks directly to the festival "Aim-for-Zero" footprint objective.

In the spirit of interactive art, and in partnership with Chamberfest, the festival launches this year the Waterway Soundfaire where participants can bring a musical instrument and join in. Some are also available on site Under the Plaza Bridge.

On Thursday July 28, hosted by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the World Heritage Stage features UN International Youth Year with local young talent. Featured artists are: Fresh Beat, Riot Police and White Wires.