


CANADIAN
MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION



ASSOCIATION
DES MUSÉES
CANADIENS

MUSE

11-12 / 2008 • vol. XXVI / 6

RETROSPECTIVE

FRED HERZOG: VANCOUVER PHOTOGRAPHS

RÉTROSPECTIVE

FRED HERZOG : PHOTOGRAPHIES DE VANCOUVER

SUS STOP
3 MAIN
5 FRASER
8 KINGSMO
12 KNIGHT



\$7.00



Museum Learning

NaMu: international network of museum researchers

Éducation / Innovation

NaMu : le réseau mondial des chercheurs en muséologie

THE VOICE OF CANADA'S MUSEUM COMMUNITY • MUSE • LA VOIX DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ MUSÉALE CANADIENNE

CULTURE

Celebrating British Columbia's unique cultural footprints

The BC Cultural Crawl

Christina Crook



Christina Crook is the editor of the Arts & Cultural Guide to BC, you can write to her at: christina.m.crook@gmail.com



Every community has its own unique cultural footprint. From the seaside creations of the Cabot Trail to the artisan wineries of the Okanagan, Canada is a cultural masterpiece.

It's with this in mind that British Columbian gallery owner and cultural advocate Trudy Van Dop fostered the vision for the first province-wide cultural celebration of BC: the *BC Cultural Crawl*. With over twenty years' involvement in BC's tourism industry, Van Dop has been a tireless promoter of the viability of arts and culture within the tourism sector.

In 2002, the first *BC Cultural Crawl* was launched in tandem with the last August long weekend, the BC Day celebrations.

Left: A close-up view of a Traditional Wood Mask. Photo: Courtesy Tourism Association of Vancouver Island.

The Concept

The *BC Cultural Crawl* is a celebration hosted by a mix of artists and business owners reflecting the diversity of the region in which they live. "The Crawl is committed to 'training the spotlight' on the arts, culture and heritage of the province," explains Van Dop.

The Crawl includes community-initiated musical, theatrical and dance performances, visual arts displays in galleries and artist studios, festivals and events, museums and heritage sites, cultural centres, wineries, art-walks, tours, restaurants and cafés, agricultural explorations, and even kosher bicycle tours.

Greg Robinson, with the Jewish Museum of BC, shares his first experience coordinating a BC Cultural Crawl event:

"Last August I experienced something like on-the-job nirvana when I took the lead on a series of guided bicycle tours of Jewish restaurants, bakeries and delis. In early June I had received a call for submissions to the *Annual BC Cultural Crawl*. I had already considered doing a Jewish restaurant tour, but doing the tour on bicycles was a fantasy that I had not even dared to share with my boss. Once I had dreamed up the perfect title of *Tour de Blintz*, though, how could I not run with it? I called up my friends at the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition and ask them if they wanted to join forces. They were instantly enthusiastic... It was an incredibly positive experience working with the BC Cultural Crawl and we plan to be active in perpetuity."

The Success Story

In February 2008, the BC Cultural Crawl won Best Tourism Marketing Campaign at the 9th Annual British Columbia Tourism Awards. The award recognizes a tourism organization for their success in launching an innovative marketing campaign to increase business and enhance the tourism industry in British Columbia.

The BC Cultural Crawl won thanks to their highly successful 8-week marketing campaign which included: province-wide advertising, grass-roots organizing and a dedicated website, www-art-bc.com. This resulted in over 70 communities participating and media coverage that reached over 2 million people. In just three years, the BC Cultural Crawl has grown from 20 to over 70 participating communities.

The Keys

The BC Cultural Crawl office has received tremendous interest from tourism, municipal, and cultural leaders across the nation who were interested in using the BC Cultural Crawl and its Ambassador Toolkit as a model for their respective communities. From St. John's to Labrador to the Yukon, inquiries came from organizations and communities looking to find a vehicle to showcase and combine tourism with their strong cultural inventories.



Peter Kiss sculptures, Peter Kiss Gallery, Granville Island, Vancouver BC.



Pavement Art in BC. Photo: Courtesy Tourism of Victoria.

This is what we shared with them:

- **Establish** your community's Cultural Crawl team and assign each member a specific leadership role.
- **List** the organizations you would like to include. Contact them by letter, email or phone inviting them to participate. Draft an itinerary; it helps to find a central starting point in the community and work from there.
- **Think** of local groups and organizations (Arts Council, Tourism Association, Chamber of Commerce, Cultural Department, BIA, City Parks & Recreation) that may be able to contribute financially.
- **Think** outside the box! You can include festivals, events and performances that are already taking place in August. Involve as many local businesses as possible (B&B's, restaurants, shops or attractions).
- **Plan** different ways to attract visitors, i.e. door prizes, performances, giveaways, workshops, etc.
- **Invite** local media to promote the event. It's their job to convey the information to their audience, so make sure you show them your event is newsworthy.
- **Plan** for staff and volunteers you may need. Use neighbourhood letters or organize community meetings to recruit people. Volunteers with graphic design and writing skills can be invaluable in creating professional and attractive material.
- **Choose** effective marketing vehicles to ensure people know about the event, get excited about it, and most importantly, attend.

Ultimately, the most important key is to put the **power** in the **community's** hands. **M**



One of the BC Cultural Crawl tours held at the Vancouver art Gallery. Photo: Tomas Svolo, VAG.

Celebrate Culture in your province:

Alberta : Alberta Arts Day, September 6, 2009,

<http://culture.alberta.ca/artsday>

Quebec: Les Journées de la culture, September 25-27, 2009,

www.journesdelaculture.qc.ca