



## **ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH FESTIVAL 2013**

### **CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR ASIAN CULTURE (CENTRAL ONTARIO) INC.**

The Canadian Foundation for Asian Culture (Central Ontario) Inc. has been playing a crucial role in promoting Asian Heritage Month in Central Ontario in the past nine years. Asian Heritage Month was unanimously adopted by the Senate through a motion by our founding patron, The Honourable Dr. Vivienne Poy. Representatives of the Parliament subsequently signed a declaration proclaiming Asian Heritage Month in May, 2002 following the passage of her motion in the Senate in December, 2001, recognizing May as Asian Heritage Month. In 2005, The Government of Ontario made the same proclamation at Queen's Park.

Asian Heritage Month promotes Canada's diversity. It strives to celebrate the vibrant and growing Asian community from the arts and science to sport, business, and government. This initiative offers all Canadians an opportunity to learn more about the history of Asian Canadians and to celebrate their contributions to the growth and prosperity of Canada. The objectives of our foundation are:

- 1) To advance education by providing artistic exhibitions and educational presentations about Asian culture at museums, educational institutions, community centres, and other venues that are open to the general public.
- 2) To develop programs that remove barriers to equal participation for racial and ethnic minorities through educational presentations about Asian culture.
- 3) To advance education by providing scholarships, bursaries and awards to high school and post-secondary students in the greater Toronto area.
- 4) To provide equipment, furnishings, teaching aids, and supplies to educational institutions in Canada and to educational institutions outside Canada who are also qualified donees under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada), with preference to educational institutions in Central Ontario.

We began in 2003 to reach out to the public, especially students in the Greater Toronto Area. We invited them to participate in two parallel competitions – design an official logo and a slogan for Asian Heritage Month.

In 2004, AHM celebrates 150 years of volunteerism by the Royal Hong Kong Regiment. The photo exhibition was opened in a popular mall, frequented by Asians and other Canadians alike, by Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson. We also held a choral competition among High Schools. The University of Toronto held lectures and there were many other activities.

In 2005, AHM took a leap towards greater recognition and participation by Society-at-large. The Toronto Catholic District School Board, The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Queen's Park, The University of Toronto, The United Way of York Region, among others, supported AHM

in various projects. It was during this summer that AHM received our incorporation from the Registrar of Ontario Corporation under the name of Canadian Foundation for Asian Culture (Central Ontario) Incorporated – CFACI in short.

In 2006, our journey to Multiculturalism gained significant advances. The Toronto District School Board, the TTC, University of Toronto, United Way, The Blue Jays, The Toronto Public Library and the Bata Shoe Museum, among others, were our partners to promote this national programme.

In 2007, AHM reached maturity, with events held territory-wide in Toronto, and spread from there to Oakville and other cities in Ontario. Our partners include the University of Toronto, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, the TTC, United Way, The Toronto Public Library, the Bata Shoe Museum, and Foundation to Commemorate the Chinese Railroad Workers in Canada.

In 2008, Asian Heritage Month found its artistic mission. Focusing on “Inclusive Education Through the Asian Arts,” the Asian Heritage Month Festival was held in May with Canadian Heritage funding and City of Toronto support. The highlights include a performance by Asian Artists and a Marketplace at the University of Toronto, attended by more than 100 high school students and other members of the public, followed by the Fourth Annual Asian Heritage Month Education Roundtable. There were Asian Photo and Art Exhibitions at City Hall Rotunda and Metro Hall Rotunda, and the first ever Asian Heritage Month Film Festival held at York University.

In 2009, with Toronto Arts Council and Canadian Heritage funding, Asian Heritage Month was able to present two big initiatives. First is the “Virtual Museum of Asian Canadian Cultural Heritage” (VMACCH) at <http://www.asianheritagemonth.org> and <http://www.vmacch.ca> showcasing the artistic expressions of Asian Canadian cultural heritage. Second is the 2009 Asian Heritage Month Festival featuring performances by Asian Canadian professional artists, art and photo exhibitions at City Hall and Metro Hall, a Film Festival and lectures.

In 2010, with funding from Canadian Heritage, Asian Heritage Month presented the 2010 Asian Heritage Month Festival featuring an education roundtable entitled "Asian-Canadian Collaboration in Education: Pathways of Enrichment", gala performances by Asian Canadian professional artists, art and photo exhibitions at City Hall Rotunda and Metro Hall Rotunda, a Film Festival and lectures.

In 2011, with funding from Canadian Heritage, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, the Asian Heritage Month Festival was held successfully. The highlights include an Education Roundtable entitled “Enlarging the Educational Discourse: Lessons for Canada from Educational Reforms in Hong Kong, China and India”, gala performances by Asian Canadian professional artists, art and photo exhibitions at City Hall Rotunda and Metro Hall Rotunda, a Film Festival, Asian Heritage Month Lectures, and the first ever Asian Heritage Month National Videoconference Toronto.

In 2012, with funding from Canadian Heritage, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Ontario Arts Council, University of Toronto and York University, Asian Heritage Month Festival offers a large range of events: an Education Roundtable entitled “Asian Canadian Studies: Theories, Politics, Pedagogies”, Pan Asian Celebration at Toronto Public Library featuring keynote speech by Senator Poy on “A Decade of Achievements: Celebrating Asian Canadian Heritage”, gala performances by Asian Canadian professional artists with keynote speech by Professor Chan Ka Nin, art and photo exhibitions at City Hall Rotunda and Metro Hall Rotunda, a Film Festival, Asian Heritage Month Lectures, and the Asian Heritage Month National Videoconference Toronto.

In 2013, with funding from Canadian Heritage, Asian Heritage Month Festival features Asian Heritage Month Lecture by Joy Kogawa, Asian Heritage Month Education Roundtable on the theme "Youth, Identity and Asian Heritage" with Plenary Address by Donna Quan, Director, Toronto District School Board; Book Launch of The Honourable Dr. Vivienne Poy's new book "Passage to Promise Land" Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women to Canada," Chinese Cultural Festivals at Toronto Public Library, art and photo exhibitions at City Hall Rotunda and Metro Hall Rotunda, and a Gala Performance of Asian Canadian Artists at Bata Shoe Museum.

Our web-site is <http://www.asian-heritage-month.org> and the Virtual Museum of Asian Canadian Cultural Heritage can be found at <http://www.vmacch.ca>.



## **ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH FESTIVAL 2011**

Asian Heritage Month Festival is a month-long event taking place in May 2011. It aims at creating a powerful sense of inclusion connecting the Asian community to the rest of Canada, promoting understanding and tolerance, and encouraging self-expression among participants through participating in various artistic events, such as music, dance, theatre, visual arts and storytelling. It provides an opportunity to engage professional artists of Asian Canadian descent and general community members in active dialogue. Exploring and comparing their ethnic cultural heritage through the arts, participants can discover commonalities and understand differences, eventually working out their roles and identity in multicultural Canada and be better equipped to face challenges such as increasing diversity in Toronto resulting from neo-liberal economic globalization and transnational migrations.

The Festival will include art and photo exhibitions, performances, an education roundtable focusing on bringing Asian arts and artists to the school community, a public lecture featuring a leading Asian Canadian artist, a film festival for youths and seniors, and demonstrations and exhibition of Asian art at the museums. There is also a prominent outreach element connecting the Asian Canadian artists to underprivileged groups in Toronto such as youths, seniors, and disabled people. Besides holding performances and exhibitions at various public locations throughout Toronto, artists will also go to youths and seniors home to make Asian Canadian arts accessible to these groups. The artists will collaborate with local community groups in the organization of these activities. Disabled youths will also be brought to the events to enable them to participate and share Asian arts and heritage.