



MEDIA RELEASE

Ontario's Ministry of Tourism Provides Event Funding to 2009 IlluminAqua Production



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Welland – The Welland Recreational Canal Corp (WRCC) is very pleased to announce that IlluminAqua is one of the recipients of event funding from the Ministry of Tourism's Celebrate Ontario 2009 Funding Program. The Ministry is contributing \$67,500 to bolster enhancement concepts planned for IlluminAqua.

In a release from Minister of Tourism, Monique Smith, the Minister stated "our government recognizes the economic impact that festivals and events have on local communities throughout the province. By enabling community events to improve their product, we are helping them reach new audiences, create more jobs and generate more economic activity."

"We applaud the McGuinty Government and the Ministry of Tourism on identifying the need for investment and upgrades to both events of distinction and community based festivals and events", suggested Bob Mahler, WRCC Chair. "Locally we aim to deliver an international caliber celebration of the Arts to our own community and do so in such a unique way that we are an attractor to visitors from around and those visiting the Niagara Region."

The completion of the Merritt Park Amphitheatre is slated for the launch of the 2009 IlluminAqua ~ Arts & Culture Series and is an exciting peripheral enhancement to the community and the production. IlluminAqua enhancements planned for 2009 include upgrades to the firepods, expansion of music programming and cultural content, increase to a minimum of seven evenings starting June 12th and the introduction of additional water elements. "We are very happy to have been identified for upper tier funding and also that Welland City Council continues to demonstrate support for IlluminAqua through our own budgeting process. It provides a clear indication to upper tier levels of government that the City of Welland is committed to Arts & Culture Tourism," suggested Stephen Fischer, WRCC Business Manager & Creative Director of IlluminAqua.

IlluminAqua is scheduled for Friday evenings, starting at dusk ~ June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7, August 21 and September 4. Further information will be made available online at www.illuminaqua.com.

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