

NEWS RELEASE

April 10, 2008

KHC, Art Gallery of Golden, and a Brand-New "Studio Gift Shop" to Open in New Premises



The Board of Kicking Horse Culture (Golden) confirms today that the arts council will be moving its offices and the Art Gallery of Golden (AGOG) into new premises at 516 9th Ave. N. (the old Golden Flower Shop) starting on June 1, 2008. The 1800 sq. foot storefront will enable KHC to open a Studio Gift Shop as an adjunct to AGOG's ongoing public art exhibitions.

"The arts council has experienced steady growth since 2004," says Executive Director, Bill Usher, "and all along the way we've been working with local studio artists and artisans to see how we can better represent their efforts. The Art Gallery of Golden was the first step and now this new location will give us the space to display and sell the work of local and regional artists year round."

The KHC Board convened an advisory panel in September 2006 to look at how the arts council could better serve visual artists and artisans. A dedicated, high profile, professional gallery emerged as the number one priority. When the old Bacchus Books location at 506B 9th Ave. N. came up for rent a couple of months later, KHC made the move and in February of 2007, opened the Art Gallery of Golden with the inaugural exhibit by Cheryl Bartram entitled *We've Come A Long Way, Baby?* Subsequent exhibits featured artists William Pitcher, Nelli Tobler, David Low, Jane Tevelein-Doel, Mike McPhee, Lee Bedford among many. Last summer's *Adventurers & Settlers* exhibit drew more than 2,300 visitors.

John Jackson, Treasurer of the KHC Board and owner of Jackson Hardware, notes, "The Board has been working on this possibility for a number of months and we have vetted various business plans to ensure the move is feasible and sustainable. We project that once the new venture becomes established, the gallery and gift shop will become a great economic driver conservatively generating more than \$200,000 per annum in sales for our artists and artisans."

Caleb Moss, co-chair of KHC and owner of Bacchus Books, says, "With my experience on the Official Community Plan committee, I know this new venture fits right in with future plans for the town and is exactly the kind of new retail initiative we need for 9th Ave."

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Local architect and fellow member of the OCP committee and KHC Board member, Len Brown, agrees, "The old Flower Shop location is perfectly situated for the new AGOG and Studio Gift Shop. We're working with the owner to create a 'heritage' façade to both the front and back of the building and hope to draw attention to Golden's historical past with a mural on the side wall facing the CIBC's parkette."

In the last 20 years, nonprofits have increasingly looked to earning money as a means of supporting their operations. The common motivation has been the continued ability of the nonprofit organization to better fulfill Mission and services.

Ken Hoepfner, KHC co-chair notes, "The great vision and leadership of the elected officials and staff of the Town and Rural Golden has given KHC the operational capacity to develop our range of cultural services delivery to the Golden community. Now, we've grown to the stage where can start to look at increasing our earned revenues to further that operational sustainability."

KHC already contributes significantly to the local economy leveraging more than \$300,000 in provincial and federal funds over the past two years to support homegrown initiatives. Norm Macdonald, MLA Columbia-Revelstoke, rose in the Legislature last week to commend Kicking Horse Culture on the recent congratulations delivered to KHC by Stan Hagen, Minister, Tourism, Sports, Arts. Mr. Macdonald said, "The community arts advisory committee, which is a provincial body, recently commended Kicking Horse Culture for its range of arts practices and for its culturally diverse offerings."

He went on to speak to the crucial role arts councils play in communities around the province, "The opportunities arts councils provide to people to express themselves creatively, to enjoy high-quality performances and exhibitions and to have communities come together are critically important. I ask the Legislature to join me in showing that we appreciate and salute their efforts."

Kicking Horse Culture will soon be reaching out to local and regional Basin artists and artisans to display and sell their wares in the Studio Gift Shop.

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For further information, please contact Bill Usher, Executive Director
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Board of Kicking Horse Culture: Ken Hoepfner and Caleb Moss (co-chairs), John Jackson (secretary-treasurer), Joyce Priest, Kay deBoer, Mike McPhee, Barry Johnson, Maggie Calladine, Len Brown.

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