



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Second Year Partnership Between VanDusen Botanical Garden and MusicFest Vancouver Hits All the Right Notes

Vancouver, BC – **MusicFest Vancouver** (formerly Festival Vancouver) is renewing its production partnership with one of North America's most beautiful public gardens this August to offer music fans three high profile outdoor concerts and a special new daytime event for children and families. For the second year in a row, **VanDusen Botanical Garden** will be the site for the festival's series of outdoor world music concerts called **World at the Garden**. The new daytime event, called **Music in the Garden: Family Day** is the latest programming component to be created by the popular international music festival, running from **August 2 – 16** this year.

2008 was the inaugural partnership for the two parties, and both had high expectations of success. Those expectations were surpassed last year as thousands of Vancouver residents and visitors flocked to the Garden's Great Lawn for three evenings of beautiful music provided by performers from Europe, South and Central America. "It was such a natural progression for MusicFest Vancouver to take some of its evening performances out into the beautiful summer nights", explains Morna Edmundson, the festival's Administrative Director. "VanDusen Botanical Garden was the perfect spot, and both of us are very enthusiastic about the synergies of our partnership."

This year's World at the Garden Series stretches out to the Caribbean Islands and reconnects with Brazil and Finland, offering a trio of shows that will please a wide range of musical tastes plus music fans of all ages.

August 12 – Caribbean Rhythms: One of the world's most talented steelpan drummers is coming to the festival to play with a who's who of local jazz instrumentalists. Steelpan virtuoso **Liam Teague** was born in Trinidad and now maintains a vibrant touring and teaching career from his home base in Chicago. He'll be joined by outstanding Vancouver percussionist **Sal Ferreras**, multi-instrumentalist **Celso Machado**, **Tom Keenleyside** (sax), **Rich Brown** (bass), **Elliot Polsky** (drums) and pianist **Chris Gestrin**.

August 15 – Fabiana Cozza: The festival is strengthening its connections with the Brazilian music scene with a programming coup: the North American debut of the captivating São Paulo singer and entertainer **Fabiana Cozza**. Cozza comes from the samba-Afro Caribbean musical camp, and she's a mesmerizing force of nature onstage. She's bringing her own four-piece band, featuring *cavaquinho*, acoustic guitar, bass and percussion and together they'll be an ideal musical companion for a warm summer night.

August 16 – Closing Night: Rajaton: The immensely-popular *a cappella* ensemble **Rajaton** will be making its fourth visit to the Festival in as many years, in response to a fast-growing and committed Vancouver fan base that can't seem to see and hear enough of these super-talented Finnish singers. Rajaton's signature sound is complex and original harmonies, along with an uncanny ability to create the sound of a tight backup band when it's only the singers' voices you're hearing. Classic Rajaton repertoire ranges from Beatles favourites and ABBA hits to traditional Finnish music; expect new songs taken from the latest Queen tribute CD.

World at the Garden ticket holders will be admitted to VanDusen on concert evenings starting at 5:30 pm, to allow pre-concert viewing of the Garden in its summertime prime. Seating on the Great Lawn will be exclusively festival-style, and no chairs are provided. There will however be low lawn chairs available for purchase.

MusicFest at VanDusen Botanical Garden – 2

Ticket holders should bring either a low lawn chair (up to 8" high legs) or a blanket to sit on. Regular-height lawn chairs will be assigned to side areas of the Lawn. Snacks will be available for purchase at the site, and a special pre-concert dinner at *Shaughnessy Restaurant* is also being offered on concert evenings - call 604-261-0011 for reservations.

Music in the Garden: Family Day is the newest entertainment project to be co-presented by the festival and the Garden and on **Sunday August 16** (10 am to 3 pm) it will bring music to life on the Great Lawn in the form of a music and environmental 'green village'. This is an event designed to allow families and kids to roam about an informal, natural setting where they can experience and explore music in a variety of ways. Site performers range from musicians to acrobats, and there will be performances featuring aerial work, acrobatics, juggling and music by the **Tickle Trunk Touring Circus**. There will also be face-painting stations, an interactive drumming circle, and – a special treat for the kids – the **Tom Lee Musical Instrument Petting Zoo** where they can actually see how instruments are played from an intimate, up-close perspective. This event is free with the regular Garden admission price, and there are reduced prices for children, youth and family groups. Children under 6 are admitted free.

VanDusen Botanical Garden's commitment to hosting premier arts events and performances reaches back to the Garden's opening in 1975. Over the years VanDusen has played host to concerts by the VSO, various jazz and chamber ensembles, the popular Garden Show Entertainment Stage as well as numerous smaller performances and art exhibits. As well as MusicFest Vancouver's events, it's hosting a series of in-house concerts and presentations in 2009; full details are on the Garden website.

The *World at the Garden Series* and *Music in the Garden: Family Day* are sponsored by Marsh Mercer, with media sponsorship from CTV. The evening series receives additional support from Grant Thornton LLP, Scotiabank and Axa Pacific. The festival is also grateful for special one-time funding from the City of Vancouver's *Host a City Happening* program.

Full evening concert details are on the festival's website – visit www.musicfestvancouver.ca. Tickets for all three **World at the Garden** concerts can be purchased through **Ticketmaster** at **604.280.3311** or online at **Ticketmaster.ca**, and are on sale now. Tickets to **Music in the Garden: Family Day** can be purchased at the Garden in advance, or on the day of the event - August 16.

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