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**CULTURE QUEST IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT CANADA WINTER GAMES**

WHITEHORSE – More than half of the artistic works created from 2003 to 2007 through the Culture Quest program will be onstage or presented in Whitehorse galleries during the 2007 Canada Winter Games Cultural Festival, announced Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor.

“Yukoners take pride in their unique northern Canadian culture,” Taylor said. “Culture Quest has encouraged active participation in social, cultural, economic and community projects that benefit Yukoners and visitors alike. I urge everyone to experience this multi-faceted, multi-talented northern legacy during the Canada Winter Games.”

Culture Quest projects include music and song, dance and theatre, photography and literary expression created by youth, First Nations and Yukon communities to encourage creative expression and celebrate what makes life in the Yukon distinct. Yukon government has provided Culture Quest with \$157,000 annually for the past four years.

“The cultural program is an important element of the Canada Winter Games as it provides our athletes and visitors the opportunity to experience our northern culture and friendship,” said Canada Winter Games President Piers McDonald. “These creative voices will be showcased at the opening and closing ceremonies, the festival venues, the National Artist Program and ancillary games events for a national audience.”

“Some of the most creative and compelling art created over the past four years started with seed money from Culture Quest,” said Yukon Arts Centre Executive Director Chris Dray. “The program has supported much of the original programming seen at events such as Canada Winter Games Cultural Festival, Gathering of Northern Nations, Longest Days Street Fair and Art Equinox Festival. The next big goal for the program is the creation of great programming by young northern artists at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.”

Culture Quest was initiated under the Decade of Sport and Culture and developed as a strategic initiative with the Yukon Arts Centre managing the program on behalf of the Department of Tourism and Culture. To learn more about the program, visit the Yukon Arts Centre website at [www.yukonartscentre.com](http://www.yukonartscentre.com) and follow the link to *Culture Quest at the Games*.

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