NEWS RELEASE / COMMUNIQUÉ

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WILKINSON ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR ARTS & CULTURE IN PERTH COUNTY
Province Strengthens Creative and Economic Growth

Stratford - Ontario is helping Perth-Wellington further develop culture and heritage as a key part of their economic development and growth plans, John Wilkinson, MPP, Perth-Wellington announced today at Gallery Stratford.

“Together, local partners will receive $50,000 through the Cultural Strategic Investment Fund to use 21st century digital tools to enrich our local culture and drive economic growth,” stated Wilkinson. “By strengthening creativity, cultural planning and heritage, we help make Perth-Wellington a great place to live, work and visit.”

With the province’s support, an important local cultural digital media arts programme that will focus on increasing education and access to art and culture, will be launched in the region.

- Stratford Digital Arts Programme Winter 2012: will develop a digital visual arts programme - creating a hub for community and international practitioners of the digital arts.

“Gallery Stratford is very pleased to collaborate with our partners in tourism, education, the municipality, and technology to launch an innovative digital project for Winter 2012. With the support of the Province, this dynamic initiative will bring together art and technology to engage new audiences and cultivate creativity,” said Zhe Gu, Executive Director, Gallery Stratford.

“The STA is pleased to be a partner with the Gallery, City Centre Committee, the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus and the City in transforming our heritage character into an outdoor digital art space for the community and visitors through this exciting innovative programme.” said Eugene Zakreski, Executive Director, The Stratford Tourism Alliance.”

“The marriage of creativity and technology is at the heart of the University of Waterloo Stratford Campus,” said Tobi Day-Hamilton, Director Advancement at the Waterloo Stratford Campus. “This project will be an extraordinary example of community partnerships that drive innovation in digital art and performance.”
“This investment by the Province brings together the cultural elements of the arts, our architecture and our creativity with a new emphasis on digital media, strengthening our tourism future,” said Dan Mathieson, Mayor of the City of Stratford.

Supporting growth in the cultural sector is part of the government’s plan to create and protect new and existing jobs for Ontario families and strengthen local economies.

“The province is helping to build vibrant communities by supporting programs and services that help communities achieve economic and creative growth. Our cultural sector enhances our lives every day and contributes greatly to the social and economic development of this province,” stated Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Support for this local project is provided through the Cultural Strategic Investment Fund (CSIF) at: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/awards_funding/csif_fund.shtml. This year these funds have supported 151 important cultural projects across the province. Culture is one of Ontario’s fastest growing sectors, employing over 200,000 people and contributing approximately $20 billion annually to Ontario’s economy. Since 2003, creative-industry jobs have increased by 12 per cent – representing 23,000 new jobs.

“Working together, we make things better,” stated Wilkinson.

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LEARN MORE

Read more about other government programs that support the culture sector at: http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/awards_funding/funding.shtml

Learn more about Gallery Stratford at: http://www.gallerystratford.on.ca/

Learn more about the Stratford Tourism Alliance at: http://www.visitstratford.ca/