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Bata Shoe Museum Opens Doors to Pigs in February 2007

- In February, Museum will offer free admission to those born in the Year of the Pig -

TORONTO, ON, December 11, 2006 – From Tuesday February 6 to Friday March 9, 2007, the Bata Shoe Museum invites **Pigs to visit the Museum free of charge!** However, this offer is only for humans who can prove they were born in the Year of the Pig: no four-legged visitors will be admitted.

The Year of the Pig, one of twelve recurring years in the Chinese lunar calendar, officially begins on February 18. People born in 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995 and 2007 are Pigs, and with proof of their date of birth, they may visit the Museum free of charge. Parents of newborns may enter free as well. (This does not apply to public programs such as lectures, musical evenings, etc.)

On Wednesday February 7, at 4:30 pm, the Museum celebrates the Year of the Pig with a **free performance of traditional Chinese dances** provided by the Orient Dance Company: Green Girls, Flying Aspara, Long Fan, Xin Jiang, and Miao Girls. Traditional refreshments will be offered and all are welcome!

Also in honour of the changing year, the Museum is putting on display a number of **rarely seen artifacts** which complement its current exhibition *Watched by Heaven, Tied to Earth: Summoning Animal Protection for Chinese Children*. The exhibition features playful and charming garments for Chinese children. Footwear, bonnets and exquisitely detailed silk jackets are embroidered with the child's zodiac animal, which would bestow its protection and positive attributes. The objects newly on display, some of which will be shown for the first time, will focus on the Year of the Pig. Some are on loan from renowned New York City collector Mr. Glenn Roberts, and others come from the Museum's collection.

Emanuele Lepri, Director of the Museum, said, "One of the most enjoyable aspects of living in this multicultural city is that events such as the Spring Festival are celebrated not only by the Chinese, but also by Torontonians of many different backgrounds. Over the past couple of years, we've started partnering with the Chinese community to host cooking classes, musical events and performances, and attendees come from all over, proving the cross-cultural appeal. The Museum is delighted to mark the New Year by offering free admission to Pigs, and our *Watched by Heaven* exhibition is a very appropriate tie-in."

Lepri added, "People born in the Year of the Pig are said to be very social and to enjoy a good time, so I hope to see them at the Museum in great number."

Free admission to all those born in the Year of the Pig

Tuesday February 6 through Friday March 9, 2007

ID with proof of Pig status (year of birth 1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, or 2007) must be shown.

At the Bata Shoe Museum

327 Bloor Street West at St. George

For more information: 416.979.7799 x225

About the Bata Shoe Museum

The Bata Shoe Museum is a centre of knowledge about the role of footwear in the social and cultural life of humanity. The Museum's growing international collection of over 12,000 objects touches on 4,500 years of history. A varied programme of events and exhibitions lets visitors discover the stories behind footwear from many lands and cultures. Current exhibitions include: *Watched by Heaven, Tied to Earth: Summoning Animal Protection for Chinese Children* (until September 2007), *The Charm of Rococo: Femininity and Footwear in the 18th Century* (until June 2007) and *All About Shoes: Footwear Through the Ages* (semi-permanent). Upcoming is *Chronicles of Riches: Treasures from the Bata Shoe Museum* (opening January 18, 2007). Online exhibitions include *All About Shoes* and *On Canadian Ground: Stories of Footwear in Early Canada*. The Bata Shoe Museum is located in downtown Toronto at 327 Bloor Street West, at the southwest corner of Bloor and St. George Streets. Further information is available at www.batashoemuseum.ca.

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