



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Beauty, Identity and Pride in a Changing World:

**Bata Shoe Museum Presents Lecture Series
in conjunction with new Native North American Footwear Exhibition**

Toronto, ON, October 23, 2007 - The Bata Shoe Museum will present a **Lecture Series** in conjunction with the new exhibition *Beauty, Identity, Pride: Native North American Footwear*. Four illustrated talks, given by specialists in different disciplines, will take place from November 2007 to April 2008. Intended for a general audience, the talks will complement the exhibition by providing insight into lesser-known aspects of Indigenous North American culture.

- On Sunday, November 11, Prof. Ted Chamberlin (English and Comparative Literature, University of Toronto) presents “Elk Dogs, Horseshoes, and Dancing Horses: Native North American Horse Cultures”.
- On Sunday December 9, Elizabeth Semmelhack, Curator at the Bata Shoe Museum, presents “Beauty in a Time of Chaos: Beaded Footwear at the End of the 19th Century”.
- On Sunday February 17, 2008, Eva Major-Marothy, Sr. Curator at the Portrait Gallery of Canada, presents “The Four Indian Kings”, a story of four portraits and their changing contexts.
- On Sunday April 13, 2008, Brian Wright-McLeod, journalist and author of The Encyclopedia of Native Music, presents “Moccasins and Music as Geographical Origins of First Nations”.

Lectures take place from 2 to 3 pm. Admission is \$14 per person, and includes admission to the Museum. Pre-registration is recommended, by calling 416-979-7799 x242.

Lecture attendees will also be able to view the exhibition *Beauty, Identity, Pride: Native North American Footwear*, which opens to the public on **Friday, November 2, 2007**. More than 90 pairs of shoes, boots and moccasins will be on display, including some of the finest examples of Indigenous footwear from the Subarctic, Northeast, Southeast, Plains, Great Basin, and Southwest regions of North America. *Beauty, Identity, Pride* will feature a range of 19th-century footwear, with several items from the 18th century as well as some 20th-century examples.

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The extraordinary beauty and fascinating diversity of these functional works of art are a testament to the individual artistry of their makers. North American Native women are highly respected for the exquisite craftsmanship and sophisticated decoration of the footwear they have traditionally created, which has inspired people all over the world. Beading, porcupine-quill work and techniques specific to Indigenous artists have been studied and emulated. These artifacts also reflect larger issues of cultural identity and pride in their distinctive patterns of construction and symbolism.

The Bata Shoe Museum's holdings of Native North American footwear have been collected over decades. One of the largest in the world, the collection includes many unrivalled examples of exceptional quality. With its 1989 typology North American Indian and Eskimo Footwear, the Museum was the first to classify regional variations in structural design in Indigenous North American footwear. *Beauty, Identity, Pride* introduces this legacy as a resource for scholars and a rare opportunity for the public to see these artifacts up close.

Visitors will discover more about the region, culture and methods of creation of each pair of footwear. The exhibition and accompanying interpretive material are designed to inform and educate visitors about the beauty and craftsmanship of Indigenous footwear, as a significant form of cultural expression.

Beauty, Identity, Pride: Native North American Footwear

Opens Friday November 2, 2007

Bata Shoe Museum: 327 Bloor Street West

416.979.7799

www.batashoemuseum.ca



One of the treasures of the Bata Shoe Museum is this 18th-century moccasin acquired in England. The centre seam construction and porcupine quillwork establish its antiquity and cultural affiliation. Metal cones with reddish died hair tassels and wrapped quill bars on the collars demonstrate the craftsmanship of the maker. *Collection of the Bata Shoe Museum (BSM P81.45). Photo: Matthew Plexman.*



Moccasin, Cherokee, c.1840. Black buckskin, a favored material of many Eastern and Great Lakes people, could be achieved by using the oxidized pulp of walnuts and provided a perfect background for colorful beadwork. *Collection of the Bata Shoe Museum (BSM P83.171). Photo: Matthew Plexman.*

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 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. As at October 22, 2007, current exhibitions include: *The Charm of Rococo: Femininity and Footwear in the 18th Century*; and *All About Shoes: Footwear Through the Ages* (semi-permanent). 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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