

The Bata Shoe Museum



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Step Ahead at the Bata Shoe Museum An Education Program for At-risk Children

Toronto ON (November 18, 2009) – Supported by Bank of Montreal, McLean Budden Ltd. and RBC Foundation, the Bata Shoe Museum has just launched the *Step Ahead* initiative, which will subsidize education programs for at-risk children. *Step Ahead* is intended to be a long-term project committed to removing financial barriers for school children in at-risk communities. Support for the fund was obtained in conjunction with an Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund grant for the duration of the exhibition *On a Pedestal – From Renaissance Chopines to Baroque Heels* (November 19, 2009 – September 20, 2010).

For the duration of the exhibition, elementary and intermediate students (JK – Grade 8) will participate in a curriculum-based program in our exhibitions and with our hands-on collection. In addition, they will paint a Dutch clog to take home, and have a try-on costume session in *On a Pedestal – Fashionable Elite and Elevating Footwear 1500 – 1600*. Teachers will receive suggestions for pre- and post-visit activities to enrich the class visit.

In its first year, the *Step Ahead* fund will completely subsidize 850 students, or approximately 35 classes. There are thirty-one junior and middle schools in at-risk neighbourhoods as defined by the City of Toronto, so there is potential to reach students in every targeted school.

It has been a long-term goal of the Education Service of the Bata Shoe Museum to be able to reach students prevented from enjoying our unique collection due to financial barriers. We are delighted to have the resources to strengthen our ability to provide access for so many children from at-risk neighbourhoods.

For more information, interviews or visuals please contact:

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