



DAREarts Teens Team With Vancouver Opera In Anti-Bullying Showcase

For Immediate Release – March 2, 2016 This week, Vancouver Opera's earlier production of *Stickboy* about bullying is the starting point of the successful return of DAREarts Vancouver's innovative youth empowerment program. Emboldened by *Stickboy*, young teens are confronting the uncomfortable reality of us all struggling with our own fear and insecurity. Grade 6 and 7 students from Britannia Community School are creatively building their own artistic messages about tough teen issues, including bullying. In daily workshops throughout this week, the teens are engaging in visual arts, writing, music, dance, drama, videography and media arts workshops.

The teens' brave and creative multi-media presentation and artwork will be showcased for the public at their **Open Studio on Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 5:30 pm at The O'Brian Centre for Vancouver Opera, 1945 McLean Drive.** Reception begins at 5 pm. Everyone is invited!

"Through all the arts, with remarkable local artist-educators and Indigenous leaders, the youths are exploring how the DARE values of Discipline, Action, Responsibility and Excellence can guide them through life challenges as they build their courage and confidence to be leaders," says Marilyn Field, DAREarts Founder. "The teens' artwork will be exciting and powerful voices of their self-exploration and messages for us all."

This program is a partnership of Vancouver Opera and DAREarts, a national charity that uses the arts to ignite change in young Canadians. The DAREarts Vancouver team of artist-educators are led by Karen J. Myskiw and include: Shelley MacDonald, Sarah Knoebber, Lori Sherritt Fleming, Brunella Battista, Roy Mulder, Elder Mary Jane Joe, Colleen Maybin (Vancouver Opera) with volunteer assistance from Patience Lavallee, Crisy Buck, Susan Brown, Alex Chow, Erin Parker and Claire Brown (grad mentor). Special thanks to school teacher, Justin Borsato.

DAREarts' arts education programs empower children in high priority communities to become leaders. They build courage and confidence by harnessing the power of the arts plus the DAREarts values of Discipline, Action, Responsibility and Excellence.

DAREarts' unique programs work with 9-14 year olds in both urban and rural areas, including aboriginal communities across Canada. The children explore world cultures while they themselves paint, sculpt, sing, dance, compose, design, write, act and create, guided by arts professionals. DAREarts provides much-needed opportunities for children to discover how to express themselves in positive ways and to experience a broader range of activities beyond what is available to them. The children gain leadership skills by returning to their schools and teaching their classmates what they have learned. In its 20th year, DAREarts has influenced more than 200,000 Canadian children. Canadian Charitable No. 88691 7764 RR0002.

Vancouver Opera is the second largest opera company in Canada. It is regarded worldwide for its fine mainstage productions; for its country-leading education programs, which have reached more than 1.6 million children and their families; for its innovative and award-winning community programs; and for forging groundbreaking cross-cultural creative partnerships that have brought opera to new generations of Canadians.

Stickboy was composed by Neil Weisensel with libretto by Shane Koyczan, based on his book, *Stickboy*. The touring production was adapted and staged by director Rachel Peake.

Supported locally by: Vancouver Opera, Northbridge Insurance and ArtStarts.

For more information, please visit www.darearts.com or contact:

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