

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 (see list attached). The school or its students will need to pay their own transportation costs.

In September 2009, the principals of these schools will receive an invitation to book class visits at no cost on a first-come, first-served basis. The Museum will accept three class bookings per month from at-risk schools beginning in October 2009. An individual school may book up to three classes under this program.

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.

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Financial assistance for the STEP AHEAD educational program provided by:



About the Bata Shoe Museum

The Bata Shoe Museum is dedicated to uncovering the role of footwear in the social and cultural life of humanity. The Museum's growing international collection of over 13,000 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. Further information is available at www.batashoemuseum.ca.