

**CIRQUE DU SOLEIL TO PERFORM
AT THE HOLT RENFREW FASHION GALA 2008
TO BENEFIT ARTS UMBRELLA**

(Vancouver, BC) – The Holt Renfrew Fashion Gala, to benefit Arts Umbrella, is Vancouver's most anticipated fashion event. This Tuesday evening, the atrium of the magnificent new Holt Renfrew store will be transformed into a moving, multi-level catwalk, featuring the Fall 2008 Diane von Furstenberg collection. Guest of honour for the evening will be legendary designer, Diane von Furstenberg.

One-thousand guests will spill into the store for a stunning evening of cocktails, wine and canapés served by Opus Hotel Vancouver, set against a magnificent backdrop inspired by the upcoming show *Corteo* from *Cirque du Soleil*. The event will also include preview performances from *Corteo* in anticipation of the June 2008 opening in Vancouver. Later in the evening, the store will then be transformed into Vancouver's most sophisticated dance party.

Arts Umbrella chief executive officer, Lucille Pacey said, "Annually, we face a huge challenge of raising funds to serve under-privileged children in our community. The proceeds from this event will go a long way in helping us reach our annual goal. The efforts of Holt Renfrew and *Cirque du Soleil* will open more opportunities for these children and we are so grateful."

Holt Renfrew Vancouver general manager, Gary Balaski said, "The Holt Renfrew Fashion Gala will anniversary the opening of our new Vancouver store. We are thrilled to bring our clients and supporters of Arts Umbrella together in this spectacular setting, and are incredibly proud to welcome the internationally acclaimed Diane von Furstenberg and *Cirque du Soleil* as collaborators in this unique and very special fundraiser for Arts Umbrella."

Canaccord Capital joins the event this year as the Couture Gala sponsor, among many other significant sponsors and partners, without whom this event would not be possible. All proceeds from this event will support Arts Umbrella programs and its mission to "inspire kids for life through the arts".

About Arts Umbrella

Located on Granville Island in Vancouver, Arts Umbrella is a non-profit centre for arts education for young people, ages 2 to 19. While thousands of children participate in Arts Umbrella's tuition-based programs each year, they reach thousands more in under-served neighbourhoods through free programs, bringing the arts to kids who otherwise would not be able to participate.

About Corteo by Cirque du Soleil

Corteo, which means "cortege" in Italian, is a joyous procession, a festive parade imagined by a clown. The clown pictures his own funeral taking place in a carnival atmosphere, watched over by quietly caring angels. The show brings together the passion of the actor with the grace and power of the acrobat to plunge the audience into a theatrical world of fun, comedy and spontaneity situated in a mysterious space between heaven and earth. Created by Daniele Finzi Pasca, *Corteo* returns to Canada for the first time since Toronto in fall 2005. The *Corteo* cast includes 63 artists from 16 countries. *Corteo* opens in Vancouver June 12, 2008 under the blue and yellow Grand Chapiteau at Concord Pacific Place. Tickets are available online at www.cirquedusoleil.com.

About Holt Renfrew

With nine stores in locations in major centers across Canada, Holt Renfrew delights with beautiful fashions presented in style. For over 168 years, Holt Renfrew has been renowned for offering its customers the highest standard of excellence in customer service, merchandise quality and selection in its nine stores across Canada. Holt Renfrew locations across the country include: Toronto (3), Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton. For additional information on Holt Renfrew please visit our website www.holtrenfrew.com.

About the Cirque du Soleil/Arts Umbrella Partnership

Since 2004, *Cirque du Soleil* and Arts Umbrella have partnered together. From the very beginning there was a natural fit between the two organizations. Both have youth, art, inspiration and creativity at the very heart of their activities. Both believe that art is an amazing tool to reach one and all. While art gives the opportunity to reach unthinkable artistic highs, it also allows us to reach out to those less fortunate.

Arts Umbrella has been a wonderful social action partner for *Cirque du Soleil* from the very start. From their students attending *Cirque du Soleil* dress rehearsals, to their successful benefit performances with *Quidam* and *Varekai* which raised a total of more than \$100 000 for Arts Umbrella programs. Now with *Corteo*, this partnership will surely once again see amazing results.

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