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A New Chapter for Artfest Kingston: 13th Annual Festival Unveils a Dynamic Management Team

KINGSTON, ON, January 29, 2024 – Artfest Kingston, Eastern Ontario's premier free outdoor art festival, is poised for its 13th Annual edition from June 29 to July 1, 2024, at Kingston's City Park. Showcasing over 150 artists from across Canada, the three-day event will exhibit and sell original works spanning diverse mediums, including painting, sculpture, photography, pottery, jewelry, glass, wood, metal, and more.

Recent developments indicate a significant shift in Artfest Kingston's leadership. Founder Lory MacDonald has stepped aside to focus on other ventures, handing the reins to the newly formed Art Experiences Co. The company, led by veteran events and festival industry expert Neil Shorthouse, plans to transform Artfest Kingston into the flagship brand for a range of innovative art experiences.

Shorthouse, renowned for his work with prominent venues like K-Rock Centre, the Regent Theatre, and historical sites such as Fort Henry and Upper Canada Village, brings a wealth of experience to the table. Having served as a consultant for Artfest in recent years, Shorthouse is deeply connected to the festival's ethos.

Explaining the motivation behind taking charge of Artfest Kingston, Shorthouse stated, "Our mission is to maintain the festival's distinct quality, ensuring it remains a viable sales platform for artists amid economic challenges and saturated craft markets. We envision Artfest Kingston as a sustainable, long-term destination for art lovers and a significant platform for artists."

Shorthouse emphasized the importance of a robust team for Art Experiences Co., acknowledging the resource-intensive nature of arts festivals. He expressed confidence in the team's ability to engage partners and make Artfest Kingston a prominent cultural destination.

Notable additions to the team include collaborations with ARABELLA, a leading Canadian arts and culture magazine. Neil Shorthouse announced, "We are thrilled to partner with ARABELLA to enhance Artfest Kingston's programming and execute sponsorships. Our shared commitment to supporting both established and emerging artists aligns seamlessly with ARABELLA's mission."

The team also includes Rhonda Evans of Glocca Morra Studios, a respected figure in the local arts community, who will play a crucial role in jurying exhibitors and developing artistic programs. Culinary expert Matt Johnston joins as an advisor to elevate the festival's culinary offerings.

While Artfest Kingston undergoes a transition in management, Shorthouse assured continuity with Lory MacDonald's successful formula, focusing on enhancing the artist's experience and community engagement. Shorthouse hinted at upcoming features, including expanded music and culinary experiences, to be revealed in the lead-up to the festival.

Applications for artists to exhibit at Artfest Kingston are currently being accepted through the festival's website, www.artfestkingston.ca.

To mark the association with ARABELLA, Artfest Kingston will adopt the magazine's theme for the festival, titled "A Celebration for the Love of All Things Art."

About Artfest Kingston: Artfest Kingston is more than a craft show; it's a celebration of creativity, culture, and community. The festival offers a diverse program of activities, including live performances, workshops, demonstrations, and children's art activities. Taking place at City Park in downtown Kingston, the festival is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, June 29 to July 1, 2024.

About Art Experiences Co.: ART EXPERIENCES Co. is a producer of festivals, events, arts-based tourism programs, and hands-on arts experiences. The Artfest Kingston festival stands as its flagship arts experience.

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About ARABELLA Magazine: ARABELLA is a leading Canadian arts magazine, focusing on fine art and design. The magazine showcases diverse content, spanning art, architecture, landscaping, and interior design, with an emphasis on nurturing talent and impacting society positively.

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