



**Inter-Cultural
Association**
of Greater Victoria

P2P Presentation:
Building Social & Cultural Connections
Through the Arts



Mission Statement

The Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) helps individuals and organizations to connect across cultures. ICA provides information, support and tools to help immigrants reach their goals. By engaging people through networks, education and arts programming ICA creates a welcoming community.



ICA Programs





The Arts & Outreach Program

Provides a non-threatening and democratic space through which to tell the immigrant story. It is a space ICA uses to explore social issues, to share ideas, to engage the community, and to create new and innovative art.



Challenges newcomers encounter:

- Alienation
- Social Isolation and Loneliness
- Depression
- Frustration
- Racism & Discrimination
- Trauma from past experiences
- Cultural disorientation

Compounding Factors

- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender Issues
- Sexual Orientation
- Faith and Spirituality
- (Dis)abilities



Art-based Projects

Theatre Projects

1. Arrival: Stories, Mask & Movement



“This performance has helped me understand more about the barriers that new immigrants to Canada face when they settle here. Sometimes it is difficult creating a bridge for those that are here and those that are arriving – this play gives insight.”

“...Beautiful, moving, funny, authentic and a glorious celebration of the human struggle for identity and connection. Please do more of these types of shows in schools, service organizations, labour unions, and all manner of venues. It brings understanding and builds connections among all Canadians. Only the arts can truly reach out and touch the heart. Thank you.”



2. Police & Community



Feedback

“This project was honest & hard hitting...it helped both sides of the relationship to better understand each other... it generated a lot of thought and discussion and action”

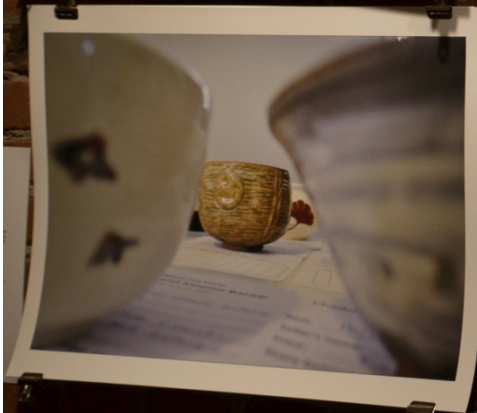
“This project is living proof that the arts, heart conversations, and qualitative data, can change policy, structure and the lives of human beings”

“Thank you for your help to connect with police officers and to find solutions...I felt a little nervous to the Police Officer. Now I know that we don't need to be scared of them”

Photo-Documentary Projects

Inside Community: Four Cultures in Images







Storytelling Projects

Interlaced: Living Our Faith Through Stories

“This was an accessible joyful event that fully engaged the audience and built respect and connections across faith groups”



Film Projects

Perspectives on Faith and Identity: Youth Documentary

"I was scared and unsure about being a part of this project in the beginning and about speaking about my faith and cultural identity. I felt people were likely to judge me for it. But six months into the project, I now value this opportunity to express myself. It's definitely caused me to think more about where I come from and to evaluate where I belong... So I feel vulnerable and empowered at the same time."



Other Arts Projects

- Healthy Minds: A Collective Journey – a visual journaling project to address mental health in youth and adults
- Shadow, Puppet, and Gardening Projects - to address senior isolation and the need for them to fully participate in the social & cultural life of the community
- Youth Summer Arts Camps and Celebration Festivals
- Projects that address Diversity & (Dis)ability













Core Values

1. Respect for the individual
2. Inclusion
3. Access - Eliminating barriers to newcomer participation in the community
4. Promote self-assurance, confidence and client empowerment
5. Promote cultural sensitivity
6. Collaboration – Building bridges between communities
7. Encourage the building of friendships across cultural & social divides
8. Facilitate mentorships
9. Working towards changes in the public attitude towards newcomers
10. Showcasing immigrant and newcomers talents and celebrating successes!

Successful Social & Cultural Integration

- ✓ Gradual
- ✓ Long-term
- ✓ Dynamic two-way process

The **ARTS** can play a crucial role!



All cultures enrich our lives in many ways, and it is essential that this diversity is celebrated and reflected in the arts. If it is not, our communities will be less vibrant, less interesting and less tolerant places to live.

Questions?

