



IN CAMERA

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 3, 2012
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Meeting Date: October 31, 2012

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Managing Director of Social Development in consultation with Equal Employment Opportunity Program

SUBJECT: Cultural Harmony Awards 2012

IN CAMERA RATIONALE

This report is recommended for consideration by Council in the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*: (b) personal information about an identifiable individual who is being considered for an award or honour, or who has offered to provide a gift to the city on condition of anonymity.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the following recipients for the 2012 Cultural Harmony Awards:

Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra 'Organization' Award

Joyce Lam 'Individual' Award.

COUNCIL POLICY

On April 3, 1998, City Council approved the creation of Cultural Harmony Awards to recognize an individual and an organization that have made outstanding contributions in promoting cultural harmony in the City of Vancouver.

BACKGROUND

On November 5, 1996, the Special Advisory Committee on Cultural Communities recommended to Vancouver City Council the creation of a Cultural Harmony Award recognizing an individual and an organization which have made outstanding contributions

promoting cultural harmony in the City of Vancouver. This was approved. On April 3, 1998, Vancouver City Council adopted the Cultural Harmony Awards as an annual City initiative.

The 2012 Cultural Harmony Awards received a total of 7 nominations and they were reviewed by a jury panel comprised of three individuals: Mr. Dan Guinan, President, Native Education College; Yvonne Chin, member of Vancouver Multicultural Advisory Committee and a former ESL teacher; and Terry Hunter, Executive Director of the Vancouver Moving Theatre which is a recipient of the 2010 City of Vancouver Cultural Harmony Award (Organization). The judging criteria were as follows:

1. Achievement: the significance of the achievement itself and how it promotes harmony amongst different cultures and society at large;
2. Scope: the range and scope of the activities;
3. Impact: the potential for fundamental and lasting change;
4. Method: the manner in which activities were performed, including originality and effort in terms of personal time and other resources.

Four nominations were submitted under the 'Organization' Category and three nominations were submitted under the 'Individual' Category. They are listed below:

'Organization' Category (4 nominees):

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

- Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra

'Individual' Category (3 nominees):

- s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
- Joyce Lam
- s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

DISCUSSION

A. RECOMMENDED RECIPIENT FOR 2012 'ORGANIZATION' CATEGORY AWARD: Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra

The jurors were unanimous in recommending Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra for the 2012 Cultural Harmony Award in the 'Organization' Category.

Founded in 2001, Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra (VICO) is a professional concert orchestra devoted to performing intercultural music on a large scale. It has the mission of acting as forum for the creation of a new musical art form reflecting Vancouver's diverse cultures and reaching out to the public including programs in schools and for younger audiences.

Since its formation, VICO has commissioned and performed over 35 new intercultural works by respected, ground-breaking Canadian composers. The ensemble has performed two to four concerts a year, in addition to presenting a yearly educational series - *Music of the Whole*

World - that has highlighted musical traditions. The series had attracted significant number of audiences.

VICO also runs a high school student composer program and has reached out to younger audiences with educational concerts aimed at elementary school students.

VICO collaborated with many Vancouver musical organizations and communities. A highlight was the 2004 collaboration with Laudate Singers and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in *Celebration for Peace*, a tribute to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This was followed by educational concerts during the Vancouver 2008 and 2010 Cultural Olympiad.

The jury was most impressed by VICO for their efforts to reach out to younger audiences and provide opportunities in learning about diverse cultural and musical traditions through discussions after performances. Their concerts are accessible to the public including free performances at local public libraries and other venues.

The jury concurred that VICO is unique in Vancouver and perhaps Canada for presenting the finest musicians from diverse musical traditions in newly created music which captures the public imagination. VICO is an exemplary group promoting cultural collaboration and creating community learning and engagement. The jury agreed that Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra is a well-deserved recipient of the City's Cultural Harmony Award.

B. RECOMMENDED RECIPIENT FOR 'INDIVIDUAL' CATEGORY AWARD: Joyce Lam

The jury members were unanimous in recommending Joyce Lam as the recipient for the 2012 Cultural Harmony Award in the 'Individual' Category. The following is a brief profile of Joyce:

Joyce Lam is the co-founder and artistic Director of the Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre (VACT) since 2000. She has produced over 40 productions with VACT and has recruited, developed and maintained a body of volunteers that has sustained its operations for 13 years. Joyce created VACT to showcase Asian Canadian actors, tell Asian Canadian stories and address their conspicuous absence on the Canadian stage. VACT's signature event *Asian Comedy Night* has been challenging media stereotypes of Asians in North America and cultivating a significant number of audiences. Over 18,000 people had attended VACT's shows.

Some significant recent productions include a production of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* in 2008; a production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Flower Drum Song* in 2009; and an original Canadian musical called *Red Letters* in 2010. Georgia Strait's review called *Red Letters* "a winningly open-hearted musical that matters."

In 2012, Joyce created the MSG Theatre Lab where Asian Canadian playwrights have an opportunity to work with established dramaturges to develop their plays towards stage-ready productions.

In developing a younger audience, VACT is reaching out to Vancouver East Side secondary schools for students to sign up for the free Teen Sketch Comedy Spring Break Camp. Over six intensive days of workshops, participants will learn about sketch comedy, writing, singing and performing. The resulting work will be showcased in VACT's Asian Comedy Night. The outreach is intentional in breaking financial or cultural barriers to performing arts for Eastside students.

Joyce worked tirelessly for all this work, mostly unpaid, over 13 years, despite a chronic health condition. The jury was most impressed by her significant body of work and for her dedication to creating a community of Asian Canadian theatre artists in the Lower Mainland which has led to increased diversity in theatre audiences. She has improved understanding between communities, and fostered the acceptance of Asian Canadian artists into mainstream theatre and the community at large.

The jury unanimously recommends that Joyce Lam be named as the 2012 Cultural Harmony Award recipient in the Individual Category for the City of Vancouver.

AWARD CEREMONY

Staff proposed that the award ceremony be held on Tuesday, November 13, 2012, in Council Chamber. This will be followed by a Tree Planting ceremony on November 16, Friday, 2:00 p.m. at the Cultural Harmony Grove, to further honour the two recipients. The Vancouver Park Board will officiate at the ceremony at the Cultural Harmony Grove.

Once Council approval is obtained, details of the award ceremony will be finalized and invitations sent out. The Mayor and the Chair of the Board of Parks and Recreation will be requested to present the awards.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council approve the recommendations of the jury and that Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra be named the recipient of the 2012 City of Vancouver Cultural Harmony 'Organization' Award; and that Joyce Lam be named the recipient of the 2012 City of Vancouver Cultural Harmony 'Individual' Award.

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