

31st Annual FolkFest Wows Victoria

Inter-Cultural Arts Festival Wins "M" Award for Favourite Annual Event or Festival

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, Feb. 23, 2005—The results are in: Victoria residents have once again cast their votes in support of Vancouver Island's largest arts festival, ICA FolkFest. The high-profile celebration of music and culture took home the 2004 "M" Award for Favourite Annual Event or Festival at last night's ceremony.

To quote *Monday Magazine*: "When it comes to festivals, we love nothing more than to grab a hunk of deep-fried Hungarian-style dough, powdered with sugar and cinnamon, before pressing our bums into a metal riser to listen to some of the best music to come through town."

The numbers agree. More than 150,000 people attended the nine-day festival. "We experienced our biggest opening weekend in the history of FolkFest," says Artistic Producer Tracy Summers.

Organizers were also struck by the standing-room-only crowd that came to see renowned guitarist Jesse Cook (July 4). That performance received a nod from the "M" Awards as well, earning a nomination for Most Memorable Gig.

The 32nd annual ICA FolkFest (July 1 – 10, 2005), featuring South Africa's Ladysmith Black Mambazo on closing night, may be even more memorable. The dynamic a cappella group, which is best known for its groundbreaking work on Paul Simon's *Graceland* album, recently won a Grammy for Best Traditional World Music Album.

The ICA FolkFest is presented by the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria and produced by TNT Productions. In previous years, FolkFest has been honoured with "M" Awards for Most Anticipated Annual Event or Festival (2003) and Favourite Outdoor Event (2002). The "Best of the City" Awards named FolkFest the Best Festival in 2001 and 2003.

Last year, the Inter-Cultural Association was given the Victoria Hospitality GEM Award for fostering cultural diversity through public events such as FolkFest.

For more information about FolkFest, call 472-FEST or visit www.icafolkfest.com.

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