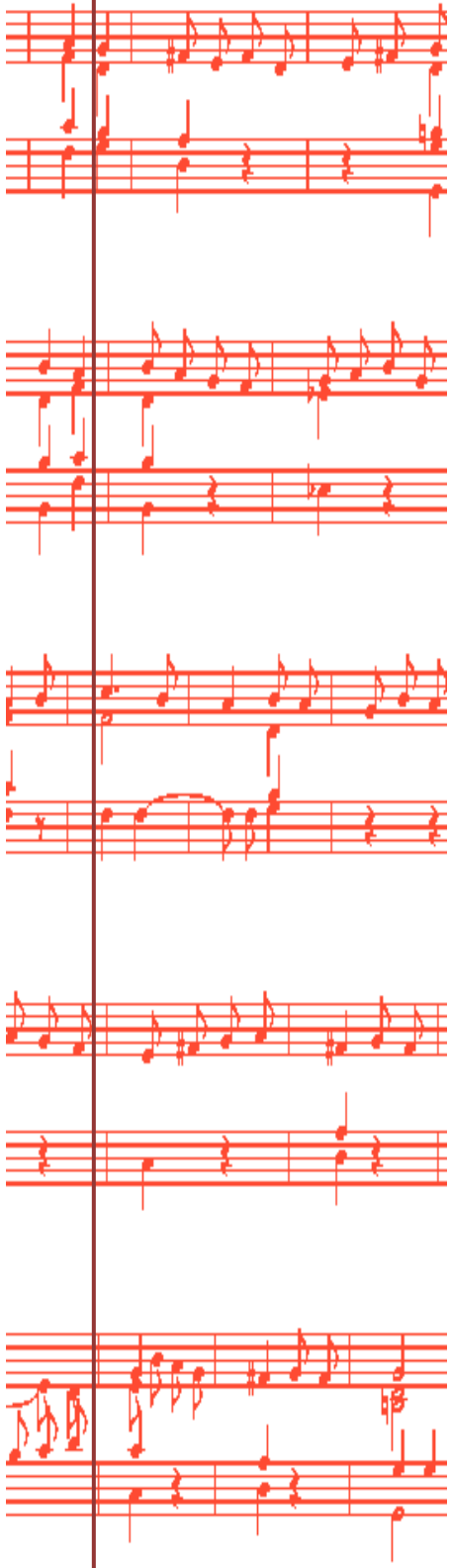
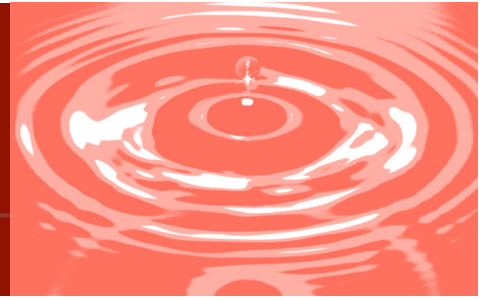




National Arts Centre

September 29, 2007



# Roundtable on Healing and the Arts:

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## Healthy Mental Development for Children and Youth

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Dear Reader:

For the past two years, the National Arts Centre Roundtable has shone a spotlight on the link between healing and the arts. This year, the third in the series, took a deeper look at *Healthy Mental Development for Children and Youth*. We were extremely lucky to have not only some of the foremost thinkers on this issue in the country, but also several young people who have directly benefited from their exposure to the arts as part of their treatment for mental health problems.

We learned that mental health problems affect children and youth across the spectrum, from the earliest age when diagnosed with diseases such as autism or other neuro-psychiatric disorders, to teenagers struggling with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), addiction, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. In his keynote address, *Second Cup* co-founder Frank O’Dea revealed that addiction need not be a barrier to turning your life into a great success—it simply takes hope, relying on solid values and the right circumstances to do it.

We learned that the arts present a compelling opportunity, with untapped potential for healing to help young people deal with the challenges that they face in society today. Some suggested that mental health should be a part of basic education in schools. Not least, we learned that many of history’s greatest artists—Sylvia Plath, Robert Schumann, Ludwig van Beethoven, Vincent Van Gogh—struggled with mental illness.

Our Roundtable discussion was augmented by an exhibition from Hamilton and the Niagara Region entitled *Courage to Tell*. It illustrated the pain of mental illness among young people through a series of drawings, essays, poems and decorated masks.

We hope that this Roundtable will lead to many more invigorating discussions on an important topic, as well as action. Now is the time to forge concrete links between the worlds of the performing arts and health care.

Yours truly,

Peter A. Herrndorf  
President and CEO  
National Arts Centre

Darrell Louise Gregersen  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Arts Centre Foundation

# HEALING AND ARTS: HEALTHY MENTAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Agenda .....	6
Opening Address .....	8
Mental Health for Children and Youth: The Canadian and Global Context.....	10
Medical Presentations .....	12
Autism and Creativity: Dr. Susan Bryson.....	12
Addiction and the Arts: Dr. Anthony Phillips.....	14
Eating Disorders and Artistic Expression: Dr. Pier Bryden.....	16
Roundtable Leadership Discussion .....	18
Conclusion .....	23
Recommendations .....	24
Participant List .....	25
Canada's National Arts Centre .....	27
National Arts Centre Foundation .....	27
Sun Life Financial .....	27
University of Ottawa .....	28



**Proud Sponsor of the 2007 Roundtable on Healing and the Arts:  
Healthy Mental Development for Children and Youth**

## **Introduction**

This report summarizes the discussion at the National Arts Centre Roundtable on *Healing and the Arts: Healthy Mental Development for Children and Youth* that took place on September 29, 2007, the third in a series of roundtables on healing and the arts, following last year's successful roundtable on *Mental Health and the Arts*.

Over three and a half hours, community leaders from the worlds of science, business, the arts, government and philanthropy, as well as beneficiaries of arts programs used to treat mental health problems, engaged in discussion that ranged from exploring the extent of mental health illness among young people, to how the arts can be beneficial to mental health sufferers.

The Roundtable was designed to address the many facets of mental health issues for young people and how these may interact with the arts. Frank O'Dea, co-founder of the successful coffee chain *Second Cup*, former street person and alcoholic, delivered the opening address, in which he stressed the need for hope for all people suffering with addiction and mental health problems. "How do you get from skid row to standing at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa?" he asked. "It's all about hope. Hope offered by you, here. It's also about values. I realized that I couldn't live in conflict with all my values from childhood. I'd traded them all for alcohol."

The second speaker, Dr. Stan Kutcher, Sun Life Chair in Adolescent Mental Health at Dalhousie University, addressed the question of mental health for children and youth, in a Canadian and global context. He described the field of child and youth mental health as the "orphan of the orphan," as coined by Senator Michael Kirby, within the Canadian medical system. "We have a wonderful health system in Canada," he said, "unless you happen to be mentally ill."

Subsequent speakers from the medical establishment addressed questions concerning mental health and the arts. Dr. Susan Bryson, Craig Chair in Autism at Dalhousie University, discussed autism and creativity. Dr. Anthony Phillips from the University of British Columbia Institute for Mental Health discussed addiction and the arts, while Dr. Pier Bryden, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto and the Hospital for Sick Children, spoke about eating disorders and artistic expression.

Following the formal presentations, Raymond Ko, founder of *Music Sensory Awakening*, gave a brief glimpse of his program that uses music to engage autistic children and youth. He distributed a DVD of his work to roundtable participants.

A wide-ranging discussion then took place that touched on the following questions:

- a) How might Canada's arts organizations contribute effectively and creatively to improved mental health for children and youth?

- b) Can arts organizations make important contributions to building a better understanding of the issues by working effectively within our communities?
- c) How might Canada's healthcare providers and the research community respond effectively and creatively to a growing understanding of the relationship between health and the arts?
- d) Is there a role for the arts in the prevention of, and assistance with, mental illness?

Don Newman, Senior Parliamentary Editor at CBC Television, moderated the discussion.

The 2005 Roundtable on Music and Medicine began the National Arts Centre's public exploration of the arts as a healing and treatment tool in human health. It focused on the impact of music in the treatment of cancer, heart disease and stroke, traumatic brain injury, and aging and dementia. Participants—prominent leaders in the medical and social policy fields, as well as arts supporters and senior public policy makers—discussed both pure science and clinical applications, with particular emphasis on the untapped potential of music to improve well-being. In 2006, the National Arts Centre Roundtable delved further into the topic with its exploration of Mental Health and the Arts.

Prior to the series on human health and the arts, the three previous National Arts Centre Roundtables addressed issues relating to corporate sponsorship and individual philanthropy in the performing arts, as well as public and private sector partnerships. The Roundtables have featured a wide range of Canadian and international participants, including keynote speakers James Wolfensohn, then president of the World Bank and Chairman Emeritus of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; the late Richard Bradshaw, then general director of the Canadian Opera Company; former federal finance minister John Manley; and the Honourable Michael Wilson, Canadian Ambassador to the United States.

This year's Roundtable discussion took place on the same day as the 11<sup>th</sup> annual National Arts Centre Gala, which raises money for the National Youth and Education Trust, the primary source of funds for the National Arts Centre's youth and education programming. The National Arts Centre Roundtable was supported by Presenting Sponsor Sun Life Financial. The University of Ottawa was an Associate Sponsor.

[ *“We have a wonderful health system in Canada, unless you happen to be mentally ill.”* ]

**Agenda**

**National Arts Centre, Le Salon  
September 29, 2007**

- 8:30 a.m. Breakfast in the NAC Foyer; Exhibition in the NAC Salon
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
- *Mr. Peter A. Herrndorf, President and CEO, National Arts Centre*
  - *Mr. Don Newman, Senior Parliamentary Editor, CBC News*
- 9:20 a.m. Opening Address
- *Mr. Frank O'Dea, Philanthropist, Co-founder of Second Cup*
- 9:30 a.m. Mental Health for Children and Youth: The Canadian and Global Context
- *Dr. Stan Kutcher, Sun Life Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, Dalhousie University*
- 9:40 a.m. Medical Presentations
- *Dr. Susan Bryson, Craig Chair in Autism, Dalhousie University: Autism and Creativity*
  - *Dr. Anthony Phillips, UBC Institute for Mental Health: Addiction and the Arts*
  - *Dr. Pier Bryden, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto and the Hospital for Sick Children: Eating Disorders and Artistic Expression*
- 10:00 a.m. Examples of the Role of the Arts in Health
- *Mr. Raymond Ko, Founder of the Music Sensory Awakening Program*
  - *Courage to Tell Exhibit, Le Salon and Main Foyer, National Arts Centre*
- 10:15 a.m. Initial Questions
- 10:30 a.m. *Break*
- 10:45 a.m. Roundtable Leadership Discussion

Discussion Concepts:

- a. How might Canada's arts organizations contribute effectively and creatively to improved mental health for children and youth?
- b. Can arts organizations make important contributions to building a better understanding of the issues by working effectively within our communities?

- c. How might Canada's healthcare providers and the research community respond effectively and creatively to a growing understanding of the relationship between health and the arts?
- d. Is there a role for the arts in the prevention of, and assistance with, mental illness?

Discussion Outcomes Sought:

- a. Canada's arts organizations commit to developing relationships with their communities in new ways, helping build awareness and support in new sectors.
- b. Public awareness of the importance of mental health for children and youth, and of the ability of the arts to serve as a powerful tool for well-being grows.
- c. The public sector is more engaged in fostering collaborative work between the arts and health sectors.
- d. The scientific and medical and government sectors commit to exploring the potential more rigorously together.

Respondents:

Dr. Margaret Clarke  
Hon. Tony Clement  
Ms. Zita Cobb  
Mrs. Joan Craig  
Dr. Simon Davidson

Ms. Amanda Flasko  
Dr. Antoine Hakim  
Mr. Mike Lake  
Mr. David Lemon  
Ms. Elysse Melo

Ms. Aileen O'Rafferty  
Ms. Susan Peterson  
Mr. Brett Wilson  
Ms. Janet Yale

11:30 a.m. Further Reflections from All Participants:

- a. Personal perspective on why this is important
- b. What can we each commit to doing as a result of this Roundtable?

11:50 a.m. Summary Remarks

12:00 p.m. Thank you and Adjournment: *Mr. Don Newman & Mr. Peter Herrndorf*

## Opening Address

Second Cup co-founder Frank O'Dea began the Roundtable by telling his personal story of addiction to alcohol, getting kicked out of home and living on the streets of Toronto and in 50-cent flophouses when he was in his twenties. His message was one of hope: hope that children and youth with mental problems can continue to become successful, productive and happy adults and that the victims themselves must have hope to guide them through their problems.

“Over 30 years ago I found myself standing on the corner of Shuter and Jarvis streets in Toronto and everything I owned was on my back—t-shirt, blue jeans, running shoes. I'd say, ‘Tomorrow I'll get a job, tomorrow I'll quit drinking, tomorrow I'll be the best salesman there ever was, tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow. Tomorrow didn't ever come. I'm often asked, ‘How does that happen?’ How do you get from skid row to standing at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa? It's all about hope. Hope offered by you, here, in this room, caring about our society and trying to find solutions for a variety of situations that we find ourselves in. I offer that story because I want to encourage continued involvement by our society. On December 23, 1971 I was standing in a park waiting for two guys to come out of the flophouse. I had a moment and saw that I needed to do something for myself; it wasn't bad luck and bad jobs, it was alcoholism. At that moment in time I realized that I couldn't live in conflict with all my values from childhood. It was the values I'd learned from my folks and my community. I'd traded them all for alcohol. I think in the end, these values saved my life.”

Mr. O'Dea went on to say how important it is to express values to our children. That for him, ultimately, his father had made the most difference in his life because he had given him values that he drew upon at his darkest hour. These values had given him hope.

He concluded with some lines from Desiderata:

*“Beyond a wholesome discipline,  
be gentle with yourself.  
You are a child of the universe  
no less than the trees and the stars;  
you have a right to be here.  
And whether or not it is clear to you,  
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.  
Therefore be at peace with God,  
whatever you conceive Him to be.  
And whatever your labors and aspirations,  
in the noisy confusion of life,  
keep peace in your soul.  
With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,  
it is still a beautiful world.”*



At 23 years of age, with the courage to hope for a better life, and the spirit to forge ahead, Mr. O'Dea began the long road back. Fighting all of those obstacles that hold back the homeless, the impoverished and the destitute, he overcame and rejoined society.

Then, he turned that same determination to the obstacles of life that challenge all of us. Within a few short years, he co-founded the *Second Cup*, which soon became the largest chain of gourmet coffees and teas in the country. Building on that success, he went on to co-found *Proshred Security*, a company that pioneered the entire industry of on-site document destruction. This company soon became an international organization with franchised operations in Canada, Europe and the United States.

As a successful businessperson, Mr. O'Dea took steps to give back to the community. He began by serving on the boards of directors of charities and not-for-profit organizations. But the entrepreneur's desire to innovate and build was not to be denied. In 1985 he co-founded *Street Kids International*, an organization developed to help homeless children in third world countries, through education and self-reliance programs. A few years later, he became the founding chair of *War Child (Canada)*, an organization that provides assistance against suffering and abuse of children in war-affected countries. In the same year, Mr. O'Dea co-founded the *Canadian Landmine Foundation*, an organization that raises funds for the dismantling on minefields around the world. He went on to initiate that organization's most successful fundraising program, "Night of a Thousand Dinners," with participation of some 30,000 people in 29 countries.

In the business world, Mr. O'Dea's success, along with his service to non-governmental organizations and his international exposure, created a demand for his services in the boardrooms of organizations across the country. He now serves on the boards of private companies, public companies and not-for-profit organizations. In this capacity, he has become an authority on the transitions of boards to the much-talked-about good governance model.

Mr. O'Dea's achievements are, of course, a work in progress. Recently, amid the pageantry of a state occasion, Mr. O'Dea attended Government House in Ottawa to be invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada by the Governor General.

## **Mental Health for Children and Youth: The Canadian and Global Context**

The next address, by Dr. Stan Kutcher, Sun Life Chair in Adolescent Mental Health at Dalhousie University and an internationally renowned expert in the area of adolescent mental health, as well as a national and international leader in mental health research, advocacy, training, policy, and health services innovation, clearly illustrated the lack of attention paid to mental illness, both here in Canada and all around the world. Dr. Kutcher described child and youth mental illness as “the orphan of the orphan,” as coined by Senator Michael Kirby. “We have a wonderful health system in Canada... unless you happen to be mentally ill.”

By the 1959 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child, “the child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped SHALL, not may or might, SHALL be given the special treatment, education and care required by his condition,” quoted Dr. Kutcher. He went on to say “the right to health is a human right, the right to education is a human right ... and yet, by the age of 19 years old, 29% of the global burden of illness in young people is in neuropsychiatric disorders. That means that for over one quarter of the world’s young people, the burden of illness is mental.”

**Declaration of the Rights of the Child—Principle 5:  
The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.**

He estimated that 75% of mental disorders are left untreated. “My guess is that of all the young people, only 10% have access to effective treatment.”

Dr. Kutcher then showed slides from his travels worldwide—of patients in Uganda, victims of The Lord’s Army, residents in the Moro refugee camp—and described a visit to the genocide museum near Kigali, Rwanda, with its remaining bloodstains and thousands of skulls. He talked to local people who had lived through those days at a school that is next to the church and the museum. “When you think about this genocide, what do you do?” he asked. They replied, “We sing.” Singing brings healing.

In Canada, about 20% of young people have major mental disorders, said Dr. Kutcher, “and this does not count the substantial distress caused by broken families, parental alcoholism and other problems youngsters encounter all the time. In a classroom, four out of five kids in every classroom in this country have a mental disorder. If one out of five had heart disease, there would be a heart clinic in every school. These kids are under the radar. Less than 20% actually get the services that they need, and that’s a disgrace. This number does not even address the quality or the outcome of the service they receive.”

Schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, ADHD and Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) are just some of the problems seen in classrooms. Our youth are at risk from neuropsychiatric disorders. “Where are our prevention

programs? Where are our treatment programs? You'll have to look long and hard, but you won't find them," said Dr. Kutcher.

"These are the most important diseases of childhood and adolescence and we're not finding out about them. We need greater investment if we are to shed the 'orphan of the orphan' label. The question is, how can we help formal and informal networks to improve knowledge? We have the opportunity and the obligation to all children in the world and to our own privileged children too. While these are problems here in Canada, they are a real problem in the rest of the world too."

*In a classroom, four out of five kids in every classroom in this country have a mental disorder. If one out of five had heart disease, there would be a heart clinic in every school.*

Dr. Kutcher was a founding member of the Canadian Association for Mood and Anxiety Treatment, the Advisory Board for the Institute of Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addictions (Canadian Institutes of Health Research), the Science Advisory Committee of NeuroScience Canada, and the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research. He currently serves as board member for the Canadian Society for International Health, and the Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation. In 2003, he was chosen by *Atlantic Progress Magazine* as one of the top 20 innovators in Atlantic Canada. He was named as the 2004 National Champion of Mental Health, Research by the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health and received the 2005 Mary Seeman award from the Canadian Psychiatry Research Foundation in recognition of his lifetime achievements in mental health work.

Dr. Kutcher is also a nationally and internationally active speaker, reviewer and consultant in psychiatry working in various countries around the globe and for various international groups including the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization.

*All She Does is Cry  
She's fallen down, too weak to rise  
She's fallen deep this time,  
All she does is cry.  
She's given up hope, without a second thought.  
God believes in her but she does not.  
Her tears fall like pouring rain.  
There is no laughter after her pain.  
She watches life pass her by,  
And all she does is cry.*

Meghan, Age 16  
From the exhibition, *The Courage to Tell*

## **Medical Presentations**

### ***Autism and Creativity: Dr. Susan Bryson***

In this presentation, Dr. Susan Bryson gave listeners a clear picture of patients with autism, explaining some of the challenges that face autism sufferers, but also illustrating the far-advanced abilities that many autistic patients present in their creativity, specifically drawing.

Dr. Bryson was recently recruited to Dalhousie University and the IWK Health Centre as the first holder of the Craig Chair in Autism Research. She was formerly Head and Clinical Director of the graduate program in Clinical-Developmental Psychology at York University, and Associate Scientist at the Hospital for Sick Children (HSC) in Toronto.

Dr. Bryson is a leading authority on the early detection and treatment of autism, on mechanisms of attention, emotion and learning in autism, and on co-morbid psychiatric disturbance in adolescents and adults with autism.

Autism is a complicated neurological disorder, present early in life, and is a lifelong condition. In fact, the diagnosis of autism covers a spectrum of conditions, including Asperger's disease. It affects one in 150 people. Dr. Bryson explained that in a fundamental sense, autism is a difficulty in processing sensory information and sufferers often have hyper-acuity of vision and hearing. The difference between Autism and Asperger's is that in autism, language is severely delayed, whereas with Asperger's, language is stronger, often precocious. But, for sufferers of either syndrome, social nuance and convention is difficult. Sufferers have difficulty understanding other people and are extremely socially innocent. The disease is sometimes described as a disorder of the imagination, although Dr. Bryson was keen to show that sufferers do have an imagination, but they may express this differently. Patients are often able to express themselves through their extraordinary creativity.

Dr. Bryson went on to describe several cases that she illustrated with slides on the screen, including Jessica Claiborne Park and Stephen Wiltshire. The most well known is Stephen Wiltshire, a British man who was diagnosed with autism at age three. He was impenetrable and had no communication (language) until he was eight years old. But aged four or five, he began drawing, by the age of nine he had produced books detailing landmark buildings and now after quick flights—20 minutes or so—over Manhattan, Tokyo and other cities, he can reproduce the exact skyline in perfect proportion, precision and architectural detail. Before he developed vocal skills, he used his art to communicate.

Dr. Bryson suggested that many of our most brilliant cultural icons, such as W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and Glenn Gould, have been described as having Asperger's Syndrome. "They showed an insatiable curiosity, singleness of purpose, drive for precision and truth and creativity that was unhindered by convention," said Dr. Bryson. "Not all people with autism or Asperger's can achieve these extraordinary feats, but many do have

abilities that have been untapped, in part because we have spent so much time focusing on their disabilities, rather than giving them the opportunity to develop their abilities.” She ended with a quote from Glenn Gould: “The purpose of art is not the release of a momentary ejection of adrenaline but is, rather, the gradual, lifelong construction of a state of wonder and serenity.”

***Addiction and the Arts: Dr. Anthony Phillips***

In this presentation, Dr. Anthony Phillips made a strong link between mind-altering substances and the arts, and the undeniable link between trauma, addiction and the benefits of music and art to people struggling with addiction.

Dr. Phillips is a world-renowned expert in brain function and behaviour. He is a co-Director of the University of British Columbia (UBC) Institute of Mental Health, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and a senior investigator with the University of British Columbia/Vancouver Coastal Health Brain Research Centre. Dr. Phillips was a founder of QLT, one of Canada's leading biotechnology companies, and is currently a director of Allon Therapeutics Inc. He serves on the Board of NeuroScience Canada, and is the Canadian representative on the North American Regional Committee of International Brain Research Organization (IBRO). He is also active in numerous other national and international neuroscience programs.

The power of art is to appeal to the human imagination, said Dr. Phillips. Across history, mind-altering substances have been used to enhance creativity. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, absinthe was used widely by society, and its impact was often depicted by artists such as Picasso, Degas and Van Gogh in their paintings. Dr. Phillips then showed a slide of someone injecting heroin by contemporary artist Rachel Strong. "Art, when paired with addiction, raises the suffering and brings it into the realm of compassion and high art. We see addiction in a different light," he claimed.

According to Dr. Phillips, there is an irrefutable link between trauma, loss, abuse and increased incidence of substance abuse. These facts have been brought to light in a recently released report called *Substance Abuse in Canada: Youth in Focus*, produced by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. Substance abuse is often seen as a way for people struggling with these issues to deal with the stresses in their life and often arises from chronic trauma in youth. Prevention may be more effective by not focusing on the drug abuse itself, but by preventing sexual and physical violence, he said. We should also reduce the stigma associated with addiction. Drawing in music and art can help deal with these issues.

Dr. Phillips went on to mention two practical programs currently underway that introduce the arts into the health environment. The first, *ArtsWay* in Vancouver, provides programs of the work of professional artists to health care organizations.

*ArtsWay* recognizes the time-honoured understanding that as much as the arts enrich human existence they are specially valued at times of illness and long-term seclusion.

The second is a new opera, a partnership between the University of British Columbia School of Music and the UBC Centre for Mental Health—*The Dream Healer*—based on Timothy Findley's book, *Pilgrim*. *The Dream Healer* centres on Carl Jung, who sought a healing bridge between the known and the unknown worlds of the human mind. This is not

just a work of biography, but also about social issues relating to total health—a concept that Jung so amazingly pioneered by broadening our understanding of healing to include not only science but also the humanities and the arts.

To continue the opera's explorations of mental health, UBC's Department of Psychiatry and UBC's Institute of Mental Health will organize a three-part lecture series, *The Dream Healer*, during the premiere performance week in March 2008. Leading clinicians and scholars will give lectures related to suicide, the stigma of mental illness and other topics.

Dr. Phillips expressed his interest in creating partnerships to create a forum for discussing important aspects of mental health research, as is the case with *The Dream Healer*. His most important message, however, was that we must address trauma to address the problems of addiction.

***Eating Disorders and Artistic Expression: Dr. Pier Bryden***

In this presentation, Dr. Pier Bryden outlined for listeners what eating disorders are, and what they are not, as well as giving numerous examples of eating disorder sufferers who have been helped by many different forms of artistic expression.

Dr. Bryden is a staff psychiatrist in the Department of Psychiatry at the Hospital for Sick Children, and an assistant professor at the University of Toronto. As an educator, Dr. Bryden is particularly interested in the use of the arts and humanities as a tool for educating medical professionals, patients and the general public on aspects of medicine and mental health. She also is the daughter of a theatre critic whose comment—when she announced she was going to medical school rather than pursuing a career in the arts or academe—that he was concerned she would be bored, has not been borne out.

Eating disorders are not lifestyle choices, they are not evidence of self-discipline, they are not glamorous, they are not the purview of girls and women and they are not rare. Eating disorders are lethal psychiatric illnesses with a mortality rate between 10 and 15 %, explained Dr. Bryden. There is also a genetic aspect to these disorders. The ratio of male to female sufferers is four to 10. In a survey of Ontario high school students of girls aged 12 to 18 years, 27% endorsed eating disorder behaviour that merited medical attention. However, less than 2% of students in the study had had a clinical assessment related to their eating.

“Eating disorders are a chronic illness of adolescence and it takes from five to seven years to emerge, with treatment,” said Dr. Bryden. Statistics show that 80% of adolescent patients will recover with treatment.

Dr. Bryden posed the nature versus nurture question for causes for eating disorders. She summed up her opinions in the words of American researcher Cynthia Bulick: “Genes load the gun, the environment pulls the trigger.” We must look at both aspects, nature and nurture; the arts as both a potential treatment tool and a preventative tool.

Dr. Bryden endorsed arts-based therapy in the treatment of eating disorders, although no empirically valued studies have been done on the effectiveness of this treatment. “But quantifiable is not the only form of evidence,” she said. “Qualitative research is a useful form of evidence.” She then went on to describe how arts—from story-writing, hip-hop, through song-writing, rhythm and blues and playing the guitar had helped some of her patients deal with the emotions that power their disorders. Dr. Bryden touched on the problems of image culture and the increased commercialization of popular youth culture—the glossy, powerful images of attractive young people. She pointed out that high art remains free from the commercial imperative that has invaded popular culture. This gives art the ability to deal with issues below the surface, things that are not shiny and glossy, to deal with the messy, vulnerable and unpolished sides of life.



Young people need to come to terms with these aspects of themselves—particularly difficult in adolescence—if they are to be able to reject the image of the perfect body as a solution to their adolescent discomfort, she said. Art presents an alternative to popular culture and a hope for young people to approach their bodies in different ways.

***Pieces***

*Losing my mind,  
Nothing is fine,  
You see this smile,  
It's not real.  
This is my life.  
I'm broken,  
Not a word can be spoken,  
I'm bleeding,  
Not allowed to be screaming.  
I'm crying. Crimson tears,  
My life is in pieces,  
Conflict inside.  
Losing my mind,  
Most pretend to be fine.  
Empty, but not past  
I sit here and make little slits,  
Some on my ankles, some on my wrists.  
I do not do this for attention.  
My scars remind me that the past is real,  
Even when I cannot feel.*

**Ailish, Age 17**

**From the exhibition *The Courage to Tell***

**Roundtable Leadership Discussion**

The Member of Parliament for Muskoka-Parry Sound and federal Minister of Health, the Honourable Tony Clement joined the Roundtable after the mid-morning break.

Mr. Clement emphasized the serious implications of mental health issues to the country, an issue that affects every Canadian in one way or another. "I'm told that the cost of mental illness to Canada is \$33 billion per annum. That's what Ontario spends annually for everything—all of its health—hospitals, doctors, nurses. It impacts different populations to different degrees—I'm thinking of the First Nations and Inuit peoples in particular. These are issues that we **have** to tackle as members of a civilized society." The federal government recently named former Senator Michael Kirby as Chair of the new Mental Health Commission which will focus on three areas: developing a national mental health strategy; sharing knowledge and best practices for the benefit of Canadians from coast to coast to coast; and undertaking public awareness and education in order to combat the hurtful stigma associated with mental illness.

Mr. Raymond Ko is the founder of the Music Sensory Awakening Program and has recently completed his second year of studies at the University of Saskatchewan. He is an accomplished violin and piano player and is a 2005 laureate of the \$60,000 TD Canada Trust Scholarship for Community Leadership. Since volunteering as a piano teacher for underprivileged and disenfranchised children at Radius Community Centre, Mr. Ko was inspired to develop classes for children with special needs. Seeing that music therapy has been shown to have a positive influence in the treatment of autism, in 2004 he started a non-profit program offering classes through Autism Services, Saskatoon. The 30-minute one-on-one classes are offered weekly to autistic children. Students learn the basics of music—simple rhythms and notation.

Mr. Ko told listeners about his annual fundraising concert for his program, which raised \$15,000 this year in May. He then directed attention to the screen where one of his students, Jordan, who came to him non-verbal, performed *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* on the piano at the concert. His beaming smile and repeated bows to the clapping audience, "shows how music has helped him communicate with people, with his audience," said Mr. Ko.

*I'm told that the cost of mental illness to Canada is \$33 billion per annum.*

The first question to stimulate discussion was posed by moderator Don Newman:

Is there an organized way that arts organizations can contribute to improving mental health for children and youth? Or does it come back to the people in the community to engage the arts organizations, or is it for the arts organizations to take the initiative? On a local level? national level? Is there a national initiative?

Dr. Kutcher said that this question, of mental health, is a tremendous challenge that the profession would like to approach. In his opinion there are a number of ways to move

forward, but one of the most important would be to remove the stigma of mental illness for young people. The approach to the stigma must be multi-faceted as it pervades advertising and the professional culture. It even pervades parts of the medical establishment. One of the ways we can try to do reduce the stigma is to link the importance of mental health issues with arts organizations across the country, to bring them together in a normalizing way.

Mr. David Lemon, founder of ArtsWay in Vancouver, pointed out that arts organizations are anxious to help if they can. Health Arts Society has had a good response from the medical community, but arts organizations are struggling to meet their own objectives. No matter how worthwhile the cause, they can't add arts interventions into healthcare to their programming because they don't have the resources to do so. In order for something practical to be done, intermediate organizations dedicated to arts in health need to be created to mobilize resources and build programs. Resources are needed to pay artists—perhaps money from healthcare services or funding organizations dedicated to seeing intervention happen.

Dr. Margaret Clarke told of her experience with arts and mental health partnerships. She told the story of an eight-year-old cocaine addict, for whom she could not get treatment, who thanks to fly-fishing and his mentoring at the Banff Centre by a series of artists, is now drug-free. She pointed out that the need is for co-location—the kinds of spaces we need are those similar to those for holistic treatment for children. She gave as an example the Child Development Centre at the University of Calgary, currently under construction. The CDC is a 12,000 square metre project consisting of office, laboratory and child care space. The CDC project anticipates the achievement of significant synergies by creating an integrated, collaborative and innovative environment for a multidisciplinary team of child development clinicians, researchers, educators and policy makers. Dr. Clarke told the story of procuring a piano from Cantos for the opening of the building and for the program and wondered if this might be the beginning of other arts partnerships. “The most important thing,” she said, “is to get something up and running and show people what you mean by partnership, especially with something as airy-fairy as medicine and the arts.”

Dr. Susan Bryson pointed out that one of the greatest needs is to educate people on a national level, even in our schools, because such ignorance surrounds mental illness. Anything we can do at an educational level to help people empathize would be positive because emotion drives people.

Dr. Simon Davidson, Chief of Psychiatry at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), Medical Director of the Mental Health Patient Service Unit at CHEO and Executive Director of Planning and Development of the Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health at CHEO, told a story of a dentist in Windsor whom he met at a conference. This dentist said that he had no family or friends with mental health illness but he was very concerned about this issue. “It is important to engage the 80% of the population who don't have it. Through the arts there is an opportunity in partnership to engage all Canadians,” he said. Dr. Davidson referred to Dr. Kelley Leech, a researcher who has advocated for mental health courses to run alongside parenting courses. “We have

to find a way of giving parents knowledge to raise healthier children and youth,” he said. Dr. Davidson also talked about youth mental health programs and the Ottawa School of Art—a mural project—and the *Dare to Dream* award program for 12-to-18 year-olds, which engage and support youth and work towards de-stigmatizing the issues. Dr. Davidson is a Professor and Chairman of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Ottawa. He has recently been appointed Chair of the Children and Youth Advisory Committee for the Mental Health Commission of Canada. He is also a Past President of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP).

Mrs. Joan Craig talked about autism and acceptance and the arts. “I feel that a lot of people have heard about autism,” she said, “and I also feel that my son has been trying to fit in for 50 years and it’s time for society to open up to accommodate him.” She gave as examples of arts working successfully with mental health patients, the play “*God’s Middle Name*,” and an initiative by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia to offer programs one-on-one to autism sufferers. “I feel that doing something one-on-one in a small way can make a big difference,” she said.

Mr. Mike Lake, Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Mill Woods-Beaumont, introduced his autistic son Jaden before talking about accessibility to activities for those dealing with autism. “I’m not an expert on autism and I’m not an expert on the arts,” he said, but went on to describe positive experiences for Jaden with hockey and another class in Tae Kwan Do being taught for kids with autism. “But a few thoughts,” he said, “as parents you’ll look for a million different things that are purported to help kids with autism, but I want to see more of what I’m hearing here—deliberate and scientific. As autism is entirely sensory, it would make sense that it would fit with the arts... when we’re talking about movement... in an auditory, visual way. Something is different in kids with autism and if we can find out how to communicate in a different way, there will be real benefits. We must deal with the tax dollars already on the table and adopt a multi-disciplinary approach. It’s important to be at the table with the provinces as they design their approach to autism. I’m really encouraged by everything I’m hearing here today.”

*Mental illness does not come from spirits, it’s not something we ‘catch’ —it comes from the brain.*

Ms. Zita Cobb, arts philanthropist and social entrepreneur, spoke to the power of the school system to get messages out into the public domain across the country, touching even the smallest rural communities, but also of the need for our societies to live in more artful ways. “Let’s get more art, more awareness of art, visual art and music in our schools,” she said. “The intersection of the people responsible for education, health and the arts in our country can do amazing things together. We should be talking about mental health in schools across the country.”

Ms. Aileen O’Rafferty, Executive Director for the Ron Joyce Foundation, concurred with Ms. Cobb that we must look at children in remote and rural communities. She also pointed out that, “When we line up families, children and youth, we often get to the youth last as

they are the more challenging to deal with. In rural communities often the youth are by then out of the school system and looking for ways to deal with their struggles. The Government of Canada has done a huge amount of work on this issue and I congratulate them.”

Dr. Stan Kutcher said that human connection is the key to improving the human condition. “I see the arts as a channel to improving the human connection. The issue is how can we use this channel? We can reach young people, we can reach parents each one of us,” he said.

Dr. Antoine Hakim, Professor and University Chair of Neurology at the University of Ottawa, Director, Neuroscience Research at the Ottawa Health Research Institute and CEO and Scientific Director of the Canadian Stroke Network, spoke about values. “Salvation for our children may come from the values they were given when growing up. Kids go into a tunnel at the age of sometimes 12, sometimes 18, and when they emerge, they’d best have values to fall back on,” he said. Mental illness does not come from spirits, he pointed out, it’s not something we ‘catch’—it comes from the brain. He touched on the fields of psychiatry and neurology and their separation within the medical field, but went on to point out that 50% of brain damage, regardless of the cause, will involve mental health issues. An important avenue is going to be the combination of knowledge from these two fields to aid sufferers. And finally, he reiterated Ms. Cobb’s point about making connections and using the arts as a way to make connections between people.

Dr. Anthony Phillips agreed with Dr. Hakim that the medical profession needs to break down barriers between neurology and psychiatry to investigate brain health. At UBC, they are trying to create a new centre, called the Centre for Brain Health. He also touched on the need for tangible, measurable benefits of arts programs within medicine, which would prove the case, so to speak, and make applications for funding easier.

Elysse Melo, 17, currently attending an art therapy program, shared her story with listeners and attributed her progress directly to the healing power of art. “I have experienced the healing power of art,” she said, “I have tried many types of cognitive and dialectic therapy but I am here today thanks to art therapy. Things were really bad. I feel like the only thing that helped get me through was the art therapy. It is a way for me to express myself without the pressure of structure. I’ve grown so much from the girl who didn’t go to school for two and a half years. I’m in school full time right now and I’m talking in front of you all. That’s huge. It upsets me that art therapy isn’t more mainstream. At many other of my therapies many of the doctors didn’t even know about art therapy. I believe in it very strongly,” she concluded. She was greeted by a standing ovation.

Mr. Raymond Ko pointed out that so many things are possible through education. Concerts showcase that these students (his autistic students) are capable and can achieve. These concerts are just one way to help educate the public.

The moderator, Don Newman, asked Susan Petersen, Associate Deputy Minister of Heritage, the following: “It seems as if it’s hit and miss, you see the right doctor, get on the

right program; the number of people who fall through the cracks must be enormous. Is there a way for the arts and medical communities to make sure that people don't get missed? Is it more government programs or a foundation that has both public and private sponsorship to it to bring organizations together?"

Mrs. Petersen replied that there is an annual venue where the biggest 50 arts organizations across the country get together annually and it would be possible to discuss it at that venue. She mentioned the recent government \$30-million annual support for local festivals and heritage community events and suggested it might be an idea to build a link between this new program and young people and mental health.

Honourable Tony Clement agreed that government can be helpful in some of these issues and will continue to fund evidence-based research. For example, there is a new strategy on how society deals with illicit drugs that is connected to mental illness and health and prevention, but he went on to point out that it can't just be the federal government that is responsible. Other elements of society have to be part of the solution.

*"I have experienced the healing power of art..."*

Amanda Flasko, a youth who attended the Art Therapy program, spoke to her experience with falling through the cracks. "Falling through the cracks—so many do. Art has helped me so much," she said, "I now work in an elementary school with kids with autism and we need more support in schools and we don't get enough."

Dr. Margaret Clarke made the first commitment of the roundtable. "I commit to hosting a western roundtable on the arts, child mental health, child development in conjunction with Elysse and Amanda who I hope will help me plan. We will continue this conversation. We've only hit the tip of the iceberg this morning. We need to hear more from Elysse and Amanda," she said.

Mrs. Darrell Gregersen, Chief Executive Officer of the National Arts Centre Foundation, closed the roundtable discussion by thanking participants of this year's roundtable and last year's roundtable, and thanking a member of the audience in particular: Jim Howard, the Executive Director of Musicfest Canada who has made it possible to reach 400,000 young people across the country. She wondered if this group would take on the subject of children's mental health as a cause of choice? Jim Howard has agreed to work with Simon Davidson's *Dare to Dream* model to spread the news on this subject across the country. She also thanked Mr. Frank O'Dea, the keynote speaker.

## **Conclusion**

The National Arts Centre Roundtable on Healing and the Arts: Healthy Mental Development for Children and Youth was the third in a series on the intersection between health and the arts.

The message that emerged from the roundtable was clear. There is huge opportunity here for arts and medical establishments to work together and the need is there, but the difficulty lies in getting tangible programs off the ground and running. The need for more dialogue in the public domain on the issue of children and youth mental health, to destigmatize the subject, also came to the forefront of the discussions.

We were encouraged to hear from some of the country's top researchers, scientists, doctors and generous philanthropists that they feel strongly that the art communities across the country have an important role to play in the mental health field. There was a palpable feeling of "can do" at this roundtable, with the realization that where there is a will, there is a way. This was endorsed by the emotional testimony of two young women who gave testament to the power of the arts to improve the life of sufferers of mental illness.

Darrell Gregersen closed the Roundtable by describing a tangible connection that has been made by the National Arts Centre following the 2006 roundtable. Over the last year Jim Howard and his Musicfest organization have agreed to work with Dr. Simon Davidson's Dare to Dream program to facilitate contact with 400,000 students across the country. The National Arts Centre intends to continue to facilitate connections within these fields.

As Mrs. Gregersen concluded, one of the most important aspects of the National Arts Centre Roundtables is to bring together people who might not know one another but have important things in common. These people and partnerships can help to create changes in society. The National Arts Centre hopes that this third roundtable on mental health and the arts will be such a catalyst for change.

## **Recommendations**

1. Encourage arts groups to think about ways they can raise the profile of mental health issues and help deflate negative stereotypes.
2. Encourage partnerships between arts organizations and health care/mental health care organizations to treat and prevent mental illness.
3. Encourage stakeholders to become spokespeople in order to help fight stigma of mental illness.
4. Post-Roundtable, continue the national dialogue across different sectors— the healthcare environment, government, the arts, business, philanthropy—in order to generate a stronger collective effort.
5. Support publicly funded research into the effect of the arts on the treatment and prevention of mental illness.
6. Impress upon the federal government the need for a national action plan on mental health that includes the fight against stigma, as well as significant resources to support research, treatment, prevention and education.
7. Broaden knowledge among physicians about the important role of the arts in the treatment of mental illness and the promotion of mental health.
8. Support efforts to showcase art by people with mental illness in the public sphere, in order to educate the public about the enormous contributions that people with mental illness can make, and to help combat stigma.
9. Advocate for strong arts programs in schools as a means to promote the mental well-being of children and young people.



## **Participant List**

### **Hosts:**

Mrs. Julia Foster, Chair, National Arts Centre Board of Trustees

Mr. Peter A. Herrndorf, President and CEO, National Arts Centre

### **Opening Address:**

Mr. Frank O'Dea, Co-founder, Second Cup

**Moderator:** Mr. Don Newman, Senior Parliamentary Editor, CBC News

**Special Guest:** Mr. Pinchas Zukerman, Music Director, National Arts Centre Orchestra

### **Organizer:**

Mrs. Darrell Louise Gregersen, CEO, National Arts Centre Foundation

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### **Dr. Pier Bryden, MD, FRCP**

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry,  
University of Toronto and the Hospital for Sick  
Children

Toronto, Ontario

### **Dr. Susan E. Bryson**

Craig Chair in Autism, Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

### **Dr. Margaret E. Clarke**

Division Chief, Developmental Pediatrics,  
Calgary Health Region  
Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Departments of  
Pediatrics and Psychiatry, University of  
Calgary

Calgary, Alberta

### **Hon. Tony Clement**

Minister of Health and the Minister for the  
Federal Economic Development Initiative for  
Northern Ontario  
Port Sydney, Ontario

### **Ms. Zita Cobb**

Arts philanthropist and social entrepreneur  
Ottawa, Ontario

### **Mrs. Joan M. Craig, C.M.**

Trustee, Craig Foundation  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

### **Dr. Simon I. Davidson, M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.P.(C)**

Chief of Psychiatry, Children's Hospital of  
Eastern Ontario (CHEO)

Medical Director, Mental Health Patient  
Service Unit at CHEO

Executive Director of Planning and  
Development, Provincial Centre of  
Excellence for Child and Youth Mental  
Health at CHEO

Ottawa, Ontario

### **Dr. Antoine M. Hakim**

Professor and University Chair, Neurology,  
University of Ottawa

Director, Neuroscience Research, Ottawa  
Health Research Institute

CEO and Scientific Director, Canadian  
Stroke Network

Senior Director, Heart and Stroke Foundation  
of Ontario, Centre for Stroke Recovery

Ottawa, Ontario

**Mr. Raymond Ko**

Student, University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

**Dr. Stanley Kutcher, MD, FRCPC**

Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental  
Health, Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

**Mr. Mike Lake**

Member of Parliament,  
Edmonton - Mill Woods – Beaumont  
Edmonton, Alberta

**Mr. David Lemon**

Executive Director, Health Arts Society  
Vancouver, British Columbia

**Ms. Aileen O'Rafferty**

Executive Director, Ron Joyce Foundation  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

**Ms. Susan Peterson**

Associate Deputy Minister  
Department of Canadian Heritage,  
Government of Canada  
Gatineau, Quebec

**Dr. Anthony G. Phillips**

Co-Director, UBC Institute of Mental  
Health  
Professor, Department of Psychiatry,  
University of British Columbia/Vancouver  
Coastal Health Brain Research Centre  
Vancouver, British Columbia

**Mr. W. Brett Wilson**

Managing Director & Chairman,  
FirstEnergy Capital Corporation  
Calgary, Alberta

**Ms. Janet Yale**

Executive Vice-President, Corporate  
Affairs, TELUS  
Ottawa, Ontario

## **Canada's National Arts Centre**

The National Arts Centre raised its curtains for the first time in 1969. Created by the Government of Canada as a Centennial project during the 1960s, the National Arts Centre has become Canada's foremost showcase for the performing arts. Today, the National Arts Centre works with countless artists, both emerging and established, from across Canada and around the world, and collaborates with scores of other arts organizations across the country.

The National Arts Centre is strongly committed to being a leader and innovator in each of the performing arts fields in which it works: classical music, English theatre, French theatre, dance, variety, and community programming. It is at the forefront of youth and educational activities, supporting programs for young and emerging artists and for young audiences, and producing resources and study materials for teachers. It is the only multidisciplinary, bilingual performing arts centre in North America, and one of the largest in the world.

## **National Arts Centre Foundation**

The National Arts Centre Foundation was established in July 2000, with the mandate to raise significant financial support for artistic and educational programming by the National Arts Centre. The Foundation's mission is to inspire individuals, corporations and foundations to invest in the National Arts Centre's vision of artistic innovation, development of young talent, and creation of new works, to benefit all Canadians.

The National Arts Centre Foundation provides a full service development program for Canadians from coast to coast who wish to support the National Arts Centre, including opportunities for annual giving, major and planned gifts, special events and corporate sponsorship. A substantial portion of the Foundation's funds are raised through its National Youth and Education Trust, which is dedicated to investing in young Canadians through the performing arts.

## **Sun Life Financial**

At Sun Life Financial, health-related matters are a major focus of our support for the communities in which we live, work and do business. In keeping with that focus, we believe there can be no more important initiative than the healthy mental development of our children and young people.

We believe that raising awareness and understanding of mental illness is an important issue for all Canadians, and we support the researchers in this important field of medicine who are working to find new and creative therapies, including examining the untapped potential of the performing arts to help all young people live healthy, creative lives. Our sponsorship of the National Arts Centre Foundation Roundtable on Healing and the Arts is one example of this support.

Sun Life Financial is proud to sponsor this important initiative, one that combines our corporate commitment to health-related causes with our long-standing support of the arts. We commend the National Arts Centre for its work in advancing the goal of healthier lives for all Canadians.

### **University of Ottawa**

The University of Ottawa is a proud sponsor of the National Arts Centre's Roundtable on Mental Health and the Arts, a unique opportunity to explore the role of the arts in therapeutic approaches.

More than in any other area of life, Canadians depend on university research to improve the effectiveness of our health care system. In September 2007, the University's Institute of Mental Health Research, the third-largest mental health research centre in Canada, hosted its first scientific symposium. And Dr. Simon Davidson, chair of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Faculty of Medicine, was named chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Advisory Committee on Children and Youth.

The University of Ottawa has made health one of its strategic areas of development in research. In developing knowledge needed for the effective planning and delivery of the whole spectrum of mental health services, our institution is working to make a difference in the lives of Canadians.

Since 1848, the University of Ottawa has aspired to be, among universities, the essential reference on what Canada represents: a university that is an integral part of its community, open to the world and distinguished by its excellence in research.