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British Columbia: Home to Many of Canada's Most Artistic Small and Rural Municipalities

Artists in Small and Rural Municipalities in Canada, a new report from Hill Strategies Research, finds significant concentrations of artists in small and rural municipalities across Canada. The study is based on a custom data request from Statistics Canada's 2001 census, conceived of and commissioned by Hill Strategies Research. The full report and regional summaries are available for free from the Hill Strategies Research website (http://www.hillstrategies.com).

Previous reports by Hill Strategies Research showed that there are 130,700 artists in Canada, representing 0.8% of the overall labour force. There are 22,100 artists in the 264 small and rural municipalities with reliable data, representing 17% of all artists in Canada.

"Small and rural" municipalities are defined as those municipalities with fewer than 50,000 residents, based on 2001 municipal boundaries. Census data is available only for the 264 small and rural municipalities with 40 or more artists. A subsequent report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series will examine 92 large municipalities in Canada.

A key finding of the report – that there are significant concentrations of artists in small and rural municipalities across the country – demonstrates that the arts contribute to the quality of life and the social and economic vitality of many small and rural communities in Canada. Particularly in small and rural municipalities, a strong artistic community can lead to "pride of place" and can therefore enhance the whole community's well-being. A strong artistic presence can also help to draw new residents to communities, including artists and others who are stimulated, inspired and entertained by the arts.

Cape Dorset, Nunavut, with almost one in four labour force workers in the arts, is the most artistic municipality in Canada. Cape Dorset has 110 artists among a total labour force of 485, for an artistic concentration of 23%.

Table 1 shows that seven of the 10 most artistic small and rural municipalities in Canada are in British Columbia. The B.C. municipality with the highest artistic concentration is Squamish-Lillooet D Regional District Electoral Area (largely situated between Vancouver and Whistler), which has 45 artists among a total labour force of 480, for an artistic concentration of 9.4%. This is second only to Cape Dorset among Canadian municipalities.

Other B.C. municipalities in the "top 10" list are: Comox-Strathcona K Regional District Electoral Area (or "RDA", 8.2%); Bowen Island (6.6%); Nanaimo B RDA (5.8%); Capital F RDA (5.2%); Lions Bay (4.8%); and Cowichan Valley G RDA (4.4%).

Table 1: Canada's 10 most artistic municipalities, 2001						
Municipality	**Prov**	**Type**	**Location**	**Number of artists**	**Total labour force**	**Artists as %**
Cape Dorset	NU	HAM	Baffin Island	110	485	22.7%
Squamish-Lillooet D	BC	RDA	Vancouver-Whistler	45	480	9.4%
Comox-Strathcona K	BC	RDA	Vancouver Island	85	1,040	8.2%
Bowen Island	BC	IM	northwest of Vancouver	115	1,735	6.6%
Sutton	QC	V	Eastern Townships	40	670	6.0%
Nanaimo B	BC	RDA	Vancouver Island	105	1,805	5.8%
Capital F	BC	RDA	incl. Saltspring Island	255	4,925	5.2%
Lions Bay	BC	VL	north of Vancouver on Howe Sound	40	830	4.8%
Outremont	QC	V	Montreal	600	12,545	4.8%
Cowichan Valley G	BC	RDA	Vancouver Island	50	1,125	4.4%
**Municipality types: HAM=Hamlet, IM=Island Municipality, RDA=Regional District Electoral Area, V=Ville, VL=Village*						

The most artistic small and rural municipalities have much higher artistic concentrations than larger Canadian municipalities (population over 50,000). The large municipality with the highest artistic concentration ranks only 28th among the smaller municipalities.

Report and data notes:

- The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Cultural Observatory and Arts Policy Branch), and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (http://www.hillstrategies.com) and the funding organizations. The report is the thirteenth in a *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series by Hill Strategies Research.
- "Small and rural" municipalities are defined as those municipalities with fewer than 50,000 residents, based on 2001 municipal boundaries. Census data is available only for the 264 small and rural municipalities with 40 or more artists. A subsequent report will examine larger municipalities in Canada.
- Data is reported for the municipal boundaries that existed in 2001.
- Nine arts occupations are included in the analysis: (1) actors; (2) artisans and craftspersons; (3) conductors, composers and arrangers; (4) dancers; (5) musicians and singers; (6) other performers (such as circus performers and puppeteers); (7) painters, sculptors and other visual artists; (8) producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and (9) writers.
- The census captures information about the occupation at which a person worked the most hours between May 6 and 12, 2001. Overall, census estimates of artists may be somewhat low because of the frequency of multiple job-holding among artists and the May timing of the census.

- The occupational categories are not a perfect fit for all artists but do provide a reasonable approximation of arts employment and self-employment. However, media artists are not well captured in the occupational classifications. In addition, the selected occupational classifications exclude those teaching arts disciplines in post-secondary, secondary or elementary schools. Those teaching artistic disciplines at private or other types of schools (such as dance schools) *are* included in the figures.
- Please see the full report for more information regarding the methodology of this report as well as a discussion of Census strengths and limitations.

The previous reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series are:

- *Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada* (October 2005)
- *Consumer spending on culture in Canada in 2003* (May 2005)
- *Who Buys Books in Canada* (March 2005)
- *Diversity in Canada's Arts Labour Force* (February 2005)
- *Artists in Canada's Provinces, Territories and Metropolitan Areas* (October 2004)
- *A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada* (September 2004)
- *Performing Arts Spending in Canada in 2001* (April 2004)
- *Donors to Arts and Culture Organizations in Canada* (January 2004)
- *Volunteers in Arts and Culture Organizations in Canada* (November 2003)
- *Consumer Spending on Culture in Canada, the Provinces and 13 Municipal Regions in 2001* (March 2003)
- *Museum and Art Gallery Attendance* (March 2003)
- *Performing Arts Attendance in Canada* (January 2003)