



MEDIA RELEASE
January 8, 2013

Talking Sex in Vancouver

Museum of Vancouver tackles taboo subject by exploring its cultural history

(VANCOUVER, BC) – What better to do on Valentine’s Day, than throw open the doors to an exhibition dedicated to Vancouver’s sexual history? *Sex Talk in the City*, the Museum of Vancouver’s newest exhibition, opens February 14, 2013, and will give visitors a chance to consider how sexuality is not only biological, but also cultural and political.

Moving from the classroom, to the bedroom, to the streets, *Sex Talk in the City* explores how sexuality is learned (at school, in the media, through popular culture) and how these conversations have impacted the way people self-identify and relate to each other.

“Exploring what people in Vancouver think about sex becomes a telling way to know the city,” explains Viviane Gosselin, *Sex Talk’s* curatorial lead. “Looking at Vancouver’s sexual history has enabled us to see that many people in the city have challenged the sexual norms of their time — whether it is on issues of contraception, gay rights, or the ergonomics of sex toys — to create communities that are more inclusive and educated.”

The exhibition shares stories ranging from early sex education in Vancouver, to political movements that began at our local universities, to the local origin of the iconic black cougar logo that for decades warned movie audiences about sexually explicit content. It also touches on issues of sex trade work, the role of the Internet as “sex educator” to many children, and how the pleasure of belonging can be as important as pleasure itself.

In the collaborative style that Gosselin brought to the award-winning *Bhangra.me* exhibition, *Sex Talk in the City* was created with an advisory panel of 17 people, and a team that included the design studio Propellor, a writer, filmmaker, and several historians.

“Working with a large advisory committee has played a crucial role in this project,” says Gosselin. “Committee members stressed the importance of featuring diverse perspectives while highlighting concerns that are often shared across age, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation.”

Sex Talk in the City is a unique opportunity to reflect on personal ideas about sexuality (where they came from, the values that shaped them, and how they help or impede our ability to live a healthy sexual life) in a safe, fun, and interesting environment. Visitors are sure to leave wanting to share their own quirky stories about their first time, their sex ed class experience, or the awkward birds and bees conversation they had with their parents.

The creation of *Sex Talk in the City* involved the participation of Options for Sexual Health, the Vancouver Queer Film Festival, the Vancouver School Board, public health experts, activists, sexologists, educators, youth, and historians.

-30-

Large format images of Sex Talk in the City and related artifacts are available on request.

The Museum of Vancouver is an independent non-profit organization with the mandate to hold a mirror to the city and lead provocative conversations about its past, present, and future.

Media Contact

Amanda McCuaig, Marketing Officer

T: 604.730.5309 C : 604.312.8791

E: amccuaig@museumofvancouver.ca

Viviane Gosselin / MOV Curator of Contemporary Issues, Co-curator

Gosselin is most recently known for her Canadian Museum Association award for Best Exhibition in the Education Category for the Bhangra.me exhibition, shown at the MOV in 2011. She has led exhibition teams in museums for the past 15 years while serving on peer review committees with the Canadian Museum Association, Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts. Her work received awards of excellence with the Canadian Association of Science Centres (2007) and the Canadian Museum Association (2012). She has published in national and international publications and has recently been elected on the board of ICOM-Canada, the national body of the International Council of Museums.

In addition to her work at the MOV, she is an Associate Researcher with the UBC Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness. She is particularly interested in the intersection between urbanity, material culture and the changing role of museums.

Advisory Committee

Jennifer Breakspear, Options for Sexual Health

Sarah Callahan, BC Centre for Disease Control

Ron Collins, Options for Sexual Health

Amber Dawn, Vancouver Queer Film Festival

Richard Dopson, Co-Chair of 1990 Gay Games

Mona Gleason, Associate Professor and Historian of Sexuality, UBC Dept of Educational studies

Barb Hestrin, Options for Sexual Health

Meg Hickling, Writer/ Sexual Health Educator

Wade Janzen, Museum Educator/LGBTQ activist

Scarlett Lake, Madam/manager/owner at Scarlett's House

Jane Langton, Certified Sexual Health Educator

Lisa Loutzenheiser, UBC / Dept of Curriculum and Pedagogy

Faizal Sahukhan, Clinical Sexologist

Jan Sippel, Vancouver School Board

Daphnee Spencer, BC Centre for Disease Control

Jen Sung, Out in Schools-Out on Screen

Leroy Wan, Performing Artist