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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**VIRTUAL FESTIVAL TO SHOWCASE THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY THROUGH ART**

**TORONTO, ON (June 11, 2020)** – A unique multi-day virtual festival is all set to address concerns associated with gender disparity and gender equity through the medium of art.

Titled “Her Voice”, the festival will showcase two live events, a virtual visual arts exhibition and a series of virtual workshops, focused towards building meaningful partnerships and collaborations and shining the limelight on the integral role played by women and girls from visible minorities in building strong communities.

June 20 & 27, July 25 & 26, August 1 & 2– Facebook Live

Funded by Canadian Heritage, this multi-day virtual festival will focus on encouraging a constructive conversation around the role and participation of girls and women of colour in today’s society. Hosted through a series of virtual workshops and events, Her Voice, through the medium of art and performing arts, will address concerns and challenges related to gender gap and equity.

The festival aims to encourage women of colour to come together, empower each other and celebrate their strength through a showcase of their artistic talents.

“Women of colour have been silent about the challenges they face” says Shirin Mandani, President of Artists and Artisans Development and Network. “Through this festival our goal is to give newcomer and immigrant women a voice to place their concerns and issues through the social media platform and to raise awareness about the important role that women play in community development.

“Artists and Artisans Development and Network is governed by women and makes strides towards events focussing on gender equity, equality and empowerment” says Shirin Mandani, President, Artists and Artisans Development and Network. “As a strong advocate of gender equity, I personally believe that in order to have your voice heard, you first need to be offered a seat at the table. Through this event, we are trying to do that.”

As part of the festival, Artists and Artisans Development and Network are also working on an app. The app will feature exclusive content on the topics addressed as well as a list of resources users can go to for more information.

“We want to ensure the conversation is ongoing,” says Mandani. “The app will allow us to continue staying in the forefront gender equity, equality, empowerment through arts and culture. We’re looking for tangible long-term results and in order to achieve that, it is important that people have access to timely and up-to-date information.”

The festival is supported by Canin Cultural Council.

“Canin Cultural Council has always been a strong advocate for women and the arts,” says Khalid Sayed, President, Canin Cultural Council. “This festival is being hosted at a unique time when the entire world is suffering from the aftermath of COVID-19it is more important than ever to encourage the contribution of women artists in making our societies a safer space. Women nurture. Art heals.”

For more information about Her Voice, please visit [www.artistsandartisans.org](about:blank)

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**About Artists and Artisans Development and Network**

Artists & Artisans Development Network (AADN) was founded in 2014 to provide resources and community development for artists and artisans who are immigrants to Canada. The organization started by helping artists participate in community events and festivals to promote and showcase their work and have since grown our community and program offerings. They currently work with over 500 artists in over 12 languages, helping them access cultural and economic opportunities.

**About Canin Cultural Council**

A Mississauga based not-for-profit, Canin Cultural Council’s vision is to become a go-to space for artists who wish to connect with their ideal audience, be it through a rigorous Public Relations Campaign, helping them access programming and grants or readings, live demonstrations and workshops. The Council’s mandate is to allow artists practicing all forms of art to connect with their immediate and extended audience through collaborations, exhibitions, and public appearances and provide crucial know-how and programming that will allow them to achieve their individual goals and be acquainted as experts within their chosen field of practice

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