

**Diverse Spaces:  
Examining identity, community and citizenship within Canadian public culture**

April 20-21, 2012

Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies

Trent University

Peterborough, Canada

Identity, belonging and citizenship within the nation state are established, contested and legitimized within sites and institutions of public culture, heritage and representation. In Canada, people from diverse cultural backgrounds seek to engage with cultural, historical and social knowledge in these spaces. While public museums have been primary sites of engagement, some people have sought to create alternative opportunities and institutional spaces to express and represent the complexities of their histories, identities, communities and places in both Canadian and global society. We are seeking papers that explore the roles that all types of public spaces play in the expression or contestation of different histories, different identities, and different forms of community, national and transnational citizenship.

The goal of this conference is to bring together a wide range of academics, professionals, community leaders and students to examine, analyze and theorize the dynamics of public cultural institutions in relation to the putative multicultural nation of Canada. What negotiations, relationships, compromises, conflicts, successes or failures emerge as new spaces are established, and as old ones are reconstituted or rethought? We welcome papers and panels from all disciplines and interdisciplinary fields that touch on the spaces, the structures, the goals, the practices, the people or the processes of public cultural and heritage institutions on local, community, national or international scales that comparatively or specifically offer comment on the Canadian context. Possible topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Conceptualizing difference/diversity/multiculturalism/pluralism in public spaces
- Representing the multicultural “we” in national spaces
- New social and cultural spaces of representation
- Collecting the transnational/multicultural ‘citizen’
- Virtual/digital collections and the ‘real’ of the public sphere
- Diaspora, migrations, uprooting and ‘heritage’
- Spaces of memory and testimony
- Donors, diversity, and ‘new’ museum publics
- State museums/institutions and representations of citizenship
- Citizenship/community in public spaces from above, below and afar
- Cross-cultural encounters in public spaces/institutions
- Museums and collaborative processes
- Virtual worlds, public culture and representation
- New media and transnational identities

Please submit either (a) 250 word abstracts for an individual papers, or (b) proposals for panels including 3 papers by **August 31, 2011** to [diversespaces@gmail.com](mailto:diversespaces@gmail.com). Accepted papers and panels will be announced by the end of **January, 2012**.

The conference is organized by Julia Harrison, Director, and Susan Ashley, SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies, Trent University, Peterborough, Canada.