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MEDIA RELEASE

Acclaimed activist asks 'How do we improve civic participation?'

May 23, 2013

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Dave Meslin, the artist-activist whose groundbreaking project **The Fourth Wall** resulted in the Toronto Star calling him “one of the people to watch in 2012,” returns to Vancouver on May 29, to lead a community dialogue with SFU’s **Centre for Dialogue** designed to assist in “**Building a Culture of Participation**.”

With low voter turnout impacting municipal, provincial and federal elections, Meslin will be encouraging citizens to step away from their role as spectators and inspire them to actively get involved in local politics and the democratic process.

In September of 2012, Meslin participated in **SFU Public Square**’s inaugural community summit, which focused on the issue of isolation and social disconnection in Metro Vancouver. The summit resulted in the City of Vancouver creating the **Mayor’s Engaged City Task Force** to address the issue.

City staff will be attending the dialogue on May 29, and setting up kiosks to receive input from the public. During his visit to Vancouver Meslin will be meeting with city residents and members of the Mayor’s Engaged City Task Force to help generate ideas for the Task Force’s final report, which is due in July of 2013.

As part of the annual **Bruce and Lis Welch Community Dialogue Series**, which explores critical community issues, Meslin will present ideas at his dialogue from the **The Fourth Wall**. Focused on breaking down the perceived barrier between City Halls and citizens, **The Fourth Wall** asks how citizens can work together to achieve and foster a culture of engagement.

Participants will have the opportunity to interact with Meslin and other attendees at the event and will be encouraged to share their own ideas for strengthening Vancouver’s civic democracy. A post-event reception will follow.

What: **Building a Culture of Participation with Dave Meslin**

When: May 29, 2013 – 7pm (reception to follow)

Where: Djavad Mowafaghian Cinema, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, 149 West Hastings St.

Cost: Free

More details about ‘Building a Culture of Participation’ can be found [online](#).

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