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**\$2 Million Gift from The Michael Young Family Foundation
Announced for Artscape's Newest and Largest Arts & Cultural Project
in Toronto's West Queen West Neighbourhood: Artscape YOUNGplace**

TORONTO – Artscape today announced a \$2 Million lead gift from The Michael Young Family Foundation towards the transformation of the historic Shaw Street School into a centre for creative collaboration. The announcement was made by **Robert J. Foster**, *Chair of the Artscape Board of Directors*, **Mazyar Mortazavi**, *Chair of the Artscape Foundation* and **Tim Jones**, *President & CEO* of Artscape at the official groundbreaking ceremony for the project. Toronto civic leaders and members of Toronto's arts and West Queen West communities gathered to hear the announcement which included a new name for the centre: Artscape YOUNGplace.

“What Artscape is doing at the Shaw Street School is an example of social enterprise solving a problem and creating something good; not just for the artists involved, but for us and for our city. This is an example of the future landing happily on the past - something that Artscape is unbelievably good at making happen,” said **David Young**, *Chair, The Michael Young Family Foundation*.

Led by David and Robin Young, The Michael Young Family Foundation provides venture philanthropy to unique charitable enterprises in Toronto. During the last decade, \$17 million of the foundation's money has funded, and prompted extra government support for important urban projects such as the transformation of the historic Don Valley Brick Works into the Evergreen Brick Works and the creation of the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in the Distillery District, which is home to the Soulpepper Theatre Company. The Michael Young Family Foundation was recently awarded with the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Outstanding Foundation Award.

"We are extremely honoured to have the Young name associated with Artscape and this project," said **Mazyar Mortazavi**, *Chair of the Artscape Foundation*. "Their lead gift was instrumental in Artscape's purchase of the Shaw Street School and was the catalyst for its redevelopment."

In addition, **Tim Jones**, *Artscape's President & CEO* announced that Artscape will be moving its headquarters from Liberty Village to Artscape YOUNGplace in the Fall of 2012. The organization's 35 staff members will relocate to a new 6,000 sq. ft. space on the third floor of the centre. Artscape has created four multi-tenant arts & cultural centres

in the West Queen West neighbourhood since 1995 and this move represents a homecoming for the organization.

Mr. Jones also disclosed the second group of non-profit organizations and artists that will soon call Artscape YOUNGplace home, including: Koffler Centre of the Arts, TYPOLOGY Projects, York Wilson Foundation, pianist Eve Egoyan, visual artist and theatre designer Gerard Gauci, visual artist Andrew Horne, painter Gillian Iles, visual artist Matthew Schofield, visual artist Shabnam K. Ghazi, and painter Sybil Goldstein.

These organizations and artists join previously announced tenants and owners: Centre for Indigenous Theatre, College-Montrose Children's Place, Inter-Galactic Arts Co-op, Paperhouse Studio, Red Pepper Spectacle Arts, SKETCH, Small World Music Society, photographer Barbara Astman, painter Emily Filler, textile artist Miriam Grenville, photographer Vid Ingelevics and musician Elyssa Lefurgey-Smith.

“While planning proceeds for a new Koffler Centre of the Arts on Sherman Campus, the next several years at Artscape YOUNGplace are an amazing opportunity to grow audiences and partnerships, solidifying our unique position within the constellation of arts organizations transforming Toronto as a global cultural urban centre,” said **Lori Starr, Executive Director of the Koffler Centre of the Arts and Vice President, Culture of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto**. “Artscape YOUNGplace will further enhance partnership and community building capacities by providing, under one roof, an unparalleled environment of artistic and social diversity that nurtures and inspires across creative fields.”

“In recent years artists in Toronto have witnessed the disappearance of many affordable studio spaces. I am delighted to know that I'll be part of a thriving creative community that is owned and operated by an organization dedicated to keeping artists working in and with communities in the downtown core,” added **visual artist and theatre designer Gerard Gauci**.

At 75,000 sq. ft., Artscape YOUNGplace will be the largest arts & cultural centre in downtown Toronto west of Spadina Avenue. Slated for occupancy in the Fall of 2012, Artscape YOUNGplace will repurpose the Shaw Street School, bringing new life to this grand Beaux-Arts heritage building. It will be a centre for creative collaboration rooted in the heart of the West Queen West alternative arts district. This is an area representing some of Canada's highest concentrations of workers with arts occupations and the largest clustering of art galleries in the country. Located at 180 Shaw Street, the building is just steps from Trinity-Bellwoods Park and close to The Gladstone Hotel, Drake Hotel, MoCCA, and The Theatre Centre. Artscape purchased the Shaw Street School from the Toronto District School Board in December 2010.

Artscape YOUNGplace will house a diverse mix of creators working in a variety of disciplines, as well as arts, community and social mission organizations. Once completed, the centre will offer a theatre training facility, a centre for dance and performance, arts programs for youth and adults, music education programs, family resources to support the local community, screenings, performances, exhibitions and events.

Artscape is making a significant investment to restore the structure, with the scope of work estimated to be greater than \$13M. The Artscape Foundation, Artscape's charitable arm, is fundraising to support the philanthropic goals for the centre. Abatement and waterproofing work is currently underway with construction estimated to begin in early

December 2011. The design of the renovation will include a number of environmentally sustainable components and will be led by Teeple Architects with construction managed by The Dalton Company.

Artscape YOUNGplace builds upon Artscape's self-sustaining development model by offering ownership and rental opportunities for artists and not-for-profit organizations at below-market rates. Artscape achieves the below-market purchase price on ownership studios by providing a 25% no-interest, payment-free second mortgage. This mix fills an important need in the arts community by offering some artists and organizations the opportunity to purchase their work space permanently while allowing Artscape to continue to address the needs of the arts community for long-term affordable rental space. To date, Artscape has sold and leased 43 of the 49 studios in the building, with only 6 studios remaining for sale.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2011, Artscape is a not-for-profit organization that makes space for creativity and transforms communities. Artscape projects provide affordable space for creativity while generating positive cultural, economic, social and environmental impacts. Artscape has transformed a portfolio of underutilized buildings across Toronto into dynamic community assets that serve to enable innovation and creativity, including the award-winning Artscape Wychwood Barns and multi-tenant arts facilities in the Queen Street West, Liberty Village, Toronto Island and Distillery Historic District neighbourhoods. In addition to Artscape YOUNGplace, Artscape is currently developing the Regent Park Arts & Cultural Centre, a 60,000 sq. ft. new-build project created in partnership with Toronto Community Housing and The Daniels Corporation, and located in the heart of the Regent Park community revitalization project. Collectively, Artscape manages 10 buildings for 863 artist and cultural worker tenants and owners in 417,000 square feet of space. www.torontoartscape.on.ca

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