

## House Concert Network Guidelines

The House Concert Network is a resource for tellers to access hosts and design their own tour, as opposed to a service-based resource with a coordinator creating a tour. The House Concert Network also helps hosts access tellers, by providing the details of tellers on tour on our website.

There are three types of concerts: Professional (touring), Community, and Apprenticeship.

### 1. Professional/Touring

An event held in a private home where a storyteller (on tour, visiting, or local) entertains an audience procured by the host and is paid at a professional rate. The host and the audience expect a professional, well-rehearsed, and engaging performance. The teller expects favourable performing conditions that will enable her to perform at her best and make it possible for the audience to listen attentively. The audience expects to pay for the entertainment at a professional rate. (Clarifications: a "professional rate" may depend on local conditions)

### 2. Community

An event mixing storytelling and conviviality held in a private home where a storyteller (local or visiting) entertains an audience which is procured by the host and which pays for the entertainment according to local custom. With the agreement of the teller proceeds may be directed to a specific cause or charity. The host intends and the audience expects a pleasant evening among like-minded people and an enjoyable performance of acceptable quality.

### 3. Apprenticeship

Community House Concert specifically designed to provide experience for an emerging storyteller. Performing conditions and expectations should aim for a professional standard in a supportive ambiance, with the opportunity for gentle feedback from the audience.

## Tellers: How to make it work

**Plan ahead:** create a tour vision and choose route. If you would like to plan a route based on the locations of potential hosts, then first email [houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca](mailto:houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca) to see who is available to host and where.

- Contact [executivesecretary@storytellers-conteurs.ca](mailto:executivesecretary@storytellers-conteurs.ca) to submit information about your tour so that your name can be posted on the HCN page of the SC-CC website. Submit the dates you'll be on tour, and the cities/towns or the general area.
- Contact [houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca](mailto:houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca) to let us know about your tour, and find potential hosts
- Important: Post information about your planned tour in your directory profile on the SC-CC website. This is how audiences and hosts will be able to learn more about your tour and your performances
- When connected with a host, clearly define what you are offering, and what you will need
- If requested, provide a contract or agreement in writing
- Consider applying for a travel bursary or grant

## **Hosts: How it Works**

- Determine which type of House Concert you are hosting
- Consult the HCN page on the SC-CC website to see which Storytellers are on Tour
- Contact that storyteller directly to discuss date, location and other details (which may include accommodation in the host's home).
- When a match has been made, share the house concert's details with the House Concert Network coordinator and post the event on SC-CC website's House Concert Network calendar.
- Invite friends, family, neighbours and their friends, and the public (if you desire)
- Refreshments are provided by the host or by potluck
- The House Concert lasts approximately 2 hours with intermission
- The fee is usually by a suggested donation (somewhere in the range of \$10.00 to \$20.00), less than the cost of a movie or a live performance
- The Storyteller receives the total remuneration
- The Host often provides accommodation and meals for the Storyteller
- If requested, provide a contract or agreement in writing

### **Beforehand**

Information Fact Sheet is mandatory. Prior to the House Concert, the Storyteller sends an information fact sheet to Administrator outlining the details of the upcoming concert.

### **Afterwards**

Once tellers and hosts are connected, the House Concert Network coordinator will send both parties a brief questionnaire to complete after each concert. This information helps SC-CC strengthen the House Concert Network service.

## **What if I want to host, but there isn't a teller on tour in my area listed on the HCN page?**

Keep watching the HCN page for tellers announcing new tours! SC-CC members interested in hosting a house concert, can also email [houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca](mailto:houseconcerts@storytellers-conteurs.ca) with the following information: hosts should provide names and locations and dates they are available to host. Our House Concert Network coordinator gathers this information and may be able to help match hosts with tellers interested in touring. Please note that Guilds/Circles/Groups may want to choose a contact person to coordinate House Concerts in their area.

## **Benefits to SC-CC Members**

- Aids in the development of Storytelling as an art-form in Canada, by increasing its visibility to new audiences;
- Allows listeners and tellers to hear new voices, new styles and new genres;
- Helps build connections between storytellers across the country;
- Increases awareness of who is telling stories in Canada;
- Provides support/information to those who wish to host a house concert for the first time;
- Provides travelling tellers with access to new audience(s);
- Is a knowledge tool for the creation and preparation of a tour;
- Provide more opportunities for revenue generation during a storyteller's tour or travel.

## **Concerts: What Works!**

- Accessibility (parking, handicap provisions etc.);
- Viable Space (seating, acoustics, bathrooms etc.);
- Hospitality (food/drink, co-hosts, theme night etc.);
- Firm financial arrangements;
- Clear communications;
- Defining Teller/Host Responsibilities

## **Host Responsibilities**

- Provide an audience for the Teller;
- Provide "home realities" checklist (see pg. 10 of Report for more details);
- Ensure legal liabilities;
- Outline telling space;
- Hospitality requirements;
- Negotiate Fees;
- Promotion;
- Logistics;
- Billeting and meals.

## **Teller Responsibilities**

- Punctuality;
- Prepared Program;
- Present what was advertised;
- Clear communications with negotiations;
- Clearly define any products you may include (books, CDs);
- Participate in publicity.

## **History of the National House Concert Network**

The Working Group at Victoria continued work begun at the Hamilton SC-CC conference (2007) regarding the establishment of a network of House Concert Venues across Canada that would host performances of traveling storyTellers. The 2009 Victoria Working group put forward a definition of a Storytelling House Concert, created a set of "tips" regarding: What Makes a House Concert Successful; the Responsibilities of the Host; the Responsibilities of the Performer; and Setting up a Storytelling Tour.

The Working Group asked that these lists of tips be posted as part of the members' pages on the SC-CC website. The Working Group suggested that further work may include the creation of feed-back forms for the hosts and the tellers that would help others create positive experiences for the audience, the teller, and the hosts as well as provide information for SC-CC data collection.