

For Immediate Release

## **Creativ Festival Celebrates 25 Years of Creativity and its 60<sup>th</sup> Show!**

Toronto, ON (September 13, 2012) - In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are inundated with fast moving technology, cyberspace and instant electronic feedback. One thing has not changed over the years is that a substantial segment of the population turns to creating by hand as a respite from day to day pressures and a way to express their personal style.

Twenty-five years ago, Rita Gramsch, President and Founder of the **Creativ Festival** (formerly the Creative Sewing and Needlework Festival) recognized an important niche in the marketplace: Many love to create something unique by adding their own touch to fashions, accessories, home décor, gifts and more by using their creative skills. What was missing was a forum where “like minded” people could gather to get inspiration, see the latest techniques, find the best supplies and learn more about their art form. Also, just as importantly, a special venue where one could develop important business opportunities.

On October 28, 1988 Rita’s insight came to fruition with the opening of the first Creative Sewing and Needlework Festival. To everyone’s surprise, Opening Day had an amazing lineup, almost an hour long, of people braving the blustery, bitter cold to attend. In fact, the initial estimate of 10,000 attendees was almost doubled when 18,000 people came through the doors!

Looking back, Rita Gramsch comments: “Had I known then, what I know today about all the risks and what could have gone wrong, I never would have taken the chance! It was blind faith, a passion for the industry and a belief that I was offering something that no-one else ever had, that made it all happen.”

Within a few years, events were being held in seven major cities across Canada: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Halifax, with the main event in Toronto. In response to consumer demand, a Conference component was added in 1995 offering hands-on workshops under the direction of industry experts, designers and artisans, all sharing insider tips, tricks and trade secrets.

The **Creativ Festival** is Canada’s largest and longest running consumer show dedicated to the creative arts of sewing, knitting, quilting, needlework, spinning, weaving, beadwork, scrapbooking, crafting, fibre, textile and paper arts. Visitors come from across Canada, the USA and as far away as England, Bermuda and the Bahamas to attend this specialized event.

The Fall **Creativ Festival** runs from October 12 to 14, 2012 with a projected attendance of 26,000 people. In addition, on October 10 through 14, a star-studded line up of innovative designers, skilled artisans and industry experts will provide a diverse educational program at over 200 workshops and seminars – over 2,000 delegates are expected to attend the Conference. It all takes place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building.

The shows continue to prosper and attract more fans every year. The Spring 2012 **Creativ Festival's** attendance was 15,750 - up by 12.5% over the previous year. The total attendance for both Spring and Fall 2012 shows is expected to be 41,750.

**Even Rita Gramsch, the visionary, could not have predicted 25 years ago the following statistics: "44% of Canada's 13 million households participated in crafting at least once during 2011, creating a \$2.8 billion Canadian craft and hobby industry." (2011 *Canadian Attitude Study* by the Craft and Hobby Association.)**

In October, 2012 the **Creativ Festival** will celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> Show – an impressive number indeed!

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