



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Through the Lens* student photography program celebrates 15 years of empowerment and transformation**

*Banff, Alberta* – This year marks a huge milestone for the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies outreach program, *Through the Lens*. *Through the Lens* has run for 15 incredibly productive and creative years, has touched close to 600 participating students and boasts a collection of 1800 photographs. The latest exhibition, *Through the Lens – 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*, opens to the public with a reception at the Whyte Museum on Saturday, February 4, 2012, at 7 p.m. and runs until April 1, 2012.

*Through the Lens* immerses high school students in the creative process of traditional and digital photography and encourages them to experiment and learn about themselves, their community and visual communication through the exciting medium of photography. Each year the program concludes with a two-month exhibition of student work. Asked to describe the impact of the program Craig Richards, Curator of Photography for the Whyte Museum, comments “It is amazing! When you hand a young person a camera it empowers them. It gives them a voice they may not have had.”

The reach of *Through the Lens* has been vast. Over the past 15 years, the program has not only involved students from the Bow Valley but has included students from international communities such as Uganda, Ukraine, Papua New Guinea and Tibet. This year, 28 students from Banff Community High School, Canmore Collegiate High School and Morley Community School are participating. For the past four months these students have taken part in field trips, darkroom demonstrations, critiques, portrait workshops and presentations by exhibiting photographers.

*Through the Lens – 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* will open on February 4 together with *Coal Mining Stalwarts: Photographs by Lawrence Christmas* and *The Bread with Honey: Photographs by Andrew Querner*. All three exhibitions are part of EXPOSURE 2012, the Calgary Banff Canmore Photography Festival. A celebration of photo-based work, EXPOSURE features exhibitions and educational events in Calgary and the Bow Valley.

Located in Banff National Park, the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies welcomes those who are drawn to the power and inspiration of these mountains. The Whyte Museum is the gateway for experiencing and enjoying the art, culture and history of the Canadian Rockies. Visitors can experience the Museum’s galleries, programs, archives and library, heritage homes, museum shop, guided walks, tours, and special events.

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For additional details and/or high resolution images, please contact:

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