

Victoria digital summit expands scope, lands in Toronto

BY MIKE DEVLIN, TIMESCOLONIST.COM FEBRUARY 9, 2012

Transmission: Global Summit, a digital media conference that's made its home here for four years won't return to Victoria next year.

The news came Thursday after roundtable discussions about the international music and technology industries on the first day of this year's event at the Inn at Laurel Point.

Transmission director Tyl van Toorn informed more than 150 conference delegates that the conference, centred around the study of digital media, will become a year-round part of the University of Toronto's faculty of music.

van Toorn recently signed a deal that will see ownership of Transmission change hands as it settles into this new relationship with the U of T.

The new interdisciplinary institute will be home to the study and advancement of digital music and creative media, said Don McLean, dean of the university's faculty of music.

McLean, who was on hand for the announcement, said the new development helps not only Ontario, but Canada.

"We will focus on technological problems and focus on the future direction of the music industry," he said. "We want to move this to the next level in Canada and internationally."

The annual conference has brought delegates to Victoria for yearly roundtable talks about the future of content-driven industries since 2009. The event, established in 2006, spent its first three years in Vancouver.

Transmission will bring its Victoria run to a close Sunday morning following the conference's live showcase events held at the Mint restaurant and Lucky Bar nightclub.

With help from a network of experts, the Toronto-based institute will attempt through research and development to transform creative ideas into innovative projects and businesses.

van Toorn's new role with the institute, of which the University of Toronto is the primary stakeholder, has yet to be announced. Though he expects it will differ from his duties as

owner-director of the Fan Tan Group, which produces Transmission, van Toorn promises to be hands-on.

"It's less about the conference and where it is located now, and more about the day-to-day activity that we have started to build. The activity that Transmission has created, in terms of commercialization of new products and services, as well as applied research opportunities, there is a demand for that. I am there to help direct that activity."

Construction has begun at the U of T on the new institute, which is slated to open in January.

van Toorn said the annual Transmission conference will likely be retooled, though he expects it to continue in some capacity, given that many of its annual delegates live in Toronto.

"Much of Canada's activity in that field exists in Toronto. That is the locus."

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