



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee

Date: March 3, 2025

From: Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture & Heritage Services

File: 11-7000-11-01/2025-Vol 01

Re: Arts Services Year in Review 2024

Staff Recommendations

1. That the Arts Services Year in Review 2024 as presented in the staff report titled, "Arts Services Year in Review 2024", dated March 3, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be received for information; and
2. That the Arts Services Year in Review 2024 be circulated to Community Partners and Funders for their information.

Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services Recreation & Sport Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The Council-endorsed *ArtWorks: Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024* (the Strategy) was developed through extensive community engagement, guidance and consultation to help guide the City’s actions in making Richmond a city with a thriving arts scene that animates the city every day; offers rich arts education and experiences, festivals and events; fosters social connections and wellness; builds arts and culture leadership; and provides creative spaces.

The purpose of this annual report is to provide a comprehensive overview of City arts programs and activities in 2024 that contribute to fulfilling the directions of the Strategy.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.

6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.

Analysis

The Strategy provides Five Strategic Directions to guide the City and its stakeholders’ involvement in supporting the arts sector and ensuring a thriving and visible arts scene in Richmond:

1. Ensure affordable and accessible arts for all;
2. Promote inclusivity and diversity in the arts;
3. Invest in the arts;
4. Increase awareness and participation in the arts; and
5. Activate public spaces through (and for) the arts.

These strategic directions create a foundation and help to ensure the City is purposeful in its continued advancement of the arts in the community and that the arts play a strong role in place making, community building, tourism, health and social well-being, economic development and more. As this is the final year of the Strategy, work is currently underway to develop a 2025-2029 Arts Strategy to be presented to Council later this year.

This report presents *Arts Services Year in Review 2024* (Attachment 1), which highlights this last year’s achievements in the arts.

The *Arts Services Year in Review 2024* describes last year's achievements in the arts. As always, the City's arts programs maintained their vital and sustaining presence in the community. City-led programming and artist-led themes continued to explore Richmond's cultural and community identities, reconciliation, local ecology, climate change, and more. Residents and visitors were invited to discover and share new arts experiences at cultural venues, community centres, in the public realm, and online. Meanwhile, community cultural development initiatives continued to offer essential support to artists and cultural organizations through financial investment, professional development opportunities, promotional support and the provision of affordable, and sometimes free, programming space.

Highlights and achievements of 2024 include:

- The long-awaited Richmond Cultural Centre Annex (RCCA) was completed in January and officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 9. As approved by Council in 2018, with extensive renovations to the former Minoru Place Activity Centre following pandemic-related delays, the RCCA marks the first significant arts facility investment in Richmond in more than 30 years. Its well-equipped, purpose-built spaces have significantly alleviated scheduling challenges for community rentals and enabled a growing and broader variety of programs, larger gatherings and new community partnerships.
- With the support of \$360,000 of funding from the BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, the Media Lab space in the RCCA was upgraded with new technological tools including specialized design software, 10 Macbook Pro computers, a 3D printer, Cricut design cutters, photo printer, 40 iPads (including a lending library), audio and video recording equipment for a new sound studio, and more.
- The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP) grew its free referral-based program for youth aged 13–24. In 2024, membership increased by more than 60% to serve 69 youth who completed more than 4,200 hours learning media arts skills and building social connections.
- Through the Civic Public Art Program, the exterior of the RCCA received a lively mural, *Seasons of Colour*, by Richmond-based artist, Laura Kwok, who incorporated themes and imagery contributed by community members. Meanwhile, the Community Mural Program completed eight new murals including *Gathering Pond* by Carolyn Wong at the nearby Minoru Arenas.
- Seventeen Richmond-based artists were contracted for public art commissions, providing vibrant works for exhibition along No. 3 Road, as well as murals and utility box wraps throughout the city.
- The annual Children's Arts Festival (CAF) continued its City-wide approach to providing in-person artist-led activities for Richmond School District No. 38 (SD 38) students. CAF artists led activities not only at the Richmond Library/Cultural Centre, but also at six community centres. Over two weeks, 2,040 children representing 89 classes from 31 Richmond elementary schools took part, many by simply walking or riding their bikes there.

- The Richmond Art Gallery presented six on-site exhibitions including *FOODWAYS* (October–December) showcasing artworks by 11 artists who explore food and food cultures. The exhibition was accompanied by a pop-up exhibition, *Hong Wo*, at the City of Richmond Archives and extensive free public programming including the Rooftop Garden Series offering hands-on learning that included growing and cultivating food plants, fabric dyeing with leaves and vegetables, painting with flowers, and making teas, jellies and preserves.
- In partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the 21st Richmond Maritime Festival presented more than 100 local artists, craftspeople, performers and “pop-up” style heritage storytellers, amidst maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site. Fourteen wooden and working boats along the dock and a range of food and community vendors rounded out the festival.
- City Centre Community Association marked the darkest day of the year with a new intercultural event, *Invite the Light: A Winter Solstice Celebration*, held at City Centre Community Centre. Attracting more than 250 attendees, the event included a meditative labyrinth comprised of 500 lanterns brought to life by Richmond artist Marina Szijarto, hands-on art activities using natural materials, a live owl presentation by the OWL Orphaned Wildlife Rehabilitation Society, locally-made dumplings, storytelling and more.
- During National Indigenous History Month (June), free city-wide activities included a cedar weaving workshop at the Richmond Cultural Centre with Musqueam artists Rita Kompst and her daughter Zoë Kompst, as well as a Public Art bus tour of works by Susan Point, Debra Sparrow and Thomas Cannell, led by Musqueam knowledge keeper, Morgan Guerin.
- Ranked by the national Culture Days office as No. 1 in BC and No. 3 in Canada for mid-size cities based on the level of community engagement and participation, Richmond continued to be a national leader in 2024 with a campaign boasting 93 free, in-person and online activities presented by 80 artists and cultural organizations. The opening weekend event at the Richmond Cultural Centre attracted an estimated 2,000 people.
- \$127,364 was invested through the 2024 Arts and Culture Grant Program providing operating and project assistance grants to 21 non-profit arts organizations, in order to strengthen the infrastructure of arts and culture organizations, increase funding for arts opportunities, show support for the careers of local artists and support a wide range of artistic and cultural activity.
- Community event rentals at the Gateway Theatre totalled 41 performances by 23 clients presenting music, dance, awards ceremonies and more.

The *Arts Services Year in Review 2024* highlights the significant value and benefits the arts bring to Richmond by encouraging self-expression, creating a sense of community identity and pride, enhancing understanding of issues in society, providing opportunities to develop and foster new skills and encouraging collaboration and connections. All of these benefits contribute to individual well-being and healthy, sustainable communities.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The *Arts Services Year in Review 2024* highlights activities and achievements in the arts in the community and the importance the arts play in further enhancing Richmond's identity as one of the best places to live, work and play. It is recommended that the Arts Services Year in Review 2024 be received for information and circulated to community partners and funders for their information.



Lies Dauk
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Att. 1: Arts Services Year in Review 2024

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City of Richmond

ARTS SERVICES YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

Arts, Culture and
Heritage Services





The Vision

Richmond's thriving arts scene

- animates our city every day;
- offers rich arts education and experiences, festivals and events;
- fosters social connections and wellness;
- builds arts and culture leadership; and
- provides creative spaces.



Richmond Cultural Centre Annex opening ceremony, February 9, 2024

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Introduction

In the City's fifth (and final) year guided by *ArtWorks: Richmond Arts Strategy: 2019–2024*, investment in inclusive and diverse arts opportunities continued to enrich and activate our communities.

The start of 2024 was marked by celebration with the opening of the long-awaited Richmond Cultural Centre Annex (RCCA) in January. As approved by Council in 2018 — and following pandemic-related delays — extensive renovations transformed the former Minoru Place Activity Centre into a hub for community programs, making it the first significant purpose-built arts facility investment in Richmond in more than 30 years (see page 12).

The impacts of adding these new spaces dedicated to arts and cultural programs have been substantial. For example, in its first year at the RCCA, the Media Lab grew its free referral-based program for youth by more than 60%, increased and diversified after-school and weekend programs, and created a new public performance opportunity for youth and children: The Mic Drop, that activates and enlivens the Lounge.

Meanwhile, the Richmond Art Gallery launched The Annex Gallery exclusively for the work of Richmond artists, while in their gallery space, they presented six on-site exhibitions including the monumental *FOODWAYS*, that was accompanied by a pop-up exhibition at the City of Richmond Archives and extensive free public programming on the Richmond Cultural Centre's Rooftop Garden.

As always, community cultural development was at the forefront with ongoing professional development opportunities for artists and organizations, 17 public art commissions for Richmond artists and the launch of a two-year pilot project providing the Richmond Arts Coalition with a storefront location in the RCCA to better service local artists.

The 2024 Arts Services Year in Review demonstrates how the City continues to foster unique and lively arts and cultural opportunities for engagement and connection, reflecting Richmond's diverse population in cultural venues, schools, libraries, community centres, festivals and public realm.

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For more about the arts in Richmond, visit [HowArtWorks.ca](https://www.howartworks.ca)



ArtWorks: Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024

Major Strategic Directions



1. Ensure affordable and accessible arts for all



2. Promote inclusivity and diversity in the arts



3. Invest in the arts



4. Increase awareness and participation in the arts



5. Activate public spaces through (and for) the arts

The Arts Services Year in Review summarizes progress made towards achieving the goals of *ArtWorks: Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024*. Throughout the document, you will see coloured icons that show how the year's activities help to advance the Strategy's five strategic directions.



Cristina Zhang, Richmond Arts Awards ceremony

Community Cultural Development

Community Cultural Development refers to a wide range of programs, activities and events that support local artists and/or cultural organizations through direct investment, public profile or recognition, professional development and other creative opportunities for collaboration and mentorship.

"The grant has had a profound effect on both the short- and long-term growth of our organization. It has enabled us to strengthen our community outreach and host more events, leading to increased visibility and interest in our programs. This, in turn, has led to the creation of a membership program, which has deepened our community engagement and provided a sustainable foundation for future growth."

– Richmond Improv Theatre Society

Arts and Culture Grant Program

The City's Arts and Culture Grant Program was established in 2011 to strengthen the infrastructure of arts and culture organizations, increase investment in arts opportunities, show support for the careers of local artists and support a wide range of artistic and cultural activity. The program offers two types of grants: Project Assistance and Operating Assistance to registered non-profit arts and culture organizations.

On September 25, an information session and grant writing workshop was offered for arts practitioners and representatives of various arts organizations. A professional grant-writer and representative from the BC Arts Council were part of this overview of arts funding opportunities and best practices for effective grant writing. This session attracted 44 attendees.

In 2024, Council approved the distribution of \$127,364. A total of **\$85,514 in Operating Assistance** was distributed to **10 recipients** and **\$41,740 in Project Assistance** went to **11 programs and projects**. Throughout summer and fall, grant recipients received individualized attention to review their programs and share feedback about the grant application process.

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2024 RICHMOND ARTS AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Arts Education: Beatriz Martin

Artistic Innovation and Excellence:
Shelby Page

Volunteerism: Denise Chambers

Youth Arts: Opal Chen

Cultural Leadership: Gateway Theatre

Richmond Arts Awards

Created in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition, the Richmond Arts Awards recognize the artistic achievements and contributions to the arts community by local artists, cultural leaders, educators, volunteers and business leaders. The Awards purpose is to:

- honour major contributions by individuals, organizations and businesses to the arts;
- cultivate greater visibility and understanding of the value of the arts;
- encourage excellence and build new leadership within the arts community; and
- develop patrons for the arts.

In 2024, **67 nominations** were reviewed by a selection committee comprised of community members and five recipients were selected and honoured.

Mayor Malcolm Brodie hosted the awards ceremony on May 8 at Richmond City Hall Council Chambers, an event that featured a traditional welcome by Musqueam representative Mary Point and a keynote speech by Sirish Rao, co-founder of the Indian Summer Festival and Vancouver Art Gallery Senior Director of Public Engagement and Learning. The spirited evening included performances by local opera singer Cristina Zhang and musicians Conor Stuart and Risa Tonita and was followed by a reception with an original music playlist created by Richmond Art Centre's Youth Clay Club.

Established in 2009, the Richmond Arts Awards are presented annually through a partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition. The media sponsor for the event is *Richmond News*. The Awards have recognized 96 honourees over 16 years.

Lulu Series: Art in the City

Since 2003, The Lulu Series: Art in the City program has presented international, national and regional speakers including acclaimed artists, architects, urban planners and other cultural leaders. The following line-up of inspirational evening talks was presented free of charge:

March 28: **Puya Khalili and Charlotte Wall** delved into the story of *Typha*, a large-scale artwork located at the terminus of Hollybridge Way, near the Fraser River. The talk covered the artists' approach, design and fabrication process, and the role that projects such as *Typha* can play in placemaking and influencing community engagement. Musical performance by Elisa Thorn.

April 25: Landscape architect **Alanna Quock** (Regenerative Design) pondered the essential question of what it means to "dwell" — in a place and in a body. In relationship with other bodies, she shared the stories of her Indigenous ancestors, her journey, and the projects and places she has been invited into along the way. Musical performance by Sam Davidson.

May 30: **Charo Neville**, curator of the Kamloops Art Gallery (KAG), discussed *Luminocity*, a week-long exhibition that showcases video projects by local, national and international artists in unexpected public spaces throughout the downtown core of Kamloops. As an off-site KAG initiative, the project brings recent video projects typically presented in gallery settings into the outdoors. Spoken word performance by Lindi Nolte.



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Zoë Kompst and Rita Kompst

National Indigenous Peoples Day

June is National Indigenous History Month and June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day. As part of city-wide activities that recognize and celebrate the cultural heritage and vibrancy of Indigenous peoples of the region, the community was invited to participate in free activities to engage, learn and connect.

Musqueam artists **Rita Kompst** and **Zoë Kompst** facilitated a cedar weaving workshop at the Richmond Cultural Centre on June 15, where they shared traditional techniques of Coast Salish weaving and ancestral knowledge with registered participants. The artists prepared locally harvested red cedar for the activity, and displayed examples of their baskets, hats and other weavings.

On June 22, Musqueam knowledge keeper Morgan Guerin led a bus tour that visited several public artworks by Musqueam artists including Debra Sparrow, Thomas Cannell and Susan Point.



Participatory Weaving Project

Pride Week

In 2024, a cross-departmental staff team of diverse identities and gender expressions, as well as allies, collaborated on a program of eight public events around the themes of identity, diversity, equity and inclusion, social justice and community celebration during Pride Week under the city-wide theme, *Pride Together*. Highlights included:

- annual outdoor Pride stairs activity organized by youth, featuring DJ La PosmoBaby (Ximena Velázquez);
- community art exhibition and artist talk featuring art instructor Mr. Tony;
- drop-in zine-making workshop by Richmond-based artist Mickey Morgan;
- participatory weaving project by artist Vanessa Figueroa;
- two hands-on printmaking workshops by Peisen Ding, Branscombe House artist-in-residence; and
- storytelling event featuring local 2SLGBTQI+ community members and allies at Gateway Theatre's first-ever Pride event (more on page 60).

Writer-in-Residence

The Writer-in-Residence program delivers hands-on programming for local emerging and aspiring writers in partnership with Richmond Public Library.

Following a hiatus, in April 2024, celebrated Canadian author **Audrey Thomas** completed her 2023 residence with workshops and a Celebration of Learning.

Throughout her residency, Audrey shared her love for writing with local established and emerging writers through creative writing techniques, engaging conversations and reflections and diverse methodologies. Audrey has held residencies in several countries and received many awards including the Governor's Award for Literary Excellence. She has published 18 books.

The next residency will launch in Spring 2025.

“People gathered and stayed to make zines and new friendships—I never imagined growing up as a [queer] youth in Richmond that I would see this happen.”

– Mickey Morgan

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Potters' Club, Culture Days



Vancouver We Dance Association of Canada

Culture Days

Each year, across Canada, Culture Days reaches millions of people to experience the transformative role of the arts and reminds us that creativity, culture and connection are the cornerstones of vibrant communities. The 15th annual Culture Days was held from September 20 to October 13, and offered a diverse range of free, interactive events and experiences.

The Richmond Cultural Centre and Annex hosted an official hub, providing creative spaces for 28 activities, many of which coincided with a kick-off weekend on September 21 and 22. An opening ceremony with councillors and community leaders in attendance included remarks by Mayor Brodie, a traditional welcome by Musqueam representative Mary Point, and a performance by Richmond Orchestra and Chorus Association.

Weekend highlights included open studio activities by Resident Art Groups, Richmond Museum's *Family Treasures* exhibition opening featuring a teddy bear repair fair, and Richmond Art Gallery's exhibition *It begins with knowing and not knowing* and their Rooftop Garden workshops presented leading up to the *FOODWAYS* exhibition. There was also a Chinese folk and contemporary dance performance by Vancouver We Dance Association of Canada, community art exhibitions, live music performances and more.

Free participatory activities continued for 24 days across Richmond, including an additional hub at the Seniors Centre at the Minoru Centre for Active Living with opportunities to meet the community groups that convene frequently.

Culture Days reserves September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, intentionally for public commemoration and Indigenous-related programs. A free film screening of *Wilfred Buck* (2024, NFB and Door Number 3 Productions) featured an introduction by Anishinaabe director Lisa Jackson, becoming part of a coast-to-coast-to-coast dialogue of Indigenous experiences. The event was presented in partnership with Richmond Public Library and Cinevolution Media Arts Society.

Richmond is consistently recognized as being among Culture Days' top 10 most engaged cities in the country. In 2024, the national office congratulated Richmond as the **#1 top participating community in BC**, placing **third nationally among Mid-Size Cities** and **eighth overall**, with **93 activities**.

CULTURE DAYS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 2,000** attendees at kick-off weekend
- 93** free activities
- 80** participating artists and cultural organizations
- 48** volunteers
- 476** volunteer hours

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-  Accessibility
-  Diversity
-  Investment
-  Awareness/Participation
-  Public Spaces

How Art Works Instagram and Arts & Culture eBlasts



As part of the Richmond Arts Strategy, Arts Services continued to engage with the Richmond arts community (and beyond) through the How Art Works social media channels and Arts & Culture eBlast.

90 posts and videos announced opportunities for artists and promoted programs and events to a combined social media audience of 3,455 followers, an increase of 60% from 2023, including Instagram and Facebook.

To further enhance engagement online, two digital shorts featuring Culture Days artist organizers were published to the City's official YouTube channel. Six special editions of the Arts & Culture eBlast provided important news on the Richmond Arts Strategy to be updated in 2025, the City's Arts and Culture Grants Program and the Arts Facilities Needs Assessment Survey to more than 700 subscribers.



Branscombe House Artist Residency

The Branscombe House Artist Residency takes place in a restored Edwardian-style house in the residential area of Steveston. Since its inaugural residency in 2016, the program has hosted eight visiting professional artists for 11-month community-engaged artist residencies. Branscombe House, built in 1908 and restored in 2014, is one of the earliest settler homes in the area.

Peisen Ding is a visual artist and educator whose practice explores urban relationships — such as those between individuals and among built environments — through painting, photography, installations or whatever medium organically arises.

In 2024, 14 free art workshops were offered by Peisen at Branscombe House and the Richmond Cultural Centre as part of the “(Be)Coming Home” project — six of which were presented as part of City-led initiatives including Youth Week, Doors Open Richmond, Pride Week and Culture Days. The year-long artist project illuminated various meanings of “home” through a variety of art-making processes and productions to nurture an inclusive and caring community.

The artist also facilitated a City staff lunch-and-learn, organized a community art exhibition, co-hosted a tour during the Creative City Summit and presented their residency project at the 19th International Conference on the Arts in Society at Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea.

At the closing event on January 25, Mayor Brodie shared a welcome message and recognized Peisen for their artistic activity and impact in the community. The afternoon included an informal artist talk, Q&A session and reception.

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Applying for Public Art Calls – Writing Workshop

"I'm pleased to share that I applied for my first grant in November. I wanted to let you know that it was the session you organized, along with reaching out to Clayton at the BC Arts Council, that gave me the confidence to submit my application. Fingers crossed!"

– Participant, Grant Programs Information Panel

Art at Work Program

Art at Work provides professional development opportunities for local artists and creative professionals working in the cultural sector. In 2024, Art at Work presented the following free workshops:

- **Tax Basics for Artists** virtual presentation by Mariana Scott of Quantum Accounting Services. Attendance: 20 online, 156 views on-demand via YouTube.
- **Applying for Public Art Calls – Level 1** In-person workshop facilitated by Biliانا Velkova, Public Art Planner. Attendance: 28
- **Applying for Public Art Calls – Level 2** In-person workshop facilitated by Biliانا Velkova, Public Art Planner. Attendance: 20
- **Applying for Public Art Calls – Writing Workshop** In-person program led by artist Andrea Hoff. Attendance: 14
- **Grant Programs Information Panel** Online presentation featuring Mary Ann S. Anderson, founder of Little Dog Creative Consulting; Clayton Baraniuk, BC Arts Council Program Advisor; and Camyar Chaichian, Community Cultural Development Manager. Attendance: 44

ART AT WORK BY THE NUMBERS:

- 5** free workshops
- 64** online participants
- 62** in-person participants
- 156** YouTube views

Richmond Cultural Centre

The Richmond Cultural Centre (RCC) is a low-cost venue for rentals to local arts and cultural organizations and hosts a range of arts events and activities from pottery sales to musical performances.

In 2024, in-kind venue support was provided to four in-person events in the Performance Hall:

- Aban Cultural Society: Persian New Year Film Festival, March 15
- Cinevolution Media Arts Society: National Canadian Film Day, April 17
- Odessa Club: Community Cultural Development, June 15
- Cinevolution Media Arts Society: Film Screening, October 22

Annually, the Kwantlen St. Farmers Market offers local vegetables and artisanal goods directly outside in the plaza from May to November on Tuesdays, 11:00 am– 4:00 pm. This year, during the colder months, some of the stalls moved inside to the new Cultural Centre Annex, thereby extending

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Reel Culture

In September, the RCCA added a new media arts feature to the Lounge: a large screen for visitors to enjoy a selection of short videos on a loop. The inaugural program presented 12 works produced for and by the Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Museum, Culture Days, Public Art and others.

F-O-R-M FESTIVAL

From November 8–16, in collaboration with Cinevolution, the Reel Culture screen was programmed as part of the 2024 Festival of Recorded Movement. F-O-R-M is an international movement-on-screen festival that centres the voices of youth and emerging artists with films that investigate the body in motion through curiosity, experimentation, and imagination. The outdoor screen at Lipont Gallery was another Richmond site for this program that was previously limited to Vancouver venues.

the Market to mid-December. This was considered a successful pilot project, and organizers are now preparing for a longer market season in 2025 by inviting new vendors and asking farmers to plant winter crops.

Over the spring, two key locations within the Cultural Centre — Richmond Art Gallery and Richmond Museum — participated in the Vancouver Attractions Group Tourism Challenge. This was their fifth year participating in this program that attracts thousands of tourism sector workers from across the region to visit and discover what is offered here over a period of six weeks.

And on December 26, the Bayit of Richmond attracted an estimated 200 people to their 36th annual Menorah Lighting. The evening featured Chanukah family activities and family skating at the Richmond Arena.

Richmond Cultural Centre Annex

In January of this year, the long-awaited Richmond Cultural Centre Annex (RCCA) opened to the public as an extension of the arts and culture programs and spaces offered in the RCC located directly across the plaza.

This RCCA's 15,145 square feet include the following spaces for expanded public programs and community access:

- **Two Performing Arts Studios** with sprung floors, change rooms and washrooms.
- **Pottery Studio** that almost doubles the offerings of popular pottery programs. At the request of the Richmond Potters' Club, the new studio is programmed by the City and the Club is now based in and programs the studio in the RCC.
- **Lounge** (lobby) featuring The Annex Gallery dedicated to the presentation of work by Richmond-based artists.
- **History Lab**, a space for the Richmond Museum to hold curriculum-linked school programs.
- Fully-equipped **Media Lab** with a sound studio.
- **Creativity Studio**, a multi-purpose room for visual and performing arts education.

In addition, the City has entered a two-year pilot project with the **Richmond Arts Coalition** who are making use of **CornerSpace** near the reception, to better serve local artists.

On February 9, there was an official opening event with ribbon-cutting ceremony that included greetings from the Mayor, elected officials from Provincial and Federal government funders and Richmond Arts Coalition, as well as a traditional welcome by Musqueam representative Alex Dan.

This new facility has significantly alleviated scheduling challenges for community rentals. The rooms are big, accessible and well-equipped, enabling a growing and broader variety of programs, larger gatherings and new community partnerships.

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RICHMOND CULTURAL CENTRE ANNEX



Steveston Salmon Festival mainstage

Signature Events

Events enrich the lives of residents by providing the opportunity for the community to connect, learn and celebrate together. Events contribute to social and economic wellbeing, provide valuable volunteer opportunities, build a sense of community and enhance our quality of life. They can also contribute to placemaking, build community capacity, a sense of identity, and raise the profile of Richmond regionally and nationally.

In 2024, along with Doors Open, Richmond produced the following signature events, attracting thousands of participants:

Steveston Salmon Festival

The 77th annual Steveston Salmon Festival was successfully delivered in alignment with the same vision theme from 2023: “It’s about COMMUNITY”. Visitors appreciated the expanded footprint and activation of some traditional Salmon Festival activities.

The 77th annual Steveston Salmon Festival on July 1 included:

- Steveston Salmon Festival Parade, Salmon Bake and Chow Mein Community Food Booth and market/trade show;
- welcome ceremony including local, federal and provincial government and Musqueam representatives;
- traditional Steveston Salmon Festival programming, including the Japanese Cultural show, demonstrations and Art Show;
- children’s activities, including inflatable carnival game;
- a variety of street and artist performers;
- the new Catch of the Day stage with a variety of local artists and entertainers; and
- a grande finale show by Dr. Strangelove in the Spirit of Steveston Zone.

“I was deeply impressed by the way various people and organizations, including volunteer staff and shop staff, came together to make the community festival a success. We are proud to be living in this community.”

– 2024 visitor survey response

SALMON FEST BY THE NUMBERS

75,000+ visitors

145,996 individuals reached via social media

281 volunteers

1,459 volunteer hours

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 Accessibility  Diversity  Investment  Awareness/Participation  Public Spaces



Richmond Maritime Festival



Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival



NeWorld Theatre, Children's Arts Festival

Richmond Maritime Festival

The 21st annual Richmond Maritime Festival animated the Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site from August 24–25, in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition and the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society. The event program included 14 wooden and working boats along the dock including local restored heritage boats, maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site, live music on three stages, roving performers and musicians, popular hands-on activities, multicultural array of food vendors, and community booths.

Highlights included:

- more than 35,000 visitors to the site over the two-day event;
- social media content that reached 183,566 individuals;
- more than 100 artists, performers, and craftspeople that contributed to the festival programming; and
- 97 volunteers that contributed nearly 800 hours to deliver the event.

Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival

Celebrating the arrival of spring and the blooming of Garry Point Park’s 255 Akebono cherry trees, this annual festival is produced in partnership with representatives from the BC Wakayama Kenjin Kai. On April 7, the event featured live music and performances, food from a local restaurant and food trucks, Japanese cultural displays, and demonstrations. The Sister City Advisory Committee also displayed chochin lanterns to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Richmond’s Sister City relationship with Wakayama. The 2024 theme was 夢 (YUME), meaning dream, which symbolizes the dream of festival organizers to leave a legacy for future generations. Highlights included:

- 5,000 attendees;
- social media content that reached 25,278 individuals, and
- 36 volunteers that contributed 280 volunteer hours to the event.

Children’s Arts Festival

The annual Children’s Arts Festival is the City’s signature event for children aged 3 to 14 years and their families and includes two components: a public event on Family Day and a two-week program of workshops for schools delivered in partnership with SD38, with support from the Richmond Public Library.

In 2024, the Family Day event on February 18 saw more than 8,000 people visit the Richmond Library/Cultural Centre and Cultural Centre Annex. For the school days component (February 9 to 22), 2,040 children representing 89 classes from 31 Richmond elementary schools attended programs at:

- Richmond Library/Cultural Centre and Cultural Centre Annex, and
- Cambie, City Centre, Hamilton, South Arm, Thompson, and West Richmond Community Centres.

On February 12, at the closing event at Lansdowne Mall with the Secret Lantern Society, more than 400 attendees created lanterns for the finale to the festivities. Behind the scenes, more than 100 volunteers made it happen.

2024 CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS

- 8,000+** Family Day attendees
- 31** schools
- 2,040** students
- 55** artists
- 100+** volunteers

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Hands on Art, Islamic Art of BC event at Richmond Public Library

Community Celebration Grants Program

This grant program allows non-profit groups, not-for-profit faith-based groups, parent advisory committees, community associations and student councils to receive funding for a creative Richmond-based event that builds community, is free-of-charge, and open to the public.

This year, 46 successful applicants collectively received \$52,536. Events included five school events and 41 community events, cultural celebrations, concerts and movies in the park.

Richmond Neighbourhood Block Party Program

The Richmond Neighbourhood Block Party Program invites Richmond residents to connect and create a sense of community in their neighbourhoods by offering block parties in a variety of spaces including parks, local streets and private property. In 2024, 26 events received funding totalling \$12,338.

Block parties took place in 13 neighbourhoods across Richmond, where funds were used to support event costs such as insurance, rentals, food, entertainment, posters and more. Activations included barbeques, international food potlucks, crafts for children, a Vancouver Canucks neighbourhood watch party, face painting, storytelling in the park, a visit from the Richmond Fire Rescue Community Engagement team, and family-friendly games.

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Vancouver Chinese Lion and Dragon Dance Team, Children's Arts Festival



Kirsten Leenaars, *The Shape of Things (Come Tomorrow)* and *Manifesto for the Future*, Photo: Michael Love (*Let the Real World In*)

Richmond Art Gallery

Richmond Art Gallery (RAG) is a nationally recognized municipal gallery featuring Canadian and international artists. It is known for a diverse array of exhibitions, educational programs and events that address issues and ideas of importance to our community and contribute to the growth of a vibrant cultural scene in Richmond. Through 2024, RAG welcomed more than 18,000 visitors to the gallery and many more via public programs and across digital platforms including live digital talks and on-demand video content found on the gallery’s website and YouTube.

2024 EXHIBITION ATTENDANCE

- 3,505** Let the real world in + Shen Xin
- 8,223** Unit Bruises + The Marble in the Basement
- 3,301** It begins with knowing and not knowing
- 3,059** FOODWAYS

Exhibitions

RAG presented six exhibitions in the Gallery and nine off-site exhibitions at the City Hall Galleria, The Annex Gallery and at the Aberdeen Canada Line station. Exhibitions represented emerging to senior artists from Richmond, the Lower Mainland and beyond. They featured a range of contemporary artistic mediums including sculpture, installation, video, painting, performance and collage.

GALLERY

LET THE REAL WORLD IN
 Kirsten Leenaars, Yaimel López Zaldívar, Yoshua Okón,
 Wapikoni Mobile
 January 20–March 30, 2024

Let the real world in presented a selection of contemporary videos centering on children and youth who boldly articulate auteur director Jean-Luc Godard’s credo that “film should bear witness to the era”. Rather than speak on behalf of children or try to protect them from difficult realities, the videos vividly foregrounded young people’s agency, taking seriously their perspectives, ideas

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"Appreciation for all of my senses and the wisdom youth carry."

– gallery visitor,
Let the real world in

"Decades old, but it still packs a hell of a punch. Many of the ideas addressed in the show – alienation, grief, belonging, identity, loss – resonate as powerfully as they did when first created."

– *The Tyee on Unit Bruises: Theodore Wan & Paul Wong, 1975-1979*

and experiences of the world. *Let the real world in* also featured a commissioned series of screenprints by local artist and graphic designer Yaimel López Zaldívar, created in response to the videos in this exhibition. Educated in Havana, López Zaldívar draws from Cuba's rich tradition of cultural, social and political posters from the 1960s to the 1980s. Experimenting with text and image, he brought his vibrant artisanal aesthetic to the exhibition.

SHEN XIN: BUT THIS IS THE LANGUAGE WE MET IN; 我们在这个语言中相遇
January 20–March 30, 2024

The exhibition *but this is the language we met in; 我们在这个语言中相遇* dove into communication in all its myriad forms — gestural, oral, written and digital — across culture, time and space, linking humans, animals and nature. At the centre of Xin's exhibition was a poetic video, the first in a larger series titled *Grounds for Coherence*. Its eclectic imagery connects the artist's intense yearning to uncover and understand language in its most primal forms, including contemporary languages of prose and protest. The exhibition also included a suite of new oil paintings on wood.

UNIT BRUISES: THEODORE WAN & PAUL WONG, 1975–1979

April 20–June 30, 2024

Curated by Michael Dang

Unit Bruises brought together the works of two Chinese-Canadian conceptual artists active during the 1970s: Theodore Saskatche Wan (b. 1953; d. 1987) and Paul Wong (b. 1954). By mobilizing their own respective bodies, and the visual languages of medical and procedural illustrations, both artists subverted notions of objectivity. Through these intensely physical works, the two artists respectively asserted their "othered" positions as people of colour as well as ruminated on the topics of illness, death and the human condition.

This exhibition was presented with the support of the Audain Endowment for Curatorial Studies through the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory in collaboration with the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia. *Unit Bruises* was also part of the 2024 Capture Photography Festival Selected Exhibition program.



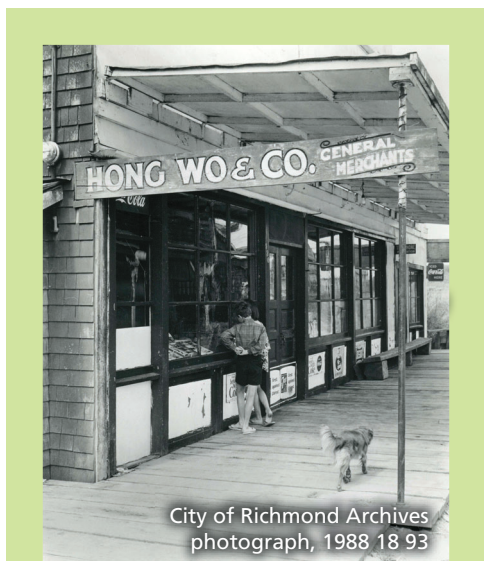
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Hazel Meyer: *The Marble in the Basement*, Photo: Michael Love



Marlene Yuen, *Peace Together*; Jesse Birch, *Cups for Richmond Art Gallery with Born Broken*, Photo: Michael Love (Foodways)



City of Richmond Archives photograph, 1988 18 93

Hong Wo exhibition

Organized in tandem with *FOODWAYS*, the exhibition *Hong Wo* 同和 is on display at the nearby City of Richmond Archives until May 30, 2025. It was guest curated by Mawenzhu Shi 史马文竹 and features a selection of archival documents, maps, photographs and objects from the collections of both the Archives and Richmond Museum.

HAZEL MEYER: THE MARBLE IN THE BASEMENT

April 20–June 30, 2024

Inspired by a pile of marble scraps that possibly once belonged to iconic Canadian artist and experimental filmmaker Joyce Wieland, local artist Hazel Meyer's solo exhibition *The Marble in the Basement* untangled issues of power, memory and inheritance by anthropomorphizing a forgotten object from the influential Canadian artist's domestic holdings. *The Marble in the Basement* looked to the legacy of Wieland to work across questions of inheritance, while asking how such a notable and supported figure, can direct us to lesser-supported histories of art, land, representation and care.

IT BEGINS WITH KNOWING AND NOT KNOWING

Rebecca Bair, Patrick Cruz, Zoë Kreye, Ogheneofegor Obuwoma, Michelle Sound, Ximena Velázquez and Xinwei Che
July 20–September 29, 2024

In a world rife with injustice, pain, and uncertainty, this compelling group of artists engaged with dimensions of spirituality, ceremony, dreams and ritual to find greater meaning, rebuild ties with community, bolster a sense of self or regain a sense of optimism. For this exhibition, the gallery was transformed by new and recent artworks including photographs, cyanotypes, textiles, sculptures, videos, ceramics, paintings and performance.

FOODWAYS

Derya Akay, Sara Angelucci, Jesse Birch, Patrick Cruz, Ellie Kyungran Heo, Kosisochukwu Nnebe, Karen Tam, Tania Willard, Paul Wong, Marlene Yuen and Shellie Zhang
October 19–December 31, 2024

Showcasing artworks from the 2010s to the present, *FOODWAYS* focused on a dynamic selection of artists who explore food and food cultures while addressing a range of questions regarding cultural identity, personal and collective narratives, colonialist histories, community and the transmission of knowledge. These layered artworks were often intersectional and embodied in nature, highlighting how ethnicity, culture, kinship, socio-economic status, geography and colonialist histories percolate through practices linked to food and food culture.

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Permanent Collection

Containing nearly 400 works in a variety of media collected from 1982 to 2020, RAG's Permanent Collection is representative of the history of its exhibitions primarily in the 1980s and 1990s as well as a broader history of artistic production in BC. The collection includes works by important artists such as Anna Wong, Wayne Ngan, Susan Point, Greg Girard and Gu Xiong, among others, and is available to view at richmondartgallery.org/ragcollection

In 2024, the Gallery launched a new series called the **Collection Close-up** to highlight artworks from the Permanent Collection that display a formal or thematic link to the featured exhibition(s). These artworks are hung in the Art Lounge. The following works were featured this year:

Anthology of a Facelift by Cynthia J. Smith with *Unit Bruises* and *The Marble in the Basement*

Mediation, No. 3 Road by Greg Girard with *It begins with knowing and not knowing*

Cafeteria #3 by Gu Xiong with *FOODWAYS*

OFF-SITE

PUBLIC ART ON THE CANADA LINE

Membranes and Pith 305 & Reverie 25

Cherry Archer

April 15, 2024–March 15, 2025

Presented in partnership with Canada Line Public Art Program

In *Membranes and Pith 305* and *Reverie 25*, Vancouver-based multidisciplinary artist Cherry Archer employs the evocative powers of culinary plants deeply rooted in her Trinidadian heritage to create images that awaken memories of her family and culture. To create the images, she freezes produce in water, creating a "botanical ice tile" that she then illuminates with coloured light, photographs and prints in large format. (Photo on page 35)

THE ANNEX GALLERY

The Annex Gallery is a new exhibition space located in the Richmond Cultural Centre Annex that is dedicated exclusively to Richmond-based artists who are selected through an annual open call. The inaugural year's exhibitions were as follows:

- Daniil Alikov, Tammy Cripps, Wendy Ding, John D Rosenthal: *You Are Awesome*, January 8–March 25
- Ya-Wei Lin: *Invisibility*, March 25–June 24
- Joselito Macapagal: *The Joy of Seeing*, June 25–September 23
- Tina Tom: *Brushstrokes of Life*, September 24–January 6, 2025

CITY HALL GALLERIA



Joselito Macapagal, *The Joy of Seeing*



Jiangang Su

Located on the ground floor of Richmond City Hall, City Hall Galleria is an exhibition space overseen by Richmond Art Gallery. As part of its outreach to the local community, City Hall Galleria primarily highlights artworks with a close connection to Richmond in terms of themes and subject matter. In 2024, the Galleria featured:

- Deirdre Hofer: *Falling Snow*, January 8–March 26
- Jiangang Su: *Birds and Rocks in Cloud City*, March 26–June 10
- Susan Purney Mark: *The Industrial Shoreline*, June 11–August 26
- Aspire Richmond: *Embracing Inclusion: Celebrating a Palette of Artists from Diverse Cultures*, August 27–November 12

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Accessibility



Diversity



Investment



Awareness/Participation



Public Spaces



Rooftop Garden Series: Tatakizome workshop



Artist Salon with Yaimel López Zaldivar

Inter/National Profile Raising



CAMDO CONFERENCE

In June, the Gallery hosted the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization Conference's Annual General Meeting. More than 30 museum directors from across Canada toured the RAG exhibitions and visited the Blue Cabin at Imperial Landing in Steveston.

JAPANESE CULTURAL EXCHANGE

In November, Director Shaun Dacey was invited by the Japan Foundation to attend an all expenses-paid ten-day curatorial exchange trip to Japan alongside three other Canadian curators and four from Brazil.

Community Outreach and Programs



Through 2024, RAG stayed connected with Richmond's artists and art lovers through a combination of digital and in-person programming.

FOODWAYS: ROOFTOP GARDEN SERIES

Made possible with investment from the City's Arts and Culture Grant Program, RAGA partnered with the Richmond Garden Club to host a series of free and low-cost summer workshops at the Cultural Centre's Rooftop Garden in the months leading up to the *FOODWAYS* exhibition that fall. Hands-on learning sessions included the growing, cultivating and uses of various vegetables, fruits and flowers.

Guest visual artists, gardening experts, chefs and Indigenous knowledge keeper Kymberlee Stogan shared their expertise on a variety of topics such as fabric dyeing with leaves and vegetables; painting with flowers; making food items such as teas, jellies, and preserves; printmaking with vegetables and fruits; and plein-air drawing in the garden.

ARTIST AND CURATOR INTERVIEWS ON VIDEO

For each exhibition, RAG produces video interviews of the artists or curators talking about their work, that are presented in the Art Lounge during the exhibition periods and available to view online. In 2024, there were four exhibition videos produced:

- Curator Michael Dang discusses the exhibition *Unit Bruises: Theodore Wan & Paul Wong, 1975-1979*
- Artist Hazel Meyer discusses her exhibition *The Marble in the Basement*
- Curator Zoë Chan introduces the group exhibition *It begins with knowing and not knowing*
- Artist Marlene Yuen discusses her work in the *FOODWAYS* group exhibition

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" I love these sessions. What I found so compelling about this last one was the process from wanting to be a full-time artist to becoming that. It is such a mystery. How does one do it? I want more."

– Artist Salon participant

2024 ARTIST SALON BY THE NUMBERS

8	sessions
8	artist speakers
158	livestream and in-person attendees
1,567	video views

ARTIST SALON SERIES

Artist Salon is an ongoing series of gatherings that connect emerging and established artists, particularly those who live or work in Richmond, with professional artists and arts workers in order to share experiences, skills and knowledge.

In 2024, Artist Salon continued to offer hybrid sessions throughout the year, delivered as monthly live-streams or in-person talks that included Q&A with participants. All online sessions were recorded and provide a video library of resources for artists, available on the RAG website and YouTube channel. The in-person sessions provided a more intimate setting where participants could connect directly with presenters for personalized discussions as well as participate in a networking opportunity; some of these sessions were also recorded for on-demand viewing.

EXHIBITION TOURS

The gallery offers in-person gallery tours led by gallery staff or exhibiting artists to provide a deeper understanding of the exhibitions and to offer visitors the opportunity to ask questions directly to the artist or curator. As well, for each exhibit, an in-person tour in Mandarin is offered, providing some Richmond residents the opportunity to learn about the local art scene in their first language.

COLLAGE PARTY: HANDS-ON ART FOR ADULTS

In 2024, the gallery continued its popular Collage Party events. Hosted once per exhibition, both local and exhibiting artists were invited as guests to share their current art projects and demonstrate a collage technique based on their own art practice. These social and educational events provided a relaxed environment to experiment with art making while getting to learn more about local artists.



Publications

RAG has a significant history of publishing exhibition catalogues and artist books; these serve as promotional tools or “calling cards” for both the Gallery and the artists involved, while contributing to discourse around local and national contemporary art practices. RAG produced two major publications this year:

KAREN TAM: WITH WINGS LIKE CLOUDS HUNG FROM THE SKY

125 pages. Edited by Haema Sivanesan

Co-published by Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and RAG

This lushly illustrated bilingual publication in English and Traditional Chinese focuses on Karen Tam’s exhibition of the same name, which was presented at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Richmond Art Gallery and the Varley Art Gallery of Markham (2017–2022). Responding to brief mentions of a Chinese artist named Lee Nam in Emily Carr’s memoirs, Tam constructed an installation that vividly imagines Lee’s studio in 1930s Victoria Chinatown as well as his influence both on Carr and on ink brush painters working then and now. The book includes essays by curators and art historians Lisa Baldissera, Greta Moray and Haema Sivanesan, as well as by the artist.

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RAGA School Program



RAGA School Program

Award-winning publications

Two 2023 publications, *Sonja Ahlers: Classification Crisis* and *Brendan Fernandes: Inaction* were awarded Honorable Mentions in the Pictorial category of the Alcuin Society Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada.

Another RAG publication, *What are our supports?*, co-published with Information Office, Doryphore Curators Society and Art Metropole, and co-edited by Joni Low and Jeff O'Brien, was shortlisted for the 2024 City of Vancouver Book Award.

AMY CHING-YAN LAM: PROPERTY JOURNAL

216 pages

Co-published by Book Works (UK) and RAG

From December 2021 to December 2022, artist and writer Amy Ching-Yan Lam kept a record of each time real estate, property or housing came up in conversation. She called this the *Property Journal*. Tender, fierce and mordantly funny, *Property Journal* is a searing indictment of the permanent state of affairs known as the housing crisis.

Youth Programming

SCHOOL ART PROGRAM

The Richmond Art Gallery Association's School Art Program introduces students from Preschool to Grade 12 to the world of contemporary art through interactive gallery tours and exhibition-based, hands-on art activities. The program also provides professional development opportunities for teachers with workshops and resources online to help teachers incorporate contemporary art practices and content on local, regional and national Canadian art and artists into their lessons.

This year saw a return to full capacity of school programs, with a third instructor enlisted to join the roster of art educators offering tours and art workshops at the gallery. The gallery provided seven high school tours for 202 students, 108 school art workshops for 2,456 students, and 14 Classroom Art Kit rentals reaching 676 students.

RAG and Richmond Museum school programs have historically partnered to promote and distribute program information to SD38 schools. In 2024, thanks to the Museum's new dedicated education space, the History Lab, in the RCCA, this partnership could expand to enable back-to-back Museum and Gallery workshop bookings.

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Chinese Art Classroom Kit



ECUAD Youth Art + Culture Lab

“Visiting the gallery is an important part of the Visual Arts curriculum because it opens the students’ eyes to perspectives other than their own. I feel very grateful to have access to a contemporary art gallery in our Richmond community. The exhibitions and programming are excellent.”

– teacher, Richmond Secondary School

As transportation costs have long been identified as the biggest barrier to extra-curricular activities, this partnership offers an enriching and affordable opportunity for Richmond schools.

CLASSROOM ART KITS

Classroom Art Kits, launched in 2021 in response to the pandemic, have now expanded into a successful rental program for schools across the Lower Mainland, with kits being distributed to schools in many school districts.

In 2024, in response to demand for quality educational resources on Indigenous Art, the gallery updated its *Indigenous Art* kit by filming new interviews with artist (and original kit collaborator) Michelle Sound, whose new artworks were on display over the summer. Once edited, the updated kits will be available in Fall 2025.

Fall 2024 saw the completion of the *Chinese Art: Then and Now* kit which draws on the contributions of Chinese-Canadian artists throughout history, such as Lee Nam, a friend of Emily Carr in Victoria, and the work of contemporary Chinese-Canadian artists such as Karen Tam and Xiaojing Yan who deftly blend Chinese traditions with contemporary techniques and approaches.

ECUAD YOUTH ART + CULTURE LAB

Continuing the partnership started in 2018 with Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECUAD), RAG co-hosted an art course for youth aged 12–15 years. Sessions were held on Sundays bi-weekly over seven months with alternating visits at RAG and ECUAD. Students worked with instructors, a teaching assistant and visiting artists throughout the course to develop projects in response to RAG exhibitions and explore the practices of contemporary artists. The culmination of the program will be a student showcase at Emily Carr University in March 2025.

2024 SCHOOL PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS

- 108 art workshops
- 7 highschool tours
- 2,456 students
- 14 Classroom Art Kit rentals

PRCS - 37



RAGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023–2024

- Kurt Aydin
- Lynn Chen
- Grace Gihm
- Allison Liu, President
- Kristal Hamakawa,
Vice President/Treasurer
- Russna Kaur
- Jas Lally
- Ronald Lauenstein
- Daria Sheina
- Lei Tian
- Debra Zhou
- Council Liaison: Carol Day

Richmond Art Gallery Association

The Gallery benefits from financial and in-kind support of many organizations via Richmond Art Gallery Association (RAGA), an independent, non-profit society and registered charity formed to support the RAG through fundraising, membership and advocacy.

In 2024, RAGA received cash and in-kind assistance from other levels of government, businesses, private foundations and individuals, totalling \$173,432.

By developing educational and public programming, RAGA provides the community with opportunities to learn about contemporary art and participate in art-making activities. Proceeds from RAGA's fundraising efforts contribute to the Gallery's active program of artist and curator talks, panel discussions, tours, workshops and video interviews as well as brochures and catalogues that serve as interpretive texts accompanying exhibitions.

Partnerships

The Richmond Art Gallery has developed and continues to consolidate relationships with numerous partners such as the Aspire Richmond, Capture Photography Festival, Emily Carr University Art + Design, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Richmond Museum Society, Richmond Public Library, Richmond School District, Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, Simon Fraser University, SUCCESS, Tourism Richmond, UBC Faculty of Education, Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society and Walk Richmond.

These partnerships allow the Gallery to create mutually beneficial opportunities for audience crossover, resource sharing and cooperative programming and help to extend the understanding of art's significance in everyday life.



PRCS - 39

Xinwei Che, *Pressing into cracks and blooms*, NK Photo (It begins with knowing and not knowing)



RICHMOND PUBLIC ART PROGRAM TO-DATE:

- 357** total number of permanent and temporary artworks
- 276** total number of permanent and temporary artworks currently on display
- 29,970+** ours of community participation in the annual Engaging Artists in Community Program
- 28** murals installed through the Community Mural Program

Richmond Public Art Program

The Richmond Public Art Program provides a means for including art in the creation of a vibrant, healthy and sustainable city. In addition to permanent and temporary artworks, the Public Art Program offers a stimulating program of educational and community engagement activities to increase public awareness of the arts and encourage public dialogue about art and issues of interest and concern to Richmond residents.

Civic Public Art Program

In 2024, the following projects were commissioned by the City through the Civic Public Art Program:

SEASONS OF COLOUR Laura Kwok Richmond Cultural Centre Annex

This mural by Richmond-based artist Laura Kwok incorporates themes that were contributed by community members at public activities held in 2023. The mural depicts three themes, one for each side of the triangular building:

- “Sea & Sky” depicts waves and clouds interspersed with symbolic elements to represent local wildlife.
- “Art & Music” presents natural imagery with musical instruments and pottery to represent a home for the arts to flourish.
- “Flora & Fauna” celebrates Richmond’s natural heritage through plants and wildlife.

A celebratory gathering with art display including two artist tours was held on June 8 as part of Doors Open Richmond.

PRCS - 40



Christian Giroux and Daniel Young, *Otto Finch House*

Private Development Public Art Program



Through the development applications process, private developers continued to provide high quality public art to enrich the public realm. In 2024, the following projects were completed:

OTTO FINCH HOUSE

Christian Giroux and Daniel Young
8119 Park Road

Inspired by architect Frei Otto’s experimental Ökohaus in Berlin, this sculpture depicts open floor plates and modular additions, as it reimagines the development’s three towers scaled-down to offer housing for birds. Whimsically, the viewer is invited to imagine themselves as one of them, connecting with both the collective and the personal within the architectural space. The piece explores themes of recursion, repetition and scale, merging modernity with the natural world’s own narratives.



Desirée Patterson, *As it Once Was*

AS IT ONCE WAS

Desirée Patterson
4899 Vanguard Road

As It Once Was is comprised of a glazing design installed across the four-storey façades of two commercial buildings as well as eight photo-based murals on the enclosure gates. With the ambition to honour the land as it once was, the artist drew inspiration from the adjacent Richmond Nature Park. The gate murals are comprised of intricate collages that showcase a diverse array of flora sensitively foraged from the Richmond Nature Park by the park’s biologist. More than 150 cyanotypes were hand-created and then digitally layered to complete the work.



Desirée Patterson, *As it Once Was*



Carolyn Wong, *Gathering Pond*

Community Mural Program

The City of Richmond’s Mural Program provides opportunities to add vibrancy to highly visible public spaces, foster community dialogue and cross-cultural exchange, and engage diverse and multi-generational communities.

Annually, a Call for Walls is announced and community facilities and businesses can apply to have a mural on their property that they will be required to maintain for a minimum of five years. If successful, they are matched with a pre-qualified artist to develop the design through a collaborative or community-engaged process. The program is funded by the voluntary contributions of private developers to the Public Art Program Reserve fund.

GATHERING POND

Carolyn Wong
Minoru Arenas

This mural is a vibrant celebration of the Richmond community, drawing inspiration from the heart of the ice rink—a place where everyone comes together in the spirit of play and connection. The mural captures the dynamic energy of hockey, ringette, lacrosse, skating and more, showcasing each activity as a thread in the rich tapestry of shared experiences at Minoru Arenas.

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Otilia Sabina Spantulescu, *Summer Joys*

SUMMER JOYS

Otilia Sabina Spantulescu
Trail Washroom at Tait Park

Summer Joys was created with the desire to capture the fun of summer and being outdoors through a playful composition focusing on movement, space and colour. The artist invites viewers to engage with the work and feel like they are a part of a joyful adventure to experience a sense of wonder and curiosity about their environment.



Ciele Beau, *In Tandem*

IN TANDEM

Ciele Beau
Trail Washroom at London Landing

Inspired by the environmental cycles of the area, and the sensitive relationship between humans and nature, this mural works to convey the ways in which humans and wildlife intertwine. It is not us versus them, it is us and them: two ways of being in the natural world learning how to co-exist, tying connection and cycles, protection and refuge.



Fiona Tang, *A Walk in the Park*

A WALK IN THE PARK

Fiona Tang
Trail Washroom at Terra Nova Park

This mural is inspired by the scenery and wildlife of the area. The artist aimed to cultivate a sense of playfulness in the mural, encouraging viewers to spend time discovering its little details, such as the small rabbit in the bush, raccoon on the door, and tiny hummingbird drinking from the water faucet. Just like observing nature, the more time one spends with the mural, the more wonders they will find.



Phil Phil Studio, *Birding on the Fraser*

BIRDING ON THE FRASER

Phil Phil Studio
Trail Washroom at No 3 Road Pier

This mural celebrates the vibrant birdlife of the local area. Each side of the building showcases a unique species—heron, hummingbird, northern flicker and swallows—capturing beauty and inspiration drawn from the surrounding natural environment.



Jean Bradbury, *Grandparents*

GRANDPARENTS

Jean Bradbury
Cook Elementary School

Grandparents depicts elders from the community alongside elder trees as young seedlings are also shown with young people. The mural is surrounded by a decorative border painted by the 600 students of Cook Elementary.

GROWING

Anaïs Lera
École Secondaire Hugh McRoberts Secondary School

This mural design envisions the school as a thriving garden—an ecosystem where adults serve as gardeners, nurturing and guiding students to bloom into their full potential.

PRCS - 42

Mark Anderson, *Postcards from Steveston*

"In all accounts, the opportunity was transformative for the entire school community. The finished murals are more than just beautiful pieces of art. They are a testament to the power of collaboration and creativity.

The murals amplify the stories and voices of our learners and have become a focal point, contributing to a growing sense of belonging for all. It's an experience that our communities will carry—long after the paint has dried."

— Catherine Jule, SD38 District Administrator Early Learning and Arts

POSTCARDS FROM STEVESTON

Mark Anderson

Steveston Harbour Authority, 3300 Chatham Street

This mural is a celebration of the fishing heritage and history of Steveston. Images in this artwork were presented as old photographs and postcards to the artist for inspiration and story building. The collage of images in the mural spanning from 1880–1940 are souvenirs or "postcards" from the past to the visitors and locals of Steveston Village.

Engaging Artists in Community Public Art Program



This annual program connects artists with socially-oriented art practices with Richmond-based community organizations. Community-based artworks can express a shared goal or theme and provoke dialogue on ideas related to neurodiversity, flood protection and the environment. The following were funded through the voluntary contributions of private developers to the City's Public Art Program Reserve fund.

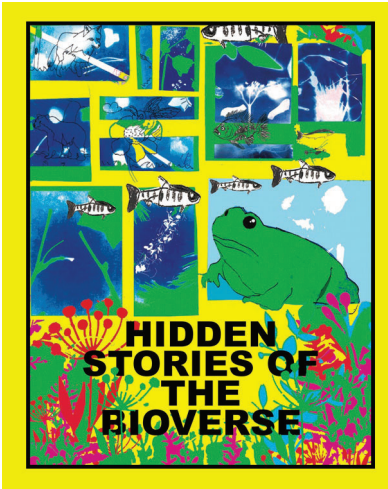
HIDDEN STORIES OF THE BIOVERSE

Andrea Hoff

Dixon Elementary School in partnership with Engineering Sustainability

Hidden Stories of the Bioverse engaged young learners at Dixon Elementary School in the making of a multi-authored graphic novel. Using a variety of art activities and artist-led collaborative approaches, students learned about flood protection and environmental awareness strategies. The project included artist-led field trips to the West Dyke Trail and Williams Road Pump Station in collaboration with City Flood Protection and Sustainability programs. A final presentation and celebratory gathering engaged the neighbourhood on June 11. For more information, visit www.andreahoff.com/blog

PRCS - 43



"We are so very impressed with the art installation at the Nature Park done by Desirée Patterson. The colorful display is great for our location and gives a beautiful pop of colour as you enter the park.

The community approach and collaborative way the art was designed and put together while showing how the bog was formed is a fabulous rendition and will welcome visitors to the park for many years."

– President, Richmond Nature Park Society

VISIONS OF BIOPHILIA

Desirée Patterson

Richmond Nature Park in partnership with Richmond Nature Park Society

From April to October 2024, this project engaged visitors at the Richmond Nature Park in photography-based image making informed by the Park's unique ecosystem. Free workshops in alternative photographic techniques, including chlorophyll printing, anthotypes and cyanotypes were offered to all ages. A final celebratory gathering to unveil the legacy project and artist presentation was held as part of Culture Days in October. For more information, visit www.desireepatterson.com/visions-of-biophilia.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Keely O'Brien

Aspire Richmond in partnership with Richmond Public Library

Express Yourself was a year-long artist project by Richmond-based Keely O'Brien that invited youth, ages 12 to 19 years old, to explore their emerging identities through a variety of art mediums including collage, drawing, printmaking, storytelling and zine creation to recognize neurodiversity and the differences and similarities among us. This project aimed to build a vibrant community of young artists exploring the possibilities of creative self-expression. For more information, visit www.keelyobrien.ca/express-yourself.



Danvic Briones, *For the Picking*



Daniil Alikov, *Techno Naive*



Marceline Siu, *From Dawn to Dusk*

2024 PUBLIC ART BY THE NUMBERS

- 40** new works installed (37 temporary and 3 permanent)
- 155** submissions received for five Public Art Calls
- 17** Richmond artists contracted for Public Art commissions
- 12** community groups and partners engaged to inform and create public art projects
- 2,210+** participants attended in-person and on-demand Public Art events and programming

Community Public Art Programs

The following programs were funded through the voluntary contributions of private developers to the City’s Public Art Program Reserve fund.

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE ART PROGRAM

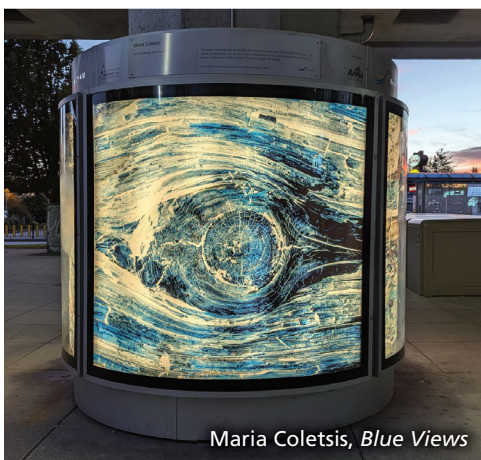
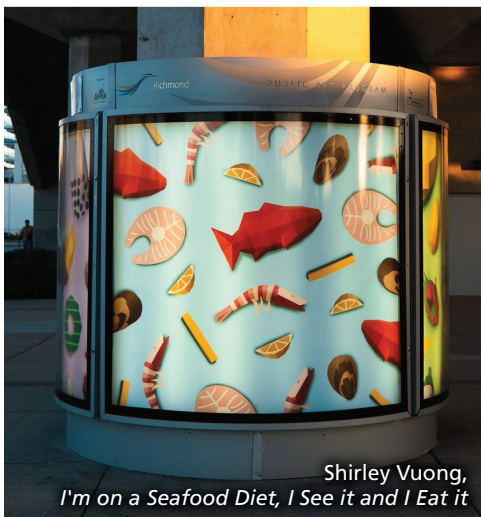
The Urban Infrastructure Art Program transforms otherwise undistinguished elements of public infrastructure — such as utility boxes and construction hoarding — into welcome encounters with art in everyday life. Public Art matches opportunities to pre-qualified artists in the creation of art wraps that reflect and celebrate Richmond’s natural heritage and vibrant communities.

In 2024, 18 traffic cabinets were wrapped:

- Marceline Siu: *From Dawn to Dusk*, No.4 Road and Westminster Highway
- Brie Aho: *Our Fellow Richmondites*, Butterfly Way, St.Albans and Bennett Road
- Danvic Briones: *For the Picking*, *Garden Sentinel*, Westminster Highway and Westminster Highway North
- Adriano Renzi: *Coyotes*, *Ducks*, Buswell Street and Park Road
- Yoojin Lee: *Existence*, *Sweet 3*, No.3 Road and Park Road
- Daniil Alikov: *Techno Naive*, Hazelbridge Way and Capstan Way
- David England: *Leaf Me Alone...I've Just Fallen Down*, *The Leaves Carpet Many Secrets*, Barga Drive and Cambie Road
- Andrea Hoff: *Hidden Stories of the Bioverse*, No.1 Road and Francis Road*
- Cherry Archer, *Capstan Understory 97* and *Capstan Understory 145*, Capstan Station

* with support from Dixon Elementary School as part of *Hidden Stories of the Bioverse*, an Engaging Artists in Community Project.

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Emily Lau, *The Dreamer*Maria Coletsis, *Blue Views*Shirley Vuong,
I'm on a Seafood Diet, I See it and I Eat it

NO. 3 ROAD ARTS COLUMNS EXHIBITION 18, PART I AND II

This annual two-part exhibition takes place at Lansdowne and Aberdeen Centre Canada Line Stations, and showcases the work of Richmond artists. Part 1 was coordinated in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition and the 2023 ArtRich Exhibition, while Part 2 artists were selected via an open call to emerging and established artists who live and/or work in Richmond and/or whose works celebrate Richmond's local culture, history and natural heritage.

Part I (February–July)

– **Emily Lau: *The Thinker, The Phonograph Record Collector, The Guitarist, The Dreamer***

This series celebrates the diversity and beauty of individual stories and contributions made by Richmond residents and visitors every day.

– **Andrew Talbot: *A Life to Light***

This celebration of wildlife is expressed as a harmonious composition of multiple layers converging into a unified whole. The work aims to capture the essence of our shared existence.

– **Susan Taylor: *Lines and Nets: A Terrible Beauty***

In these works the artist depicts the lines and nets that underpin the culture of fishing, towing and other water-based activities. Their intricate structures can be transformed into a terrible beauty when, as ghost gear—damaged and abandoned—they snare marine life.

Part II (August–January, 2025)

– **Maria Coletsis: *Drift WoodScapes: Blue Views***

This series imagines vast landscapes emerging from Richmond's driftwood. The digital photographs convey the interconnectedness of the natural world and invite the viewer to discover hidden images of a much larger landscape.

– **Shirley Vuong: *You're All That and Dim Sum, I'm Sweet and Odorable, I'm on a Seafood Diet, I See it and I Eat it, I Know What You're Thinking a Bao***

This series celebrates the abundance and diversity of foods in Richmond. From Steveston to the Richmond Night Market, one can find fresh seafood, dim sum and wonderful fruits and veggies at Asian markets and farm stands.

– **Ranu Chakraborty: *Recollections of the Richmond Sakura Soirée***

Strolling through Steveston during the Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival, one is enveloped in a tapestry of pink blooms. Amidst the fragrant air, serene tea ceremonies beckon and sushi delights offer a taste of spring's abundance, merging nature's beauty with culinary bliss.

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Cherry Archer, *Membranes and Pith 305*

MEMBRANES AND PITH 305 & REVERIE 25

Cherry Archer
Aberdeen Canada Line Station

Cherry Archer uses photography, ice and culinary plants that have ties to her Trinidadian heritage to explore themes of memory, storytelling, family history and how first-generation parents connect their youth to their cultural roots. Her process begins by collecting culinary plants which evoke a strong memory of her childhood and family. She boils, rehydrates, peels, manipulates and freezes the plants in water to form a tile which is illuminated with coloured light, photographed and then printed in large format.

Education and Outreach

Richmond Public Art incorporated public art-based activities and programs in signature events and other annual activities.

- **Children's Arts Festival Self-guided Scavenger Hunt for Family Day** that took participants from Richmond City Hall to Minoru Park in search of 10 public artworks
- **Doors Open Richmond** Gathering and tours hosted by artist Laura Kwok celebrating the completion of *Seasons of Colour* community mural at the Richmond Cultural Centre Annex
- **National Indigenous Peoples' Day/ National Indigenous History Month** Free bus tour on June 22 guest-led by Musqueam knowledge keeper Morgan Guerin and featuring artworks by Musqueam artists Debra Sparrow, Susan Point and Thomas Cannell
- **Culture Days** Capstan Village walking tour guest-led by RAGA board member Jas Lally, cyanotype printmaking workshop at Richmond Nature Park led by artist Desirée Patterson, and "Express Yourself" celebratory gathering led by artist Keely O'Brien and Richmond youth at the Richmond Public Library Brighthouse
- **Public Works Open House** Public Art info booth with free button-making activity using artist-designed access cover artwork
- **Capital Projects Open House** Info table highlighting public artworks commissioned through capital projects
- **National Seniors Day** Free bus tour for seniors led by guest tour guide Eric Fiss, former Richmond Public Art Planner, visiting art at the Oval Village, Minoru Centre for Active Living and City Centre
- **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** in partnership with the Richmond Public Library, a screening of the film documenting the year-long *Mosaic Firefly* project presented on March 21. It can be accessed from the City's YouTube Channel and project website www.abcrichmond.wixsite.com/abcrichmond

Public Art Maintenance

In 2024, the following civic artworks were identified for maintenance and were repaired:

- *Ford Grove* by Douglas Taylor, Coppersmith Corner Shopping Centre, 11388 Steveston Hwy.
- *House of Roots* by Jeanette Lee, Paulik Neighbourhood Park
- *Gateway* by Tyler Hodgins, Gateway Theatre
- *Site Unseen* by Mia Weinberg, 8633 Capstan Way
- *Versante* by Krzysztof Zukowski, 8280 Lansdowne Rd.
- *Wild Salmon City* by Sara Genn, Tiko Kerr, Johnny Maynard Jr. and Michael Tickner, Watermania

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Meander

These Canada 150 legacy benches by Becki Chan and Milos Begovic continue to liven up public spaces from May to October at the Richmond Cultural Centre, Minoru Centre for Active Living and Richmond City Hall Plaza. *Meander* also provides additional seating at the Steveston Salmon Festival.

2024 RPAAC MEMBERS:

- Bronwyn Bailey, Vice-Chair
- Sabrina Bhojani
- Ceri Chong
- Paul Dufour, Chair
- Frank Ducote
- Victoria Grigorenko
- Jose Larano
- Allison Liu
- Jerome Teo
- Council Liaison: Kash Heed

Artist Rosters

The following artist rosters were updated in 2024 to ensure efficiency, transparency and diversity in the selection of local artists for annual and ad-hoc projects:

PUBLIC ART + URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2024, the Public Art + Urban Infrastructure roster was updated and renewed to create the program's pool of artists who live or work in Richmond. Roster artists can be called upon when low-barrier art opportunities arise, including traffic cabinet art wraps and construction fence art wraps. The roster will be active to April 2026.

COMMUNITY MURAL

The Community Mural roster is a list of experienced mural artists who are pre-qualified to work with community groups, business or property owners, schools, and/or private developers to design and execute murals in public spaces. This roster will be in use through June 2026.

Richmond Public Art Advisory Committee

The Richmond Public Art Advisory Committee (RPAAC) is a Council-appointed voluntary advisory committee that provides input on public art policy, planning, education and promotion. At monthly Committee meetings, members receive presentations on new civic, private development and community project proposals and provide feedback and recommendations.





Arts Programs at the Cultural Centre/Annex

Programs at the Cultural Centre and Annex (RCC/A) provide Richmond's diverse community with arts education, cultural experiences and creative spaces. High quality arts education opportunities are available in a wide variety of disciplines including visual arts, dance and movement, music and theatre. The purpose-built studios in both locations are also home to seven local arts organizations known as the Resident Art Groups and provide affordable spaces to additional community arts groups.

As the hub of artistic participation within Richmond, these offerings activate and inspire artists and community members to connect through the arts. The creative contributions of Richmond residents — through dance, theatre or visual arts — have a significant positive impact on community health and celebrate the vibrancy of Richmond as a diverse and dynamic city.

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS:

1,234	courses
6,340	registered students
49	professional instructors
110,000+	visits

Arts Education Programs

The City continues to develop and diversify its arts education offerings to meet community demand for high calibre arts education delivered by professional artists. These programs ensure affordable access to a strong base of introductory and beginner arts education programs as well as higher-level learning opportunities.

Arts instructors are not only highly qualified instructors, but also artists currently practicing in their artistic disciplines. Programmers, responding to community needs and current arts trends, recruit educators from a diverse background of cultures and creative practices.

Classes are offered both seasonally and during Spring Break and Summer Camps and serve pre-school, children, youth and adults. In 2024, the range of disciplines included:

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Performing Arts Ballet, Jazz, Hip Hop, K-Pop, Chinese Classical Dance, Flamenco, Sassy Jazz, Musical Theatre, Drama, Acting on Camera, Acrobatics, Contemporary, Ballroom and Latin Dance, Dance Fitness, Water Sleeve Dance and Creative Movement. In partnership with Richmond Improv Theatre Society: Improvisation. In partnership with Richmond Music School: Drum Circle and Tiny Tots Piano Program, and private lessons for Piano, Guitar, Voice, Violin and Electronic Drum.

Visual Arts Drawing and Painting, Mixed Media Sculpture, Printmaking, Nature Illustration, Industrial Design, Fibre and Textile Arts, Abstract Drawing and Painting, Pottery (Wheel-throwing and Clay Hand-building), Ikebana, Book-Making, Comics and Cartooning and Manga, in partnership with Petit Architect: Introduction to Architecture.

In 2024, **new programs** were developed to expand and support community offerings. Examples include Chinese Classical Dance, K-Pop Dance, Flamenco, Intermediate Courses for Serious Performers, Ballroom Dance, Drum Circle for Seniors, Early Childhood Education Piano, Printmaking, Book-making, Private Voice Lessons, Nature Illustration for Families, Open Studio Art classes, and a wider variety of full-day and half-day camps as well as discipline-specific intensives.

This year also saw the development of the newly created Fibre and Textile Arts program expanding from sewing and quilting to ribbon and Brazilian embroidery.

Community Programs and Outreach

ART TRUCK PROGRAM

The Art Truck program is designed to meet three community needs: 1) provide arts experiences for community members who may not otherwise have access to them, 2) promote public awareness of art within the community, and 3) make arts education readily available to the public.

In the spring, the Art Truck offered historical and cultural arts activities to more than 50 Richmond Museum Heritage Fair participants. Musqueam artists and weavers, Rita and Zoë Kompst, taught traditional cedar weaving techniques to create friendship bracelets. Students also had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese Brush Painting with artist and arts educator, Maylyn Chan.

"Thank you for offering such a great variety of activities to enrich our lifestyles."
 – Adult dance student



Tiny Tots Piano



Ribbon Embroidery



Art Truck at Heritage Fair

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Accessibility Initiatives

Richmond endeavours to provide a safe and welcoming space for all in the RCC/A. Some examples include improving wayfinding at the Children's Arts Festival, adding a nursing area and a "chill-out zone" for visitors with sensory sensitivities, providing classroom assistants for programs with diverse learners to provide better support, investing in portable clay wheels for the pottery studio and designing an Accessibility Guide for the Richmond Cultural Centre.

In 2024, staff and instructors participated in training to enhance classroom services and better support neuro-divergent participants in performing arts.

The Arts Centre Sampler Program, in collaboration with the Richmond Adult Mental Health Team (RMHT), fosters creativity, community integration and holistic wellness among adults with lived experience of mental illness in Richmond. Over the course of eight weekly sessions, participants engaged in dance, movement and pottery classes led by artists and occupational therapists.

The newly established Pottery Studio in the RCCA complimented seasonal programming with workshops customized for partners; for example, students in alternative secondary school programs such as SD38's Horizons and Touchstone's School Readiness participated in handbuilding workshops to foster artistic expression and confidence-building.



Interactive mural by Bea Martin at Burkeville Days

In July and August, the Art Truck partnered with the Richmond Public Library to offer eight free Art Club workshops for children. Richmond-based artists Bea Martin, Vanessa Figueroa, Mickey Morgan and Alisha Weng led sold-out workshops, reaching a combined 120 participants.

In June, August and September, the Art Truck also provided arts engagement opportunities at community events. Artist and naturalist, Bea Martin, created an interactive mural depicting Richmond's flora and fauna for more than 500 people at Burkeville Days; actor, singer and dancer, Krista Goss, led hundreds of participants in a musical theatre activity at Cambie Community Centre BBQ; and artist Vanessa Figueroa created a collaborative immersive site-specific art piece with found materials at Hamilton Night Out.

JUST FERMENT IT!

In July, a series of four fermentation programs was presented by Brewbird (Kristine Hui) who led workshops in making kimchi, sauerkraut, hot sauce and kombucha at the RCC Rooftop Garden. These classes were also a part of the Richmond Art Gallery's Rooftop Series, encouraging and sharing community knowledge about the importance of food preservation and exploring culinary creativity by using a variety of ingredients and seasonal produce

RESIDENT ART GROUPS

The studios in the RCC/A are home to some of Richmonds longest running community arts organizations who receive reduced rates on regular room rentals for their activities. Throughout the year, the groups provide workshops, exhibitions and demonstrations for their members as well as participate in community events such as Culture Days.

2024 was a momentous year for long-time resident art group, the Richmond Potters' Club, who became the exclusive programmers of the pottery studio in the RCC. This transition was made possible with the opening of the new pottery studio in the Annex, dedicated to complementary City-led programs to better meet community need. Pottery is extremely popular with programs in both studios carrying year-round waitlists for enrollment.



Art Club at Richmond Public Library



Mr. Tony, Over the Rainbow, Somewhere is Here

7 RESIDENT ART GROUPS:

- Richmond Artists' Guild
- Chinese Artists Association of Richmond
- Richmond Gem and Mineral Society
- Richmond Photo Club
- Richmond Potters' Club
- Richmond Weavers and Spinners Society
- Textile Arts Guild of Richmond

COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITIONS

The City coordinates exhibitions by local artists and arts groups for display in the Upper Rotunda Gallery. In 2024, the following took place:

- Chinese Artists Association of Richmond, January 2–Feb 2
- Ruby Smith Diaz and Tosin Peters: Black Artists and Creators in Our Community Exhibition, February 2–29
- Sister Cities: Getting to Know Our Cities Photo Exhibition – Fire Departments, March 1–29
- Richmond Arts Centre Faculty Show, March 28–April 26,
- Richmond Secondary School Students, April 26–May 31
- *Richmond News: Good Morning*, May 31–June 28
- Lydia Rozental and Carolyn Bell: Mavens and Matriarchs, June 28–July 26
- Mr. Tony: Over the Rainbow, Somewhere is Here, July 26–August 30
- SD38 Faculty, August 30–September 27
- Richmond Sister City Advisory Committee's 50th Anniversary Photo Exhibition, September 27–October 25
- Richmond Artists Guild, October 25–November 29
- Chung Ai, November 29–December 27

Ruby Smith Díaz, *Ofrenda*Tosin Peters, *Fragmental Reflections*

“The act of gathering together with community to listen, share, learn and act on our history is this year’s theme and is driving how we will honour our heroes this February and all year round, and share our historical and ongoing contributions to Canada.”

– Mary Wilson

Special Events

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EXHIBITION

Initiated in 2016, the Black History Month exhibition program is presented annually in February in partnership with Mary Wilson of Richmond Black History Month. This year, artists Ruby Smith Díaz and Tosin Peters were featured at the Upper Rotunda Gallery from February 2–29. Their artworks demonstrated a range of techniques and materials including photography, digital art and sculpture.

On February 17, Tosin presented an artist talk and reflections on a collection of artworks that drew inspiration from their collection of poetry, *Letters to Untitled*.

The exhibition and artist talk were part of 17 activities presented during Black History Month at the RCC, Richmond Art Gallery, Children’s Arts Festival and Richmond Public Library.

Community Partners

In 2024, the City partnered with the following community organizations to increase the community’s access to arts opportunities through programs, events, exhibitions and more: Gateway Theatre, Resident Art Groups, Vancouver Cantonese Opera Society, Richmond Public Library, School District No. 38, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Museum, Richmond Black History Month, Richmond Music School, Lansdowne Centre, Cambie, City Centre, Hamilton, South Arm, Sea Island, Steveston, Thompson and West Richmond Community Centres, Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living and Richmond Nature Park.

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Traditional Chinese Brush Painting class with Maylyn Chan
using new video table-top demonstration table at the RCCA Creativity Lab



Jam Session

“Media lab is fun and I like coming here”

– A.H., RYMP member

RICHMOND MEDIA LAB BY THE NUMBERS:

- 69** RYMP Youth members who attended at least one drop-in session
- 4,200** hours RYMP members spent learning media arts skills and building community connections
- 300** hours RYMP members spent volunteering to provide photography, sound mixing and AV support for community events
- 65** Media Lab courses
- 424** course registrations

Richmond Media Lab

The Media Lab is designed to increase technology literacy, accessibility and creativity in our community, particularly among youth. Media Lab participants are taught skills and techniques for applying media and computer technology towards artistic activities and practical marketable skills.

In January, the Media Lab was relocated to the RCCA. This move was successfully completed while maintaining program delivery with minimal course interruptions.

Richmond Youth Media Program

The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), a free referral-based program for youth ages 13-24, has been running continuously for 13 years as a signature offering of the Richmond Media Lab. RYMP members gain valuable skills in media arts and build connections in the community, with a focus on asset development. This year saw a continuation of support from Vancouver Coastal Health, with ongoing grant support in partnership with Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS).

The program saw a significant increase in participation among referrals and drop-in engagement as a result of moving to the RCCA. The larger space was upgraded with the latest software, hardware and machinery providing youth access to learning new skills, discovering new creative pursuits, and increasing curiosity to learn digital media.

This year also saw the creation of two new RYMP drop-in programs: Wednesday’s Create Space and Friday Night Jam Session. Create Space is a drop-in focused on crafting, textiles and the use of tools like Cricut machines, 3D Printing, sewing machines and more. Music Jam Sessions utilize the robust suite of musical equipment now in place to bring aspiring musicians and music lovers together to play music and learn. In addition to regular drop-ins on

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Youth-led Skill Session



Media Lab sound booth



The Mic Drop

In June, RYMP launched a regular open mic night for children and youth, brightening the new lounge space at the RCCA. This event, in contrast to formal music recitals, creates a comfortable atmosphere for musical showcases that encourage children and youth of all musical backgrounds to gain confidence with performing among their peers.

Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, RYMP is also now an after-school and weekend option for youth to attend nearly every day of the week.

In 2024, RYMP welcomed 69 active RYMP members, 407 guests, and 30 adult mentors (including youth workers and professional media artists) contributing over 4,200 hours spent at the Media Lab. **A record 53 new youth were referred to the program this year – the most in the program’s history.**

RYMP members also participated in a variety of community events and initiatives, including the following:

YOUTH WEEK – CAREERS IN MEDIA ARTS (CIMA)

Careers in Media Arts is an annual event that introduces youth to professionals working in different areas of media arts. On May 4, CIMA featured: Richmond born filmmaker Kat Jayme, film director Sidartha Murjani, producers Mik Narciso and Phil Planta, and graphic designer David Arias. Participants learned about these artists’ career journeys and had a chance to ask questions.

RICHMOND REMEMBERS LIVE VIDEO SIMULCAST

Under the direction of filmmaker Kryshan Randel, five RYMP members took part in providing live coverage of the 2024 Richmond Remembers ceremony at Richmond City Hall. RYMP members took part in a hands-on camera operations workshop, set up recording equipment including microphones and cameras, and provided great shots throughout the event.

YOUTH ART MART

Since its inception in 2013, this youth-led craft market has featured local youth artists and their handmade prints, crafts, and designs. This year, the event expanded to take place during the summer at City Centre Community Centre as well as in the late fall at the Richmond Cultural Centre Annex. Both two-day craft markets were a resounding success and supported more than 50 youth vendors and an estimated 600 members of the public. Youth gained valuable experience with setting up their own handmade products for sale, and networking with other youth artists.



Equipment and Technology Upgrades

Thanks in part to significant Provincial funding, the Media Lab is now not only much bigger, it is kitted out with exciting new technological tools and elements such as:

- 7 Mac Studios with M2 Max Chip
- 10 Macbook Pros
- 40 iPads
- Software: Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, Animate etc.), Procreate, Procreate Dreams, plus many more to come
- Cricut Smart Cutters and Cricut EasyPress 2
- 2 Ultimaker S7 3D printers
- Zoom recorder
- Two video cameras as well as wireless microphones, tripods and light kits
- Canon EOS Mirrorless and DSLR cameras, point-and-shoot cameras, lenses, Manfrotto tripods, stabilizers and light kits
- Green screen backdrop
- editing/sound recording booth with guitar/bass amps; bass, electric and acoustic guitars, monitor speakers, MIDI Keyboard Controller, Loop Station, Bose L1 PA System, Pioneer DJ Controller



Skill Session: Amazon Web Service Techno Trailblazers Workshop

RYMP SKILL SESSIONS AND OUT-TRIPS

In addition to drop-in sessions, RYMP also provides a space for professionals and youth experts to teach media literacy skills to participants, and go on out-trips to art spaces and events around the region. RYMP hosted a variety of skill sessions led by youth and industry experts such as DJ workshop, Video Game Design, Pushing the Speed Limit: A High Schooler's DIY Go-Kart Miracle, How to Make a Low Budget Horror Film, and more. Notable out-trips included Vancouver Jazz Festival, Vancouver Art Gallery, Amazon Web Service Techno Trailblazers Workshop and Vancouver Film School tour.

YOUTH GROUPS AND CAMPS AT THE MEDIA LAB

The larger classroom space of the Media Lab at the RCCA provides an opportunity for youth outreach workers to invite community partners to visit and learn about digital media skills. Youth groups from Richmond Addictions Service Society, SD38, Touchstone Family Association and community centre associations brought their youth camps and groups to the Media Lab to learn about photography, 3D Printing, Cricut basics, photo editing and more. More than 30 interagency sessions were hosted, providing vital collaborations and community connections with caring adults in their community.

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Youth outreach workers worked with four Richmond-based youth bands over the summer, providing opportunities to work on song writing and recording with staff, and arranging performance opportunities at community events. The bands performed at City Centre's Concerts in the Park series, Cambie Community Centre and West Richmond Community Centre's Mega Youth Hangouts, as well as Hamilton's end of summer event. The Battle of the Bands project culminated with a concert in the Performance Hall as a part of Culture Days, with more than 60 in attendance. This project will now be an annual summer opportunity for youth in Richmond.

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"You guys are a lifesaver!

I promised you, you'd be the first people I tell [re: UBC acceptance]. My friends don't even know I wanted you to be the first to know.

That's what you mean to me."

- A.A., RYMP member



Technology Through the Times

"No matter how busy I am, I want to come here. I know it's always fun here."

- A.H., RYMP member

TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE TIMES

The Media Lab and the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living provided an intergenerational program Technology Through the Times which aimed to bridge the gap between youth and seniors through a shared interest in technology. This summer-long weekly program welcomed discussion about youth and seniors' perspectives about technology through the decades and provided instruction by Media Lab instructors and staff that focused on intergenerational learning. Final projects included crafting, short films, photography and digital art.

PHOTOVOICE PROJECT

In partnership with Richmond Addictions Services Society, the Photovoice Project was a two-session workshop for students in Blundell Elementary's School's Out program to learn about photography basics while identifying spaces in school where they feel the most comfortable to express themselves. At the year-end assembly, they spoke to the experience of having "safe spaces" at school. The collaboration underlined the importance of sharing our experience through a visual and storytelling lens.

Programs & Activities

MEDIA ARTS EDUCATION COURSES

The number of programs offered by the Richmond Media Lab doubled in 2024 to 106 registered courses. Throughout 2024, students took classes in Digital Illustration, Digital Animation, Video Editing, Filmmaking and new courses such as 3D Printing, 3D Scanning, Wearable Electronics, Cricut, and Procreate. The Media Lab also offers enriching programs across disciplines via spring break and summer camps.

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Technology Through the Times

“Coming here has helped me to find a new art style, and I love it!”

– G.B.M., RYMP member

COMMUNITY MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE

The Media Lab has continued in its role as a community resource for technology and media, providing advice, technical support and equipment for a variety of community groups. Some highlights:

- creation of a live-streaming equipment kit for use by Resident Art Groups and other rental groups who wish to host hybrid in-person/online meetings and events.
- creation of two video table-top demonstration tables for use in the RCC/A for instructors or Resident Art Groups to project art lessons for disciplines such as painting and Chinese Calligraphy.
- AV support for public programming and performances in the RCC/A.

Media Creation Services

Media Lab supports the production of original videos that highlight program achievements, assist with training, provide documentation and/or offer technical support and advice. In 2024, the list of projects included:

- 2023 Arts Services Year in Review video
- Art At Work Program – Tax Basics for Artists video
- Richmond Art Gallery – Panel Discussion: Documentary as Social Practice video
- Richmond Art Gallery’s Artist Salon – Procreate App for Artists video
- Richmond Art Gallery’s Artist Salon – Teaching Tips for Artists video
- Richmond Art Gallery’s Artist Salon – Sustainable Art Practices video
- Richmond Arts Coalition–Let’s Celebrate video
- MyPermit video
- MyRichmond Registration video
- MyRichmond Activity Search video project
- Worksafe BC Video Contest 2024
- Volunteer Appreciation video 2024
- Special Event photographer referrals for Minoru Centre for Active Living

Partners and Funders

The Media Lab continues to develop relationships with service agencies across the region. RYMP members have been referred to employment, volunteer and workshop opportunities as part of the program benefits. RYMP youth have found volunteer experience and paid employment with the Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Arts Centre, Richmond Arts Coalition, Community Social Development, Minoru Seniors Society, Cambie Community Association, City Centre Community Association, Hamilton Community Association, Sea Island Community Association, Steveston Community Association, South Arm Community Association, Thompson Community Association, West Richmond Community Association, MacNeill Secondary School, and McMath Secondary School.

The Media Lab was also the recipient of funding through the Province of British Columbia as well as the Federal government’s Building Safer Communities Program.

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Skill Session with local DJ artist



55+ Facility Pass Dance Group, West Fest

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ARTS PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 2,187** arts courses offered
- 12,096** registered participants
- 10** participating community associations/societies

Beyond Arts Services

While much of Richmond's arts programs, exhibitions, events and experiences are offered through the Arts, Culture & Heritage Services Department, the arts play a vital role in the activities of other areas in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Division, including Parks Programs and Community Recreation.

Community Associations and Societies

As part of our relationship-based approach, the City of Richmond works with community associations and societies who deliver a variety of programs and services at community centres. Program offerings and events include visual arts, dance, music and theatre opportunities which play a vital role in the continuum of arts programming in the City.

In 2024, more than 2,187 visual arts, dance and music courses were offered for 12,096 participants. These courses were offered for ages ranging from Preschoolers to Seniors in a variety of disciplines such as K-Pop Dance, Cartooning, Musical Theatre, Taiko Drumming and Jewellery Making.

In addition to registered programs, arts activities are an important component of the child care programs offered by community centres. Throughout the year, arts programming also supports city-wide themes and special events, such as Pink Shirt Day and Pride Week.

Participating associations include City Centre Community Association, East Richmond Community Association, Hamilton Community Association, Sea Island Community Association, South Arm Community Association, Steveston Community Society, Thompson Community Association, West Richmond Community Association and Minoru Seniors Society, as well as the Richmond Nature Park Society.

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Hula Dance performance at Fireside Lounge



Terra Nova Nature School 10-Year Celebration

Activities

HOLIDAY ART AND DANCE PROGRAMS

Over the holiday break, including Christmas Day, South Arm offered several art and dance programs, such as ornament making, slime workshops, friendship bracelet making, and family dance parties.

TERRA NOVA NATURE SCHOOL 10-YEAR CELEBRATION

The Thompson Community Association hosted a 10-Year Celebration for the Terra Nova Nature School (TNNS) program on International Children’s Day, Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Terra Nova Rural Park. The event offered something for everyone, including musical entertainment that ranged from solo acts to a six-piece band, covering genres like jazz, classical, folk hillbilly, rock, and even an ASL performance. Both professional and amateur musicians took to the stage, adding a unique and vibrant feel to the day. Families enjoyed free kids activities, roving performers, food trucks, community partner tents, and a TNNS marketplace, all while celebrating a decade of outdoor learning and the community that has made it possible.

MUSIC AND DANCE

The Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living hosted a variety of music and dance socials, including a number of drop in group performances, a series of volunteer-hosted social events celebrating music and song, and weekly jam sessions in the Fireside Lounge.

MUSICAL SING-ALONGS: MUSICAL INTERLUDES, GOLDEN OLDIES, MINORU JAZZERS

The Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living continued to offer in-person weekly music programs for participants aged 55+ with sing-along style piano and guitar performances featuring classic pop, golden oldies and jazz. Music enhances mood and improves cognition, and these sessions provide a much-needed social opportunity, creating connections with others who share a common musical interest.

“My daughter, her classmates, the parents were so happy to see you, the leaders and to reminisce, share the wonderful experience they had at Nature School program. Truly profound positive impact on the development of these kids in so many ways.”

– Terra Nova Nature School parent

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Faces of Richmond

DRAMA, PHOTO AND GLEE

Throughout 2024, arts groups from the Seniors Centre continued to meet. The Platinum Players drama group met weekly to rehearse short skits including a performance during Culture Days, while the Minoru Photo Group and Glee singers attended their programs throughout the year, maintaining their vital connections to the arts and to each other.



Faces of Richmond

FACES OF RICHMOND

In celebration of BC Seniors' Week 2024, from June 3 to 9, the Minoru Centre for Active Living partnered with the Community Arts Council of Richmond to display an exhibition featuring portraits of seniors in Richmond. Additionally, audio pieces of the seniors were recorded to accompany each portrait – stories that contain nuggets of wisdom or personal messages. Each portrait was painted by a local artist and the interpretative portrait they kindly created was gifted to their senior models.

LOCAL ART EXHIBITION SPACE

City Centre and Thompson Community Centres have wall space dedicated to exhibiting art by local artists, in an effort to promote the development of visual arts at all levels and provide exhibition space in Richmond. Artists from all cultural and artistic backgrounds at any stage in their career are encouraged to submit applications on an ongoing basis. New artists are selected regularly, showcasing a variety of practices including painting, drawing, photography and textile arts.

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Special Events

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIRS

There were 125 vendors who participated in the Steveston Craft Fair in November, selling various handmade crafts to the public, including knitting, crochet, paintings, baked goods and other handmade goods.

There were 80 vendors who participated in the South Arm Craft Fair in November, selling various handmade crafts to the public, including knitting, crochet, paintings, baked goods and other handmade goods. The South Arm knitting group had also participated by producing knitwear for the sale, with proceeds going back to support seniors programs.



South Arm Craft Fair

“It was my first time there. The craft fair was an amazing experience.”

– South Arm Craft Fair vendor

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

The City led a volunteer appreciation project to show appreciation to Richmond’s Volunteers. This project involved City wide site filming to capture thank you messages from Intermunicipal Volunteer Coordinators, the Richmond RCMP, and Mayor Malcom Brodie. The video was showcased in all City Facilities for the 2024 National Volunteer Week in April in honour of Richmond’s volunteers.

PRIDE WEEK

As part of South Arm Community Centre’s Pride Week festivities, community members were invited to enjoy light refreshments and hands-on art activities while listening to original music performed by musician, Jon Muller, who sang songs inspired by empowerment, inclusion and community.

Thompson Community Centre proudly celebrated Pride Week with a lively indoor concert in the main lobby. The performance featured a talented vocalist and guitarist, both cherished members of the Richmond community.

MINORU POP-UP SHOP

On November 7, the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living hosted another “Minoru Pop-Up Shop”. The event featured tables of handcrafted goods, including knitted and crocheted items created through the Seniors Facility Pass Programs. The Seniors Centre Cafeteria also participated, offering new menu items such as delicious baked goods and pastries. Over the course of three hours, sales amounted to more than \$1,500, generating funds for the Minoru Seniors Society.

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Summer Fun in the Plaza

CONCERTS IN THE PARK/PLAZA

West Richmond Community Association presented a summer series of family-friendly activities and free play in the playground, that included performances by Becca Wade and Luc LeMans.



Summer Fun in the Plaza

City Centre Community Association's Concerts in the Park took place on July 24 and August 28 at Garden City Community Park with performances by local youth bands White Silhouette and The Next Skytrain. In addition to live performances, there was a very popular paper kite craft, colouring and lawn games with giant inflatable bowling, beach balls and more. The two concerts combined attracted more than 150 attendees.

In 2024, from June–September, free, all-ages activities on the Outdoor Plaza at the Minoru Centre for Active Living included 10 concerts featuring a wide range of music performed by local artists from across the Lower Mainland including tunes from the 50s and 60s to string quartet classics. In July and August, the free Summer Fun in the Plaza series included Art in the Plaza, Intercultural Connections in the Plaza, Dance Party in the Plaza and Lantern Decorating in the Plaza.

The Thompson Community Picnic, held on Thursday, June 20, drew over 500 attendees for an evening of music, food, and fun-filled activities. Guests enjoyed performances by the Midnight Cruiser Band, Luc LeMans, and other local artists, alongside interactive booths offering face painting, yoga, bocce, and e-bike demonstrations. The event's lively atmosphere, featuring inflatable games and youth-led activities, created a memorable experience that showcased Thompson's community spirit.

CONCERTS IN THE PARK/PLAZA BY THE NUMBERS:

- 4 locations
- 16 events
- 18 performancees
- 2,450 attendees

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"I love this program. I learned a lot and at the same time I can give some of my experience."
 – 55+ participant, Now and Then

"With my partnered senior, it feels like I can slow down and enjoy just cooking. The cooking isn't being critiqued, it isn't being graded, and isn't for university applications at all. It's just the bowls of ingredients, my senior and me. Out of everything, I have to say letting it be an escape from my responsibilities is my favourite part of the program."
 – youth participant, Now and Then

NOW AND THEN – A JOURNEY THROUGH THE AGES

In 2023, the Minoru Seniors Society was the successful recipient of the New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant that provided \$25,000 to go towards intergenerational programs that occurred throughout 2024/2025. This program was divided into four streams of activities including: Dining through the Decades, Technology through the Times, Evolution of Music and Art through the Eras. These activities are geared towards pairing seniors up with youth and children as they learn new skills and participate in activities together. Art through the Eras, Technology through the Times and the Evolution of Music in partnership with Richmond Music School. These programs were free to register.

WEST FEST

West Fest 2024 at the West Richmond Community Centre offered a wide variety of arts activities from building /decorating forts, to balloon twisting, sensory play stations, face painting and live music. The event also included inflatables, active games, food trucks and more.

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

City Centre Community Centre welcomed the Harvest Moon with the Mid-Autumn Festival. Activities included paper lantern making and mooncake sampling. With more than 100 attendees, the activation received positive feedback from the community.

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South Arm Outdoor Pool Mural



SOUTH ARM OUTDOOR POOL MURAL

The City commissioned artist Rory Doyle to create a mural at the entrance of the South Arm Outdoor Pool in 2024. This new artwork extends the design of Doyle's *Dog Days* mural, originally completed as part of the Community Mural Program at the location in 2023.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

West Richmond Community Centre hosted "Ukeing around the Christmas Tree" featuring 42 seniors playing the ukulele and singing along to classic holiday-themed songs. Light snacks and a social preceded the event, which proved to be a terrific seasonal activity for all involved.

INVITE THE LIGHT: A WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

For the second time, City Centre Community Centre celebrated the darkest day of the year with an intercultural event. Activities included a meditative labyrinth of light comprised of 500 lanterns brought to life by artist Marina Szijarto, education and stories about local nocturnal wildlife by the Richmond Nature Park, arts and crafts using the natural elements such as pinecones and compostable materials, a show with Alba the owl with the OWL Orphaned Wildlife Rehabilitation Society, information booth on canning smoked fish with Moon Tide Reconciliation and free refreshments and food including dumplings from Richmond restaurant Kung Fu Dumpling. With more than 250 people in attendance, the event received positive feedback.

2024 Street Banner Contest

The 2024 street banner contest was launched in August 2023 and concluded with the banner unveiling ceremony on March 27, 2024. The contest attracted more than 360 original submissions consisting of photographs, graphic art, collages and other art medium formats. A community judging panel reviewed the submissions and selected 20 designs as semi-finalists. The public was then invited to vote for their favourite designs through the City's Lets Talk Richmond website casting over 6,600 votes over the 15 day voting period. The Top 10 designs with the most votes were chosen as the winners.

The winning artists were Kaiden Bjerke, Allisa Ritchie, Clare Scott, Hiahua Su, Lisa Toffolo, Brett Whitelaw, Chen-Ann Fu, Fifi Zhao, Lisa Craker and Yanqui Cheng.





Genevieve Fleming, Gerry Mackay & Melissa Oei in Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*
Lighting Design: Kevin Tanner. Costume Supervisor: Oriana Camporese. Photo by David Cooper

MISSION

To enrich the quality of life in Richmond and surrounding communities by creating outstanding professional theatre and a dynamic hub for the performing arts.

Gateway Theatre

Gateway Theatre is managed and operated by Richmond Gateway Theatre Society, a registered charity and not-for-profit organization. Supported by the City, the theatre facility is Richmond's live performing arts hub, drawing audiences in excess of 35,000 to more than 150 performances.

As "A Stage for Richmond", Gateway provides entry points for audiences and performers in three key areas: Artistic Offerings, Education and Community Rentals.

Through its Artistic Offerings, Gateway produces a breadth of stories that tackle the ideas, values and issues that reflect the diverse people of this city. It brings people together through shared artistic experiences that encourage dialogue and exchange.

Gateway's Education programming connects youth to the performing arts, through classes in acting, singing, dancing and production. Where it is most transformative is beyond the stage, building confidence, self-awareness, and a sense of belonging in young people.

And the Community Rentals program allows Richmond to celebrate its achievements, with thousands of people coming through the doors each year to participate in events presented by community organizations.

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Artistic Offerings



THE FLAME: LUNAR NEW YEAR EDITION February 10, 2024

Featuring talented local storytellers and a musician, *The Flame: Lunar New Year Edition* was a special performance of Vancouver's wildly popular storytelling series, led by award-winning actor Deborah Williams. The event, which marked the first time *The Flame* came to Richmond, was filled with personal stories and live music, capturing moments of joy, tears, and rebirth in celebration of Lunar New Year themes. This sold-out event attracted more than 80 attendees.



JADE CIRCLE March 6–17, 2024

Gateway Theatre partnered with rice & beans theatre and Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre to share this world premiere of *Jade Circle*, a multidisciplinary performance by Jasmine Chen that blended powerful music, movement, and storytelling in Mandarin and English. The show's success was further celebrated with a well-received post-show community dinner, where attendees continued to connect and reflect on the themes. Over 700 patrons enjoyed the performance across 10 shows.

“It was such a powerful experience. It was engaging and thought provoking. I continued to think about talk about the themes throughout the rest of the evening.”
– *Jade Circle* audience member

KEN LUDWIG'S BASKERVILLE: A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY April 11 – 20, 2024

Directed by Barbara Tomasic, Gateway Theatre's Executive Artistic Director, Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville* was a fast-paced, pulse-pounding production that kept audiences on the edge of their seats, guessing at every twist and turn. In addition to the staged performances, Gateway provided accessible and special events, including a Pay-What-You-Will preview night, an open (relaxed) performance, and VocalEye Live Audio Description. The production also offered surtitles in both Traditional and Simplified Chinese. Over ten performances, *Baskerville* reached almost 2,000 attendees.



40th Anniversary Season

2024 marked a milestone for Gateway Theatre as it opened its 40th season of inspiring stories, artistic excellence, and community connection. The organization honoured this journey through various initiatives; one of them was the alumni program, which reunited those who had graced its stages and shared their stories. Gateway remains committed to delivering impactful programs for artists, patrons, youth, multigenerational groups, volunteers, and the community as a whole.

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True Voices



Moonlight Magic

“Every story was so engaging and compelling, the event seemed almost magical.”

– *True Voices* audience member

TRUE VOICES: PRIDE STORYTELLING & TEA

August 1, 2024

Gateway Theatre celebrated Richmond Pride Week by hosting *True Voices*, the first free storytelling event to feature powerful and inspiring stories from local queer voices. After the storytelling session, attendees engaged in an intimate Q&A with the storytellers, finding a safe space to connect with the queer community and allies. This first-ever Pride event was enjoyed by more than 40 attendees.

MOONLIGHT MAGIC: MID-AUTUMN CELEBRATION

September 14, 2024

Following the success of last year’s Family Fun Mid-Autumn Celebration, Gateway Theatre invited families back for a magical evening at this year’s *Moonlight Magic: Mid-Autumn Celebration*. Families kicked off the festivities by handcrafting beautiful lanterns, then joined us for a breathtaking lantern procession into Minoru Park. As the sun set, they were immersed in an enchanting concert featuring moonlit melodies sung by the talented Renee Fajardo. The event attracted 80 attendees and drew even more people during the musical performance in the park.

“I went to the flame not sure what to expect and left in awe of the stories I heard and felt so connected to all of the speakers.”

– *The Flame* audience member

CULTURE DAYS – THE FLAME: STORYTELLING SHOWCASE & WORKSHOP

October 5-6, 2024

The weekend kicked off with a transformative two-day storytelling workshop, led by Deborah Williams, co-founder and Artistic Producer of Vancouver’s *The Flame*. Eighteen participants, from beginners to seasoned storytellers, explored how to craft and share their unique stories, learning techniques to transform personal experiences into captivating narratives.

On October 6, the storytelling showcase featured eight participants who had completed the workshop. The evening was filled with powerful, inspiring true stories, leaving the 58 attendees in awe of their courage and creativity. The event emphasized the meaning, inspiration, and connection stories bring to our lives, offering an unforgettable experience of community and storytelling.

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Community Rental Events

Gateway had a successful rental season in 2024 year with more than 20 clients and 41 performances throughout the year. Most long-standing rental clients returned to the theatre to celebrate the richness and diversity of the Richmond community.

2024 rental partners:

- BC Chinese Music Association
- Canada Chan Commerce And Culture Association
- Canada Y.C. Chinese Orchestra Association
- Canadian VIM Youth Culture Association
- Childlike Faith Academy
- City of Richmond–Annual Goals Meeting
- Community Mental Wellness Association of Canada
- Earth Child Montessori School
- Grand Ensemble Chorus
- Grand Hale Marine Products Co. Ltd
- Metro Vancouver Overseas Taiwanese Society
- North American Arts Association
- Richmond Academy of Dance
- Richmond Children's Arts Festival 2024
- Richmond Christian Secondary School
- Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra
- Richmond Youth Concert Band
- SD38 – Music in Our Schools
- Pleasant Mountain Music
- Pythagoras Academy
- ValleyRain International
- Vancouver Academy of Dance
- Waiale Wai Wai Hoike



Aidan Correia, Colleen Wheeler and Genevieve Fleming in *Yaga*
Set Design: Ryan Cormack. Lighting Design: Hina Nishioka. Costume Design: Rosie Aiken

YAGA

October 24 – November 2, 2024

Gateway Theatre delighted audiences with *Yaga*, a Touchstone Theatre production that re-envisioned the legendary folk anti-hero through playwright Kat Sandler's razor-sharp feminist wit. Part thriller, part comedy, part nightmare fairy-tale, *Yaga* transported patrons into an unforgettable world of trickery and revenge. Gateway offered accessible performance options similar to those provided for *Baskerville*, with the added bonus of a special costumed ticket offer on Halloween night. Over 11 performances, *Yaga* reached more than 1,400 patrons.

LIONEL BART'S OLIVER!

December 12, 2024 – January 4, 2025

The award-winning musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic novel *Oliver!* springs to life with some of the most memorable characters and songs ever to grace the stage. Featuring spirited numbers like "Food, Glorious Food" and "Consider Yourself", *Oliver!* was widely hailed as a theatrical masterpiece. This production of Lionel Bart's *Oliver!* garnered multiple Ovation nominations, a testament to its success. *Oliver!* welcomed over 6,900 attendees, who shared this unforgettable musical experience with friends and family.

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“My child instantly fell in love with everything in theatre class. I personally am quite impressed by its higher standard of teaching.”

– Academy parent

Gateway Academy

At Gateway Academy, students gain an understanding of themselves and others, grow confidence, and develop communication and problem solving-skills. All the while, they are also learning acting, singing, dancing, and speaking techniques taught by professional artists.

No matter what the future holds for Academy students—be it as performers, scientists, or technicians—they will make their communities better places by bringing the relational skills developed and learned in Gateway’s theatre classes.

In 2024, Gateway Academy delivered more than 554 hours of education to a total of 200 students aged 6–18. Each class culminated in a presentation and each session ended with an Open Studio where families get the opportunity to participate in the practices of the class. The classes were as follows:

- **Acting Classes** (January-April, September-December 2024)
Acting students not only developed skills integral to all theatrical disciplines, but also universal skills such as confidence, focus, listening and trust-building. Through developing skills for team work, the classes created learning experiences that fostered belonging and self-confidence through creative expression.
- **Musical Theatre** (January-April, September-December 2024)
Musical Theatre students built confidence as they explored vocal techniques, choreography and expressing lyrics musically and dramatically. Through developing skills for team work, the classes created learning experiences that fostered belonging and self-confidence through creative expression.
- **Acting Summer Camp** (July 2024)
Through weeklong Acting intensives in July, Acting campers explored skills integral to all theatrical disciplines, and worked on building confidence, focus, listening and trust-building.
- **Musical Theatre Summer Camp** (July 2024)
Through week-long Musical Theatre intensives in July, Musical Theatre campers explored vocal techniques, choreography and expressing lyrics musically and dramatically, finding ways to develop confidence, creativity and team work. Musical Theatre camps 2024 saw the return of Gateway’s Performance program, where students work towards a semi-produced presentation with technical elements such as costumes and lights.

SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM

Gateway’s Secondary School Outreach Program provides a unique opportunity for Richmond students to connect with professional artists and learn about careers in theatre. In March, Gateway delivered a workshop with artist, Sarv Esmali, to students from A.R. MacNeill Secondary School, a longstanding partner in Richmond. In December, students from Richmond Secondary participated in a tour of the theatre, a staff-led careers conversation, and a character physicality exploration workshop, as part of the Outreach Program offered for Gateway’s holiday show, *Oliver!*. Gateway Theatre offers this program at no cost to secondary schools.

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Set Design: Ryan Cormack. Lighting Design: Sophie Tang. Costume Design: Donnie Tejani. Photo by David Cooper

Cast of *Oliver!*



“The grant helps the organisation to be active in the community and public as a cultural and arts organization. It provides more opportunity and increases the ability of the organization to present meaningful artistic programs to our community and introduce more traditional arts and new creations from Canadian artists.”

– Canada Chinese Performing Arts Society

“The funds provided by the City of Richmond allow us to further our mission of providing equality of access to quality music education ... and ultimately, deepening our connection and outreach network with the community.”

– Richmond Music School

APPENDIX 1

2024 Arts and Culture Grant Program

The following 21 organizations received \$127,364 in financial support:

OPERATING ASSISTANCE

Canadian YC Chinese Orchestra Association	\$7,464
Cinevolution Media Arts Society.....	\$9,000
Community Arts Council of Richmond	\$9,000
Richmond Arts Coalition	\$10,000
Richmond Community Band Society.....	\$5,400
Richmond Community Orchestra and Chorus Association	\$9,000
Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra	\$10,000
Richmond Music School Society	\$10,000
Richmond Singers	\$8,100
Richmond Youth Choral Society	\$7,650

PROJECT ASSISTANCE

Arisun Yu Opera Society.....	\$3,000
BC Philharmonic Society.....	\$4,500
Canada Chinese Performing Arts Society.....	\$4,500
Direct Theatre Collective	\$4,500
Richmond Art Gallery Association	\$5,000
Richmond Gateway Theatre Society	\$1,500
Richmond Improv Theatre Society	\$5,000
Southeast Asian Cultural Heritage Society	\$3,000
Steveston Historical Society	\$5,000
Textile Arts Guild of Richmond	\$1,250
Vancouver Cantonese Opera.....	\$4,500

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How Richmond supports and invests in arts and culture*

The City wears many hats, acting as a supporter, presenter, facilitator, communicator, investor and facility operator

Supporter



COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITIONS

29 exhibitions
in **6** locations
including Richmond
City Hall



RICHMOND ARTS AWARDS

57 nominations
96 award recipients
recognized since 2009



CULTURE DAYS

93 registered activities¹
by **80** local arts groups and
individuals

1: Ranked Number 1 in BC, Number 3 in Canada for
medium-sized cities; in Top 10 overall



RICHMOND ARTS CENTRE

provided **10+** arts groups
5,586 hours of room
rentals at a total subsidy of
\$122,800

Facility Operator



RICHMOND CULTURAL CENTRE

458 hours room
rentals by cultural
organizations at
subsidized rates



ARTS PROGRAMS IN THE RICHMOND CULTURAL CENTRE/ANNEX

1,234 arts courses
49 professional instructors
6,340 students registered



RICHMOND ART GALLERY

15 exhibitions in the gallery and
off-site presenting **36** artists
2,456 school program participants
58 free public programs in-person
and online with **2,062** participants
10,335 YouTube video views



COMMUNITY FACILITIES²

2,189 visual arts,
dance & music courses
12,096 registered
participants

2: Delivered by community
associations. There are also libraries,
museums and heritage sites that
partner with Arts Services



RICHMOND MEDIA LAB

65 media arts courses
69 Richmond Youth Media Lab
members spent **4,200** hours
at the Media Lab

Communicator



ARTS & CULTURE EBLASTS

6 special edition eblasts
700+ subscribers

HOW ART WORKS INSTAGRAM

90 posts
3,455 followers

ART AT WORK PROGRAM

5 free professional
development work-
shops for artists &
organizations
282 participants
in-person, online
and via on-demand
Youtube

Investor



ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS PROGRAM

\$127,364 to
21 organizations



PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

357 artworks to-date
40 new works
17 Richmond artists contracted for
civic art commissions
12 community group partners
29,970+ hours of community
participation in the Engaging Artists in
the Community Program to-date

Presenter



FESTIVALS

5 signature events showcasing
300+ local artists and performers
120+ performances
155,000+ attendees



GATEWAY THEATRE³

57 performances and **41**
rental events
119 professional artists
11,437 audience members
554 hours of theatre education
200 students enrolled

3: Operated by Richmond Gateway Theatre
Society with support of City of Richmond

Facilitator



FILM OFFICE

110+ individual filming requests
670 Richmond business supported
by the film industry
\$13.75 million+ spent on
production-related goods and services
such as costumes, catering, automobile
rentals and more



ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

11-month Branscombe House
Artist-in-Residence
2-month Writer-in-Residence
3 Artists-in-Residence as part of Engaging
Artists in the Community Program

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*2024 statistics represented unless otherwise noted



"Great art must be a
living thing, or it is not
art at all."

– Bill Reid



City of Richmond

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Cover: Richmond Art Gallery
Shen Xi, *but this is the language we met in*

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