



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
Committee

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

**Re:** **Arts Services Year in Review 2023**

**Date:** February 2, 2024

**File:** 11-7375-01/2024-Vol  
01

### Staff Recommendations

1. That the Arts Services Year in Review 2023 as presented in the staff report titled, "Arts Services Year in Review 2023", dated February 2, 2024, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be received for information; and
2. That the Arts Services Year in Review 2023 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		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>
Community Social Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation & Sport Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>

## Staff Report

### Origin

*ArtWorks: Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024* 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 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. This report presents *Arts Services Year in Review 2023* (Attachment 1), which highlights this last year’s achievements in the arts.

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 *Arts Services Year in Review 2023* describes last year’s achievements in the arts. 2023 saw public programming in the arts fully return to, and often surpass, pre-pandemic levels of service provision and participation.

As always, the arts maintained its 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.

Highlights and achievements of 2023 include:

- In October, the City was awarded the 2023 Creative Cities Network of Canada Award of Excellence for Thomas Cannell's monumental glass artwork, *Sea to Sky*, located in the Keltic Development at the corner of No. 3 and Cook Road. At five-storeys high, the work, which was completed through the Private Development Public Art Program, powerfully acknowledges and celebrates Musqueam culture in the heart of City Centre.
- Twenty-two 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 and the Richmond Nature Park. Over two weeks, 2,733 children representing 48 classes from 35 Richmond elementary schools took part, many by simply walking or riding their bikes there.
- After a ten-year hiatus, the Richmond Art Gallery revived its popular open-call exhibition of postcard-sized artworks open to anyone over age 18. Artworks were sent through the postal service, and every artist's entry was accepted into the online and gallery exhibition, and later auctioned to raise funds for public programs offered through the Richmond Art Gallery Association. The exhibition saw many returning participants and included works by 288 artists from 32 countries.
- In partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the 20th Richmond Maritime Festival presented more than 50 local artists, performers and "pop-up" style heritage storytellers, amidst maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site. Twelve 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. The event included a meditative labyrinth comprised of 500 lanterns brought to life by Richmond artist Marina Szijarto, a reflective interactive activity by Indigenous artist Christine Mackenzie, stories about local nocturnal wildlife by the Richmond Nature Park, and more.
- From National Indigenous Peoples Day in June through National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in September, the Richmond Cultural Centre rotunda played host to *Hope and Healing Canada*, a site-responsive temporary artwork by Ontario-based Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers. As one of more than 100 sites across Canada, the installation—comprised of crochet, knit and woven red yarns—illustrated connections between First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples with settlers and newcomers, while addressing the

decolonization of public spaces. Experiences and stories gathered from each participating site will inform a forthcoming book project and traveling exhibition.

- 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 2023 with a campaign boasting 93 free, in-person and online activities presented by 62 artists and cultural organizations. The opening weekend event at the Richmond Cultural Centre attracted an estimated 2,000 people.
- \$124,256 was invested through the 2023 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.
- The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), a free referral-based program for youth aged 13–24, completed its 13th year as a signature offering of the Richmond Media Lab. In 2023, 43 RYMP members completed more than 3,200 hours learning media arts skills and building social connections.
- Community event rentals at the Gateway Theatre totaled 44 performances by 20 clients presenting music, dance, awards ceremonies and more.

The *Arts Services Year in Review 2023* also 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 2023* 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. Art in everyday life creates a sense of place as well as a sense of personal meaning and community identity.



Liesl Jauk  
Manager, Arts Services  
(604-204-8672)

Att. 1: Arts Services Year in Review 2023



City of Richmond

# ARTS SERVICES YEAR IN REVIEW 2023

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





Collecting and Reassembling: International Mail Art Exhibition at Richmond Art Gallery

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 6 Community Cultural Development
- 14 Signature Events
- 18 Richmond Art Gallery
- 28 Richmond Public Art Program
- 38 Richmond Arts Centre
- 44 Richmond Media Lab
- 48 Beyond Arts Services
- 56 Gateway Theatre
- 61 Appendix 1: Arts & Culture Grants
- 63 How Richmond Supports Arts & Culture (2023 Statistics)

## Introduction

Against a backdrop of preparation and anticipation for the new Richmond Cultural Centre Annex opening in 2024, 2023 saw public participation and programming in the arts return to, and often surpass, pre-pandemic levels.

It was also a year of notable achievements: a national public art award for Thomas Cannell's monumental glass artwork, *Sea to Sky*; the long-awaited return of both the Lulu speaker series and the Richmond Art Gallery's *International Mail Art* exhibition (288 artists from 32 countries); and a repeat of our long-standing Culture Days ranking as BC's top city and Canada's number three medium-sized city for the total of free, interactive activities: a whopping 93 by 62 local groups and individual artists.

As always, community support, collaboration and development remained at the forefront with the biannual ArtRich exhibition presented by the Richmond Arts Coalition (who are soon to embark on a two-year pilot project with space in the Cultural Centre Annex), the culmination of the year-long *Mosaic Firefly* project engaging two cohorts of seniors and youth around themes of anti-racism and discrimination; seven professional development workshops for artists and arts organizations; 22 public art commissions for Richmond artists (including 14 utility box wraps); and more than \$124K invested in the programs and operations of 21 arts and culture organizations through the City grants program.

Themes of identity, public participation and local ecology continue to lead with the majority of activities, programs and exhibitions showcasing, supporting and/or actively involving members of diverse, equity-seeking communities; while again, hands-on public activities working with natural materials marked National Indigenous Peoples Day and other programs.

The 2023 Arts Services Year in Review demonstrates how the City continues to foster arts and cultural opportunities for community engagement and connection, reflecting Richmond's diverse population in cultural facilities, schools, libraries, community centres, festivals and the public realm.

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





PRCS - 26

Potters' Club demo at Culture Days opening weekend



## 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.



Canada YC Music Academy at the 2023 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 funds provided by the City of Richmond Operating Grant 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

### 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.

In addition, an in-person grant writing workshop and information session presented an overview of the grant process and offered coaching on effective grant writing practices to 32 arts practitioners and/or representatives of various arts organizations.

In 2023, Council approved the distribution of \$124,256. A total of \$88,658 in Operating Assistance was distributed to 12 recipients and \$35,600 in Project Assistance went to nine programs and projects. Throughout summer and fall, grant recipients met individually with staff to discuss their programs and share feedback about the grant application process.

## PRCS - 28

## 2023 RICHMOND ARTS AWARDS RECIPIENTS

### Arts Education:

Mike Booton and Donna J. Wilson

### Artistic Innovation and Excellence:

Nikhath Izhar Qureshi

### Business and the Arts:

Steveston Harbour Authority

### Volunteerism: Gabby Cometa

### Youth Arts: Botao Chen

### Cultural Leadership: Dr. Jim Tanaka

## Richmond Arts Awards

Created in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition, the annual Richmond Arts Awards recognizes artistic achievements and contributions to the cultural community by residents, artists, educators, organizations and business leaders. The 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 arts community; and
- develop patrons for the arts.

This year, **57 nominations** were reviewed by a selection panel comprised of community members and seven recipients were selected. As part of the City's commitment to providing meaningful opportunities for youth, 2022 Youth Arts award recipient Megan Yung was invited to join the selection panel to share her perspective during the adjudication process.

The awards ceremony, hosted by Mayor Malcolm Brodie, was held on May 17 at the Gateway Theatre. The evening featured an Indigenous welcome by Morgan Guerin of Musqueam Nation, a keynote speech by CBC's Margaret Gallagher, as well as performances by Canada YC Music Academy, Edward Sembatya and the Richmond Singers.

The Richmond Arts Awards are a partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition (RAC) and are sponsored by the *Richmond News*.



## Lulu Series: Art in the City

After a three-year hiatus, the Lulu Series: Art in the City guest speaker series returned to explore the relationship between art and our urban environment with the following free inspirational evening talks:

September 21: **Milena Droumeva**, Associate Professor of Communication and Glenfraser Endowed Professor in Sound Studies at SFU, explored the question of how we can reconsider the design and impact of sounds around us. Droumeva's current project explores best practices for soundscape design in cities and civic participation approaches to storytelling with sound. This talk was preceded by a musical performance by Konstantin Bozhinov.

October 19: Members of the collective **Other Sights** shared a range of recent projects that include a FLEET of mobile artist studios, the Blue Cabin floating artist residency, a public art performance exploring care recipient autonomy and creative systems of access, and a trio of public artworks that further important dialogues about public spaces on unceded territories. Their talk was preceded by a performance by members of the Canada YC Chinese Orchestra.

November 23: Through his studio's work for the *Steveston Nikkei Memorial*, the Canadian Navy Monument in Ottawa, Yi Fao Park in New Westminster and various design competitions and unrealized works, **Joseph Fry**, principal at Hapa Collaborative, reviewed some of the lessons he has learned in pursuing commemorative design work through his career, and shed light on how public art and memorialization in the public sphere is changing in the age of reconciliation. This talk was preceded by a performance by Ali Razmi.

## PRCS - 29





Audrey Thomas

## Writer-in-Residence

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

This year, celebrated author **Audrey Thomas** was Richmond's twelfth writer-in-residence. The program was launched as part of Culture Days on September 23 with a reading followed by an informal reception with refreshments and warm conversation.

Throughout her two-month residency, Audrey shared her love for writing with local established and emerging writers through creative writing workshops, engaging conversations and reflections on diverse approaches to writing. Free sessions included *Memoir Writing: Everyone Has a Story*, *Flash Fiction: A Very Short Story (Teens)*, *All in the Family: Writing About Relationships*, *Writing Circle for Teens*, and *Conversations*.

Audrey was born in Western New York State and immigrated to Canada in 1959. She has taught workshops and held residencies in several countries and has received many awards including the Canada Scotland Award, Canada Australia Award, Engel Award, W.O. Mitchell Award and recently, Governor's Award for Literary Excellence. She has published 18 books.

Jen Sungshine and David Ng,  
of Love Intersections

## Pride Week

In 2023, a cross-departmental committee programmed arts experiences during Pride Week at the Richmond Cultural Centre. This team included staff with diverse identities and gender expressions, including allies, who contributed their perspectives to create a program that included themes of identity, diversity, equity and inclusion, social justice and community celebration.

On July 30, youth and adults were invited to enjoy a afternoon with QueerProv, whose *Queer + Improv = QueerProv* show at the Performance Hall was full of games, laughs and queer stories as well as a two-hour workshop to learn improv games and skills seen on stage.

The annual Pride Stairs painting activity returned on August 3. This favourite all-ages drop-in activity invites anyone to pick up a paintbrush and brighten up the Cultural Centre plaza and Minoru Boulevard entrance stairs. Organized by the Arts Centre's summer student, the activity is supported by Richmond Youth Media Program and other youth groups.

Artist and educator Mr. Tony offered a drop-in visual art workshop, *Push the Petal* on August 4. Participants designed a petal or leaf to add to a community artwork that celebrates harmony; each petal was included in the "Garden of Diversity", which grew with each contribution that day.

Also on August 4, Love Intersections presented *Hot Pot Talks: Queer Asian Storytelling* at the Performance Hall. Co-Artistic Directors Jen Sungshine and David Ng shared their award-winning film, *Yellow Peril: Queer Destiny* (2019), and the sequel, *Yellow Peril: Queer Futures* (2022), followed by an interactive storytelling workshop on filmmaking and community care. The evening was geared for adults and created a safe space for questions and open dialogue.

These five free programs together engaged 200+ participants.

## PRCS - 30





Culture Days Opening Ceremony



Richmond on the Rocks exhibition

## 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 14th annual Culture Days was held from September 22 to October 15, and offered a wide-range of free, participatory activities, workshops and events.

The Richmond Cultural Centre was the official hub, hosting a kick-off weekend on September 23 and 24 that welcomed an estimated 2,000 attendees. An opening ceremony included remarks by Mayor Malcolm Brodie and an Indigenous welcome by Musqueam elder Mary Point, with Councillors and community leaders in attendance.

The Richmond Arts Centre's resident art groups held open studio events and offered drop-in activities and demonstrations throughout the Cultural Centre and outdoor plaza. Weekend highlights included the launch of the Writer-in-Residence program, featuring celebrated author Audrey Thomas; the Richmond Art Gallery's *Classification Crisis* and *Mail Art* exhibitions and drop-in workshop; Richmond Museum's opening of their new exhibition, *Richmond Kids* alongside a popular kite-making workshop; the Canadian Rock Painting Association's *Richmond on the Rocks* exhibition; a *Cinderella* meet-and-greet hosted by Gateway Theatre, and the *Date Movie* video installation by local artist Ron Reed.

Free participatory activities continued for 17 days across Richmond, including a public art bus tour, improv and acting workshops, choir and orchestra open rehearsals, community art exhibitions, as well as a number of self-guided and online activities.

Culture Days reserves September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, exclusively for public commemoration and Indigenous-related programs. Feature activities shared First Nations, Métis, and Inuit experiences and perspectives from across the country, and honoured the creative and cultural expressions of First Peoples and communities.

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

### PRCS - 31

#### CULTURE DAYS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 2,000** attendees at kick-off weekend
- 20** volunteers
- 62** participating artists and cultural organizations
- 93** free, public activities



## How Art Works Instagram and Arts & Culture eBlast



As part of the Richmond Arts Strategy, Arts Services continued to engage with the Richmond arts community (and beyond) through the How Art Works Instagram account and Arts & Culture eBlast. The How Art Works Instagram audience more than doubled in 2023, to share local arts opportunities and updates with 2,100 followers.

Meanwhile, after more than a decade in service, this fall, the Arts & Culture eBlast discontinued monthly publications in order to endorse the Richmond Arts Coalition's Arts Events & Artists Opportunities eNewsletter. As a reliable source for funding and training opportunities, artist calls, local arts and culture events, arts advocacy issues and more, RAC is well-positioned to keep artists and arts groups informed while eliminating duplication in the provision of this vital community service.

Subscribers to the City's Arts & Culture eBlast will still occasionally receive communications directly from Richmond Arts Services related to specific topics, such as the Richmond Arts Strategy. September marked the final regular monthly edition of the eBlast which was sent to more than **700 subscribers**.



## Branscombe House–Blue Cabin Partnership



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 seven visiting professional artists for 11 month community-engaged arts residencies. Branscombe House, built in 1908 and restored in 2014, is located at 4900 Steveston Highway and is one of the earliest settler homes in the area.

The Blue Cabin is currently moored at Imperial Landing. Built by a Norwegian carpenter in 1927, the cabin was sited near Cates Park on the North Shore for more than 80 years before undergoing extensive remediation. The cabin's long-time inhabitants, prominent Canadian artists Al Neil and Carole Itter, as well its unique vernacular architecture and association to artistic happenings in the area, contribute to the heritage building's cultural significance.

In 2023, the Artist Residency program took a break to enter a partnership with the Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency to provide artist-led public programs at Branscombe House in association with activities at the floating residency located at Imperial Landing. Free artist talks, open studio events and workshops animated the heritage home while also providing accommodations to visiting artists from Ontario, Germany and Australia. Artists Michelle-Marie Letelier, Erica H Isomura and Tarryn Love offered public activities, while Other Sights' *Foreshore Immersive* sessions and a free printmaking workshop by Richmond-based artist Atheana Picha of Kwantlen First Nation, stoked creativity and curiosity among participants.

In addition, behind-the-scenes tours of the Blue Cabin were offered throughout the year, including during annual cultural events such as Doors Open Richmond in June and Culture Days in September and October.

## PRCS - 32





Arts and Culture Grant Program Information and Application Tips

“I just wanted to say thanks so much for offering last night’s workshop, and the valuable feedback. I love the format of having artists come together at a round table for discussion.

– participant, Preparing Exhibition Proposals

### ART AT WORK BY THE NUMBERS:

7	free workshops
91	in-person participants
58	online participants
304	on-demand YouTube views

## Art at Work Program

Presented in collaboration with the Richmond Art Gallery Association and Richmond Public Art, Art at Work provides professional development opportunities for local artists and creative professionals working in the cultural sector. The goals of the program are to:

- support the growth and development of the arts and cultural sector;
- provide artists and cultural workers with practical, inspiring and career-enhancing programming; and
- encourage networking and sharing within the arts and culture community.

In 2023, Art at Work presented the following free workshops:

- **Tax Basics for Artists** An introduction to tax management for self-employed creative professionals by Mariana Scott of Quantum Accounting Services. Attendance: 32 online, 157 on-demand via YouTube.
- **Conservation and Maintenance: Best Practices for Artists Working in Public Art** An overview facilitated by Sabina Sutherland, Art Conservator, on materials as well as long-term durability and maintenance of artwork in public spaces. Attendance: 26 online, 89 on-demand via YouTube.
- **Conservation Best Practices for Studio-Based Artists** An introduction to artwork conservation for a wide range of media facilitated by Sabina Sutherland, Art Conservator. Attendance: 5 in-person.
- **Applying for Public Art Calls** Informative seminar for artists with limited experience with public art, using mock artist calls to share best practices in applying for art calls facilitated by Biliana Velkova, Public Art Planner. Attendance: 35 in-person.
- **Art Rental Information Session** An introduction to submitting artworks to an art rental program facilitated by Florene Belmore, North Van Arts. Attendance: 8 in-person.
- **Preparing Exhibition Proposals** A workshop on the fundamentals of crafting exhibition proposals for non-profit galleries, artist-run centres and community art spaces facilitated by Shaun Dacey, Director, Richmond Art Gallery. Attendance: 11 in-person.
- **Arts and Culture Grant Program Information and Application Tips** An overview of grant writing practices led by Camyar Chaichian, Program Manager, Community Cultural Development. Attendance: 32 in-person.

### PRCS - 33





Cedar weaving workshop

## National Indigenous Peoples Day

As part of her ongoing project, *Hope and Healing Canada*, Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers installed a site-responsive temporary artwork in the Cultural Centre rotunda, as one of more than 100 she has done across Canada. Each installation is made using crochet, knit and woven red yarns to illustrate connections between Indigenous, Inuit, and Métis peoples with settlers and newcomers, while also addressing the decolonization of public spaces. Experiences and stories gathered from each participating site will inform a forthcoming book project and traveling exhibition. The exhibition in Richmond remained until the end of September, including the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Tracey-Mae Chambers is an artist and member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. Her family is from, and some still reside, in the traditional Métis community in Sault Ste. Marie and Penetanguishene, Ontario.

On June 25, Musqueam artists Rita Kompst and Zoe Kompst facilitated a cedar weaving workshop at the Arts Centre where they shared traditional techniques of Coast Salish weaving and ancestral knowledge with 15 participants. The artists prepared locally harvested red cedar for the activity, and displayed examples of their red and yellow cedar baskets, hats and other weavings.

Tracey-Mae Chambers, *Hope and Healing Canada* installation at the Richmond Cultural Centre

## Richmond Cultural Centre

The Cultural Centre and Plaza regularly provide low-cost venue rentals to local arts and cultural organizations and plays host to arts events and activities from pottery sales to musical performances.

The Cultural Centre supported two in-person events in the Performance Hall this year:

- The Vancouver Cantonese Opera Society presented two performances to full houses on August 5 and October 21. In September, three water sleeve workshops were offered to the public in partnership with the Arts Centre.
- As part of the Richmond Arts Strategy and City DEI initiatives, a Kwanzaa event was held on December 28. Partner organization, Great Lakes Society, provided a free public performance that helped introduce African arts and culture to Richmond.

This year also saw the return of the Kwantlen St. Farmers Market where local vegetables and artisanal goods were available May to November every Tuesday from 11:00 am– 4:00 pm.

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 the Cultural Centre's fourth 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 10, Bayit, Chabad of Richmond, Ebco Group of Companies, Lightspeed and Richmond Public Library/Cultural Centre celebrated the 35th annual Menorah Lighting with special guests including Mayor Malcolm Brodie as well as elected officials from three levels of government such as the current and former British Columbia Premiers, Hon. David Eby, Bill Vander Zalm and Michael Harcourt. The evening featured Chanukah family activities indoors followed by the lighting of the 25 ft Menorah on the Cultural Centre Plaza.

## PRCS - 34









## Signature Events

Based on extensive public feedback, the Richmond Arts Strategy identifies free festivals and events as its number one priority. This is consistent with national data indicating that festivals and events are the most common form of Canadians' participation in the arts. Festivals foster civic pride, inclusion and encourage intercultural understanding. In 2023, along with Doors Open, Richmond produced five major events, attracting hundreds of thousands of participants to sites throughout the city.

**"The festival was well-organized. What a great community!"**  
 — 2023 visitor survey response

### Steveston Salmon Festival

The 76th annual Steveston Salmon Festival on July 1, was successfully delivered in alignment with the festival's theme "It's about COMMUNITY" in partnership with the Steveston Community Society. Visitors appreciated the expanded footprint and return of some traditional activities including the Steveston Salmon Festival Parade, Salmon Bake, Chow Mein Community Food Booth, Japanese Cultural Show, Martial Arts demonstrations, children's activities, market/trade show and welcome ceremony including local, federal and provincial government and First Nations representatives.

Musical artists included the Irish Wakers, J.N. Burnett Senior Concert Band, Ishinomonosashi and Dave McArthur among many others on the main stage and throughout the site. Visitors also enjoyed roving performers including stilt walkers, living statues, a ventriloquist and circus artists.

### SALMON FEST BY THE NUMBERS

- 75,000+** visitors
- 211,416** people reached via social media
- 274** volunteers
- 1,406** volunteer hours
- 35+** artists

### PRCS - 36





Richmond Maritime Festival



Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival

“I was so inspired to see families interacting with the event and the site. Parents were taking teachable opportunities with their children and encouraging a connection to the history here.”  
 – festival attendee

### Richmond Maritime Festival

The 20th annual Richmond Maritime Festival animated the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site on the weekend of August 26–27. The event program included 12 wooden and working boats along the dock, including local restored heritage boats, maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site, roving performances, pop-up style heritage storytellers, food and beverage vendors, and community booths.

Staged performances included Vancouver Okinawa Taiko Drummers, Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra, Dan Prop, The Seabillies and Blackthorn Blossoms while visitors also encountered visual arts such as Indigenous weaving, origami, and painting by muralists Bea Martin and David Camisa.

### RMF BY THE NUMBERS

- 40,000+** visitors
- 182,000** people reached via social media
- 105** volunteers
- 870** volunteer hours
- 50** artists, performers and heritage storytellers

### Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival

Celebrating the arrival of spring and the blooming of Garry Point Park's 255 Akebono cherry trees, this annual event is produced in partnership with representatives from the BC Wakayama Kenjin Kai. Returning to its pre-pandemic format for the first time on April 2, the event featured live music and performances, food from a local restaurant and food trucks, a Japanese cultural display and demonstrations.

The Sister City Advisory Committee also hosted a display highlighting the 50th anniversary of Richmond's Sister City relationship with Wakayama. The 2023 Cherry Blossom Festival theme was 感謝 (*kansha*), meaning gratitude or appreciation. More than 5,000 visitors attended the festival.

### PRCS - 37





Children's Arts Festival



Children's Arts Festival

## 2023 CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS

**6,300+** Participants

**43** Schools

**21** Artists

## Neighbourhood Celebration Grants

At the end of January, residents, artists, community champions and community organizations were invited to apply to the Neighbourhood Celebration Grant Program to invest in creative initiatives that offer residents of diverse backgrounds opportunities to connect through shared experiences. There were **67 successful applicants**—including Parent Advisory Councils, student groups, strata groups and non-profit societies—who collectively received \$78,983 and delivered all manner of events including 14 school events, 14 block parties and 39 community events and programs.

## Children's Arts Festival

The annual Children's Arts Festival is Richmond's signature event for children aged 3 to 12 years and includes two components, both presented by the Richmond Arts Centre: a public event on Family Day and a two-week program of workshops for schools delivered in partnership with Parks, Recreation and Sport Services and SD38, with support from Richmond Public Library and Community Associations and Societies.

In 2023, the Family Day public event on February 20 saw more than 5,200 people visit the Richmond Library/Cultural Centre. Activities and performances included singer and storyteller Gina Lina, *Let's Make a Song!* with festival favourite Peter GG, cedar bark weaving with Musqueam artist Rita Kompst, Bollywood dance performances and workshops with Canadian National Dance Champion Karima Essa, Taiko drumming with Uzume Taiko, beatboxing by Infinitus String Trio, as well as artist-led Imagination Stations for creative and fun hands-on art making activities. The Richmond Public Library also hosted author readings with Richmond's Sharon Dulay, author of *Gia and the Moon*, and Kung Jaadee presenting Haida and Squamish stories and songs.

For the school days component (February 21 to 24), 1,075 children representing 43 classes from 28 Richmond elementary schools attended programs at:

- Richmond Library/Cultural Centre (Library, Art Gallery, Museum, Arts Centre, Media Lab, Public Art);
- City Centre, Hamilton, South Arm, Steveston, Thompson and West Richmond Community Centres; and
- Richmond Nature Park.

## PRCS - 38





PRCS - 39

Muralist David Camisa at the Richmond Maritime Festival



Mike Bourscheid, *Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories*

## 2023 EXHIBITION ATTENDANCE

- 3,407** Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories + Codes of silence
- 8,899** a small but comfy house and maybe a dog
- 2,363** MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue
- 3,167** Classification Crisis + Collecting & Reassembling: International Mail Art Exhibition & Fundraiser
- 2,199** ArtRich 2023

## 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 2023, RAG welcomed more than 20,000 visitors to the gallery and many more via programs and across digital platforms including live digital talks and on-demand video content found on the gallery's website and YouTube.

### Exhibitions

RAG presented seven exhibitions in the Gallery and seven off-site exhibits at Richmond Public Library (Brighthouse branch), City Hall Galleria, and at two Canada Line stations (Aberdeen and Lansdowne). Exhibits represented emerging to senior artists from the Lower Mainland and beyond. Each exhibition featured a range of contemporary artistic mediums including sculpture, installation, video, painting, performance and collage.

## GALLERY

### SUNNY SIDE UP AND OTHER SORROWFUL STORIES

Mike Bourscheid

January 28–April 2, 2023

Brussels-based Canadian artist, Mike Bourscheid, melded family anecdotes, fictional tales, domestic work, and tropes of masculinity—from clown to cowboy—in this new body of work. Bringing together several sculptural works and a short film starring the artist, *Sunny Side Up* could also be purposed as a stage or set ready to be activated. Bourscheid's sense of play and pathos percolated through this series of carefully hand-crafted and bespoke costumes, furniture, props, prosthetics and puppets.

**PRCS - 40**



### CODES OF SILENCE

Shirley Bruno, Aleesa Cohene, Caroline Monnet, Cauleen Smith  
January 28–April 2, 2023

Within the public sphere, the voice is vital for expressing untold stories, collective identities and political perspectives; when the voice is quieted, we tend to think of censorship or the marginalization of oral histories. *Codes of silence* radically overturned this illusory binary with videos in which the voice is muted, withheld, or unexplained in ways that cultivate interiority and intimacy. Videos by Shirley Bruno, Aleesa Cohene, Caroline Monnet and Cauleen Smith were presented in tandem with a selection of paintings by Toni Onley, Leslie Poole and Harry Stanbridge from the Gallery’s Permanent Collection, which resonated with the exhibition’s themes, creating an ambience of contemplation.

“An emotional tour de force that moves you from varied, individual experiences into something more cohesive. Quiet choral voices come together to express the ineffable, the unbearable, the silent secret current of life that runs underneath us all.”  
– *The Tyee* on *Codes of Silence* exhibition

### A SMALL BUT COMFY HOUSE AND MAYBE A DOG

Amy Ching-Yan Lam with Haeahn Woo Kwon  
Curated by Su-Ying Lee  
April 22–June 11, 2023

The title of this exhibition comes from a text that Amy Ching-Yan Lam wrote at age 11, speculating that by the age of 25 she’d be married, have a career, and “a small but comfy house and maybe a dog.” Starting from these childhood fantasies of domestic and financial stability, Lam presented artworks that explore how these dreams functioned within the wider context of colonial history. With humour, she examined the relationships between property, family, institutional power, collections and theft. A central part of the exhibition was a series of models created by Lam in collaboration with artist HaeAhn Woo Kwon: remade toys, domestic materials and found objects reconstructed into a fantasy communal home. The exhibition also featured works from the Richmond Public Library’s Dr. Kwok-Chu Lee Collection.



Caroline Monnet, *Creatura Dada* (*Codes of silence*)



Amy Ching-Yan, *a small but comfy house and maybe a dog*

### PRCS - 41



Amy-Claire Huestis, *MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue*

## MOTHLIKE/SILVERY-BLUE

Amy-Claire Huestis

June 29–August 20, 2023

Threaded through this exhibition was the poetic tale of “Silvery Blue,” a fictional character who embodied the land. The artworks—created to be animated through dance, sound performance and community participation—share a story cycle of Silvery Blue’s transformation from woman to butterfly to land. Constructed of ecologically friendly materials including recycled packing materials, natural pigments, and honest cotton, the works were accompanied by sound design and composition by Huestis’s main collaborator, Omar Zubair, played throughout the gallery. A “Nest-work” in the back gallery offered a place for communal action and knowledge, including bird-friendly window treatments, artworks and live footage of a barn owl nest box in the Richmond Nature Park’s Nest Box Program. The exhibition was preceded by a public performance/procession at Garry Point Park on June 21.

Sonja Ahlers, *Classification Crisis*

## CLASSIFICATION CRISIS

Sonja Ahlers

Curated by Godfre Leung

September 9–November 5, 2023

For 30 years, Victoria-based artist Sonja Ahlers has been making books in a distinct visual idiom that is equal parts collage and poetry. *Classification Crisis*, a major survey of her career, emerged from Ahlers’s project of the last half-decade to prepare her archive. The exhibition included her Riot Grrrl zines of the nineties, one-of-a-kind chapbooks spanning 30 years, a decade of unseen work after she “quit art” in the wake of the Vancouver art boom, and other artworks and ephemera from a career of collecting images and scraps of language.



International Mail Art Exhibition

## COLLECTING & REASSEMBLING:

### INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART EXHIBITION & FUNDRAISER

September 9–November 5, 2023

After a ten-year hiatus, the gallery revived its popular open-call exhibition of postcard-sized artworks open to anyone over age 18. All artworks were sent through the postal service, and every artist’s entry was accepted into the online and gallery exhibition. This year saw many returning participants and included works by 288 artists from 32 countries. Leading up to the exhibition, free drop-in workshops were held to offer visitors the opportunity to make an artwork just for the exhibition. At the conclusion of the exhibition, the postcard artworks were auctioned online to raise funds for future gallery public programs offered through the Richmond Art Gallery Association.



ArtRich 2023

## ARTRICH 2023

November 24–December 31, 2023

Presented in partnership with the Richmond Arts Coalition, this dynamic juried exhibition featured 50 emerging and established artists from Richmond, the Lower Mainland, and nearby communities. Showcasing a diverse range of artists engaging with an eclectic array of styles and subject matter, this fifth edition of ArtRich offered a remarkable view into the art scene of Richmond and its environs.

## PRCS - 42



“Very beautiful— My grandparent pioneers would agree with this.”

“Very peaceful environment and a reminder of nature preservation.”

— gallery visitors, *MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue*

## OFF-SITE

### CAPTURE FESTIVAL ON THE CANADA LINE

Faune Ybarra, *Iceberg Stranded In My Bed* (Aberdeen Station)

Jaspal Birdi, *11h02m* (Lansdowne Station)

Presented in partnership with the Capture Festival, Public Art and Canada Line Public Art Program.

Ybarra responds to Robert E. Holloway's influential book, *Through Newfoundland with the Camera* (1905), in her pursuit to provide a nuanced perspective to the evolving story of the province, where she once lived for four years. In this series of stills from her video performance created during the initial pandemic shutdown, the artist enshrouds herself with a white blanket while standing on a mattress in her Vancouver apartment as Holloway's archival photo captioned "Iceberg Stranded Outside St. John's Harbour for Three Weeks" is projected onto her and the blanket.

Jaspal Birdi's work *11h02m*, also takes the viewer back to the isolating times of 2020, when the artist found herself re-located to her Toronto home from an art residency in Milan. The work features an abstracted and picturesque blue sky adorned with low-lying clouds printed onto a gold rescue blanket, a lightweight yet stable material. The result is an ethereal image offering a window into how the artist navigated a time of unprecedented collective uncertainty.



Jaspal Birdi, *11h02m*



Faune Ybarra, *Iceberg Stranded In My Bed*



Julie Pappajohn, *Ditch*

## CITY HALL GALLERIA 2023

The Richmond Art Gallery organizes exhibitions by local artists for display in Richmond City Hall. In 2023, visitors could see:

- Janette Calubad and Karen Leon: *Iridescent Landscape*, January 13–May 2
- Steveston Japanese Canadian Culture Centre: *Contributing to a Diverse and Multicultural Canada*, May 2–June 5
- Julie Pappajohn: *Ditch*, July 4–September 19
- Aspire Richmond: *Treasure Hunt*, September 19–November 7

## PRCS - 43





Laurens Lee,  
*Landscape with Flying Object, 1990*



Toni Onley, *Zone #9, 1963*

## Permanent Collection

Containing nearly 400 works of art in a variety of media collected from 1982 to 2020, RAG's Permanent Collection is representative of the history of its exhibitions as well as a broader history of artistic production in BC and beyond. The collection includes works by established artists such as Anna Wong, Wayne Ngan, Susan Point, Greg Girard and Gu Xiong among numerous others.

In 2023, two gallery exhibitions prominently featured artworks from the Collection:

*Codes of silence* showcased paintings by artists Toni Onley, Leslie Poole and Harry Stanbridge. Displayed alongside four contemporary videos, these paintings created an atmosphere of quiet contemplation, while echoing thematic and aesthetic elements of the videos.

The exhibition *a small but comfy house and maybe a dog* featured artworks selected by artist Amy Ching-Yan Lam. Some of these works were presented in the gallery while others were showcased on a wall in a high traffic zone at the Library, nearby. These works were part of a lending program that offered Richmond residents the rare opportunity to borrow an artwork during the exhibition's duration. Featured artists included Diyan Achjadi, Evan Lee and Alan Wood among others.

Since 2022, the Gallery also re-initiated an ongoing program of installing collection works throughout City Hall and City Hall Annex.

The Permanent Collection is available to view online at [richmondartgallery.org/ragcollection](http://richmondartgallery.org/ragcollection)

## Community Outreach and Programs

**T**hrough 2023, RAG stayed connected with Richmond's artists and art lovers through a combination of engaging digital and in-person programming.

### 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.

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.



Children's Storytime + Performance,  
*MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue*

## PRCS - 44





Artist Salon



Collage Party: Hands-on Art for Adults

## 2023 ARTIST SALON BY THE NUMBERS

- 8 sessions
- 10 artists and curators
- 282 Livestream and In-person
- 443 Video views

### Accessibility Initiatives

In a new initiative for 2023, described audio tours were created for visually impaired visitors for the exhibitions *a small but comfy house and maybe a dog* and *MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue*. As well, audio didactic labels were created for the *Classification Crisis* exhibition.

### 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 2023, 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. This year, the program partnered with Richmond Arts Coalition and Community Arts Council of Richmond to build connections with local artists and invite their input regarding programming of future sessions.

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 a networking opportunity, and some of these were also recorded for on-demand viewing.

### COLLAGE PARTY: HANDS-ON ART FOR ADULTS

In 2023, the gallery started regular Collage Party events in the gallery in conjunction with each exhibition. Local artists were invited as guests to introduce their work and demonstrate collage techniques for participants. These social and educational events provided a relaxed environment to experiment with art making.

### ARTIST INTERVIEWS ON VIDEO

For each exhibition, RAG produces video interviews of the artists or curators talking about their work. In 2023, there were four exhibition videos produced: Mike Bourscheid for *Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories*, Amy Ching-Yan Lam for *a small but comfy house and maybe a dog*, Amy-Claire Huestis for *MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue*, and Sonja Ahlers for *Classification Crisis*.

## PRCS - 45





School Art Program



School Art Program

## 2023 SCHOOL PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS

- 86** art workshops
- 11** tours
- 13** Indigenous Art Classroom Art Kit rentals
- 2,914** students

## 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 art and artists into their lessons.

This year saw a return to regular school programming, and a return to partnering with the Richmond Museum to distribute program information to SD38. RAG provided 11 high school tours for 400 students, 86 school art workshops for 1,976 students, and 13 Indigenous Art Classroom Art Kit rentals reaching 538 students.

### 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 at 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 in the RAG Program Room in April 2024.



ECUAD Youth Art + Culture Lab



Sonja Ahlers' *Classification Crisis*

"I love your educational programs because they are diverse (painting, water colouring, gluing, sewing, cutting out, etc.) and easy for my students. We need not to forget to teach Arts as it is a way to express oneself other than the paper/pencil activity.

A lot of children at a very early age like Arts because they can achieve something. I will come back next year."

— Teacher, Homma Elementary

## 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.

**SONJA AHERS' CLASSIFICATION CRISIS**  
 240 pages. Edited by Godfre Leung  
 Co-published with Conundrum Press

Sonja Ahers' *Classification Crisis* is an important survey of the artist's 30-year career, published on the occasion of a major retrospective at RAG in 2023. The first half of this hardcover publication functions as an exhibition catalogue, featuring texts reflecting on different periods of Ahlers' career by Tavi Gevinson, Kathleen Hanna, Doretta Lau and Lisa Prentice; a methodological essay by archival theorists Alexandra Alisaukas and Jennifer Douglas; a survey essay by curator Godfre Leung, and lavish illustrations of artwork from throughout Ahlers' career. The second half of the publication is "Rabbit-Hole," a new long form collage work, that the artist describes as a "feminist memoir/scrapbook/confessional commentary on the art world and my place within it."

**BRENDAN FERNANDES: INACTION**  
 158 pages. Edited by Alhena Katsof  
 Co-published with Skira, Ezra & Cecile Zilkha Gallery

This soft-cover publication is a detailed exploration of Fernandes's multimedia exhibition *Inaction* co-presented by Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, USA in 2019 and by RAG in 2021. It comprises a richly illustrated archive of the project, bringing together photographic documentation, architectural drawings, an original dance score, and in-depth texts, including three scholarly essays, and a conversation between the artist, featured dancers, and the exhibition's curators.

## PRCS - 47





Exhibition opening, *Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories + Codes of Silence*

## RAGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

- Kurt Aydin
- Kristal Hamakawa,  
Vice President/Treasurer
- Russna Kaur
- Jas Lally, President
- Allison Liu
- Daria Sheina
- Lei Tian
- 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 formed to support the RAG through fundraising, membership and advocacy. In 1987, RAGA was registered as a non-profit society to enable the Gallery to receive donations and issue tax receipts as a charitable organization.

In 2023, RAGA received cash and in-kind assistance from three levels of government, businesses, private foundations and individuals.

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, Birds Canada, Capture Photography Festival, Emily Carr University, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Nanaimo Art Gallery, Richmond Arts Centre, Richmond Media Lab, Richmond Museum Society, Richmond Public Art Program, 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 - 49

*MOTHLIKE* silvery-blue performance at Garry Point Park, June 21





Charlotte Wall and Puy Khalili, *Typha*

**RICHMOND PUBLIC ART PROGRAM TO-DATE:**

- 406** total number of artworks
- 199** permanent artwork installations
- 202** temporary installations (85 no longer on display)
- 316** number of permanent and temporary artworks currently on display
- 27,770+** hours of community participation in the annual Engaging Artists in Community 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 2023, public art commissioned by the City through this program was installed on two civic properties:

#### TYPHA

Charlotte Wall and Puya Khalili  
 Hollybrdige Way at Middle Arm Waterfront Greenway

Inspired by the Typha plant’s inherent connection to water, this sculpture serves as a visual marker for the Fraser River which is unseen from street level, and thereby symbolizes the river, connecting the community to the hidden yet vital water source. Situated in a high profile location visible by land, water and air, *Typha* aims to evoke a strong sense of place and pride for Richmond residents. The three stainless steel forms embody the interplay of elements, such as water, vegetation and wildlife that interact with human inhabitants and have shaped this landscape over time.

**PRCS - 50**





Thomas Cannell, *Sea to Sky*

## 2023 Creative Cities Network of Canada (CCNC) Award of Excellence

Richmond was awarded the CCNC Public Art Legacy Award on October 5 at the annual Summit held in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The award honours *Sea to Sky*, completed in 2021, the five-storey integrated glass artwork by Musqueam artist Thomas Cannell located on No. 3 Road as part of the Keltic Development.

The Public Art Legacy Award recognizes a Canadian municipality that demonstrates visionary leadership by supporting an excellent program and process that led to a successful public art project or program,

specifically, permanent projects valued over \$75,000. This artwork, that powerfully acknowledges and celebrates Musqueam culture in the heart of City Centre, was made possible by the City's Private Development Public Art Program.

*Sea to Sky* offers impressive views for pedestrian and vehicular passersby, while the interior spaces – including Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hub – invite a more intimate stained glass-like viewing experience that conveys the hand-made and textural qualities of the work.



Celan Bouillet, *Leaping Home*

### LEAPING HOME

Celan Bouillet  
12071 No.5 Road

*Leaping Home* serves as a wayfinding feature to welcome staff and visitors to the Richmond Animal Shelter. The work is comprised of a wall of colourful animals representative of those cared for at the shelter — including cats, dogs, birds and rabbits — set against a forest-like background. The work also takes into consideration the experience of drivers and pedestrian visitors, concealing barbed wire along the top of the fence that encloses a dog run.



Nathan Lee, *Fireside*

### 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 2023, the following project was completed:

#### FIRESIDE

Nathan Lee  
6611 Pearson Way

In reviewing the history of this site, artist Nathan Lee learned that an early settler dwelling, likely built in the early 1900's, was burned down as part of a Richmond Fire Department exercise in 1979. *Fireside* is a playful reference to the chimney structure that would be left in the aftermath of such a fire, as well as a gathering space with benches oriented around the hearth. The work is, therefore, an invitation to connect, dialogue and exchange ideas. The fireplace, painted a vibrant fuchsia, also references fire and warmth, as well as fireweed, a symbol of ecological rebirth.

## PRCS - 51



Mark Anderson *Gillnetter at Night*Nicole Larsen, *Journey Home*Rory Doyle, *Dog Days*Ben Evely, *Movements That Make Us*Ho Lay Hoon, *Patchwork of Unity*

## Community Mural Program

The City of Richmond's Community 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. If successful, they are matched with a pre-qualified artist to create the mural, developing the design through a collaborative or community-engaged process. The program is funded through the voluntary contributions of private developers to the City's Public Art Program Reserve Fund.

### GILLNETTER AT NIGHT

Mark Anderson

Pacific Net & Twine Ltd., 3731 Moncton Street

The mural was inspired by the stories of the Nakashima family who have owned and operated Pacific Net & Twine Ltd. for 50 years.

### JOURNEY HOME

Nicole Larsen

Steveston Outdoor Pool, 4151 Moncton Street

This mural celebrates the artist's own Japanese culture, while honouring both her ancestors and Steveston's Japanese Canadian community, past and present.

### DOG DAYS

Rory Doyle

South Arm Outdoor Pool, 10100 South Arm Place

This colourful mural celebrates a typical summer day at the pool. The mural depicts a diverse community of people engaging with each other and enjoying themselves.

### MOVEMENTS THAT MAKE US

Ben Evely

Mitchell Elementary School, 3800 No. 5 Road

The design of this mural reflects the most prevalent themes gathered from students and staff at Mitchell Elementary School; they were prompted to create drawings and written works about their passions, curiosities, and the spaces in which they feel most comfortable or at home.

### PATCHWORK OF UNITY

Ho Lay Hoon

22855 McLean Avenue

Inspired by community engagement activities at the Hamilton Community Centre, this mural reflects the values, stories and aspirations of local residents.

## PRCS - 52



## 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 cultural identity, social history or the environment. The following were funded through the voluntary contributions of private developers to the City's Public Art Program Reserve fund.

### CREATIVE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

J Peachy  
 Ferris Elementary School in partnership with  
 Richmond Emergency Programs.

This project is an arts-based response to the question, "How can an elementary school help prepare the larger community for emergencies?" Through a variety of hands-on art activities including storytelling, puppetry arts, wood crafting, needle felting and Indigenous storytelling through music and song, the project engaged approximately 60 students from grades 5 and 6. The artist-led workshops were guided by the questions: "How can we build personal and community resiliency?" "Where in nature and the life spirit of all living beings are there examples of resiliency and responses to threats?" and "How can we draw on this knowledge and apply it to climate change adaptation strategies?" A celebratory community gathering was held on June 1 to share the project learnings and outcomes with the larger community and public. For more information, visit [www.ferrisresilience.ca](http://www.ferrisresilience.ca)



J Peachy, *Creative Community Resilience*



Aaron Friend Lettner, *Garden Time*

**"Exploring the seasonal cycles and climate change through art allowed for a collective contemplation of our natural surroundings."**  
 – Terra Nova Nature School and Sharing Farm

### GARDEN TIME

Aaron Friend Lettner  
 Sharing Farm and Terra Nova Nature School

This project focused on a variety of plant and agricultural crop species and their ability to teach vital lessons about how climate and weather patterns are changing and affecting local ecology. Through free and accessible photo-based art activities, workshops and events, young learners, community members and the general public learned, observed and engaged in dialogue on these vital issues. For more information, visit [www.eacgardentime.wordpress.com](http://www.eacgardentime.wordpress.com)

### WEAVING LIVES TOGETHER

Mariana Frochtengarten  
 East Richmond Community Association at Tait Riverfront Park  
 in collaboration with Tait Elementary School

This project invited young learners and local residents to share and express individual stories through a variety of art activities including weaving, photography, paper tie-dye, jelly plate prints, storytelling, painting and printmaking. The creative expressions were then used by the artist to create a digital collage for a vinyl art wrap that covers a storage locker at the park pavilion. This project fostered social connection and community building among new and long-time residents in the Tait Neighbourhood. For more information, visit [www.nanafro8.wixsite.com/weavinglives-together](http://www.nanafro8.wixsite.com/weavinglives-together)



Mariana Frochtengarten, *Weaving Lives Together*

## PRCS - 53



Danny Chen, *Birds of Steveston*Juliana Loh,  
*Richmond: Sea to See Island*Hilda Chen, *Celebration of Colours*

## 2023 PUBLIC ART BY THE NUMBERS

39	new works installed (36 temporary, 3 permanent)
124	submissions received for 4 Public Art Calls
22	Richmond artists contracted for Public Art commissions
8	community groups engaged to inform and create public art projects
160+	volunteer hours
1,575+	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 welcoming encounters with art in everyday life. Public Art matches opportunities to pre-qualified Richmond-based artists in the creation of art wraps that reflect and celebrate Richmond's natural heritage and vibrant communities.

In 2023, 14 traffic cabinets and two utility boxes were wrapped in partnership with Parks, Recreation and Transportation:

- *Steveston Gardens*, Kerri-Jo Stewart, Shell Road and Williams Road
- *A Gentle Dialogue and Could It Be*, Simone Guo, Railway Avenue and Garry Street
- *Puddluv Wave 2*, Adriele Au, No. 5 Road and Vulcan Road
- *Trees on the Lagoon*, Susan Viccars, No. 5 Road and King Road
- *Fractal Forest*, Maria Coletsis, Moffatt Road and Blundell Road
- *Bring Me Some Good News*, Nicole Jang, McLelland Road and Alderbridge Way
- *Ode to the Garden City Lands*, Anja Nov, May Drive and Alderbridge Way
- *Birds of Steveston*, Danny Chen, 4000 Bayview Street
- *Gingkos*, Crystal Chan, No.3 Road and Williams Road
- *Richmond: Sea to See Island*, Juliana Loh, Pearson Way at Lansdowne Road/Hollybridge Way
- *Birds of the Lower Mainland* and *Marvelous Mushrooms of BC*, Bea Martin, McLennan Avenue and Bridgeport Road
- *Lavender Fields and Reflection*, Fiona Tang, No.3 Road and Cook Road
- *Celebration of Colours*, Hilda Chen, Buswell Street and Cook Road
- *Altar I and Altar II*, Tony Bowden, Cook Road between No.3 Road and Buswell St.

## PRCS - 54

## HOMECOMING

Simone Guo

Brighthouse Canada Line Station

This multi-panel installation references the experience of the artist who has lived in Canada for two decades. "Home" is no longer understood as a physical place but as a feeling, where one's heart goes and nerves are settled. With these vibrant and stylized Northwest Coast scenes, Guo reflects on the complexity of the concept of "home," and shares the exhilaration of homecoming to express a new sense of space and immersion that continues to evolve.

## CAPTURE PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL ON CANADA LINE

In partnership with Richmond Art Gallery, a series of photo-based installations at Aberdeen and Lansdowne Canada Line Stations were installed as part of the Capture Photography Festival: *11h02m* by Jaspal Birdi and *Iceberg Stranded in My Bed* by Faune Ybarra. (More about these works on page 21)



Simone Guo, *Homecoming*



*Mosaic Firefly: Richmond Edition*

## ABC: ASPIRE | BUILD | CELEBRATE & MOSAIC FIREFLY

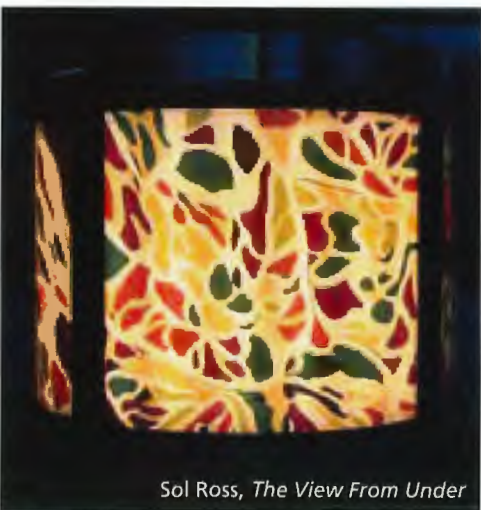
Public Art in partnership with Community Social Development and Richmond Multicultural Community Services Society, Minoru Seniors Society and City Centre Community Association received a Canadian Heritage project grant (\$92,000) to implement ABC: Aspire | Build | Celebrate, a community and socially engaged artist project to foster awareness, learning and action on topics of anti-racism, discrimination and intersectionality.

An artist team from Presentation House Theatre/Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre engaged 15 youth and 15 seniors through 20 workshops and gatherings. Professional artists and educators held workshops with senior and youth groups, developing their skills in storytelling, improvisation, art-making and acting. The project culminated in two public performances called *Mosaic Firefly: Richmond Edition* which were presented as part of Culture Days and the City's Diversity Symposium; both included a post-show Q&A and reception.

The artist team also published a booklet showcasing the participants' artwork and stories (in English and their chosen languages). Each participant was gifted a booklet and a copy has been accessioned into the Richmond Public Library's Artist Book Collection.

## PRCS - 55



Yanqun Xue, *The Brides*Cherry Archer, *Final Fruit*Sol Ross, *The View From Under*

## NO. 3 ROAD ARTS COLUMNS EXHIBITION 17, PARTS I AND II

This year-long, two-part exhibition taking place at Lansdowne and Aberdeen Centre Canada Line Stations, showcased the work of six artists — Bernadette C De Jesus, Yanqun Xue, Susan Viccars, Sol Ross, Cherry Archer and Sam McWilliams — selected via an open call to emerging and established artists who live and/or work in Richmond whose works celebrate Richmond's local culture, history and natural heritage.

### Part I (February – July)

- *Inner City Living, Food Fairlane, Chromosomes of Heart, Casting Echoes to Heaven, Bernadette C De Jesus*

This series of reproduced ink drawings displayed at the Lansdowne Station represented Richmond's interconnected communities and the resources we share in everyday life. Individual joys, challenges and flows of emotion are symbolized in the touch of lines and vibrant colours.

- *The Spring, The Pond in Winter, The Brides, The Pond in Summer, Yanqun Xue*

This artist's practice is influenced by early Italian Renaissance painters and traditional Chinese figure painting. His series of paintings shown at Lansdowne Station was inspired by nostalgic memories of his hometown and the experience of newcomers who arrive here to build new dreams.

- *Farmhouse on the West Dyke, Cottage in Steveston, Parsons House, Cottages Along Finn Slough, Susan Viccars*

This series depicted Richmond's heritage homes with vignettes of farm and fishing life that have largely disappeared as some search for a sense of place in a modern city that is rapidly changing.

### Part II (August – January, 2024)

- *Garlic and Peas, Kabocha, Salmonberry, Black Beauty Mini Watermelon, Sam McWilliams*

This series of botanical drawings was inspired by Richmond's agricultural heritage and aimed to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining resilient and local food systems.

- *Dorsal 960, Et Selec 71, Final Fruit 78, Citrus and Candyfloss 506, Cherry Archer*

These photographs from the artist's *Botanical Ice Tile* series highlighted plants commonly found around Richmond. With each image, the artist invited the viewer to examine their relationship with the natural world and embrace emotions and sensations they may evoke.

- *The View from Under, Lichen, Turkey Tail, Webbed, Sol Ross*

This series of digital illustrations explored the complexity of repetitive patterns found within fungi specimens as well as their role in keeping our ecosystems working. It also celebrates Richmond's natural beauty and aims to inspire the protection and care of our natural world.



## Public Art Partnerships



### PROPERTY TAX BROCHURE

Public Art worked in partnership with the Finance Department to include public art on the 2023 Property Tax Brochure.

### SOUTH ARM PLAYGROUND MURAL

Public Art worked in partnership with Parks to install a mural in a tunnel at the new South Arm Playground.

### STEVESTON COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION FENCE ART WRAP

Public Art worked in partnership with Community Services Planning and Projects to implement a community-engaged art wrap project for the construction site of the new Steveston Community Centre and Library.



Laura Kwok, Community Roots Mural Painting

## Education and Outreach



Richmond Public Art partnered with other City areas to incorporate public art based activities and programs as part of signature events for the City.

### 2023 RICHMOND CULTURE DAYS

Public Art, in partnership with community partners offered a variety of free, family-friendly activities and events for the annual Culture Days festival:

- **Richmond Public Art Bus Tour** Staff hosted an accessible bus tour of works around Alexandra, Bridgeport and Oval Villages. A self-guided mural tour was also available online.
- **Garden Time** with Aaron Friend Lettner and **Weaving Lives Together** with Mariana Frochtengarten Two celebratory events connected participants of the Engaging Artists in the Community program (page 31) with a broader audience to learn about the project and to unveil a legacy artwork.
- **Richmond Cultural Centre Annex mural project** Richmond-based muralist Laura Kwok held four sessions with community members and arts groups to help inform the design of her mural to be installed in spring 2024: 1) Community Roots Mural Painting, a participatory mini-mobile mural installation that explored the question: "Do you have a memento or souvenir that reminds you of home?" 2) Botanical Self Portrait Collage Party, a drop-in activity at RAG to create self-portrait collages inspired by floral images and natural elements. 3) Botanical Nature Walk, with Métis herbalist Lori Snyder exploring nearby native plant life, and 4) Canvas of Colour a hands-on art activity with members of the Richmond Youth Media Program to explore how we communicate and express emotions, ideas, and cultural symbolism through colours. In addition, the artist created a series of social media posts for the @HowArtWorks Instagram account inviting participants to share photographs of their favourite locations and landscapes in Richmond.

## SELECTION PANELIST ROSTER

In 2023, the Public Art Selection Panelist Roster was updated to maintain the Program's pool of community members who can be called upon to serve on selection panels in 2024 and 2025. Selection panels are an integral part of the Richmond Public Art Program. They review artist proposals and make recommendations on public art projects.

## PRCS - 57



## Public Art Maintenance

In 2022, a major condition survey of the public art collection was completed in order to create a conservation plan so that artworks in the collection may be enjoyed for as long as possible. The survey collected information about each artwork, its age, dimensions, material composition, and state of physical stability. From this data, artworks were prioritised according to the level of conservation work required to ensure they are maintained in a stable condition.

In 2023, the following civic artworks were identified for maintenance and were repaired:

- *Hupakwanum: the Chief's Treasure Box*, Richmond Olympic Oval
- *Errant Rain Cloud*, Minoru Centre for Active Living
- *Steveston's Legacy*, Gulf of Georgia Cannery
- *Shaping Hands*, Sea Island Fire Hall No. 4
- *The River*, Thompson Community Centre
- *No. 3 Art Columns*, Aberdeen and Lansdowne Canada Line Stations

### 2023 RPAAC MEMBERS:

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



Dolores Altin and Elvira Monteforte, *We Are Made of Water*

### CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

Dolores Altin and Elvira Monteforte's art installation *We Are Made of Water* activated the Cultural Centre plaza on BC Family Day. By constructing "Three Hemispherias: Blue Planet, Ice House, Bubble House" out of recycled plastics, the artists aimed to raise awareness of plastic pollution in oceans, and water as a precious resource to be protected for future generations.

### 2023 DOORS OPEN RICHMOND

Public Art offered two bus tours. The first was for newcomers in partnership with Richmond Multicultural Community Services that explored the Richmond Oval and Terra Nova Rural Park. The second covered artworks around Alexandra, Bridgeport and Oval Villages and featured artist Christian Huizenga to speak about his recently installed sculptural shelter, *Wake*.

### 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 Experience Camp

## Richmond Arts Centre

The Richmond Arts Centre provides high quality arts education opportunities in a wide variety of disciplines, including visual arts, dance and movement, music and theatre. The Centre is also home to seven local arts organizations known as the Resident Art Groups.

The Richmond Arts Centre is the hub of artistic opportunity within Richmond, activating and inspiring 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.

The Richmond Arts Centre is also home to the annual Children’s Arts Festival (see page 16 for details)

### ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 985 courses
- 8,500+ registered students
- 54 professional instructors
- 80,000+ visits (virtual & in-person)

### Arts Education Programs

The Richmond Arts Centre continues to develop and diversify its arts education offerings to meet community demand for exceptional arts education. The programs ensure affordable access to a strong base of introductory and beginner arts education programs as well as higher-level learning opportunities.

Instructors at the Richmond Arts Centre are not only highly qualified instructors, but professional artists. Programmers, responding to community demands and the latest arts trends, recruit artist educators from a diverse background of cultures and creative practices.

Classes are offered both seasonally and during Spring Break and Summer Camps. Programs are offered for pre-school, children, youth and adults and, in 2023, covered a range of disciplines including:

- **Performing Arts:** Ballet, Jazz, Hip Hop, Dance Fitness, Water Sleeve Dance and Creative Movement, Improvisation (in partnership with

### PRCS - 60



- Richmond Improv Theatre Society). Private lessons for Piano, Guitar, Voice, Violin and Electronic Drum (in partnership with Richmond Music School).
- **Visual Arts:** Mixed Media Sculpture, Printmaking, Nature Illustration, Industrial Design, Natural Dyes, Abstract Drawing and Painting, Pottery (Wheel-throwing and Clay Hand-building), Ikebana and Textiles.
- In preparation for the 2024 opening of the Cultural Centre Annex studios, new programs were developed this year to expand and support community offerings. Examples include Acrobatics, K-Pop Dance, Ballroom Dance, Drum Circle for Seniors, Open Studio Art classes and more.

## 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 partnered with the Richmond Museum to offer historical and cultural arts activities to more than 40 Heritage Fair participants. Musqueam artists and weavers, Rita and Zoe Kompst, taught traditional cedar weaving techniques to create friendship bracelets. Students also had the opportunity to learn traditional Ugandan drumming and dance with artist, choreographer, drummer and educator, Edward Sembatya.

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, Jeni Chen, Mickey Morgan, Keely O'Brien, provided arts experiences at sold-out workshops, reaching a combined 120 participants.

In August and September, the Art Truck provided hands-on experiences at East Richmond Community Association's Summer BBQ and Hamilton Community Association's Night Out. Community-engaged artist, Bea Martin, who has a special interest in nature-based arts, led approximately 250 people in creating representations of local flora and fauna to enhance a tree for the Fall season at the Cambie Summer BBQ. Artist Kathy Shleindl brought a range of materials for hundreds of participants to explore and create festive hats, crowns and masks at Hamilton Night Out.



Art Truck at Cambie Community Centre

"The Art Truck gave me the unique opportunity to share my love for nature drawing with curious and imaginative children. Together, we learned how to draw different animals commonly found in BC, and we added interesting (and fun) facts about them using pictures, words and numbers."

— Art Truck artist, Bea Martin



Arts Education: Natural Dyes



Arts Education: Ikebana



Art Truck: Ugandan Drumming

### PRCS - 61





Art Truck After-School Program:  
McKay Elementary School



Richmond Potters' Club

## 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

"As the position is unique within art centres, galleries and non-profits, it gives us time to talk about the particular struggles we face. I have learned many ideas from my colleagues that I have brought into my practice as an art educator."

- Intermunicipal Arts Programmer Roundtable member

## ART TRUCK AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Children and Youth Mental Wellness Working Group, a joint committee with Vancouver Coastal Health and School District No. 38 (SD38), recommended the reinstatement of the Art Truck After-School Program with a Provincial Plan H grant to fund it as a pilot project with an eye to expanding it in the future. Cook and McKay Elementary schools were selected for the initial Fall season where, weekly, 60 Grade 4–7 students participated in the Art Truck program: 30 minutes of activity with a physical literacy instructor, an art lesson with a professional artist and a healthy snack. This program provides safe, skill-based, quality after-school programming to young people who would otherwise have barriers to do so.

## RESIDENT ART GROUPS

The Richmond Arts Centre is home to some of the city's longest running community arts organizations who receive reduced rates on regular room rentals for their activities. Throughout the year, typically, these groups provide workshops, exhibitions and demonstrations for their members as well as participate in community events such as Culture Days.

In 2023, the Richmond Arts Centre saw an increase in Resident Art Group visitation as community members returned to their pre-pandemic activity levels. In addition to these groups, some additional non-profit societies — Chinese Ink and Brush Society, Chung ai Photography and Creative Jewellers of BC — rented Arts Centre studio space on a regular basis.

## INTERMUNICIPAL ARTS PROGRAMMER ROUNDTABLE

Initiated by the Richmond Arts Centre, the Intermunicipal Arts Programmer Roundtable unites 55+ arts workers representing 12 municipalities. The work group convenes virtually on a quarterly basis, supporting each other on emerging issues, identifying sector trends, and discussing industry best practices and resources. The supportive group also values the roundtable as a welcoming space for skill-sharing, relationship-building and networking.

## PRCS - 62





Upper Rotunda Gallery: Richmond Artists' Guild exhibition



Richmond High School Students exhibition

### COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITIONS

With the support of RAG staff, the Arts Centre organizes exhibitions by local artists and arts groups for display in the Upper Rotunda Gallery. In 2023, the following took place:

- Richmond Chinese Artists Association, January 3–30
- John Hall and Crystal Noir: Black Artists and Creators in our Community, January 30–February 27
- Richmond Photo Club, February 27–April 1
- Richmond Arts Centre Faculty Show, April 3–May 1
- Richmond High School Students, May 1–June 9
- Sister Cities Project, June 26–July 31
- Alex Ji, July 31–August 28
- Richmond High School Faculty, August 28–September 25
- Richmond Artists' Guild, September 25–October 30
- New West Artists and Richmond Artists 'Guild: Earthly Delights, October 30–November 27
- Richmond Arts Centre Student Exhibition, November 27–January 2, 2024

### PRCS - 63



Crystal Noir, *Choose Wisely*John Hall, *Map IV*SUCCESS Newcomers Group  
and John Hall

## Accessibility Initiatives



The Richmond Arts Centre endeavours to provide a safe and welcoming space for all. 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, and providing classroom assistants for programs with diverse learners to provide better support.

Additionally, staff participated in training to enhance classroom services and instructors received training opportunities to better support neuro-divergent participants in performing arts including dance.

## Special Events



### BLACK HISTORY MONTH EXHIBITION

This exhibition in the Upper Rotunda Gallery marked Richmond's eighth Black History Month celebrated by the City and its community partners. *Black Artists and Creators in our Community* featured work by John Hall, a graphic designer who exhibited large-scale mixed media artworks, and Crystal Noir, a self-taught painter who exhibited surreal paintings created in response to her own mental health challenges faced during the pandemic.

During the installation of the show, a tour of newcomers from SUCCESS were treated to a meeting with the artists to learn more about the work and the purpose of the exhibition.

This annual exhibition is a partnership with Mary Wilson, organizer of Richmond Black History Month (and 2022 Richmond Arts Award recipient.) On February 14, CBC News recognized Mary Wilson for her organization of Black History Month events in Richmond since 2016 and featured interviews with the two artists.

## Community Partners



In 2023, the Arts Centre partnered with the following community organizations and City departments to increase the community's access to arts opportunities: Gateway Theatre, Resident Art Groups of the Richmond Arts Centre, Vancouver Cantonese Opera Society, Richmond Public Library, School District No. 38, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Museum, Richmond Black History Month, Richmond Music School, Richmond Public Art Program, Lansdowne Centre, City Centre, Hamilton, South Arm, Steveston, Thompson and West Richmond Community Centres, and Richmond Nature Park.

## PRCS - 64









Friday Jam Night

## Richmond Media Lab

Located in the Richmond Cultural Centre and operated in conjunction with the Richmond Arts Centre, 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.

“No matter how busy I am, I want to come here. I know it’s always fun here.”

– RYMP member

### RICHMOND MEDIA LAB BY THE NUMBERS:

- 43** RYMP Youth members
- 3,281** hours RYMP members spent learning media arts skills and building community connections
- 56** Media Lab courses
- 287** registrations for Media Lab courses

## Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP)

The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), a free referral-based program for youth ages 13–24, has been running continuously for 12 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 presenting sponsor, Viva Pharmaceuticals and Vancouver Coastal Health’s ongoing grant support in partnership with Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS).

The program saw an increase in participation among referrals from neighbouring secondary schools. Youth familiar with RYMP referred their classmates and friends, increasing drop-in rates, necessitating the creation of an overflow room. As well, due to increased interest in music production, Friday Jam Nights were added to the mix.

In 2023, there were 43 active RYMP members, 187 guests, and 17 adult mentors that used the Media Lab. Twelve new youth were referred to the program this year. 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 6, CIMA featured CTV News

## PRCS - 66



RYMP session



Youth Art Mart



Gabby Cometa and Botao Chen

## Richmond Arts Awards Honours

Two members of the Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP) were selected as the recipients in the Youth Arts and Volunteerism categories.

The nominees for these categories, Botao Chen and Gabby Cometa, have collectively dedicated 2,011 hours (and counting) to RYMP projects since joining the program.

Anchor Jason Pires; lawyer-turned actress, Anna Robinson; and local videographer and instructor, Sahand Mohajer. 24 youth participants enjoyed this professional development workshop followed by an opportunity to connect, meet new people and further learning in a supportive, friendly environment.

### RICHMOND REMEMBERS LIVE VIDEO SIMULCAST

Under the direction of filmmaker Kryshan Randel, five RYMP members took part in providing live coverage of the 2023 *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. The video (posted to YouTube) has reached more than 3,000 views.

### YOUTH ART MART

Since 2013, this two-day youth-led craft market has featured local youth artists and their handmade prints, crafts, and designs. Through promotion via the @CityOfRichmondYouth Instagram page and word of mouth, the number of vendors doubled over last year, to 40. Over the two-day event, there were 702 visitors and a vendors' survey following the event reported total sales over \$4,000.

## Programs & Activities

### MEDIA ARTS EDUCATION COURSES

Throughout 2023, students took classes on a range of topics including Digital Illustration, Animation, Stop-Motion Animation, Video Editing, Filmmaking and Graphic Design. The Media Lab also offers enriching programs across disciplines via the Arts Centre's spring break and summer camps.

The Media Lab has also partnered with the Richmond Public Library's Digital Services department to deliver skills sessions to youth in areas such as 3D Design and Cricut Workshops.

## PRCS - 67





Botao Chen

## Pink Shirt Day Design Contest

This year, Richmond held a t-shirt design contest and eight RYMP members submitted designs that went before a selection panel. The winning design was created by Grade 12 student and active RYMP youth, Botao Chen.

Shirts were printed and distributed to Council, community partners and RYMPers. The design was also featured in the *Richmond News* and *Richmond Sentinel* newspapers.

## COMMUNITY MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE

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

- facilitating Resident Art Group TAGOR in producing hybrid live-streaming events,
- AV support for public programming and performances in the Cultural Centre, and
- providing a Portable Media Cart for live-streaming at the Cultural Centre.

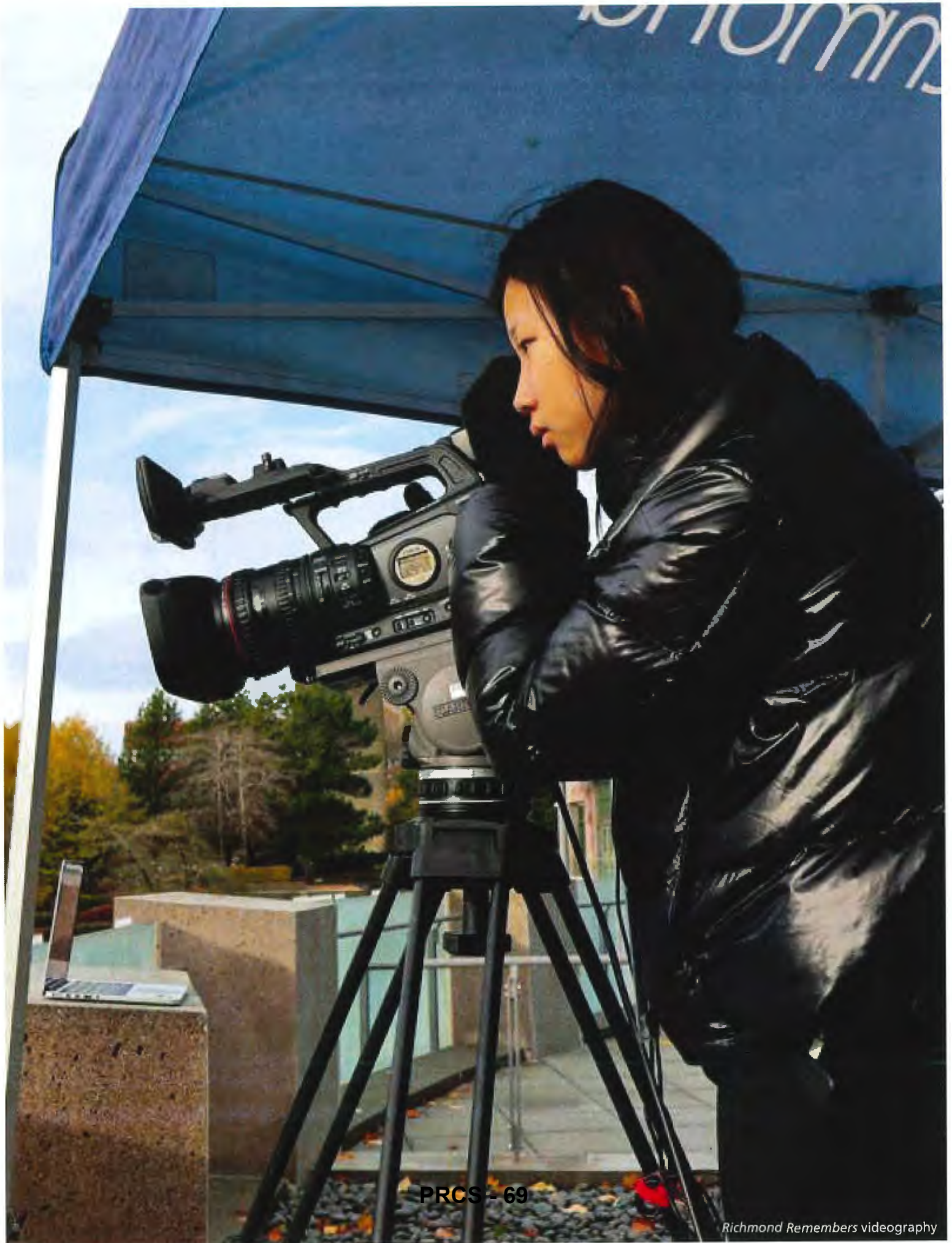
## Media Creation Services

Staff have worked with partners from a range of City departments and community partners to support the production of original videos to highlight program achievements, assist with staff training, provide documentation, and/or offer technical support and advice. In 2023, the list of projects included:

- 2022 Arts Services Year in Review video
- 2022 Heritage Services Year in Review video
- Filming *MOTHLIKE/silvery-blue* gallery performance at the Richmond Art Gallery
- Recording the Described Audio Exhibition Tours for the Richmond Art Gallery
- Pink Shirt Day T-Shirt Design Contest

## 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, Community Social Development, Minoru Seniors Society, City Centre Community Association, West Richmond Community Association, and Thompson Community Association. 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 through the City's Community Safety department.



PRCS - 69

*Richmond Remembers videography*





## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ARTS PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 2,230** arts courses offered
- 13,652** 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 Department of Arts, Culture & Heritage, the arts play a vital role in the activities of other areas in the Community Services Division, including Parks Programs, Community Social Development 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 2023, more than 2,200 visual arts, dance and music courses were offered for 13,652 participants. These numbers are similar to the 2022 programs offered and both years represent a significant increase over 2021 participation (5,060 in 2021).

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.

## PRCS - 70





Art Corner at South Arm Community Centre



Ukelele Ensemble Open House

## Activities

### ART CORNER

On Christmas Day, South Arm piloted Art Corner, a drop-in program for families to engage with each other through a variety of hands-on arts projects. Families were invited to explore different art mediums such as air-dry clay, paints and pastel.

### UKULELE ENSEMBLE OPEN HOUSE

As part of Culture Days, the Ukulele Ensemble of Steveston BC and the Steveston Community Centre hosted a Ukulele Ensemble Open House, where participants were invited to sing along, craft percussion instruments and try their hand at playing the ukulele.

### GARDEN TIME

*Garden Time* was a year-long project led by artist Aaron Friend Lettner in collaboration with the Sharing Farm and Terra Nova Nature School. It culminated in an art installation and exhibition unveiled on November 8 at Thompson Community Centre: a prayer for the earth, inscribed with plants collected from Terra Nova Rural Park and arranged as scanned images, as well as Lumen prints and Phytograms with help from local residents and young learners. This project was presented through the Public Art Engaging Artists in Community Program (page 31).

### 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.

"the ground is so soft,  
special and secret  
falling out and around  
Yeah, it's dancing"

— poem by Terra Nova Nature  
Preschool children

## PRCS - 71



### MUSIC AND DANCE

The Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living hosted a variety of music and dance socials, including an International Line Dancing event, a series of volunteer-hosted social events celebrating music and song, and a weekly jam session in the Fireside Lounge.

### DRAMA, PHOTO AND GLEE

Throughout 2023, arts groups from the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living 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

In celebration of BC Seniors' Week 2023, from June 5 to 11, Minoru Centre for Active Living partnered with the Community Arts Council of Richmond to display an exhibition featuring portraits of local seniors. Additionally, audio pieces of the seniors were recorded to accompany each portrait containing stories with 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

South Arm 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. In 2023, Thompson had six exhibitions that included the Richmond Photo Club, community engagement artist Aaron Friend Lettner, local artist Liliya Vasilyeva, and Lei Tian. South Arm had five displays including work by local artist Laura Rivera.

**“Thank you for putting this on, this activity is so great for our brains!”**  
– Seniors Improv workshop participant



Faces of Richmond: portrait of Tammi Belfer by artist Bea Martin



Laugh with the Platinum Players at Culture Days

## PRCS - 72





Concerts in the Plaza, Minoru Centre for Active Living

## Special Events

### 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.

In August, the Steveston Community Association hosted a number of local musicians and musical groups, including CCIM Rising Stars, Cherelle Jardine and Natasha Santos, who performed in Steveston Park for community members and park visitors.

City Centre Community Association's Concerts in the Park took place on July 19 and August 16 at Garden City Community Park with performances by local artists Julian Jayme, Quincy Chimich and Kurt Chen. In addition to live performances, there was a very popular paper kite craft, chalk drawing and lawn games with giant inflatable bowling, beach balls and more. The concerts attracted more than 150 attendees over the two days.

Thompson Community Association hosted a series of free family-friendly community events for six weeks throughout the summer, offering food trucks, games, bouncy castles and crafts. In addition, each evening included live performances by a variety of local musicians including The Renegades, Cherelle Jardine, CCIM entertainment and more.

Through the summer months, seven concerts and performances took place in the outdoor plaza at Minoru Centre for Active Living. These included performances by local bands, a string quartet, jazz trio and a magician. These free events created a special intergenerational opportunity for the attendees that ranged in age from young children to seniors.



Thompson Community Picnic

### CONCERTS IN PARK/PLAZA BY THE NUMBERS:

- 5 locations
- 22 events
- 28 performances
- 1,920 attendees

### PRCS - 73





Pride Picnic at South Arm Community Centre



Seniors Week Opening Ceremonies

## 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 local musician, Nicole Audrey, who sang songs inspired by inclusion and community.

Thompson Community Centre celebrated Pride Week with "Paint Your Pride", an outdoor workshop where children painted a one-of-a-kind t-shirt. This activity was geared towards 2SLGBTQIA+ members of the community to support artistic expression and individuality. There were eight participants registered for the workshop and many requests to offer more opportunities like this in the future.

West Richmond Community Centre hosted two Pride printmaking workshops during Pride Week that attracted 30 participants of various ages to create limited edition printed artworks to take home.

"I was inspired by the performances and hope to sign up to be a part of a program like that in the future"

— audience member, Seniors' Week opening event

## SENIORS' WEEK

The BC Seniors' Week opening event, "Seniors in the Spotlight" was held at Gateway Theatre and featured seniors in the performing arts. There were 244 audience members and more than 150 seniors from across Richmond took to the stage to perform. The 90-minute show featured welcoming remarks from Mayor Malcom Brodie and 15 performances including multicultural dance groups, ukulele, drumming, tap dancing and more.

## MINORU POP-UP SHOP

On November 1, the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living hosted the first "Minoru Pop-Up Shop". This event featured tables of handcrafted items including knitting, photo prints and calligraphy scrolls created through the Seniors Centre's facility pass programs. Sales from the event generated funds for the Minoru Seniors Society.

## PRCS - 74




**Steveston Salmon Festival Mural**  

The 76th annual Steveston Salmon Festival at the Steveston Community Centre on July 1 (see page 14) included a Youth Zone that hosted emerging local mural artist, Janice Cheng. Their completed artwork is now displayed in the Centre's Games Room.

**STEVESTON COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIBRARY NEW BUILDING SCRIM PROJECT**

Several open houses and engagement workshops were held to inform the design of the scrim for the construction site of the new Steveston Community Centre and Library. Participants were asked to create postcards and flags, and participate in a word cloud to share what the Steveston Community Centre and Library means to them.

**WEAVING LIVES TOGETHER**

*Weaving Lives Together* was a community engagement project involving photography, gelli printing and paper weaving. The project consisted of three workshops with children from Tait Elementary School and five workshops open to the community, led by artist Mariana Frochtengarten. By the end of the workshops, the work created by the community was thoughtfully arranged as a quilt by artists Mariana Frochtengarten and Monica Hetti, becoming a vinyl wrap for the metal trunk of the Wake pavilion at Tait River Community Park. (More on page 31)

**MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL**

City Centre Community Centre welcomed the Harvest Moon with a new name this year: the Mid-Autumn Festival. Activities included paper lantern making and mooncake sampling. With more than 155 attendees, the activation received positive feedback from the community.

**WEST FEST**

West Fest 2023 at the West Richmond Community Centre offered a wide variety of arts activities from clay hand-building to balloon twisting, sensory play stations, face painting and live music. The event also included inflatables, active games, food trucks and more.

**PRCS - 75**



## CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

There were 140 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.

## HOLIDAY EVENTS

West Richmond Community Centre hosted "Ukeing around the Christmas Tree" featuring 45 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

## INVITE THE LIGHT: A WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

For the first 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, a reflective interactive activity by Indigenous artist Christine Mackenzie, 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, colouring sheets of the Ukrainian Koliada star, a show with Alba the owl with the OWL Orphaned Wildlife Rehabilitation Society, and free refreshments and food including dumplings from Richmond restaurant Kung Fu Dumpling. With more than 340 people in attendance, the event received fantastic feedback.



Yewon Choi with winning street banner

## 2023 Street Banner Contest

The 2023 street banner contest, organized and coordinated by Richmond's Parks Department, was launched on August 22, 2022 and concluded with the banner unveiling ceremony on March 27, 2023. The contest attracted more than 650 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. The Top 10 designs with the most votes were chosen as the winners.

The winning artists were Alissa Ritchie, David England, David Poon, Dilshad Mithani-Kara, Haihua Su, Joyce Tse, Lihong (Lily) Zhang, Tristan Todd, Vladimir Cheinman and Yewon Choi.

## PRCS - 76

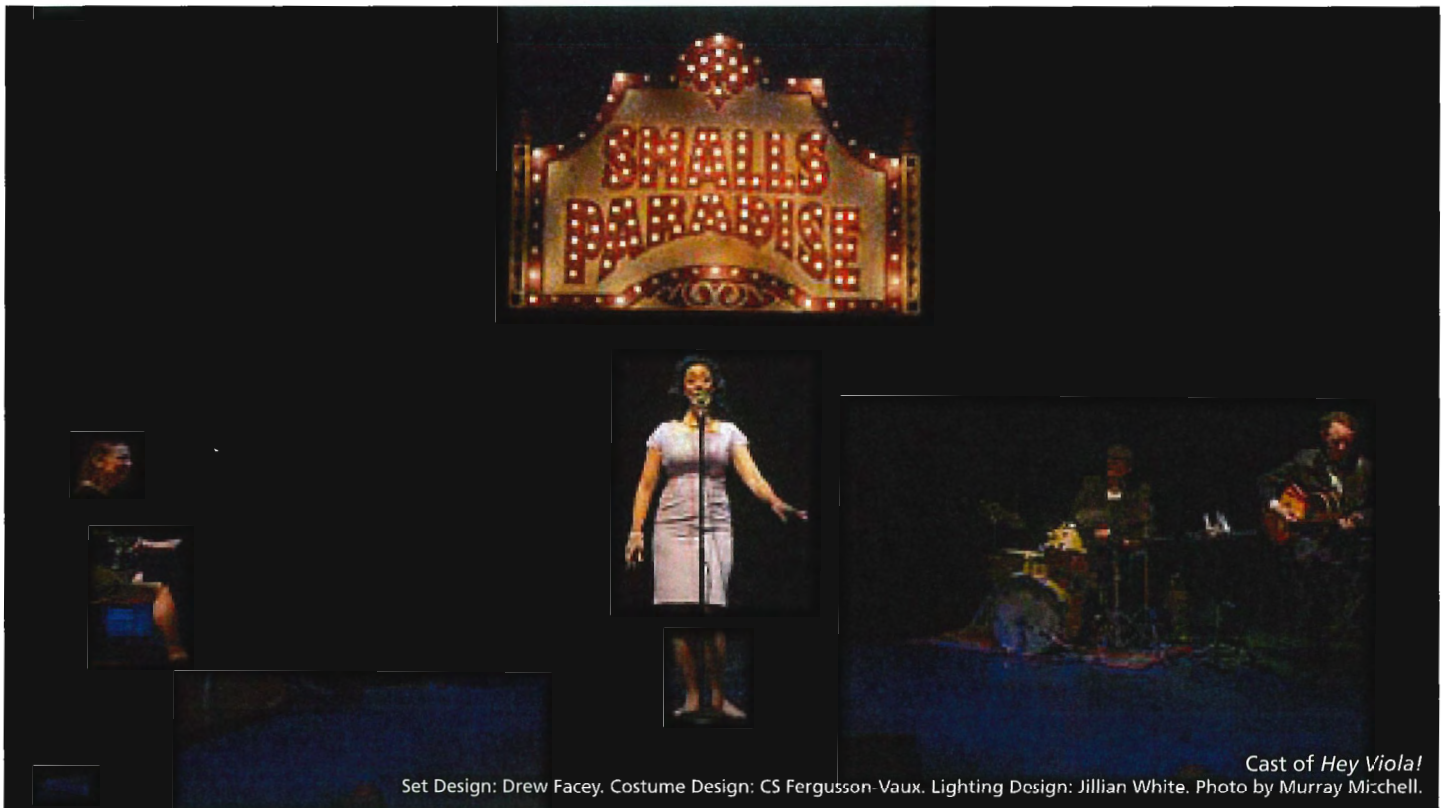




THOMPSON

www.thompsondailylearning.co



Cast of *Hey Viola!*

Set Design: Drew Facey. Costume Design: CS Fergusson-Vaux. Lighting Design: Jillian White. Photo by Murray Mitchell.

## 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, normally 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:

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 and dancing. 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 members of the public.

## PRCS - 78

## Artistic Offerings



### FAMILY FUN LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

January 21, 2023

In the New Year, Gateway Theatre partnered with Five Blessings Collective and launched *A Year of Blessings*, a free five-part audio play series celebrating major traditional Chinese festivals. The theatre welcomed families to a live reading of the first episode, *Bun Fun New Year*, a humorous tale of Bunnifer and Bunnithy as they prepare a traditional Lunar New Year family feast. After the performance, guests enjoyed themed hands-on activities in the lobby. Over two performances, this sold-out event attracted more than 160 attendees.



### PROPHECY FOG

March 9–18, 2023

Created by award-winning Indigenous artist Jani Lauzon, *Prophecy Fog* took audiences on a beautiful, intimate journey about relationships with land, family and sacred spaces. The story begins in the Mojave Desert in search of Giant Rock, with a single question: can a site still be sacred if it has been desecrated? Over ten performances, *Prophecy Fog* reached an audience of 260.

### HEY VIOLA!

April 13–22, 2023

Gateway Theatre delighted audiences with *Hey Viola!* presented in English with traditional and simplified Chinese surtitles. *Hey Viola!* was a musical exploration of Canadian civil rights trailblazer, Viola Desmond, the fearless woman featured on Canada's \$10 bill. With the support of musicians Steve Charles (bass and guitar), Mary Ancheta (piano) and Chris David (drums and trumpet), the award-winning blues and jazz singer and actor, Krystle Dos Santos, brought the life of Viola Desmond to the stage. More than 1,300 patrons enjoyed this eye-opening musical.

"I went with my 11 year-old to see *Hey Viola!* What a beautiful (and accessible) way to share Viola Desmond's story. We were both inspired and I loved that it sparked a lot of discussion at home afterwards. Highly recommended!"

– audience member

### FAMILY FUN MID-AUTUMN CELEBRATION

September 24, 2023

Following the success of the Family Fun Lunar New Year Celebration, Gateway Theatre invited families back to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival. The fourth episode from *A Year of Blessings* audio play series, *Legend of the Whoooshhh*, was performed live by seven artists. After the performance, families were engaged in a lantern-making activity and received a free mooncake to enjoy at home. These performances in the Studio attracted more than 80 attendees.



## Gateway Rebrand

At the beginning of 2023, Gateway Theatre launched a significant rebrand, updating its logo, brand colours, and an exciting new website. The new brand elevates the organization's role in the community – championing the importance of performing arts in bringing together diverse people and ideas. An accessible, bold style celebrates a vibrant city and its people.

## PRCS - 79





Van Lefan at Culture Days



Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella*  
 Co-Set Designers: Sophie Tang & Jennifer Stewart. Lighting Designer:  
 Sophie Tang. Costume Designer: Alaia Hamer. Photo by David Cooper.

## CULTURE DAYS: TIME TO PLAY FOR THE LOST TIME

September 24, 2023

For Culture Days, Gateway Theatre hosted a free performance of *Time to Play for the Lost Time* in partnership with Jade Music Festival. Second-generation Taiwanese Canadian artist Van Lefan performed a cross-generational presentation of music incorporating elements from their parents' beloved popular singers into their own arrangements.

"We were most impressed by the overall high quality of this production. Congratulations to every one of you involved in bringing this delight to your audiences."

— audience member

## RODGERS + HAMMERSTEIN'S CINDERELLA

December 14–31, 2023

The modern musical adaptation of Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella* took over the MainStage during the holiday season. In addition to the staged performances, Gateway provided accessible and special events including a Pay-What-You-Will preview night, dress-up matinee, open (relaxed) performance, and free ballroom classes for the community. This magical musical was enjoyed by more than 4,800 attendees who attended with their loved ones of all ages.

## 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 2023, Gateway Academy delivered more than 490 hours of education to a total of 143 students aged 6–18. Each class culminated in a presentation and each session ended with an Open Studio where families got the opportunity to participate in the practices of the class. The classes were as follows:

- **Acting Classes** (January–April, September–December 2023)  
Acting students not only developed skills integral to all theatrical disciplines, but also universal skills such as confidence, focus, listening and

"I am very grateful to know that the education programs at Gateway Theatre do emphasize diversity and inclusion as it means a lot to us as parents to find welcoming environments for children of all types."

— Academy parent

## PRCS - 80



## Community Event

### Rentals

Gateway had a successful rental season in 2023 year with more than 20 clients and 44 performances throughout the year. Most long-standing rental clients returned to the theatre to celebrate the richness and diversity of the Richmond community.

#### 2023 rental partners:

- Arisun Yue Chinese Opera Society
- BC Chinese Music Association
- Canada YC Orchestra Association
- Canada Chain Commerce and Cultural Association
- City of Richmond Arts Awards
- Defy Gravity Dance Company
- Drama One
- Earth Child Montessori School
- Focus Learning
- Jacqueline Au Studio
- Minoru Centre of Active Living
- MVOT – Vancouver Taiwanese Society
- Philcas of BC
- Pythagoras Academy
- Richmond Academy of Dance
- Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra
- Richmond School District
- Society of We are Canadians Too
- Stage One Academy
- Thamil Cultural Society
- Trek and Friends
- Vancouver Philharmonic Youth Orchestra



Gateway Academy Musical Theatre class

trust-building. Through developing skills for teamwork, the classes created learning experiences that fostered belonging and self-confidence through creative expression.

- **Musical Theatre** (January–April, September–December 2023)  
Musical Theatre students built confidence as they explored vocal techniques, choreography and expressing lyrics musically and dramatically. Through developing skills for teamwork, the classes created learning experiences that fostered belonging and self-confidence through creative expression.
- **Acting Summer Camp** (July 2023)  
Through week-long 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 2023)  
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 teamwork.

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 April, Gateway delivered a workshop with *Prophecy Fog* artist, Jani Lauzon, to students from Hugh Boyd Secondary, a longstanding partner in Richmond. In December, students from Burnett Secondary participated in a tour of the theatre, as well as a stage combat workshop with Jessie-nominated fight and movement-based theatre group, Affair of Honor, as part of the Outreach Program offered for Gateway's holiday show, Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella*. Gateway Theatre offers this program at no cost to secondary schools.

## PRCS - 81





# APPENDIX 1

## 2023 Arts and Culture Grant Program

The following 21 organizations received \$124,258 in financial support:

### OPERATING ASSISTANCE

Canadian YC Chinese Orchestra Association .....	\$ 8,000
Cinevolution Media Arts Society.....	\$ 8,500
Community Arts Council of Richmond .....	\$ 9,130
Richmond Arts Coalition .....	\$ 9,000
Richmond Community Band Society.....	\$ 3,350
Richmond Community Orchestra and Chorus Association .....	\$ 8,300
Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra .....	\$ 9,130
Richmond Music School Society .....	\$ 9,370
Richmond Potters' Club .....	\$ 6,570
Richmond Singers .....	\$ 8,100
Richmond Youth Choral Society .....	\$ 7,650
Textile Arts Guild of Richmond .....	\$ 1,558

### PROJECT ASSISTANCE

First Pacific Theatre Society .....	\$ 3,400
Arisun Yue Opera Society.....	\$ 4,050
BC Philharmonic Society.....	\$ 3,850
Canada Chinese Performing Arts Society.....	\$ 3,850
Phillipine Cultural Arts Society of BC .....	\$ 4,125
Richmond Art Gallery Association .....	\$ 4,000
Steveston Historical Society .....	\$ 4,125
Richmond Improv Theatre Society .....	\$ 4,150
Vancouver Cantonese Opera.....	\$ 4,050



“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







# 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

**26** exhibitions in **5** locations including Richmond City Hall



### RICHMOND ARTS AWARDS

**57** nominations  
**6** awards presented annually



### CULTURE DAYS

**93** registered activities<sup>1</sup> by **62** local arts groups and individuals

1: Ranked Number 1 in BC, Number 3 in Canada for medium-sized cities; in Top 4 overall



### RICHMOND ARTS CENTRE

provided **7** arts groups  
**4,043** hours of room rentals at a subsidy of **\$84,184**

## Facility Operator



### RICHMOND CULTURAL CENTRE

**352** hours room rentals by cultural organizations at subsidized rates



### RICHMOND ARTS CENTRE

**985** arts courses  
**54** professional instructors  
**8,500+** students registered



### RICHMOND MEDIA LAB

**54** media arts courses  
**43** Richmond Youth Media Lab members spent **3,281** hours at the Media Lab



### RICHMOND ART GALLERY

**9** exhibitions onsite, offsite and online presenting **349**<sup>2</sup> artists  
**2,914** school program participants  
**61** free public programs in-person and online with **3,888** participants  
**9,300** YouTube video views

2: Including 288 International Mail Art artists and 50 in ArtRich 2023



### COMMUNITY CENTRES<sup>3</sup>

**2,230** visual arts, dance & music courses  
**13,652** participants

3: Delivered by Community Associations Plus: Libraries, Museums and Heritage sites that partner with Arts Services

## Communicator



### ARTS & CULTURE E-BLASTS

**9** e-newsletters  
**700+** subscribers

### HOW ART WORKS INSTAGRAM

**88** posts  
**2,100** followers

## Investor



### ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS PROGRAM

**\$124,256** to **21** organizations



### PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

**406** artworks to-date  
**39** new works  
**22** Richmond artists contracted for civic art commissions  
**8** community group partners  
**27,770+** 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  
**125,000+** in-person and online attendees



### GATEWAY THEATRE<sup>4</sup>

**46** performances and **22** rental events  
**76** professional artists  
**19,114** audience members  
**490** hours of theatre education  
**143** students enrolled

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

## Facilitator



### FILM OFFICE

**6** Film Studio Facilities  
**850** Richmond business supported by the film industry  
**\$28 million+** spent on production-related goods and services such as costumes, catering, automobile rentals and more



### ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

**2-month** Writer-in-Residence  
**3** Artists-in-Residence as part of Engaging Artists in the Community Program  
**5** artists accommodated at Branscombe House in Partnership with Blue Cabin Floating Artist Residency

PRCS - 85



\* 2023 statistics represented unless otherwise noted



"Life is art, art is life.  
I never separate it."

— Ai Weiwei



**City of Richmond**

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**PRCS - 86**

Cover: Tracey-Mae Chambers,  
*Hope and Healing Canada*, installation  
in Richmond Cultural Centre rotunda