

APL marks Black History Month with series of events

Black History Month commemorations will continue at the Aurora Public Library this month with opportunities to learn, reflect and even sing!

Aurora Public Library's (APL) Black History Month program will begin this Saturday, February 7, with an afternoon of learning entitled *Roots & Resonance*.

Suitable for people of all ages, the 2-4 p.m. panel discussion will feature Canadian visual and performing artist Dylan Smith, Aurora Black Community founder and president Phiona Durrant and, leading a workshop focused on voice, identity and leadership, facilitator Aisha Saintiche.

"The event is designed to inspire but also be reflective," says APL CEO Jodi Marr. "It offers space for artistic expression, meaningful dialogue, and that community connection factor. We're hoping it's going to be a celebration of culture, storytelling and contemporary Black voices.

"It's going to be a really great time and a full and busy day!"

The program continues on Monday, May 9, when the APL hosts a screening of the film *Bob Marley: One Love*, at 6 p.m., and virtually on Wednesday, February 18, through the York University Scholars' Hub at APL.

This session of the Scholars' Hub will feature *Buried Histories: Racial Geographies of Memory from New York to Toronto*, a lecture from Safiyah Rochelle, an Assistant Professor in York's Department of Social Science.

The talk "explores how cities choose what and who to remember, using examples from the African Burial Ground in New York and Toronto's lost Black neighbourhood, The Ward, and why reclaiming these histories matters today."

"It's nice that we can bring university-level learning into the public setting through our partnership with York University," says Marr. "It makes this kind of scholarship really accessible to everyone, whether they are part of the Library or not. This [will be a talk] where there will be a lot of learning, and that's one of the key things we need to do over the course of this month: we want to honour the stories, the achievements and contributions of Black Canadians, both past and present, and then recognize the deep roots that Black communities have in our country, from their early settlements to the diverse and growing Black populations that shape the communities we are in today."

For more on these events, including how to register for the film screening and Scholars' Hub, visit aurorapl.ca.

By Brock Weir
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