

Aurora Art Show & Sale marks milestone 60th anniversary next weekend

Creativity is difficult to measure, but more than 10,000 pieces of art over the last six decades is a good place to start.

That is the output of more than 4,000 artists over the years who have showcased their unique perspectives at the Aurora Art Show and Sale, the annual exhibition that celebrates its remarkable 60th anniversary this year.

Hosted each year by the Town of Aurora, in conjunction with the Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA), this year's milestone runs at Town Hall next Saturday and Sunday, May 4 and 5, bringing together more than 300 original pieces of artwork from dozens of local artists.

"The 60th anniversary is monumental," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. "It's arguably one of the oldest, longest-standing art shows in Canada, which I really do have to give proud credit to Town Council for supporting the arts as well, dating back 60 years. It is still vibrant and going strong today, which is absolutely incredible."

"For the 60th anniversary, much of the celebration will be focused on the actual artists. Without the artists, we simply don't have the show without the talent they choose to share. Art really tells a story and every artist shares their stories with us each year when they submit their artwork. I find it quite humbling with the array of talent out there, but also with their ability to share their talent on such a wide scale, which really does promote dialogue and invigoration."

Art, says Ware, is a powerful medium that transcends boundaries and speaks to our souls and enriches our lives in countless ways.

"When you walk into our Art Show, take stock of the emotions you have before you walk into the show and then take stock of them in terms of how you feel once you walk out of the show. It truly does transform you because it has such a powerful ability to evoke emotions, thoughts, as well as to create change. The Aurora Art Show and Sale began almost by chance when the first core group of artists was looking for a place to showcase their talent. The Mayor of the day said Old Town Hall was closed on Saturdays and asked whether they could use that space."

It's a tradition that has endured since that first go-round in 1964, growing by leaps and bounds each year.

"I think it was forward-thinking in being able to transform a municipal town hall into one of the most beautiful facilities during that time," says Ware. "It's remarkable and that doesn't happen without the magic of a few people. It's the culmination of hundreds of hours of volunteer work within the three days of the show to make it happen, and through the bonding experience and the connections made amongst the artists. It really is an artistic, united front and something that you really have to experience and feel. When you see the art and the transformation, it will all click in terms of the magic that is created and why it has lasted all this time and will continue to do so in its new home at Aurora Town Square in 2025 for the sixty-first year."

"Next weekend, let your brain have an extended vacation. The leaves can wait, the gardening can wait - treat yourself to this unique and free experience during the weekend of the art show. Come to Town Hall, enjoy a free cup of coffee, move through the floors where you will see a minimum of 300 original pieces of artwork and just allow yourself during that time to indulge and invest in your own emotional wellbeing, because it will be a treat to this show."

The 60th annual Aurora Art Show & Sale takes place at Town Hall May 4 & 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, visit aurora.ca/artshow.

By Brock Weir
Editor
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter