

Calling Local Artists: Cultural Centre launches Artists' Residency program

Local artists will soon have the chance to create and display their work in a unique way as the Aurora Cultural Centre launches its inaugural Artists-in-Residence program.

The Centre is currently accepting applications from artists through to 11.59 p.m. this Sunday, November 3, with a special emphasis placed on local artists.

The first residency will run from January 18 to April 18, 2025, with a summer residency launching June 1 and running through August 31.

Each residency culminates in a solo exhibition within the Aurora Cultural Centre's historic Church Street School space.

"It is a pretty robust program," says Samantha Jones, the Centre's Gallery Manager. "Our basement activity room is typically the room where there is open studios and [for the first term] it will be converted to an artists' residency space. One artist will be selected from the community, as there is an emphasis on local talent for this call. We're especially encouraging them to apply and during that three-month residency period, they will make artworks. At the end, those artworks will be exhibited in a solo exhibition in the lower hall gallery.

"It's a very exciting program. We have not had a residency here before. While not a live-in residency, it comes with lots of community engagement opportunities; each artist will do a workshop with the community, we'll do an Art Byte feature on our YouTube channel, social media posts, as well as two Artist-In-Studio days where we invite patrons from the community to come in and watch the artist at work. They get lots of exposure, lots of marketing, and we just want to showcase them as much as possible."

The call is open to artists working in just about all media, as long as the art can be hung from the gallery's wire picture rail hanging system.

"It's not limited necessarily to two-dimensional works, but works that can be hung on the wall," notes Jones. "If you're a sculptural artist, if your work can be moved to a wall space, that can work, but that is just one of the limits of the residency."

The two successful applicants will also receive an honorarium of \$4,020 for their work.

The studio space will be equipped with easels, a sink table space and storage.

All works created during the residencies will be listed for sale at the resulting solo shows, with the Centre subject to a 40 per cent commission. It's expected that the show and sale will include a minimum of 50 per cent of art created during the residency term.

"There is an emphasis on local for this particular [residency program] and one of the reasons we're focusing on local artists is because it was founded out of the recognition of a lack of affordable studio space in Aurora and York Region," says Jones. "In response to that, we created this residency program and made it paid.

"If you're an artist in Aurora or surrounding area, and you're looking for a free studio space to create your work and also get payment for it, this is the place for you. It comes equipped and is especially good for anyone who is new to the community and is looking to get their name out there and connect with other patrons and people in the arts."

For more information, including how to apply, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca/open-calls.

By Brock Weir