

Culture thrives at ACC as it launches 2026-2027 season



The box office is abuzz at the Aurora Cultural Centre this week as they launch an expansive season of performing arts, gallery shows, and more on Thursday, June 25.

The new season, which is expected to go live at 9 a.m., brings the best of the world to Aurora through a new concert series, returning favourites that have been at the heart of the organization for more than 15 years, and more opportunities than ever before for local artists.

"I'd like to start tonight by talking about this simple mindset that when culture thrives at the centre of civic life, people don't just attend events, they know that they belong here," said Morry Patoka, Vice President of the Aurora Cultural Centre, at a recent sneak peek of the upcoming season hosted for program and community supporters. "This is really the heart and soul of why we're all here tonight". We're all part of the reason the Aurora Cultural Centre is becoming broadly recognized as a cultural leader and an artistic hub. It means real impact: a child's enthusiastic return to art camp, an older adult rediscovering their love of painting, a newcomer's concert in Canada, clapping along to songs that are popular and fun. It means community impact: all of our programming brings people from all over the place, but from all different places in the world, sharing experiences that build trust and where trust grows, friendships grow, and civic pride grows."

Derek Andrews, Performing Arts Manager for the Aurora Cultural Centre, reflected these themes in teasing out some of the artists who will be gracing the Aurora Town Square and Brevik Hall stages in the season ahead.

"Innovation and escalation are trademarks of the crop of 30-something concerts," he said, making particular note of the Centre's recently-launched Gold Circle concert series, which offers an enhanced experience for ticket holders enjoying top-tier talent from at home and abroad. "The Gold Circle concerts will cost a little more, but they also deliver a lot more. Powerful jazz women will grace our stage right off the top, and also with a Christmas twist. We'll offer a taste of opera twice, family programming, grassroots fiddling and African percussion.

"Indie pop songwriters, Celtic direct from Ireland, gospel, top ranking Indigenous performers and we raise the bar with another season of great music."

Great music will also be found in, as the name suggests, the latest installment of the Great Artists Music Series.

The Great Artists Music Series is the brainchild of Grammy Award-winning classical musicians and producers and Aurora residents Bonnie and Norbert Kraft. Once again, they have assembled a four-concert series featuring acclaimed and emerging talent.

"We're celebrating our seventeenth year of the Great Artists Music Series," said Bonnie Kraft. "Norbert and I have proudly supported the Aurora Cultural Centre since its beginnings in 2009 because we have seen firsthand how the arts can transform people's lives. Live music has the power to bring us together at the very deepest level, and reminds us that we are all much more alike than we are different. We can connect emotionally with music that was written 500 years ago as well as music that was written yesterday or improvised today.

"Since our first concert in 2009, we have brought exceptional world-class musicians to share their music making with us. Many of them have played in the most prestigious concert halls, but they still always express how much they love playing for us. We have invited young, emerging artists at the beginning of their careers, as well as having the privilege of hosting international- renowned musicians from throughout the world."

New this year will be two Sunday afternoon events in Brevik Hall offering a cabaret-style experience with intimate seating, pastries, and "gorgeous music" in this "Tea & Classics" program.

The Centre's multiple galleries will be very active in the season ahead as well, with installations highlighting the impacts of the opioid epidemic; memory, identity, and intergenerational trauma; local natural wonders; textiles; works created by local artists in-house through their Artist-in-Residence program; and much more.

"As a free public gallery, we offer a rotating calendar of exhibitions and programs that expand access to contemporary art and provide vital opportunities for critical cultural dialogue and connection," said Interim Gallery Manager Ashlyn Gregory. "It's important to understand galleries not just as a space to look at art, but as a place for the community to gather and have shared experiences. In a time where people are feeling increasingly socially isolated, spaces like these matter deeply.

"Our upcoming exhibitions engage the community in a diverse range of culturally relevant conversations through a variety of artistic practices and media. Our galleries also play an essential role in supporting artists. We are committed to amplifying the voices of diverse artists. We work with artists who have exhibited on a national and international scale, but we're also strongly committed to celebrating emerging and local artists."

To explore the Aurora Cultural Centre's 2026-2027 season, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

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