

Kids let imaginations run wild at Cultural Centre summer camps

Summer can present a world of wonder and the Aurora Cultural Centre is showing kids how these wonders can be transformed into art through a series of camp programs.

The Cultural Centre is in the midst of its Summer Camp season and this year's programs offer a wide range of art forms for kids to explore and try out.

"We believe that children learn best by doing," says Aitak Sorahitalab, Education Manager for the Aurora Cultural Centre. "We design the curriculum based on artistic experiences and they really explore the materials - testing their ideas and solving problems by making their own creative decisions. We don't give children a template to copy, we introduce them to real processes and campers really have a chance to try a wide range of art forms, from storytelling and drawing to sculptures, printmaking and animation."

This is the second week of the Aurora Cultural Centre's Summer Camps and, through July 10, campers are looking at the world of fantasy, myths and legends in "Fantastical Artistic Imaginations."

The theme for Week 3, which runs July 13 - 17, is The Enchanting Natural World.

"Campers will have a chance to explore found objects, for example, and explore how they can make art with the objects that are in nature," says Sorahitalab. "One of the things we do is highlight famous or local artists who work with the theme of nature."

"Each week, we hire one of the artists that are related to our theme. For some of the weeks, animation, for example, we will go visit the Aurora Public Library and this is a collaborative project with the Library and we use their facility to create artwork in their studio."

"This year, all of our counsellors are professional artists, art educators, or even post-secondary art students, and we have expanded our team to include a dedicated behavioural management specialist, and her role is to support the camper's social and emotional wellbeing. We wanted to make even more supportive environments for children."

Themes for the remainder of summer include:

Art of the Digi-verse: "Get ready to journey into the Digi-verse! Inspired by video games, memes, and characters, campers will draw inspiration from online spaces to create projects around pop culture and digital creativity using traditional materials. Character drawing, collage, and elements of cartooning will be explored, learn about various mediums, and experiment with the vast expanses of the digital world. (July 20 - 24)

Prehistoric and Futuristic Art Adventures: "Rawr! Zap! Zap! This week, campers will dive into a world where the prehistoric era and visions of the future collide. They'll explore sculpture, drawing and painting, while imagining themselves alongside dinosaurs and in high-tech futuristic worlds that have yet to be discovered." (July 27 - 31)

Comics, Anime, and Cartooning: "Get ready to draw, draw, draw! Inspired by exciting and action-packed comics, anime, and movie magic, campers will immerse themselves in activities practicing storytelling, worldbuilding, and character building, experimenting through marker, ink, comic-paneling, painting, sculpture, craft, and other exciting traditional mediums!?" (August 4 - 7)

Artmaking for the Senses: "Inspired by touch, smell, sight, movement, and auditory play, campers will utilize different senses to create artworks and nurture the art-making process and allow experimentation with new, fun, and engaging art mediums." (August 10 - 14)

Famous Artists & Their Styles: "This week, unleash your inner Basquiat, Monkman, or Group of Seven! Inspired by International,

Canadian, Indigenous, recognized, and culturally ground-breaking artists and their work. Delve into the styles and techniques used by some of the most famous artists in history, and learn about various mediums and experiment with recreating iconic artworks. (August 17 - 21)

Neverending Summer Fun: This final week of camp celebrates Summer 2026, giving campers the chance to reflect on the best parts of their summer. Through a variety of creative activities, they'll celebrate the last few sunny days before heading back to school. (August 24 - 26)

Long Live Summer '26 (One Day Camp): This final camp celebrates Summer 2026, giving campers the chance to reflect on the best parts of their summer. Through a variety of creative activities, they'll celebrate the last few sunny days before heading back to school. (August 27)

In addition to these camps for children and youth, education programs for adults in the community are also available, including an Intro to Watercolour course on July 18, Acrylic and Still Life Workshop on August 15, both for ages 16+, and World Rhythms: A Community Drum Experience for everyone five-and-up, on August 22.

Led by professional artists, as the programs are throughout the year, they are one-day workshops to get people introduced to the practice and hopefully engage them for fall programming, says Sorahitalab, noting the Drum Experience will take place in the Aurora Town Square's outdoor piazza for up to 40 drummers.

For more information about these and other education programs on tap throughout the summer at the Aurora Cultural Centre, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

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