

Music, espionage and holiday cheer on tap at Aurora Town Square this month

From wartime espionage to holiday cheer, November is shaping up to be a busy month at Aurora Town Square.

A sold-out screening of the documentary *We Lend a Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes* leads the Town Square-sponsored programming this month on November 12, in a program co-organized by local historian Christopher Watts.

The documentary, which tells the story of 40,000 teen girls who spent the Second World War working on Canadian farms, is a fitting way to follow Remembrance Day, and includes a Q&A session with filmmakers.

A look back at heritage continues on November 25 with two performances of the play *Spycraft*, a two-act thriller set in 1942 in which focuses on ?a middle-aged Canadian woman and hidden Jew joins Churchill's Special Operations Executive in London during WWII as a spy in occupied France,? says the Town.

?Her British male colleague is skeptical she'll make a difference because she's a woman ? and an ?old' one at that. But she defies expectations and challenges the chauvinism and ageism of the times by using her invisibility as an asset and employing a classically female craft to pass coded intelligence about the Nazis to the Allies: knitting.?

?We're very excited about November, we have lots going on and we're thrilled that we actually have like a few sellouts already, which is very exciting, but I think the one event that we're the most excited about is we have a live theatre performance on Tuesday, November 25, with *Spycraft*,? says Nichole Campsall, Cultural Development Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, of the play, penned by [Kirk Dunn](#) and [Claire Ross Dunn](#). ?It's an incredibly fascinating topic, it is timely being that we have Remembrance Day coming up, and it's our first full live theatre production that we've been able to host at Town Square.?

The Aurora Town Square production of the play has been ?a long time coming,? says Campsall, adding it's been in the works since before Town Square formally opened to the public.

If *Spycraft* shines a light on an older woman who might feel ?invisible,? the flipside will be in focus on November 16 when the Town of Aurora presents the *Silver Screamers*, a documentary by York Region-based filmmaker Sean Cisterna, which charts the making of his short film, *The Rug*. Shot in Aurora, the production of *The Rug* was made possible through the participation of local seniors who came together to learn new skills and take on behind-the-scenes production roles.

?We were able to debut *The Rug* as part of our grand opening performances back a year ago, last year when Town Square opened, and so we are thrilled that the documentary about the making of *The Rug*, called *Silver Screamers*, is able to now also debut here in Aurora,? says Campsall. ?We've worked closely with Sean Cisterna, whose film this is, and then of course a few of the seniors who are in it are big volunteers at Town Square and such a part of the Aurora community, so we're thrilled. We talked about this with Sean way back when we brought *The Rug* in, we said, ?Okay, we're going to bring *Silver Screamers* here too when you're ready,' so this has also been another one that's a long time coming, and we're just so excited about it.?

Youth will have the chance to get in on the action, too, as Aurora Town Square and the Aurora Museum & Archives host P.A. Day at the Museum on November 21, which will offer youngsters a full day of ?hands-on heritage fun? including the chance to curate their own mini-exhibit.

?One of our biggest goals is to make the community museum accessible and to see excitement in the community for all ages in history and heritage in the museum,? says Campsall. ?Things have been going so well since we opened last year, and this is another program that we think will really bring that to the community.?

As the holiday season approaches, Aurora Town Square is set to be a destination as it plays host to the Town's annual Christmas Market. As part of the two-weekend event, Town Square will host film screenings of *Elf* on November 28 and *Home Alone* on

November 30, while the Borealis Big Band will present ?A Jazzy Christmas? on November 29.

?We've been getting into film screenings at Town Square, and we've seen a very good response from the community, so we're excited,? says Campsall. ?Home Alone is an absolute classic. Personally, I can sit there and recite the whole movie, so I know I have to get my own tickets for my family as well, and so it'll be really great to enjoy it together. I think that's one of the things that I personally enjoy most about being at Town Square during these various events and concerts and programs is being able to experience it all with the crowd that's there, with the community members. When you see participants there enjoying a concert, you can really feel their joy.

?We're seeing all ages come through the space, whether it be attending a show, we just had the Blue Jays watch parties, coming by the café for a treat ? it's been fascinating to see really every different type of community member enjoying the space in one or more ways. It really does have something for everybody.?

For more information on what's in store this month at Aurora Town Square, including tickets, visit aurora.ca/whatson.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter