

Performing Arts Festival returning June 14 ? with new location

Young local singers, dancers, and actors looking to take their passion to the next level are encouraged to apply for a spot in the 2025 Aurora Performing Arts Festival, which is set for June 14.

Traditionally held at the Town Park Band Shell, the Performing Arts Festival will take place for the first time at the Aurora Town Square Performance Hall.

Talent applications are now being accepted through May 19 and the Festival is open to all young singers, dancers and actors in York Region in the following age brackets: six and under; seven to nine, 10 to 12; and 13 to 17.

The winner of the Vocal Category 13 ? 17 will have the added bonus of being crowned Aurora's 2025 Teen Idol.

Those interested in applying must submit a performance video of two to four minutes, recorded within the last three months, for consideration.

The Aurora Performing Arts Festival is once again co-hosted by the Town of Aurora and Marquee Theatrical Productions.

Marquee founder Sheryl Thomas says everyone in the age ranges should consider putting themselves forward.

'Everybody should always try 'the good ol' saying that you miss 100 per cent of the shots you don't take,' she says. 'Even if you don't win, it is always such a great experience to meet other competitors and talk to them. Some of them have more experience than others and the feedback I always hear is they make good friends and they learn something along the way. They might be jittery about a particular audition because it is always the first one, but it makes them stronger for the next one.'

This is a particularly great year to try out, she adds, because of the venue change from Town Park to Aurora Town Square. While the leafy ambiance of Town Park and holding the Festival in conjunction with the Aurora Farmers' Market were always bonuses, the shift to the Performance Hall offers a more professional experience for participants.

'It will be nice to have this in a professional theatre, on an actual sprung floor for the dancers,' says Thomas, noting that while they were able to put a covering on the performance area of the Band Shell it was, at the end of the day, still a concrete floor. '[A cover] doesn't come close to a sprung 'real dancer' floor.'

'We can add lighting effects and other things like that ' and the other really great thing about this is it is not weather-dependent. We'll miss being at the Farmers' Market because we'll always love that element, but we're still close enough [to Town Park] that we can make pit stops on the way over to the theatre.'

The space also offers 250 seats within and video monitors in the lobby areas, she adds, giving plenty of space for each performer, their families, their friends and cheering sections, not to mention anyone looking to catch a glimpse of up-and-coming talent.

Prizes will also be awarded to the winners of each category, in addition to the Aurora Teen Idol sash.

This being the case, however, Thomas says they would love to see the local business community come in to support the prizes and help the Festival continue to grow down the road.

'The more we can get in terms of support in prizes and sponsorships then we would love to be able to grow the event,' says Thomas. 'It basically comes down to prize money and how we split it up. We can only split it up so much because that's how much we have in the pool right now. If there is a way to find some people to come on board and sponsor a category, perhaps, we would be able to do that.'

For more information about the Aurora Performing Arts Festival, including the application process, visit www.aurora.ca/en/news/call-for-talent-register-now-for-aurora-s-annual-community-talent-show.aspx.

By Brock Weir