

SPEAKEASY: Culture Days

By Jane Taylor & Reccia Mandelcorn

Millions of Canadians engage in thousands of free activities and performances hosted in communities across Canada as part of the national Culture Days celebrations. From Nunavut to New Brunswick, and from British Columbia to Baffin Island and all points in between Canadians share the inspiration, artistry, creativity and expression that reflect the mosaic of our diverse cultures.

Aurora is no stranger to innovative and participatory experiences, and this month's Speakeasy featured some of the wonderful artists who will be bringing the best of culture to our Town. OnBeat is the theme of Culture Days 2018 and participating organizations were encouraged to run with the tagline.

Aurora Public Library will be definitely be OnBeat with an afternoon of free participatory experiences in art, writing, dance and music including a performance by a quartet of musicians from the York Chamber Ensemble.

Barbara Dickson, Marketing Director and cellist, stopped by The Speakeasy to give us a preview of the concert they are performing at the Library on Culture Days. Entitled Classical Beats: from Baroque to the Contemporary, this concert will have young and old experiencing the passion and rhythm of cultural music. The concert will be enjoyed in the main living room, and we anticipate amazing acoustics in APL's open and soaring facility. It's also a great way to introduce children to a lifelong relationship with classical music without worrying about attention span or wiggling bodies. The concert opens the Library's festivities at 1.30 p.m. just drop in.

We placed a call to Phil Shaw, owner of Shaw Percussion in Georgina. There's something about the beat of a drum that speaks to the soul, stirring our ancient memories as our feet begin to tap and our bodies begin to sway.

The Aurora Cultural Centre invites you to The Global Beats Petting Zoo where you will discover how to create joyful percussion with a variety of rhythm instruments. From the djembe drum to the washboard, daf to marimba, participants of all ages will enjoy a collective musical experience through the opportunity to try out a huge variety of percussion instruments. The Global Beats Petting Zoo runs from 1 to 4 p.m. with special djembe group instruction at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. for all to enjoy. Bring your own, or use one of the drums on hand!

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair will be hosting their ever-popular annual Soup Fest that will be on beat to the music of the fabulous sounds of Juno-nominee Glenn Marais. Be sure to get to the Market early (Soup Fest starts at 9.30 a.m.) as the tastings don't last for too long.

And the Aurora Historical Society takes three beats to the tune with free tours of Hilary House, walking tours of historic Aurora ending up at on the lawn of the Aurora Cultural Centre with fun old-time games & crafts.

While we could only whet your appetites with some of the highlights of the day, we encourage everyone to plan their Culture Days itinerary by checking the national site at culturadays.ca.

Culture Days is a collaborative movement that welcomes your participation. Look for your Culture Days passport in The Auroran, visit any of the participating venues to have your passport stamped and be eligible to win great prizes.

Fall is a time of art openings, workshops, programs and events in Aurora where culture lives 365 days a year. Full listings for Aurora Public Library can be found at aurorapl.ca and for the Aurora Cultural Centre at auroraculturalcentre.ca.

Jane Taylor is Communications and Events Manager at the Aurora Cultural Centre and Reccia Mandelcorn is Manager of Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. They co-host The Speakeasy on the first Wednesday of each month on 102.7 CHOP-FM.