



2017 Annual Report on  
**CULTURE**

# Message from the Mayor

On behalf of the Members of Council, I'm pleased to present our 2017 Report on Culture.

Culture is alive and thriving in Richmond Hill! Since 2011, the Cultural Plan has established an overarching vision, goals, and recommendations for cultural development in Richmond Hill.

This was an exciting year in our town as the Cultural Plan momentum continued to build with new initiatives and opportunities. In addition to launching our first Artist in Residence program, we introduced the Arts Awards program. And, this was the second year we received applications for funding through the Community and Cultural Grant program.

This year, many of our events and initiatives celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation, including the Street Banner Contest, the SESQUI Dome Tour and the Community Murals project, to name a few.

Our programs and events are designed to support our vision of Richmond Hill as a vibrant community, rich in culture and heritage, where diversity and unique identities are celebrated.

This report showcases the activities related to the Cultural Plan. You will find facts and figures related to cultural programming, festivals and events, cultural institutions, community engagement activities and more.

I would like to thank the many dedicated volunteers, passionate artists, unique arts and culture organizations and the community as a whole for supporting our cultural initiatives and contributing to the vibrancy of our town.

Yours Sincerely,  
Dave Barrow  
Mayor



# Vision

Richmond Hill is admired as a vibrant community in which culture is a part of all facets of the Town's planning and decision-making; where diversity, gender and age are reflected in all aspects of cultural expression; and where an authentic and distinctive identity inspires a creative spirit.

## Cultural Plan in Action

### 1 Demonstrated Leadership

- ✓ Launched third term of the Cultural Leadership Council
- ✓ Convened issue-based community forum
- ✓ Delivered second round of funding through Richmond Hill Community and Cultural Grant Program
- ✓ Strengthened and expanded cultural mapping in Richmond Hill

### 2 A Dynamic Cultural Sector

- ✓ Hosted Richmond Hill's fourth Cultural Summit
- ✓ Engaged Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre in Business Development and Technical Assistance for the Cultural Sector
- ✓ Implemented the Richmond Hill Festivals & Events Strategy
- ✓ Enhanced partnerships with Richmond Hill Public Library

### 3 An Inclusive Cultural Community

- ✓ Developed a community programs calendar
- ✓ Continued to strengthen and expand youth engagement in culture

### 4 Places and Spaces for Culture

- ✓ Implemented the Public Art Policy

### 5 A Celebrated Story

- ✓ Communicated cultural success stories
- ✓ Profiled Cultural Icons

# 1

## Demonstrated Leadership

### Cultural Leadership Council

The third two-year term of the Cultural Leadership Council (CLC) was launched in January 2017. The CLC is comprised of 22 members and represents artists, arts and cultural groups, creative industries, youth and diverse citizens. The diverse makeup of the CLC provides an important connection between Richmond Hill, its community and local businesses to achieve the goals and recommendations of the Cultural Plan. The CLC met three times in 2017 and provided valuable input into many recommendations, including the Richmond Hill Community Murals Project, SpaceFinder York Region, the Artist in Residence program and the Arts Awards program.

### Community Forum

Richmond Hill's Cultural Plan was developed based on extensive community consultation. As the Cultural Plan is implemented, the community continues to shape the development of projects and initiatives. In addition to ongoing community consultations through the CLC, Richmond Hill invited participants to provide feedback at the Cultural Summit.

### Community and Cultural Grant Program

Through the annual Community and Cultural Grant Program, Richmond Hill is proud to support the local not-for-profit organizations and individual artists who make our town a vibrant and exciting place to live and work. This \$65,000 fund provided support to 21 community and cultural organizations as well as individual artists whose projects support a more vibrant Richmond Hill. The intake for 2018 projects was also undertaken in November 2017.

### Richmond Hill Culture Map

Richmond Hill expanded cultural mapping in 2017 with the launch of Park Stories. This map profiles the unique history, culture and design of 25 parks in our town. Visitors can go on self-guided tours to learn more about how each park's story is told through its design. The Culture Map also continues to be an updated resource for the community. It allows users to locate cultural resources in the town under nine categories, including the creative cultural industries, natural and cultural heritage, cultural facilities, community cultural organizations, public art, festivals and events, intangible assets and independent artists.



# 2

## A Dynamic Cultural Sector

### Richmond Hill Cultural Summit

The fourth annual Richmond Hill Cultural Summit was held on March 30, 2017 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts (RHCPA). The 2017 Summit marked our most successful event to date with 250 Richmond Hill-based artists, volunteers, residents and culture lovers in attendance. The night featured the annual Cultural Plan progress update as well as performances by local artists and a speaker series highlighting the success stories of three local artists. The evening also featured demonstrations from community arts and culture organizations, a networking reception and the premiere of Celebrated Stories: Cultural Icons. The 2018 Cultural Summit will be held on Tuesday, March 27 at the RHCPA.

### Business Development and Technical Assistance for the Cultural Sector

Richmond Hill supports the development of the creative industries and recognizes their impact on the local and regional economy. The seventh annual Creative Industries Symposium was held on November 7, 2017 with over 300 in attendance. The theme was Authenticity - Free the Spectrum of Possibilities. The Symposium fosters a dialogue between creative minds and provides a networking opportunity for creative entrepreneurs to connect with industry leaders. During the Symposium, the second Creativity Connected Awards were presented. The awards recognize individuals or companies in Richmond Hill who have demonstrated excellence in the creative industries field. The Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre hosted workshops and offered assistance in business development.

### Festivals and Events Strategy

In 2017 the recommendations of the Festivals and Events Strategy continued to be implemented to support third party event organizers as they plan and execute their events within the community. Highlights for this year include the launch of a new Community Event Planning Guide, which serves as a resource for organizers looking to plan new events. Workshops that focused on the Community Festivals and Events Application Process, Emergency Management, Sponsorship Basics and the opportunity to network were offered. The Festivals and Events Application was made available as an online form and updated resources such as the Festivals and Events Resource Manual and Event Toolkit were also made available at [RichmondHill.ca](http://RichmondHill.ca).

### Enhanced Partnerships with the Richmond Hill Public Library

The Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) is a vibrant cultural institution. Together, Richmond Hill and the Library have worked to continue to support cultural development in the community. In 2017, both the Library and Richmond Hill partnered to deliver Moonlight Movies and Culture Days. In support of Culture Days, the Richmond Hill Central Library served as a community hub with activities offered by local artists and arts organizations to over 650 attendees. The Library also supports the Cultural Leadership Council and Richmond Hill's Interdepartmental Culture Team.

## 3 An Inclusive Cultural Community

### Community Programs Calendar

Richmond Hill launched the redeveloped RichmondHill.ca, which includes a community events calendar. Community members can create an account at RichmondHill.ca, review the event eligibility criteria and then submit their event for approval to be posted online.

### Youth Engagement in Culture

Richmond Hill supports meaningful youth engagement in the development of cultural activities. Youth are one of the six key sectors represented on the Cultural Leadership Council. In addition, youth are engaged directly through the Youth Action Committee (YAC) and through mentorship support of the Council for Richmond Hill Emerging Artists and Teen Expression (CREATE). In 2017, this engagement resulted in the third Hill After Dark event. This cultural fusion event for youth, hosted by YAC, attracted 150 youth and their families. CREATE also produced their annual Top of the Hill youth talent show and an online art competition for youth, called VISIONS.

## 4 Places and Spaces for Culture

### Public Art

In 2017, Richmond Hill partnered with the Government of Canada, Community Matters Toronto and the Bell Box Murals project to deliver the Community Murals Project. This place-making project engaged eight artists to paint outdoor Bell utility boxes across Richmond Hill. The artists were selected after a call for general submissions and the murals had to reflect the themes "Under One Sky", or "The Town that Rose", both inspired by the unique history of our town.



Canada

Funded by the Government of Canada.  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada.

The Public Art Advisory Council also supported the selection of the 2017 Artist in Residence. The Artist in Residence program provided professional artists with the opportunity to develop a new piece of work with the stated purpose of engaging the community and animating outdoor public spaces. The 2017 Artists in Residence were The Karma Project, Hasheel Lodhia and Robert Halley. They presented six performances of Intercollective, an interactive experience where music and movement came together, to honour the diverse fabric of Canada and the residents of Richmond Hill.

### Cultural Spaces and Facilities

The Museum Feasibility Study implementation was underway in 2017 with actions designed to increase public awareness and involvement in the Heritage Centre and in celebrating and appreciating the history and heritage of Richmond Hill. During the year, a new Mission, Vision and Values statement for Heritage Services were approved alongside the slogan - *we have a story to tell*. In 2017, Heritage Services also began the process of digitizing the artifact collection to enable on-line public access. Council also approved funds for the design phase of future Heritage Centre renovations, in order to enhance the site for heritage programs, services and events.

## 5 A Celebrated Story

### Celebrated Stories

Richmond Hill is home to nationally and internationally-recognized talent and a rich array of stories that make the community unique. In 2017, the second installment of Richmond Hill: Cultural Icons was produced and premiered at the 2017 Cultural Summit. Directed by local film maker Sean Cisterna and featuring interviews with icons, R.H. Thomson, Claire Mowat, widow of Farley Mowat, and Elvis Stojko, each video tells the story of their relationship to Richmond Hill, past and present. The videos can be viewed at [YouTube.com/TownRichmondHill](https://www.youtube.com/TownRichmondHill).

# What's up for 2018?

Implementation of Richmond Hill's Cultural Plan will continue in 2018 with initiatives designed to strengthen culture in the community, including:

- ✓ The fifth annual Richmond Hill Cultural Summit on Tuesday, March 27
- ✓ Presentation of the inaugural Richmond Hill Arts Awards
- ✓ Richmond Hill's 2018 Artist in Residence Program
- ✓ Delivery of Business for the Arts Sponsorship and Board Governance Mentorship Program for the Arts
- ✓ Continued funding available through Community and Cultural Grant Program
- ✓ Culture Days 2018
- ✓ Recruitment of the fourth term of the Cultural Leadership Council
- ✓ Continued development of Spacefinder York Region in partnership with York Region Arts Council

# Arts and Culture Programming

Arts, culture and heritage programs in Richmond Hill include activities for many interests and ages. Participants can discover Richmond Hill's history, take classes in disciplines such as dance, visual arts and music or they can attend annual special events like the Studio Tour, Moonlight Movies, Doors Open and Culture Days. Through all of Richmond Hill's arts and culture programs, participants are engaged in the creative community activities.

**5,200+**

adults, children and youth in registered arts, culture and heritage programs



**2,100**

2017 Studio Tour visitors

**47**

artists featured in the 2017 Studio Tour across 20 locations

**2,829**

attended Doors Open across 17 sites

**3,200**

attended Moonlight Movies



Artucate Canada



2,322

attended 24 special events for older adults



Snigdha Richmond Hill

600

attended Artist in Residence program



Snigdha Richmond Hill

906

attended Heritage Services events



Joanna Grace

2,200

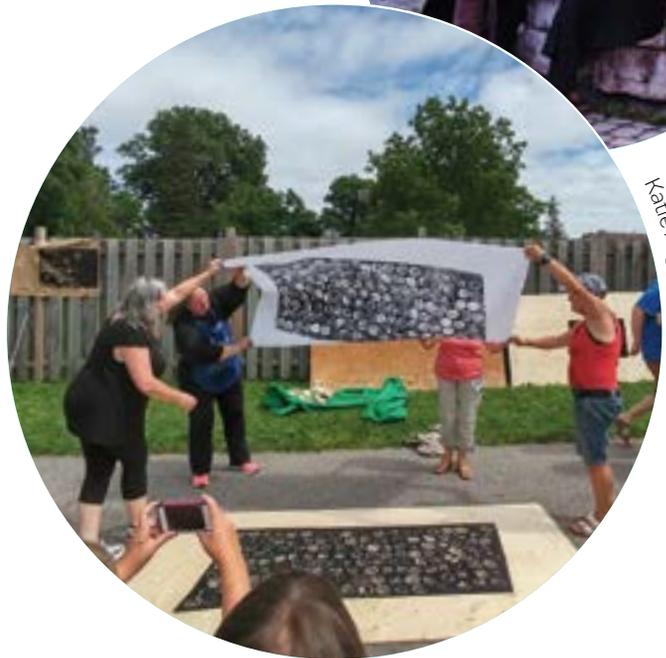
Likes and followers on Cultural Plan and Studio Tour Facebook and Twitter accounts



Shadowpath Theatre

800

attended Culture Days activities in Richmond Hill



Katie Aryle

21

projects supported through the Community and Cultural Grant Program

# Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts

The Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts (RHCPA) is located in the heart of the historic downtown. This state-of-the-art cultural facility offers a full season of professional entertainment by Canadian and International performers. In 2017 the RHCPA launched its 2017/2018 season inspired by the 150th anniversary of Confederation. This season is proudly Canadian featuring artists from across the nation.

## 470

events took place at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts over 337 days

## 100,000+

patrons

## 93,447

tickets issued

## 11

international film screenings as part of The Reel Thing Film Series

## 12,000

students attended performances of the Education Program

## 8

visual art showings





# Richmond Hill Public Library

Richmond Hill Public Library has been an essential provider of information and ideas for more than 165 years. Every year, hundreds of thousands of community members visit our physical and digital spaces to draw inspiration and actively create. The Library is a community hub, serving Richmond Hill's diverse population through its four locations – Central Library, Oak Ridges Library, Richmond Green Library and Richvale Library. Through a wide range of collection items, programs, and resources, the Library empowers our community to thrive in the digital age. Richmond Hill Public Library acts as a cultural heartbeat in our community, helping to inspire our residents to come together and network in spaces that are repositories of lifelong information, learning, and knowledge.

## 1,106,768

in-person visits

## 1,519,388

electronic visits

## 675,907

social media visits

## 2,108,171

collection items borrowed

## 1,020,419

Wi-Fi connections

## 67,304

program attendees



# Festivals and Events

Every year Richmond Hill offers fun and engaging festivals and events for the community. Many of the festivals and events in 2017 created an opportunity for artists, residents and visitors to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation. All of Richmond Hill's dynamic festivals and events generate economic benefit, build community pride, and strengthen Richmond Hill's unique identity.

## 99,000+

people attended events in 2017

## 8,565

attended SESQUI Cinematic Dome Tour, selected as only stop in York Region

## 8

artists painted 8 Bell utility boxes for the Community Murals Project

## 16

local artists artwork was displayed on 20 banners along Yonge Street for the Street Banner Contest

## 350

attended the opening of Morgan Boyle Park.



Merk Photography



Margaret Cresswell



Shepherd Photography



Merk Photography



Canada

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Financé par le gouvernement du Canada.



Canada

Funded by the Government of Canada.  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada.



Canada

With support through the Canada 150  
Community Infrastructure Program.  
Avec l'appui du Programme d'infrastructure  
communautaire de Canada 150.

# Creative Industries

Richmond Hill's creative industries include a diverse range of talent from actors, broadcasters, designers, writers and many more. Through their work, this talent plays an integral role in the local and regional economy. Richmond Hill is proud to support and recognize this talent through the annual Creativity Connected Symposium and Awards. Workshops and business development assistance is also provided to the creative industries through the Small Business Enterprise Centre.

## 318

attended the Creativity Connected Symposium



## 3

Creativity Connected Awards were presented to recognize excellence in the creative industries field



## 32

film permits issued

## 438

creative industries mapped on the Richmond Hill Culture Map



Photo credits: Laura Benn, Gooseberry Studios

# Heritage



Burr House Spinners and Weavers Guild

Richmond Hill's cultural heritage serves as a reminder of the history and origins of the community. This heritage is protected and celebrated through several properties such as the Gormley Heritage Conservation District, the David Dunlap Observatory, the Boynton House, Heritage Centre and the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Richmond Hill also takes pride in its significant number of natural heritage sites such as the Oak Ridges Moraine, Mill Pond Park and Phyllis Rawlinson Park. The spaces connect residents with nature and contribute to the quality of life in Richmond Hill.

## 245

registered and listed heritage properties

## 107

designated heritage properties

## 9,517

artifacts significant to the history of Richmond Hill

## 8

Heritage Grants were awarded for restoration and maintenance



# Community Engagement

Engaged and committed volunteers support Richmond Hill's many recreation and culture programs, activities, and events. These passionate individuals volunteer their time and creativity to sustain programs and events, share their expertise, connect people across the community and ensure that Richmond Hill is a vibrant community.

## 35

members of the Youth Action Committee volunteered approx. 3,101 hours



## 807

volunteers supported events and recreational programs



## 32,740+

hours contributed



## 47

community members engaged in arts, culture and heritage related committees





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