

"I am Ontario" Youth Arts Showcase  
Artfest on the Esplanade  
Saturday, May 27th 2017

Summary:

The City of Pickering will host a celebration of Arts excellence in Ontario through the addition of a Youth Arts Showcase to Artfest on the Esplanade (Pickering's annual event to celebrate the arts). Youth aged 25 and under from Pickering are invited to form a committee, who will spearhead this project. The Youth project will be open to all youth residents of Ontario and themed "I am Ontario". It will include youth performances on the stage; a show and sale of youth art works; a juried competition for the selection of a youth designed public art piece; workshops and seminars led and/or directed by youth; and immersive hands on art activities designed by youth to showcase local and iconic artists. The purpose of the project is to foster excellence in youth arts, engaging and empowering emerging youth artists, and enriching their artforms through an exploration Ontario's rich arts heritage.

The project objectives are as follows:

1. To Celebrate Ontario's rich arts heritage and future through the creation of an "I am Ontario" section of Artfest.
2. To commemorate the celebration of Ontario's 150th Anniversary and the legacy of art in our communities through the installation of a publicly selected youth art work in a city facility or park.
3. To highlight emerging youth artists by including youth performers and artists as a feature of the event.
4. To engage participants in an exploration of Ontario's artists of excellence through activities themed around the art and artist of Ontario
5. To enable participants to immerse themselves in 150 years of arts innovation and artists of excellence, by providing opportunities for engagement in all art forms and linking experiences with the story and art of Ontario's arts icons.
6. To create leaders of tomorrow. The youth team will be empowered to take their place as community leaders, by leading the project in partnership with community organizations. The team will be invited to stay on, and develop culture related activations as part of the City's Cultural Plan.
7. To build opportunities for youth entrepreneurs by offering opportunities in a youth focused market-place.

Description:

The City of Pickering will host a celebration of Youth Arts excellence in Ontario through the addition of a Youth Arts Showcase to Artfest on the Esplanade (Pickering's annual event celebrating the arts). Pickering Youth aged 12 - 25 are invited to form a committee, who will spearhead this project. The representatives on the committee will follow the City's guiding principle of diversity, accessibility, inclusion, and sustainability throughout the engagement, development and implementation process. Participation in the planning committee will be open to all Pickering residents, participants will be invited through all marketing channels including social media, City advisory committees, area

schools, community and cultural organizations. The purpose of the project is to foster excellence in youth arts, engaging and empowering emerging youth artists, and enriching their art forms through an exploration Ontario's rich arts heritage.

Artfest on the Esplanade will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2017. This free outdoor event has always celebrated all art forms and artists of all ages. The event is operated in partnership with the PineRidge Arts Council. The City of Pickering hosts this event in Esplanade Park; which is in the City Centre home to more than 18,000 residents, and located along major transportation routes. The event includes local artists in an art show and sale, live performances, free arts activities, demonstrating artists, and participatory performance demonstrations. The "I am Ontario" youth arts showcase enhancement will see one third of the events space transformed into a celebration of Ontario arts excellence, and youth arts initiative.

Art Show & Sale specifically engaging youth will be held on a portion of the event grounds. Youth will set-up and display their work for public display show and sale. Artists will apply in advance to be part of the showcase, and be selected by an expert jury to maximize diversity of art forms, ages, and backgrounds.

The final installation of a Youth Public Art work commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Ontario will be a key objective of the visual component of this event. During the call for artists, youth will be invited to submit one piece for consideration to be transformed into a piece of public art. The submissions will be reviewed by the expert jury, and the top three scoring works will be put on public display during the event for public review and comment. The final work will be installed in a municipal facility or park as a legacy of the youth arts initiative.

Live Performances will create opportunities for youth writers, dancers, thespians, and musicians to share their art form on stage. Call for performance submissions will be juried by the performance sub-committee.

Free Arts Activities will include hands-on immersive activities that celebrate famous Ontario artists with ties to Pickering. These activities will be informational and experiential, allowing participants to immerse themselves in the art of Canadian greats, while acquiring new skills, and a sense of national pride. The City will work with local youth, and in partnership with the Pickering Township Historical Society, PineRidge Arts Council, ArtsUnleashed, The Pickering Public Library, and Pickering's Youth Advisory Committee to develop the showcase elements.

Demonstrating Artists will provide youth with the opportunity to be mentored by professional artists in workshops. Youth will also be invited to offer workshops related to the "I am Ontario" theme showcasing their unique abilities.

Participatory Performance Demonstrations will be held in impromptu locations. Performers will set-up a small staging area, and provide live performances and interactive lessons to event participants.