
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2023TACS0046-001482
Sept. 23, 2023

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

BC Culture Days offer arts, cultural activities throughout province

QUESNEL – To celebrate BC Culture Days from Sept. 22 until Oct. 15, 2023, hundreds of free activities and events are scheduled throughout British Columbia.

"BC Culture Days is an incredible opportunity for everyone to showcase, learn and experience life enriched by arts and culture," said Lana Popham, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. "We are proud to proclaim BC Culture Days and to support communities with free events that celebrate our diverse culture together."

The opening ceremony for BC Culture Days 2023 was held in Quesnel Saturday, Sept. 23, and organized by the Quesnel and District Community Arts Council. The full-day event featured art activities and entertainment and served as the official launch for the three-week celebration of arts, culture and heritage through interactive events across the province. BC Culture Days is a network of more than 450 events, presentations, interactive activities and workshops that highlight B.C.'s cultural landscape.

BC Culture Days is delivered by the Society to Bridge Arts and Community, a sibling organization of the BC Alliance for Arts and Culture, and is supported by a \$70,000 grant from the Province. The society works alongside a provincial volunteer task force and steering committee, as well as numerous community, arts and cultural organizations and municipalities to provide free arts and cultural activities in communities throughout the province.

In addition to community celebrations, emerging artists are appointed each year as BC Culture Days ambassadors. This year, 10 artists are given the opportunity to participate in a mentorship program to develop their artistic practices, and plan public activities across the province with a focus on the theme of AIR (access, inclusion and resilience).

Quotes:

Nazanin Shoja, program director, BC Culture Days –

"Government's support for BC Culture Days helps us create safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for the public to enjoy a variety of fun, creative events for all ages. The AIR Ambassador Series invites the public to take part in music, visual arts, dance and puppetry workshops, as well as interactive exhibitions and a collaborative yarn mural project open to all abilities and levels of experience."

David Pensato, chair, Culture Days national board of directors –

"On behalf of the Culture Days national board of directors, I offer my congratulations and thanks to the community of Quesnel for hosting the successful launch of BC Culture Days 2023."

As Culture Days unfolds across B.C. and nationwide over the next three weeks, we encourage people to engage with the free arts and culture events on offer. Together, we can celebrate our country's diversity and creative spirit, and highlight the central role that artists, creators and cultural organizations play in each of our communities.”

Cathy Heinzelman, president, Quesnel and District Community Arts Council –

“I am thrilled that Quesnel has been selected as the kickoff community for BC Culture Days events. This year, we're happy to have a day dedicated to showcasing some of the excellent performing artists that reside in our community. We have been part of this event for several years, and it's great to see how much it's enjoyed by both citizens and artists alike. We are grateful to the volunteers who step up every year to help the arts council run its programs and events, making it all happen.”

Quick Facts:

- The BC Culture Days Ambassador program is aimed at breaking down systemic barriers for artists in under-served communities and drawing diverse audiences through culturally accessible programming and professional development opportunities.
- BC Culture Days 2022 featured 435 activities registered in 53 communities throughout B.C.
- National survey results indicate that 10% of British Columbians (approximately 500,000 people) attended Culture Days events in 2021, the highest rate of any province.

Learn More:

BC Culture Days: <https://culturedays.ca/en/bc>

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