



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Colleen Fitzpatrick, *Executive Director, Rotary Centre for the Arts*

Email: director@rotarycentreforthearts.com

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Rotary Centre for the Arts Unveils Outdoor Youth Mural and New Summer Exhibitions of Okanagan Art

(Kelowna, BC) - The Rotary Centre for the Arts (RCA) invites the community to the unveiling of an inspiring outdoor youth mural and the launch of four new exhibitions for spring and summer, showcasing the exceptional talent of Okanagan artists. Join us on June 12 for a gallery reception at the RCA from 4:30 PM to 7:00 PM, as part of the City of Kelowna and UBCO Art Walk. The event will feature opening remarks, live music, outdoor lawn games, and more, promising an evening of vibrant art and engaging activities.

Registration for the reception on June 12 is encouraged. RSVP [here](#).

RCA Youth Mural Project:

The RCA Youth Mural project began in December 2023 to engage local youth while working with Sheldon Louis, a renowned Syilx artist known for his work in painting, drawing, carving, and sculpting. Louis, along with the RCA team, collaborated with teachers and students from three schools to design and paint a mural that highlights nature, the environment, and the culture of the Okanagan. The project involved three SD23 teachers from Kelowna Secondary School, Okanagan Mission Secondary, and École George Elliot Secondary, who identified students enthusiastic about exploring environmental themes and learning the art of mural painting.

The mentorship under Sheldon Louis was invaluable, providing students with insights into the artistic process and the importance of thematic expression. The students worked on a theme centered on the Sustainable Development Goals, and sustainable cities and communities. This hands-on experience not only enhanced their artistic skills but also deepened their understanding of environmental issues and sustainability. The mural will be mounted on the West side of the RCA at the end of the Art Walk facing the Arts Commons and will be revealed in a public unveiling for the public on June 12.

Colleen Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of the RCA, expressed her excitement: “We are thrilled to see our galleries come alive with the creativity of our local youth and artists. The youth mural is a testament to the vibrant spirit of our community, and we are incredibly proud to showcase the talent and collaboration that

went into this project. This event is a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together and celebrate the artistic expressions that make the Okanagan so unique.”

Andrew Stauffer, the RCA’s Programming Director, says, “These exhibitions are truly special and feature the diverse creations of artists of all ages from the Okanagan. Each exhibition features something unique: naturalistic and abstract photography, works created with local plant-based paints, and suspended quilts. I’m delighted to have this work in our centre.”

In the RCA Indoor Art Exhibitions: ***The Thursday Group*** is on display in the RCA Galleria; ***Quilts for Families Who Lost Homes in the McDougall Creek Wildfire*** is in the South Atrium; ***Strengthening Sustainable Communities: 5th Grade Eco-Art and UBCO Land-Revitalization Initiative*** is in the 1st Floor Studio Hallway; and ***Gerald Siemens*** is in the Mezzanine.

The Thursday Group:

Since 2013, The Thursday Group has united friends with a shared passion for photographic art. Meeting weekly at a local coffee shop, they exchange ideas, compare techniques, and plan photography field trips. Their work, showcasing a variety of camera and digital darkroom techniques, reflects their individual artistic visions. The diversity of their perspectives, detailed in their Artists' Statements, highlights the range of subjects and styles within this close-knit group.

Orchard Valley Quilters Guild: Comforting Families Affected by the McDougall Creek Wildfire:

Founded in 1982, the Orchard Valley Quilters Guild fosters creativity, friendship, and community through quilting. Guild members, committed to improving and sharing their skills, have crafted quilts for families who lost their homes in the 2023 McDougall Creek Wildfire. This fire, which began on August 15 north of West Kelowna, affected over 35,000 evacuees and involved the efforts of over 500 firefighters. The Guild's quilts are a heartfelt expression of sympathy and support, aiming to bring comfort to those rebuilding their lives. This project received partial funding from the City of Kelowna.

Strengthening Sustainable Communities: 5th Grade Eco-Art and UBCO Land-Revitalization Initiative:

The UBCO Land-Revitalization Initiative shows how education and art can foster a connection to the land. UBCO teacher candidates, alongside Dr. Seiki, transformed invasive weeds from their campus grassland restoration site into paint. Partnering with Georgia and the Shannon Lake Elementary fifth-grade classes, they created eco-art that expresses their appreciation for the Okanagan land. This collaborative project, led by Becki and installed by Andrew, aims to inspire the community to live out a land acknowledgment through sustainable practices.

Gerald Siemens:

Gerald Siemens, a self-taught artist with a focus on detail, has spent considerable time mastering his craft through extensive reading. His exhibition features realistic coloured pencil drawings of BC wildlife, showcasing his dedication to capturing the natural beauty of animals.

Stauffer adds, “We warmly invite our entire community to enjoy these compelling works, and look forward to welcoming art lovers of all ages and backgrounds to the RCA this spring and summer.” RCA’s galleries are free and open to the public during regular building hours: Monday-Friday, 9 AM – 9 PM; Weekends and Holidays, 9 AM – 5 PM.

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High-Res Press Photos Available on Request:

Please contact Emily Stubbs at marketingassist@rotarycentreforthearts.com

About the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Located in the heart of Kelowna’s Cultural District, the [Rotary Centre for the Arts](#) is a multidisciplinary visual and performing arts centre. The RCA improves the economic, cultural, and social quality of life in the community by fostering participation in, and appreciation of the arts. The RCA brings together individuals of all ages and backgrounds to share in the excitement of strengthening art and culture in the Okanagan celebrating creative expression through diverse art forms and disciplines. The Rotary Centre for the Arts respectfully acknowledges that it is located on the unceded, traditional territory of the Syilx/Okanagan People.