

A photograph of three dancers in a dark studio. They are wearing dark, long-sleeved dresses with light-colored, flowing skirts. They are positioned in a line, facing away from the camera towards a large window. The window shows a bright, abstract pattern of light and dark shapes, possibly a reflection or a view of a building. The floor is dark and reflective, showing the silhouettes of the dancers.

Richmond Arts Strategy

2012-2017

“...it’s important to recognize that 2010 did change forever the face of Richmond in a bold way. The Olympic Legacy isn’t just the Richmond Olympic Oval and the Canada Line. On a grand scale, sculptures appeared on streets and parks...it was like Richmond grew up culturally. Or, that for once art was an integrated element in terms of a city’s transformation.”

Mary Gazetas, Richmond Review, 2010

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Front Cover: Richmond Arts Centre Year End Dance Recital (2011)
Photographer: Felix Law

Back Cover: *Tea into the Mist: A Ceremony of the Soul* (2011),
Your Kontinent: Richmond International Film and Media Arts Festival
Artists: Sophia Liang, Seb Nem, Oz Peta and Oliver Martin
Photographer: Lewis Liao

1. Acknowledgements

The Richmond Arts Strategy Update benefitted from the active participation of a number of stakeholders and residents who participated in a number of sessions over the course of the past year. Richmond Arts, Culture and Heritage Services is appreciative of the valuable contribution these individuals made during the process.

We would also like to acknowledge the direct contributions of the following individuals for their knowledge, perspective and insight.

Steering Committee

Community Members

Sid Akselrod	Teacher, School District 38
Glen Andersen	Public Artist
Jean Garnett	Richmond Arts Coalition
Mark Glavina	Owner, Phoenix Coastal Art
Lorraine Jarvis	Director, Youth Honour Choir
Steve Jedreicich	Vice President of Development, Townline
Simon Johnston	Past Artistic & Executive Director, Gateway Theatre
Nancy Lee	Writer/Teacher
Rishell O'Brien	Studio Director, Defy Gravity Dance Company Inc.
Jullin O'Sheaur	Owner, Jullin Vocal Studio
Marina Szijarto	Artist
Ying Wang	President, Cinevolution Society

City Staff

Jane Fernyhough	Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
Kim Somerville (Project Lead)	Manager, Arts Services
Nan Capogna	Curator, Richmond Art Gallery
Suzanne Carter	Senior Planner/Urban Design
Camyar Chaichian	Arts Coordinator, Richmond Arts Centre
Eric Fiss	Public Art Planner
Alan Hill	Coordinator, Diversity Services
Vern Jacques	Senior Manager, Recreation Services
Liesl Jauk	Manager, Community Cultural Development
Sandi Swanigan	Manager, Major Event Development
Ted Townsend	Senior Manager, Corporate Communications
Donna Lee	Project Assistant

Consultants

Howard Harowitz	Howard Harowitz Consulting Ltd.
Eric Vance	Eric Vance & Associates

We would also like to acknowledge LIFT Philanthropic Partners (previously 2010 Legacies Now Society) for their generous contribution to support the development of the Richmond Arts Strategy 2012–2017.

2. Executive Summary

The City of Richmond is updating its 2004 Arts Strategy to reflect today's opportunities and challenges and to further the City's vision "to be the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada". This process was led by a Steering Committee comprised of an equal mix of City staff and representatives of the arts community. Their work spanned a number of extended planning sessions, supported by input from three public meetings.

As a Venue City for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, Richmond showcased its diverse artistic talent to local and international audiences. The Olympic effect helped elevate the arts in the community and created an increased sense of pride, identity and spirit. This legacy continues to help advance the arts and influence this new strategy. A number of City plans and strategies also guided updating of the Arts Strategy.

The purpose of the Arts Strategy is to help facilitate the growth of the arts in Richmond by creating an environment and culture in the city that ensures the arts play a strong role in placemaking, community building, tourism and economic development.

Since 2004, City Council and staff have worked with the community to help Richmond reach its creative potential. The main accomplishments are:

- Building capacity and support
- Increased experiences and opportunities
- Increased public awareness and understanding
- Broaden the contribution of the arts

A number of national, provincial and local trends and external influences have been identified, with the recognition that they will have an impact on planning, management and programming in the arts. Key trends include growth in visual and performing arts, multi-disciplinary events and community art, increased participation of businesses in their communities and the impact of technology on the arts.

Important local influences include continuing growth in Richmond, the Olympic legacy, the City's commitment to the arts and the increasing diversity of the Richmond community.

A review of opportunities and challenges related to the arts in Richmond reveals that Richmond has an opportunity to make the arts a primary engine for further enhancing Richmond's growth into one of the best places to live, work and play. The arts community has

a solid base of artists and an emerging reputation. Richmond's healthy population growth can support audience expansion, development of much-needed physical infrastructure and the formation of arts precincts.

The Arts Strategy vision is: "Richmond is an arts destination with a thriving arts community and a rich offering of festivals and events". The Strategy calls upon the City to play a number of roles: facilitator, program provider, partner, supporter, communicator and advocate in advancing the arts.

Five strategic directions guide the Arts Strategy:

1. Strengthen and support the arts community.
2. Increase the number of art spaces and more effectively use existing ones.
3. Broaden the diversity of arts experiences and opportunities.
4. Expand public awareness and understanding of the arts.
5. Broaden the economic potential and contribution of the arts.

Under each strategic direction, a number of actions are recommended. Examples of these include:

- Organize an annual Arts Community Forum to review the Arts Strategy and promote knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Complete a Cultural Facilities Plan to determine the best types and balance of facilities and programming to support and meet the needs of the community.
- Create and sustain two new events that integrate the arts with Richmond's unique social, environmental, historical and economic advantages.
- Develop an Arts Marketing Plan that uses social media and traditional tools to brand the arts, build awareness, promote the benefits and create a sense of identity that differentiates Richmond from other communities.
- Ensure the arts are considered in the City's Economic Development Strategy.



Landon Mackenzie, *Neurocity (Aqua Blue)*, 2009-09, Richmond Art Gallery

Photographer: Scott Massey

Upon adoption of the Arts Strategy by Council, staff will begin to advance the strategic directions and recommended actions through annual work plans. Staff will monitor and report out on the progress and achievements on an annual basis to Council and the arts community. It is expected that the Art Strategy will be revised again in five years.

A visioning session identified what the arts in Richmond might ideally look like if the strategic directions in this strategy are achieved. That future vision includes these features:

- Richmond is an arts destination
- Great facilities and physical infrastructure
- Strong civic commitment
- Collaboration, education, integration
- Economically sustainable framework for the arts

This updated Art Strategy positions Richmond to be recognized as an arts destination with a thriving arts community and a rich offering of festivals and events. With leadership and support from the City, there is every reason to believe that the arts will flourish and continue to contribute to the community's quality of life.

3. Introduction

A vibrant arts community plays an important role in Richmond's aspiration to be the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada.

In 2004, the City adopted the Richmond Arts Strategy, which served as the foundation for a range of civic initiatives and partnerships over the past eight years to develop, support and strengthen the arts. Much has been accomplished, and Richmond's arts scene is diverse, vibrant and growing.

As part of its continued commitment to the arts, the City has undertaken a process to update the 2004 Arts Strategy to reflect today's challenges and opportunities.

A Steering Committee was formed, comprised of an equal mix of City staff and representatives of the arts community. Their work spanned a number of extended planning sessions, supported by input from three public meetings to which the community at large and the arts community in particular were invited to provide insight and input.

This document sets out the results of their work and documents people's comments throughout the process regarding the opportunities and challenges in Richmond as well as their expectations for the Arts Strategy. The outcomes from the process are summarized into five strategic directions and recommended actions.

Context

In 2004, the City adopted the Arts Strategy to guide its actions and development to make Richmond a city with a thriving cultural life where the opportunities for participation in the arts at all levels are accessible, where artists feel they have a place and are seen as contributing to the community, where cultural industries are welcomed and where cultural activity is visible and supported. Since 2004, there has been a significant investment by the City to increase the capacity of arts organizations, enhance current and develop new high quality arts festivals and activities, identify and showcase Richmond's artistic talent and leverage partnerships, grants and sponsorship opportunities.

As a Venue City for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, Richmond has created a lasting legacy by showcasing Richmond's diverse artistic talent to local and international audiences. The Olympic effect helped elevate the arts in the community and created an increased sense of pride, identity and spirit. Richmond also has a unique sense of place and geography, and a diverse community. This legacy continues to help advance the arts and influence this updated strategy.

The following City plans and strategies have also provided vision and direction related to updating the Arts Strategy:

- Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan 2005-2015
- 2004 Richmond Arts Strategy
- 2007 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Facilities Strategic Plan
- Major Events Plan 2007-2012
- Richmond Arts and Culture Economic Impact Study 2008
- Richmond Arts and Culture Community Scan 2008
- 2009 Waterfront Strategy
- 2009 City Centre Area Plan
- 2010 Arts and Culture Plan
- 2010 Community Wellness Strategy

As this is a City Arts Strategy Update, opportunities will be sought to integrate the strategic directions and actions with other City policies, programs and initiatives.

4. Purpose

By investing in the arts, the Arts Strategy will help to facilitate the growth of the arts in Richmond by creating an environment and culture in the city that ensures the arts play a strong role in placemaking, community building, tourism and economic development. The strategy shall also serve to motivate and excite Richmond residents and foster a stronger connection between the City and its stakeholders in an effort to advance policies, programs and services so that the arts can thrive.

Key deliverables associated with the plan include:

- opportunities to increase the arts experiences and spaces,
- strategies to support growth and increased awareness of the value of the arts, and
- realization of the economic opportunities.

Mission of the Strategy

This Arts Strategy, similar to the Arts Strategy developed in 2004, helps to identify the challenges and clarify the needs both within the arts community and in the general community in order to provide a vision for the arts and five-year strategies and actions. As a result of this strategy, detailed actions and annual work plans will be created to accomplish the strategic goals.

The mission is to:

- ensure the broadest possible access to and awareness of the City's diverse cultural assets by all segments of the Richmond community,
- stimulate and recognize talent among the City's professional and amateur artists,
- ensure the arts play a strong role in placemaking, community building, tourism and economic development,
- enhance and bring to life public spaces in order to define and create a special sense of place,
- encourage and facilitate cooperative partnerships among government and non-government entities to deliver cultural services,
- ensure policies are in place to support the arts and the promotion of arts activities,
- develop an environment where artists are welcomed, valued and supported within the community,

- enhance opportunities for training in the arts,
- enrich quality of life by celebrating and supporting the development and creation of art, and
- honour and celebrate those individuals, community organizations and corporate leaders who support the arts.

The "Arts"

For the purposes of this strategy, "arts" is understood as the expression of human creative skill as it relates to:

- visual arts: sculpting, drawing, painting, printmaking, craft, photography and art exhibitions
- performing arts: performing, attending or producing live theatre, music and dance
- literary arts: writing, publishing and/or printing material, reading, attending poetry readings or writers festivals
- culinary arts: aesthetic and palate pleasing meal preparation including baking and pastry making, food stylists, food sculptures and teaching food preparation techniques
- media arts: film, video, new media and audio
- environmental, eco and land art: art dealing with ecological issues and/or art created in nature using natural materials
- integrated arts: artistic practice that combines two or more artistic disciplines to create a hybrid where no single form of art is dominant
- community engagement and collaboration: art that involves the work of professional artists and non-arts community members in creative relationships to give the visual arts a stronger presence

Art in everyday life creates a sense of meaning and place for citizens. It gives visitors a lasting memory and reflects the City's long-term investment in the future. An investment in the arts is an investment in the community and the economy.

"Art is also a kind of power, which cannot only boost your imagination but also your creativity. Thank you for such a great activity."

Frank (participant), Family Sunday Program,
Richmond Art Gallery



Richmond Youth Dance Company (2012), Richmond Arts Centre

Photographer: GTFX

5. Where Are We Now?

Accomplishments Since 2004

The overarching goals from the Arts Strategy adopted in 2004 were to:

- build capacity within and support for arts organizations,
- strengthen, support and enhance the artistic community,
- increase the variety and diversity of arts experiences and opportunities,
- expand public awareness and understanding of the value of the arts, and
- broaden the economic potential and contribution to the arts.

Since 2004, City Council and staff have worked with the community to help Richmond reach its creative potential. Much has been accomplished, including but not limited to the following:

1. Building Capacity and Support

- Development of the City Arts Grants Program to support Richmond artists and arts organizations
- Creation of Art at Work – a Professional Development Symposium
- Formation of the Richmond Arts Coalition, a member-driven association that supports and celebrates culture and arts activities in Richmond
- Increased profile of Arts, Culture and Heritage Services in the City's structure by creating it as a stand-alone Division in the City
- Increased complement of staffing:
 - Manager, Arts Services,
 - Manager, Cultural Development,
 - Director and Curator position at the Richmond Art Gallery,
 - Arts Programmer
 - Media Lab Facilitator,
 - Film Office Coordinator, and
 - Public Art Planner
- Development of a City Film Office to increase filming opportunities in Richmond
- Creation of the Richmond Artists Directory

2. Increased Experiences and Opportunities

- Adoption of the 2010 Arts and Culture Plan and arts programming in the Richmond O Zone
- Participation in Culture Days, a free, interactive nation-wide celebration of arts and culture
- Participation in the Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale with the installation of eight artworks around the city
- Extended the delivery of Arts Services through the creation of the new Media Lab and Rooftop Garden at the Richmond Cultural Centre
- New events such as the Children's Arts Festival, Minoru Opera Series, Your Kontinent: Richmond International Film and Media Arts Festival, Resident Art Group Showcase, Salmon Row and redesign of Richmond Maritime Festival with an arts focus
- Regional, national and international exhibitions at the Richmond Art Gallery:
 - Face to Face, Wanda Koop,
 - Mask, Arthur Renwick,
 - In Transition: New Art from India with the Vancouver Biennale, and
 - Last Riot, AES+F, a partnership with the Vancouver Biennale.
- Increase inventory of public artworks in the City; Richmond Olympic Oval has the City's largest investment of public art

3. Increased Public Awareness and Understanding

- Development of a six-week marketing campaign called Winter Festival of the Arts
- Increased local media coverage and national media coverage helped to elevate the arts
- Creation of a Richmond Artist Directory, an online communication tool that provides Richmond artists and arts organizations with updates about arts news and opportunities available in Richmond
- Development of the Richmond Arts Awards, which recognize artistic support and merit in the community
- Richmond Art Gallery was identified as one of the best small galleries in a survey by the international museum planning and consultation firm Lord Cultural Resources
- Artist Margaret Dragu won the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts
- Richmond Chorus and Orchestra performed in New York at Carnegie Hall

- Gateway Theatre nominated for a Jessie Award, which celebrates and promotes the outstanding achievements of the Vancouver Professional Theatre Community
- Youth Honour Choir performed at ChorusFest in Ottawa accompanied by the National Arts Orchestra

4. Broaden the Contribution of the Arts

- Revamped the Richmond Public Art Program's Policy Guidelines and Administration Procedures to increase voluntary contributions to the public art reserve and recognize the value of art in the public realm
 - Development of relationships with community organizations such as BC Arts and Literacy Centre and Cinevolution to deliver the Children's Arts Festival and the Richmond International Film Festival
- Expanded sponsorships and partnerships – Royal Bank, TD Canada Trust, VANOC, Vancouver Biennale, Coast Capital Savings, BC Arts Council, Canada Council, BC Arts and Literacy, Richmond Review, Richmond News, Georgia Straight, SUCCESS, YVR, Richmond Foundation, Richmond Mental Health, Westin Wall Centre Hotel, Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, Gulf of Georgia Cannery, Multicultural Concerns Society, Richmond Women's Resource Centre, Richmond Food Security Society, Tom Lee Music, Vancouver Opera, Richmond School Board, Kwantlen University, Emily Carr, Richmond Steel and Recycling Ltd., Vancouver Coastal Health, Gulf & Fraser Financial and Canadian Western Bank



Salmon Row (2011), Britannia Heritage Shipyard

Photographer: Tim Matheson

Trends and Influences

Many national and provincial trends and external influences will have an impact on our planning, management and programming in the arts over the next five years and into the future. Local influences are also important to note as they have the potential to impact the advancement of the arts in Richmond.

Trends

- Interest and participation in the visual and performing arts is growing, sparking construction of new facilities and changing the allocation of limited program dollars.
- Multi-disciplinary events that equally combine dance, music and design continue to develop in contrast to productions that are heavy in one discipline.
- Interest in site-specific events continues to grow, both on the part of practitioners and audiences.
- Increasing attention is being paid within the cultural field to the role of participation in the arts and the idea that there is a rich continuum of artistic practice that includes children's dance classes, amateur woodworker guilds, knitting circles, weekend painters, etc. that are as vital to the health of a community as are professional organizations.
- The arts are being used as a tool for social purpose and as a method in facilitation.
- Recent Statistics Canada figures show BC at the bottom of the list when it comes to provincial per capita arts funding. For 2009-10, province per capita spending averaged \$90 – only Ontario and BC came in under that figure, with BC last of all at \$54. BC also came in last in per capita federal arts spending, at \$53 compared to the average of \$123.
- There is increasing pressure from funding bodies to form partnerships with organizations within the community. Communities also expect to see themselves and their experiences represented within the context of exhibitions and performances – in terms of local circumstances, daily life, current issues, etc.
- The 2008 economic downturn and continuing economic uncertainty have added to the demand for low-cost services. With the private sector hesitant to spend money as readily as in the past and a decline in sponsorships and donations, more non-profits are in need of support leading to an increase in competition for available dollars.
- The recent trend in declining funding from senior levels of government is expected to continue. Government granting agencies appear to be reducing their lists of beneficiaries, tightening the screening/granting criteria and generally reducing the total funding envelope. This has, and will continue to, affect the smaller and/or start-up arts groups in particular.
- There is increasing awareness not only at the academic level but also in communities that participation in various forms of arts and culture contributes to society and helps instill self-confidence, personal well-being and community identity.
- Programming is critical to the successful transmission of ideas and issues contained in the arts world. A variety of learning opportunities from formal to informal, academic to hands-on and passive to interactive must be provided in order to accommodate the variety of education levels.
- Traditional arts (eg. crafts) are being rediscovered by the 17-30 year age group.
- According to a recent report from the Cultural Board of Canada, a dynamic cultural sector is a magnet for talent and a catalyst for economic prosperity. This is true for cities across the country, and Richmond is no exception.
- Businesses are becoming increasingly involved in their home communities through charities, sponsorships, volunteerism, resources, environment preservation and other initiatives.
- There are fewer businesses that support live performance art (eg. live music venues).
- Busy families and individuals lead to a lack of discretionary time and increased competition of choices. Many consumers are shifting from a tradition of long-term loyalties to selective consumption. Within the arts world, this trend has implications for both audience development and volunteer commitment.
- The rising use of the Internet and new digital technologies are influencing how people spend their time and provide new options for service choice.
- Technology continues to make our world a smaller place by increasing access and interaction at the global and regional levels and changing the definition of community (eg. online community) and how artists interact. Opportunities are provided for collaboration/production alliances, therefore changing the notions of how art is created and presented. Artists are increasingly producing and marketing their own works and audiences are becoming more intimately involved in producing the art they are experiencing (e.g. flash mobs).
- Social media expands communication networks and innovation but it is also putting some artists out of business (eg. live music artists).



Mr. Tony, Painting Class (2010), Richmond Arts Centre

- Interest in and awareness of cultural diversity adds breadth to the creative spectrum, effecting choices of subject matter, genres, styles and forms. Similarly, increased environmental awareness is effecting choices of materials, production methods and subject matter.

Local Influences

- Construction in Richmond is expected to continue with increased development particularly along the Canada Line. There will be more opportunities to acquire spaces for cultural use.
- The legacy of being a Venue City for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the City's commitment to the arts contributes to the livability of Richmond
- The projected population growth in Richmond City Centre and the new City Centre Area Plan, which identifies an Arts and Entertainment District, provide new opportunities.
- There is increasing growing need for timely, quality and accessible City products and services. These choices must also meet the diverse and growing needs of the City's customers.
- Richmond is an increasingly diverse community with residents having various levels of abilities and income. More than half (57%) of Richmond residents are foreign born and 64% are a visible minority.

- The Canada Line contributes to increased mobility. Providing opportunity to draw Vancouver residents to Richmond and vice versa.
- Richmond's older population is increasing in numbers. By 2021, 19.6% of the population is projected to be over the age of 65. This provides an enhanced opportunity for community engagement and development as older adults are lending their expertise as volunteers.
- Major arts, cultural and sporting events that are family-friendly and have relevance to their location are becoming increasingly important to both the local community and visitors to the City.
- Increased attention is being paid across the City to the role and values of community development and capacity building. In particular, there is recognition that community members themselves are best able to identify and address their own needs. This is a central pillar to social sustainability.
- Although Richmond is a relatively wealthy population, according to Statistics Canada, approximately one third of children in the community live in low-income families, higher than the provincial average.
- Community partnerships and networking continue to be an important element in serving youth in Richmond.

*"Have you ever been inspired by a little kid before?
I got that today."*

Youth Volunteer, Richmond Media Lab

Opportunities and Challenges

The 2004 Arts Strategy has created a solid foundation from which the arts can grow and be positioned as an integral part of the City's ethos. Now is the time that the Arts Strategy take advantage of the opportunities that exist to make the arts a priority in Richmond's development as a great small city while also recognizing there are challenges to overcome.

Opportunities Abound

A review of opportunities and challenges reveals that Richmond has an opportunity to make the arts one of the primary engines in city building and to drive Richmond's growth into one of the best places to live, work and play. The arts community has a solid base of artists and an emerging reputation. The City has a rich culture and physical backdrop against which to create a uniquely Richmond arts experience. Healthy population growth bodes well for audience growth, development of much-needed physical infrastructure, formation of arts precincts and the opportunity to galvanize support for expanding the role of the arts as an important contributor to the quality of life.

The following review paints a picture of what is currently impacting the arts particularly in Richmond in addition to the trends that are affecting the arts.

Opportunities

- A number of festivals and public art programs are gaining increased traction and reputation (e.g. Vancouver Biennale), and participation is increasing across a wide spectrum. The outstanding success of the Richmond O Zone during the Winter Olympics provided an added boost to Richmond's reputation as an emerging arts destination.
- The online world continues to have a strong influence on the creative process, offering collaboration possibilities with other artists and other disciplines. New and/or dramatically altered art forms are emerging under the heading of New Media.
- Richmond has a growing pool of artistic talent that is young, diverse and welcoming to other artists. There also seems to be many Chinese artists with little exposure or connection to other artists in the community.
- Richmond's projected strong and steady population growth over the foreseeable future adds to the potential base of arts audiences, supporters and volunteers. Increasing private development also provides opportunities to expand art in the public realm.
- Private development in the City core provides interesting opportunities to incorporate new arts facilities/venues. The City Centre Area Plan has identified the development of an "arts and entertainment district", which would provide many benefits for the arts.
- The Official Community Plan has identified a number of arts-specific initiatives that integrate into the broader growth and development plans for Richmond as a whole and the City Centre in particular.
- The City is reasonably well equipped with parks and recreation facilities, possibly freeing up funds (both operating and capital) to pursue the conversion of indoor spaces into creation, exhibition, rehearsal and performance space and the development of outdoor spaces such as an outdoor theatre.
- Richmond has a number of physical features such as the waterfront and agricultural lands that can be celebrated and provide exciting opportunities to imbue the arts scene with a distinct "Richmond flavour".
- Richmond has a number of tourist attractions (eg. Steveston Village and the Richmond Olympic Oval) as well as diverse international cuisine. Opportunities exist to tap into rich cultural traditions and celebrate them across the full arts spectrum.
- The role the arts play in the livability of a city continues to gain recognition, engendering further participation and also support for civic funding.
- There is a resurgent desire for people to connect locally. This may suggest a need/opportunity to cater to smaller more intimate audiences and/or tap into existing community structures.

"I met one family who came 3 days in a row. 1st day father, mother and 2 children. 2nd day father, mother, 2 children, grandpa and grandma. 3rd day, the same family, grandpa, grandma, neighbours and friends. You can tell everyone is happy. Thank you for allowing me to share my artworks."

Ricky Cho, artist, Maritime Festival



Jérôme Havre, Artist Talk, *Fibred Optics* exhibition (2011), Richmond Art Gallery

Challenges

- Artists have commented that they feel somewhat disconnected from one another and the City, and the lack of cohesion makes it difficult for them to mobilize as a group.
- More education about the benefits the arts bring to a community is needed for the arts to gain support similar to that of sport.
- Richmond's cultural diversity presents a double-edged sword: it offers a rich spectrum of cultural backgrounds, tastes and art forms on the one hand, while it also requires attention to minimize cultural barriers (communication, customs, etc.) to garner the broadest audiences possible.
- Competition for funding support is intensifying. Donors are being presented with an ever-increasing and diverse group of opportunities, not only in the arts but also in the areas of environment and social action. These same donors are becoming more interested and sophisticated in identifying the "payback" they expect from their support dollars.
- The community is constantly changing. Creating a disconnection between new immigrant artists and participants.
- Marketing techniques from the 80's and 90's continue to be used in the 21st century.
- Richmond continues to lose audiences to Vancouver for more professional and diverse offerings.
- There is a need for more opportunities for professional artists in terms of professional development, creation, exhibition, rehearsal and performance spaces.
- Growth and development of the arts sector is constrained by limitations in facilities and infrastructure. Richmond has limited affordable space for creation, rehearsal, instruction and performance. Gateway Theatre consistently fields more rental requests from local arts groups than it has space available. The Richmond Art Gallery lacks adequate space for incoming exhibitions and appropriate space to house the City's Permanent Collection. The Richmond Arts Centre's programming is constrained by limited studio space, making it difficult to meet anticipated future growth and development.
- More professional quality arts experiences are needed for Tourism Richmond to expand their marketing to include food, sport and the arts.

6. Vision

Under the umbrella of the City of Richmond's vision statement "to be the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada", the vision for the arts is:

"Richmond is an arts destination with a thriving arts community and a rich offering of festivals and events".

Achieving this vision requires:

- great facilities and physical infrastructure,
- strong civic commitment,
- collaboration,
- education,
- integration, and
- an economically sustainable framework for the arts.

The arts are an integral aspect of the city's identity, quality of life and community wellness. With the update of the City's Arts Strategy, Richmond has the opportunity to position the arts as a pivotal element in the community's future development.

Role of the City

The City's role is to provide leadership in creating and nurturing a thriving arts community in Richmond, which is intrinsic to the livability of the city. The Arts Strategy calls upon the City to play a number of roles to develop and foster a community-wide approach to developing the arts:

- **Facilitator** – The City encourages linkages and coordination in the community by developing policy, services and resources to advance the arts.
- **Program Provider** – The City delivers accessible arts programs and events for people of all ages.
- **Partner** – The City partners with the arts community, community organizations, other levels of government, agencies, institutions and business in the funding and delivery of arts services.
- **Supporter** – The City helps build capacity for the arts by investing in the arts.
- **Communicator** – The City promotes the arts and builds awareness of the value and the importance of the arts.
- **Advocate** – The City acts as a champion by publicly supporting the arts through policy development, financial investment, program delivery, resource development and communications.



Gateway Theatre's production of *The Forbidden Phoenix*, Book & Lyrics by Marty Chan
Lyrics, Music & Orchestrations by Robert Walsh

Photographer: David Cooper Photography



Watersky Garden (2009), Janet Echelman, Richmond Oval

Photographer: Andrea Sirois

7. Strategic Directions and Recommended Actions

The Arts Strategy is supported by five strategic directions that will guide the City and its stakeholders' involvement in supporting Richmond's growing arts sector and ensuring a thriving and visible arts scene in Richmond.

- Strengthen and support the arts community.
- Increase the number of art spaces and more effectively use existing ones.
- Broaden the diversity of arts experiences and opportunities.
- Expand public awareness and understanding of the arts.
- Broaden the economic potential and contribution of the arts.
- Focusing on these five strategic directions will help position the City to achieve its vision "to be the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada".

1. Strengthen and Support the Arts Community

Rationale

An engaged and well functioning arts community provides benefits to a city by creating a vibrant, healthy and cultural community for its citizens. Many of the artists and arts organizations that contribute to the creative life of the city need support and assistance to help them succeed. The City can enhance the ability of the arts community to provide cultural opportunities by providing leadership, resources, training and marketing support. This support helps to strengthen the infrastructure of arts organizations so they can effectively develop their own capacities.

Recommended Actions

1. Support arts advocacy and capacity building:
 - Host education and business training for artists and arts organizations.
 - Offer assistance with strategic planning.
 - Increase awareness of existing funding opportunities (e.g. sponsorship and donation opportunities, Municipal, Provincial and Federal grants, "non-arts" grants to support the arts).
 - Provide assistance with grant applications.
 - Ensure a cultural components integrated into sports events over a certain size (e.g. medals, banners, opening ceremonies).

2. Increase communication
 - Increase dialogue between City Council, the arts community and City staff, in addition to the designated Council liaisons to the Richmond Public Art Advisory Committee, Gateway Theatre and Richmond Art Gallery.
 - Educate the arts community about how to access City expertise, staff and resources (e.g. who to contact).
3. Integrate with City departments:
 - Establish formal and informal processes/mechanisms to ensure the arts are integrated with City planning and business (Planning and Development, Engineering, etc).
4. Facilitate relationship building:
 - Assist in improving communication and understanding among arts organizations. Developing methods for inter-organization cooperation and partnerships, and the use of shared resources.
 - Encourage the Richmond Arts Coalition to be a "voice" for arts organizations in the community.
5. Support for children and youth:
 - Work with local schools and post-secondary institutions in the Lower Mainland to attract and retain graduates and emerging young artists by providing training, employment, connection to professional artists and volunteer opportunities in arts administration, programming and events.
 - Foster opportunities for Richmond students and emerging artists to learn about and appreciate art, and to create and display their work.
 - Develop a model to support children and youth on a continuum of participation to achievement in the art's similar to sport's "playground to podium".
 - Celebrate the accomplishments of young artists.
6. Annual Arts Community Forum:
 - Organize an annual Arts Community Forum to review and provide feedback on the Arts Strategy and to promote knowledge sharing, discuss existing barriers in the arts in Richmond and identify opportunities for groups to connect and collaborate their efforts, with or without the aid of the City.

"Public funding of the arts is easily criticized, even when financial controls are in place and objectives are clear. I think this increased arts funding by the City will result in a stronger, more stable arts community."



School Art Program, Richmond Art Gallery, *Navigating the Uncertainty Principle* (2009), Ingrid Koenig

2. Increase the Number of Art Spaces and More Effectively Use Existing Ones

Rationale

Richmond would benefit from affordable, adequate and dedicated rehearsal, performance, production and presentation space, to promote the development of the arts and enable long-term planning. The 2007 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Facilities Strategic Plan ranks a new visual and performing arts centre number ten in the priority list of future facilities. Affordable live/work space is also required in the city. Expanding the number of arts facilities, particularly the addition of a dedicated multi-use arts facility to the City's amenities, would allow Richmond to augment and extend the types of services currently provided at the Cultural Centre and Gateway Theatre. Experience elsewhere has shown that by operating in close proximity, artists which support, collaborate and sustain each other further supports the growth and development of Richmond's arts community.

"Today's presentation gave us ideas that were interesting, relevant, and suitable for our classroom. Many teachers lack art skills (and confidence) but this energizes us to share what we've learned."

Richmond Teacher, Pro-D Day Workshop,
Richmond Art Gallery

Recommended Actions

1. Complete a Cultural Facilities Plan to determine the best types and balance of facilities and programming to support and meet the needs of the community.
2. Conduct an analysis of the current use of City facilities, spaces and parks for artistic activities. Develop and maintain an inventory of suitable, functional and affordable spaces available in the city to expand the arts and attract professional arts organizations and programming (e.g. schools, churches, recreation facilities, private development).
3. Foster a supportive environment for artists by facilitating access to and provision of affordable creation space, live/work space, presentation space, engagement in festivals, and distinct arts districts and cultural hubs as identified in the City Centre Area Plan.
4. Continue to identify creative use of existing space at other city facilities and pursue facility improvements to respond to and accommodate the community's changing and growing demands for cultural programming and services at the City's multidisciplinary cultural hub.
5. Ensure that City-operated arts spaces have technological resources and flexibility to accommodate emerging forms of presentation and exhibition.



Brandon Folks, Richmond Maritime Festival (2011)

3. Broaden the Diversity of Arts Experiences and Opportunities

Rationale

The arts help us to understand ourselves, express ourselves more clearly and honour the expression of others. As Richmond grows as a city and the community changes, the presence of a full spectrum of arts experiences and opportunities will enhance the vitality and creativity of the city. By supporting programming that reflects Richmond's diverse arts, culture, heritage and physical environment, and building on the success of existing activities, the City can support artists and expand the arts while enhancing the community. The City must work with arts organizations, businesses and stakeholders to continue to raise the quality of arts experiences available to the public.

Recommended Actions

1. Build civic connections:
 - Strengthen and foster the connection with civic recreation facilities, the local school system (public, private and post-secondary), the Richmond Public Library and community organizations to increase arts education, support emerging artists and to expose the community, particularly youth, to the arts.
 - Develop a plan to enhance the quality of arts programming and instruction in City facilities and ensure a broad range of programs and services from entry level to professional.
2. New events:
 - Create and sustain a number of events that integrate the arts with Richmond's unique social, environmental, historical and economic advantages (e.g. add or enhance at least one event within three years and a second within five years).
 - Explore existing locations such as Steveston Village, Minoru Park and Richmond Olympic Oval as anchors for new events.
 - Work with organizers/sponsors to implement new opportunities.
3. Facilitate the presence of more professional art organizations. Support opportunities for emerging young artists to connect with these organizations (eg. create a model similar to sport's playground to podium).

4. Build bridges between the arts and the broader community:

- Facilitate programs that encourage interaction between arts professionals and the community (e.g. build an "Artists in Residence" program).
- Promote increased access and use of public spaces for art.
- Encourage and support the creation of new events in public spaces.
- Streamline processes/administrative requirements (e.g. insurance, buskers, street art) for festivals and and temporary performances.

4. Expand Public Awareness and Understanding of the Arts

Rationale

Increasing greater awareness of the arts in Richmond will help cultivate wider audiences and recognize our island city as an artistic community where the arts are understood and appreciated for their contribution to a healthy creative community. Residents are more likely to participate in and support arts events and activities that are well promoted. Fostering more communication in the arts community helps artists and arts organizations feel more connected to one another, acknowledges the contributions they make to the cultural life of the city and raises their individual and collective profile.

"This is a wonderful view of the personal impact on population control and the challenges facing an immigrant. My father fled the Nazis in 1939 and emigrated from Vienna, Austria. I too am an only child. One gets much attention for the better and for the worse, and one is an orphan at some point. Cultural mixing is both wonderful and very lovely. Thank you for this thoughtful view of personal struggles related to population and loneliness; and the inescapable connection with one's past. Wonderful work!"

Cooperston, NY, USA, *My Big Family*, Hua Jin,
Richmond Art Gallery

Recommended Actions

1. Increase communication:
 - Develop strategies to strengthen communication between the City and arts organizations as well as the broader arts community.
 - Collaborate with key stakeholders in the arts sector, business sector, education sector and community to increase awareness around arts programs, services and activities in and outside of Richmond.
2. Develop an Arts Marketing Plan:
 - Expand arts literacy, brand the arts, build awareness and appreciation, promote the benefits and create a sense of identity that differentiates Richmond from other communities.
 - Consistently coordinate messaging for programs, events and activities, using both social media and traditional tools.
 - Create a central place where information about the arts in Richmond can be captured and promoted (e.g. Vancouver Max Guide, arts access map).
3. Increase the regional and national profile of Richmond's arts scene by participating in projects such as Culture Days and the Vancouver Sculpture Biennale.
4. Media support:
 - Foster and encourage added coverage of the arts in the local media.
 - Create a working group of both the local media and arts organizations to develop promotional and marketing initiatives for local artists and groups.
5. Show City support:
 - Ensure that City policies and administration position Richmond as an arts-friendly community.
 - Enhance the profile of the arts in City and other arts-related publications (e.g. "Arts Overview" in City Annual Reports).
 - Continue to showcase achievements in the arts in an annual Arts Update to Council and distribute to the arts community.

"I appreciate the partnership and have witnessed children being empowered through the arts. The children attending this program have left with excitement in their eyes and new ideas they cannot wait to create."

Richmond Arts Truck, Marlae, Richmond Family Place



Water #10, Jun Ren (2010)

Photographer: Dan Fairchild



My Big Family, Hua Jin (2011), Richmond Art Gallery

5. Broaden the Economic Potential and Contribution of the Arts

Rationale

Investing in the arts is an investment in the prosperity of the city. A vibrant arts community provides employment, attracts businesses and workers, promotes tourism and enhances the livability of the community and the quality of life for its residents. Cultural industries such as film, television, video, music recording, design publishing, multimedia and broadcasting provide well-paying jobs. By attracting and supporting the creative professions and actively seeking partnerships between businesses and the arts, Richmond has the opportunity to generate creativity and innovation in its citizens and advance economic growth.

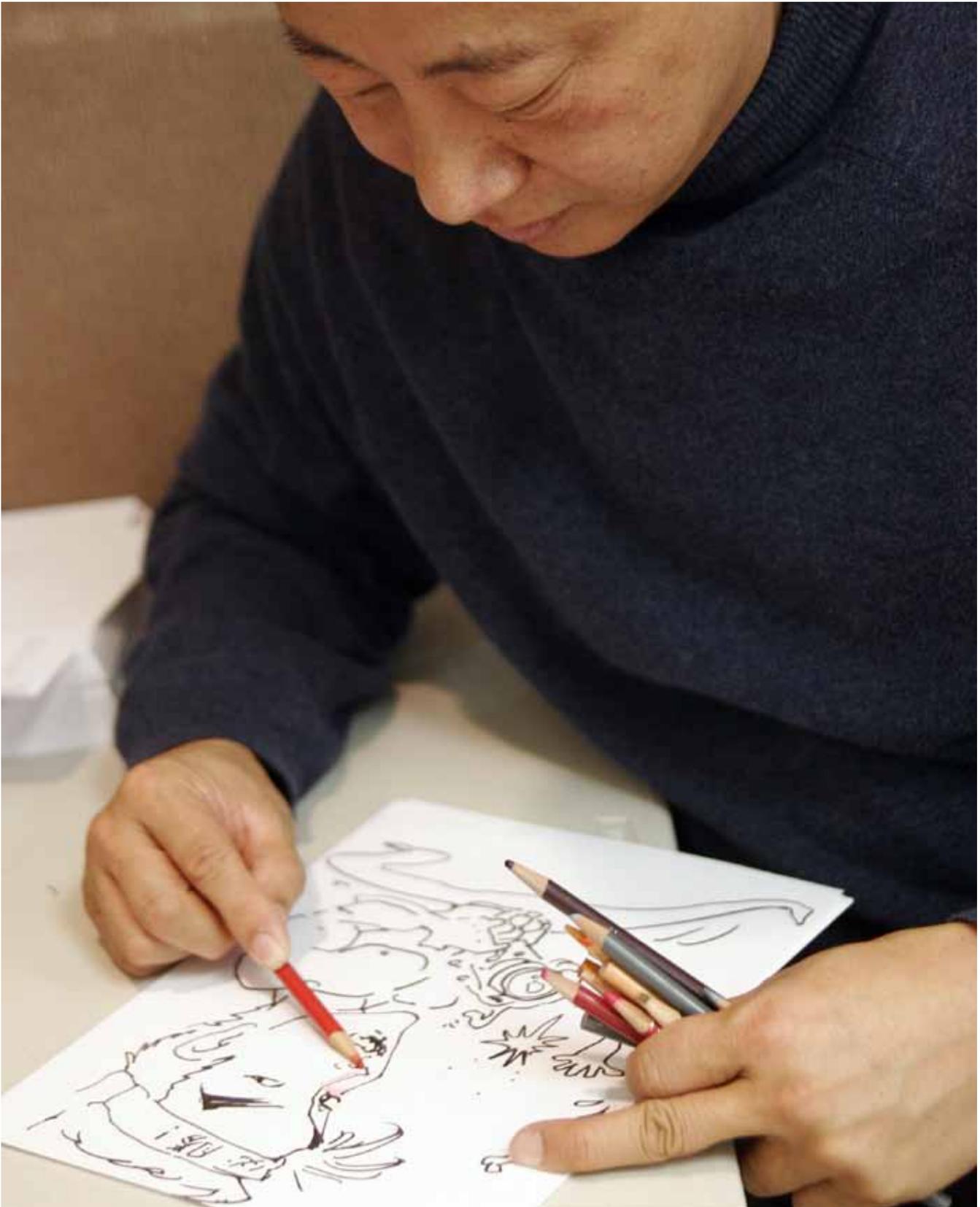
Recommended Actions

1. Foster relationships between arts and business:

- Strengthen the collaborative role of the arts and the business community in the economic growth of the city.
- Raise awareness of the ways the arts contribute to the economics of the community (e.g. creating jobs, attracting corporations and tourists, and increasing the livability of the city).
- Provide opportunities for the business community to invest in and support the arts (e.g. provide public amenities, an endowment fund, sponsorship and/or financial support, etc).
- Nurture strong arts-focused linkages

with key business organizations in Richmond, such as the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Richmond and cultural organizations.

- Identify the marketability of our local arts and culture and develop strategies to connect with and capitalize on the city's assets.
 - Explore opportunities to collaborate with the arts community to market our products and services outside of Richmond.
2. Ensure the arts are considered in the City's Economic Development Strategy and that they play a strong role in the economic sustainability of the city.
 3. Work with other levels of government to increase awareness of existing funding opportunities, to leverage civic investment and to attract the investment of additional resources, financial and non-financial, in support of the arts sector.
 4. Monitor the City's Arts and Culture Grant program to ensure it supports and responds to the needs of individual artists and arts organizations. Encourage some organizations to leverage their support from the City's grant program to draw additional provincial and federal funds.
 5. Develop strategies to support and attract cultural industries in the city by promoting the benefits of a creative city.
 6. Create an arts endowment fund to help support future arts planning, activities and special projects.



Adult Drawing Class (2009), Richmond Arts Centre

8. Next Steps

The Arts Strategy is a living document that will assist the City, in partnership with the arts community, businesses and other agencies, to further develop the arts in Richmond. It is imperative that the five strategic directions outlined are carried out to advance the arts and that the document stay current through the changes and evolution of the city, particularly the arts community.

Upon adoption of the Arts Strategy by Council, staff will begin to advance the strategic directions and recommended actions through annual work plans with the intention to monitor and report out on the progress and achievements on an annual basis to Council. It is expected that in five years, the Arts Strategy will be revised again to respond to current trends and the present state of the arts in the community.

Actions:

- Richmond Arts Strategy 2012-2017 endorsed by City Council
- Bi-annual meetings scheduled with the Arts Strategy Steering Committee to discuss progress and identify current challenges and opportunities
- Continue to explore best practices in other cities that support the development of the arts
- City to host an annual forum to engage and consult with the arts community and to review the Arts Strategy
- Arts Strategy Update summarizing progress and achievements presented annually to Council and disseminated to the arts community



Button Beads and a Wavy Line or Two, Freda Hopper, Textile Artist Guild of Richmond

Photographer: Gerry Boretta, Richmond Photo Club

9. The Future

The following comments, collected during a visioning session with the Arts Strategy Steering Committee, paint a picture of what the arts in Richmond might ideally look like if the strategic directions outlined in this document are achieved. If Richmond aspires to be an arts destination with a thriving arts community and a rich offering of festivals and events, the key will be to bridge the gap between where we are now and where we aspire to be in five years. By striving to accomplish the actions outlined in this strategy, the City and its partners in the arts can position the arts as an integral element in a thriving cultural city.

1. Richmond is an arts destination

Residents and visitors have access to a rich variety of arts and cultural experiences that are happening all over the city, indoors and outdoors, every night of the week. Richmond regularly showcases the rich diversity (cultures, history, etc) that makes up the city. The arts, cuisine and environment are promoted and fostered as a way to increase tourism. As such, Richmond is recognized throughout Metro Vancouver and provincially as a place to come year round for arts experiences – from the display of public art by local and international artists, and multiple festivals including an international festival of the arts, to performances by emerging and professional artists, local and national gallery exhibitions and a place where working artists strive to relocate. Richmond is known as a place that supports the arts and a place to visit to explore what's new, challenging and creative in the arts.

"It is our great honour to inform you that the World Poetry Canada International Peace Festival, held in Richmond on May 25 and 26, 2012, was a resounding success. This was partly due to the wonderful ongoing support that your city has been able to supply us with."

Ariadne Sawyer, President, World Poetry Reading Series Society

2. Great facilities and physical infrastructure

Richmond has one or more thriving arts districts/precincts that are known as a locus of activities, venues and creative space that showcase the arts. These areas provide a significant draw for Richmond and a broader client/audience base. They encompass affordable dedicated live-work space for artists to create, rehearse, display and sell their works. Public and open spaces are used effectively and creatively for festivals, public art, instruction, etc. Creativity is used to identify and convert spaces and existing facilities into arts spaces (e.g. use of unconventional spaces – warehouses). The inventory of arts spaces for rehearsal/performance, instruction and creation of art forms has increased and continues to grow. Improved access to suitable facilities provides more varied programming for organizations to increase arts programming (classes, performances). Plans and funding are approved for the construction of a major multidisciplinary facility to augment and support the arts on many levels.

3. Strong civic commitment

The arts are embraced in community life. Civic leaders and the community value and celebrate artistic achievement and contribution to the arts in an effort to create a vibrant and healthy community. The Richmond Arts Strategy is understood and supported by other City departments and is fully integrated with City strategies towards improving the livability of the community. City policies and procedures encourage/support artists and arts organizations. There is a noticeable increase in community satisfaction with art products and services supported by the City. Support and recognition of the arts reaches that of sports. The City's stand-alone arts grants program is well funded.

4. Collaboration, education, integration

Richmond has a visibly thriving community where arts and culture are an integral aspect of Richmond’s identity, and collaboration occurs on many fronts. Residents are proud and involved in the arts community. Artists and arts organizations communicate, collaborate and gather informally with each other both within and across genres.

The arts in Richmond promote broad participation, accessibility and education. They are a priority, and there is a notable increase in customer satisfaction in arts experiences. The Arts Centre is recognized provincially as a centre for arts education. Festivals include a strong and compelling education component. A growing percentage of the community, particularly youth actively participate in the arts. Cross-cultural and intergenerational projects are also well publicized and well attended. Richmond’s artistic identity is woven into showcasing Richmond’s natural beauty and ethnic diversity. The value placed on the arts enriches civic policy and programming.

5. Economically sustainable framework for the arts

The arts continue to be financially supported by the City. Recognition and attention to new funding mechanisms such as the City Arts Grants and sponsorship help advance the arts in Richmond. Individual artists and arts organizations feel there is significant value placed on their contribution to the livability of the community, and financial support helps to build and strengthen their capacity. Creative entrepreneurs and cultural industries play a prominent role in the economic vitality of Richmond. Government and private support for the arts is in place. A sustainable healthy economic footing is foreseeable for the future. Opportunities exist for arts organizations to access financial resources leveraged from higher levels of government and funding organizations.



Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra (2009), River Rock Theatre



Rocks of Our Future (2011), Blake Williams, Steveston Firehall

10. Conclusion

The arts are an essential and integral part of our social fabric. The arts add significant value and benefits to Richmond by encouraging individual self-expression, creating a sense of community identity and pride, enhancing society understanding, providing opportunities to develop and foster new skills, and encouraging collaboration and connections.

Since the adoption of the 2004 Arts Strategy, the arts in Richmond have evolved and matured. Richmond has a unique opportunity now to elevate the arts. By building on past success, encouraging talent to thrive and applying our collective will, we can advance the City's vision and lift the arts to a level that is integral to the livability of the community.

This new and updated Arts Strategy addresses current opportunities and challenges and equips Richmond to be an arts destination with a thriving arts community and a rich offering of festivals and events. With continued leadership and support from the City, there is every reason to believe that the arts will flourish and continue to contribute to the community's quality of life.



City of Richmond

6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Telephone: 604-276-4000
www.richmond.ca

