

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Paint the Town Celebrates 30 Years

### *Preserving and expanding a cherished regional event*

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, Nova Scotia (Aug. 6, 2025) This August 15-17, Paint the Town will celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the launch of a brand new tradition: the first-ever [Paint the Town Symposium](#).

Talks and panel discussions will feature leaders in the arts, business and local governance sectors to showcase models of success. Events will be relevant and informative for anyone interested in the arts or how small communities work together to take charge of their own development.

“We have free and paid events, featuring dozens of fascinating speakers and community leaders from across the province,” says Ted Lind, artist and ARCAC vice chair. “Everyone is welcome to join the conversation. The question and answer periods are often the best part.”

The weekend kicks with a free evening at King’s Theatre, Friday, August 15, 6pm. Acclaimed interdisciplinary Mi’kmaw artist Ursula Johnson will deliver an opening keynote, paired with a community conversation and short film screening.

Johnson is Atlantic Canada’s first-ever Sobey Art Award winner. Her installation *Moose Fence* won the 2019 NS Masterworks Award. She comes from a long line of Mi’kmaw Ash Basket Weavers. Since graduating NSCAD in 2006, Johnson has exhibited throughout Canada, USA, Greece, Italy, United Kingdom, China and Australia.

Her talk will follow a screening of *Arts at the Centre* (12 minutes) and a lively conversation with ARCAC founders Wayne Boucher, Susan Tileston and Heather McCormick, led by Ted Lind. Hear surprising memories of colossal challenges and great fun along the way to building an enduring cultural institution – blazing trails in 1980s-90s and breaking through to new plateaus in the 2000s.

Saturday and Sunday, enjoy free admission to the Art Market at the Legion. Chose among works by recent Paint the Town alumni or donated paintings from past editions stretching back to the 1990s. Everything is on sale at buy-it-now, carry-away prices. No auction this year. Come early for the best selection.

Meanwhile in the Legion’s main auditorium, the core of the Symposium programming unfolds. Two Saturday panels focus on the rewards and challenges of a rural artistic practice, and how the digital world is changing how we live and work. Sunday dives deeper into how artistic and cultural activity reaps benefits for the community as a whole, socially and economically.

The Symposium comes to a close Sunday with another free public event. Join Mi’kmaw muralist Lorne Julien for *Claiming Space*. This Artist Walk & Talk starts at Julien’s compass mural at the

tip of the Annapolis Wharf, then continues along the boardwalk a short distance to his mural at the Oqwa'titek Amphitheatre, as well.

Visit [www.arcac.ca/paintthetown](http://www.arcac.ca/paintthetown) for full schedule and all panel descriptions, speaker bios and self-serve registration forms.

Anyone who cannot attend the Legion panel discussions in person due to time, distance or cost is welcome to participate for free via Zoom. Click the links at [www.arcac.ca/paintthetown](http://www.arcac.ca/paintthetown) to join the livestream.

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This inaugural Paint the Town Symposium is made possible thanks to a project grant from the province's Culture Innovation Fund.

Paint the Town is a production of the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council (ARCAC).

ARCAC envisions a two-year cycle, alternating between the traditional Paint the Town Festival in even-numbered years and the Symposium in odd-numbered years. Next year will see the return of a standard 2026 Paint the Town *plein air* festival and auction. In both cases, this third weekend of August remains the time to gather in Annapolis Royal and celebrate the value of art in our communities.

ARCAC is a registered charitable, community organization dedicated to encouraging and promoting the arts. ARCAC is supported through the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts.

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**PAINT THE TOWN SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**  
**Aug 15-17, 2025**

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**Friday, August 15**  
**King's Theatre, 209 St George St**  
**Annapolis Royal**

**\*6:00 PM (\*Free to participate)**

Ursula Johnson (Opening Keynote)

&

*The Art of Art Community Building* (Panel Discussion)

Wayne Boucher RCA, Heather McCormick, Ted Lind (moderator), Susan Tileston

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**Saturday, August 16**  
**Legion/Community Centre, 66 Victoria St**  
**Annapolis Royal**

**\*10:00 AM - 6:00 PM (\*Free to participate)**

Paint the Town Art Market

**10:00 AM**

Welcome Speaker - Mayor Amery Boyer

**10:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

*Small Town, Big Ideas: Surviving and Thriving as a Rural Artist* (Panel Discussion)  
Therese Cruz (moderator), Brandt Eisner, Rebecca Fisk, Debra Kuzyk

**1:30 PM-3:00 PM**

*Virtual Rurality: Life and Work of the Rural Artist in a Digital World* (Panel Discussion)  
Bonnie Baker, Ashlee Conery (moderator), Adam McNamara, Andrew Tolson

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**Sunday, August 17**  
**Legion/Community Centre, 66 Victoria St**  
**Annapolis Royal**

**\*10:00 AM - 6:00 PM (\*Free to participate)**

Paint the Town Art Market

**10:00 AM**

Welcome Speaker - Warden Diane LeBlanc

**10:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

*"Could we ever know each other... without the arts?"* (Panel Discussion)  
Ken Flett, Sally O'Grady, Chris O'Neill, Dr. Tracy Summerville (moderator)

**1:30 PM - 3:00 PM**

*Cultural Values: Art, Creativity and Economic Activity* (Panel Discussion)  
Wade Cleveland, Dawn Oman, Christopher Webb (moderator), Jon Welch, Erin Welch

**\*3:30 PM (Free to participate)**

*Claiming Space* with Lorne Julien (Artist Walk & Talk)  
Start at Annapolis Wharf, End at Oqwa'titek Amphitheatre, Annapolis Royal



# Paint the Town

## SYMPOSIUM

Rural artists and communities seizing new opportunities and tackling shared challenges:

- How do artists survive and thrive in a rural context and the ever-changing digital world?
- How do creative rural communities contribute to social and economic development?

## August 15-17, 2025

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL  
[arcac.ca/paintthetown](http://arcac.ca/paintthetown)

PHOTO: ANDREW TOLSON

**ARTSPPLACE**

  
**NOVA SCOTIA**