

# PACKET & TIMES

## Seed planted for Culture Days

### ARTS

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Posted 6 days ago

Orillia has jumped onboard Culture Days, a countrywide celebration of arts and culture taking place this September.

The event aims to connect the public with local artists through hands-on activities such as workshops, private tours and interactive demonstrations, while also connecting individual towns with the nation as a whole.

At a planning meeting held on Monday at Brewery Bay Food Co., it was decided that Orillia, would start small because of how late it joined, but get more involved in the coming years.

"I would try to keep it really modest for the first year," Aubrey Reeves, provincial co-ordinator appointed by the Ontario Arts Council as a liaison for municipalities, said on Monday. "We're trying not to make it a big burden. These are not huge events, but simple activities."

Culture Days began in Quebec 13 years ago under a French name and has been so successful that the rest of Canada is taking part for the first time this year on the weekend of Sept. 24-26, Reeves said. The weekend-long event features free, hands-on, interactive activities that encourage the public to participate in the "behind-the-scene" world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators and designers in their own community.

"It's really about bringing the public and the creators closer in dialogue so the public can appreciate more what artists do," Reeves said.

She added that the event isn't meant for artists to showcase what they normally do, whether it's acting or sculpting a statue, but instead involve the audience in the creation process.

Michael Martyn, Orillia's manager of community and cultural development, thinks the city will benefit from taking part in Culture Days. He also said this event comes at a good time because the city's annual Village of the Arts showcase has been cancelled due to "unforeseen circumstances."

Some ideas floated around at the initial planning meeting were to connect with the Dragon Boat Festival taking place on the same weekend and set up some activity booths at Couchiching Beach Park.

To get involved, contact Martyn at 325-4530. Individual artists can also register an activity for free by visiting the Culture Days website at [www.culture-days.ca](http://www.culture-days.ca).

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