

CULTURE DAYS KICKOFF SPEECH

Good afternoon, everyone. It's such a pleasure to be here. I'm Adam Walker, your independent MLA for Parksville-Qualicum, and I am thrilled to welcome you all to the opening of BC Culture Days. What an honour that this incredible provincial celebration is kicking off right here in our vibrant community. With stunning beaches, beautiful forests, and a friendly atmosphere second to none, we are the perfect backdrop for this showcase of local arts and culture.

From September 20th to October 13th, our communities will be transformed into a cultural hub. Our streets will come alive with the sounds of music, the colours of art, and the energy of dance. BC Culture Days is more than just a festival; it's Canada's most extensive public participation campaign for the arts and a fantastic opportunity to immerse ourselves in the transformative power of our local creativity.

BC Culture Days also gives each of us a chance to explore the diverse, artistic talent right here in our backyard. Now, we can discover the hidden gems of our local arts scene, from world-class painters to emerging musicians. We will experience the thrill of live theatre, the beauty of dance performances, and the power of the spoken word.

But BC Culture Days is more than just a tribute to talent. It's a chance to connect with our neighbours, to explore new passions, and to find joy in creating something together. Whether you're an experienced artist or simply curious about the arts, there is something here for everyone to explore, enjoy, and be inspired by.

Parksville boasts a rich cultural heritage, a heritage shaped by generations of artists, musicians, and writers. Our incredible arts scene is a testament to the imagination and passion that flourishes among us. By hosting this opening, Parksville is holding up a mirror to and shining a light on our own unique cultural identity. It's an invitation for everyone to get involved in the arts and to embrace the diversity and richness of the place we call home.

Today's event features multiple tents showcasing the incredible talents of local artists and cultural groups. Enjoy live music from the popular group TOPAZZ, fuel up with delicious items from the food trucks, and join local artist and environmental advocate Gina Adams in creating a beautifully illustrated children's book about protecting our wetlands, marshes, and estuaries.

If you have questions, look for volunteers wearing black BC Culture Days T-shirts who are looking forward to assisting in any way they can.

So, let's come together to explore and celebrate the creativity, passion, talent, and heritage that Culture Days is all about. Together, we can create a brighter future for BC and our communities filled with art, culture, and connection.

Enjoy the day, everyone, and thank you!