



FILE PHOTO

Claire (left) and Brianne Logeman work on pastel drawings at the Bright Nights in June event at the North Peace Cultural Centre in 2015.

# Bright Nights will showcase local artists

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The North Peace Cultural Centre will once again play host to a weekend showcase of the arts and culture thriving in the Peace Region.

The second annual Bright Nights in June is set for June 24 and 25, featuring gala performances and a free day of arts classes.

“Our goal is to showcase what the Cultural Centre represents and supports throughout the year and give the community an opportunity to experience local cultural in a creative way,” organizers say.

The evening of June 24 will feature a

gala performance that includes piano, dance, music, and other collaborations from local arts groups. Performers include Studio2Stage, Ryan Hennessey, Wesley Phan, Ashley White, Lance Stoney, Morgan Mora, and more.

The evening will also feature a silent auction, the unveiling of a new permanent art installation at the centre, and, of course, hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

On Saturday, the Cultural Centre will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a free slate of arts classes ranging from pastels and watercolour painting to jazz and hip-hop dance.

For more, visit [npcc.bc.ca](http://npcc.bc.ca) or call 250-785-1992.

# FORT ST. JOHN ARTS

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*Celebrating 50 years of the Arts Council in 2017*

## Bright Nights Opened the NPCC in 1992

Bright Nights in June was the title of the opening of the North Peace Cultural Centre (NPCC) 25 years ago. The title resurfaced a few years ago as an annual event to celebrate Arts at the North Peace Cultural Centre. Coming up on June 7-10 is the biggest ever Bright Nights in June celebration of 25 years featuring the Arts at the NPCC.

A centre for the arts in Fort St. John was first proposed in 1968 and came in second place twice in the community's quest for a covered swimming pool and then another swimming pool. During the 70's, the Public Library repeatedly leased retail space which quickly became too small for the rapidly increasing population. A number of projects were proposed to build a theatre in various vacant buildings. In 1978, the Regional District, Taylor and the City of Fort St. John cooperated in a plan to construct a Library/Theatre across from the Totem Mall in 1978. Each of the four regional areas had to vote yes in order to proceed. In 1979/80, the vote failed in 2 regions by a narrow margin in the first referendum and by only a few votes in one region in the second referendum. The prospect of having these much needed facilities in Fort St. John was put on hold for a short time.

When the Expo 86 Legacy Funds of \$1 million became available to each community in BC, the Peace Liard Regional District put a bid on the vacant Hudson's Bay Building in the centre of Fort St. John with the aim to build a Regional Public Library. The building was too large for a single Library so the plan expanded to include a theatre, an Art Gallery and Artspace

Classes program area. Areas B and C of the Regional District, Taylor and Fort St. John formed a committee to raise the \$4.6 million for the NPCC. The Provincial government provided the \$1 million Expo Legacy and a \$650,000 GO BC Grant. The Federal government contributed \$400,000 and community business and individuals fundraised over \$1.5 million. Fort St. John put in the remaining \$800,000 to complete the construction.

The 2017 Bright Night in June invites everyone back to Fort St. John who has worked with the arts over the past 50 years. School classes will be treated to chainsaw carving, sand sculpting and the Artwalk on June 7. The doors are open to meet the Arts Stars – the Talk of the Town on June 8 when past residents of Fort St. John will talk about what inspired them to become career artists in music, dance, visual arts. June 9 is a Gala Reception and Performance by famous performers for once lived in Fort St. John. June 10 is a Printmaking Arts Market and printmaking demonstrations plus the Alaska Highway CD Music stage. Bright Nights in June 2017 is a true celebration of 25 Years of the North Peace Cultural Centre.

*In 2017, the Fort St. John Community Arts Council celebrates 50 years of Arts, Culture and Heritage development. Each month, historic milestones in the arts will be featured in this newspaper column. Comments and additional material welcome.*

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