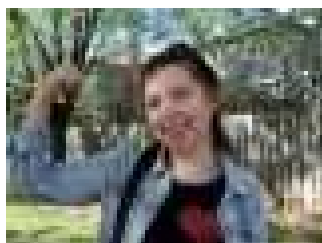


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## Oakville celebrates diversity at annual Culture Days



Susanna Kostelansky, 2, focusing on cutting up pieces for her art activity. (Photography by Courtney Blok/ The Sheridan Sun)

STORY BY COURTNEY BLOK AND CAMILLE GUSHWAY

With music playing, kids running everywhere and a hall filled with arts and crafts, this years' Culture Days didn't fall short of its title.

The Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre celebrated its 6th annual Culture Days event on September 26.

The event was created to celebrate the growing appreciation of the arts and cultures throughout the world. Culture Days promotes the attention, convenience, and engagement of Canadians in the cultural life of their neighbourhood.

More than 7.5 million Canadians have participated in 33,000 Culture Days activities hosted by 5,000 Canadian artists, cultural organizations and groups in 900 different Canadian cities.

This event showcased the diversity of local activities and gave the programs a chance to display their work. From acting lessons and Scottish country dancing through to ceramics and song recording, there was something for everyone.

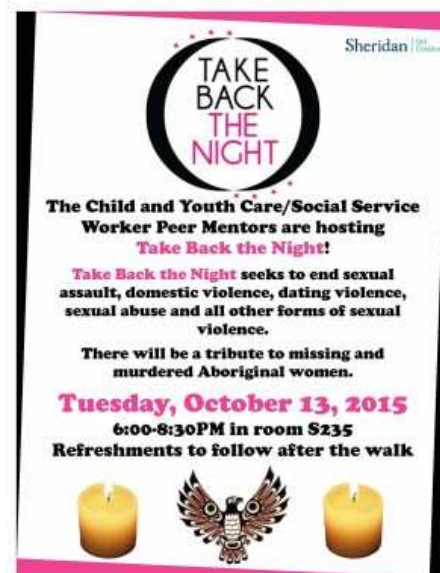
All the programs and entertainment were free.

The main display was by Oakville's Fibre Artists, titled *Hanging By A Thread*.

"The name just sort of came because everything actually has threads on it even if it's paper based. They still have some thread and pieces of fiber," said Chris Booth, in charge of hanging the display.

The gallery was filled with intricate pieces made of felt, beads, and patterns. Paintings on the walls came to life with three-dimensional elements incorporated in them.

"Fibre art is a new term, but it uses a lot of the traditional methods. They are just taking a lot of



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steps further in more of the art area. Anything goes, any combination. We have traditional techniques, but maybe on a felted background,” said Booth.

Although traditional methods, such as knitting or quilting, can be fun to start with they can get repetitive.

“I started off as a traditional quilter and after quilting for 35 years you can only do so much. So now with the stitchery, the beading, ice dying and felting, you can take it anywhere you want it. It’s a little more interesting.”

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Just down the hall, everyone was welcome to come pick out the patterns of their choice to make into charity quilts. Scrap fabric of all colours and patterns were laid across a long table ready for people to search through to find the perfect piece for their block. Once they were done, the quilts were stitched together by volunteers.

“You make the pattern and we are here to sew it. It’ll go up on the wall for everyone to see today and then we’ll donate the quilts to charity,” said Judy Hakim, a volunteer sewing at the quilting station.

If you didn’t feel like participating in a program you could sit back and enjoy some of the entertainment. Various dance groups and musicians performed at the front of the building, greeting visitors as soon as they arrived.

Emotionally intense performances ranging from acapella groups to African dancing with drums were shown in the rehearsal hall. Interactive shows were held in the black box theatre featuring the Maderaz Interactive Latin Music Show and the Oakville Improv Theatre Company.

Culture means something different to everyone – and that was reflected at the event.

“My job is to cut and tape these paper hearts to the string. We call it the ‘We love Culture’ string,” said volunteer Dima Kukje Zada. “People can write what they love about culture on the hearts, whether it’s music or arts...anything, and then we hang it on the wall to share it with everyone to see what there is to love about culture.”





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