



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**North Van Arts Launches Free Online Community Resource
to Showcase Region's Cultural Richness:
– North Shore Culture Compass –**

***Interactive mapping tool connects locals and tourists
with the region's arts, culture, and heritage***

Vancouver, BC — North Van Arts is proud to officially launch the **North Shore Culture Compass (Culture Compass)**, an easily accessible **free** online platform that catalogues and visualizes the cultural, artistic, and historic institutions and destinations of North Vancouver, West Vancouver, and the region's First Nations communities. The Culture Compass encourages local residents and tourists alike to connect with the arts, heritage, and stories of the North Shore. From museums to natural places, annual festivals to art galleries, the map encompasses the cultural diversity of the region.

"The North Shore was a bedroom community of Vancouver for a long time — however over the past few decades it has grown exponentially, establishing a distinctive cultural identity," says **Nancy Cottingham Powell, Executive Director of North Van Arts**. "The North Shore Culture Compass will help define what North Shore culture is today by making culture more visible and convenient to access, fostering collaborations, and encouraging a better understanding of our shared home. UNESCO recognizes that cultural mapping is critical in preserving both the tangible and intangible components that comprise a community — this interactive tool is a way to appreciate all the North Shore has to offer."

With federal funding secured in 2017 from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Strategic Initiatives component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund, the Culture Compass has been in beta testing since spring 2019, reflecting feedback and insights from project partners: the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Squamish Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and the broader North Shore community. The next phase of the Culture Compass' evolution will be anchored by support from the Canada Council for the Arts' Digital Strategy Fund: Public Access to the Arts and Citizen Engagement.

The Culture Compass is submission-based, with all listings uploaded for free. Listing information includes an image, a short description, an address and a web link to the organization, event, or cultural landmark. With the support of the North Shore community, the Culture Compass currently features more than 400 listings of regional points of cultural and historic significance. Listings are searchable by keyword and organized into 10 distinct categories:

- **Creative & Cultural Industries**

Businesses that provide the creation, production, manufacturing and/or distribution of goods and services that are cultural in nature (recording studios, costume designers, creative software design).

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- **Cultural & Natural Heritage**
The legacy of buildings and/or sites, physical artifacts, activities, and intangible attributes of a group or society, of historical, cultural and educational value that are inherited from past generations.
- **Cultural Spaces & Facilities**
A physical space, building, or site that hosts cultural activity where people gather to experience arts or heritage-related activities.
- **Cultural Organizations**
Organizations that represent arts, heritage, and ethno-cultural interests in the community. These are usually non-profits.
- **Festivals & Events**
A period or program of activities, events, and/or entertainment celebrating and/or educating one or many social cultures.
- **First Nations**
Places, stories, events, customs, and traditions that represent the culture of local First Nations. **Listings follow appropriate sharing protocol and are uploaded in close consultation with the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations*
- **Intangibles & Stories**
Non-physical aspects of a particular culture, including traditions, customs, and practices, aesthetic and spiritual beliefs, lore, artistic expression, and language.
- **Public Art**
Original, one-of-a-kind work that creatively reflects the culture, heritage and/or natural environment of the site or surrounding area.
- **Public Institutions**
A public body that operates accessible facilities and services for the public good, including but not limited to schools and local authorities.
- **Service Organizations**
A voluntary non-profit organization where members meet regularly to perform charitable work either by direct hands-on efforts or by raising money for other organizations.

The Culture Compass is accessible from desktop, tablet, and mobile devices with no sign-up or app download necessary. The platform was created by **Esri Canada** using geographic information system (GIS) software — a model that partnering municipalities and First Nations use to collect data. The map is updated by a dedicated project team and overseen by an advisory committee comprised of individuals from North Shore organizations across sectors.

To access or upload a listing to the Culture Compass, please visit the [website](#).

With gratitude as guests, we acknowledge that the cultural assets shown on this map are located on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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About North Van Arts (northvanarts.ca)

North Van Arts, founded in 1969 as The North Vancouver Community Arts Council, is a grassroots, social-profit, charitable cultural organization dedicated to maximizing the intrinsic value of the arts in all media. Our mandate is to enable emerging and professional artists in all disciplines, to bridge cultures, and to build strong and healthy communities through the arts.

We serve our community by organizing cultural events, curating exhibitions at CityScape Community ArtSpace and three other community locations around North Vancouver; offering arts education programmes year-round; presenting an annual film series, managing a popular Art Rental programme, and spearheading community-based projects like the North Shore Culture Compass.

LISTING INFORMATION

North Shore Culture Compass

Website:

northshoreculturecompass.ca

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