



Ernie Shepard, Penticton



Michelle Loughery, Vernon

In rural towns and urban centres across BC you can spend a whole day admiring vast canvases and 3-D installations by the best of BC's artists ... and never step foot inside. Our parks have become galleries without borders, our storefronts have become blank canvases for local brushstrokes, and even sidewalks have us treading on art from the ground up. Look around, and you'll find that BC's beautiful landscape is merely the backdrop, the gallery walls, containing the most amazing local art.

Murals have added renewed colour to community cores, painting a trail of historical images and urban cultural identity in hundreds of snapshots of Canadian cultural life.

Visit Chemainus, known as "Muraltown" (pg 76), to take in one of the most established outdoor art galleries in BC. Chemainus is famous for its open-air murals, bringing new vitality to a town threatened by the collapse of its main economic support, the mill. Chemainus now has over three dozen murals featuring images of historic figures and life in the early years. Chemainus is host to the 2012 Global Mural Conference, capturing international acclaim.



Paul Ygartua, Chemainus

Downtown Vernon (pg 100) also boasts one of the largest outdoor public art galleries in Canada with over 25 murals that portray the culture, history and scenery that are Vernon's cultural identity. Port Coquitlam's (pg 53) vibrant cultural heritage is reflected in the nine murals that speckle its downtown core, and Surrey boasts Canada's largest mural by Vancouver's own Paul Ygartua (pg 65).

Communities such as Penticton (pg 110) and Merritt (pg 96) have a more contemporary feel, depicting current cultural icons and encouraging the use of graffiti-style art. Merritt offers a trail of images through time, celebrating its quintessential western lifestyle alongside images of the biggest names in country music.



Michelle Loughery, Vernon

Renowned Mural Artist, Michelle Loughery (pg 65) is Merritt's Official Portrait Artist to the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame and also the major muralist creating Vernon's many outdoor paintings.

In September 2010, Penticton's first "Relmagine Art" Festival did just that; more than 20 young and emerging artists were invited to create murals in the downtown back alleys – bringing a new form of art to unlikely places. Visit Penticton this year on September 23–25 to take in the creation of more works in this outdoor art gallery.



Luke Hunter, Penticton



5



3



8

Outdoor art galleries offer a fresh departure from the typical gallery experience. Sidewalk and pavement art is just another way to remind us that art is always nearby – we just have to look for it. Vancouver's downtown now contains 22 mosaic tiles, with more added each year. Use the guide to take a tour (pg 13).

So, the next time you're planning your cultural crawl or art walk, keep an eye open for the outdoor art galleries you're sure to find.

Mosaic Tiles, Downtown Vancouver