

Becoming a creative city

Moncton's emphasis on the arts is helping the city to develop an attractive identity to newcomers

Published Friday April 11th, 2008
Appeared on page a2

In the past few weeks it has become more and more apparent that Moncton loves music.

From the multiple big-name concert announcements to the local high schools' trio of musical theatre productions to the annual Moncton Music Festival, the streets of the Hub City are practically singing.

Early in February, Sackville was visited by Dr. Richard Florida, an economist and head of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Florida's public lecture focused on his most famous idea, the importance of what he calls the 'Creative Class' in economic development.

"Access to talented and creative people is to modern business what access to coal and iron ore was to steelmaking," he says. This idea is one that Moncton seems to be taking seriously.

With the encouragement of musical endeavors comes the acceptance of broader cultural ideas, allowing the city to become more diverse with each successful event.

By re-building our reputation as a concert venue of choice, by encouraging our teenagers to showcase their talents on stage, and by placing just as much emphasis on the Grade 3 choir as the 16- year-old classical guitarist, Moncton is re-inforcing its cultural identity.

It doesn't stop at music. With the Capitol Theatre at the heart of our downtown core, with a delicious mix of not just French and English heard at restaurants across the city, but other languages as well, and with the Atlantic Ballet Theatre rooted firmly in this city, Moncton is sending a message.

Developing an economic identity that includes diversity of culture doesn't just attract musicians, dancers and actors to the city, it encourages people who work hard all day and want to play hard, too, no matter what their line of business.

It encourages young people, just starting their careers, to come and settle in a place where they can go out all night - yet remain here to raise families.

It encourages growth.

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