



Artist Richard Gill prepares for his 46th annual Fall Show

Richard Gill Captures Ireland

It has often been said there is a wee bit of Irish in all of us — well most certainly those of us in the Ottawa Valley at the very least.

Irish or not, many of us hold a curious fascination with the culture, history and folklore, and are indeed captivated by the ancient Emerald Isle. Many Irish descendants claim to share a deep spiritual, mystical connection passed down through generations. So just what is the attraction? It has been said by some that it is not an attraction but rather an “anchor in a spinning universe”.

A visit to Ireland has always been on the bucket list for Burnstown artist/sculptor Richard Gill, so last fall he managed a venture to the isle of green, intent on exploring the countryside as a muse for his annual fall show. He discovered a pot of gold rich with ancient culture, lush landscapes and generous people, loyal and full of wit, grit and gumption.

The show will encompass the greener-than-green lush landscape dotted with ancient ruins, castles, monasteries, cottages and pubs galore. It travels to Dublin, Galway and Spiddal (where Irish seems not spoken but sung with such a lovely lilt of the tongue), to the Aran Islands, Connemara, Bantry Bay and Belfast (where Van Morrison wrote *Brown-Eyed Girl* down in the hollow), and to the Giant's Causeway in the north... to name a few. All is captured and shaped in the knowing hands of a sculptor for whom the medium of fired clay in relief is second nature.

Come, “faillte” and discover Ireland in clay. The show runs until October 8 at Bittersweet Gallery in Burnstown, open daily from 11AM to 5PM.



SchoolBOX Latin Fiesta to Celebrate Milestone of 100 Classrooms Built in Nicaragua

The “little charity that could” has a lot to celebrate these days, having recently completed the construction of their 100th classroom in Nicaragua. SchoolBOX has its roots in Almonte and was started by Tom Affleck with little more than a pencil, a notebook and a dream. The people of Almonte and the Ottawa Valley have played an instrumental role in growing it from an idea into a full-fledged movement that is empowering over 20,000 students to get a basic education in Nicaragua.

The 100th classroom was built in a very remote community that is without running water or electricity. Roads were so bad that often materials had to be carried in by horseback. On Saturday, October 20 from 7–10PM, everyone is invited to the Almonte Civitan Hall to celebrate this achievement at the 13th annual Latin Fiesta.

Acting Executive Director Jonathan Tam is particularly thankful to the community of Almonte and surrounding areas for their commitment to SchoolBOX. “No one could ever have dreamed that we could build 50 classrooms in Nicaragua, let alone 100! It is a remarkable feat for a small organization. I credit our success to the leadership, guidance and vision of our founding team of Tom Affleck, Sarah Kerr, Ronald Chavarria and Jazmin Lopez, as well as the community of Almonte that has continued to believe in us for the past twelve years. An impossible dream has now become a reality and is empowering thousands of children all around Nicaragua!”

You are invited to join the SchoolBOX family to celebrate this amazing milestone at the Almonte Civitan Hall on October 20. Event Chair Brad Weir and many dedicated volunteers on the Fiesta Committee have put together a silent auction with unique

items and experiences donated by local businesses, artists and community members, as well as a live auction with that will feature a trip to Costa Rica. The evening features free snacks and a cash bar. Attendees will tap their toes to the spicy tunes from the live Latin band Azucar Jam and enjoy salsa demos from Silver Steps. Put on your dancing shoes and invite your family and friends to this festive event.

Tickets (\$22 in advance, \$20 for students or \$25 at the door) can be purchased at Baker Bob's, Mill Street Books and Equator Coffee Roasters in Almonte, or online at <schoolbox.ca/fiesta>. Kids under 13 get in for free! Remember to bring cash, credit card or cheques to participate in the auctions.

SchoolBOX is committed to “Making Education Possible” for the children of Nicaragua and the world. SchoolBOX implements cost-effective programming by building schools, providing school supplies, libraries, washrooms and teacher training. The organization has built 100 classrooms and 76 libraries in Nicaragua and serves thousands of students and teachers in over 100 communities on an annual basis. Since 2006, they have put over 500,000 notebooks into the hands of kids. In 2017, SchoolBOX will implement its first library project in a Northwestern Ontario Indigenous community.

The SchoolBOX community is united in love for the children we serve and the belief that education can defeat poverty. SchoolBOX is comprised of thousands of people from different faiths and socioeconomic backgrounds. We empower educators and students, and they in turn empower their communities and change our world.

— Jonathan Tam

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