



The design of the Richmond Olympic Oval is centred upon three, main conceptual themes: Flow, Flight, and Fusion. These themes are reflected in a number of the building's striking features.

- The heron, the official symbol of the City of Richmond, is celebrated in a series of feathered roof spans that tail off the edge of the building to create porches that serve as outdoor gathering spaces. The Oval's roofline also recalls the outline of the stylized heron in the city's logo.
- Translucent polycarbonate walls on the Oval's south, east, and west facades show a dynamic colour variation across their length, evoking the flowing colours of the estuary while mediating the flow of sunlight to the building's interior and displaying the muted outlines of figures inside the building.
- An irregular pattern of clear glazing in the south wall provides moments of transparency and promotes interaction between dynamic interior spaces and the street.
- The Oval's glassed northern side provides spectacular views to the Fraser River and North Shore mountains.
- The north buttresses are articulated with a relief sculpture by artist Susan Point.
- A new integrated public art work by artist Janet Echelman is suspended over a large pond adjoining the Oval.

- The vehicular bridge over the Hollybridge Canal, near the Oval's southeast entrance, features art elements by artist Buster Simpson.
- Public artworks are essential elements of an integrated landscape design that complements the diverse recreational opportunities, cultural experiences, and other public amenities offered inside the Oval.
- The landscape design encompasses three main, interconnected public spaces: Legacy Plaza, Waterworks, and Riverside.

Relief Sculpture by Musqueam Artist Susan Point

A signature public artwork designed by artist Susan Point for the exterior of the Richmond Olympic Oval pays homage to the Fraser River and underscores the historical and cultural significance of the Oval site to the Musqueam people.

- Carved three-dimensional reliefs depicting water, herons, salmon, and other motifs significant to aboriginal traditions and contemporary Richmond culture are inlaid into channels in 15 massive concrete buttresses on the north side of the Oval, facing a large festival plaza.
- Each channel is approximately 18 feet tall and 24 to 30 inches wide. The artwork makes a dramatic artistic statement while providing humanizing relief to the large concrete buttresses.

- When it rains, stormwater from the roof runs through the channels in the buttresses, and the carved three-dimensional forms animate the water as it runs down the face of the channel. In fair weather, the lively patterns are clearly visible for users of the plaza to enjoy.
- Stormwater running over the reliefs is collected and processed through a bioremediation pond for reuse or discharge. The pond and adjacent canal define a water-themed green space east of the building.

"This artwork is a tribute to the Fraser River, on whose shores my people have lived and prospered for countless generations," writes Point. "It is also a tribute to all rivers that shape the destiny of those who live by their cycle and spiritual encounters. The river alters its shapes and course over time, yet it remains at the heart of the changing communities around it."

The use of First Nations art in the Richmond Olympic Oval acknowledges the site's historical and cultural significance and continuing importance to the Musqueam people and is part of the City of Richmond's ongoing commitment to recognize those interests in the development of the site.

Integrated Public Art by Janet Echelman

Water Sky Garden, an integrated public art piece by artist Janet Echelman, is inspired by Asian gardens and the natural elements of water, sky, and wind. It is a central feature of an integrated landscape design for the Oval site.



- Two giant red “sky lanterns” created from a translucent, durable fabric are suspended over a large pond adjoining the Oval.
- The lanterns move with the riverside winds.
- The lanterns’ red colour references Chinese colour tradition.
- A meandering wooden walkway influenced by Japanese gardens crosses over and under the water and beside the giant lanterns.
- The art is integrated with an “art landscape” extending from Legacy Plaza to Riverside, a major festival space connecting the Oval to the water.

Hollybridge Vehicular Bridge by Buster Simpson

The Richmond Hollybridge Canal Bridge – a vehicular bridge that crosses Hollybridge Canal at High Street, near the Oval’s southeast entrance – is the first public art project visitors encounter as they enter the Oval site. Artist Buster Simpson collaborated with landscape architect Christopher Phillips to integrate art elements into the bridge’s design to create a kinesthetic threshold crossing experience and a processional civic entry to the Oval.

- On each side of the short four-lane bridge stand four light poles with glass blades that resemble a series of speed-skating blades positioned at the starting line.
- By day, the glass blades mirror the adjacent landscape as well as reflect and diffract ambient light. At night, efficient LED lighting transforms the blades into an illuminated vector and beacon.
- Skate marks in the concrete walkway below also playfully commemorate the speed-skating competition for which the Oval was created.

- Contemporary handrails in stainless steel and high-density polyethylene on both sides of the bridge complement the blade art pieces.
- Handrails invite visitors to lean and view the “bioditch” in the canal below.

Integrated Landscape Design

The integrated landscape design for the Oval site envisions an outdoor environment that complements the diverse recreational opportunities, cultural experiences, and other public amenities offered inside the Oval. The landscape design encompasses three main, interconnected public spaces.

- *Legacy Plaza* welcomes and accommodates crowds arriving and leaving the Oval. It is designed to accommodate small gatherings and future public art.
- *Waterworks* consists of a large pond that detains stormwater, improves water quality, and may provide water for site use. The pond also provides a major public urban space and attraction.
- *Riverside* is a major festival space capable of hosting up to 8,000 people. It includes plaza and lawn space, amphitheatre seating, and steps toward the Middle Arm Dyke Trail and the Fraser River.

The three major spaces are connected by plazas, accessible pathways, and stairs to form a route called The Stroll that encircles the Oval. Furnishings are provided throughout the site for resting, viewing, and gathering.

Landscape design and public artwork are being constructed in concert with the Oval, which opened in fall 2008 as a speed-skating training facility and community resource.

Artists

Susan Point is a member of the Order of Canada and winner of numerous awards, including a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. Her works have been exhibited internationally, and she has completed numerous public art commissions in Canada and the United States.

Janet Echelman is an award-winning artist specializing in public art. Her recent commissions include a \$2 million commission for a new Civic Space in downtown Phoenix, Arizona, a \$1.6 million waterfront wind sculpture in Porto, Portugal, and the September 11th Memorial for Hoboken, New Jersey. Her work has been shown in museums and public spaces in Venice, Madrid, Rotterdam, Vilnius, Mumbai, Jakarta, Hong Kong, Kyoto, Miami, Houston, and New York. She is a former recipient of a Fulbright Senior Lectureship, a Japan Foundation Fellowship, a Rotary International Fellowship, residencies at the Bogliasco Foundation, Fundacion Valparaiso, and Art OMI, and artist grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation.

An active artist since the 1970s, **Buster Simpson** has worked on major infrastructure projects, site master planning, signature sculptures, museum installations, and community projects. Recent projects include a light rail bridge, sustainable water infrastructure fountains, and a campus campanile. Master plans include a 40-acre sustainable arts plan for downtown Vancouver, British Columbia; a \$1.8 billion wastewater treatment plant; and, currently, a 14-mile streetscape project in Doha, Qatar. Recent installations include *Incidence* at the International Museum of Glass and *Instrument Implement* at Whitman College’s Sheehan Gallery. His wide-ranging work includes standalone sculpture as well as integrated and collaborative works that incorporate ecological, historical, social, and aesthetic considerations contextualized in the site-specific values of place.