



BC ARTS COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The BC Arts Council acknowledges it carries out its work on the land of Indigenous nations throughout British Columbia. We pay our respects to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers, past and present, descendants and custodians of these lands and waters. We are grateful for the continuing relationships with Indigenous Peoples that develop through our work together. We acknowledge and raise our hands to the ləkʷəŋən people, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, on whose ancestral lands we operate our main offices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4 Messages from the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary
- 6 Message from the Chair and Vice Chair
- 9 Mandate, Vision, and Values
- 10 Status of the Arts in B.C.
- 14 Strategic Visioning — Progress This Year
- 18 At a Glance — Funding Across the Province
- 20 Key Figures
- 23 Council Members
- 26 Staff
- 28 Contact

MESSAGE FROM HON. LANA POPHAM

Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, I am pleased to receive the BC Arts Council's 2023/24 Annual Report, which celebrates the council's remarkable achievements in the arts and culture sector over the past year.

This report emphasizes the council's commitment to promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, as outlined in the *Extending Foundations: Action Plan 2022-2024*. Our government wholeheartedly supports the council's belief in the vital role of arts and culture in the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of B.C.'s communities.

As the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, I have had the pleasure of engaging with many facets of our vibrant arts community. From attending various arts events to the Community Connections event in Surrey, hosted by the BC Arts Council, these experiences underscored the importance of our ongoing support. My recent visit to Tofino was particularly memorable, where I had the honour of announcing Roy Henry Vickers as the inaugural BC Arts Council Elder-in-Residence. This new role is a significant step in promoting Indigenous knowledge within the arts community, reflecting our commitment to a more dynamic and inclusive cultural environment for all British Columbians.

We recognize the enduring challenges faced by the arts and culture sector and despite significant obstacles in recent years, our government, in close collaboration with the BC Arts Council, remains resolute in our commitment to support and revitalize this dynamic sector. In the 2023/24 fiscal year, the Province allocated \$37.5 million through the BC Arts Council's base budget, reaffirming our dedication to providing a stable funding environment.

A thriving arts and culture scene not only drives economic growth but also enriches our communities, making them more vibrant and attractive. The significance of arts and culture for mental health, particularly in the post-pandemic context, cannot be overstated.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time marked by isolation and uncertainty, many people sought comfort, expression, and connection through the arts. Whether through music, visual arts, literature, or performance, the arts played a vital role in helping individuals process their collective experience. Our government's investment in the arts is not just about economic recovery; it is about healing and rebuilding the social fabric of our communities.

I am exceptionally proud of the BC Arts Council's accomplishments over the past year. Looking ahead, we will continue to partner closely with the council to support and nurture the creative spirit of our province, ensuring that the arts remain a cornerstone of our vibrant communities.

Sincerely,



Hon. Lana Popham
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport



MESSAGE FROM BOB D'EITH

Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film

On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, I am pleased to acknowledge the BC Arts Council's 2023/24 Annual Report, detailing the council's work in the arts and culture sector from April 2023 to March 2024.

This report highlights the council's recent successes, which demonstrate its outstanding leadership in promoting fairness, equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation while engaging with the sector to address their needs.

Last year, I had the pleasure of attending a Community Connections event in Surrey with Minister Popham, which was hosted by the BC Arts Council. During the event, arts and culture practitioners shared their invaluable perspectives on the sector and its future. I was truly inspired by the diversity and vibrancy of Surrey's arts community. Through such engagement events, we gain vital insights into the specific challenges and opportunities affecting our arts and culture communities. As a government, we are committed to listening to these communities' needs and ensuring their voices shape our vision, priorities, and policies.

I am particularly pleased to see the continuation of the BC Arts Council's Accelerate Pilot Program into its second year. This program has been instrumental in supporting many artists and arts and culture organizations throughout the province. It aims to improve access and reduce barriers to funding for equity-deserving and regional arts and culture groups, offering stable funding while remaining adaptable to various artistic needs.

British Columbia is home to a rich and diverse arts and culture scene, represented by our talented artists and dedicated arts and culture organizations. As an independent musician and

writer, I understand firsthand the tremendous impact of art and culture on both a community and an individual level. It is a source of inspiration, community connection, and pride for our province.

As Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film, I am as committed as ever to working with Minister Popham and the BC Arts Council to ensure that our unique and diverse culture is represented and to help people thrive in a more vibrant, healthy arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,



Bob D'Eith
Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film



JOINT MESSAGE

BC ARTS COUNCIL CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

As the BC Arts Council continues its work on the *Extending Foundations: Action Plan 2022-2024*, we are inspired by the progress we have made and the conversations that have shaped this journey. The plan addresses calls for social justice and for further support for the sector through a period of renewal and recovery, work that will continue as we move forward into the future.

In March of 2024, we were proud to announce Roy Henry Vickers as the BC Arts Council's inaugural Elder-in-Residence. This announcement marks a significant step forward in promoting Indigenous knowledge and reciprocity within the arts community and acknowledges Roy's impact on our own work. Roy's insights and guidance will continue to be instrumental in shaping our activities, supporting community projects, and providing mentoring opportunities for young artists. This is another step in Council's commitment to increase the diversity of lived experience and engagement informing Council's decision-making – having increased Council member representation from intersectional equity-deserving groups to over 90%, and now providing new opportunities for diverse modes of engagement.

Our commitment to supporting the arts community is reflected in the impressive \$37.5 million in grants distributed through the BC Arts Council's base budget. This funding has empowered individual artists, cultural practitioners, and arts organizations throughout the province. The second year of the Accelerate Pilot Program, a multi-year initiative to improve access and enhance capacity for equity-deserving and regionally-based arts and culture groups, saw an investment of \$2.5 million supporting 143 arts and culture organizations. Additionally, British Columbia's arts and culture sector received a significant boost with over \$4 million in grants provided through the Arts Infrastructure Program, supporting 67 diverse projects to enhance arts and culture facilities and spaces in the province.

This year, we found new opportunities to convene with communities as we continued our outreach and engagement efforts across the province. We hosted Community Connections events in Kelowna and Surrey, where we listened to arts

and culture practitioners as they shared their thoughts about the sector and its future. We also had the opportunity to make meaningful connections at the Union of BC Municipalities convention and the First Nations Leaders' Gathering. These events highlighted the importance of place, as we visited and connected with communities across the province to understand their unique needs and perspectives. We are deeply grateful to the community members, colleagues, and partners who generously contributed to these conversations. Your insights deepened our understanding and highlighted areas that still require action.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to outgoing council members Ian Case, Patricia Henman, Dean Heron, and Paula Martin for their invaluable contributions. We also appreciate the exceptional collaboration we've enjoyed with Parliamentary Secretary Bob D'Eith and Minister Lana Popham. Additionally, we acknowledge the dedicated efforts of the ministry staff, whose commitment has been instrumental in driving significant change.

We are fortunate to support such a dynamic, innovative, and diverse arts and culture sector. Your work is vital to the health of our communities, and we thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to the arts. We look forward to continuing to learn, collaborate, and work in reciprocity together.

Sincerely,



Sae-Hoon Stan Chung, Chair, BC Arts Council



Dana Claxton, Vice Chair, BC Arts Council



ELDER-IN-RESIDENCE ANNOUNCEMENT, TOFINO, 2024. Left to right: Hon. Minister Lana Popham, Elder-in-Residence Roy Henry Vickers, and BC Arts Council, Chair, Sae-Hoon Stan Chung.



MANDATE, VISION, AND VALUES

OUR MANDATE

The BC Arts Council was created in 1995 as an agency of the Province of British Columbia under the *Arts Council Act* for the purposes of:

- Providing support for arts and culture in British Columbia;
- Providing people and organizations with the opportunity to participate in arts and culture in British Columbia; and
- Providing an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process for managing funds for arts and culture in British Columbia.

OUR VISION

The BC Arts Council has set its course toward an aspirational vision where:

- Artists and cultural organizations in British Columbia are well-supported, thriving, and able to reach their full potential under principles of equity, diversity, accessibility, and reconciliation; and
- Arts and culture are seen as fundamental to developing vibrant and resilient communities, where the people of British Columbia are highly engaged in the province's unique arts and culture sector and are recognized for their innovation and leadership in Canada and abroad.

OUR VALUES

Our values guide our decisions and activities, from program design to the peer review process. We strive for constant improvement under these values in how we serve artists and cultural organizations throughout B.C.

Artistic Development & Achievement

Supporting the development and achievement of diverse practices by artists and cultural organizations.

Equity, Access & Diversity

Striving for equitable access to arts and culture funding and programs for underserved artists, organizations, and audiences.

Indigenous Engagement & Cultural Vitality

Engaging with Indigenous artists and organizations guided by principles of cultural vitality and self-determination.

Engagement & Participation

Facilitating opportunities for all people in British Columbia to engage with and participate in arts and culture.

Collaboration & Partnerships

Collaborating and co-creating with arts and culture communities throughout the province to improve the council's programs and practices.

Recognition & Promotion

Improving access to and visibility of British Columbia's artists and cultural organizations locally, nationally and internationally.

Fair & Transparent Governance

Using fair and transparent processes guided by principles of accountability, independence, merit and equity.



STATUS OF THE ARTS IN B.C.

The arts and culture sector continues to demonstrate resilience and vibrancy despite challenges related to affordability and rising operational costs driven by inflation, as well as a shortage of appropriate and affordable cultural facilities. There is also an ongoing need to address equity issues and climate justice within the sector.

Notably, this year saw an increase in collaborative advocacy efforts within the sector, identifying priority areas for support and attention.

In response to these challenges, significant progress was made in several key areas. In 2023/24, the BC Arts Council made substantial investments to support the sector, including providing \$37.5 million through 1,442 grants to individual artists, cultural practitioners, and arts and culture organizations and an additional 345 distributed through partnerships. The BC Arts Council also continued important initiatives to address equity issues, improve cultural infrastructure and engage and convene communities.

Economic Impact Data*

The cultural sector plays a significant role in British Columbia's (B.C.'s) economy. In 2023, estimates based on Statistics Canada data show that the arts and culture industry contributed \$9.8 billion to B.C.'s GDP, a projected 5.38% increase over 2022. In the latter half of 2023, quarterly culture GDP figures in B.C. declined slightly from a post-pandemic quarterly peak of almost \$2.5 billion between April and June 2023. This mirrors the national picture, where there was a flattening or decline of cultural sector GDP in the same period.¹

* This section highlights the most recent data available from Statistics Canada and other sources.

Resiliency

Arts and culture organizations have seen different rates of audience return as they navigate pandemic recovery. To support recovery, the provincial government provided resilience funding and program top-ups totaling \$81,992,120 through the BC Arts Council between 2020 and 2023. These funds were an investment in longer term renewal. Organizations have made careful use of previous resiliency funding to maintain programming. At the same time organizations increased collaboration across the sector and explored new models and approaches to prepare for the future with strategies to serve audiences, engage communities and stay vital.

TOP: POWELL STREET FESTIVAL, VANCOUVER, 2023. Katari Taiko.
Photo by Yohei Shimomae.
BOTTOM: GRAND FORKS ART GALLERY, GRAND FORKS.
Photo by Grand Forks Art Gallery.



¹ Statistics Canada, Cultural Satellite Account (2024). National culture indicators, fourth quarter 2023.



TRAIL AND DISTRICT ARTS COUNCIL, TRAIL, The Doggone Brothers at Music in the Park Night Market, July 20, 2023. Photo by Vicky Jones.

Artists and Cultural Workers

In 2023, B.C. experienced a population growth of nearly 3.3%, the highest annual increase since 1971.² The province has the highest proportion of artists in the country, with nearly 40,000 artists (20% of all Canadian artists) calling B.C. home in 2021.³ Despite their significant contributions, the median wage for professionals in the arts and culture sector is lower than those in other professions.⁴ The number of jobs in the culture sector declined throughout 2023 to a low of 124,000 in the fourth quarter of 2023, down from a post-pandemic peak of almost 131,000 at the end of 2022.⁵

Arts and cultural workers have been reporting mental health issues. In early 2024, a Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) survey of 1,170 Canadian artists and cultural workers reports that "Regarding their mental health, almost as many artists are dissatisfied as satisfied." This level of satisfaction is lower for artists than what most Canadians report. According to Statistics Canada data more than twice as many Canadians rate their mental health as very good or excellent than fair or poor.⁶

In spite of challenges, about one-half of artists responding to the CHRC survey would choose roughly the same path if they had the chance to start their careers over again; a majority of responding artists (71%) are satisfied with their principal occupation in the arts and culture.

Affordability

The arts and culture sector, as with other industries in B.C., is facing significant economic challenges due to inflation. Although the overall rate of inflation slowed in 2023, the inflation components related to housing have remained high, with housing prices and mortgage interest rates higher than three years ago.⁷ These inflationary pressures increased operational costs and financial instability for arts organizations.⁸ While many industries are affected by inflation, the arts and culture sector is especially vulnerable due to its reliance on discretionary spending and private donations, which are heavily influenced by economic downturns. In January 2023, analytics agency TRG Arts reported that donations to the Canadian arts sector had decreased by 45% between 2019 and 2023.⁹

The CHRC survey also highlighted a critical affordability issue among artists. Financial stress is widespread, with 91% of respondents reporting they had found it necessary to take steps to alleviate their financial difficulties.¹⁰ The survey found that incomes remain low for many artists and cultural workers, with one-half of responding artists (51%) having total personal incomes below \$40,000.¹¹



NANAIMO MUSEUM, NANAIMO. Exhibit Curator Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun, with Museum Curator Aimee Greenaway, work together behind the scenes on the "stem'al'u'ni xe'xe: What is Sacred?" exhibit. Photo by Nanaimo Museum.

² British Columbia Statistics. "Quarterly Population Highlights," Reference date: January 1, 2024. Issue: #24-04

British Columbia Statistics. (January 2024) Consumer Price Index. Annual averages.

³ Hill Strategies (2023). How many artists are there in each Canadian province and territory? Analysis of 2021 census data.

⁴ Statistics Canada, Cultural Satellite Account (2024). National culture indicators, fourth quarter 2023.

⁵ Hill Strategies (2023). In all 10 provinces, the median wages of professionals in the arts and culture are well below other professional occupations.

⁶ Statistics Canada, (2024) Perceived mental health, by gender and province.

⁷ Bank of Canada (2024). Monetary Policy Report, January 2024.

⁸ Government of Canada Job Bank (2023). Information and Cultural Industries, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, British Columbia 2023.

⁹ Josh O'Kane. "State of the Arts: Canada's cultural industry is feeling the squeeze." June 7, 2024. Accessed June 7, 2024,

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/article-state-of-the-arts-canadas-cultural-industry-is-feeling-the-squeeze/>

¹⁰ Cultural Human Resources Council, Hill Strategies Research Inc. (2024). How are Canada's artists doing? Analysis of a survey of affordability and working conditions in early 2024.

¹¹ Cultural Human Resources Council, Hill Strategies Research Inc. (2024). How are Canada's artists doing? Analysis of a survey of affordability and working conditions in early 2024.

Renewing and Rethinking Approaches to Cultural Spaces

Access to affordable and suitable spaces remained a challenge for the sector. There continues to be a critical need for investment in infrastructure, from the refurbishment of aging equipment and venues to major capital building projects. The BC Arts Council's Arts Infrastructure Program provided an important boost, with more than \$4 million in grants supporting 67 projects aimed at enhancing arts and culture facilities and spaces across the province.

Arts and culture advocates have articulated calls to action to address the need for cultural spaces. This includes a call to create a provincial strategic green cultural infrastructure fund, and the stewardship of cultural assets through infrastructure investment, improved policy, and the establishment of a Cultural Land Trust. There is also a push to incorporate services such as community housing and childcare facilities into existing and new cultural spaces. Lastly, advocates emphasize the sector's potential in transforming neglected spaces, rehabilitating existing buildings, and fostering community revitalization.

Equity in the Arts

The CHRC revealed that financial challenges are especially severe for artists who are Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, D/deaf and/or disabled, as well as women, gender diverse, and younger artists.¹² For example, artists in Canada who are Indigenous, Black and People of Colour are significantly more likely to have arts incomes under \$40,000 (72%, compared to 66% of white artists).¹³ Over two-thirds of artists who are Indigenous, Black and People of Colour also report experiencing systemic barriers due to their race during their careers and are more likely than their white counterparts to face systemic challenges, such as issues related to disability (25% vs. 15%), and sexism (42% vs. 35%).¹⁴

These figures highlight the need for targeted support to address the systemic inequalities within the arts sector. In 2023/24, the BC Arts

Council's Accelerate Pilot Program continued to improve access and enhance capacity for equity-deserving arts and culture groups, with \$2.5 million investment supporting 143 organizations. Council also supported a new partnership with a group of Arts Service Organizations to launch the Pathways pilot program for arts, culture, and heritage organizations, supporting organizations in creating more inclusive, accessible, and equitable work environments.

Climate Justice and Emergency Management

The increasing frequency and severity of climate emergencies, including B.C.'s worst-ever wildfire season in 2023, underscored the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and focusing on emergency planning.¹⁵ Organizations across the sector are wrestling with the need to protect their collections and assets and ensure the safety and well-being of artists, staff, volunteers, and audiences.

B.C. has the highest proportion of organizations in the arts, heritage, and entertainment sectors that have either undertaken or plan to undertake environmental or climate-readiness practices.¹⁶ To support their efforts, the BC Arts Council, along with funders from across the country, has contributed to the Creative Green Tools to help organizations calculate their carbon footprints and participate in the development of a national climate initiative.



DANCE VICTORIA, VICTORIA. The Lekwungen Singers welcoming the Māori contemporary dance group, Ōkāreka Dance Company to the Lekwungen territory (Victoria, BC). Photo by Dance Victoria Society.

Environmental Stewardship in the Arts

Creative Green Tools is an initiative led by the Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts – a coalition of arts and environmental practitioners interested in promoting environmental stewardship in the Canadian arts and culture sector. The Creative Green Tools enable arts and culture organizations to understand and reduce their negative environmental impacts and support them in increasing their positive impacts. The Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts works to facilitate inclusive conversations with users of the Tools by presenting environmental issues through an intersectional lens, using a framework of accessibility and equity, while fostering environmental stewardship. Visit www.cgtoolscanada.org to learn more.

BALLET KELOWNA, KELOWNA. Artists of Ballet Kelowna in Cameron Fraser-Monroe's taqāš. Photo by Abigail Wiens.



STRATEGIC VISIONING

PROGRESS THIS YEAR

As we move towards the end of BC Arts Council's two-year *Extending Foundation: Action Plan 2022-2024*, we've continued to make progress on our commitments. The *Extending Foundations Action Plan* extended and continued to implement the BC Arts Council's *New Foundations Strategic Plan: 2018-2022*, which outlines Council's four strategic directions:



Extending Foundations

In April 2022, BC Arts Council announced the extension of *New Foundations* and the launch of the *Extending Foundations Action Plan*. The *Extending Foundations Action Plan* was developed to provide concrete steps towards increased equity, reconciliation, diversity, inclusion and accessibility while supporting sector stability and recovery as it emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Action Plan has seven action areas and associated priorities:

Renew Strategic Visioning and Planning

- Current strategic plan extension
- Strategic Visioning for 2024

Establish Diversity, Equity and Access Program Supports

- Targeted investments in underserved and equity-deserving organizations
- Equity support initiatives

Implement Process and Procedure Improvements

- Reduce barriers to funding programs
- Increased access to services

Modernize Peer Assessment

- Transparent, accountable peer assessment process

Rebalance Funding Distribution

- Funding redistribution within existing budget to support equity

Deliver Arts Impact Grants

- Flexible strategic development program

Expand Arts Infrastructure Program

- Spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and culture practitioners

ACTION 1:

Renew Strategic Visioning and Planning

- Continued to align processes and procedures with *Extending Foundations* strategic priorities and commitments, distributing 887 grants to organizations and collectives and 555 to individual practitioners through BC Arts Council's base budget, and an additional 345 grants through partner organizations. Without contingency funds to support the sector in 2023/24, Council looked to develop a strategic, long-term approach to supporting resiliency into the future within a status quo funding fiscal environment.
- Facilitated 60 assessment meetings with 239 peer assessors to support the realization of BC Arts Council's strategic goals and collect recommendations for improvements.
- Hosted two Community Connections engagement sessions—in Kelowna in June 2023 and in Surrey in November 2023—to convene community and inform strategic visioning.
- Incorporated feedback from peer assessment panels, input from public engagement and advice from program advisors to inform the renewal of Council's Strategic Vision.
- Robust new data collection and policies introduced previously were leveraged to provide stronger quantitative and story-driven data to inform evaluation and strategic decision-making.

ACTION 2:

Establish Diversity, Equity, and Access Programs

- Used new equity data to address gaps in funding and document need for prioritization of designated groups.
- Worked with the Equity Advisory Network to advise on program policy related to validation of designated priority groups and concerned status reviews and enhance voices of equity-deserving communities.
- Launched the Pathways Pilot Program in partnership with a consortium of Arts Service Organizations – Arts BC, the BC Museums Association, the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance, and the Rural Arts Inclusion Lab. This program supports arts, culture, and heritage organizations to learn more about reconciliation, equity and access and how to integrate this work into their organizations.
- Enhanced Indigenous voices and cultural vitality through investment of \$1.725 million in First Peoples' Cultural Council, resulting in 103 grants to organizations and individual practitioners. Also provided \$250,000 towards the Arts Vitality Research Project to support new research and documentation of First Nations arts vitality across the province.
- Announced Roy Henry Vickers as the inaugural BC Arts Council Elder-in-Residence, a role created to uplift Indigenous perspectives and self-determination in policy, programs and processes. The Elder-in-Residence supports BC Arts Council's ongoing work towards equity and reconciliation and will provide mentoring opportunities for Indigenous artists.

VANCOUVER LATIN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTRE, VANCOUVER. Sumalao band featuring Carmen Rodríguez. Remembering the Future: Chile 1973-2023, An Evening of Music, Poetry and Art. Photo by Gabriel Aspee. Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre is an Accelerate program recipient.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, (LEFT) SURREY 2023 and (RIGHT) KELOWNA 2023. Photos by BC Arts Council.



BC Arts Council Welcomes Roy Henry Vickers as Elder-in-Residence

In March 2024, the BC Arts Council was thrilled to welcome Roy Henry Vickers as the inaugural Elder-in-Residence within the Council. Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport Lana Popham, along with Council Chair Sae-Hoon Stan Chung, joined Roy Henry Vickers in Tofino to mark this important step for the BC Arts Council. The role was created to recognize the importance of Indigenous perspectives and self-determination and support our ongoing work towards equity and reconciliation. As Elder-in-Residence, Roy will support community projects and provide mentoring opportunities for Indigenous artists.



ROY HENRY VICKERS, 2023. Image courtesy of Roy Henry Vickers.

ACTION 3:

Implement Process and Procedure Improvements

- Supported artists and arts and culture practitioners who are Deaf or have a disability with \$105,283 to submit applications and access support for carrying out their projects through formalized grant accessibility programs.
- Reduced barriers by introducing video or oral reporting options within the Accelerate program. Grant recipients were able to choose their preferred way to report on their funding.
- Participated in over 47 in-person and virtual outreach events, reaching over 4900 people.
- Participated in two information sessions hosted by community organizations as part of outreach during Council's visit to Kelowna in 2023 and Surrey in November 2023.
- Restructured the BC Arts Council Secretariat Branch within the Arts and Culture Division of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport to better support the arts and culture sector and Ministry priorities.
- Collected public feedback to simplify applications and new voluntary data collection forms. This valuable input will be considered in the next round of application improvements.

ACTION 4:

Modernize Peer Assessment

- Collected public feedback to simplify applications and new voluntary data collection forms. This valuable input will be considered in the next round of application improvements.
- Supported continued integration of equity advisory roles and designated priority groups policy into the peer assessment process. See page 24 for general information on our peer review process.

ACTION 5:

Rebalance Funding Distribution

- Provided the second year of \$2.5 million in funding to 143 regional and equity-deserving organizations as part of the multi-year capacity building Accelerate pilot program.
- Provided the second year of stable multi-year funding through the Operating Assistance program, including the 26 new Operating Assistance clients brought into the program in 2022/23, the majority of which are from designated priority groups.
- Undertook a continuing eligibility review to ensure that the funds within the budget are allocated effectively to reflect BC Arts Council's mandate, vision, and strategic priorities.
- Launched a re-vamped Arts Circulation and Touring program (ACT) to support touring and circulation activities that had been paused during the pandemic. ACT expands on previous touring support to enable touring activities within B.C., across Canada, and internationally, as well as digitization of artistic and cultural works for the purposes of dissemination.

ACTION 6:

Deliver Arts Impact Grants

- The Arts Impact Grant program delivered a total of \$3.9 million to 147 recipients late in the 2022/23 fiscal year, creating meaningful impact over the past year.¹⁷

ACTION 7:

Expand Arts Infrastructure Program

- Continued the Arts Infrastructure Program to develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners.
- Delivered 67 Arts Infrastructure Program grants, totaling \$4.025 million, with grants ranging from \$3,430 to \$250,000.
- Continued community engagement to advocate around cultural space needs and the significance of place-based strategies in development of future strategic directions.
- Initiated policy development related to strategies for green infrastructure in the arts, including funding to the Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts to help with the development and dissemination of Creative Green Tools Canada to arts and culture users throughout B.C. These carbon calculation and reporting tools allow organizations in the arts and culture sector to record, measure and understand the impacts of their activities – including emissions from venues and offices.



BARD ON THE BEACH, VANCOUVER, Participants in Bard on the Beach's Little Players summer program. Bard on the Beach received an Arts Infrastructure grant to further augment air flow and increase ventilation safety at the Douglas Campbell Theatre. Photo by Max Mehran.

Making an impact!

Arts Impact Grants are responsive and flexible funding for arts and culture organizations and collectives. Applicants prioritize a specific project or group of related activities that will provide the most meaningful impact to their organization, artistic practice, or community.

Projects funded through the previous year's grant program made an impact this year. Highlights include:

The **Living with the Land Society** based in Lee Creek received a \$30,000 Arts Impact grant to assist with putting hundreds of photos and videos from hunting and gathering travels into a fascinating documentary film featuring local landscapes and Indigenous knowledge.

The **Korean Traditional Arts Society** located in North Vancouver received \$5000 towards the celebration of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Korea and Canada. The event included performances of music and dance and celebrated the friendship and cultural connections between the two countries.

The **Dancers of Damelahamid** received \$30,000 to bring the production of *Minowin* to New Zealand in the summer of 2023. *Minowin* balances movement, song, and new multimedia design to reflect on Indigenous identity, immersing audiences in a narrative that illustrates moments of connection, understanding, and renewal. The tour included community engagement activities and a residency with Atamira Dance – a Māori contemporary dance company.



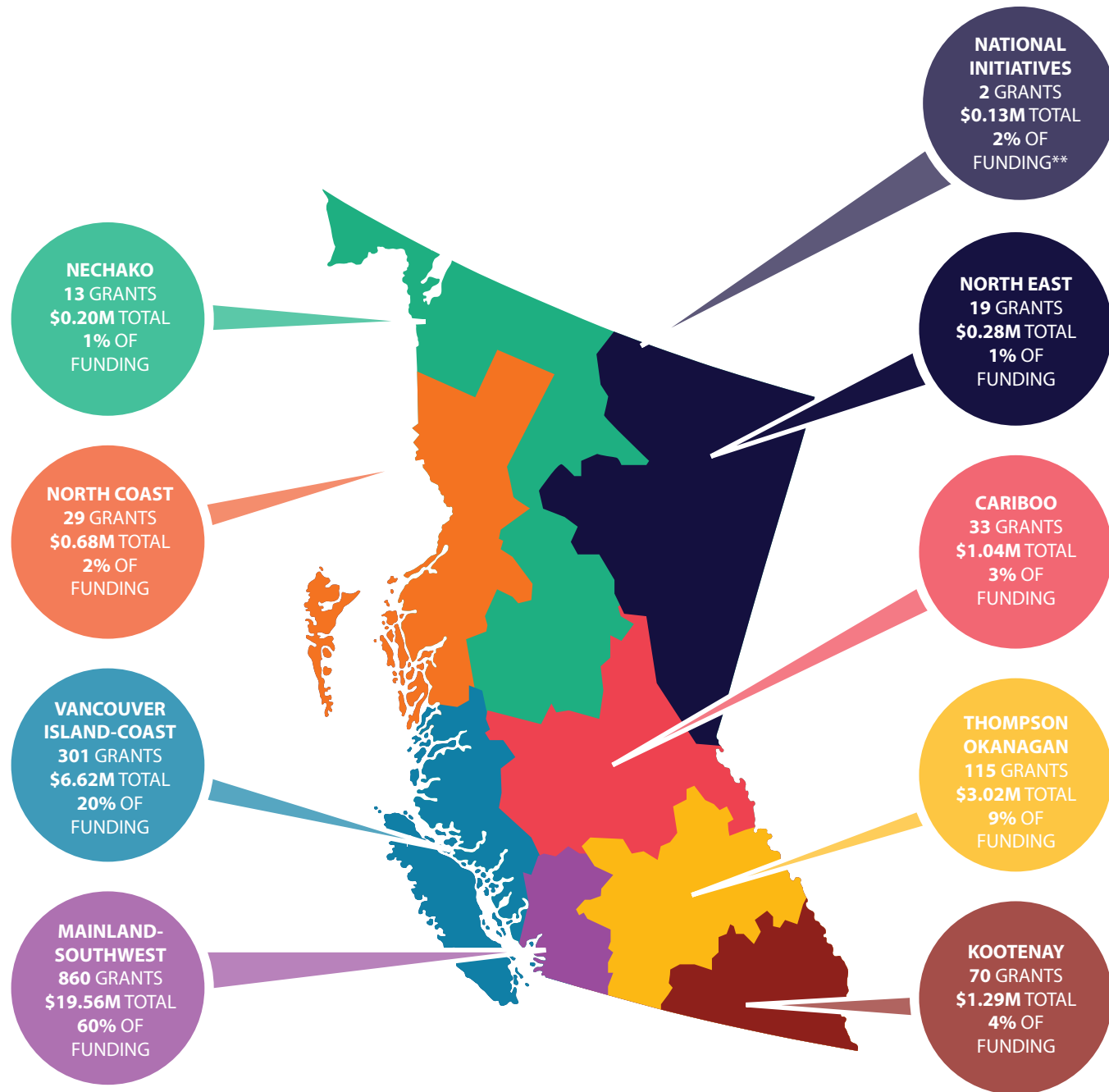
DANCERS OF DAMELHAMID, VANCOUVER. Still from production of *Minowin*. Creative team credits listed at www.damelahamid.ca/productions/minowin. Photo courtesy Dancers of Damelahamid.

¹⁷ A shift in the intake timelines for the Arts Impact Grants meant the program did not run in 2023/24, but launched again early in 2024, with funds to be delivered in 2024/25.

AT A GLANCE

FUNDING ACROSS THE PROVINCE 2023/24

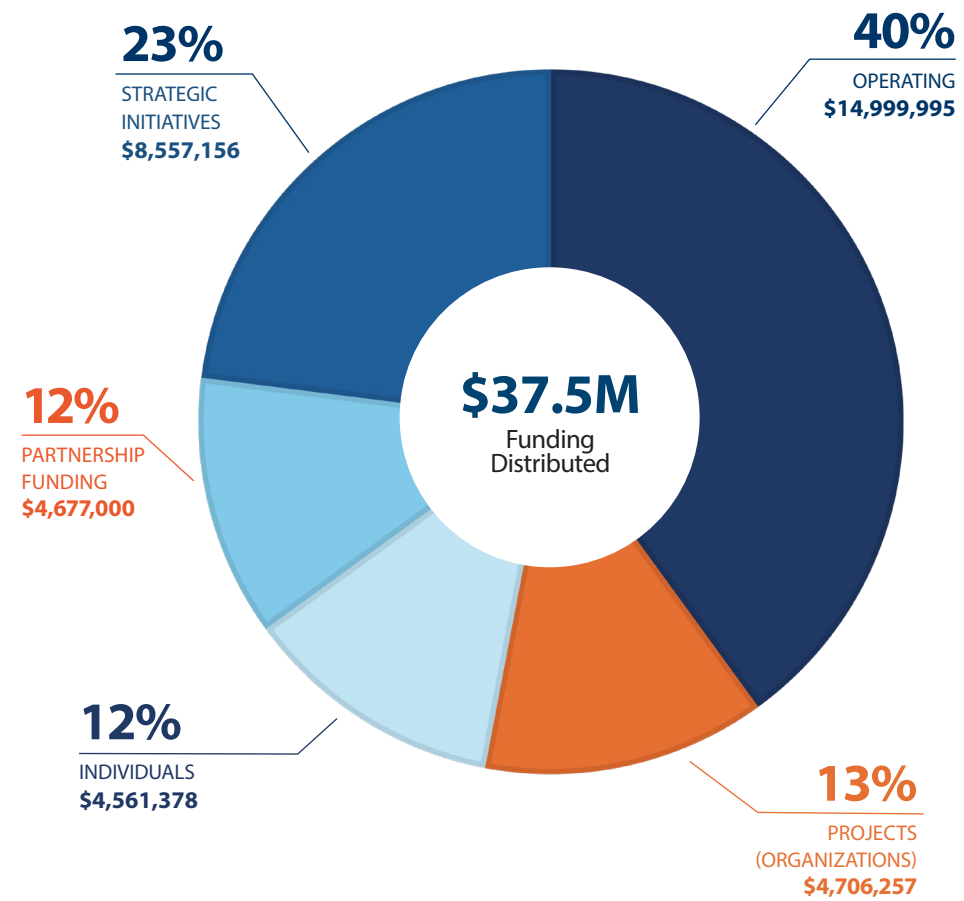
Funding by location distributed in fiscal year 2023/24 through the BC Arts Council's base budget and supplemental funding.*



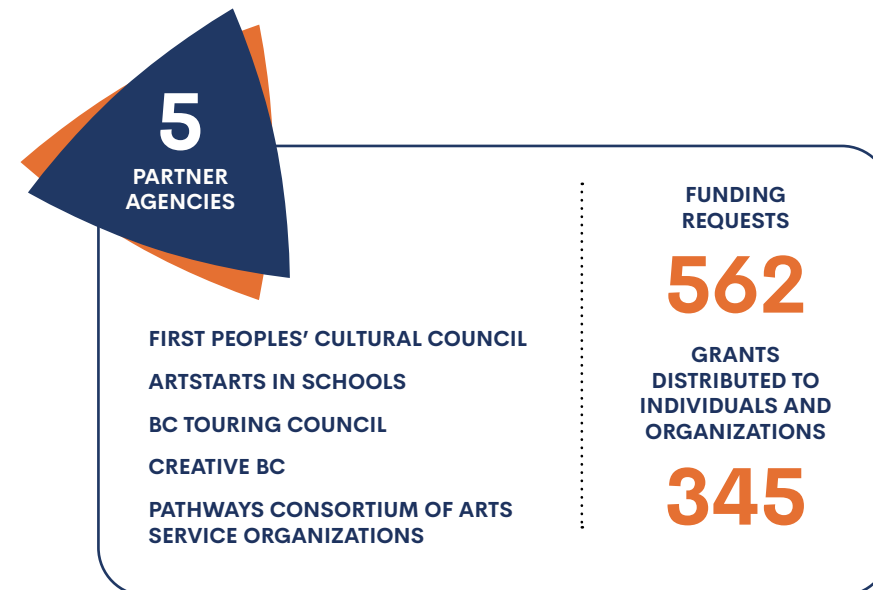
* Map and figures do not account for regional distribution of funding delivered through partner agencies. The map includes the portion of Accelerate Pilot Program grants from fiscal year 2022/23 paid out in fiscal year 2023/24.

** These funds were delivered through national collaborations to support initiatives taking place province-wide.

GRANT FUNDING



FUNDING DELIVERED THROUGH PARTNER AGENCIES 2023/24



1,442
GRANTS
DELIVERED

887
GRANTS TO
ORGANIZATIONS AND
COLLECTIVES

2,667
FUNDING REQUESTS

555
GRANTS TO
INDIVIDUALS

\$37.5M
TOTAL FUNDING
DELIVERED

1050
UNIQUE
RECIPIENTS

KEY FIGURES

	2022/23	2023/24
PROFESSIONAL ARTS FUNDING Supporting professional arts activity		
Operating Assistance	\$13,531,710	\$13,531,710
Professional Projects	\$2,669,268	\$3,853,309
Individual Arts Awards	\$3,461,150	\$3,778,378
Scholarship Awards	\$900,000	\$783,000
SUBTOTAL	\$20,562,128	\$21,946,397

	2022/23	2023/24
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUNDING Supporting time-limited or strategic development programs		
Arts Infrastructure Program	\$3,984,052 ¹⁸	\$4,025,000
Arts Impact Grants	\$3,905,295	\$0
Accelerate Pilot Program ¹⁹	\$1,510,675	\$3,493,173
Strategic Investments	\$211,504	\$544,200
Access Support and Application Assistance	\$82,955	\$105,283
Operating Assistance (one-time payments)	\$0	\$389,500
SUBTOTAL	\$9,694,481	\$8,557,156

	2022/23	2023/24
COMMUNITY ARTS FUNDING Supporting community arts activity		
Arts-Based Community Development	\$392,730	\$368,470
Community Arts Organizations Operating Assistance	\$1,468,285	\$1,468,285
Community Arts Development Projects	\$139,027	\$141,028
Community Festivals	\$353,705	\$343,450
SUBTOTAL	\$2,353,747	\$2,321,233

PARTNERSHIPS FUNDING Supporting programs delivered by partners that meet specific priorities of Council		
Creative BC– Interactive Fund	\$675,000	\$675,000
ArtStarts in Schools – Artists in Education & Artists in the Classroom	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
First Peoples’ Cultural Council – Indigenous Arts Programs	\$1,725,000	\$1,725,000
BC Touring Council - Community Presenter Assistance	\$537,000	\$537,000
Arts BC– Arts Service Organizations Consortium Pathways Pilot Program	\$0	\$440,000
SUBTOTAL	\$4,237,000	\$4,677,000

TOTAL BC ARTS COUNCIL FUNDING **\$36,847,356** **\$37,501,786**

	2022/23	2023/24
SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING One-time contingency		
Arts Infrastructure Program	\$4,525,000	\$0
Resilience Supplements	\$30,000,000	\$0
SUBTOTAL	\$34,525,000	\$0

TOTAL FUNDING DELIVERED **\$71,372,356** **\$37,501,786**

BC Arts Council Budget

	2022/23	2023/24
BUDGET		
BC Arts Council – Base Budget	\$35,815,000	\$36,097,000 ²⁰
BC 150 Cultural Fund	\$3,795,000	\$3,795,000
Supplemental Funding	\$34,525,000 ²¹	\$211,790 ²²
TOTAL	\$74,135,000	\$40,103,790

	2022/23	2023/24
EXPENSES		
Grants to organizations, individuals, and partnerships	\$71,372,356	\$37,501,786
Operations ²³	\$2,636,920	\$2,602,004
TOTAL	\$74,009,276	\$40,103,790

¹⁸ 2022/23 Arts Infrastructure figure represents commitment from BC Arts Council base budget. An additional \$4,525,000 in supplemental funding was added for a total of \$8,509,052 for the Arts Infrastructure Program.

¹⁹ 2022/23 Accelerate figure represents the amount paid out of fiscal year 2022/23. Total funding delivered for the Accelerate Pilot Program was \$2,501,924 per year of which \$991,249 was paid out of fiscal year 2023/24. 2023/24 Accelerate figure represents \$2,501,924 grants for the fiscal year, plus the 2022/23 amounts of \$991,249 paid out in 2023/24.

²⁰ An increase of \$282,000 was provided in 2023/24 as part of the BC Public Service salary increases.

²¹ The BC Arts Council distributed \$34.5 million in one-time year-end funding from the Province to support the arts and culture sector as it worked towards recovery and renewal.

²² Represents general recoveries, the Shared Recovery Mandate, and Ministry surplus delivered by the BC Arts Council at fiscal year end.

²³ External to the grants budget – staff salaries and benefits, peer assessment expenses, and all operating expenses.



COUNCIL MEMBERS

The *Arts Council Act* provides for up to 15 government-appointed representatives as BC Arts Council members. Collectively, they broadly represent the cultural and regional diversity of the province as well as a range of artistic practices and expertise.

We would like to thank the following outgoing members for their contributions and service:

Ian Case
 Patricia Henman
 Dean Heron
 Paula Martin

APPOINTED MEMBERS 2023/24

SAE-HOON STAN CHUNG, CHAIR
 Cranbrook

KIRANDEEP DHALIWAL
 Vancouver

TOBY LAWRENCE**
 Victoria

DANA CLAXTON, VICE CHAIR
 Vancouver

JAI DJWA
 Vancouver

MELISSA LEE**
 Vancouver

JULES ANDRÉ-BROWN
 Victoria

MARNIE HAMAGAMI**
 Prince George

PAULA MARTIN*
 Vancouver

JAKE ANTHONY**
 Burnaby

PATRICIA HENMAN*
 Nelson

MIKE MURRAY
 Maple Ridge

HALEY BASSETT**
 Groundbirch

DEAN HERON*
 Victoria

BUKHOSI NKOSI**
 Vancouver

IAN CASE*
 Victoria

MIRANDA HURON
 New Westminster

SIMONE ORLANDO
 Kelowna

NIKA COLLISON**
 Skidegate

*Outgoing members 2023/24

**New members appointed 2023/24

For member biographies please refer to the BC Arts Council website: www.bcartsCouncil.ca.



LEFT: TONYA KAY, VANCOUVER. Actor Kallie Hu, 1st AC Edith Cheng and Script supervisor Thomas Kuhn during set up for *High Heels*, a Tonya Kay film produced by Kalopsia. Photo by Ray Shum.
 RIGHT: LAMONDANCE, NORTH VANCOUVER. *Us Souls*, choreographed by Sidney Chukas. Photo by Adrian Ortega.

GRANT ASSESSMENT

PEER REVIEW

Peer assessment of grant applications is the primary means of review and is used to uphold the *Arts Council Act* purpose of providing an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process. The peer assessment process also provides for transparency and is fundamental to the work of the BC Arts Council.

For each relevant program, we bring together panels of three to five artists and arts and culture practitioners to review applications and determine or recommend funding, based on how effectively applicants addressed the program criteria outlined in the guidelines.

Assessors are identified with consideration given to the diversity of artistic and cultural practice (representation of different artistic disciplines, approaches and fields of practice); a range of professional specialization (representation of different roles within the arts, such as creators, interpreters, administrators, directors, independent artists); geographic and regional representation; Indigenous perspectives; cultural perspectives; and stage of career. The goal is to have a panel of assessors who, through their diversity of experience and background, can evaluate the range of applications for each program intake.

We also use the opportunity of the panels to conduct consultations with assessors to inform policy and program development. Discussions cover the structure, intent and outcomes of individual programs; application and assessment processes; the Council's strategic plan; and ongoing and emerging issues in the sector. These consultations are essential to facilitate continuous improvement, address changing needs, research new initiatives, and maintain a high degree of responsiveness to important trends as they emerge.

Peer assessors are remunerated for their time, expertise, and labour.

We are grateful to those who served as assessors for our programs and also for the programs offered through partnership with ArtStarts in Schools, BC Touring Council, Creative BC, and the First Peoples' Cultural Council.

A full list of BC Arts Council panel members and Equity Advisory Network members is available on the website: www.bcartscouncil.ca/peer-assessment/previous-assessors.

10
Program
Advisors

60
Assessment
Meetings

239
Assessors

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

We are always looking for individuals with discipline and sector knowledge, open-mindedness, generosity of spirit, and the ability to work collaboratively through the assessment process.

Serving on a peer assessment panel provides a unique learning experience, valuable insight into how the funding process operates, and a broader understanding of the sector. By providing this support, assessors are participating in cultural policy in action. Assessors are remunerated for their services. Through our online grant management system, individuals can register their interest in becoming an assessor.

AWARDS LISTING 2023/24

For a complete list of award recipients and grant amounts please refer to our website: www.bcartscouncil.ca

EQUITY ADVISOR NETWORK

The BC Arts Council would like to acknowledge the impactful work of the Equity Advisory Network.

The Equity Advisory Network is a committee made up of experienced artists and arts and culture practitioners from a variety of fields of practice, with specific work and lived experience in the area of equity and diversity. Their role is to enhance the voices of Indigenous and equity-deserving communities in policy, programs and processes.

In the past year, 8 participants of the Network assembled to support the validation of organizations and designated priority groups. The group's insights continue to be critical in supporting staff in the validation process for organizations and collectives and identifying prioritize equity-deserving organizations.



TOP: LADYSMITH ART GALLERY, LADYSMITH. June monthly art show showcasing local Vancouver Island and Gulf Island artists. Shown here artist, Megan Cawthron. Photo courtesy Ladysmith Art Gallery.
LEFT: FULL CIRCLE: FIRST NATIONS PERFORMANCE, VANCOUVER. The Brush Arbor Gurlz at Talking Stick @ Club PuSh 2024. Photo by Chris Randle Photography.
PREVIOUS PAGE: SALMON ARM FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY, SALMON ARM. Salmon Arm Roots and Blues Festival Photo by Ihana Images.

STAFF

SPECIAL THANKS

Our work and this report would not be possible without the support of the dedicated staff who worked within the BC Arts Council Secretariat Branch and the former Arts and Culture Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport during the timeline of this annual report.

BC ARTS COUNCIL SECRETARIAT STAFF

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MAIRA AURUCCI Policy Analyst

CLAYTON BARANIUK Program Advisor and Accessibility Coordinator

MICHELLE BENJAMIN Program Advisor

KEELY BLAND Policy Analyst

ALLISON BOTTOMLEY Executive Director

NADINE CAREW Program Advisor

NICOLA DUNNE Program Advisor and Accessibility Coordinator

DARB ERICKSON Senior Director, BC Arts Council Programs

BREANNA FABBRO Program Advisor

NATASHA FARIVAR Grant Program Administrator

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ANISSA PAULSEN Program Advisor

KAITLYN REINING Program Advisor

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WENDY SWAN A/Communications Specialist

INGMARIE THUNANDER Manager, BC Arts Council Operations

SHELAGH VAUX Grant Program Administrator

Thank you to staff both past and present for contributing to a thriving arts and culture sector in B.C.

A = Acting



TOP: GATEWAY THEATRE, RICHMOND. Jasmine Chen in Jade Circle. Set/Props/Costume Designer: Julia Kim. Video Designer: Daniel O'shea. Lighting Designer: Jonathan Kim. Photo by Julia Kim, courtesy of rice & beans theatre.
 BOTTOM: FRANCOPHONE SUMMER FESTIVAL, VANCOUVER, 2023. Gaëtan Nerinx – Corneille. Image courtesy of Le Centre Culturel Francophone de Vancouver.

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Cover images:

TOP LEFT: VINES ART FESTIVAL, VANCOUVER. Jacky Essombe. Songs of Resistance at Stanley Park. Photo by Sheng Ho. Image courtesy of Vines Art Society.

TOP RIGHT: THEATRE TERRIFIC, VANCOUVER. Tree Drum Gudrun Sabrina Hirt and Andy Wise, Son of Richard Photography by Chelsey Stuyt Venue: Fringe Festival – Granville Island, Ron Basford Park.

BOTTOM LEFT: CARAVAN FARM THEATRE, ARMSTRONG. Every Brilliant Thing, Dawn Petten, Caravan Farm Theatre, Photo by Zev Tiefenbach.

BOTTOM RIGHT: UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA LEGACY ART GALLERIES, VICTORIA. Atla'gimma (Spirits of the Forest) dance. Performers: (Left to Right) Jackie Dawson and Francis Dick. Location: Wawadit'la (Mungo Martin House in Thunderbird Park). programmed during the exhibition Walking Thru My Fires, works by Francis Dick. Photo by Anahita Ranjbar. Image courtesy of University of Victoria Legacy Art Galleries.