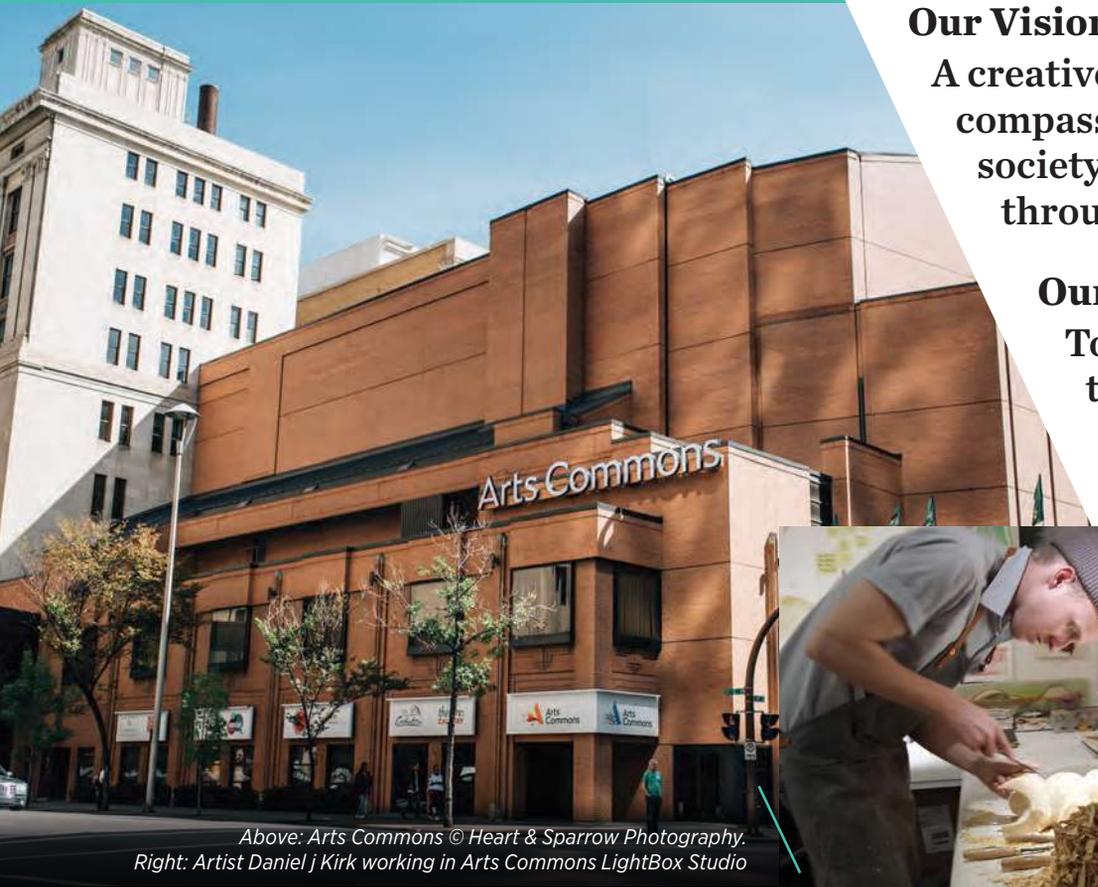




# 2015 2016

 Arts  
Commons

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



## **Our Vision:**

**A creative and  
compassionate  
society, inspired  
through the arts.**

## **Our Mission:**

**To bring the arts...  
to life.**



*Above: Arts Commons © Heart & Sparrow Photography.  
Right: Artist Daniel j Kirk working in Arts Commons LightBox Studio*



## **Our Mandate:**

- 1. To foster, present,  
and promote the arts.**
- 2. To provide and care  
for our assets.**
- 3. To ensure optimal  
access and utilization  
of our assets.**

*Patrons enjoy the opportunity to meet National Geographic Live explorer Carsten Peter, after his show*



It's been an interesting year for our city. The downturn in the economy has affected us all in unexpected ways. However, especially during challenging times, it is the arts that help inspire us, remind us of the abundance that life has to offer, and give us hope. Providing access to this hope is our motivation.

This year, despite our collective struggle, we continued to create accessible opportunities for our community by hosting free public events and providing complimentary tickets to those who would otherwise be unable to attend. We distributed over 2,200 free show tickets through the TD Arts Access Pass, with nearly 900 of those allocated to families and children. We also welcomed over 8,000 students to the Jack Singer Concert Hall for *National Geographic Live*, with 6,656 of those attending for free through the EXPLORE National Geographic program. In these ways, we endeavour to bring the arts to every life, and remain grateful for the ongoing support of our patrons, donors, and sponsors. Without you, none of this would be possible.

Free Happenings art parties invite people to interact directly with visual artists



During this past season, we have taken audiences on journeys of discovery and enlightenment – we explored the *Blue Ocean* and the rebirth of an African wilderness, with *National Geographic Live*, moved people to tears with the whirling dervish during the BD&P World Music presentation of Canadian-Iranian artists Niyaz's performance, and hosted the Calgary memorial for the victims of the Orlando shooting (in partnership with Calgary Outlink). We also continued our collaboration with CADME (Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education) to make a masterclass and workshop possible for an auditorium full of students with New York jazz legends the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, and brought the house down with the TD Jazz presentation of Gregory Porter. During our hugely successful *Happenings* events, we also welcomed thousands from the community into our space to interact with visual and interdisciplinary artists in a whole new way. These are just a few examples of the artistic and cultural intersections that happened this past year at Arts Commons. And this is why we do what we do.

We believe that the arts act as both a mirror and a window. The arts reflect our lives, inspiring conversation, thoughtfulness, and action. The arts also act as a gateway towards the possible, allowing us to see the world in a new light. We hope you had the opportunity to enjoy some of our Arts Commons Presents programming and experienced some of the hope and inspiration that only the arts can provide.



Singer-songwriter Danielle French shares her music outside centre court

**Johann F. Zietsman**  
President and CEO

**Henry W. Sykes, Q.C.**  
Chair, Board of Directors

# Arts Commons Core Values

How we behave and what we do defines who we are as an organization. We are passionate about our work and the contribution it makes to our society. Our commitment to each other, to our patrons, and to our community is to:

- ★ **Be our best, always** – in service, professionalism, and providing a quality experience.
- ★ **Do the right thing** – considering the facts, erring on the side of grace, and behaving with integrity.
- ★ **Be open** – in our minds, hearts, and arms, we value teamwork, empathy, and collaboration.

Thank you for your feedback – that which helps us learn, and that which reminds us of the significance of what we do.



Arts Commons staff members engaging in conversation at the Living our Values workshop



*“Your staff completely saved our anniversary and helped us have a really great experience. We really had a wonderful time at the show. Thank you thank you thank you. Your staff are the true rock stars of any show! With much gratitude for your kindness.”*

*- Mrs. Christy Ziehl Mallett & Mr. Tyler Mallett,  
patrons of Arts Commons*

Arts Commons Box Office team



**Core values**  
How we behave when we do what we do.

Be our best, always	Do the right thing	Be open: minds, hearts, arms
In service	Behave with integrity	Teamwork
In leadership	Consider the facts	Empathy
In professionalism	Apply professionalism	Openness
In providing a quality experience	Consider sustainability	Trust
Problem-solving	Balance dollars vs values	Collaboration
Learn from failure	Be honest	Empowerment
Effective	Err on the side of grace	Own the relationship
Efficient	Balance	Seize opportunity

Arts Commons



*“One night, we encountered a lost patron. Through the investigative work of our Ticketing Services Manager (Jen), we discovered that the patron was meant to meet her friend at the Jubilee. When she expressed some trepidation at taking the C-Train, Jen provided change for the fare, escorted her to the platform, and ensured that she got on the right line and knew her stop. She also phoned the Jubilee to ensure someone was there to assist her when she arrived. This was a clear example of going above and beyond.”*

- Laura Castle, Ticketing Coordinator

Arts Commons leadership team leading staff Living our Values workshop, held in the Engineered Air Theatre

# Community and Patron Impact

Arts Commons exists to serve our community and be not only an integral part of Calgary's cultural landscape, but an important gathering place in both good times and bad.

After the tragic fire in Fort McMurray, we were honoured to host an event in the Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby recognizing and thanking the firefighters, nurses, and other first responders for their around the clock dedication to the people affected by the fire.

Being the premier venue in the city, Arts Commons was equally proud to host and be the venue sponsor for the

Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala for the 2nd year in a row. This event provides profile for local and national artists and brings the community together to celebrate film and those behind its creation.

This past year, Arts Commons also developed a shared services agreement with the Alberta Ballet. Along with becoming a ticketing consortium member, the Ballet will obtain assistance with financial services, including financial reporting and payroll. This collaboration creates efficiencies and in turn, allows all parties to better serve patrons and impact our community in positive ways.



*“Arts Commons is a fantastic organization with top notch facilities. They are exceptionally supportive of the Calgary arts community and we look forward to working with them again.”*

~ Jennifer Cecconui,  
Calgary International Film Festival

Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala featuring musician Christian Hudson



Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala, Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby, Arts Commons

# Contributing to the Future

As part of the Arts Commons five-year plan, and with the generous support of our Lead Sponsor for Arts Learning ConocoPhillips Canada, we have prioritized making vital interactions between artists and students possible. In a once in a lifetime opportunity, five high schools were invited to bring their jazz ensembles to the Jack Singer Concert Hall for a full day workshop with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, which for the past 50 years has been the house

band for the infamous Village Vanguard Club in New York City. With the support and close partnership of CADME (Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education) 1,200 students were also given a private concert and an incredible learning experience that many will remember for the rest of their lives. Several prominent Calgary jazz musicians indicated that this was “the most significant jazz event in Calgary’s history.”

**10,056**  
students engaged  
in Arts Commons  
Presents Arts  
Learning programs

**1,200**  
students attended  
the private CADME  
concert with  
Vanguard Jazz  
Orchestra



*CADME student learns first hand from a Vanguard Jazz Orchestra artist*



*“On behalf of the members of Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, I want to express my deep appreciation to you both for bringing VJO to Calgary. It was a highlight of our 50th anniversary year. Thanks so much for having the vision and stamina to have us perform for your young musicians and general public.”*

*~ Douglas Purviance, Orchestra Manager, Vanguard Jazz Orchestra*



CADME students engaged in a workshop with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra Artists

# Relevant and Current

It is not every day that a local, emerging artist gets to open for an international award winning artist on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage, or use an entire building as a blank canvas for their self-expression, but Arts Commons makes this happen. This past year, Calgary's own Ellen Doty with Josh Crowhurst opened for jazz's new "it" boy, Gregory Porter, and artist Rob Knudsen was given carte blanche to apply his creativity to the Arts Commons building. Knudsen's work resulted in "This Feels So Real", the square plot of artificial grass mounted

on the side of the building with the title carved out, and the HB pencils designed out of the bollards around the parkade entrance. You can find more of his work in some of the most unexpected places throughout the building as well.

For the 100 year anniversary of women receiving the vote in Alberta, Arts Commons collaborated with the community and facilitated an incredible day-long celebration themed around women's rights, empowerment, and equality. The day started off with the

Union Choir collaborating with members of Sisters from Another Mother singing 'Songs for All Women' on the Jack Singer Concert Hall steps. The members of the Union Choir were honoured to showcase the music of Indigenous women as taught by Calgary musicians Chantal Chagnon and Cheryle Chagnon-Greyeyes. The day continued with a visual arts tour of feminist art in the Window Galleries, and closed with a screening of *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*, as part of the Artflicks! series.



HB Pencils, by artist Rob Knudsen



*“Working with Arts Commons  
I was given a lot more freedom than  
I’m used to while creating art in  
a public space. They told me, ‘You  
can do anything, no limits, except  
paint on the heritage building’”*

- Rob Knudsen, resident artist

Union Choir performs on the steps of the Jack Singer Concert Hall, Arts Commons



This Feels so Real, by artist Rob Knudsen



Ellen Doty with Josh Crowhurst open for Arts Commons Presents TD Jazz, Gregory Porter on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage

**479**  
artists engaged through  
Arts Commons Presents

# A Season of Excellence

This year, thousands of people walked through the doors of Arts Commons, sat in our seats, strolled through our halls, and were impacted by the creativity and imagination that occur within our walls. In total, 31,664 people attended Arts Commons Presents shows in the acoustically brilliant Jack Singer Concert Hall, embracing music from around the world through the BD&P World Music and TD Jazz series, and learning about the world around us through *National Geographic Live*. PCL Blues celebrated 18 years of performance in the intimate and recently renovated Engineered Air Theatre. Over 20 brides and grooms exchanged vows on our beautiful

stages and reception halls and over 190 community user groups held their special events in our spaces. Artflicks! wrapped up for good, after an amazing season, which included both the premiere and two additional screenings of *The Peel*, a documentary following six Canadian artists paddling through North America's last intact river system, in an attempt to raise awareness and prompt action for its protection. *The Peel* artists were in residence at Arts Commons and were also featured in the Lightbox gallery and the +15 Soundscape.

We are proud to have shared in these powerful, passionate, and unforgettable moments with you.



Wedding ceremony, Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby © Heart & Sparrow Photography



National Geographic Live speaker Bob Poole on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage

**56,201**  
people engaged in  
Arts Commons Presents  
programming

(includes paid & unpaid attendance,  
audience, students, teachers, artists)

**24,885**  
patrons purchased  
tickets to Arts Commons  
Presents shows

Arts Commons Presents, BD&P World Music  
Yamato the Drummers of Japan, Jack Singer Concert Hall



*“When artists and  
community come  
together, amazing  
things can happen.”*

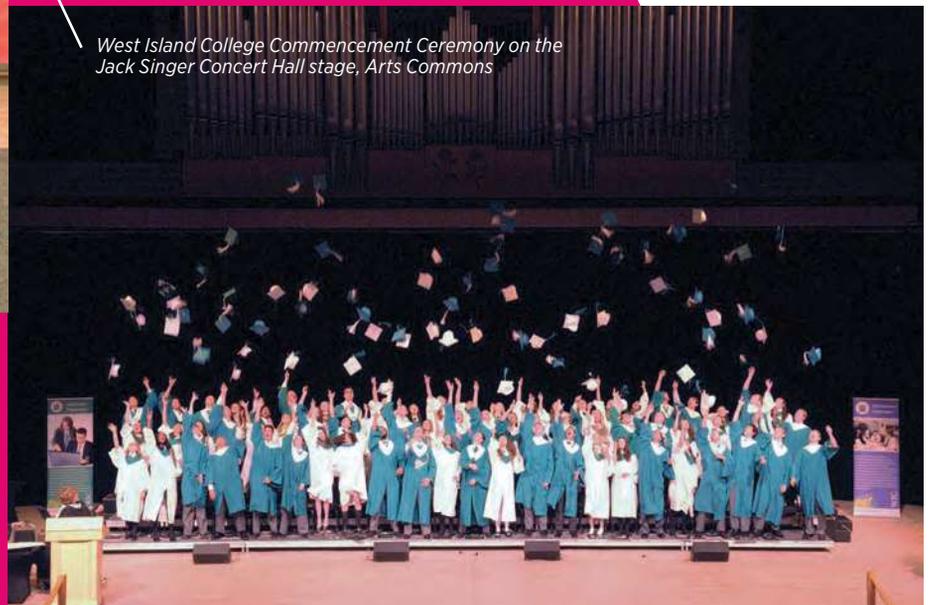
~ Jennifer Johnson,  
Director of Programming.



Q & A with the cast of *The Peel*, Engineered Air Theatre



Arts Commons, Front of House staff



West Island College Commencement Ceremony on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage, Arts Commons



1097

events booked by  
Venue & Event  
Management

*“We are very pleased to be holding our third consecutive Commencement Ceremony at the lovely Jack Singer Concert Hall. It is a spectacular venue for this special moment and our graduates and their families have nothing but great things to say about the reception we host in the lobby afterwards.”*

- Tina Butz, West Island College

# Arts Commons is... **Passion**

Arts Commons is proud to have passionate and dedicated staff that take great pride in operating and maintaining the 560,000 sq-ft facility to the highest standards. The venue and event staff, the facility management crew, and the administrative team alike, are driven to give audiences and artists the best experience possible. In our dedication to operating sustainably and reducing “dark days”, venue and event management booked 1,097 events this year, up from 974 events in 2014-15. In addition, 18 Founders Circle and Explorer Circle Membership events were held, contributing to our fundraising efforts, providing behind-the-scenes opportunities, and enhancing the overall patron experience.



Arts Commons staff with artist composer-pianist Mark Limacher



Arts Commons' Director of Facilities, Wes Jenkins (centre), and longtime Founders Circle Members, Bryan Clarke and Michel Bourque on a backstage tour of the Martha Cohen Theatre. © Will Young.

**61**  
full time staff

# Arts Commons is... **Accessible**

Through the TD Arts Access Pass, Kids Up Front, and other community giving programs, Arts Commons Presents was able to provide free tickets to 15,803 new Canadian citizens, families in need, and so many other Calgarians who wouldn't otherwise be able to enjoy these enriching cultural experiences. Additionally, Arts Commons held free events including the hugely popular *Happenings* evenings, which encourages the public to interact with art and artists, and is never the same twice.



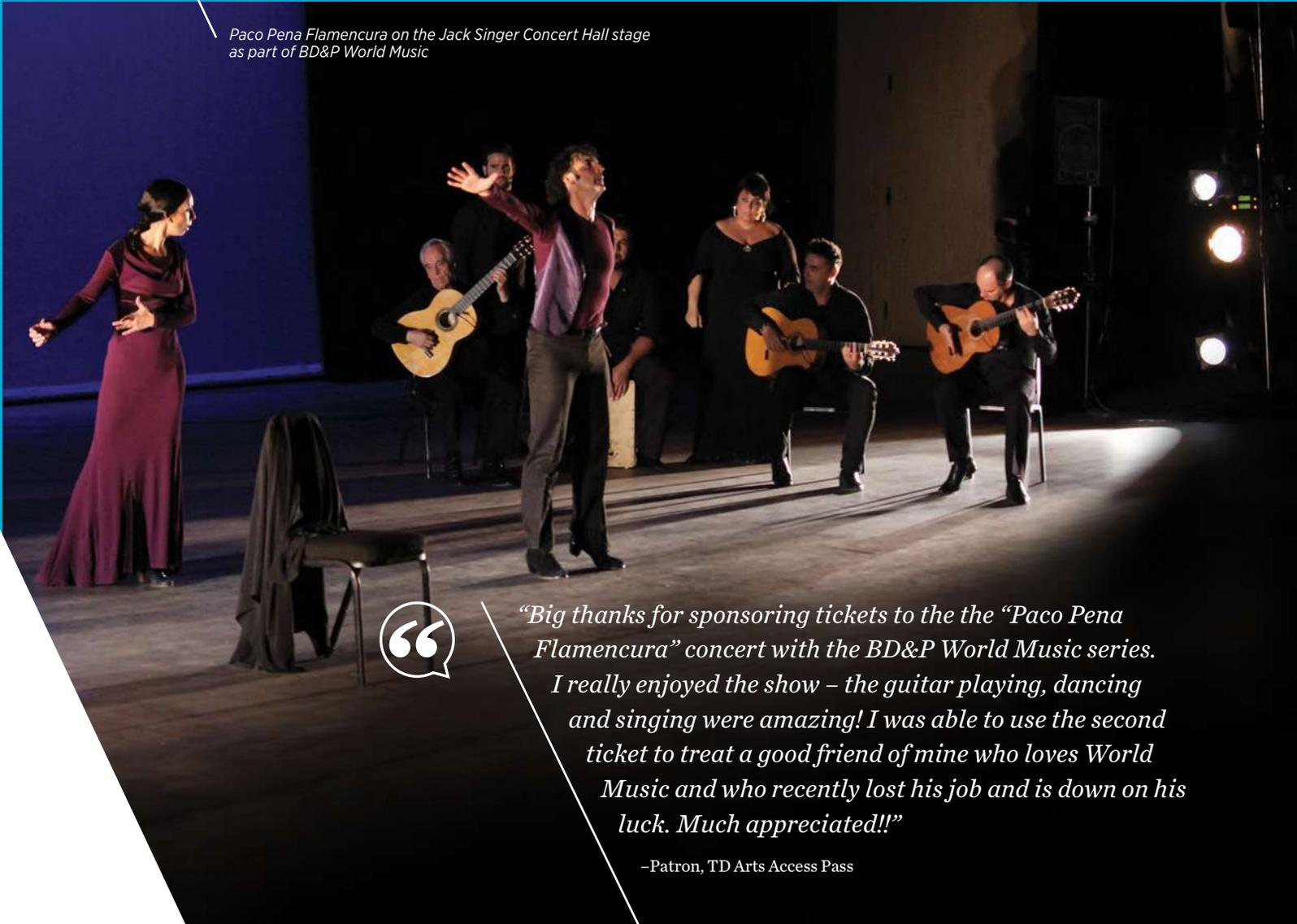
Left: Chalk artist Jenny Bonar decorates centre court entrance for the Happenings 5 event. Right: Free Happenings printmaking activity with artist Trevor Gieske



Happenings, artist Kris Ellestad

**15,803**  
people attended an  
event FREE of charge

Paco Pena Flamencura on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage as part of BD&P World Music



*“Big thanks for sponsoring tickets to the the “Paco Pena Flamencura” concert with the BD&P World Music series. I really enjoyed the show – the guitar playing, dancing and singing were amazing! I was able to use the second ticket to treat a good friend of mine who loves World Music and who recently lost his job and is down on his luck. Much appreciated!!”*

*– Patron, TD Arts Access Pass*

**2,259**

patrons benefited from  
FREE show tickets, through  
the TD Arts Access Pass

# Arts Commons is... **Vital**

Arts Commons is an incubator and leader in the development of emerging artists in Calgary, providing experience and support that builds artist repertoire and qualifications for various funding and professional development streams. Along with providing showcasing opportunities for musicians, Arts Commons Visual and Media Arts Programs support and promote predominantly local emerging

individual artists and collectives to create innovative, thought-provoking, and exceptional work. We provide multiple non-traditional gallery spaces and opportunities for artists to take supportive risks at a professional level that helps provide valuable experience. Working with 165 visual artists during the 2015-16 season, the number of local artists we support continues to grow ever year.

*Arts Commons, Lightbox Gallery.  
Featuring Sarah Nordean*



**165**

visual and media  
artists engaged



*Arts Commons, Window Galleries exhibition*



*“It is difficult to “nutshell” Arts Commons. I have played in most of the theaters and even the hallways, I have been in residency at the Ledge Gallery, and as a patron, I have experienced much more. There is no other place in the city as diverse and dynamic for the arts community - a unique and critical hub for Calgary.”*

*- Mark Limacher, composer-pianist*

*Mark Limacher and Brianna Strong experiment with visually representing music in the Ledge Gallery.*

# Arts Commons is... **Education**

The Hub for Inspired Learning entered its first full year during the 2015-16 season welcoming 483 students to participate. Partnering with Campus Calgary Open Minds, Arts Commons provides an innovative learning environment, allowing students to explore new ways to communicate, as well as interact with each other through visual arts, dance, music, and theatre. This season's activities ranged from mask-making to journal writing, and even creating life-sized statues of

themselves that were then displayed throughout the centre for the public to engage with. Educator feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, paving the way for many successful years to come.

The *National Geographic Live* education program also welcomed 8,198 students to this spectacular speaker series, over 600 students participated in One Day Arts School, and the immersive SummerACT musical theatre program was sold out!

*National Geographic Live*



**483**  
students enrolled  
in the Hub for  
Inspired Learning

*Students discover a new style of learning with the Hub for Inspired Learning*

**8,198**  
students attended a  
*National Geographic  
Live* student show



*“I had a student who was excited to participate at the site, who ‘blossomed’ at school during our rehearsals and final production. Their in-class behavior has been more confident in their verbal expression as well as their peer relations.”*

*- Teacher, Light of Christ school, participant in the Hub for Inspired Learning program*



*SummerACT students perform their original work on the Engineered Air Theatre stage*



*One Day Arts School workshop*

*Hub for Inspiring Learning students created life-sized statues of themselves*



**633**

students who participated in One Day Arts School

# Arts Commons is...

# Engagement

During the Arts Commons 2015-16 season, the volunteer base more than doubled with the launch of our new volunteer program, engaging individuals on multiple levels throughout our organization, including marketing and communications, development, and programming (specifically for our *Happenings* artist receptions and parties).

We also launched our new concierge program, creating a team of brand

ambassadors and Arts Commons guides and service providers for our patrons. As we move forward, we're excited to expand our concierge program to offer a superior level of customer service inside our building and for the surrounding area. Not only does this program help patrons navigate the building, but also allows for a deeper exchange of information about the space and everything that happens within.



Volunteer at Happenings



*“...you folks at Arts Commons treat us so well and this is just the beginning! You’re going above and beyond helping us newer volunteers feel comfortable with the Volunteer Program, the Concierge Role, other opportunities and how everything works. I’m really looking forward to being part of (and hope I can help create) a great volunteer experience with Arts Commons. So... “Thank You!”*

~ Lynda, Volunteer Program participant



Volunteers help with Arts Commons festival tent



Volunteers introduce the new concierge program to patrons in Arts Commons

*"I am very glad to be a part of the Volunteer Program at Arts Commons, it is a great opportunity to become exposed to the arts community in Calgary while at the same time promoting a sense of community."*

- Melissa, Volunteer Program participant

# Arts Commons is... **Community**

Arts Commons is the home to some of Calgary's most innovative artistic organizations, and is proud to present and promote creative collaboration within our city. As part of our commitment to being a gathering place and collaborator for our community, we have created the Community Opportunity Fund. This fund has been developed to allow community and arts organizations to apply for a sponsorship opportunity to host their

event(s) at Arts Commons whether for a performance, rehearsal, readings, or workshop. Criteria includes being a Canadian-based organization and the event being arts related and impactful on the community. This year, the fund benefited music, dance, puppetry, theatre, and more, further broadening the depth and breadth of culture which happens here at Arts Commons.

*Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in the Jack Singer Lobby*



**15**

organizations that benefited from the Community Opportunity Fund

*“The Community Opportunity Fund Campaign (COF) allowed a small-size local music school like us to provide our students with a performance experience that has developed a sense of community, nurture the joy of live music making and self-expression, in a professional, yet intimate recital venue like the Engineered Air Theatre. We truly appreciate the support of local talent development through programs like the COF.”*

- Alicia Romero, Avant Garde Music Studio

\$100 Film Festival  
 5 Star Entertainment  
 ABEC Promotions Inc.  
 Absolute Dance Inc.  
 Adult Recreation  
 Choir Society  
 Alberta Association of  
 Architects  
 Alberta Theatre Projects  
 Alexandra Young  
 Amber Arts Inc.  
 Arts Commons Presents  
 Avant-Garde Music  
 Studio  
 Backside Tours  
 Ballet de Moscou, Inc.  
 Birnton Theatricals  
 Bishop Carroll High  
 School  
 BLG Awards  
 Bow Valley College  
 Brian Farrell Music Inc.  
 Brooks & Dodd  
 Consulting Inc.  
 Calgary Association  
 for the Development of  
 Music Education  
 Calgary Catholic School  
 District  
 Calgary Civic Symphony  
 Calgary Congress for  
 Equity & Diversity in  
 the Arts  
 Calgary Girls Choir  
 Calgary Housing  
 Company  
 Calgary Immigrant  
 Women's Association  
 Calgary International  
 Children's Festival  
 Calgary International  
 Film Festival  
 Calgary Municipal Land  
 Corporation

Calgary Oracle Users  
 Group  
 Calgary Outlink Centre  
 For Gender and Sexual  
 Diversity  
 Calgary Philharmonic  
 Orchestra  
 Calgary Queen's  
 University Alumni  
 Association  
 Calgary Society of  
 Organists  
 Calgary Tundra Swan  
 Dance School  
 Canadian Society  
 for Unconventional  
 Resources  
 Canadian Society of  
 Petroleum Geologists  
 Canadian Voice Care  
 Foundation  
 Children's School of  
 Dance  
 Christine & Kevin  
 Nguyen  
 Chromatic Theatre  
 City of Calgary  
 City of Calgary -  
 Community Standards  
 City of Calgary -  
 Corporate Properties  
 & Buildings  
 City of Calgary -  
 CSC Digital Forum  
 City of Calgary -  
 Customer Service  
 & Communication  
 City of Calgary -  
 Environmental and  
 Safety Management  
 City of Calgary -  
 Information Technology  
 Services  
 City of Calgary - IT  
 Application Support  
 City of Calgary - Parks  
 and Recreation  
 City of Calgary - Urban  
 Strategy

Columbia College  
 Conrad Belau  
 Coopérative  
 Théâtre à Pic  
 Dance on Edge  
 Dance Spectrum  
 Dark Matter  
 Productions  
 Dean Kolundzic  
 DeFakto Theatre  
 Dell Canada  
 Diana Paul Galleries  
 Digital Zone Media  
 Diversity Dance  
 & Performing Arts  
 Downstage  
 Dr. E.P.Scarlett  
 High School  
 EMH Productions Inc.  
 Erikaentertainment  
 Ernst & Young, L.L.P.  
 Experience Church  
 Fairmont Hotels and  
 Resorts, Canada's  
 Western Mountain  
 Region  
 Fashion Calgary  
 Festival Chorus  
 Fire Exit Theatre  
 Company  
 Foothills Academy  
 Free for All Marketing  
 FUNNYFEST Calgary  
 Comedy Festival  
 Government of Alberta -  
 Alberta Infrastructure  
 Governors of the  
 University of Calgary  
 National Trust for  
 Canada / Fiducie  
 Nationale du Canada  
 Hitachi Solutions  
 Canada, Ltd.  
 Holly Blazina

Honens  
 Husky Energy  
 Independent Living  
 Resource Centre of  
 Calgary  
 Inglesia Productions  
 Inside Out Theatre  
 International Live  
 Events Association,  
 Calgary  
 Jacquelyn Perron  
 Jaime Tinevez  
 Jeff Parry Promotions  
 Jennifer Mansell  
 Jeremy Johnson  
 Jeunesse Classique  
 Ballet Society  
 Jewish National Fund  
 - Calgary  
 JUNO Awards  
 La Pointe Dance  
 Legacy Kitchens  
 Lighthouse Labs  
 Link PR Incorporated  
 Live Nation Canada Inc.  
 Luxor Group of  
 Companies  
 Martyna Gatkiewicz  
 & Christopher Ian Cox  
 Mawer Investment  
 Management Ltd.  
 Meridican Incentive  
 Consultants  
 Michelle Thrush  
 Minimax Group Inc.  
 Morin Music Studio  
 MPACT Dance  
 MS Society of Canada  
 Musica Academy  
 New Pathway  
 New West Symphony  
 & Chorus  
 Nexen Energy ULC  
 Next Level  
 Entertainment  
 Service Inc.  
 Nimble Storage  
 North American  
 Resource  
 Management Inc.  
 Northland Oral Surgery  
 One Yellow Rabbit  
 Performance Theatre  
 Orff the Wall

Paul Mercs Concerts Inc.  
 Pechakucha Night  
 Peripheral Theatre  
 PREPSKILLS INC.  
 Pride Calgary  
 Planning Committee  
 Productions Juste  
 pour rire II Inc.  
 Professional Association  
 of Canadian Theatres  
 QED Marketing Inc.  
 Red Deer Symphony  
 Renee Howey and  
 Patrick Boyd  
 Revv52  
 River Street Productions  
 Romanian-Canadian  
 Cultural Association of  
 Calgary  
 Ronnie Burkett Theatre  
 of Marionettes  
 Rozsa Foundation  
 Sai Productions  
 SAIT Student Association:  
 Architectural  
 Technologies  
 SAIT Student Association:  
 Civil Engineering  
 Technology Students'  
 Club  
 Sakamoto  
 Entertainment  
 Sandra Irwin  
 SDI Marketing & Rogers  
 Hometown Hockey  
 Search Tower Company  
 Serenella Sol  
 Shangrila Calgary  
 Society (SCS)  
 Shantero Productions  
 ShowBiz Production Inc.  
 Showtime Dance  
 Promotions  
 Snap Dance Studios  
 Soul to Sole Dance  
 SoundKreations  
 Security Professional's  
 Information Exchange  
 Society  
 Springboard Dance  
 Square Cat  
 Entertainment  
 SS Entertainment Inc.  
 StageCoach Theatre  
 Arts Calgary

Stampede  
 Entertainment Inc.  
 Studio C  
 Teachers Convention  
 TEDxYYC  
 The Calgary  
 International Burlesque  
 Festival  
 The Garter Girls Inc.  
 The Russian Theatre  
 Foundation of Calgary  
 The Young Canadians  
 School of Performing  
 Arts  
 Theatre Alberta  
 Theatre BSMT  
 Theatre Calgary  
 Theatre of  
 Consequences  
 Theresa Pinhey  
 & Ryan Brookwell  
 THUGWork Theatre  
 TK Events Inc.  
 Tourism Calgary  
 Traugott Building  
 Contractors  
 Tri-Tone Productions  
 Two Towers  
 Ultimate Dance  
 Company  
 Union Events  
 University of  
 British Columbia -  
 Development & Alumni  
 Engagement  
 University of Lethbridge  
 Urban Dance Projects  
 Urban Stories Theatre  
 Vietnamese Buddhist  
 Congregation in Calgary  
 Viva Musica Studio Ltd.  
 W.P. Puppet  
 Theatre Society  
 Wayne Jones Comedy  
 West Island College  
 Western Canada  
 High School  
 Wild Rose Dance  
 Arts Association  
 Wordfest  
 World Beauty Fitness  
 and Fashion Inc  
 Youth Singers of Calgary  
 Youth World  
 Petroleum Council  
 Yum Yum Catering Ltd.

191  
 community groups  
 who made use of  
 Arts Commons' facilities

# Arts Commons is... **United**

Within the walls of Arts Commons, magic happens. From the seven resident companies to the multitude of community groups who share our space, stories are told, experiences are shared, and doors to inspiration and creativity are opened. In the 2015-16 season, Theatre Calgary's *The Little Prince* took us on a fantastical journey across the stars in the Max Bell Theatre, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra filled Jack Singer Concert Hall with inspiring, uplifting, and powerful music, and One Yellow Rabbit Performance Theatre celebrated 30 years of presenting the High Performance Rodeo with a line-up that ranged from

a grassroots Calgary song project to a performance in an elevator. In the Martha Cohen Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects premiered *The Circle* by Geoffrey Simon Brown, a new Canadian play that starred an all-Albertan cast, fostering the future of theatre in our province, while Downstage worked tirelessly to remove barriers that might discourage patrons from enjoying their ground-breaking productions. And the Calgary International Children's Festival provided over 60,000 arts experiences to children, parents, and teachers in our building and on Olympic Plaza, confirming them to be the best at theatre for young people.



*“My best memory of Arts Commons was hearing the Johnny Gaudreau anthem in One Yellow Rabbit’s Calgary I love you, but you’re killing me. Still has me laughing.”*

~ Julia Best



Cast members of Alberta Theatre Projects' *The Circle* by Geoffrey Simon Brown, 2015 - Photo courtesy of Alberta Theatre Projects

The cast of Theatre Calgary's *The Little Prince – The Musical*.  
© Trudie Lee



*“My favourite music moment was listening to the amazing score for Theatre Calgary’s *The Little Prince* premiere with two 8 year olds.”*

- Sonja



Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra

Calgary International Children’s Festival, 2016.  
© Kelly Hofer



*“It was my first time going to see the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and it was definitely a fantastic experience. The concert hall itself was neat and beautiful. I was overwhelmed with emotions and I will admit that I cried at the end. Overall experience left me with a great memory! Thank you!!!”*

- Cindy Nguyen

Our collective impact combines activities from community groups and resident companies, including Arts Commons Presents:



**430,968**  
tickets distributed

**46,567**  
students inspired

**757**  
artists engaged  
or employed

**889**  
ticketed  
performances

**222**  
FTE positions  
in the building

**1,741**  
volunteers  
participated

**20,931**  
volunteer  
hours spent

# Arts Commons is... **Innovative**

Our facility experienced some magical moments as well. During the 2015-16 season, through the support of the City of Calgary and the Government of Canada, Arts Commons was able to give the Max Bell, Martha Cohen, Engineered Air, and Motel Theatres a face lift with 1,332 new seats, each designed and chosen specifically for their designated theatre. Each seat from three of the theatres was carefully disassembled, in order to recycle and reuse wherever possible. Metal frames were melted down, recycled, and will be turned into new products, while many of the wooden seatbacks were converted into acoustic reflective panels to enhance the Jack Singer Rehearsal Hall! The remaining

seatbacks were donated to Calgary woodworking artists. The dressing rooms of the Jack Singer Concert Hall were also refurbished, providing a much needed upgrade to host our artists, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall seats will be replaced in Summer, 2017.

We also brightened the experience in Big Secret Theatre and Motel with new lighting grids and upgraded the Martha Cohen Theatre with a new lighting console.

These improvements, among many others, not only make the experience more enjoyable for our patrons, but also for the artists who rehearse and perform under our roof.



*Max Bell Theatre was one of four theatres in Arts Commons to receive new seating*



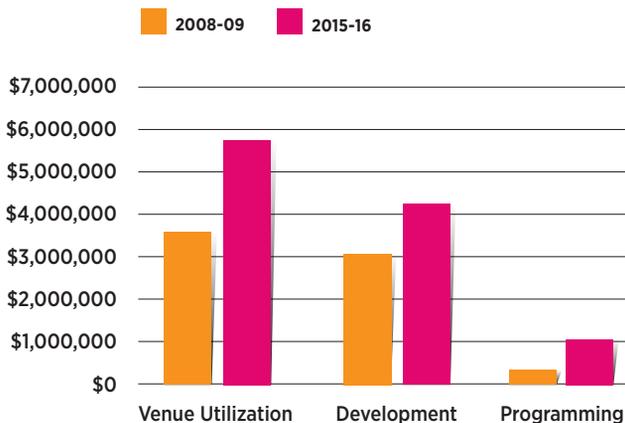
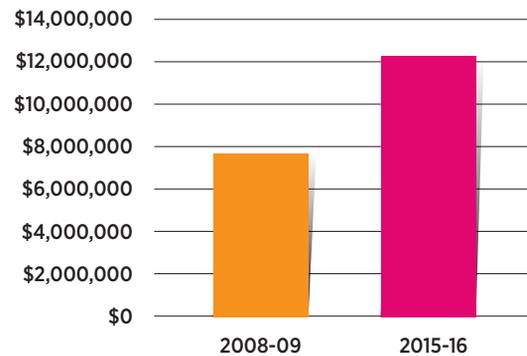
*Jack Singer Concert Hall Rehearsal Room acoustic ceiling created from the recycled backs of the old Max Bell Theatre seats*

# Arts Commons is... **Sustainable**

## Revenue Growth and Diversification

When the current management of Arts Commons took over in fiscal year 2009-10, the organization was facing a large deficit which required significant cuts to operating expenses in order to reduce the overall deficit to just over \$100K. Understanding that cutting expenses was a short term measure and that we needed to grow and diversify revenue streams to ensure the future of the organization, a longer term plan was developed.

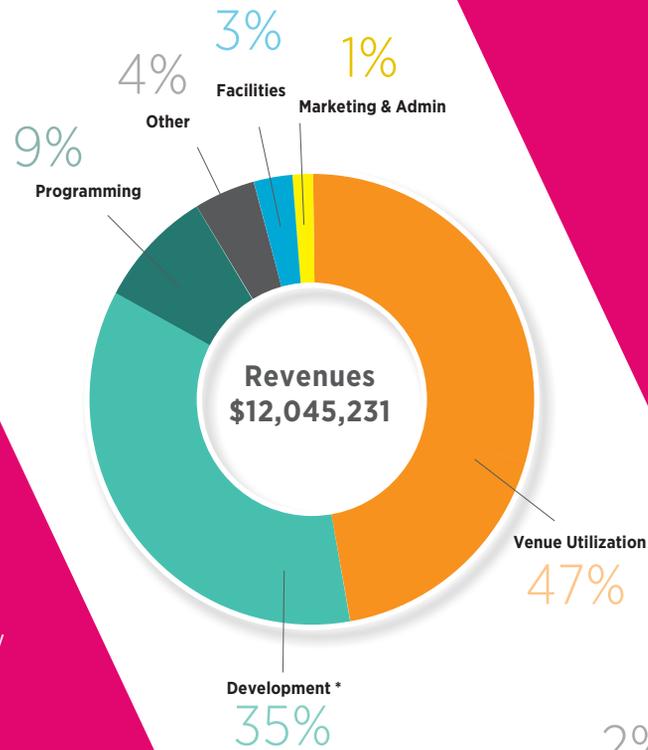
Seven years later we can see the results of that strategy with revenues increasing over 61% in 2015-16 when compared to 2008-09 results (right).



The focus on maximizing revenues included:

- Increased and innovative use of venues
- Expanding our role as a presenter & programmer
  - New series
  - Additional arts learning offerings
  - Increased public programming
- Strengthening our relationships with all levels of government and the community (development)

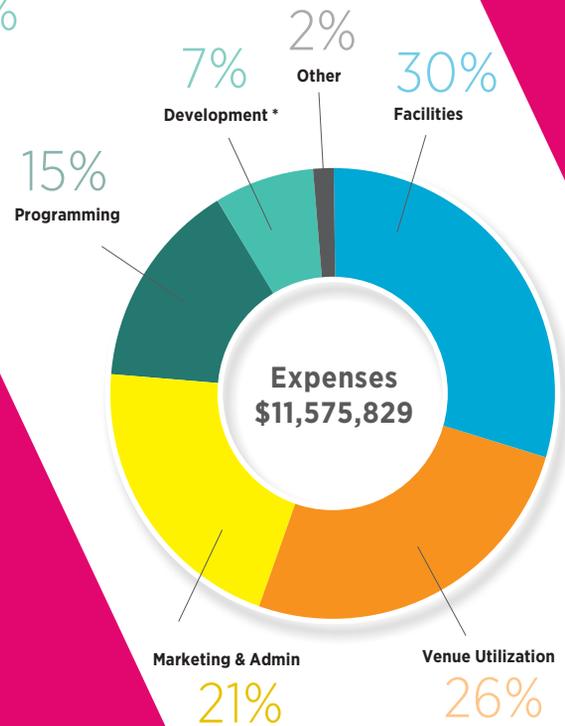
Resulting in increases from 41 to 133% in three key areas: venue utilization, programming and development (left).



**Fiscal Year 2015-16 Results**

In our ongoing focus on improving resiliency and sustainability, we continued to pursue revenue opportunities and diversification by maximizing the capacity of our core services and venues while maintaining a competitive cost structure. This resulted in the third consecutive year of positive operational results which will help ensure both the sustainability of our operations and the ability to respond dynamically to opportunities or future challenges as they present themselves.

Despite a successful year, the effects of the economic downturn were significant, with revenues from venue usage and ticket sales down 19% year over year. Gains in development and support service revenues helped offset the impact of the decreased activity.



\* includes \$241,586 of goods and services in kind

# Arts Commons is... **You**

Through the ongoing support and generosity of corporations, foundation, governments, and individuals, Calgarians, as well as visitors to our wonderful city have access to Arts Commons, Calgary's preeminent gathering space. Filled with wonder and imagination, this is where creativity comes to life, remarkable experiences are shared, and meaningful memories are made to last a lifetime.

In the midst of the latest economic crisis facing Alberta, ALSA Road Construction's decision to become a Supporting Sponsor of Arts Commons BD&P World Music and TD Jazz series is nothing less than remarkable. ALSA President, Sam Kamis, believes that business is a creative process and that the quality of Calgary's cultural infrastructure has a direct impact

on quality of life and therefore on the competitiveness of Calgary in attracting people and investment.

For Explorers Circle and Founders Circle members, Dave and Roxanne Dunlop, the arts help us tell our stories, to create dialogue, and foster compassion. *"There are no walls; you walk into a room of friends at Arts Commons."* When other languages fail, art can promote tolerance and provide a forum for exploration, discovery, and understanding.

It's because of the generosity of ALSA, the Dunlops, and many more friends that Arts Commons is able to continue to be a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors.



Roxanne Dunlop (center). © Will Young



*"You can always find a way to give back – even in tough economic times."*

- Sam Kamis, President, ALSA Road Construction – Supporting Sponsor of BD&P World Music & TD Jazz



*"Arts Commons provides authentic experiences that keep us coming back."*

- Dave & Roxanne Dunlop, Explorers Circle & Founders Circle Members

# Private and Public Sector Support

**Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation** to the following corporations, foundations, governments, and passionate community leaders who gave generously to support Arts Commons as we played a key role in the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors throughout the 2015-16 Season.

## Corporate Sponsors and Foundation Partners

 Supporting Sponsor, BD&P World Music & TD Jazz	 Official Brewery	 Title Sponsor, BD&P World Music	 Partner, Hub for Inspired Learning	 Media Sponsor	 Official Printer
 Student Engagement Sponsor, <i>National Geographic Live</i>	 Major Sponsor, Arts Commons Box Office Student Engagement Sponsor, <i>National Geographic Live</i> Lead Sponsor, Arts Education Program	 Official Hotel	 Title Sponsor, PCL Blues	 Media Sponsor	 Media Sponsor
 Series Presenting Sponsor, <i>National Geographic Live</i>	 Sponsor, EXPLORE National Geographic, <i>National Geographic Live</i>	 Media Sponsor	 Sponsor, EXPLORE National Geographic, <i>National Geographic Live</i>	 Supporting Sponsor, BD&P World Music	 Title Sponsor, TD Jazz Title Sponsor, TD Arts Access Pass

## Corporate Sponsors and Foundation Partners Cont.

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**Teatro Restaurant Group**  
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## Government

**Operating/Program Support**

Government of Canada through  
the Departments of Canadian  
Heritage, and Service Canada

Government of Alberta through  
the Departments of Culture & Tourism,  
Alberta Labour, and the Alberta  
Foundation for the Arts

The City of Calgary through the  
Department of Community Services  
& Protective Services

**Capital Support**

Government of Canada through  
Canadian Heritage

The City of Calgary through the  
Department of Community Services  
& Protective Services

Gift from the Arts Commons  
Endowment Fund at the  
Calgary Foundation.

## Arts Commons FOUNDERS CIRCLE

Members of Founders Circle support Arts Commons' education programs, which make the arts more accessible to young minds through a variety of impactful initiatives, such as the Hub for Inspired Learning; and, they help us bring renowned artists to perform in the BD&P World Music and TD Jazz, to name only two of the series presented by Arts Commons.



Longtime Explorers Circle and Founders Circle members Ken Havard and Bob Benzen enjoy the Founders Circle Dinner. © Will Young

### HONOURARY MEMBERS

Dr. Martha Cohen, CM, LLD (*in memoriam*)  
Sandra LeBlanc  
Vera Swanson, OC

### LEGACY BUILDER MEMBERS

Estate of Dr. Martha Cohen, CM, LLD (*in memoriam*)  
Ken & Chris (*in memoriam*) Havard  
Henry Sykes, QC & Molly Naber-Sykes

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Randy & Luba Pettipas  
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Susan Van Niekerk  
Sandra J. Watson  
Darrel Winter

## Arts Commons EXPLORERS CIRCLE

All members of Explorers Circle help National Geographic Society to inspire people to care about the planet and aid Arts Commons in bringing the distinguished National Geographic Live speaker series to Calgary.



Explorers Circle Associate Members Nyssa and Jordan Moore mingle with the National Geographic Live Explorer Dr. Sylvia Earle (right) © Richard Lam

### ENGAGEMENT SPONSORS

Bob & Sue Benzen - Gorongosa Reborn: A Cameraman's Journal by Wildlife Filmmaker Bob Poole  
Ken & Chris (*in memoriam*) Havard - Blue Ocean by Explorer-in-Residence and Marine Biologist Dr. Sylvia Earle

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Jane Golubev & Igor Tesker  
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Tharrie & Johann Zietsman

# Board and Staff

Arts Commons is where people from all walks of life can come together. Our staff include: artists, educators, and subject matter experts who commit their time and attention to their work because of their passion for it. Working at Arts Commons is more than a job. We understand the impact the arts have on our community and we are dedicated to bringing the arts to every life.

Arts Commons also welcomes members from our greater community to serve on our Board of Directors, bringing fresh viewpoints, and sharing their diverse experience with the staff, volunteers, and patrons of our organization. We are proud to have a member from each of our resident companies currently serving on our Board, bringing their point of view, expertise, and knowledge.

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*Building Operator*

### **Johann Zietsman**

*President & CEO*

**Arts Commons**

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403-294-7455 / artscommons.ca

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Charitable Registration Number 11882 3269 RR0001 (Registered as Calgary Centre for Performing Arts)

Cover: TD Jazz, Gregory Porter, performing on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage.

Back cover: BD&P World Music, Yamato The Drummers of Japan - Bakuon.