

MEDIA RELEASE



For Immediate Release

Arts Commons Presents: The Transformative Power of the Arts Leads the Conversation on Mental Wellness on Stage with Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 3 Leading Up to CMHA Mental Health Week

March 27, 2024 - CALGARY – In the third chapter the 2023-24 TD Amplify series from Arts Commons Presents, local artists Noreen Demeria, Kamika Bianca Guerra-Walker, Sandra Sutter, and Tara Vahab tackle the concept of art as a tool in the pursuit of mental wellness. ***Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 3***, curated by Calgary Poet Laureate Wakefield Brewster, takes this dialogue to the stage with interdisciplinary artists whose practice spans music, visual arts, film, and poetry. Join **Arts Commons Presents April 26 & 27, 2024 at 8 p.m.** for the TD Amplify series performance of ***Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 3***, live in the underground **Engineered Air Theatre at Arts Commons**. Learn more at artscommons.ca/amplify.

Part 1 and part 2 of *Wakefield Brewster Presents* took audiences by storm this past November and February. From spoken word and dance to classical violin, the series has offered something for everyone. Audience members called it “beyond expectations” from an “outstanding selection of new artists” and “the best show I've seen so far this year.” The TD Amplify series showcases Calgary artists in conversation with the most pressing cultural, artistic, and social conversations of today, all of whom are season participants in the Arts Commons TD Incubator program.

Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 3 brings an all-women roster of artists to the stage, exploring the connection between mental wellness and therapeutic artistic expression. This line-up includes traditional Indigenous drummer and singer Noreen Demeria, poet and filmmaker Kamika Bianca Guerra-Walker, singer/songwriter Sandra Sutter, and visual and performance artist Tara Vahab. As curator of the TD Amplify series, Wakefield Brewster will return with his newest experiment *PoeThree* to cap off this evening showcasing local talent.

“The work onstage at TD Amplify is some of the most exciting work happening anywhere in the city,” says VP of Programming Sarah Garton Stanley (SGS). “Wakefield Brewster is a force for creative greatness and his collaboration with the visionary Josh Dalledonne, Associate Director of Creative at Arts Commons on the TD Incubator program, and the artists of Calgary is beyond exciting.”

Leading up to Canadian Mental Health Associations’ Mental Health Week, *Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 3* is set to inspire and lift spirits as with each performer weaving wellness throughout their artistic practice. Whether these artists positively impact their own mental well-being, or it is in the form of arts-based techniques being applied in therapy practice, the power of art to lift us up is undeniable. For Wakefield Brewster, the weaving of mental wellness into his art was essential to discovering his true potential.

“I did not realize until well into my career that I was using my words, using my art, to write my way into wellness. When I unlocked this understanding, I unlocked a whole new part of myself and that in turn inspired by practice,” says Wakefield Brewster. “I am thrilled for Calgary audiences to experience this wonderful showcase of four women who will share their truths. They will each approach the idea of mental wellness from different cultural, generational, and spiritual perspective and in turn add their unique pieces to our ‘people puzzle.’ As artists, we are honoured to go on this journey with you.”

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The performers of the TD Amplify series are members of the TD Incubator artist development program, which provides performance and exhibition opportunities in addition to networking, professional development, and mentorship. Each season of TD Incubator is guided by the leadership of the program Fellow(s) with past Fellows including Jae Sterling and Contra, and Sargeant x Comrade. Arts Commons is thrilled to continue this outstanding artistic leadership of the program with Wakefield Brewster, alumnus of the TD Incubator program himself in addition to being the 2022 – 2024 Calgary Poet Laureate.

Calgary audiences are coming to the TD Amplify series to be among the first to experience where the next wave of Calgary’s arts and culture scene is breaking, and to be part of the energy in the underground Engineered Air Theatre afterparty. Artists featured in the series are selected from TD Incubator, an artist mentorship program at Arts Commons that focuses on developing local talent and providing them with opportunities to share their powerful art forms with new audiences.

“This cohort of artists is connected, dynamic, and continues to lift-up Arts Commons in the same spirit that we aim to amplify and advance their voices. It’s a gift to witness audiences connect with these artists here and to know that this is only the beginning of a long relationship that will echo far beyond our walls,” says Joshua Dalledonne, Associate Director of Creative at Arts Commons.

This spring, Arts Commons Presents is thrilled to host one more installment with **Wakefield Brewster Presents, Pt. 4 featuring Jeremy Furlong, John F. Gerrard, Kaja Irwin, and Chloe Stankowski** on **June 7 & 8, 2024**. Learn more at artscommons.ca/amplify.

Arts Commons Presents wishes to express our sincere appreciation to Naming Sponsor TD Bank Group as well as our friends at the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Government of Alberta and the City of Calgary.

For media inquiries, high resolution images, or more information contact:
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Arts Commons Presents invites you to discover the transformative power of the Arts. As the programming arm of Arts Commons, the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada, Arts Commons Presents is one manifestation of this mandate, achieved through the programming and presenting of our in-house series: BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, National Geographic Live, TD Amplify series, as well as special presentations. Through this work, we are able to do our part to further enrich our city, as well as create opportunities for Calgary-based artists to perform, exhibit, reach new audiences, and grow on a multitude of levels.

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