



For Immediate Release

Werklund Centre Expands Support for Local Artists with Increased TD Bank Funding

November 18, 2025 – CALGARY, AB, CANADA

Werklund Centre is thrilled to announce a \$250,000 commitment from TD Bank Group to Werklund Centre's artist development program - TD Incubator - empowering a new generation of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary artists in Calgary. Through professional development, creative networking, and opportunities to share their work with audiences, TD Incubator, led by Werklund Centre, continues to be a vital element for our city's artistic growth. Click here to [learn more about the TD Incubator program](#).

"This is a landmark moment for Werklund Centre's commitment to Calgary artists," said Alex Sarian, President and CEO of Werklund Centre. "Even as we embark on an exciting expansion of our physical campus, our greatest impact will always come from investing in the artists who shape our city's cultural life. TD's generosity allows us to deepen that investment. Thanks to their support, we can continue uplifting emerging and mid-career artists whose voices will help define Calgary's future."

"We're so proud to continue our support for the TD Incubator at Werklund Centre and provide a platform for thought-provoking programming that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of our amazing city," said Robert Ghazal, Senior Vice President and Alberta Region Head, TD Bank Group. "Through the TD Ready Commitment, our corporate citizenship platform, we're investing in initiatives focused on helping emerging artists and professionals facing barriers in the music, arts and culture sector."

With its doubled commitment, TD is helping usher in a new chapter for TD Incubator, which will now encompass the former RBC Emerging Visual Artist Program—uniting Werklund Centre's artist development initiatives into a single, strengthened platform that includes both performance and exhibiting streams. This evolution comes as the RBC Foundation shifts its 2025-26 support to other Werklund Centre priorities. RBC has played a vital role in championing emerging artists in Canada, and its legacy of support continues to shape our community.

Each season of TD Incubator is shaped by the vision of an exceptional artistic Fellow—previously including Calgary Poet Laureate Wakefield Brewster and most recently transdisciplinary performing artist Migguel Anggelo. Under the newly combined format, the 2025-26 season will be guided by teacher, writer, and songwriter Kenna Burima, whose creative leadership will help define this next chapter.

"As fellow I am keen to explore the themes of connection, collaboration and community. These are more than just buzz words. They are powerful indicators of a concept I have been deeply immersed in with my own artistic practice," says Kenna Burima. "Artists have a unique perspective of playing within the space between all things. We bring something



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from nothing into being through our creative process. We craft it through our artistic practice, and we share it through performance. I believe creativity is the thread that gives life to all that we do and connects all things we create. It's this that I want to protect and nurture in this season of growth for the TD Incubator program."

A cornerstone of Calgary's artistic community, Kenna Burima brings a wealth of creative experience to TD Incubator. She is a regular collaborator with One Yellow Rabbit and Ghost River Theatre, having recently co-created *Echoes of the Land*, an Indigenous-led sound bath experience that blends reconciliation, theatre, and storytelling. Kenna's career has taken her across North America and Europe, including tours with the beloved, indie-folk band Woodpigeon, giving her deep insight into the realities and resilience of artistic life. Her multifaceted practice as an artist, educator, and mentor makes her an ideal Fellow for TD Incubator's expanded next chapter.

Beyond offering professional development and meaningful networking, TD Incubator helps artists reach audiences through the TD Amplify performance series and exhibitions in Werklund Centre's six galleries. By fostering connections among artists, mentors, arts leaders, and the public, the program builds a vital support system that empowers Calgary artists to deepen and expand their practice. It also ensures that local artists play an active role in shaping the future of Werklund Centre itself, informing how our spaces and programs evolve.

Werklund Centre offers our profound gratitude to TD, whose steadfast commitment as Naming Sponsor of the TD Incubator program plays a pivotal role in advancing artist development in our community.

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Werklund Centre (formerly Arts Commons) is the steward of Western Canada's largest arts centre and the artistic and civic cornerstone of Calgary's downtown core that fosters the arts through live performance, educational opportunities, and artist development. For 40 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians—a commitment that is being renewed through the Werklund Centre Transformation project, the largest cultural infrastructure project in Canadian history. It is home to five resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary Philharmonic



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Orchestra, Downstage, Theatre Calgary, and One Yellow Rabbit. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall.