

BANFF

CENTRE
FOR ARTS AND
CREATIVITY



This past year has been an incredibly difficult period for Banff Centre and an exceptionally trying time for the communities of artists and leaders we serve. Despite the immense challenges that COVID-19 is presenting, Banff Centre is carrying forward its long and proud tradition of learning, creation, production, and presentation, which have been hallmarks of our institution for nearly 90 years.

Your commitment to supporting Banff Centre's work – and your resolute belief in our mission as an educational institution serving the arts and leadership community – has been critical through this time. We are sharing this update with you, our community of supporters, to thank you for your unwavering support. Your gift has enabled many positive outcomes this year. Most importantly, your support has made a deep impact on the artists and leaders who need a community around them now, more than ever before.

From all of us at Banff Centre - *thank you.*



Sincerely

Janice Price

President and CEO
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

Support from our **donor community** during the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled:

Our **reduced staff team** to maintain critical operations while developing and implementing recovery plans

Hospitality staff were retained to prepare over

20,000

free meals for current staff and those permanently or temporarily laid off

Continued connections with **audiences near and far**

130,000+

views from around the world for the virtual **Banff Centre International String Quartet Festival**

160,000+

views from around the world for the virtual **Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival**

165

visitors to the **Walter Phillips Gallery** following its re-opening

The successful launch of **online arts and leadership training** programs in Fall 2020

8 digital programs in Visual Arts, Literary Arts, Performing Arts, Indigenous Arts, and Indigenous Leadership, plus online engagements in Cultural Leadership

470 applications

155 participants

77 scholarships for deserving artists and Indigenous leaders



Your gift is supporting Banff Centre's journey through COVID-19

We extend our most sincere gratitude to our supporters for being together with us as we charted a course forward. Some major milestones include:

Connecting audiences with marquee events – online!

- A rich and unique immersion in Treaty 7 arts and culture was offered through the virtual celebration of **National Indigenous Peoples' Day** on June 21
- The **Midsummer Gratitude** Event on July 18, featuring artist alumni in online performances and videos, was held to thank the many corporate and individual supporters for their steadfast commitment to Banff Centre during the temporary

suspension of activities on campus due to COVID-19. Repositioning the 41st annual Midsummer Ball as a virtual event raised \$870,073 net

- World-class chamber music and international artist performances, interviews and documentaries were streamed around the world with the **Banff Centre International String Quartet Festival** from September 1-5
- The virtual **Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival** brought 75 epic films for the great indoors to viewers in 42 countries from October 31-November 8. The **Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival Virtual World Tour** launched November 26, bringing Banff to the comfort of homes around the world!

Pivoting programming online for artists and leaders.

- In September, Banff Centre began offering online programs in Visual Arts, Literary Arts, Performing Arts, Indigenous Arts, and Indigenous and Cultural Leadership for the very first time in our history.
- Building on the success of eight online programs in Fall 2020, additional online programs have been announced for January-March, 2021.

Re-opening the campus thoughtfully and gradually.

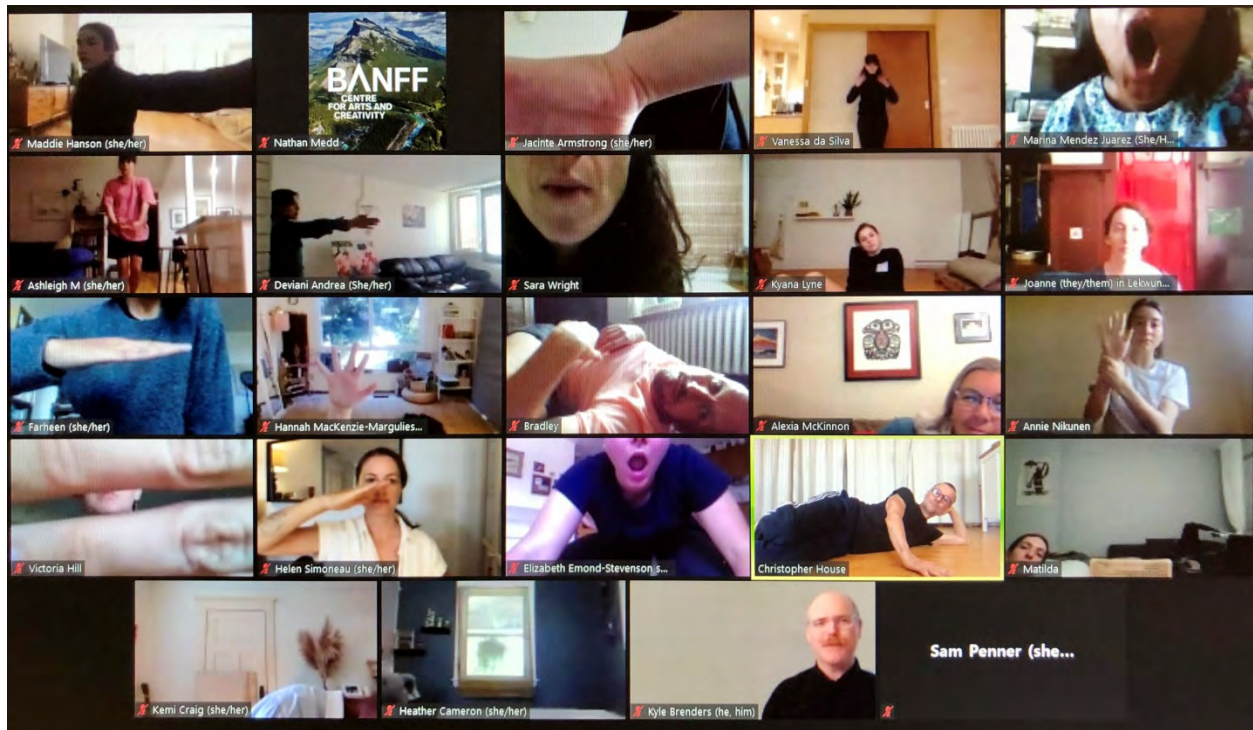
- The Walter Phillips Gallery re-opened to the public on September 26 with the extension of Governor General Award-winning media artist Rita McKeough's stunning exhibition *darkness is as deep as the darkness is*.
- Thanks to the transformational gift from the Belzberg family in honour of Calgary-born community builder and philanthropist, Mrs. Jenny Belzberg, CM, AOE, LLD, revitalization of Banff Centre's most important training and performing arts venue, the Eric Harvie Theatre, was completed in November. We look forward to welcoming artists and audiences to the **Jenny Belzberg Theatre** when it is safe to do so.
- On November 13, Banff Centre paused Gallery visits and Theatre tours until further notice to do the right thing while COVID-19 cases in Banff and across the province were increasing.
- Most recently, Banff Centre provided the Don Becker Staff Residence for the Town of Banff to operate a self-isolation facility as part of our efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- In addition to offering online programming in Winter 2021, Banff Centre will begin to bring artists and leaders back to campus in small numbers, following all relevant health guidelines.

Striving to re-build and re-launch in a more inclusive way.

- The **2020 Clifford E. Lee Dance Award** was awarded to Crazy Smooth in a strong statement of support for hip-hop within the community of contemporary dance in Canada.
- Indigenous composer, Ian Cusson, and African-American soprano, **Karen Slack**, have been named as Opera program faculty for 2020-21, making space for new stories and diverse voices.

The board of directors, management, and staff completed a strategic planning process this fall to chart a course forward for Banff Centre. The plan will be shared with stakeholders and the community in Spring 2021.

Inside an online program: What an artist's experience looks like



Creative Practice for Contemporary Dance (September 28 to October 3)

This six-day online workshop brought together emerging choreographers and mid-career makers in an environment of generative and **engaging shared learning**. In the midst of the global health pandemic, **community was built through an online space**, with Indigenous wisdom and the surging racial justice movement serving as foundations for much of the week's artistic dialogue and response. The program faculty and the 19 participants from across North America and beyond **gathered on videoconference** for three hours daily for group seminars, workshops, and speakers. Each artist worked offline for the balance of the day, **completing research and preparation** for the next day's session. Each artist shared their work with the group in **solo presentations**, which created the sense of live performance "eventfulness" in a time when we cannot gather in person. A chat space throughout the program was used for all participants to respond to each other, privately, to **give and receive mutually supportive feedback**.

Some of the outstanding feedback received from artists participating in the online programs included:

*I had no idea what to expect, but I knew I needed this journey and this collective reckoning of the moment. **I needed art.** I needed to move into creative and critical composition as a way of life.*

- Creative Practice for Contemporary Dance participant

*This was my first online residency experience. I was pleased to discover that an **online program could be as rigorous and challenging as in person**, and grateful that close connections were still made between participants.*

- Visual Arts Thematic: Soft Power participant

*Art is so important in the pandemic, as it is what's brought us comfort and connection while we've stayed at home. I really was **amazed by the exceptional programming** that included top notch authors, who were helpful in shedding light on their processes and knowledge...*

- Writing the Imaginary participant

Through the support of our donor community, financial aid to cover 100% of the program fees was available for the eight online programs offered in Fall 2020.

On behalf of all of us at Banff Centre – and the artists and leaders who had outstanding experiences in our online programs this fall – thank you.

In post-program evaluations received to date for the Fall 2020 arts and Indigenous leadership online programs: **95%** responded they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the online program experience; **86%** rated the relevance of their online program as "very good" or "excellent".

From artists to donors – thank you.

"Dear Generous Donor ... Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity has provided me ... a necessary reprieve for my artistic spirit. The [Writing the Imaginary] instructors provided an empowering, empathetic space that is rare to find for a budding author and that I wouldn't have otherwise had the opportunity to access without your generosity ... I am already inspired to radically adjust my strategy in approaching my literary techniques as a direct result of my attendance, and have fostered friendships amongst my peers ... Sincere thanks."

Lisa May Lu, award recipient
Anjulin Endowment

"I believe strongly in the arts as a vehicle for us to have important conversations, but also to create strong communities, build bridges and celebrate shared experiences. Banff was this for me, and I hope I was able to make an impact on others, as they made for me. **Thank you for supporting the arts, artistic communities, and helping creatives access the resources required to make impactful art.**"

Michael Gary Dean, award recipient
Boris Roubakine Memorial Endowment

"My week within the Creative Practice for Contemporary Dance program at Banff Centre was extraordinary. **Your support meant that I could dedicate myself to my craft** in a focused environment with motivated peers and spirited mentors who encouraged me to think, see and feel with both openness and reflection. ... **I cannot emphasize enough how important this kind of exchange is to my work and to my growth as an artist.** Thank you once again for supporting the arts. It means so much."

Elizabeth Emond-Stevenson, award recipient
Ontario Arts Endowment

Providing artists the freedom to explore, create, collaborate, and inspire continues to be at the heart of our mission. Thank you for your commitment to supporting our work, and your steadfast belief in supporting artists and leaders to realize their human potential at Banff Centre.

For more information, please contact:

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We acknowledge, with deep respect and gratitude, our home on the side of Sacred Buffalo Guardian Mountain, in the beautiful and special territory of Treaty 7. We recognize the past, present, and future generations of Stoney Nakoda, Blackfoot, Tsuut'ina Nations, and Metis from Region 3, who help us steward this land, as well as honour and celebrate this place.