

The Gift of Art and Creativity



President and CEO's Message

It's my pleasure to share with you the summer 2017 issue of the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity newsletter for supporters. In these pages, we reflect on the Truth and Reconciliation Summit held last October and introduce a new Indigenous Leadership program. We shine a spotlight on the achievements of our alumni, and those artists and leaders who have benefited directly from your generous support.

Banff Centre continues to thrive thanks to your passion and commitment to creating a vibrant Canadian arts and cultural scene. We know the challenging economic times continue in Alberta, across Canada and the globe. This makes your support so vital and special. I want to extend my deepest appreciation to you.

In April, we kicked off a new series co-presented by the National Music Centre in Calgary, with a chamber music concert featuring Banff Centre alumni. The series will continue in late September and December 2017 with performances featuring New Canadian Global Music Orchestra and Jens Lindemann.

This summer, we'll present new and reimagined works. Some of you may have experienced *Kopernikus*, the chamber opera written by Montréal composer Claude Vivier (as part of our Open Space: Opera in the 21 Century program), and at the end of July you can join us for *Noetic*, the contemporary dance by internationally renowned choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (The Creative Gesture - Dance program). We'll also offer more classical music concerts than ever before with co-artistic directors Claire Chase and Steven Schick at the helm of our Summer Classical Music Programs. You can find more details online at banffcentre.ca.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your continued support – we couldn't do it without you!

Sincerely,

Janice Price
President & CEO
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

New Heights

Celebrating
Banff Centre alumni
honours, nominations,
and milestones.



Arnold Choi was appointed principal cellist of the Calgary Philharmonic. Choi is a multi-award winning cellist who has performed around the globe. He is a graduate of Yale School of Music and was principal cellist in the Banff Festival Orchestra. Choi has a deep history with Banff Centre; between 1994 and 2013, he took part in over a dozen music programs including Banff Centre's Youth Orchestra Symposium, Cellofest, Chamber Music programs, master-classes, and music residencies.

Visual artist **Anne Macmillan** delivered a public lecture at Concordia University in Montreal as part of a cross-country lecture tour. Macmillan was the inaugural recipient of the *Emerging Atlantic Canada Artist Residency*, a self-directed residency at Banff Centre, where she created "This Place" (2016), an animated video inspired by the geographical relationship of mountains and caverns in the Banff region. The *Emerging Atlantic Canada Artist Residency* is an initiative of The Hnatyshyn Foundation in partnership with Banff Centre for

Arts and Creativity, and made possible through the generous support of the Harrison McCain Foundation.

Flutist **Claire Chase** won the \$100,000 Avery Fisher Prize; her name will be added to a plaque in David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center commemorating the 22 past winners including cellist Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Emanuel Ax. In 2017, Chase became co-artistic director of Banff Centre's Summer Classical Music Programs.

Images (left to right): Arnold Choi, photo by Ilya Kuznetsov; Anne Macmillan; Claire Choi, photo by Armen Elliot.

In the Artist's Studio

Banff Centre is delighted to welcome interdisciplinary visual artist **Lou Sheppard** for the second *Emerging Atlantic Artist Residency*. Their work, *Requiem for Polar Regions*, presents a current and intimate interpretation of ecology and place for the upcoming Antarctic Biennale.

Deepening our commitment to create tangible, meaningful connections with artists across Canada, Banff Centre has partnered with the evenko foundation to host young, emerging Quebec artists as part of the *Banff Musicians in Residence* program.



Image: Lou Sheppard

Announcements

THE SLAIGHT FAMILY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA

In one of the largest charitable donations ever in Canada in support of Indigenous communities, The Slight Family Foundation donated more than \$12 million to 15 not-for-profit organizations, including Banff Centre, working to improve the physical, mental, and social well-being of Canada's Indigenous populations. As part of this gift, The Slight Family Foundation's funding will support scholarships for up to 40 emerging Indigenous artists annually across all artistic disciplines at Banff Centre, enabling them to contribute more fully to our rich Canadian cultural landscape.

INAUGURAL BANFF CENTRE INTERNATIONAL STRING QUARTET FESTIVAL SET FOR SEPTEMBER

The spirit of the Banff International String Quartet Competition returns this summer with the inaugural Banff Centre International String Quartet festival – a three-day festival designed to showcase the finest in international classical music to audiences through a completely immersive experience. Led by director Barry Shiffman, the festival is held in off-competition years, and features concerts, masterclasses, and special events. This year's Festival runs from September 1 – 3, 2017.

“What better way to relive the energy and excitement of the Banff Centre International String Quartet Competition than a chamber music festival?”

– Barry Shiffman, director



BANFF CENTRE APPOINTS RENELTTA ARLUK AS DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS ARTS

After a lengthy nation-wide search, Banff Centre is pleased to announce the appointment of Reneltta Arluk as Director of Indigenous Arts. Arluk, originally from the Northwest Territories, is of Inuvialuit, Dene, and Cree descent.

For over a decade, Arluk has been part of, or initiated, the creation of Indigenous theatre across Canada and overseas. She is an actor, playwright, poet, director and producer, and has written, produced, and performed various works under her company, Akpik Theatre. Arluk is committed to stories inspired by Indigenous language and has worked in depth with Indigenous and minority youth through her theatre advocacy work.

As the Director of Indigenous Arts at Banff Centre starting in November, Arluk will be responsible for ensuring the programs meet the needs of Canadian Indigenous artists, providing them with a creative environment to facilitate growth and development. She will expand Indigenous arts programming to offer more year round training and creation opportunities in all artistic genres – a key pillar of Banff Centre's strategic plan, *The Creative Voice*.

Endowment Giving

Endowments breathe life into almost every aspect of the creative experience at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. And they give not-for-profit and Indigenous leaders the space to be curious and experiment with bold, game-changing ideas to strengthen their organizations and communities. Banff Centre is proud to steward more than 180 endowments, created as a legacy or to ensure a particular arts or leadership programming area is well-sustained in the future.

Between December 1, 2015 and November 15, 2016, our generous donors contributed \$1,591,236 to various Banff Centre endowments. In March 2017, the federal government announced it would match these contributions with a grant of \$897,704 which was distributed among the endowments so that donations made during the given period were matched at a rate of 56 percent. Thank you for this support!

Whether you choose to donate to an existing fund or create one that is most meaningful to you, your donation on or before November 15, 2017 will be matched through the Endowment Incentives Matching Program of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund. For more information, please contact:

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Power in Togetherness

A look at the Suncor Energy Foundation Gathering

The Gathering is the story of possibility and the power of coming together. It began in 2013 as an effort to bring 140 diverse community partners and thought leaders from across the country to Calgary for a two-day event to recognize the 15th anniversary of the Suncor Energy Foundation. What emerged were new connections, powerful perspectives, and countless opportunities no one saw before.

"As funders we have to learn to love the problem, not the solution. This is the great deficiency of the whole philanthropic exercise, we're all so focused on solutions that we forget to think about the problem," reflects Tim Brodhead, co-chair of Canadians for a New Partnership and a Gathering participant.

Since 2013, two more Gatherings have been held, including one at Banff Centre in the spring of 2017. The events bring social innovation concepts to three focus areas: Indigenous youth

leadership, community resilience, and the energy future we'll all share.

"Since we began hosting the Gatherings with our partners, we've learned there are no easy solutions when we're working to address complex community needs that impact us all," says Lori Hewson, Director, Community Investment and Social Innovation, Suncor. "We have to take the time to understand what we're working on, open ourselves up to all perspectives, and stay in it long enough to see the opportunities."

Through the Gatherings, participants have learned about and explored the connectedness of their work, and considered community needs from a systems perspective. As work is further brought together, distinct roles – whether as funder, community partner, or thought leader – begin to fall away.

"When you start weaving together you create a basket of knowledge. That's what the people deserve - what you put into that basket. It feeds the multitude with knowledge, it feeds them with hope. And I think that's what we all come together for, to create that community out there that's going to benefit all peoples," reflects Casey Eagle Speaker, a member of the

Blood Tribe of Southern Alberta and a recognized Elder in the community, as well as the Indigenous Resource Coordinator for Hull Services.

One outcome of the Gathering for Suncor and participants has been a powerful new way to look at the spectrum and evolution of our shared community work, the "to-for-with-of" model. Funders and community partners are often in the 'to' or 'for' space, wanting to provide support 'to' communities or clients, or 'for' them to address specific needs. But to truly tackle complex community needs and bring about lasting change all players in a system – including funders and communities – need to work in the 'with' and 'of' space, the space of co-creation and going beyond themselves to something much larger.

"That's what the Gathering is all about. We don't know exactly what we'll learn each time we get together, or what the impacts may be," says Hewson. "But the space - and the trust we create there - gives us the time to imagine the possible, step into the future, and together bring forth the world we want to see."

Image: Participants share perspectives on what it takes to make social change happen during a 'fishbowl' exercise at the Gathering, photo by Sunshine Chen, Storybuilders Inc.



Image: Joan MacLeod, photo by Donald Lee.

Providing pivotal experiences for emerging artists

Celebrated playwright Joan MacLeod knows first-hand the power and potential that exists at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. In 2016, she finished a draft of her latest play “*Gracie*” in the Leighton Artists Studios at Banff Centre. *Gracie* premiered in Victoria, toured to Alberta, and will be produced in Winnipeg this coming October—along the way it earned an outstanding review in *The Globe and Mail*. MacLeod often comes to Banff to work on her plays; in fact, she has taken part in over 25 programs and residencies here since 1982.

As a young poet, she came to Banff Centre and had a transformative experience that helped pave the way for her to become one of Canada’s most important and celebrated playwrights. MacLeod has been the recipient of numerous accolades, including the Governor General’s Award and the Siminovitch Prize in Theatre. Her extensive body of work includes: *Jewel* (1987), *Amigo’s Blue Guitar* (1990), *The Hope Slide* (1992), *Little Sister* (1994), *The Shape of a Girl* (2001), *Homechild* (2006), and *Another Home Invasion* (2009).

MacLeod spoke of Banff Centre’s importance and prominence during her acceptance speech for the 2011 Siminovitch Prize in theatre, which celebrates excellence and innovation in Canadian Theatre:

“I always wanted to be a writer. My parents gave me lined paper for Christmas and birthdays and dozens and dozens of notebooks. I survived high school ... by writing reams and reams of terrible poetry, by reading profusely and listening to Joni Mitchell as much as was humanly possible. I studied creative writing at UVic and UBC and was blessed with many great teachers. I went to Banff Centre as a poet in the mid-80s and two important things happened.

I asked an actor from the Banff Playwrights’ Colony if she could read a poem of mine at a public reading. For the first time, I was in an audience watching an actor lift my words off the page and transform them into something beautiful. I was astounded. The second was when Alan Williams, the brilliant monologist, performed “The Cockroach Trilogy” for us in Banff on one magical and snowy evening in June. I wasn’t quite 30 and I had been to the theatre twice in my life. After watching Alan, I understood with absolute certainty that I was supposed to be a playwright. And within a year

I had moved to Toronto and become part of the playwright’s unit at Tarragon [Theatre].”

I wouldn’t be here tonight if I hadn’t gone to Banff, if funding for places like Banff didn’t exist. And Banff is there because governments, corporations, and individuals value art and understand that sometimes the creation of art can’t exist without a hand.”

Enabling pivotal moments in the careers of artists is at the heart of Banff Centre’s work. By supporting deserving artists to attend Banff Centre programs, countless emerging artists have had extraordinary experiences that served as a launching pad to a successful and meaningful career in the arts.

Revised names:

From knowledge gained at the Truth and Reconciliation Summit held last year on campus, Banff Centre is revising the naming conventions of two of its programs to be more sensitive and inclusive to our communities by removing language that can have negative connotations.

The Leighton Artists Colony will become Leighton Artists Studios. Additionally, Banff Centre will be amending the name of the Playwrights Colony to become the Banff Playwrights Lab, which also more accurately describes the program’s lab-based process.



Image: Truth and Reconciliation Summit
photo by Don Lee.

Lighting the Fire: The Power of Right Relations

During a morning circle, Elder Tom Crane Bear illuminates how being together in this place grounds our sense of interdependency, reminding us to be humble with all relations, and that the spirit of Sleeping Buffalo Mountain also brings people here as it has long been a place to gather in understanding, re-generativity, and vision.

The spectral power of right relations arise out of the sacred waters and spirit of *Iniskim*, Sitting Buffalo in the *shining mountains* – traditional lands of the Stoney Nakoda, Blackfoot, and Tsuut'ina Nations in Treaty 7 Territory. A territory working towards harmony through an open Buffalo Treaty; where many partners and Nations are cooperating to reintroduce buffalo into Banff National Park.

Co-becoming with this power and vision, Director of Indigenous Leadership programs Brian Calliou, and Associate Director Alexia McKinnon, carried a sense of responsibility into collective action hosting the Truth and Reconciliation Summit – building momentum internally and across

the Bow Valley bioregion. Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner Marie Wilson encouraged the principle that reconciliation is a movement we support each other in and practice together. In this essence, Elders and national thought leaders guided our walk together, to first deeply listen to the truth of our history, lifting up wise approaches and sparking sector breakout sessions in the crystallization of personal action.

Lorraine Widmer-Carson, Executive Director of Banff Canmore Community Foundation explored their role in energizing the local fabric, sharing research that shows communities thrive when they feel like they belong and how sports, arts, and storytelling projects can strengthen awareness, connection, and right relations. Faculty member Don McIntyre reflects, “Artists can take people to the uncomfortable places, in a comfortable way; they can go deeper as they step into the story or art form and themselves together.” As an artist, McIntyre’s sessions expand a sense of openness, resonant connection, and responsibility within oneself and all of life.

“Right relations can be very hard to talk about because it is not something we can solve overnight, it is a good thing we are talking about it and carrying the message... We have the power of speech use it... We have to continue to focus on working towards a good mind together – worldwide – because transformation and change will come.”

– Elder Tom Crane Bear

An introspective keynote by Former AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine aligned the values of personal presence and openness, and remind participants that the respect for reconciliation is very different for everyone and must be lived into all facets of life. Dr. Alike Lafontaine identifies this value and organizational responsibility in engaging narrative structures as reinforcing loops, “When we talk about colonized systems we must transform systems unless we want the same outcomes.”

The integrity of this foundational awareness sparked Dr. Leroy Little Bear's ultimate view of reconciliation in recentralizing Indigenous science that acknowledges everything as animate, in sacred relationship – communicating in waves and flux of dynamic life energy.

Awakening the spirit and synergy of Indigenous knowledge systems within the emergence of holistic systems thinking is a reminder that in what many are calling the exponential age we can light the fire of a transformational cycle. We not only go further when we come together to advance right relations – we become open and connected, returning to cycles of reciprocity and the potential to regenerate ourselves, and all of our relations – braiding true power, thriving, and resiliency.

Calling to action the face of leadership in contemporary Canada, Alexia McKinnon invited everyone to become aware of how one's voice can leverage this conversation, to break through gaps and create space for the benefit of generations to come. "I think that is our responsibility as leaders and Canadians, and I feel at this point, Canada is at that pivotal turning point and we get to choose if we want to go 5 degrees, 10 degrees or if want to completely change and actually make Canada look different moving forward."

Images: Truth and Reconciliation Summit, photos by Don Lee.

Almost a year following the Summit, Banff Centre's Indigenous Leadership program remains committed and will provide opportunities to maintain the movement and momentum of Truth and Reconciliation, to live into the Calls to Action in the offering of a Right Relations program. The program emerged out of the inspired response from Summit participants and thought leaders, weaving together the 9 Principles of Reconciliation with the patterned themes identified in the research report. Creating a generative process grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing – to advance right relations and opportunities to build personal awareness, communication, connection, collaborative leadership, and action.

As an Indigenous Awareness Trainer within the Ontario Provincial Police, Erin Dixon shares her Otipemisiwak-Metis heritage and passion for traditional healing to living systems transformation in the regenerative spirit of reconciliation. She serves as faculty for Banff Centre's Right Relations program.

The Truth and Reconciliation Summit was made possible by the following supporters: Alberta Government, Suncor Energy Foundation, Calgary Foundation and Nexen Energy ULC.

The program was developed with support from the Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative at Banff Centre.

