



2020/2021

# BC ARTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ARTS COUNCIL



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

## TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The BC Arts Council acknowledges it carries out its work on the traditional territories of Indigenous nations throughout British Columbia. We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, descendants, and custodians of these lands. We honour the knowledge keepers and the continuing relationships with Indigenous peoples in B.C. that develop through our work together.

We are grateful to the Lekwungen people and the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations, on whose traditional territories we operate our main offices.



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TINA ROBINSON, PRINCE RUPERT. Robinson received a Pivot for Individuals grant, which supported a mentorship with Chilkat weaver Pearl Innis.





**Hon. Melanie Mark**  
**Minister of Tourism,  
Arts, Culture and Sport**

On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, I'm pleased to receive the BC Arts Council's 2020/21 Annual Report detailing the Council's work in the arts and culture sector from April 2020 through March 2021.

When we look back over the last year, we see that the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges, but it also showed us the value of working together. When the pandemic hit, we engaged with the sector to understand their needs and support their pivots. The BC Arts Council immediately provided a \$3-million supplement, advanced operating funding, and provided microgrants to artists.

The arts and culture sector did incredible work to keep staff and patrons safe. From modifying physical spaces, to adapting performances to online platforms, to pausing events when required, people and organizations acted quickly. Faced with the challenges of the pandemic, the industry demonstrated incredible ingenuity and resilience.

We have been on a journey together. Looking back, I'm so glad our government brought the Council's budget to an all-time high because these funds sustained artists and organizations over the past year. We also provided funding through StrongerBC, our government's economic recovery plan, bringing our total investment to over \$70 million in 2020/21. Now we're positioned to be stronger than ever.

I believe in the power of arts and culture. I look forward to working with the Council members on creating systemic change within the arts and culture ecosystem by emphasizing equity and diversity and aligning our work with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. By paddling together, we will build a bright future for the arts in B.C.

T'ooyaksim' N'iisim'

Honourable Melanie Mark  
Hli Haykwhl Wii Xsgaak  
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport



**Bob D'Eith**  
**Parliamentary Secretary  
for Arts and Film**

I am pleased to acknowledge the BC Arts Council's work in the arts and culture sector from April 2020 through March 2021.

The pandemic has deeply impacted artists and arts and culture organizations. As a musician myself, I understand the challenges the arts and culture sector faced this past year.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, I had the opportunity to speak with arts and culture leaders to understand their needs. People said they needed flexibility to meet their operating costs. The BC Arts Council immediately provided \$3 million in supplements and advanced \$15 million in operating funding to professional and community arts and culture organizations to meet their needs.

In the summer, I spoke with arts and culture groups about what they needed to get through the months ahead. People asked for help to keep their lights on. We responded with a total of \$35 million to support sector resilience through StrongerBC – the first province in the country to provide recovery funding for the arts. More than 600 arts and culture organizations in communities across B.C. received the support they needed to pay their rent, bills and keep people employed.

We listened and we'll keep listening. I would like to thank everyone who has provided feedback and continues to do their part to keep people safe. We'll keep working together over the next year to build back stronger.

Thank you,

Bob D'Eith  
Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film



TARA CHEYENNE PERFORMANCE, VANCOUVER. Behind the scenes of a digital workshop in Smithers, B.C., presented by Bulkley Valley Concert Association. Photo by Alen Dominguez.



ARTS REVELSTOKE. Arts Revelstoke presents Guerrilla Gigs featuring Old Soul Rebel. Photo by M. Ehrler.



BELFRY THEATRE, VICTORIA. Adrian Neblett and Austin Eckert in Being Here: The Refugee Project. Photo by Mark Halliday.



**Sae-Hoon Stan Chung**  
Chair, BC Arts Council

The story of this past year is the story of the pandemic and how it changed our lives, often in ways that we have yet to fully acknowledge or understand.

For the arts and culture sector in B.C., the pandemic impacted in a deep and worrying manner. Many fields of practice experienced prolonged absences from our cultural spaces, the livelihoods of artists and cultural workers were under threat. For those who were able to make a return to operations, they were required to do so in reduced circumstances engaging with fewer people and experiencing another form of absence: the audiences and visitors that weren't there.

The arts bring communities together, they create connections. They also challenge our assumptions, shake us out of our routine, and move us collectively forward as a society. They are the harbingers and often the cause of social change. The absence of the arts from the public realm, at a time when we needed them most, has been profound. It has created a sense that the world has somehow stopped.

As we emerge from the pandemic, as the absences begin to ease, I believe we have an opportunity before us: a chance to imagine what the arts can and should be for a province as richly diverse as B.C.

The arts council is grateful to the Province for the support they provided to help the sector through the pandemic. Over the past year, the arts council distributed \$35 million in pandemic recovery funding. When you factor in our regular budget, over \$70 million was provided to the sector during the period covered by this report. I believe this demonstrates an understanding on the part of government of the value of the arts, not just economically but also how crucial, how precious, they are for our society.

In thinking of the opportunities that lie ahead, it is worth reflecting that the pandemic disproportionately affected marginalized communities, including Indigenous people and People of Colour. The BC Arts Council had already begun moving towards a more equitable future, with its ambitious strategic plan, [New Foundations](#).

You'll find later in this report an update on the progress the arts council has made towards meeting these goals over the past twelve months.

Our strategic vision for the future will build on the accomplishments of the current plan, taking the unexpected opportunity the pandemic has provided to reflect on the most appropriate course of action.

The pandemic provides us with a challenge. One that we must meet. How can the arts council act as an agent for effective and positive change? How can we decrease disparity and increase equity within our sector? How can we support art and cultural practices that represent contemporary B.C.? What role does the B.C. arts and culture sector have in climate change? These are not conversations we intend to have alone. We will include the sector to help us craft this vision.

I was appointed chair of the arts council in March of 2021. Dana Claxton was appointed vice-chair at the same time. I would like to acknowledge the work of the previous chair and vice-chair, Susan Jackson and Jane Brindley, and to thank them for their leadership and guidance, in particular for helping to guide the arts council through the first year of the pandemic.

The arts council is currently made up of 14 members, representing a broad diversity of practice and experience. I look forward to working with them as we meet the challenges and the opportunities ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Chung'.

Sae-Hoon Stan Chung  
Chair, BC Arts Council

# Mandate, Vision, and Values

## OUR MANDATE

The BC Arts Council was created in 1995 as an agency of the Province of British Columbia under the Arts Council Act for the purposes of:

- Providing support for arts and culture in British Columbia;
- Providing people and organizations with the opportunity to participate in arts and culture in British Columbia; and
- Providing an open, accountable and neutrally administered process for managing funds for arts and culture in British Columbia.

## OUR VISION

The BC Arts Council has set its course toward an aspirational vision where:

- Artists and cultural organizations in British Columbia are well-supported, thriving and able to reach their full potential under principles of equity, diversity, accessibility and reconciliation; and
- Arts and culture are seen as fundamental to developing vibrant and resilient communities, where the people of British Columbia are highly engaged in the province's unique arts and culture sector and are recognized for their innovation and leadership in Canada and abroad.

## OUR VALUES

Our values guide our decisions and activities, from program design to the peer review process. We strive for constant improvement under these values in how we serve artists and cultural organizations throughout B.C.





THE REACH GALLERY MUSEUM, ABBOTSFORD. Emilie Kvist assists in leading a virtual tour at The Reach. Photo by The Reach Gallery Museum.

## Status of the Arts in B.C.

For arts and culture, 2020/2021 will likely be remembered as the great pause. The necessary public health orders that restricted both travel and public gatherings had an unprecedented impact on the arts and culture not just in British Columbia but around the world. Venues were closed for prolonged periods and those that were able to retain a more normal opening pattern continued to have restrictions on the patrons they could host.

As detailed elsewhere in this report, during the past year the Province of B.C. made a significant investment in the arts and culture sector to ensure its survival. The government made this investment because the sector was particularly hard hit by the pandemic but also out of a recognition that arts and culture are integral to the economic and social prosperity of our province.

The impact of this investment was felt by the sector and appreciated. According to province-wide surveys of the sector conducted by the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance (GVPTA), more arts and culture organizations and individual arts and culture practitioners felt optimistic about the potential for their recovery in spring 2021 compared to how they reported in spring 2020, at the start of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>.

Investing in the arts makes communities stronger, more vibrant, and healthier. As we collectively plan for a sustainable recovery, the arts will be an essential component in helping all of us to manage change, ensure public health, and reconnect to our communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance (April 30, 2021) COVID-19 Impact Report. British Columbia Arts & Culture Sector Spring 2021

## ARTS & CULTURE AT THE START OF THE PANDEMIC

At the time the pandemic began, the arts and culture sector in B.C. was vibrant, diverse, and recognized for artistic excellence.

In terms of numbers, cultural activities in B.C. contributed about \$7.9 billion to the provincial gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019 (the last year we have figures for). This figure, which includes the film industry, represents 2.7% of the province's total GDP, supporting over 109,000 jobs across the province.

The GDP for live performance, visual and applied arts and written and published works was nearly \$2.9 billion for 2019, supporting over 45,000 jobs province-wide. B.C. consistently has the 3rd largest culture GDP and employment in the country, behind only Ontario and Quebec. B.C. continues to have the greatest concentration of artists (1.2%) and the second-highest concentration of cultural workers (4.7%) of any province.

Despite this success, there was growing recognition that systemic inequities existed within the sector that acted as barriers to accessing resources and opportunities for Indigenous people, members of racialized communities, and other equity-deserving groups.

### TLUU XAADA NAAY

Tluu Xaada Naay received a \$75,000 grant through the Arts Infrastructure Program. The grant supported improvements to places of historical significance in Old Masset on Haida Gwaii: the Longhouse Cultural Centre and the Haida Carving Shed Studio. Both required upgrades to make better use of the space, improve the accommodation of cultural productions, artist creations and projects, and to create an improved environment to preserve unique, Haida historical family and community artifacts.



Photo of Chief Kihlguulaans Geoffrey White memorial pole and Tluu Xaada Naay longhouse. Photo courtesy Christian Kihlguulaans White.



SHUSWAP DISTRICT ARTS COUCIL, SALMON ARM. Visitors to the art gallery during the Pride Project exhibition. Photo by Kristal Burgess.



VINES ARTS FESTIVAL, VANCOUVER. Sarah Wong performing for Fluidity: Bodies, Sound and Land in Hadden Park. Photo by Valley Tech Production Group

## THE ARTS & CULTURE DURING A PANDEMIC YEAR

A full understanding of how COVID-19 impacted arts and culture in the province will be some time in coming; as this annual report is being drafted, we remain in the third wave of the pandemic. Still, even in the snapshot of our current moment, major themes do emerge.

### ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

At the start of the pandemic, arts and culture organizations—and the individual artists and cultural workers they employ—were facing the potential of real economic hardship and in many cases closures.

By November 2020, employment in the information, culture, and recreation sector in B.C. was down 18% compared to the previous year, the largest decrease of any sector. Employment in the performing arts disciplines was down even more<sup>2</sup>. Organizations that operate venues or cultural facilities were particularly vulnerable, facing fixed costs 55% higher than organizations that do not operate facilities<sup>3</sup>.

To keep artists employed and audiences engaged, many organizations began using digital platforms to present and share work. While this has had the potential to provide wider exposure for B.C. artists and arts organizations, audiences have, to date, proven to pay much less for digital offerings than they will for work presented in traditional settings<sup>4</sup>.

### SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY

Recovery from the impacts of the pandemic goes beyond economic resilience; to manage all the various issues the sector will need to confront, a more integrated approach is required.

To support social justice and better establish sustainability, organizations are creating business models that put equity and respectful workplaces at the forefront. They are also considering what they can do to mitigate the impacts of climate change. As they prepare to reopen to the public, facility managers are making the case, when upgrading cultural spaces, for construction and renovations that reduce strain on the environment, which, in turn, makes them more efficient to run.

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2 Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (unpublished data). Prepared by BC Stats, January 2021.

3 Source: GVPTA, COVID-19 Impact Report, June 2020.

4 Business/Arts, National Arts Centre, Nanos Research. (2020). Arts Response Tracking Survey – May Report.

## EQUITY, ANTI-RACISM AND JUSTICE

According to the most recent research available, the B.C. arts sector has a high concentration of racialized groups<sup>5</sup>. Yet, racialized artists, Indigenous artists, women, and those with intersectional profiles receive a significantly lower median income than men, non-racialized, and non-Indigenous artists<sup>6</sup>.

The sector continued to have conversations on greater equity, diversity, and access in arts and culture. The results of the GVPTA's province-wide survey of the sector highlighted that funding strategies are needed to ensure more equitable distribution of resources to underrepresented artists<sup>7</sup>. The calls for action during the summer of 2020 in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in the United States and events here in Canada, combined with the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on Indigenous people, People of Colour and people with disabilities has led to a greater sense of urgency and a higher level of awareness that changes are required.

## ENABLING ARTS PARTICIPATION FOR ALL – RE-ENGAGEMENT

The pandemic didn't just impact those who work in the sector. It also took its toll on audiences. Canadians that attend arts and cultural events tend to have better overall health, feelings of satisfaction and connection with community<sup>8</sup>. It is one of the ironies of the pandemic that the sense of community and connection, which the arts are so effective at creating, has had to be temporarily set aside, or forged in new ways, creating both a void and new opportunities for participation and access.

In the absence of audiences and traditional venues, many artists and organizations pivoted in their practice, sometimes adopting new forms of creating or presenting their work. Funders, including the Province of B.C. and the BC Arts Council, made funds available to support these adaptations as well as the creation or renovation of cultural spaces. Many of these adaptations and changes will have a long-term impact and lead B.C. artists, cultural workers and participants into the future. Fundamental questions remain for the sector. As the next phase of re-opening sets in, how quickly will audiences and visitors return and in what numbers? What is the future and role of digital presentation across all fields of practice?

Through it all, as the arts and culture sector considers what recovery after COVID-19 might look like, a clear refrain has emerged: how can we build back better than before?

In June, in response to calls for action to end the racism, violence, and inequities that are causing deep harm to our society, the BC Arts Council made a [public statement](#) affirming our commitment to confronting the systemic racism that Black, racialized, and Indigenous communities face. Taking our lead from Indigenous artists, organizations, and communities, and respecting the principle of self-determination, we renewed our committed to decolonization and reconciliation.

5 Hill Strategies (January 29, 2020) Demographic Diversity in Canada in 2016. Retrieved from <https://hillstrategies.com/resource/demographic-diversity-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016/>

6 Hill Strategies (November 27, 2019) Artists in Canada's Provinces and Territories in 2016 (with Summary Information about cultural workers) Retrieved from <https://hillstrategies.com/resource/artists-in-canadas-provinces-and-territories-in-2016/>

7 Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance (April 30, 2021) COVID-19 Impact Report. British Columbia Arts & Culture Sector Spring 2021.

8 Hill Strategies (2021) Participation, health and well-being. Statistical Insights on the Arts. Retrieved from: <https://hillstrategies.com/resource/canadians-arts-participation-health-and-well-being/>

# How the BC Arts Council Responded to the Pandemic

Recognizing the immense and unprecedented impact the COVID-19 pandemic was having on the B.C. arts and culture sector, the BC Arts Council moved quickly to respond, making changes to our policies and programs. In making these changes, we were guided by the following key objectives:

- To support the sustainability of arts and culture organizations;
- To support artists and arts and culture workers;
- To provide access to funding as efficiently as possible;
- To ensure that funded projects and activities are not penalized by the unprecedented situation; and
- To support the safe continuation of projects and activities.

The BC Arts Council continued to deliver the vast majority of our regular programs. In addition, we made adaptations within our existing \$35.7 million grants budget, which allowed us to provide \$5.19 million directly in response to the pandemic. We also delivered an additional \$35 million in funding from the Province through StrongerBC to support pandemic relief and recovery.

In total, for the year, the BC Arts Council distributed in excess of \$70 million in funding across the province, more than double the highest amount previously distributed in one year.

## ROYAL ACADEMY OF BHANGRA

Based in Surrey, Royal Academy of Bhangra is the first not-for-profit academy in Canada to offer a formal Punjabi Folk Dance education. The organization received \$20,000 in Resilience Supplements to help weather the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, with \$47,625 in support from the Pivot Program, the Royal Academy of Bhangra provided British Columbians with access to online performances of professional Punjabi folk artists, including dancers, musicians and dancers, showcasing B.C.-based professional artists to Bhangra lovers around the world.

Deep Sahota and Jacky Yenga performing. Photo courtesy of Royal Academy of Bhangra.



ART GALLERY OF GREATER VICTORIA. Still from video "Handwash with Soap" by Farheen HaQ.

## Relief Funding to the Sector

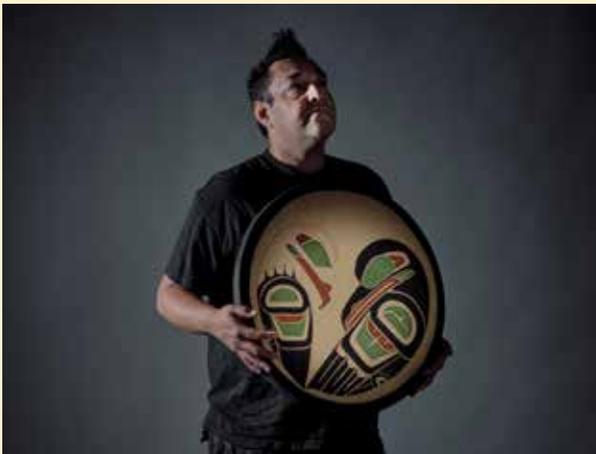
Through StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan, the provincial government provided a total of \$35 million in targeted recovery funding through the BC Arts Council.

- \$15.7 million in one-time funding to 558 organizations who receive annual funding or project grants through the **Expanded Arts and Culture Resilience Supplement**;
- \$5.3 million to support 155 arts and culture organizations adapt their programs and practices in response to the pandemic through the **Pivot Program**; and
- \$14 million in resilience supplements to 589 organizations with targeted top-ups for those in performing arts, owning a facility, or located outside of urban areas.

### SQUAMISH LIL'WAT CULTURAL CENTRE

The Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre received a \$11,100 Pivot grant to develop a new online shop and gallery to showcase pieces created by Indigenous artists, including works by numerous Squamish and Lil'wat members. In addition to increasing the sales and visibility of the artists they work with, the project will showcase authentic Indigenous designs and culture to a potentially international audience.

Troy Baker, an artist who works with the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre. Photo by Ryan Robinson.



### DANNY RAMADAN

Vancouver-based, Syrian-Canadian author Danny Ramadan received a \$12,000 Pivot for Individuals grant. An established fiction writer, Danny will use the grant to support the development and evolution of his writing into non-fiction, a genre which is new to him. Drawing on his own lived experiences as a former refugee, Danny will work with mentor, John Vigna, who will support and help guide the process.

Danny Ramadan. Photo courtesy of the author.



# COVID-19: The Year in Review



## April

On March 11, the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic was declared. On March 16, a state of emergency was introduced in B.C. This state of emergency, which had immediate and significant impacts on the province's arts and culture sector, was in place for the entire period covered by this annual report.

Existing operating clients received a 50% advance on their 2020/21 Operating Assistance grant. Advances were based on client's 2019/20 operating grant.

Launched the **Arts and Culture Resilience Supplement** to help cultural organizations and the artists and culture workers they contract to cope with impacts of the pandemic.

Opened Spring Project Assistance, Scholarship and Arts-Based Community Development and Leon and Thea Koerner Award programs for intake.

## May

Piloted the **Microgrant Program**, which supported professional artists and cultural practitioners to adapt either existing projects or their professional practice in response to the pandemic. This program was made possible by a generous donation from the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation and funding from the City of Vancouver.

## June

Clients on Operating Assistance were able to apply for the second half of the 2020/21 operating grant. Organizations had until September 30 to apply.

Opened Early Career Development Program for intake.

## August

Launched the new **Arts Infrastructure Program**, which responded to the need for the development of dedicated arts and culture spaces. The program budget was ultimately doubled as a result of additional investment earnings that became available and recipients were announced in two rounds.

Opened Creative Writing Program for intake.

Opened intake for Professional Development & Touring Initiatives.

## September

Opened Fall Project Assistance Program for intake.

(Left to Right)

CENTRE CULTUREL FRANCOPHONE DE VANCOUVER.

Ghislaine Doté Venue at Studio 16 as part of 2021 Concert Nouvelle Scène. Photo by Gaëtan Nerinx.

SQUAMISH ARTS COUNCIL. Random Acts of Art event at the 2020 Wind Festival. Photo by Tara O'Grady.

AXIS THEATRE, VANCOUVER. Th'owxiya: The Hungry Feast Dish – The Film, by Axis Theatre, featuring Merewyn Comeau & Nick Benz. Photo by Angelica Perez Anzures.

## October

Launched the **Pivot Program** to support arts and culture organizations as they adapted their programs and practices in response to the pandemic.

Launched the **Expanded Arts & Culture Resilience Supplement**, which provided assistance to current BC Arts Council Operating Assistance clients and eligible Project Assistance arts and culture organizations.

Funding for both programs came through StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan

## November

Opened Co-op Placements Program for intake.

## January

Launched **Pivot for Individuals** to assist professional artists, cultural practitioners, and arts administrators to adapt, transition or develop their practice in response to the pandemic.

## February

Opened Community Arts Festivals Program for intake.

## March

Administered **\$14 million in additional resilience supplements** to arts and culture organizations across the province. The funding came through StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan.



**January to March 2021:** Provided funding to sector-based capacity and equity initiatives:

- Sector Equity for Anti-Racism in the Arts
- First Peoples' Cultural Foundation
- Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance
- Pacific Legal Education and Outreach
- Open Access Foundation
- ActSafe Safety Association

# 2021

# Strategic Plan

The BC Arts Council's strategic plan, [New Foundations 2018 – 2022](#), outlines the BC Arts Council's four strategic directions. It is focused on increasing the accessibility of our programs, decolonizing our approach to arts funding, and working to achieve greater equity in supporting arts and culture in B.C.

To realize the strategic plan, we have committed to working in collaboration with artists, cultural practitioners, arts organizations, and communities to ensure our programs are more responsive to the creative and cultural needs of the people and communities we serve.

While the realities of the pandemic dominated our activity this past year, we nevertheless continued to make progress on the strategic plan. *New Foundations* also provided valuable guidance as we navigated and developed our response to the pandemic with our four strategic directions always front of mind.

## SUSTAINABILITY & CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

### OBJECTIVES

- Increase support for professional and organizational capacity building and sustainability throughout the arts and culture sector.
- Amplify support for developmental opportunities for artists, arts administrators and cultural organizations.
- Build awareness of the opportunities and challenges relating to new technologies and build capacity in the arts sector to meet them.
- Encourage diverse forms of artistic research and experimentation.
- Expand support for underserved artists and organizations, including greater opportunities for accelerated advancement.

### PROGRESS THIS YEAR

- Supported over 600 organizations and hundreds of individuals with COVID-19 relief and resilience funding.
- Piloted the Microgrant Program, timed to provide as rapid response as possible to individual artists.
- Ensured stable funding for operating clients, including a simplified application process, and reporting that will help us to understand the impact of the pandemic on the sector.
- Developed and delivered the Pivot for Individuals program, which provided enhanced professional development opportunities, an expanded eligibility for artists and cultural workers and a 60% increase in grant amounts from previous professional development grant programs.
- In response to travel and gathering restrictions, maintained the use of the peer-assessment process by moving to online assessment meetings.
- Increased the number of organizations hosting co-op placements by 42%.
- Launched the Arts Infrastructure Program with support for capital improvements and specialized equipment for 97 arts and cultural spaces.
- Enhanced project support for individual artists within performing arts, increasing the number of individuals receiving funding by 24% compared to last year. There was a significant increase in successful applicants to the music stream.
- Invested in sector-led initiatives to support sustainability and capacity in the sector, including:
  - » Provided \$50,000 to the Pacific Legal Education and Outreach Education Series, providing legal information, education and advice to artists and arts organizations in B.C.
  - » Invested \$125,000 in Actsafe Safety Association COVID-19 Safety Certificate for workers in arts and culture for protocols and safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic

## INDIGENOUS ARTS & CULTURE

### OBJECTIVES

- Engage in partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations to inform policies and programs.
- Develop both dedicated funding and integrated policies that incorporate principles of reconciliation and accessibility into all programs.
- Improve awareness of eligibility and funding through outreach and partnership initiatives while improving access to programs.
- Enhance the support of Indigenous artists and cultural organizations, including both traditional and contemporary cultural expressions, as well as hybrid forms and experimentation.

### PROGRESS THIS YEAR

- The impact of the investment of \$225,000 into the First Peoples' Cultural Council's Indigenous Arts Scholarship program was seen in the inaugural intake, providing support for 13 Indigenous arts and culture practitioners embarking on both formal education and mentorships.
- Provided an additional \$800,000 in funding to First Peoples' Cultural Foundation to support Indigenous artists and organizations through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Developed an expanded outreach strategy to engage with Indigenous organizations through our Indigenous Community Liaison.
- Initiated joint virtual outreach sessions with the Arts Program staff at First Peoples' Cultural Council.



THEATRE SKAM, VICTORIA SKAMPede Festival brought live performance to downtown Victoria. Pictured are the Lekwungen Dancers. Photo by Samantha Duerksen.



POWELL STREET FESTIVAL, VANCOUVER. The Telethon co-host Tetsuro Shigematsu with The Giving Ceremony in the background. Photo by Xinyue Liu.

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY & ACCESS

### OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen engagement with historically underserved groups through increased outreach and communication efforts.
- Collaborate to discover new and improved ways that programs can be made more accessible and relevant, through both application and assessment processes.
- Review and improve organizational policies and procedures through an equity lens.
- Develop both dedicated and integrated funding strategies to better serve historically underfunded groups.

### PROGRESS THIS YEAR

- Endorsed an Equity Framework, which includes recommendations on policy, process and program improvements to enhance accessibility and create more funding opportunities for equity-deserving communities.
- Incorporated assessment criteria for all programs according to the principles of equity, diversity and access.
- Improved access for applicants who identify as Deaf and/or living with disabilities through a grants assistance support funding pilot initiative.
- Started using disaggregated demographic data collected through a voluntary self-identification process in program evaluation and gaps analysis.
- Invested in sector-led equity initiatives including:
  - » \$100,000 to the Sector Equity for Anti-Racism in the Arts (SEARA) #POWERSHARE fundraiser.
  - » \$30,000 to the Open Access Foundation for Arts and Culture's projects focused on accessibility and meaningful inclusion from a Disability Justice perspective.
  - » \$30,000 to the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance Anti-Oppression Fundamentals Program.

## REGIONAL ARTS & COMMUNITY ARTS

### OBJECTIVES

- Improve outreach and communication efforts across the province to increase our understanding of regionally distinct arts practices and raise program awareness and accessibility.
- Develop policies and practices to increase the capacity of regional arts and cultural organizations and artists to allow for full and meaningful participation in BC Arts Council programs.
- Increase support for professional arts in non-urban areas, acknowledging the unique and diverse characteristics of regional arts.
- Increase support for community arts throughout B.C., recognizing their importance in developing and celebrating vibrant communities.
- Support organizations and artists across the province to promote engagement and enjoyment of the arts.

### PROGRESS THIS YEAR

- Undertook targeted COVID-19 recovery consultations with community arts organizations.
- Included regional priorities in resilience funding and new funding initiatives such as the Arts Infrastructure Program and Microgrant Program.
- Reviewed the In-Province Touring program in the face of COVID-19 realities. Piloted in 2019/20 to foster connection and collaboration across regions, resources from this program were reallocated this year, including support for individual artists across the province.

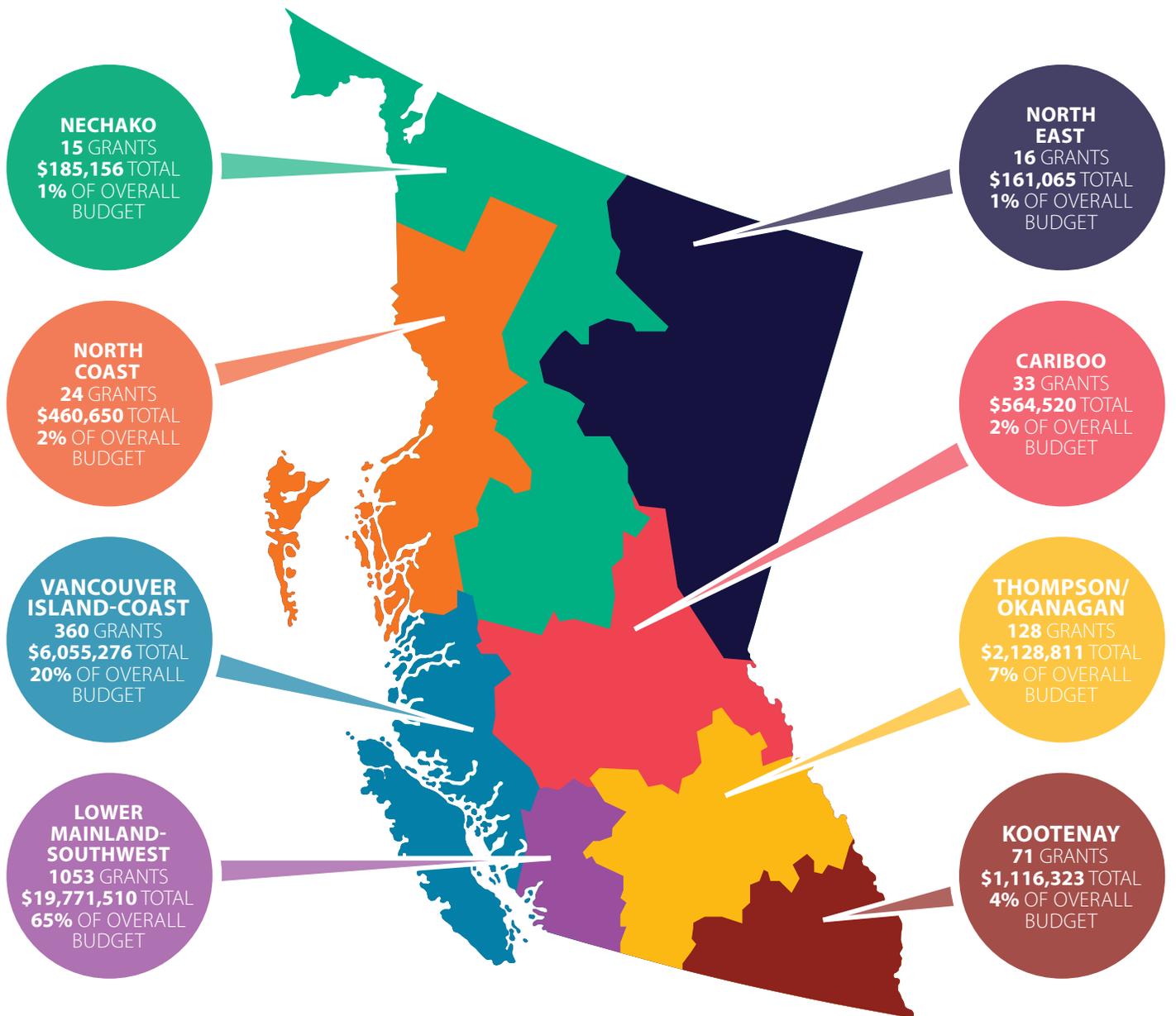
We had planned to release a report card midway through 2020 outlining what we've achieved so far – and detailing the work that remains – since the launch of New Foundations. That work was reprioritized over the past year due to the pandemic, however our commitment to accountability, transparency, and engagement remains steadfast as we look forward to strategies that will best support the sector into the future.

LAKE COUNTRY ART GALLERY: Pippa Dean-Veerman leads collage workshop via Zoom. Photo by Alison Beaumont.



# At a Glance: Funding Across the Province

## BASE FUNDING BY LOCATION



\*Map breakdown does not include distribution of funding delivered through partner agencies or several strategic initiatives.

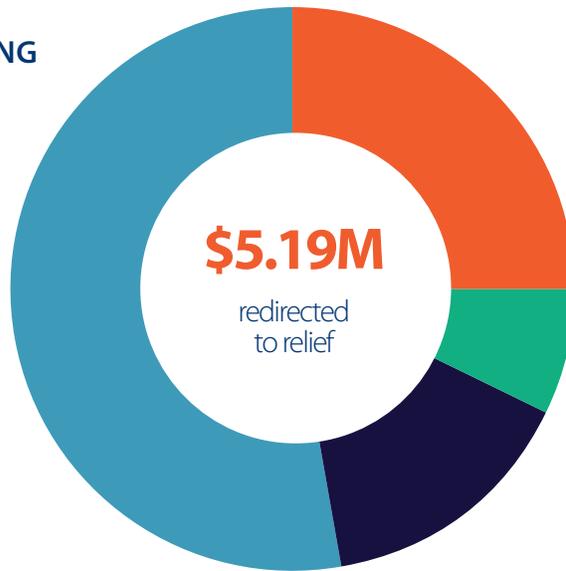
## BC Arts Council by the Numbers



# Pandemic Relief Funding

## REDIRECTED BC ARTS COUNCIL FUNDING

- Supplements
- Strategic Investments
- Pivot for Individuals
- First Peoples' Cultural Foundation



## STRONGERBC FUNDING

- StrongerBC Resilience Supplements (November 2020)  
TOTAL AMOUNT \$13,989,750 **40%**
  - StrongerBC Resilience Supplements (March 2021)  
TOTAL AMOUNT \$15,700,000 **45%**
  - Pivot Program  
TOTAL AMOUNT \$5,299,370 **15%**
- TOTAL AMOUNT \$34,989,120**



**1301**  
Total Grants

### STRONGER BC GRANTS BY LOCATION

Region	% of Budget	Number	Amount
Mainland-Southwest	61%	756	\$21,378,025
Vancouver Island-Coast	21%	269	\$ 7,212,965
Thompson/Okanagan	9%	126	\$ 3,116,470
Kootenay	3%	65	\$ 1,259,940
Cariboo	3%	37	\$ 1,030,895
North Coast	1%	18	\$ 473,175
Nechako	1%	17	\$ 297,650
North East	1%	13	\$ 220,000

## KEY FIGURES

The BC Arts Council worked hard to ensure the appropriate stewardship of funding during an unpredictable year. This required a nimble and flexible approach to the management of our budget and programs. Funding was delivered where it was needed most while responding to the evolving realities of the pandemic and associated public health orders affecting activities like travel and gatherings.

The BC Arts Council provides grants through four different funding streams: Professional Arts, Strategic Initiatives, Community Arts and Partnerships. In addition, this year funding was provided through the Province to support COVID-19 recovery.

	2019/20	2020/21
<b>PROFESSIONAL ARTS FUNDING   Supporting professional arts activity</b>		
Operating Assistance	\$14,563,000	\$13,519,571
Professional Projects (includes Early Career Development & Co-op Placements)	\$3,633,690	\$3,259,901
Individual Arts Awards	\$2,360,475	\$1,894,110
Scholarship Awards	\$968,000	\$903,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,525,165</b>	<b>\$19,576,582</b>

	2019/20	2020/21
<b>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUNDING   Supporting time-limited or strategic development programs</b>		
Strategic Opportunities/Enhanced Capacity (programs suspended 2020/21)	\$1,759,200	
Youth Engagement (program suspended 2020/21)	\$703,600	
Arts Infrastructure Program (program introduced in 2020/21)		\$3,966,345
Strategic Investments – Equity and Indigenous Arts Supports	\$531,450	\$663,455
COVID-19 Supports		\$5,192,705
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2,994,250</b>	<b>\$9,822,505</b>

	2019/20	2020/21
<b>COMMUNITY ARTS FUNDING   Supporting community arts activity</b>		
Arts-Based Community Development	\$500,000	\$484,000
Community Arts Organizations Operating Assistance	\$1,520,984	\$1,449,484
Community Arts Development Projects	\$106,018	\$122,240
Community Festivals	\$418,500	\$348,500
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,545,502</b>	<b>\$2,404,224</b>

	2019/20	2020/21
<b>PARTNERSHIPS FUNDING   Supporting programs delivered by partners that meet specific priorities of Council</b>		
Creative BC – Interactive Fund	\$750,000	\$665,000
ArtStarts in Schools– Artists in Education & Artists in the Classroom	\$1,300,000	*\$931,628
First Peoples’ Cultural Council – Indigenous Arts Programs	\$1,502,500	\$1,500,000
BC Touring Council – Community Presenter Assistance	\$880,000	\$880,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,432,500</b>	<b>\$3,976,628</b>

**TOTAL BC ARTS COUNCIL FUNDING: \$31,497,417      \$35,779,939**

	2019/20	2020/21
<b>RECOVERY FUNDING   StrongerBC Funding to support COVID-19 recovery</b>		
StrongerBC Resilience Supplements (November 2020)		\$15,700,000
Pivot Program		\$5,299,370
StrongerBC March Resilience Supplements (March 2021)		\$13,989,750
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>\$34,989,120</b>

**TOTAL FUNDING: \$31,497,417      \$70,769,059**

\*Demand for grants in schools and school districts was temporarily reduced due to COVID-19.

## Clayoquot Sound Theatre

Through the Arts Infrastructure Program, Clayoquot Sound Theatre received a \$75,000 grant to support renovations to the theatre. The theatre is an artistic hub in Tofino, and the upgrades will include a new, level floor that will enable members of the public to access the theatre without having to navigate stairs or tight seating. The floor will also be sprung to provide shock absorption for performers. New windows will ensure improved air flow, while three new fixed risers built along the back of the space will support both a modernized technical booth and provide space to accommodate retractable risers.

Clayoquot Sound Theatre.  
Photo courtesy Sophie L'Homme.



# Council Members

## REPRESENTATIVES FOR BC ARTS COUNCIL

The Arts Council Act provides for up to 15 government-appointed representatives to support the work of the BC Arts Council as Council members. Collectively, they broadly represent the cultural and regional diversity of the province as well as a range of artistic practices. Council members may hold terms for one to three years but may not sit for more than six years in total.

### In 2020/21, we were pleased to welcome new members:

Sae-Hoon Stan Chung  
Dana Claxton  
Evan Klassen  
Paula Martin

### We would like to thank the following, outgoing members for their contributions and service:

Jane Brindley  
Vicky Chainey Gagnon  
Susan Jackson  
Derral Moriyama

### APPOINTED MEMBERS 2020 / 2021

**SAE-HOON STAN CHUNG**, CHAIR (as of March 2021) Cranbrook\*\*

**DANA CLAXTON**, VICE CHAIR (as of March 2021) Vancouver\*

**SUSAN JACKSON**, CHAIR Vancouver ~

**JANE BRINDLEY**, VICE CHAIR Vancouver^

**NORMAN ARMOUR** Vancouver

**LINDSAY BAILEY** Vancouver

**IAN CASE** Victoria

**KIRANDEEP DHALIWAL** Vancouver

**JAI DJWA** Vancouver

**VICKY CHAINEY GAGNON** Campbell River\*\*\*

**PATRICIA HENMAN** Nelson

**DEAN HERON** Victoria

**EVAN KLASSEN** Kamloops\*\*

**PAULA MARTIN** Vancouver\*\*

**DERRAL MORIYAMA** Vancouver\*\*\*

**MIKE MURRAY** Maple Ridge

**SIMONE ORLANDO** Kelowna

**ROY HENRY VICKERS** Hazelton

\*appointed to Council in March 2021

\*\*appointed to Council in July 2020

\*\*\*until July 2020

~until December 2020

^until March 2021

For member biographies please refer to the [BC Arts Council website](#).



MUSEUM OF VANCOUVER. Socially distanced and masked guest visiting A Seat at the Table. Photo by Museum of Vancouver.

# Grant Adjudications

## PEER REVIEW

The peer review and assessment of grant applications is used to uphold the BC Arts Council's legislated purpose to provide an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process.

The peer assessment process also provides for transparency and is fundamental to the work of the BC Arts Council.

For each relevant program, we bring together panels of three to five artists and arts and culture practitioners to review applications and determine or recommend funding, based on how effectively applicants addressed the assessment criteria outlined in the guidelines.

Assessors are identified with consideration given to the diversity of artistic practice (representation of different artistic styles and philosophies); a range of professional specialization (representation of different roles within the arts, such as creators, interpreters, administrators, directors, independent artists); geographic and regional representation; Indigenous perspectives; cultural perspectives; and stage of career. The goal is to have a panel of assessors who, through their diversity of experience and background, can evaluate the range of applications for each program intake.

We also use the opportunity of the panels to conduct consultations with assessors to inform policy and program development. Discussions cover the structure, intent and outcomes of individual programs; application and assessment processes; the Council's strategic plan; and ongoing and emerging issues in the sector. These consultations are essential to facilitate continuous improvement, address changing needs, research new initiatives, and maintain a high degree of responsiveness to important trends as they emerge.

## PEER ASSESSMENT

We are grateful to those who served as advisors for our programs and also for the programs offered through partnership with ArtStarts in Schools, BC Touring Council, Creative BC, and the First Peoples' Cultural Council.

A full list of BC Arts Council panel members for 2020/21 is available on the [BC Arts Council website](#).



## CALL FOR ASSESSORS

We are always looking for individuals with discipline and sector knowledge, open-mindedness, generosity of spirit, and the ability to work collaboratively through the assessment process.

Serving on a peer assessment panel provides a unique learning experience, valuable insight into how the funding process operates, and a broader understanding of the sector. By providing this support, assessors are participating in cultural policy in action. Assessors are remunerated for their services. Through our online [grant management system](#), individuals can easily register their interest in becoming an assessor.

## AWARDS LISTING 2020/21

For complete list of award recipients and granting amounts please refer to our [website](#).



OKANAGAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Members of the orchestra properly distanced across the stage. Photo by Judy Burns.

# Staff

## Special Thanks

Our work and this report would not be possible without the support of the dedicated staff within the Arts and Culture Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and Sport.

KRIS ANDERSEN Senior Policy Analyst, Cultural Services

MAIRA AURUCCI Policy Analyst

MICHELLE BENJAMIN Program Officer: Arts Periodicals; Book Publishers; Early Career Development: Studio Arts; Literary Organizations

REEVA BILLY BC Arts Council Indigenous Community Liaison

ALLISON BOTTOMLEY Senior Director, BC Arts Council Secretariat and Strategic Engagement

ANNA BURROWES Senior Policy Analyst, Cultural Services

NADINE CAREW Program Officer: Dance Organizations, Individuals, and Collectives; Theatre Organizations, Individuals, and Collectives; Touring Initiatives

ALEX DENIS Senior Policy Analyst, Cultural Services

REBECCA ELLIOT Grant Program Administrator

DARB ERICKSON Director, Cultural Services

OLAYINKA FASHEUN A/Program Officer, Program and Policy Development

CHRIS GILPIN Senior Policy Analyst, Cultural Services

LINDA JOHNSON Finance & Contracts Administration

SHERYL JONES Program Officer: Media Arts Organizations; Visual Arts Organizations; Touring Initiatives

BRIAN JONKER Executive Director

JULIE KING Team Lead, Finance & Administration

MONIQUE LACERTE Program Officer: Community Arts & Partnerships

ERIN MACKLEM Program Officer: Co-op Placements; Early Career Development: Performing Arts; Youth Engagement: Performing Arts.

JENNIFER NICHOLS Senior Policy Analyst

KRISTA PATTERSON Program Officer: Community Arts Organizations; Community Arts Festivals; Arts-Based Community Development; Leon and Thea Koerner Award

ANISSA PAULSEN Program Officer: Indigenous Cultural Centres; Museums; Scholarships; Youth Engagement: Studio Arts

WALTER QUAN Program Officer: Arts Training Organizations; Music Organizations; Creative Writers; Professional Development

KIMBERLEY REID Senior Director, BC Arts Council Programs

SARVENAZ RIDLEY Finance and Contracts Administrator

ERIC SMITH A/Program Officer, Operations

WENDY SWAN Assistant to the Executive Director and Branch Administrative Coordinator

ANDREW TEMPLETON Communications Specialist

INGMARIE THUNANDER A/Manager, BC Arts Council Operations

SARAH TODD Program Officer: Media Artists; Visual Artists; Arts Infrastructure

SHELAGH VAUX Grant Program Administrator

MELISSA WALLACE Policy Analyst

Thank you to staff both past and present for contributing to a thriving arts and culture sector in B.C.

# BC Arts Council

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Cover photos

NEW WORKS & THE DANCE CENTRE, VANCOUVER. Spirit and Tradition performance on stage by Dancers of Damelahamid.  
Photo by Chris Randle

NEW WORKS, VANCOUVER. Artist Dea Shields from Afro Van Connect performing live at the New Works Summer Dance & Music Event on August 23rd, 2020. Photo by Jeff Lucas

TRAIL & DISTRICT ARTS COUNCIL, TRAIL. Muralist Jessa Gilbert, and Mena McGill from VISAC Gallery, take a break from working on Jessa's mural Alpenflow. The Trail & District Arts Council and VISAC Gallery partnered on this mural project. Photo courtesy of Trail & District Arts Council.

V'NI DANSI, VANCOUVER. Livestream of V'ni Dansi's 15th annual Louis Riel Day Celebration. Lyric Tsuji (dancer), Ryan McDonald (videographer), Gregory Coyes (guitar), Eloi Homier (dancer), JJ Lavallee (fiddle), Yvonne Chartrand (dancer), Bob McIntosh (bass).  
Photo by Chris Randle.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ARTS COUNCIL



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