



# 2015 2016

 Arts  
Commons

CITY OF CALGARY  
**RECEIVED** ART TO THE COMMUNITY  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

APR 27 2017

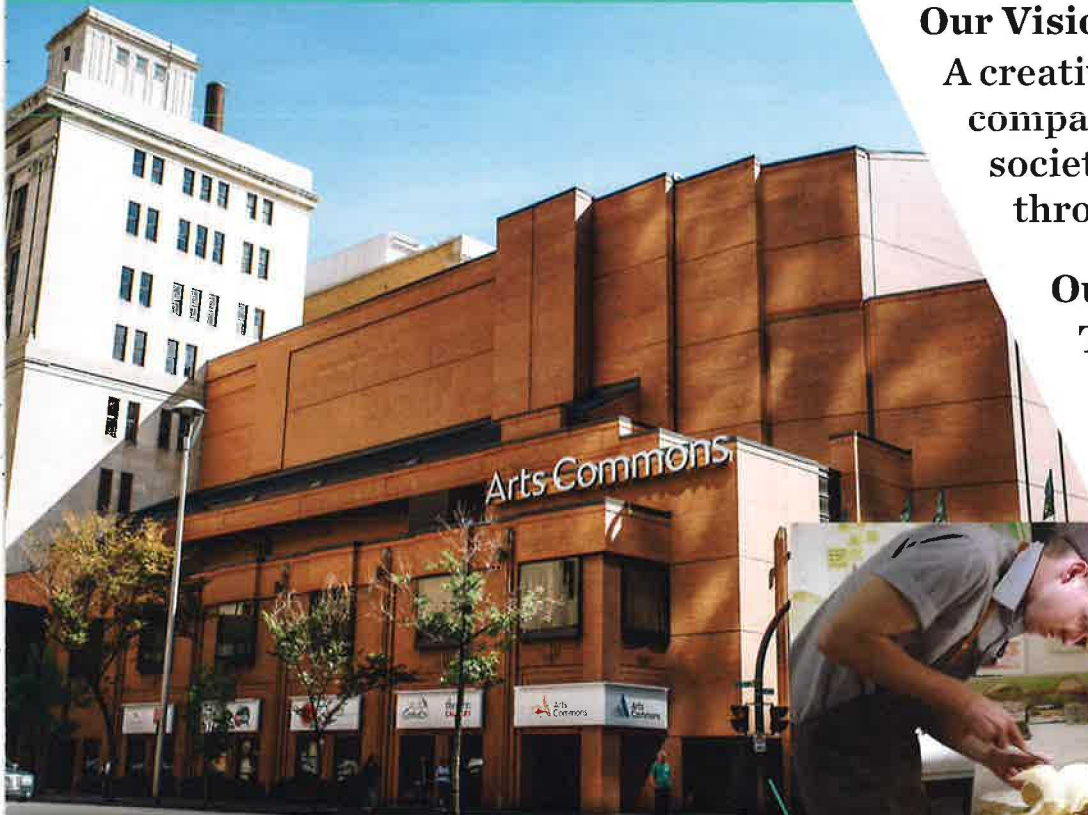
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Distribution  
CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

## **Our Vision:**

A creative and  
compassionate  
society, inspired  
through the arts.

## **Our Mission:**

To bring the arts...  
to life.



Above: Arts Commons © Heart & Sparrow Photography.  
Right: Artist Daniel J Kirk working in Arts Commons LightBox Studio



Patrons enjoy the opportunity to meet National Geographic Live explorer Carsten Peter, after his show

## **Our Mandate:**

1. To foster, present,  
and promote the arts.
2. To provide and care  
for our assets.
3. To ensure optimal  
access and utilization  
of our assets.





It's been an interesting year for our city. The downturn in the economy has affected us all in unexpected ways. However, especially during challenging times, it is the arts that help inspire us, remind us of the abundance that life has to offer, and give us hope. Providing access to this hope is our motivation.

This year, despite our collective struggle, we continued to create accessible opportunities for our community by hosting free public events and providing complimentary tickets to those who would otherwise be unable to attend. We distributed over 2,200 free show tickets through the TD Arts Access Pass, with nearly 900 of those allocated to families and children. We also welcomed over 8,000 students to the Jack Singer Concert Hall for *National Geographic Live*, with 6,656 of those attending for free through the EXPLORE National Geographic program. In these ways, we endeavour to bring the arts to every life, and remain grateful for the ongoing support of our patrons, donors, and sponsors. Without you, none of this would be possible.

Free Happenings art parties invite people to interact directly with visual artists



During this past season, we have taken audiences on journeys of discovery and enlightenment – we explored the *Blue Ocean* and the rebirth of an African wilderness, with *National Geographic Live*, moved people to tears with the whirling dervish during the BD&P World Music presentation of Canadian-Iranian artists Niyaz's performance, and hosted the Calgary memorial for the victims of the Orlando shooting (in partnership with Calgary Outlink). We also continued our collaboration with CADME (Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education) to make a masterclass and workshop possible for an auditorium full of students with New York jazz legends the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, and brought the house down with the TD Jazz presentation of Gregory Porter. During our hugely successful *Happenings* events, we also welcomed thousands from the community into our space to interact with visual and interdisciplinary artists in a whole new way. These are just a few examples of the artistic and cultural intersections that happened this past year at Arts Commons. And this is why we do what we do.

We believe that the arts act as both a mirror and a window. The arts reflect our lives, inspiring conversation, thoughtfulness, and action. The arts also act as a gateway towards the possible, allowing us to see the world in a new light. We hope you had the opportunity to enjoy some of our Arts Commons Presents programming and experienced some of the hope and inspiration that only the arts can provide.



Singer-songwriter Danielle French shares her music outside centre court

**Johann F. Zietsman**  
President and CEO

**Henry W. Sykes, Q.C.**  
Chair, Board of Directors

# Arts Commons Core Values

How we behave and what we do defines who we are as an organization.  
We are passionate about our work and the contribution it makes to our society.  
Our commitment to each other, to our patrons, and to our community is to:

- ★ **Be our best, always** – in service, professionalism, and providing a quality experience.
- ★ **Do the right thing** – considering the facts, erring on the side of grace, and behaving with integrity.
- ★ **Be open** – in our minds, hearts, and arms, we value teamwork, empathy, and collaboration.

Thank you for your feedback – that which helps us learn, and that which reminds us of the significance of what we do.



Arts Commons staff members  
engaging in conversation at the  
Living our Values workshop



*“Your staff completely saved our anniversary  
and helped us have a really great experience.  
We really had a wonderful time at the show.  
Thank you thank you thank you. Your staff  
are the true rock stars of any show! With  
much gratitude for your kindness.”*

~ Mrs. Christy Ziehl Mallett & Mr. Tyler Mallett,  
patrons of Arts Commons



Arts Commons Box Office team



**Core values**  
How we behave when we do what we do

| Be our best, always   | Do the right thing   | Be open, minds, hearts, arms   |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In service</li> <li>In leadership</li> <li>In professionalism</li> <li>In providing a quality experience</li> <li>Problem-solving</li> <li>Learn from failure</li> <li>Effective</li> <li>Efficient</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behave with integrity</li> <li>Consider the facts</li> <li>Apply professionalism</li> <li>Consider sustainability</li> <li>Balance dollars vs values</li> <li>Be honest</li> <li>Err on the side of grace</li> <li>Balance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Empathy</li> <li>Openness</li> <li>Trust</li> <li>Collaboration</li> <li>Engagement</li> <li>Own the relationship</li> <li>Seize opportunity</li> </ul> |

Arts Commons



*“One night, we encountered a lost patron. Through the investigative work of our Ticketing Services Manager (Jen), we discovered that the patron was meant to meet her friend at the Jubilee. When she expressed some trepidation at taking the C-Train, Jen provided change for the fare, escorted her to the platform, and ensured that she got on the right line and knew her stop. She also phoned the Jubilee to ensure someone was there to assist her when she arrived. This was a clear example of going above and beyond.”*

~ Laura Castle, Ticketing Coordinator

Arts Commons leadership team leading staff Living our Values workshop, held in the Engineered Air Theatre

# Community and Patron Impact

Arts Commons exists to serve our community and be not only an integral part of Calgary's cultural landscape, but an important gathering place in both good times and bad.

After the tragic fire in Fort McMurray, we were honoured to host an event in the Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby recognizing and thanking the firefighters, nurses, and other first responders for their around the clock dedication to the people affected by the fire.

Being the premier venue in the city, Arts Commons was equally proud to host and be the venue sponsor for the

Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala for the 2nd year in a row. This event provides profile for local and national artists and brings the community together to celebrate film and those behind its creation.

This past year, Arts Commons also developed a shared services agreement with the Alberta Ballet. Along with becoming a ticketing consortium member, the Ballet will obtain assistance with financial services, including financial reporting and payroll. This collaboration creates efficiencies and in turn, allows all parties to better serve patrons and impact our community in positive ways.

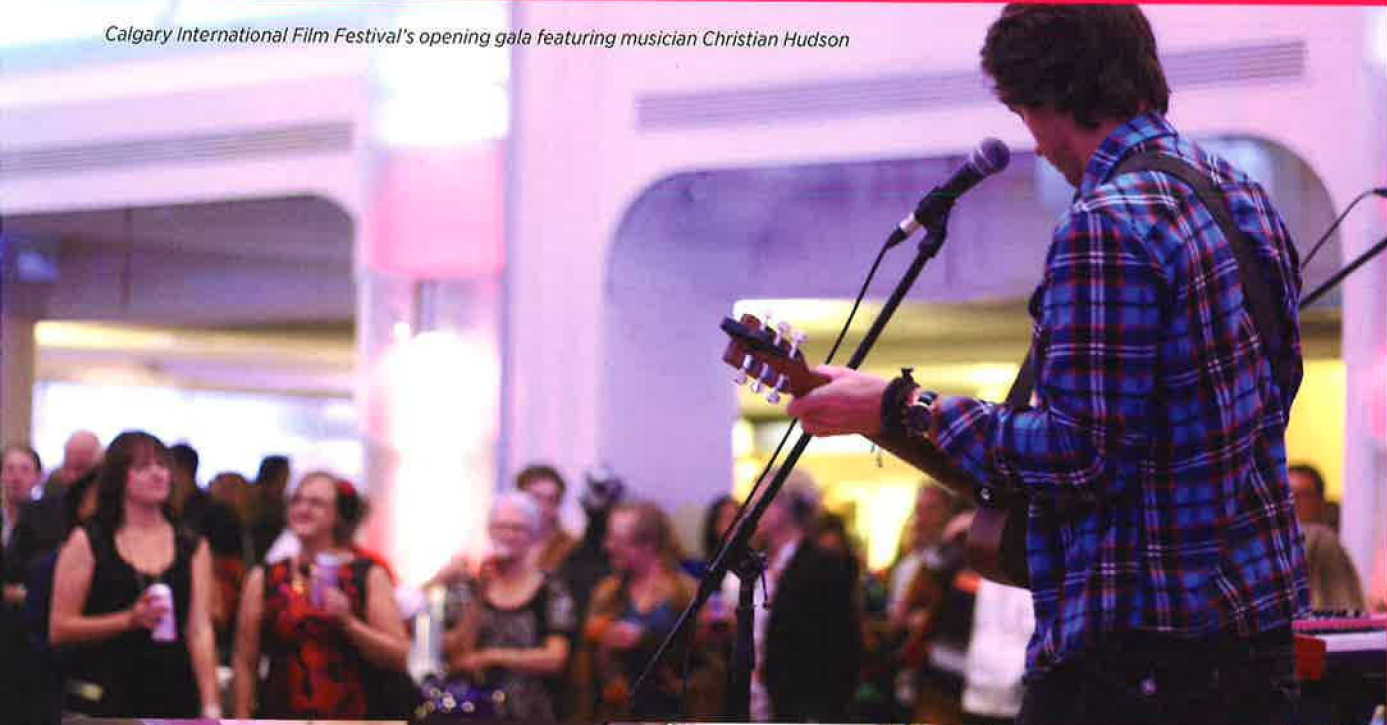


*“Arts Commons is a fantastic organization with top notch facilities. They are exceptionally supportive of the Calgary arts community and we look forward to working with them again.”*

~ Jennifer Cecconui,  
Calgary International Film Festival



Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala featuring musician Christian Hudson



Calgary International Film Festival's opening gala, Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby, Arts Commons

# Contributing to the Future

As part of the Arts Commons five-year plan, and with the generous support of our Lead Sponsor for Arts Learning ConocoPhillips Canada, we have prioritized making vital interactions between artists and students possible. In a once in a lifetime opportunity, five high schools were invited to bring their jazz ensembles to the Jack Singer Concert Hall for a full day workshop with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, which for the past 50 years has been the house

band for the infamous Village Vanguard Club in New York City. With the support and close partnership of CADME (Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education) 1,200 students were also given a private concert and an incredible learning experience that many will remember for the rest of their lives. Several prominent Calgary jazz musicians indicated that this was "the most significant jazz event in Calgary's history."

**10,056**  
students engaged  
in Arts Commons  
Presents Arts  
Learning programs

**1,200**  
students attended  
the private CADME  
concert with  
Vanguard Jazz  
Orchestra



CADME student learns first hand from a Vanguard Jazz Orchestra artist





*"On behalf of the members of Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, I want to express my deep appreciation to you both for bringing VJO to Calgary. It was a highlight of our 50th anniversary year. Thanks so much for having the vision and stamina to have us perform for your young musicians and general public."*

*- Douglas Purviance, Orchestra Manager, Vanguard Jazz Orchestra*



CADME students engaged in a workshop with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra Artists

# Relevant and Current

It is not every day that a local, emerging artist gets to open for an international award winning artist on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage, or use an entire building as a blank canvas for their self-expression, but Arts Commons makes this happen. This past year, Calgary's own Ellen Doty with Josh Crowhurst opened for jazz's new "it" boy, Gregory Porter, and artist Rob Knudsen was given carte blanche to apply his creativity to the Arts Commons building. Knudsen's work resulted in "This Feels So Real", the square plot of artificial grass mounted

on the side of the building with the title carved out, and the HB pencils designed out of the bollards around the parkade entrance. You can find more of his work in some of the most unexpected places throughout the building as well.

For the 100 year anniversary of women receiving the vote in Alberta, Arts Commons collaborated with the community and facilitated an incredible day-long celebration themed around women's rights, empowerment, and equality. The day started off with the

Union Choir collaborating with members of Sisters from Another Mother singing 'Songs for All Women' on the Jack Singer Concert Hall steps. The members of the Union Choir were honoured to showcase the music of Indigenous women as taught by Calgary musicians Chantal Chagnon and Cheryle Chagnon-Greyeyes. The day continued with a visual arts tour of feminist art in the Window Galleries, and closed with a screening of *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*, as part of the Artflicks! series.



HB Pencils, by artist Rob Knudsen



*"Working with Arts Commons*

*I was given a lot more freedom than I'm used to while creating art in a public space. They told me, 'You can do anything, no limits, except paint on the heritage building'"*

*- Rob Knudsen, resident artist*



Union Choir performs on the steps of the Jack Singer Concert Hall, Arts Commons



*This Feels so Real*, by artist Rob Knudsen



Ellen Doty with Josh Crowhurst open for Arts Commons Presents TD Jazz, Gregory Porter on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage

479

artists engaged through  
Arts Commons Presents

# A Season of Excellence

This year, thousands of people walked through the doors of Arts Commons, sat in our seats, strolled through our halls, and were impacted by the creativity and imagination that occur within our walls. In total, 31,664 people attended Arts Commons Presents shows in the acoustically brilliant Jack Singer Concert Hall, embracing music from around the world through the BD&P World Music and TD Jazz series, and learning about the world around us through *National Geographic Live*. PCL Blues celebrated 18 years of performance in the intimate and recently renovated Engineered Air Theatre. Over 20 brides and grooms exchanged vows on our beautiful

stages and reception halls and over 190 community user groups held their special events in our spaces. Artflicks! wrapped up for good, after an amazing season, which included both the premiere and two additional screenings of *The Peel*, a documentary following six Canadian artists paddling through North America's last intact river system, in an attempt to raise awareness and prompt action for its protection. *The Peel* artists were in residence at Arts Commons and were also featured in the Lightbox gallery and the +15 Soundscape.

We are proud to have shared in these powerful, passionate, and unforgettable moments with you.



Wedding ceremony, Jack Singer Concert Hall lobby © Heart & Sparrow Photography



National Geographic Live speaker Bob Poole on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage

**56,201**  
people engaged in  
Arts Commons Presents  
programming

(includes paid & unpaid attendance,  
audience, students, teachers, artists)



24,885

patrons purchased  
tickets to Arts Commons  
Presents shows

Arts Commons Presents, BD&P World Music  
Yamato the Drummers of Japan, Jack Singer Concert Hall



*"When artists and  
community come  
together, amazing  
things can happen."*

- Jennifer Johnson,  
Director of Programming

Q & A with the cast of *The Peel*, Engineered Air Theatre





Arts Commons, Front of House staff



West Island College Commencement Ceremony on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage, Arts Commons



1097

events booked by  
Venue & Event  
Management

*"We are very pleased to be holding our third consecutive Commencement Ceremony at the lovely Jack Singer Concert Hall. It is a spectacular venue for this special moment and our graduates and their families have nothing but great things to say about the reception we host in the lobby afterwards."*

- Tina Butz, West Island College



# Arts Commons is... **Passion**

Arts Commons is proud to have passionate and dedicated staff that take great pride in operating and maintaining the 560,000 sq-ft facility to the highest standards. The venue and event staff, the facility management crew, and the administrative team alike, are driven to give audiences and artists the best experience possible. In our dedication to operating sustainably and reducing "dark days", venue and event management booked 1,097 events this year, up from 974 events in 2014-15. In addition, 18 Founders Circle and Explorer Circle Membership events were held, contributing to our fundraising efforts, providing behind-the-scenes opportunities, and enhancing the overall patron experience.



Arts Commons staff with artist composer-pianist Mark Limacher



Arts Commons' Director of Facilities, Wes Jenkins (centre), and longtime Founders Circle Members, Bryan Clarke and Michel Bourque on a backstage tour of the Martha Cohen Theatre. © Will Young.

**61**  
full time staff

# Arts Commons is... **Accessible**

Through the TD Arts Access Pass, Kids Up Front, and other community giving programs, Arts Commons Presents was able to provide free tickets to 15,803 new Canadian citizens, families in need, and so many other Calgarians who wouldn't otherwise be able to enjoy these enriching cultural experiences. Additionally, Arts Commons held free events including the hugely popular *Happenings* evenings, which encourages the public to interact with art and artists, and is never the same twice.



Left: Chalk artist Jenny Bonar decorates centre court entrance for the Happenings 5 event. Right: Free Happenings printmaking activity with artist Trevor Gieske



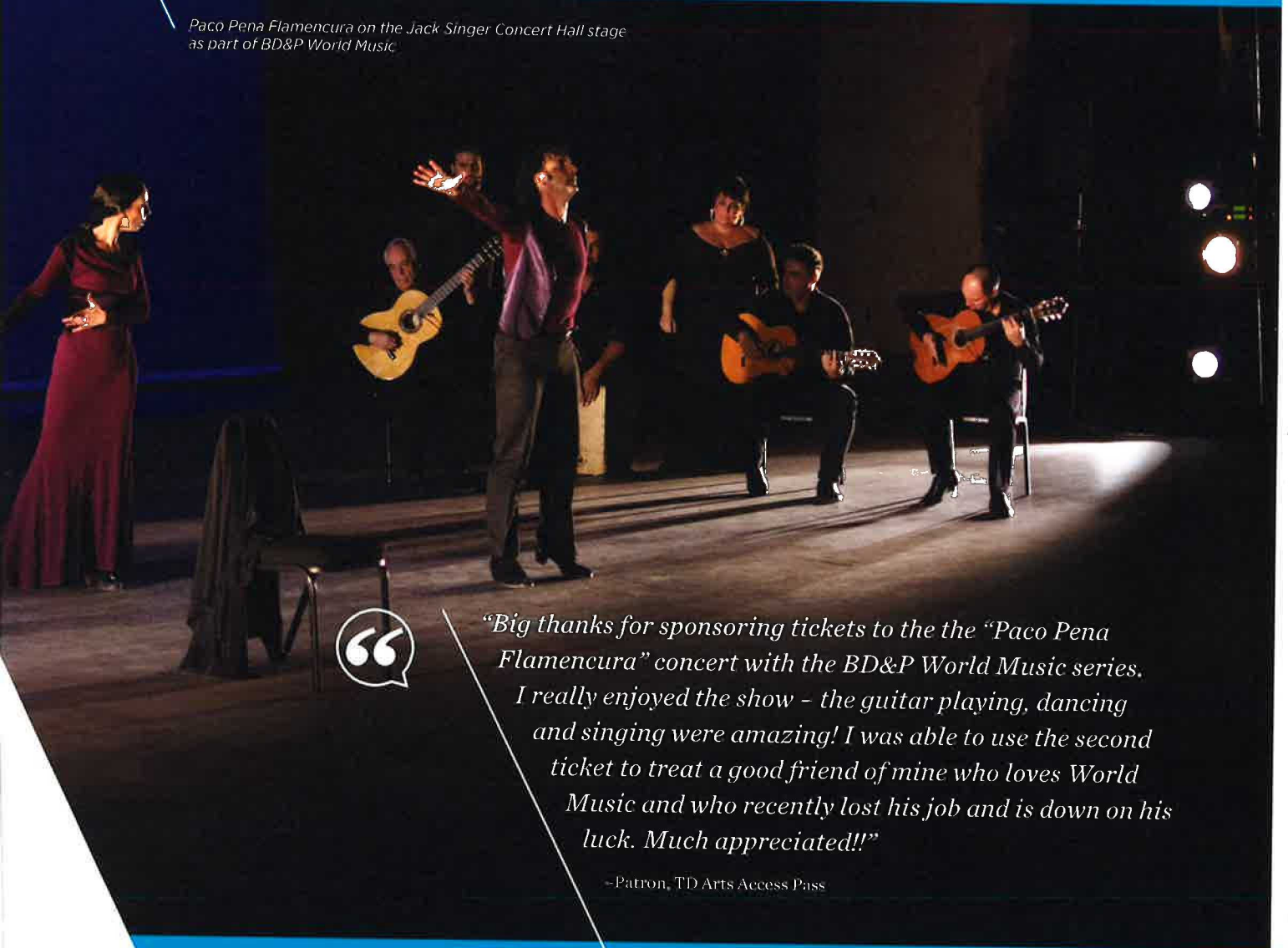
**15,803**  
people attended an  
event FREE of charge



Happenings, artist Kris Ellestad



*Paco Pena Flamencura on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage as part of BD&P World Music*



*"Big thanks for sponsoring tickets to the the "Paco Pena Flamencura" concert with the BD&P World Music series. I really enjoyed the show - the guitar playing, dancing and singing were amazing! I was able to use the second ticket to treat a good friend of mine who loves World Music and who recently lost his job and is down on his luck. Much appreciated!!"*

*- Patron, TD Arts Access Pass*

**2,259**

patrons benefited from  
FREE show tickets, through  
the TD Arts Access Pass

# Arts Commons is... **Vital**

Arts Commons is an incubator and leader in the development of emerging artists in Calgary, providing experience and support that builds artist repertoire and qualifications for various funding and professional development streams. Along with providing showcasing opportunities for musicians, Arts Commons Visual and Media Arts Programs support and promote predominantly local emerging

individual artists and collectives to create innovative, thought-provoking, and exceptional work. We provide multiple non-traditional gallery spaces and opportunities for artists to take supportive risks at a professional level that helps provide valuable experience. Working with 165 visual artists during the 2015-16 season, the number of local artists we support continues to grow ever year.

Arts Commons, Lightbox Gallery.  
Featuring Sarah Nordean



**165**

visual and media  
artists engaged



Arts Commons, Window Galleries exhibition





*"It is difficult to "nutshell" Arts Commons. I have played in most of the theaters and even the hallways, I have been in residency at the Ledge Gallery, and as a patron, I have experienced much more. There is no other place in the city as diverse and dynamic for the arts community - a unique and critical hub for Calgary."*

- Mark Limacher, composer-pianist

*Mark Limacher and Brianna Strong experiment with visually representing music in the Ledge Gallery.*

# Arts Commons is... **Education**

The Hub for Inspired Learning entered its first full year during the 2015-16 season welcoming 483 students to participate. Partnering with Campus Calgary Open Minds, Arts Commons provides an innovative learning environment, allowing students to explore new ways to communicate, as well as interact with each other through visual arts, dance, music, and theatre. This season's activities ranged from mask-making to journal writing, and even creating life-sized statues of

themselves that were then displayed throughout the centre for the public to engage with. Educator feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, paving the way for many successful years to come.

The *National Geographic Live* education program also welcomed 8,198 students to this spectacular speaker series, over 600 students participated in One Day Arts School, and the immersive SummerACT musical theatre program was sold out!

*National Geographic Live*



**483**  
students enrolled  
in the Hub for  
Inspired Learning

*Students discover a new style of learning with the Hub for Inspired Learning*

**8,198**  
students attended a  
*National Geographic  
Live student show*





*"I had a student who was excited to participate at the site, who 'blossomed' at school during our rehearsals and final production. Their in-class behavior has been more confident in their verbal expression as well as their peer relations."*

- Teacher, Light of Christ school, participant in the Hub for Inspired Learning program



SummerACT students perform their original work on the Engineered Air Theatre stage



Hub for Inspiring Learning students created life-sized statues of themselves



One Day Arts School workshop

**633**  
students who  
participated in  
One Day Arts School

# Arts Commons is... **Engagement**

During the Arts Commons 2015-16 season, the volunteer base more than doubled with the launch of our new volunteer program, engaging individuals on multiple levels throughout our organization, including marketing and communications, development, and programming (specifically for our *Happenings* artist receptions and parties).

We also launched our new concierge program, creating a team of brand

ambassadors and Arts Commons guides and service providers for our patrons. As we move forward, we're excited to expand our concierge program to offer a superior level of customer service inside our building and for the surrounding area. Not only does this program help patrons navigate the building, but also allows for a deeper exchange of information about the space and everything that happens within.



Volunteer at Happenings



*"...you folks at Arts Commons treat us so well and this is just the beginning! You're going above and beyond helping us newer volunteers feel comfortable with the Volunteer Program, the Concierge Role, other opportunities and how everything works. I'm really looking forward to being part of (and hope I can help create) a great volunteer experience with Arts Commons. So... "Thank You!"*

~ Lynda, Volunteer Program participant





Volunteers help with Arts Commons festival tent



Volunteers introduce the new concierge program to patrons in Arts Commons

*"I am very glad to be a part of the Volunteer Program at Arts Commons, it is a great opportunity to become exposed to the arts community in Calgary while at the same time promoting a sense of community."*

- Melissa, Volunteer Program participant

# Arts Commons is... **Community**

Arts Commons is the home to some of Calgary's most innovative artistic organizations, and is proud to present and promote creative collaboration within our city. As part of our commitment to being a gathering place and collaborator for our community, we have created the Community Opportunity Fund. This fund has been developed to allow community and arts organizations to apply for a sponsorship opportunity to host their

event(s) at Arts Commons whether for a performance, rehearsal, readings, or workshop. Criteria includes being a Canadian-based organization and the event being arts related and impactful on the community. This year, the fund benefited music, dance, puppetry, theatre, and more, further broadening the depth and breadth of culture which happens here at Arts Commons.

*Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in the Jack Singer Lobby*



15

organizations that benefited from the Community Opportunity Fund



*"The Community Opportunity Fund Campaign (COF) allowed a small-size local music school like us to provide our students with a performance experience that has developed a sense of community, nurture the joy of live music making and self-expression, in a professional, yet intimate recital venue like the Engineered Air Theatre. We truly appreciate the support of local talent development through programs like the COF."*

- Alicia Romero, Avant Garde Music Studio



|  |  |   |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| \$100 Film Festival  | Calgary Oracle Users Group                             | Columbia College  | Honens   | Paul Mercs Concerts Inc.  | Stampede Entertainment Inc.                                      |
| 5 Star Entertainment                                       | Calgary Outlink Centre For Gender and Sexual Diversity | Conrad Belau  | Husky Energy                                   | Pechakucha Night  | Studio C   |
| ABEC Promotions Inc.                                       | Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra                         | Coopérative Théâtre à Pic                                     | Independent Living Resource Centre of Calgary  | Peripheral Theatre  | Teachers Convention  |
| Absolute Dance Inc.  | Calgary Queen's University Alumni Association          | Dance on Edge   | Inglesia Productions                           | PREPSKILLS INC.   | TEDxYYC  |
| Adult Recreation Choir Society                             | Calgary Society of Organists                           | Dance Spectrum  | Inside Out Theatre                             | Pride Calgary Planning Committee                                      | The Calgary International Burlesque Festival                     |
| Alberta Association of Architects                          | Calgary Tundra Swan Dance School                       | Dark Matter Productions                                       | International Live Events Association, Calgary | Productions Juste pour rire II Inc.                                   | The Garter Girls Inc.  |
| Alberta Theatre Projects                                   | Canadian Society for Unconventional Resources          | Dean Kolundzic  | Jacquelyn Perron                               | Professional Association of Canadian Theatres                         | The Russian Theatre Foundation of Calgary                        |
| Alexandra Young  | Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists               | Dell Canada   | Jaime Tinevez                                  | QED Marketing Inc.  | The Young Canadians School of Performing Arts                    |
| Amber Arts Inc.  | Canadian Voice Care Foundation                         | Diana Paul Galleries  | Jeff Parry Promotions                          | Red Deer Symphony   | Theatre Alberta  |
| Arts Commons Presents                                      | Children's School of Dance                             | Digital Zone Media  | Jennifer Mansell                               | Renee Howey and Patrick Boyd  | Theatre BSMT   |
| Avant-Garde Music Studio                                   | Christine & Kevin Nguyen                               | Diversity Dance & Performing Arts                             | Jeremy Johnson                                 | Revv52  | Theatre Calgary  |
| Backside Tours   | Chromatic Theatre                                      | Downstage   | Jeunesse Classique Ballet Society              | River Street Productions  | Theatre of Consequences  |
| Ballet de Moscou, Inc.                                     | City of Calgary  | Dr. E.P. Scarlett High School                                 | Jewish National Fund - Calgary                 | Romanian-Canadian Cultural Association of Calgary                     | Theresa Pinhey & Ryan Brookwell                                  |
| Birnton Theatricals  | City of Calgary - Community Standards                  | EMH Productions Inc.  | JUNO Awards                                    | Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes                                 | THUGWork Theatre   |
| Bishop Carroll High School                                 | City of Calgary - Corporate Properties & Buildings     | Erikaentertainment  | La Pointe Dance                                | Rozsa Foundation  | TK Events Inc.   |
| BLG Awards   | City of Calgary - CSC Digital Forum                    | Ernst & Young, L.L.P.   | Legacy Kitchens                                | Sai Productions   | Tourism Calgary  |
| Bow Valley College   | City of Calgary - Customer Service & Communication     | Experience Church   | Lighthouse Labs                                | SAIT Student Association: Architectural Technologies                  | Traugott Building Contractors                                    |
| Brian Farrell Music Inc.                                   | City of Calgary - Environmental and Safety Management  | Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, Canada's Western Mountain Region | Link PR Incorporated                           | SAIT Student Association: Civil Engineering Technology Students' Club | Tri-Tone Productions   |
| Brooks & Dodd Consulting Inc.                              | City of Calgary - Information Technology Services      | Fashion Calgary   | Live Nation Canada Inc.                        | Sakamoto Entertainment  | Two Towers   |
| Calgary Association for the Development of Music Education | City of Calgary - IT Application Support               | Festival Chorus   | Luxor Group of Companies                       | Sandra Irwin  | Ultimate Dance Company   |
| Calgary Catholic School District                           | City of Calgary - Parks and Recreation                 | Fire Exit Theatre Company                                     | Martyna Gatkiewicz & Christopher Ian Cox       | SDI Marketing & Rogers Hometown Hockey                                | Union Events   |
| Calgary Civic Symphony                                     | City of Calgary - Urban Strategy                       | Footfalls Academy   | Mawer Investment Management Ltd.               | Search Tower Company  | University of British Columbia - Development & Alumni Engagement |
| Calgary Congress for Equity & Diversity in the Arts        |  | Free for All Marketing  | Meridian Incentive Consultants                 | Serenella Sol   | University of Lethbridge   |
| Calgary Girls Choir  |  | FUNNYFEST Calgary Comedy Festival                             | Michelle Thrush                                | Shangrila Calgary Society (SCS)                                       | Urban Dance Projects   |
| Calgary Housing Company                                    |  | Government of Alberta - Alberta Infrastructure                | Minimax Group Inc.                             | Shantero Productions  | Urban Stories Theatre  |
| Calgary Immigrant Women's Association                      |  | Governors of the University of Calgary                        | Morin Music Studio                             | ShowBiz Production Inc.   | Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Calgary                      |
| Calgary International Children's Festival                  |  | National Trust for Canada / Fiducie Nationale du Canada       | MPACT Dance                                    | Showtime Dance Promotions   | Viva Musica Studio Ltd.  |
| Calgary International Film Festival                        |  | Hitachi Solutions Canada, Ltd.                                | MS Society of Canada                           | Snap Dance Studios  | W.P. Puppet Theatre Society                                      |
| Calgary Municipal Land Corporation                         |  | Holly Blazina   | Musica Academy                                 | Soul to Sole Dance  | Wayne Jones Comedy   |
|  |  |   | New Pathway                                    | SoundKreations  | West Island College  |
|  |  |   | New West Symphony & Chorus                     | Security Professional's Information Exchange Society                  | Western Canada High School                                       |
|  |  |   | Nexen Energy ULC                               | Springboard Dance   | Wild Rose Dance Arts Association                                 |
|  |  |   | Next Level Entertainment Service Inc.          | Square Cat Entertainment  | Wordfest   |
|  |  |   | Nimble Storage                                 | SS Entertainment Inc.   | World Beauty Fitness and Fashion Inc.                            |
|  |  |   | North American Resource Management Inc.        | StageCoach Theatre Arts Calgary                                       | Youth Singers of Calgary   |
|  |  |   | Northland Oral Surgery                         |   | Youth World Petroleum Council                                    |
|  |  |   | One Yellow Rabbit Performance Theatre          |   | Yum Yum Catering Ltd.  |
|  |  |   | Orff the Wall                                  |   |  |

191

community groups  
who made use of  
Arts Commons' facilities

# Arts Commons is... **United**

Within the walls of Arts Commons, magic happens. From the seven resident companies to the multitude of community groups who share our space, stories are told, experiences are shared, and doors to inspiration and creativity are opened. In the 2015-16 season, Theatre Calgary's *The Little Prince* took us on a fantastical journey across the stars in the Max Bell Theatre, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra filled Jack Singer Concert Hall with inspiring, uplifting, and powerful music, and One Yellow Rabbit Performance Theatre celebrated 30 years of presenting the High Performance Rodeo with a line-up that ranged from

a grassroots Calgary song project to a performance in an elevator. In the Martha Cohen Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects premiered *The Circle* by Geoffrey Simon Brown, a new Canadian play that starred an all-Albertan cast, fostering the future of theatre in our province, while Downstage worked tirelessly to remove barriers that might discourage patrons from enjoying their ground-breaking productions. And the Calgary International Children's Festival provided over 60,000 arts experiences to children, parents, and teachers in our building and on Olympic Plaza, confirming them to be the best at theatre for young people.



*"My best memory of Arts Commons was hearing the Johnny Gaudreau anthem in One Yellow Rabbit's Calgary I love you, but you're killing me. Still has me laughing."*

- Julia Best



Cast members of Alberta Theatre Projects' *The Circle* by Geoffrey Simon Brown, 2015 - Photo courtesy of Alberta Theatre Projects



The cast of Theatre Calgary's *The Little Prince – The Musical*.  
© Trudie Lee



*"My favourite music moment was listening to the amazing score for Theatre Calgary's *The Little Prince* premiere with two 8 year olds."*

~ Sonja



Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra

Calgary International Children's Festival, 2016.  
© Kelly Hofer



*"It was my first time going to see the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and it was definitely a fantastic experience. The concert hall itself was neat and beautiful. I was overwhelmed with emotions and I will admit that I cried at the end. Overall experience left me with a great memory! Thank you!!"*

~ Cindy Nguyen

Our collective impact combines activities from community groups and resident companies, including Arts Commons Presents:



**430,968**  
tickets distributed

**46,567**  
students inspired

**757**  
artists engaged  
or employed

**889**  
ticketed  
performances

**222**  
FTE positions  
in the building

**1,741**  
volunteers  
participated

**20,931**  
volunteer  
hours spent



# Arts Commons is... **Innovative**

Our facility experienced some magical moments as well. During the 2015-16 season, through the support of the City of Calgary and the Government of Canada, Arts Commons was able to give the Max Bell, Martha Cohen, Engineered Air, and Motel Theatres a face lift with 1,332 new seats, each designed and chosen specifically for their designated theatre. Each seat from three of the theatres was carefully disassembled, in order to recycle and reuse wherever possible. Metal frames were melted down, recycled, and will be turned into new products, while many of the wooden seatbacks were converted into acoustic reflective panels to enhance the Jack Singer Rehearsal Hall! The remaining

seatbacks were donated to Calgary woodworking artists. The dressing rooms of the Jack Singer Concert Hall were also refurbished, providing a much needed upgrade to host our artists, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall seats will be replaced in Summer, 2017.

We also brightened the experience in Big Secret Theatre and Motel with new lighting grids and upgraded the Martha Cohen Theatre with a new lighting console.

These improvements, among many others, not only make the experience more enjoyable for our patrons, but also for the artists who rehearse and perform under our roof.



*Max Bell Theatre was one of four theatres in Arts Commons to receive new seating*



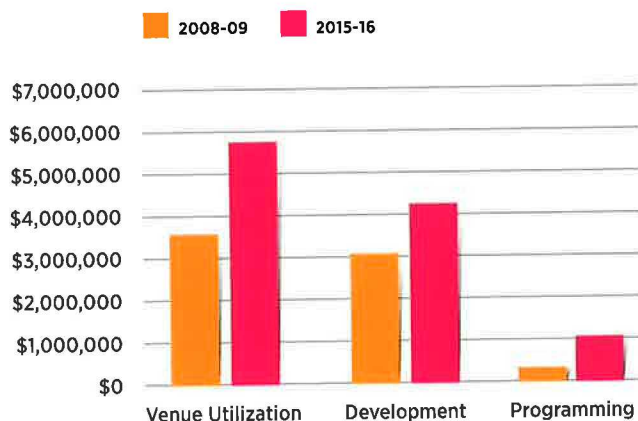
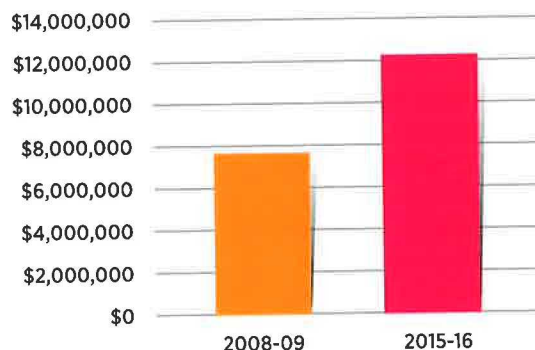
*Jack Singer Concert Hall Rehearsal Room acoustic ceiling created from the recycled backs of the old Max Bell Theatre seats*

# Arts Commons is... **Sustainable**

## Revenue Growth and Diversification

When the current management of Arts Commons took over in fiscal year 2009-10, the organization was facing a large deficit which required significant cuts to operating expenses in order to reduce the overall deficit to just over \$100K. Understanding that cutting expenses was a short term measure and that we needed to grow and diversify revenue streams to ensure the future of the organization, a longer term plan was developed.

Seven years later we can see the results of that strategy with revenues increasing over 61% in 2015-16 when compared to 2008-09 results (right).



The focus on maximizing revenues included:

- Increased and innovative use of venues
- Expanding our role as a presenter & programmer
  - New series
  - Additional arts learning offerings
  - Increased public programming
- Strengthening our relationships with all levels of government and the community (development)

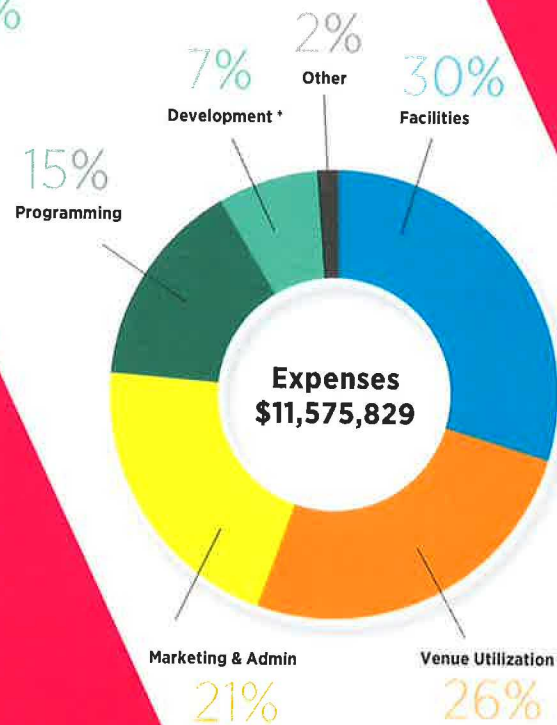
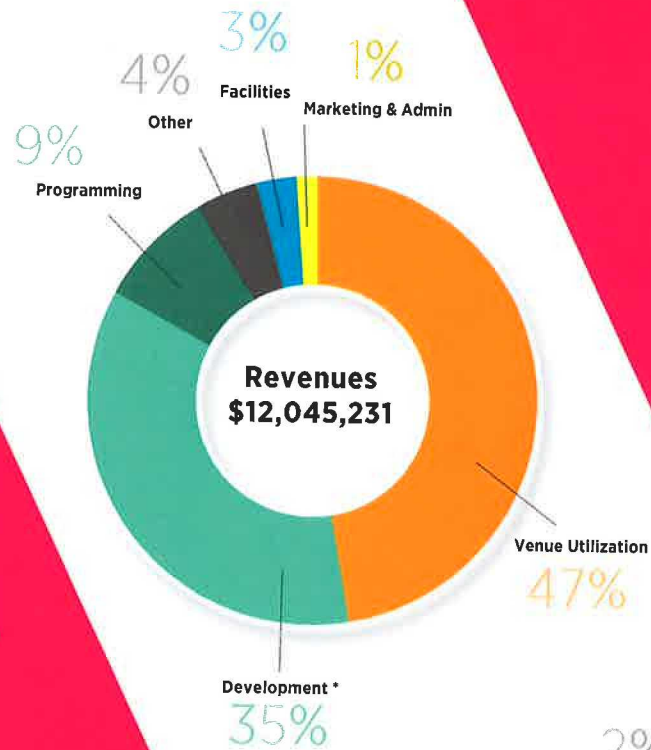
Resulting in increases from 41 to 133% in three key areas: venue utilization, programming and development (left).



#### Fiscal Year 2015-16 Results

In our ongoing focus on improving resiliency and sustainability, we continued to pursue revenue opportunities and diversification by maximizing the capacity of our core services and venues while maintaining a competitive cost structure. This resulted in the third consecutive year of positive operational results which will help ensure both the sustainability of our operations and the ability to respond dynamically to opportunities or future challenges as they present themselves.

Despite a successful year, the effects of the economic downturn were significant, with revenues from venue usage and ticket sales down 19% year over year. Gains in development and support service revenues helped offset the impact of the decreased activity.



\* includes \$241,586 of goods and services in kind

# Arts Commons is... **You**

Through the ongoing support and generosity of corporations, foundation, governments, and individuals, Calgarians, as well as visitors to our wonderful city have access to Arts Commons, Calgary's preeminent gathering space. Filled with wonder and imagination, this is where creativity comes to life, remarkable experiences are shared, and meaningful memories are made to last a lifetime.

In the midst of the latest economic crisis facing Alberta, ALSA Road Construction's decision to become a Supporting Sponsor of Arts Commons BD&P World Music and TD Jazz series is nothing less than remarkable. ALSA President, Sam Kamis, believes that business is a creative process and that the quality of Calgary's cultural infrastructure has a direct impact

on quality of life and therefore on the competitiveness of Calgary in attracting people and investment.

For Explorers Circle and Founders Circle members, Dave and Roxanne Dunlop, the arts help us tell our stories, to create dialogue, and foster compassion. *"There are no walls; you walk into a room of friends at Arts Commons."* When other languages fail, art can promote tolerance and provide a forum for exploration, discovery, and understanding.

It's because of the generosity of ALSA, the Dunlops, and many more friends that Arts Commons is able to continue to be a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors.



Roxanne Dunlop (center). © Will Young



*"You can always find a way to give back – even in tough economic times."*

- Sam Kamis, President, ALSA Road Construction – Supporting Sponsor of BD&P World Music & TD Jazz



*"Arts Commons provides authentic experiences that keep us coming back."*

- Dave & Roxanne Dunlop, Explorers Circle & Founders Circle Members



# Private and Public Sector Support

**Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation** to the following corporations, foundations, governments, and passionate community leaders who gave generously to support Arts Commons as we played a key role in the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors throughout the 2015-16 Season.

## Corporate Sponsors and Foundation Partners



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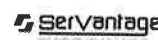
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the Departments of Canadian  
Heritage, and Service Canada

Government of Alberta through  
the Departments of Culture & Tourism,  
Alberta Labour, and the Alberta  
Foundation for the Arts

The City of Calgary through the  
Department of Community Services  
& Protective Services

### Capital Support

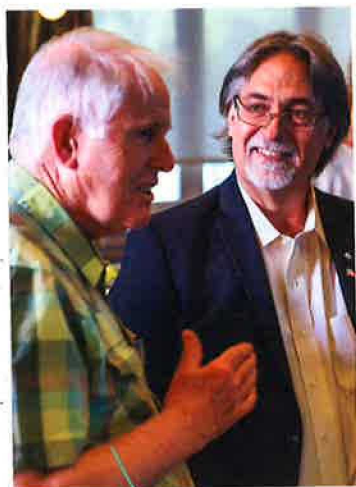
Government of Canada through  
Canadian Heritage

The City of Calgary through the  
Department of Community Services  
& Protective Services

Gift from the Arts Commons  
Endowment Fund at the  
Calgary Foundation.

## Arts Commons FOUNDERS CIRCLE

Members of Founders Circle support Arts Commons' education programs, which make the arts more accessible to young minds through a variety of impactful initiatives, such as the Hub for Inspired Learning; and, they help us bring renowned artists to perform in the BD&P World Music and TD Jazz, to name only two of the series presented by Arts Commons.



Longtime Explorers Circle and Founders Circle members Ken Havard and Bob Benzen enjoy the Founders Circle Dinner. © Will Young

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Sandra LeBlanc  
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Estate of Dr. Martha Cohen, CM, LLD (*in memoriam*)  
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## Arts Commons EXPLORERS CIRCLE

All members of Explorers Circle help National Geographic Society to inspire people to care about the planet and aid Arts Commons in bringing the distinguished *National Geographic Live* speaker series to Calgary.

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Explorers Circle Associate Members Nyssa and Jordan Moore mingle with the National Geographic Explorer Dr. Sylvia Earle (right) © Richard Lam

Patricia Dalk & Terry Burton  
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# Board and Staff

Arts Commons is where people from all walks of life can come together. Our staff include: artists, educators, and subject matter experts who commit their time and attention to their work because of their passion for it. Working at Arts Commons is more than a job. We understand the impact the arts have on our community and we are dedicated to bringing the arts to every life.

Arts Commons also welcomes members from our greater community to serve on our Board of Directors, bringing fresh viewpoints, and sharing their diverse experience with the staff, volunteers, and patrons of our organization. We are proud to have a member from each of our resident companies currently serving on our Board, bringing their point of view, expertise, and knowledge.

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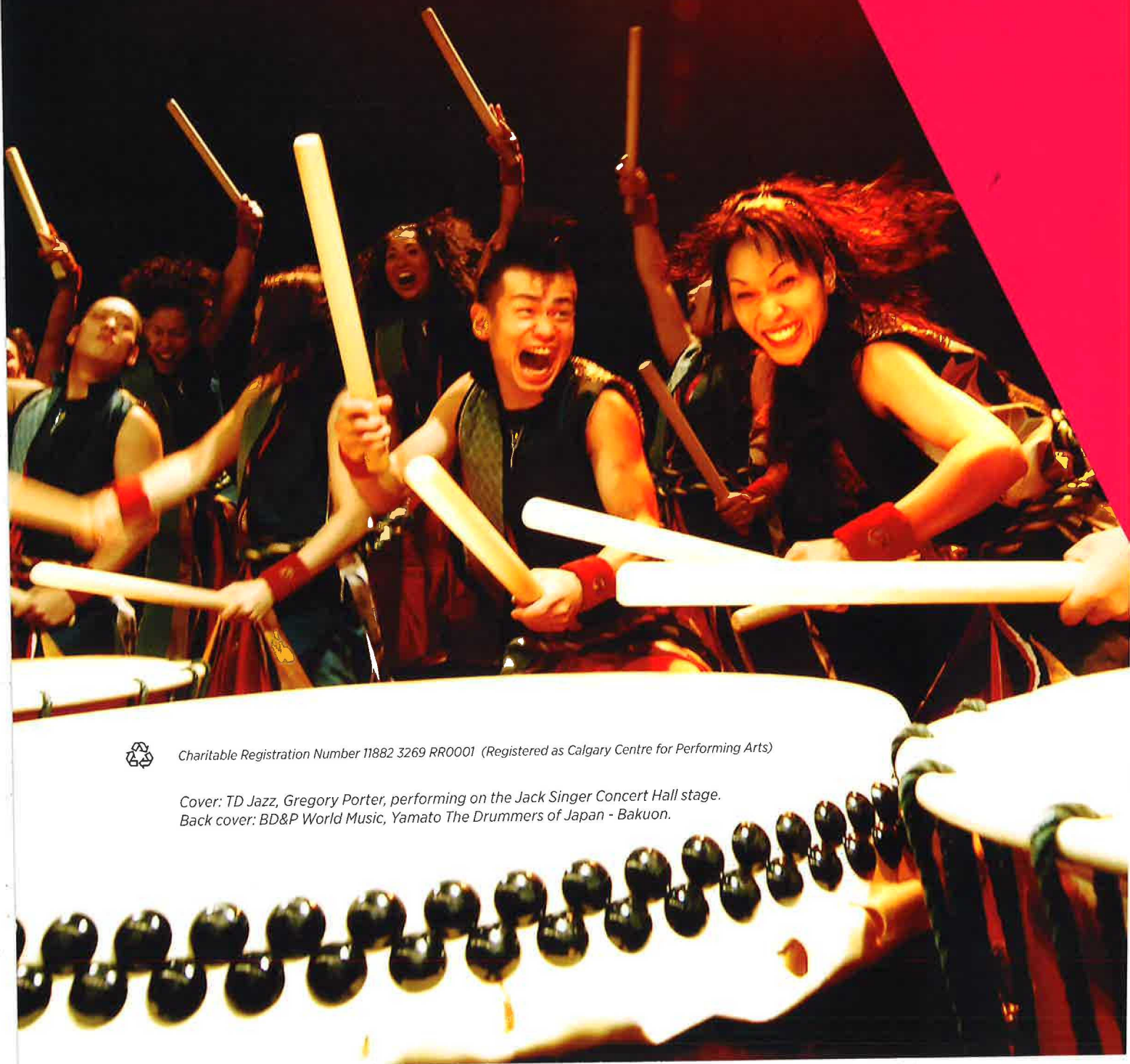
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Cover: TD Jazz, Gregory Porter, performing on the Jack Singer Concert Hall stage.  
Back cover: BD&P World Music, Yamato The Drummers of Japan - Bakuon.