

2020-21

ANNUAL REPORT



theatre:
CALGARY

Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

WELCOME

Our 53rd season was unlike any other. With the world still navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenge our theatre faced was how to remain creative, engaging, and relevant to our audiences and to the city of Calgary. Not being able to perform live on our stage, or in Prince's Island Park, meant we had no choice but to go where everyone had to for much of 2020 and early 2021. Going online, with *Shakespeare by the Bow*, *A Christmas Carol*, and even our new *Page to Stage New Works Festival*, allowed us to continue creating theatrical experiences, and provide opportunities for our artists, crew, and administrative teams, albeit in new and challenging ways. I am particularly proud that our filmed production of *A Christmas Carol* was recognized for its artistic and technical excellence, with six Alberta Media Production Industries Association (AMPIA) Rosie Award nominations.

Over the past year, there have been numerous changes to the people of our theatre, including new Executive Director Maya Choldin who joined the company in November 2020. Under very challenging circumstances, Maya stepped into her role and, in partnership with our Artistic Director Stafford Arima, begin to envision what Theatre Calgary looks like in the days, months, and years to come, post-pandemic. The leadership shown by Maya and Stafford gives us confidence that we will once again be the cornerstone of the arts in our community, and continue to engage and inspire a new and diverse generation of Calgarians.

I would be remiss if I did not thank former board member Jim Reader for his contribution. Jim stepped into the Executive Director role on an interim basis in 2020 and was instrumental in working with Stafford to lay the foundation for many of the successes achieved in 2020-21. Jim, along with the theatre's many long-time administrative staff, worked incredibly hard to help make Season 53 happen.

Finally, a huge thanks to each of you. Your love of the arts and desire for Theatre Calgary to remain a world-class theatre was evident more than ever, as we continued to receive incredibly generous individual and corporate financial support even though we could not welcome you in-person last year. Our upcoming 2021-22 season fills me with a great sense of hope and optimism. While we all continue to take steps to reconnect with our families, communities, and city, our job at the theatre is to do the same with our audiences, artists, and our home – the Max Bell Theatre. The board and staff of Theatre Calgary are committed to ensuring that we welcome everyone back in a safe, responsible, and entertaining way. We cannot wait to be back on our stage in 2021-22.

Craig Senyk
CHAIR, THEATRE CALGARY SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Great theatre needs three things: exceptional artists, curious audiences, and a supportive team to help bring the art and the audience together. The artistic growth shown in the creative endeavours undertaken by Theatre Calgary since March 2020 has moved and inspired me as an artistic director and theatre-maker. As we enter into a new era of safety and healing, I feel it is this company's time to reclaim the theatre to, once again, create and produce art that tells the untold stories of our communities, to share the beloved classics, and redouble our efforts in building a safe space for every artist, stage crew, theatre employee and audience member to feel welcomed and part of this glorious home we call Theatre Calgary.

Stafford Arima
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Theatre Calgary's 2020-21 season was filled with challenge. It required a significant amount of adjusting and (the ever-present word) pivoting. Luckily, flexibility and adaptability is at the core of great creation and Theatre Calgary was able to find our way to be theatre makers in this new environment. At the core we are here to serve our community and showcase great theatre. Telling the stories we want to, and need to, hear. We are proud to have found a way to do that safely and are looking forward to reigniting the stage and bringing our audiences, artists, and staff back.

Maya Choldin
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MISSION

TO STIMULATE, PROVOKE, AND DELIGHT THROUGH AMBITIOUS PROGRAMMING CREATED TO IGNITE LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT.

VISION

TO STAND AMONGST THE BEST THEATRES GLOBALLY AS A LEADER IN INNOVATIVE, IMPACTFUL, AND DIVERSE PROGRAMMING.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION, THEATRE CALGARY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT WE LIVE, WORK AND CREATE ON THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY (SIKSIKA, KAINAI, PIIKANI), THE TSUUT'INA, THE ÎYÂXE NAKODA NATIONS, THE MÉTIS NATION (REGION 3), AND ALL PEOPLE WHO MAKE THEIR HOMES IN THE TREATY 7 REGION OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA. THEY WERE THE ORIGINAL OCCUPANTS OF THIS LAND AND CONTINUE TO BE HERE TO THIS DAY. THEATRE CALGARY IS GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT IN THIS TERRITORY.



2020-21 PRODUCTIONS

This past season saw three unique presentations at Theatre Calgary, created and shared in three very different ways. With neither our theatre, nor Prince's Island Park available to us due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were faced with the opportunity to look for new and creative ways to bring work online to our audiences in 2020-21.

In July, 2020, as a way to continue our dedication to providing opportunities for young emerging artists, we, along with The Shakespeare Company and Hit & Myth Productions, brought *Shakespeare by the Bow* to Zoom. Our production of *Romeo & Juliet* was performed exclusively online nine times, and was viewed by more than 3,700 people. While the production was free to watch, text-to-donate and online donation options were available. The generosity from all these donations allowed the program to continue, and provide valuable learning opportunities to our emerging artists.

A *Christmas Carol*, which premiered an all-new production in 2019, saw playwright Geoffrey Simon Brown create an abridged adaptation of his script for a new, three-performer filmed version of the play. The Stafford Arima-directed show, which was filmed and shown exclusively online, was viewed by more than an estimated 20,000 people. Going online also provided a rare opportunity for our annual production to be seen outside Calgary for the first time. Not only did we have viewers in every Canadian province, patrons also joined us in the USA with viewers in 28 states (from Hawaii to Florida). We also had audiences enjoy the show in over 20 other countries around the globe, including Mexico, the United Kingdom, Australia, Italy, Qatar, Japan, Kenya, and more. The production was also honoured with six Alberta Media Production Industries Association (AMPIA) Rosie Award nominations for best Directing, Acting, Score, Writing, Scripted Feature, and Production Reflecting Cultural Diversity.

In March, 2021, our *Page to Stage New Works Festival* made its debut. For 2021, the festival focused on three new plays from Alberta LGBTQ2S+ writers. With a week of workshopping the scripts, the plays were presented as online readings over a weekend featuring a full compliment of actors and directors. More than 450 viewers joined us for this festival, which was a ticketed (single play or three-pack) event.

In the spring, we hosted a one-night-only (April) online viewing of *The Louder We Get*, which was our smash hit musical (2019-20 season) based on the true story of Canadian Marc Hall, and his fight to take his boyfriend to prom. Regrettably, our planned return to the theatre in May with *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* would be cancelled due to new health restrictions imposed in Alberta.

And finally, throughout 2020-21, we continued to bring *tcTakeout* to our audiences. This was a way to continue to feature a diverse array of young and established artists performing musical numbers, showing off unique talents, and sharing memories of Theatre Calgary in short videos that were shared both on our website and over social media.





2020-21 PRODUCTIONS



JUNE 27 -
JULY 25,
2020

SHAKESPEARE BY THE BOW — ROMEO & JULIET

BY William Shakespeare
ADAPTED BY Haysam Kadri and Jenna Turk

LIVE ONLINE ZOOM PERFORMANCES

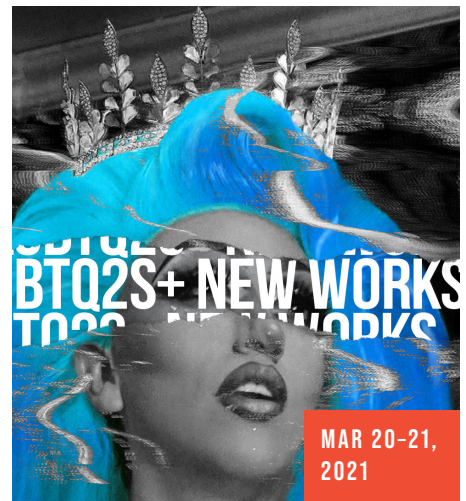


DEC 11 -31,
2020

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

BY Charles Dickens
ABRIDGED ADAPTATION BY Geoffrey Simon Brown

A FILMED DIGITAL PRODUCTION



PAGE TO STAGE — NEW WORKS FESTIVAL

BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIQUE
BY Sharanpal Ruprai (she/her)
AWOWAKII
BY Sable Sweetgrass Katoiyissa (she/her)
AGÁPI STI FURY
BY Matthew Oliver van Diepen (they/them)

LIVE ONLINE ZOOM READINGS

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL

BY Lanie Robertson
RUN CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19

GIVING EMERGING ARTISTS A VOICE AND A PLACE TO LEARN AND PERFORM

Since we became involved in presenting the *Shakespeare by the Bow* program in 2012, our focus has always been on emerging artists. The experience that a young actor, often a recent post-secondary graduate, can gain from working with a professional director, voice coach, fight director, and more makes a massive impact in their development. Tackling the complex language of Shakespeare is never easy, and neither is putting this program together every year, especially when we are unable to perform in our usual home on Prince's Island Park.

The enormous generosity from the **RBC Foundation**, our Emerging Artist Program partner, made our ability to transition to an online performance much easier. Not only were we able to produce an online production of *Romeo & Juliet*, we were able to still cast eight young emerging artists to bring the words to life. While not presented with a 'usual' rehearsal and performance experience, the cast were still able to work with a director and voice coach, to create a truly one-of-a-kind performance for the summer.

In our 2020-21 season, you could not only find emerging artists in *Shakespeare by the Bow*, but you could also find them in our online *A Christmas Carol* and our *Page to Stage New Works Festival*. In difficult times, being able to still provide valuable learning opportunities for young artists was possible because of the support and dedication of the **RBC Foundation**. We thank them for still allowing young artists to create, learn, and continue on their journey as the next generation of actors on our stage.

"Our support is focused on strengthening access to professional networks, mentorship and training as well as exposing Canada's emerging talent to new and diverse audiences. We have been so proud to have partnered with Theatre Calgary for many years, supporting the amazing emerging artists and works that they have created and performed."

- Jerilynn Daniels, Regional Director, Community Marketing and Citizenship, Royal Bank of Canada

SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENT INTERACTIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

Every year, our student matinee performances have allowed thousands of students to attend a Theatre Calgary show in-person. As a long time supporter, and with our theatre closed for the season, **Canada Life** stepped in to ensure the continued success of our Student Interactive Learning Program for 2020-21. Their support enabled more than 7,600 students and teachers to enjoy our new filmed adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. We were able to offer these online performances at a discount, and delivered them to schools across Alberta, and even reached schools as far away as Nanaimo, BC. In fact, 74 schools (305 classrooms) showed the performance to their students, an increase of 24 schools that were able to attend our in-person production in 2019.

We are so very thankful to **Canada Life** for their contribution. Because of their commitment to student learning programs, we extended our reach, and created opportunities for more students and schools (both in-person and online learning) to experience the magic of theatre, in a difficult time for all.

"We support Theatre Calgary's Student Learning Programs because it will allow students to learn about diverse social issues while providing youth the opportunity to engage in world-class theatre. Together, we believe we can create a strong social impact, one program at a time."

- Stephanie Halligan, Program Manager, Community Relations, Canada Life

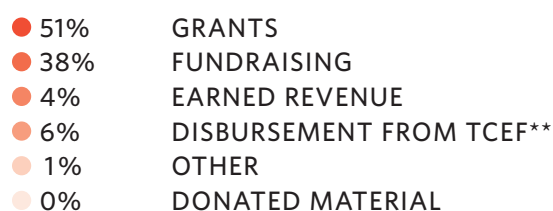
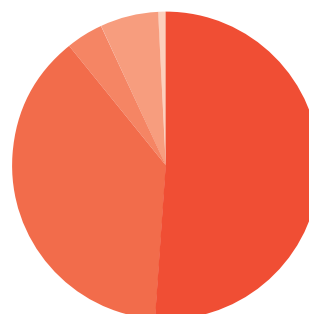
A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Theatre Calgary extends our deepest appreciation to **Craig and Cara Senyk** for their generosity and extraordinary gift this past season. Their ongoing dedication to Theatre Calgary strengthens our commitment to be a cultural leader in our city, and provide opportunities to actors, designers, and theatre practitioners both locally and across the country.

2020-21 STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS*

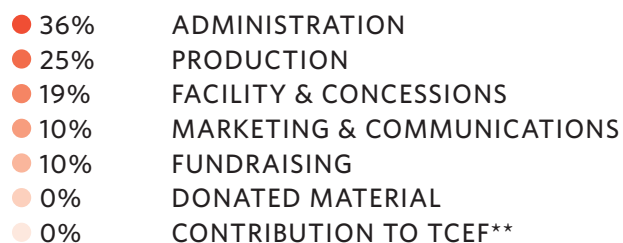
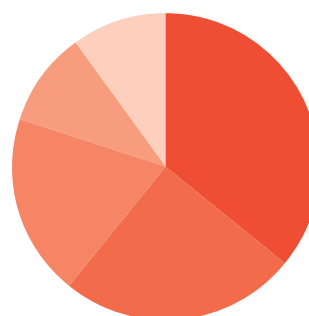
REVENUE

	2019-20	2020-21
EARNED REVENUE	3,428,357	232,200
FUNDRAISING	3,539,988	2,003,007
GRANTS	1,688,988	2,739,166
OTHER	9,508	34,918
DONATED MATERIAL	1,200	0
DISBURSEMENT FROM TCEF**	2,375,000	333,348
TOTAL	\$11,043,051	\$5,342,639



EXPENSES

PRODUCTION	4,657,106	1,033,943
FACILITY & CONCESSIONS	1,422,427	774,879
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS	1,331,311	422,071
ADMINISTRATION	1,356,037	1,475,759
FUNDRAISING	708,261	393,018
DONATED MATERIAL	1,200	0
CONTRIBUTION TO TCEF**	2,001,383	0
TOTAL	11,477,725	4,099,670



EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-\$434,674	\$1,242,969
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* THEATRE CALGARY SOCIETY CONDENSED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDING MAY 31, 2021
 ABOVE RESULTS ARE NON-CONSOLIDATED AS THEY EXCLUDE THE RESULTS OF THE THEATRE CALGARY ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION.
 ** THEATRE CALGARY ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

BOARD & FOUNDATION

SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Craig D. Senyk, **CHAIR**
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Edith Wenzel
Ward Zimmer

ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

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Ward Zimmer, **SECRETARY/TREASURER**
Andrew Bateman
Ellen Chidley
Chris Lee
Chadwick Newcombe
Alex Osten



SHARON POLLOCK

On April 22, 2021, theatre in Calgary, and Canada, lost a giant. We mourn and acknowledge the passing of renowned playwright, and former Theatre Calgary Artistic Director, Sharon Pollock. Sharon was a fierce, bold, and groundbreaking artist whose work helped shape the Canadian theatre landscape. Sharon's plays *Walsh*, *Whiskey Six Cadenza*, *Doc*, and *Blow Wind High Water* premiered on our stage.

"Theatre Calgary had a very special relationship with Sharon over the decades. When I met Sharon in 2017, I fell instantly in love with her no-filter way of communicating. Her personality was like a stunning tsunami wave that engulfed a room. Rest in power, dear Sharon."

- Stafford Arima

We shall all miss seeing her in the Max Bell Theatre on opening nights. Our love goes out to all of Sharon's family, and friends.

PRODUCTION PHOTO CREDITS:

COVER: MARSHALL VIELLE IN A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* (TRUDIE LEE) | PAGE 4: MARSHALL VIELLE, STEPHEN HAIR IN A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* (TRUDIE LEE) | PAGE 5: ANNA DALGLEISH, ZACH RUNNING COYOTE FOR *SHAKESPEARE BY THE BOW*; JAMIE TOGNAZZINI IN A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* (TRUDIE LEE).

theatre: CALGARY

Theatre Calgary is a professional non-profit theatre company and a resident of Arts Commons, operating out of the Arts Commons Max Bell Theatre.

It is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and operates within the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Theatre Calgary employs technicians under a collective agreement with the I.A.T.S.E.

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