



# ARTS IN ACTION

YYC

Stories and data about how arts build a city

*Photo: Trudie Lee, courtesy of Three Left Feet*

## HOW DO ARTS HELP BUILD A CITY?

Large-scale and small, traditional and cutting-edge, amateur and professional, once-in-a-lifetime and part of daily life—all of these aspects combine into a vital arts ecosystem that helps a city thrive. At [Calgary Arts Development](#), we believe that arts build our city by:

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Arts build community and enhance well-being, through our personal enjoyment of participation and creative expression, along with the connections we make with artists and each other through artistic experiences.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### BOOSTING ECONOMY

Arts contribute to our economy, both as a sector and in making Calgary a great place to make a living and to make a life.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### SHAPING IDENTITY

Arts shape our city's character, reflecting our diversity of experiences and voices, and attracting businesses, workers and visitors.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### INSPIRING YOUTH

Arts develop essential skills in our youth, such as creative thinking, confidence, team-building, discipline and social interaction.

[LEARN MORE](#)

This year, we wanted to provide a snapshot of all of these benefits in action. For each area, you'll find data that captures how Calgarians are currently engaging with arts, as well as a few representative stories (which were difficult to select—there are hundreds to choose from!). We'll share updated data and new stories annually.

Whether you're looking for information or inspiration, we hope you'll find it here. More importantly, in the 364 days between updates, we hope you'll recognize the many ways that arts build our city and celebrate the presence that arts have in your own life.

Patti Pon, President & CEO  
Dean Prodan, Chair  
Calgary Arts Development

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

Although today's technology connects us more than at any other time in history, some studies show that many people still feel alienated and disconnected—and arts are a catalyst for belonging, well-being and community strength. Artistic expression connects us socially and emotionally to fellow Calgarians and to our city.



Photo: Cat Schick, courtesy of This is My City

### Art from the Margins:

#### This is My City

There's an old yellow house right on 10th Street in Hillhurst/Sunnyside. The Calgary Homeless Foundation plans to transform it into an apartment building for differently abled people exiting homelessness. But before it does, hundreds of Calgarians contributed to Calgary's largest yarnbombing project ever, wrapping the house cosily with knitting and crochet-work. From a distance, it's the sort of spontaneous creativity that is a gift to passersby; up close, the project reminds us of the warmth of home, and of our fellow citizens who often make do without that comfort.

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### IN 2014:

**3,193,840**

attendees to arts activities in Calgary

**26,869**

volunteers for arts-related activities

**780,743**

volunteer-hours for non-profit arts organizations

Based on data from organizations funded in part through [Calgary Arts Development](#).

### Shoulder-to-Shoulder, Paintbrush-to-Paintbrush:

#### Soul of the City Neighbour Grants

And then there were five: the recipients of the inaugural Soul of the City Neighbour Grants built sculptures, shared poetry, danced in the streets, designed family crests and painted murals. Most importantly, all five projects brought neighbours together and deepened social connections within their communities.

[READ MORE](#)



Photo: Claire Griffin, courtesy of Calgary Economic Development

## CALGARIANS' ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ARTS

**87%**

of Calgarians believe that arts help bring people together and enable people to connect to each other

**82%**

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of Calgarians engage with the arts in some way:

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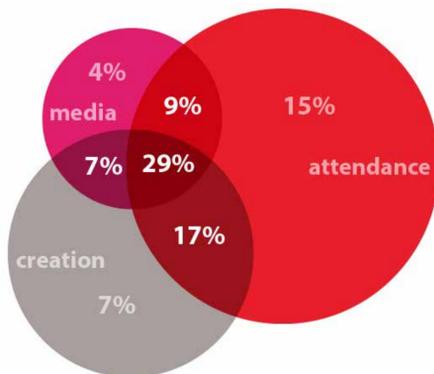
attend arts events (visiting galleries, attending performances, etc.)

**59%**

have a creative or personal practice (photography, sketching, playing music, etc.)

**48%**

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**19%**

donate to a not-for-profit arts or cultural organization

**17%**

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2014 [Calgarian Engagement Survey](#), [Calgary Arts Development](#), to be released in summer 2015.

\*Because media consumption is so widespread, respondents were considered to be engaged with the arts through media if they participated in at least half of the measured media activities each month.

## ARTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

A study by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) examining the correlation between arts and civic engagement found that American adults who attended art museums, galleries or live performances were far more likely than non-attendees to vote, volunteer or take part in community events.

### Performing arts attendees were:

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[Arts-Goers in Their Communities: Patterns of Civic and Social Engagement](#), National Endowment for the Arts, October 2009.



Photo: Brian Jensen & Aran Wilkinson-Blanc, courtesy of Equinox Vigil

### ARTS SNAPSHOT

#### EQUINOX VIGIL

In 2012, 'artist' Sharon Stevens organized Calgary's first Equinox Vigil, a creative, respectful evening that honours the deceased and uses art to guide conversations about life and death. Now an annual event, the vigil attracts hundreds of Calgarians each year.

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Timeraiser Calgary celebrated its 10th year in Calgary in 2015. The innovative event format purchases original, local art for its annual auction—but participants bid volunteer hours instead of dollars. Timeraiser Calgary raised 7,100 volunteer hours in 2015, connecting attendees with dozens of local non-profits.



Photo: Kelly Hofer Studios, courtesy of Timeraiser Calgary



## This is My City: Art from the Margins

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The project was a collaboration between the Homeless Foundation and This is My City Calgary (TMC), an arts society devoted to providing opportunities for homeless and at-risk people to engage in art-making. As Sally Truss, TMC's Executive Director explains:

**"This is My City is a really important social experiment where social justice and the arts shake hands and see what they can do together."**

Begun in 2008 as an initiative of The City of Calgary's Arts & Culture department, TMC became a non-profit society in 2010 and launched its first festival in 2012. TMC runs programming during the year in partnership with arts, community and social service agencies, showcasing the results in the annual festival.

What precisely TMC does changes year by year, depending on the participants and partners involved, but what it accomplishes stays consistent: nurturing artistic talent among marginalized Calgarians, presenting outstanding artistic work and engaging new audiences. Professional artist-mentors from several artistic backgrounds volunteer with clients of service agencies, producing work like *Flood Stories: Creative Flotsam on the Edge of High Water* (a limited edition hand-printed book that captured the rawness and diversity of emotions evoked by the 2013 flood) and *Uncovering Colonial Legacies: Voices of Indigenous Youth in Child Welfare* (dis) Placements (artwork by young artists between ages 18 and 29 exploring themes of childhood displacement and disconnection from families).



Video courtesy of This is My City

Truss underscores that TMC is an arts society, but one that follows a model that doesn't exist anywhere else in Canada. "No one else is doing what we do," she says. "It feels as if it's closer to being a movement rather than an organization."

[ThisIsMyCityCalgary.ca](http://ThisIsMyCityCalgary.ca)

Based on data from organizations funded in part through Calgary Arts Development.

## Shoulder-to-Shoulder, Paintbrush-to-Paintbrush:

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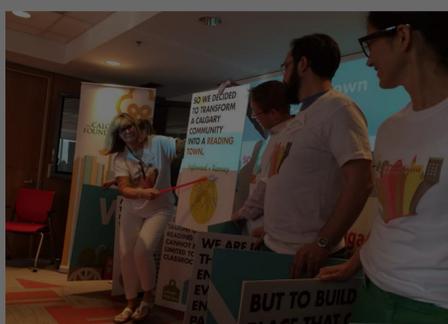


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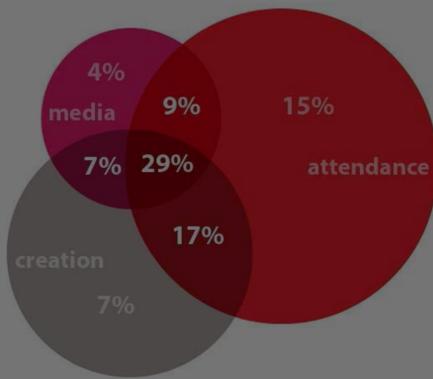
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The \$5,000 grants launched in 2014 as a partnership between Calgary Economic Development's *Soul of the City* speaker series and the Calgary Foundation's *Neighbour Grants*. With more than 40 applicants in the first year, finalists presented their community-building projects to a live audience and jury, which ultimately awarded grants to eight projects. A 30-minute documentary released last November follows five of those projects.



Video courtesy of This is My City

Art was not a requirement for the grant, but creative energy was a must. The five featured projects all included art as a central element, such as the all-ages write-your-life weekly circle in northeast Calgary, the Wildwood Water Spiral sculpture that also serves as a water pump, and the Twin Views Communal Garden mural project.

"It is striking, how deep of a theme arts are," says Julie Black, Citizen Engagement Associate at the Calgary Foundation, of the grant recipients.

**"Because these grants are about building a sense of belonging and connection, a good way to do that is to create something together [and] of course there are going to be a lot of arts projects, because that's something people can do together."**

Originally planned for only a single year, the Soul of the City Neighbour Grants ran again in 2015, with winning projects set to take place from May to September 2015. The results of these grants are both immediate and long-lasting: for instance, the Wildwood Water Spiral from 2014 will continue to nurture nearby gardens and delight visitors for years to come, and Reading Town Canada, a collaboration between Calgary Reads and the Inglewood Community Association, brought together creative neighbour-led activities to celebrate reading for a weekend in May 2015—with the greater goal of fostering life-long joy and love of reading.

While the Soul of the City Neighbour Grants are still new, the Calgary Foundation has run regular Neighbour Grants since 1999, and Black observes that the projects usually leave behind increased community connectedness.

"It's such a sense of belonging to be side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder, hammer-to-hammer, paintbrush-to-paintbrush, creating something," she comments.

[CalgaryFoundation.org](http://CalgaryFoundation.org)

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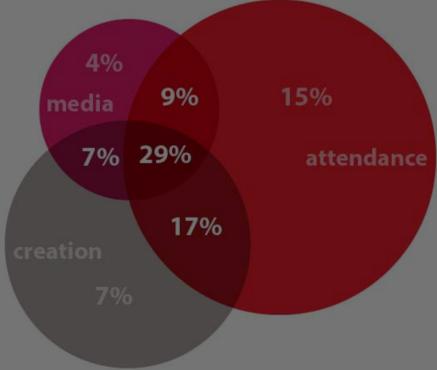
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Photo: Kelly Hofer Studios, courtesy of Timeraiser Calgary



Photo courtesy of Calgary Economic Development

## BOOSTING ECONOMY

As an economic engine for our country, Calgary's success increasingly hinges on creative thinking and innovation, skills honed by arts participation. Also, a healthy arts sector typically punches above its weight economically and helps attract top talent to our city.



Photo courtesy of Calgary Economic Development

### Creative Energy Makes Economic Sense (and Dollars):

Calgary Economic Development

Telling Calgary's unique and compelling story. Promoting a culture of innovation. Investing in equal opportunity and prosperity for all Calgarians. Building Calgary as a city to live a creative, active life.

What do these things have in common? All are listed in Calgary Economic Development's 10-year strategy, *Building On Our Energy*—and all will be supported through a vibrant arts sector.

[READ MORE](#)

## IN ALBERTA, \$1,000,000 OF INVESTMENT CREATES

# 22

full-time jobs in the arts, recreation and entertainment sector

This is greater than many other industries, including retail trade; accommodation and food services; professional, scientific and technical; administrative and support services; wholesale trade; crop and animal production; and oil and gas extraction.

Research Note: *The Economic Impact of Arts Organizations Supported by Calgary Arts Development*, Calgary Arts Development, June 2014.

### Building Momentum for Artists:

#### Market Collective

Some of the best success stories start with 50 bucks and a dream. Here's one of them: Calgary's own Market Collective, co-founded in 2008 by Angela Dione and Angel Guerra. The goal of the self-sufficient artisan market has always been to promote local arts and culture and build community.

[READ MORE](#)



Photo: Mike Tan, courtesy of Market Collective

### IN 2014:

# 4,545

Calgarians work in an artist occupation, comprising 0.7% of our city's overall labour force\*

# \$112

million in direct economic output, including artistic expenses, facility costs, administration and more, via Calgary's investment in its arts sector

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full-time equivalent staff hired by Calgary arts organizations

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\*[Artists and Cultural Workers in Canadian Municipalities](#), Hill Strategies, December 2014 (based on 2011 National Household Survey).



Photo courtesy of CMLC and Yellow Couch Photography

#### ARTS SNAPSHOT

### PUBLIC ART IN EAST VILLAGE

As master developer of East Village, [Calgary Municipal Land Corporation](#) (CMLC), is leading the redevelopment and revitalization of Calgary's most historic neighbourhood. To date, CMLC has invested \$357 million into the community and attracted over \$2 billion in private investment. CMLC's commitment to arts and culture—pillars of both the Area Redevelopment Plan and the Master Plan for East Village—is shaping the neighbourhood's uniquely compelling character. [Public art](#) and a vibrant cultural scene make the neighbourhood more inviting, more engaging and ultimately more desirable as a place to live.

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### REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE ACCELERATOR

Remarkable arts experiences not only delight locals, but also attract visitors to our city. That's the idea behind the Remarkable Experience Accelerator, a partnership between [Calgary Arts Development](#) and the [Calgary Hotel Association](#) that invests in medium- to long-term arts experiences that give people even more reasons to visit Calgary as leisure travellers. The [Calgary International Film Festival](#) participated in the program from 2012 to 2014, and saw attendance jump from about 20,000 to 29,000 between 2013 and 2014, increasing the number of hotel nights booked by out-of-town attendees by 33%.



Photo: Max Eng-Horn, courtesy of Calgary International Film Festival



## Building Momentum for Artists:

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Some of the best success stories start with 50 bucks and a dream. Here's one of them: Calgary's own [Market Collective](#), co-founded in 2008 by Angela Dione and Angel Guerra. The goal of the self-sufficient artisan market has always been to promote local arts and culture and build community. Held several times throughout the year (nine times in 2014), Market Collective provides a space for local artists to sell their work, offers a stage for local bands, and partners with dozens of non-profit organizations.



Photo: Mike Tan, courtesy of Market Collective

Starting as a small art market, it now hosts more than 100 artists and musicians and welcomes more than 8,000 visitors for each event. In 2014, Market Collective artists earned \$1.5 million for their work—and they keep 100% of their commission.

"Market Collective contributes to the economic growth of Calgary in a number of ways," says Angela Dione.

**"Many artists, from their involvement with Market Collective, are now able to completely sustain themselves with their practice. Others have gone even further, and now have opened stores and begun projects of their own that continue to contribute to the city."**

Market Collective has not only done well by its artists—almost 600 showcasing their work throughout 2014, with more than 50 musicians or bands playing from the stage—but also plays well with others. From 2009 to 2013, it donated over 20,000 pounds of food to the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank, and diverted 6,780 pounds of garbage from the landfill in 2014, with the help of Green Event Services. Tireless supporters of other community events and projects, Market Collective also encourages the next generation of artists by sponsoring ACAD students and alumni and donating one space to a new applicant at each event.

Market Collective isn't done growing yet. In addition to booths, the event now hosts workshops that create additional revenue for artists, many of whom have gone on to teach at schools or offer private consultations based on their Market Collective experience.

With 11 staff members, 150 volunteers, and 50,000 visitors in 2014, the Market Collective momentum isn't going to stop anytime soon.

[MarketCollective.ca](#)

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What do these things have in common? All are listed in Calgary Economic Development's 10-year strategy, *Building On Our Energy*—and all will be supported through a vibrant arts sector. "Increasingly, arts and culture are being recognized not only for the important role they play in placemaking but also for their significant contribution to the local economy," says Steve Allan, Calgary Economic Development's Board Chair.

**"There are thousands of artists in Calgary injecting millions into the local economy through purchasing local supplies and hiring local talent. This is in addition to the valued role our arts and culture sector plays in making Calgary the best city in Canada to live."**

Arts contribute to an economically vibrant city in many ways—there are obvious outcomes like enhancing cultural tourism or producing world-class festivals, but also subtler benefits, like welcoming new Canadians or promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. For example, a soon-to-be tangible addition to Calgary's economic and artistic vitality is the [Calgary Film Centre](#), set to open in early 2016.

Alberta's film, television and digital media industry employs over 3,000 people and is responsible for hundreds of millions in economic activity every year, and the Calgary Region/Southern Alberta accounts for 80% of all film and TV projects shot in the province. The new 8.53-acre Film Centre will include permanent, purpose-built soundstages, allowing Calgary to accommodate larger projects than in the past.



Photo courtesy of Calgary Economic Development

The project is led by Calgary Economic Development, which has sound reasons for investing in the \$22.8-million centre. Permanent facilities will offer more training and mentorship opportunities for our creative industry professionals, and create jobs by increasing the number of productions shot in Calgary. And every dollar invested in the screen industries brings a \$5 return on investment.

Calgary is a city of boundless energy, envisions *Building On Our Energy*. All sorts of energy—not the least of which is artistic.

[CalgaryEconomicDevelopment.com](http://CalgaryEconomicDevelopment.com)

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Photo: Max Eng-Horn, courtesy of Calgary International Film Festival



Photo: Chris Malloy, courtesy of Springboard Performance

## SHAPING IDENTITY

Our city leaves its thumbprint on all our citizens and the millions of visitors we welcome each year. That unique Calgary character comes from our history and geography, our artistic and cultural vitality, and the stories of the people who live here. Arts have the ability to both reflect and interpret who we are, and project that image beyond our borders.



Photo: Kelly Hofer Studios, courtesy of Beakerhead

### A Made-In-Calgary Original:

#### Beakerhead

It couldn't have happened anywhere else: Beakerhead takes Calgary's key attributes as an engineering hub, a science innovator and an arts leader, and mashes them together. Through its annual September lineup and year-round programming, Beakerhead activities run the gamut, from tesla coils and robot theatre to gastronomy and fashion.

[READ MORE](#)

### IN 2014:

**10,289**

public activities produced by Calgary arts organizations

**948**

held outside of Calgary in 2014

**5,122**

arts education and public arts activities held in the Centre City

**10,190**

held outside the Centre City

Based on data from organizations funded in part through [Calgary Arts Development](#).

Calgary artists are receiving opportunities for international exchange, developing their craft and acting as ambassadors for Calgary. Of the artists who received funding for professional development:

**39%**

of opportunities took place in Canada, outside of Calgary

**58%**

of opportunities to place outside of Canada

Based on 2014 recipients of [Calgary Arts Development's Artist Opportunity Grant](#).

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[READ MORE](#)



Photo: Arnell Tailfeathers, courtesy of Making Treaty 7

### IN 2014:

**3,405**

Calgary-produced arts activities engaging diverse communities, including:

**2,191**

for disability communities

**498**

for multicultural communities

**317**

for LGBTQ communities

**203**

for Aboriginal communities

**146**

for those experiencing mental health issues

**108**

for those experiencing homelessness

**64**

for seniors and aging populations

2014 [Calgarian Engagement Survey](#), Calgary Arts Development, to be released in summer 2015.



Photo: Chris Malloy, courtesy of Springboard Performance

### ARTS SNAPSHOT CONTAINER

Take an empty lot in the heart of Sunnyside, add a few shipping containers, some community spirit, and a few artists—and you get Springboard Performance's containR, Calgary's first designated art park. The site boasts gardens, beekeeping, local food, rehearsal areas, incubator and experimental work spaces, locally built outdoor furniture and hand-painted murals, reflecting the passions of the site's community partners.

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Photo: Wojciech Mochmiej, courtesy of University of Calgary

## A Made-In-Calgary Original:

### Beakerhead

It couldn't have happened anywhere else: Beakerhead takes Calgary's key attributes as an engineering hub, a science innovator and an arts leader, and mashes them together. Through in its annual September lineup and year-round programming, Beakerhead activities run the gamut, from tesla coils and robot theatre to gastronomy and fashion.

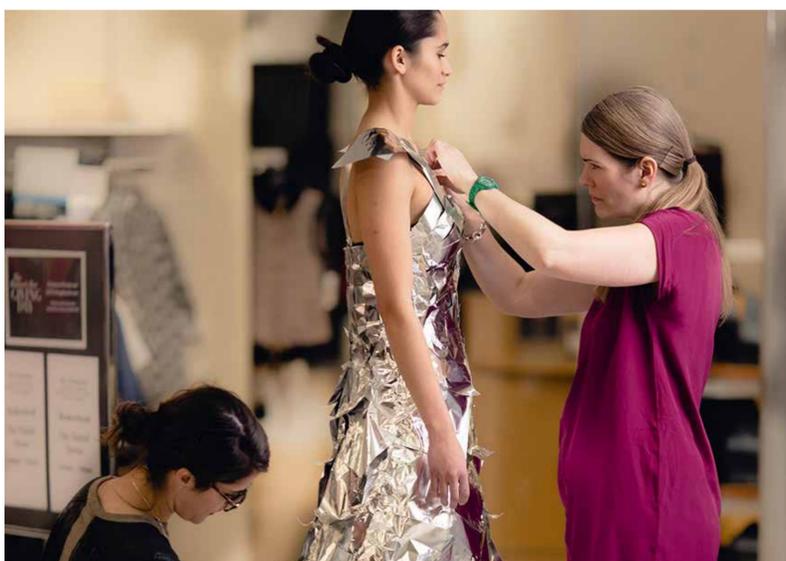


Photo: Kelly Hofer Studios, courtesy of Beakerhead

"It's a made-in-Calgary original; it's not a model that's replicated anywhere else in the world," says Michelle Htun-Kay, Beakerhead's Marketing and Communications Director. From the outset, Beakerhead's mission has been to put Calgary on the map.

**"In order for it to have a long-term, sustainable future, it needed to start conversations internationally from day one."**

Those conversations began even before the first Beakerhead spectacle in 2013, drawing on the global networks of partners like Science Festival Alliance and Maker Faire to help spread the word about Calgary's unique blend of artistic, scientific, and engineering innovation. With upcoming events in September 2015, Beakerhead continues to shape perceptions of our prairie city. For Calgarians, Beakerhead is full of did-you-know moments (Did you know that Calgary's world-renowned MakeFashion is Canada's leading wearable technology initiative? Did you know that the Calgary Mini Maker Faire is the largest in Canada?); for visitors, Beakerhead has created more than 200 new Calgary brand advocates in past presenters and international media.

While Beakerhead's core purpose is not directly related to advancing international awareness of Calgary's contemporary creative vitality, the organization considers itself successful only if it can create a climate where creativity is crucial and part of everyday life. "One of its missions is to draw more and more visitors and new immigrants, and meetings and conventions to Calgary, because it's so original," says Htun-Kay, who says Calgary is "a dynamic arts sector, a leading science innovator, and an engineering hub—and there are fun things to do."

[Beakerhead.com](http://Beakerhead.com)

IN 2014:

public activities produced by Calgary arts organizations

held outside of Calgary in 2014

5,122

arts education and public arts activities held in the Centre City

10,190

held outside the Centre City

Based on data from organizations funded in part through [Calgary Arts Development](#).

Calgary artists are receiving opportunities for international exchange, developing their craft and acting as ambassadors for Calgary. Of the artists who received funding for professional development:

39%

of opportunities took place in Canada, outside of Calgary

58%

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The groundbreaking project involved more than two years of artistic exploration with dozens of collaborators, including members of all [Treaty 7 First Nations](#). Premiering in September 2014 to sold-out audiences, Making Treaty 7 weaves together diverse stories of First Nations and settler peoples as part of what will become an annual performance festival.



Photo: Arnell Tailfeathers, courtesy of Making Treaty 7

"Making Treaty 7 sets a precedent in bringing together the various talented voices of southern Alberta, combined with the handing down of history through elders. It is the unique expression of oral tradition meeting theatre," says Michelle Thrush, performer, co-director and Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society Board member.

**"Both indigenous and settler artists have taken in the sacred words of the elders of Treaty 7 and transformed this medicine to present the true and original intent of such an important agreement, to an eager audience that wants to have a better understanding."**

In February 2015, two of the key visionaries behind Making Treaty 7, Michael Green (also known as Elk Shadow/Pona Ko'taksi) and elder Narcisse Blood (Middle Bull/Tatsikiistamik), were tragically killed in a highway collision in Saskatchewan. The Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society remains dedicated to the shared belief that 'We Are All Treaty People,' and will present a shorter version of its performance for 2015 with a tribute to Michael Green and Narcisse Blood.

Because if Making Treaty 7 is about nothing else, it's about our resilience and the enduring power of our stories. "I have never been so proud to be a part of theatrical production that truly represents the powerful healing of theatre with oral tradition and initiates a conversation that continues to happen in our province," comments Thrush.

From asking who we are, the question then becomes: how can we all learn to live together, to work together, and together build a better home for everyone? Making Treaty 7 may not have the answer, but it can help us find the way.

[MakingTreaty7.com](http://MakingTreaty7.com)

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Photo: Wojciech Mochmiej, courtesy of University of Calgary



Photo: Kelly Hofer Studios, courtesy of Calgary International Children's Festival

## INSPIRING YOUTH

Everyone wants our youth to have the foundation they need for a full and rewarding life. Some will grow up to be professional artists, but no matter what their path, arts experiences help build essential 21st-century skills like creative thinking, confidence, teamwork, discipline and social interaction.



Photo: Share Munoz, courtesy of Trickster Theatre

### Studying Social Change through Art:

#### Socially Empowered Learning Framework

Schools are transforming into forums of expression and social change—but until now, little empirical research has captured the effects of this educational trend.

[READ MORE](#)

### IN 2014:

# 5,949

arts education activities provided by Calgary arts organizations for children and youth

# 488,753

participants in arts education activities provided by Calgary arts organizations

Based on data from organizations funded in part through [Calgary Arts Development](#).

A recent study by Business for the Arts found that:

## 83%

of Canadian parents believe that engaging children in the arts is important for their development

## 80%

of Canadians believe that arts education improves children's academic performance

## 79%

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*Building the Case for Business Support of the Arts*, Business for the Arts, February 2015.

### World-Class Performance:

#### Calgary Stampede Showband

More than 200 times during the 10-day Calgary Stampede, members of the Calgary Stampede Showband fill the air with note-perfect performances, delivered with visual flair. As five-time marching band world champions, including three consecutive wins in 2012, 2013 and 2014—and the only marching band to earn the title multiple times—the group's artistic excellence and professionalism are even more impressive considering the age of its musicians: all are between 16 and 21, and devote more than 900 hours a year to rehearsing their music and marching patterns.

[READ MORE](#)



Photo courtesy of Calgary Stampede Showband

### Young adults with many arts-rich experiences in high school are:

## 5x

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## 3x

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*The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*, National Endowment for the Arts, March 2012.



Photo: Trudie Lee, courtesy of Soulocentric Performing Arts

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It's never too early to expose children to art, but toddlers are often too young to bring to theatrical performances. Soulocentric saw the need and answered it with *Bach Tots*: short, infant-friendly performances accessible to children up to age six.

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Loft 112, Calgary's newest literary hub, hosts the *Writers' Guild of Alberta's* free teen writing groups every month from September until June. Mentored by Lisa Murphy-Lamb, the group aims to unite teens interested in pursuing the craft of writing in a fun, friendly and safe environment.



Photo: Lisa Murphy-Lamb, courtesy of Loft 112

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[info@calgaryartsdevelopment.com](mailto:info@calgaryartsdevelopment.com)



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### Socially Empowered Learning Framework:

Schools are transforming into forums of expression and social change—but until now, little empirical research has captured the effects of this educational trend.

The **Socially Empowered Learning Framework (SELF)** Research Project at the Werklund School of Education is addressing this gap by collaborating with **Trickster Theatre**, a Calgary-based company that runs a range of school-based programs. Over a six-month period, SELF measured the effects of 1) Trickster Theatre's use of Arts Integrated Collective Creation; 2) **Kids Go Global**, a program that uses Educational Social Enterprise; and 3) the combination of both programs and methods.



Photo: Michael Huang, courtesy of Trickster Theatre

"Socially Empowered Learning is group-based learning that integrates creative opportunities to address real-world challenges and make positive social change," says Brittany Harker Martin, Lead Researcher of the project and Assistant Professor of Leadership at the Werklund School of Education.

Dr. Martin chose to study the Trickster Theatre and Kids Go Global programs because of their alignment with SELF's tenets: to be socially entrepreneurial (with a focus on collective action that creates social value); socially empathetic (with a collective consideration of social issues from other perspectives); socially empowering (with a design that enables students to make a positive social impact); and socially ethical (with an advocacy orientation to collectively act on behalf of others).

**"Arts integration and educational social enterprise are both excellent examples of Socially Empowered Learning because of the collective collaboration that encourages students to consider issues from the perspective of others."**

Findings support all three variations of the Trickster Theatre programs as powerful interventions for engaging kids. In particular, the combined program yielded the greatest increase in several variables, indicating that adding the arts to the experience leads to higher results.

The research project was funded through a generous gift from the **Rozsa Foundation**.

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Photo courtesy of Calgary Stampede Showband

The commitment pays off, not only in the gauntlet of Stampede performances, but also in building skills among the band members. As Director of Bands Aaron Park likes to put it, the band doesn’t just work hard and have fun, but “We have fun working hard.”

And it isn’t only about top-level musicianship. “Students are gaining experience and training as musicians and performers on a world-class level. I really believe, however, that music is just a context for a greater learning,” says Park.

**“While students do learn about music and performance, they also learn teamwork, work ethic, commitment and compassion. Students learn how to be citizens and contribute to their communities.”**

For example, when visiting Atibaia, Brazil in summer 2014, not only did band members compete in the World Association of Marching Show Bands championships, they also volunteered to help renovate a local school for underprivileged children.

The showband usually has about 120 members, some of whom study music at the post-secondary level. Since the band’s founding in 1971, Park estimates that there are more than 2,000 showband alumni who have taken both a love of music and the teamwork and work ethic skills with them. “Whether they go on to be engineers, lawyers, or politicians, they are extremely successful in what they do,” says Park.

[StampedeShowband.com](#)

Based on data from organizations funded in part through [Calgary Arts Development](#).

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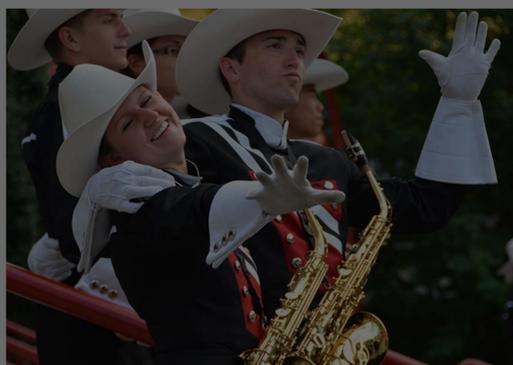


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