Aurora Cultural Centre

2020 Annual Report

2020 **ANNUAL REPORT**

Front Cover: "Red Dancer" by Gordon Becker

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Our Mission & Vision

Vision

Strengthening the social fabric of our community through the transformative power of arts and culture.

Mission

As a cultural leader, we bring vitality to the heart of Aurora through:

- Excellent and innovative professional visual and performing arts programs and educational opportunities;
- Opportunities for meaningful social interactions and artistic community arts programs in our welcoming and inspiring venue and beyond; and
- Inclusivity by reaching out into our diverse community, recognizing that the arts are both universal and unifying.

As a partner of the Town of Aurora, we play a leading role in the realization of the Town's cultural objectives.

Core values were purposely chosen as integral elements for every day decision making by staff, volunteers and the Board. They are **Excellence**, **Collaboration** and **Accountability**.

Message from the President & Executive Director

Eric Acker, President

The Aurora Cultural Centre celebrated our 10th anniversary in 2020. Our temporary move from 22 Church Street and dealing with the worst health pandemic in a century created multiple challenges for our small team of dedicated staff who found ways to create opportunities from the challenges. As a not-for-profit charitable organization, we were able to qualify for government pandemic assistance programs allowing us to keep our staff working, albeit remotely from their homes. Lockdowns and the need for physical distancing create a greater need for social interaction opportunities, even if done remotely. Staff found new ways to continue to offer cultural programming to our community ranging from live streaming and pre-recorded musical performances to virtual art exhibits, virtual education summer camps and online classes. The Centre received positive feedback from many residents regarding the value of our continued programming.

Our volunteer Board of Directors learned to meet and complete business through Zoom calls. Most of our Board of Directors are professionals working during the day who found they were putting in ever-increasing hours. While this created understandable stresses, they continued to contribute their time, skills, and expertise to supporting our Executive Director Suzanne Haines and her team.

The Board created a new Outreach Committee to increase our focus on understanding and better serving the ever-changing demographics of our community.

A special thank you to our donors and funders who continued to support us throughout 2020 regardless of health protocols limiting in-person programming. We are grateful for their continued commitment. Our key stakeholder, the Town of Aurora, also continued with their financial support in a true partnership to deliver much needed cultural services to the community. We continue to work closely with the Town in further defining how the hybrid governance model for Library Square can best serve Aurora.

On behalf of our Board of Directors I want to sincerely thank Suzanne Haines and her team for the outstanding work they did to make our 10th anniversary the great success that it was.

Suzanne Haines, Executive Director

We came into 2020 with incredible gusto. Classes were sold out, performances sold out to the end of June, and Gallery programs had pivoted to our new temporary location. We thought it was set to be one of our best years, even with a move in the middle of it. We had a promising plan of action to build audiences by participating throughout the community in new locations due to our temporary move during the Library Square building project. The first quarter continued with this buzz – and then abruptly halted on March 13, 2020. There are almost no words to describe the pain and courage it took to watch our industry stop and fall. However, as resilient, creative and talented people do, the team at the Aurora Cultural Centre packed up the laptops and headed home, looking for ways to find a way through.

The first instinct was to speak to the community about their feelings, their actions, their courage, and their own resilience at a time that was new for the world. A cross-organization initiative, #ArtsAtHomeAurora had us speaking to existing and new audiences, creating new partnerships, and building new friendships. While this outreach continued, the team collaborated, built, learned, shifted, reorganized, re-budgeted, and re-visioned the programming at the Centre. We connected with patrons, donors, funders, and artists to see what we could build. We took what we learned from our grassroots conversation in #ArtsAtHomeAurora and the 42 surveys we did in the community to respond with new ideas and programming. We took on too much, assessed, and regrouped to deliver what was within capacity. We worked with shorter and shorter timelines as health restrictions changed and we took on the massive communication challenge of being small and often not seen, in a sea of news that was mostly hard to hear. We heard over and over from our community they were grateful that we were present and active. It spurred us on.

While we lost most of what we programmed in 2020, we kept in touch with artists and worked to build with them and support them through this also. We tried to find moments of certainty in an uncertain time, setting up opportunities we could control and being flexible, adaptive and spontaneous in ones we could not. The business of running a not-for-profit organization, connecting with the community, securing funding, delivering programing, running a venue and then sorting out a temporary home while talking about a new home to come in 2023, supporting people through some of their toughest times with compassion, care and understanding, and building the company to rise strong at the end of this with a new model that works is and was our work.

I am so proud of the team at the Aurora Cultural Centre. I am so grateful to the Board of Directors who stood strong and supportive, watching and waiting for staff to build, and giving critical feedback every step of the way as we implemented ideas, strategy and took measured risks.

We learned a lot in 2020 and have become a stronger, tighter team with a Board who has proven they can lead through a pandemic.

Community Comments

I loved the ease with which the centre and its staff pivoted to provide unique arts based events. The online concerts were wonderful. The quality was amazing.

The ACC always delivers a high level of programming even during the pandemic.

Incredible organization with a fantastic grasp of what arts lovers want. Always pushing the boundaries of arts experiences. The staff is always wonderful. Their passion shines through. Thanks to everyone for your efforts. Happy for your existence

Thank you for maintaining high standards of interesting programs during these challenging times.

Incredibly high level of quality and relevance. A fantastic delivery of art forms.

Exceptional and innovative approach to art during troubled times.

2020 Highlights

- 128 artists exhibited in the galleries in 5 exhibitions
- 3 gallery exhibition community events
- Online Gallery launch party for Beyond the Walls
- SHISM program on gallery curation for Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School
- Initiated Art Byte digital gallery education series in June 2020 – 12 educational online art events, including outside geographical locations (Ireland, USA, and across Canada)
- 8 Professional Performing Arts Events
- 19 artists engaged as instructors
- 47 educational programs with 373 students from ages 4+
- 1 artist groups engaged in 4 new in-school live professional young audiences performances with 4 artist directed workshops and building new professional development teacher sessions to support virtual delivery of the arts, impacting 990 participants
- New YouTube and Vimeo digital platforms
- New Google Classroom digital educational tools
- New Zoom meeting, conferencing, webinar and educational tools
- Maintained financial support from the community and funders
- Partnered with our Cultural Partners and the Town on Culture Days community engagement project
- Partners with the Town on Halloween community engagement project
- 21605 virtual and in-person engagements with the Centre
- New summer student employment opportunities in digital formats
- New digital payment process implemented
- 2020 clean financial audit

Snapshot of 2020 Activities

Programs

- Professional music concerts (both in-person and digital)
- Professional children's and family theatre
- Professional live performing arts for young audiences in schools
- Professional visual art exhibitions
- Student visual art exhibitions
- Educational arts classes for all ages with professional artists
- In-school performances and workshops with professional artists for grades JK – 4
- Summer visual art camps
- Educational lectures, talks and demonstrations with professional artists
- Special community events
- Free community programs
- Multi-cultural events & showcases
- Mentorship and skills exchange with industry
- Collaborate, host and facilitate programs with community partners
- Volunteer opportunities
- Community facility rentals

Administration

- In-house management of all facility rentals, activities and events
- Box office and e-commerce services
- Bookkeeping, accounting, audit
- In-house marketing and communications
- Maintain and grown active website and social media platforms
- Operations moved temporarily off-site for the Town of Aurora Library Square Project

Governance

- Board of Directors assume fiduciary responsibility for the governance of the Centre and provide broad oversight of the Centre's operations
- Create, review and administer policies and procedures
- Develop & review strategic plans
- Oversee all aspects of the organization
- Oversee compliance, legal and reporting protocols
- Ensure compliance with Canada Revenue Agency, Imagine Canada Standards, Provision of Cultural Services Agreement (PCSA), Strategic Plan, Ontario Corporations Act
- Serve as a resource to Town of Aurora for various cultural studies, committees etc.

*Visit EngageAurora.ca/librarysquare

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)*

	KPI (reference to PCSA)	How Calculated	Measure
1a	**Customer satisfaction with Program mix**	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey**	% satisfied or extremely satisfied for those that participated 98% for in person programming 93% for digital programming
1b	**Customer Satisfaction with Quality Level*** *In 2020, we asked about each program to see how those using them found their quality (ranked satisfied or extremely satisfied). Digital survey results new in 2021 related to both active and passive access to virtual programs. Just over 40% of those polled did not enter satisfaction ratings because they did not attend a digital program.	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey**	% satisfied or extremely satisfied for those that participated
	1. Educational Programs		87%
	2. Gallery Programs		85%
	3. Live Performing Arts Programs		85%
	4. Special Events		62%
	5. Volunteer Program		50%
1c	**Public perception of how well the Aurora Cultural Centre is governed**	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey**	56% give high and very high rating 37.5% were unsure
1d	**Customer Recognition and Awareness of Centre**	Question in Annual customer satisfaction survey**	Our Net Promoter Score (NPS) is +57. Of the total survey respondents, 66% are ranked as Promoters of the Centre (with a score of 9 or 10 out of 10 in response to the question).
2	**Programming spending vs. total spending**	Programming Spend / Total Spend	77%
3	**Programming hours per capita**	Programming hours / population	8.4%
4	**Town Grant as % of Total Revenue**	Town Grant / Total Revenue	53%
5	**Town Grant per capita**	Town Grant/ Population	$7.91
6	**Number of Partnerships**	Current year partners	21
7	**Volunteer hours as a % of total hours to operate the Centre annually+**	(Paid + Volunteer hours)/ Total volunteer hours	11%
8	**Number of Visits Annually both virtual and in-person**	Current year visits	21,605

*The Aurora Cultural Centre is required to report on key performance indicators (KPI) identified by the Provision of Cultural Services Agreement with the Town of Aurora. Additional organizational KPIs can be found on page 25. **Customer satisfaction information is gathered through an annual survey distributed in the spring of the following year of operation. The 2020 survey occurred during the Coronavirus pandemic which may skew results based on the significant impact that the pandemic has had on normalcy in our community. + Volunteer hours were diminished with the ability to program due to COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteer program information can be found on page 24.

2020: The year of uncertainty, flexibility, adaptation, and change.

January – March 12, 2020

- Gallery Exhibitions
- Education
- Performing Arts
- Community Rentals

- SOYRA Exhibition
- Community Rentals
- John Sheard Concert
- Education Term (Jan - Mar)
- Mayor's Celebration of Youth Arts
- Infinitus in Schools
- Infinitus in Concert
- Family Day Concert & Event
- 10th Anniversary Celebration
- Janina Fialkowska Concert
- QW4RTZ

March 13, 2020:
Coronavirus Pandemic closes venue.

Community Feedback & Organizational Learning

- Beyond the Walls
- Where Are They Now?
- #ArtsAtHomeAurora
- Art Bytes
- #HomeIsWhereTheArtIs
- Concert in the Park: Tribal Vision Dance
- Culture-in-a-Box
- Royal Wood Concert: Live & Livestream
- flight²
- Art Bytes
- Fall Education Term (Oct - Dec)
- Hallowe'en-in-a-Box
- The Bombadils Livestream
- Home for the Holidays Prerecorded Concert

Library Square

As an identified partner in governance of the Library Square project, the Aurora Cultural Centre is pleased to see this cultural infrastructure project move forward in 2020. With extensive support from the Town of Aurora, we had planned for a departure from the venue to facilitate the construction as it was unsafe to stay in the building. We continue to work with the Town and the Aurora Public Library on determining the best practices for shared governance and operation of the new infrastructure.

For more information and to watch the progress, please visit the Town's website at: EngageAurora.ca/librarysquare

Programming at the Centre

The main programs offered to the public are live performing arts events, gallery exhibitions and educational events, visual and performing arts educational camps, classes, workshops and short courses for ages 4+ and community rentals. Programming was deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Live Performing Arts

We started our year with a robust plan that had sold-out performances through to June 2020. January through March brought delightful with concerts and events up to March 6, 2020. When health restrictions eased in the summer, we presented a free community event in Town Park to encourage the community to come together again as part of Culture Days. This was followed up with one in-person concert at the Aurora Armoury, in which we offered a livestream experience for the first time. Health restrictions did not allow further in-person engagements so we shifted to livestream and pre-recorded events to round out the year's offerings.

We typically present five series geared towards different community engagements:

- Signature Series and RBC Emerging Artist Series featuring established and emerging artists of popular music genres;
- Great Artist Music Series featuring classical music artists and a pre-show lecture to support education;
- Kaleidoscope Family Series featuring music, theatre, dance and multi-discipline artists who program from age 5+, and
- Meridian Magic Carpet Series featuring music, theatre, dance and multi-discipline artists who program from age 18 months+.

The Bombadils | Livestream Concert

Live Performing Arts

Date	Artist	Series	Genre
January 24	**John Sheard Presents The Beatles Songbook**	Brevik Hall Presents	Pop/Rock Music
February 8	**Infinitus: From Handle to Hip-Hop**	Kaleidoscope Family Series Kaleidoscope in the Schools	Family, Classical Music, Hip-Hop
February 21*	**Janina Fialkowska, piano**	Great Artist Music Series	Classical Music
March 6	**QW4RTZ a cappella**	RBC Emerging Artist Series	A Cappella, Vocal Music
March 13		**VENUE CLOSED**	
September 26	**Tribal Vision Dance**	Kaleidoscope Family Series (FREE) In-person	Family, Dance, Indigenous
October 3	**Royal Wood**	Signature Series In person/livestream	Pop/Indie
December 6	**The Bombadils**	RBC Emerging Artist Series Livestream	Folk
December 17 – January 4, 2021	**Home for the Holidays** John Sheard with David Celia Judy Marshak Drew Jurecka & Rebekah Wolkstein Laila Biali Coig Rum Ragged Reid Jamieson	Signature Series (FREE) Pre-recorded	Holiday/Popular

*10th Anniversary Celebration

John Sheard and band - The Beatles Songbook

Gallery Programs: Exhibitions

Town of Aurora Mayor Tom Mrakas with MCOYA artists

Curious Minds Society of York Region Artists Juried Exhibition & Sale	November 29, 2019 - January 25, 2020
Mayor's Celebration of Youth Arts Youth Art Exhibition	February 2 – February 29, 2020
VENUE CLOSED	March 13, 2020
Building Virtual Galleries	March 20 – June 1, 2020
Moved to Town Hall	July 9-17, 2020
Beyond the Walls – an online gallery exhibition with The Uxbridge Collective Virtual Exhibition Group Exhibition & Sale	June 15 – September 26, 2020
Flight² Installed in the Temporary Gallery space on the 2nd floor of Town Hall Virtual viewing only Gordon Becker and Grazyna Tonkiel	Oct 17, 2020 - Jan 23, 2021

Gallery Events & Art Bytes

Painting Portraits in the Gallery SOYRA Event	11-Jan
MCOYA Visual Arts Opening Reception	05-Feb
MCOYA Performing Arts Night	19-Feb
In-depth Instagram Post Summarizing Event	02-Apr
In-depth Instagram Post Reflecting on MCOYA	14-Aug
#TBT Post from Christina on Instagram	26-Mar
Clare Posts a Poetry Reading Video	09-Apr
Christina Reposting a Painting Demo Video	15-Apr
Beyond The Walls Artist Launch Party (Livestream)	25-Jun
Introduction to our new Art Bytes online series	12-Jul
Bert Liverance – Welcome to My Studio	09-Jul
Fly Freeman with Francis Muscat	16-Jul
Gayle Temple - Fused Glass Sculptures	23-Jul
Joan Yerema & Jay Yerema-Weafer	30-Jul
Mark Puigmarti - What Does a Blacksmith Do in the 21st Century?	06-Aug
Neal Greig & Eileen Ferguson in Conversation	13-Aug
Ross Colby with Daniel Colby - In Conversation	20-Aug
Charles Stevens & Carol Grant Stevens in Conversation	27-Aug

Society of York Region Artists | Painting in the Gallery

Gallery Events & Art Bytes

In Conversation with John Pryce and Shelly Burke	03-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 1	15-Aug
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 2	21-Aug
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 3	28-Aug
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 4	01-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 5	04-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 6	08-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 7	11-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 8	15-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 9	18-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 10	22-Sep
Beyond The Walls In-depth Instagram Post 11	25-Sep
Name That Butterfly Quiz	07-Oct
Easy Kids Craft Butterfly Painting Demo Video	08-Oct
flight2 Behind the Scenes video	02-Nov
In Conversation with Grazyna Tonkiel	16-Nov
In Conversation with Gordon Becker	23-Nov
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 1	09-Nov
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 2	17-Nov
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 3	23-Nov
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 4	01-Dec
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 5	07-Dec
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 6	14-Dec
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 7	22-Dec
flight2 In-depth Instagram Post 8	30-Dec

Where Are They Now – Gallery 10th Anniversary Celebration

Social Media • April 29 – July 16, 2020

The gallery program showcased 10 artists (one from each year) to celebrate past artists and the 10 years of gallery programming at the Aurora Cultural Centre. Included in social media posts were artist bios, photos, and an update of what the artists were currently doing. Below is the list of artists celebrated.

Date of Post	Artist Celebrated	Year(s) Exhibited With Aurora Cultural Centre
April 29	**George Boyer**	2011 group exhibit 2014 solo exhibit
May 4	**Dave Rheaume**	2017 co-curator and exhibitor in group exhibit
May 12	**Nathalie Bertin**	2011 solo exhibit 2014 curated exhibit 2017 group exhibit
May 18	**Allan O'Marra**	2017 solo exhibit & curated of group exhibit
May 26	**Josee Savaria**	2012 solo exhibit 2015 duo exhibit
June 4	**Jeanette Luchese**	2015 solo exhibit 2017 two group exhibits
June 10	**Gaia Orion**	2019 solo exhibit
June 30	**Ernestine Tahedl**	2011 group exhibit 2012 mentor to emerging artist group exhibit 2013 solo exhibit 2018 curator solo exhibit
July 8	**Clayton Samuel King**	2012 group exhibit 2016 solo exhibit 2017 group exhibit
July 16	**Helen Lucas**	2018 solo exhibit

Clayton Samuel King 2016 Solo Exhibit Art Talk

Educational Programs: Kaleidoscope in the Schools

Launched in 2019, the second half of the school year continued in 2020 with one performance delivered in schools in February amidst teacher labour action. The performance and workshops were well received and enjoyed by students and teachers. We were able to capture a video response from students and the performers. The April performance was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Infinitus Post-concert classroom workshop

Educational Programs: Kaleidoscope in the Schools

Infinitus KITS performance

From Handel to Hip-Hop

February 5-7, 2020

- Highview Public School
- Holy Spirit Catholic Elementary School
- Light of Christ Catholic Elementary School
- St. Jerome Catholic Elementary School

Performances provided to 825 students and 41 teachers
4 artist workshops provided to 124 students

In early fall, we canceled the scheduled fall performances and spoke with school boards about what kind of support their schools need. Teachers had interest in learning about practical tools to deliver performing arts curriculum virtually, specifically using new engagement tools and looking at arts integration tactics. Arts Facilitator, Marjie Chud worked with YRDSB to develop two curriculum of workshop for teachers that responded to this need, one for teachers who still have students in their classroom and one for those operating virtually. This pivot remains in line with the Kaleidoscope in the Schools program as it supports JK – grade 4 teachers in the region with support to deepen arts engagement with students. These workshops have planned delivery in 2021.

Educational Programs

Winter

The Winter season offered most of our regular programming. Two one-day workshops slated for late March were cancelled, and our Drawing & Sketching, Wood Carving, and weekly children's programs were cut short by one week resulting in seven-week programs instead of originally scheduled eight weeks.

- PA Day - January 17
- PA Day - January 31
- Drawing & Sketching
- Wood Carving
- Ukulele for Beginners
- Beginning Guitar
- Open Studio
- Start Painting Now with Acrylics
- Expand Your Horizons in Acrylics 2
- Watercolours: Basics & Beyond
- Exploring Watercolours - Morning
- Exploring Watercolours - Afternoon
- A Journey Through Art & Time
- Around the World with Art
- Famous Artists & Their Styles

Spring

Our Spring season runs from April - June. This term was cancelled as closures hit abruptly and the world shut down for the COVID-19 pandemic. We focused on supporting #ArtsatHomeAurora and rebuilding a comprehensive virtual camp program which was announced in late May.

We are very happy with the entire program and how it has been delivered online. The counsellors were very professional and creative with the art lessons. My son really enjoyed working with the counsellors. We appreciate all your hard work counsellors! Thank you Aurora Cultural Centre for putting this all together for our kids.

Summer

To provide educational programs for families, **Home is Where the Art Is** was created as an online summer arts experiences for kids with camps for kids aged 4-6 and 7-12. Younger students had a morning 60-session and older students had an afternoon 90 -minute session. Demand required two sessions for each age group per week. Parents picked up art kits filled with the week's materials the Thursday before the camp started. Home is Where the Art Is camp also included a unique blend of live-online and offline learning, featuring one-to-two pre-recorded video tutorials daily for campers to enjoy at their leisure, pause, and re-watch at any time (24/7) for the entirety of their camp program. Camp weeks also featured special guests from both our gallery and performing artist roster - Jay Yerema, Marjie Chud and Fana Soro. These guest artists introduced students to music, dance, and drama. Artists were very grateful for the opportunity to have some paid work during a challenging time for the arts industry.

- Art Around the Globe
- World of Colour
- Famous Artists & Their Styles
- Sculpt It!
- Artistic Imaginations
- Art Through the Ages
- The Wonderful World of Nature & Animals
- Art in Media

Educational Programs

Fall

In the Fall that we worked with community partners at the CFWI Aurora Armoury and the Aurora Seniors Centre to offer our classes. Working with York Region Public Health, we created rigorous COVID protocols as well as an informational video for patrons and offered almost all of our regular programming with smaller class sizes. Core classes were reduced from eight weeks to five weeks to accommodate one programming space. Registration was very strong with waitlists and students were overjoyed to be back creating in the classroom together.

- Start Painting Now with Acrylics
- Fall Paint Along
- Magnificent Florals
- Around the World with Art
- Famous Artists and Their Styles
- A Journey Through Art & Time
- Wood Carving
- You Can Uke It!
- Ukulele for Beginners
- Beginning Guitar
- Exploring Watercolours (Advanced)
- PA Day -November 13
- Holiday Card Making
- Holiday Card Making - Second offering due to high demand
- Stained Glass
- Stained Glass - Second offering due to high demand

Young artist | Saturday art class

Community Engagement Events

1

Family Day

We celebrated our 10th anniversary! February 17

#ArtsAtHomeAurora

2

Instagram 2-month creative engagement April – May

3

Culture Days – Tribal Vision Dance

September 27

Culture Days – Culture-In-A-Box

4

September 26 – October 26

4

Hallowe'en – Hallowe'en-In-A-Box

October 31

2020 Community Rental Partners

The rental program was set to close in May 2020 as we planned for our move from the Aurora Cultural Centre. The impact of the global pandemic began in January with our community partners as they cancelled gathering events due to the spread of the coronavirus. Our community partners are a significant part of our relationship with the community, with a program that supported over 250 days per year of events. We look forward to welcoming all of our partners back to the venue to reactivate your events in 2023.

Rental partner hosts between January 1 – March 13, 2020.

- Aurora Historical Society
- Conservation Ontario
- Family Services of York Region
- Irina Poljakova, piano teacher
- Keller Williams
- Ontario Ministry of Finance
- Paskke Quartet
- Soroptimist
- SOYRA January and February Schedule
- Town of Aurora
- York Region Nursing

QW4RTZ a cappella group with volunteers

Governance

Board Governance & Nominating Committee Report

The Governance and Nominating committee manages governance and compliance for the organization; the membership on the Board and committees; and the health of the Board. The committee created a robust understanding of the compliance requirements for Imagine Canada over the next 5 years and participated with the Facility Task Force to provide direction to staff on the Town working groups for Library Square. One vacancy was filled through recruitment efforts and the committee completed a Board self-evaluation that showed improvement overall and continued interest in learning opportunities in finance and fundraising. Thank you to our hard-working members of the committee who support the health of the organization through risk management and policy controls.

Parisa Sabat

Accountability & Transparency

- As a Registered Charity and a party to the Provision for Cultural Services Agreement (PCSA), the Centre maintains high standards of accountability and transparency.
- Reporting to Federal and Provincial governments (e.g. Canada Revenue Agency, Ontario Charities Directorate, OnCorp)
- Reporting to Town of Aurora Council (quarterly reports, annual budget presentation)
- Compliance with PCSA reporting and submissions
- External third party annual financial audit
- Continuous oversight of Finance & Audit Committee & Treasurer
- 10 Aurora residents volunteer as the Centre's Board of Directors
- 2 Town of Aurora Councilors on Centre's Board of Directors
- Regular minimum monthly meetings with Director of Community Services
- Documents and operational information widely available to public on Centre's website
- Quarterly Public Meetings
- Accountability and reporting to our individual and corporate donors as well as grant providers (Ontario Arts Council, Heritage Canada etc.)

Volunteer Program

The volunteer program is a significant part of our operations. We rely on the support of community members who donate their time to help us with administrative and event related activities. After a complete pause on all operational volunteer engagement and outreach from March to July, two volunteer meetups were held in Summer 2020 (one virtual and in-person). A true testament to the Centre and the dedication of our volunteers to one another, 5 - 10 volunteers took time out of their day, during the pandemic, to meet with one another and catch up.

The COVID-19 Playbook was activated in September and two live in-person events (Tribal Vision Dance, and Royal Wood) were programmed with operational volunteer shifts engaged for the first time since March. Our volunteers ensured safe and meaningful performances by embracing the safety protocols, reassuring the public through well-informed guidance, and expressing pure joie de vivre of simply being all together again. These were magic moments for our volunteers and audience and filled the spaces with a sense of normalcy and familiarity.

1,164 hours in 2020

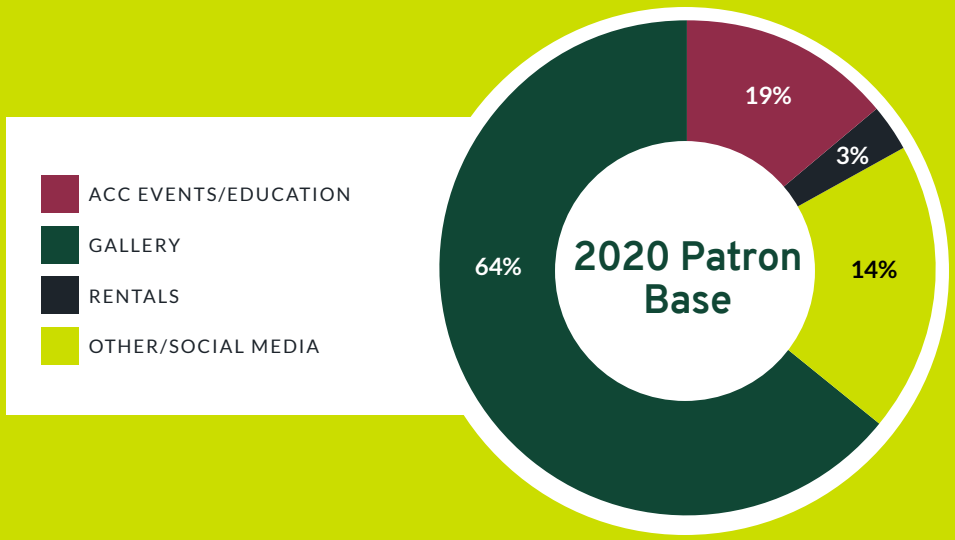
30,997 hours to date (Jan 2011 – Dec 31, 2020)

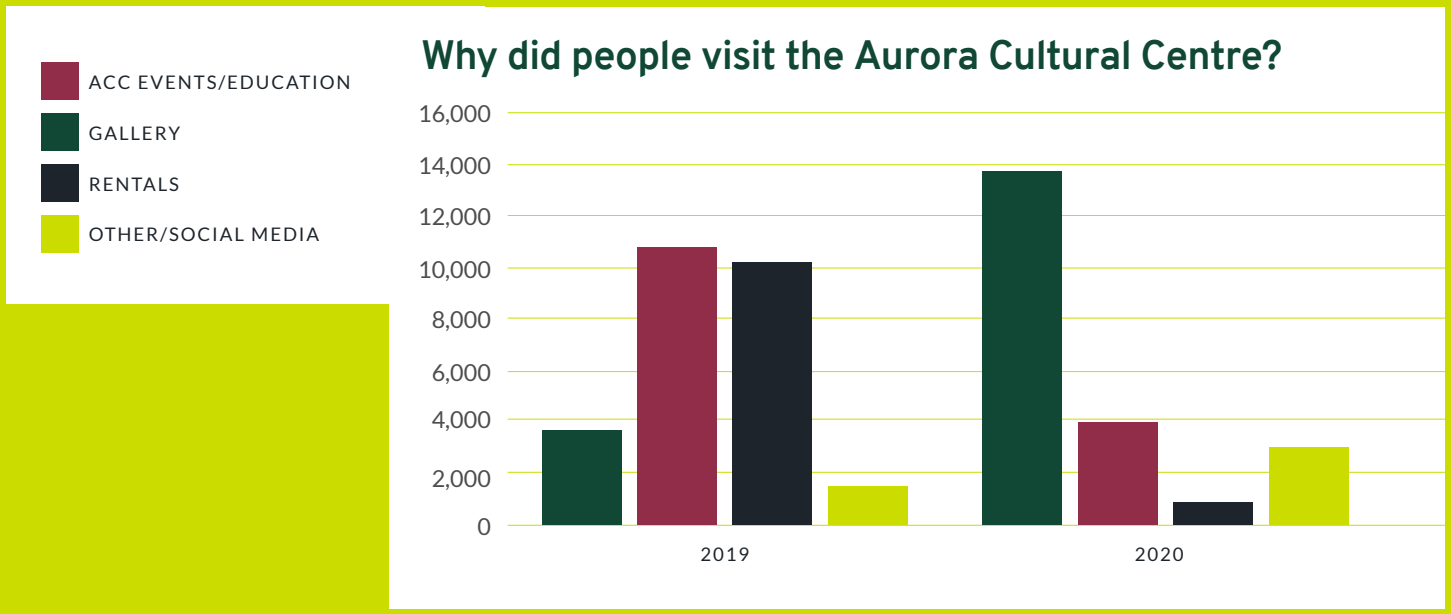
Assist with:

- Wayfinding
- Ticket taking/scanning
- Ushering
- Special event setups
- Board Governance duties
- Administrative support
- Reception support
- Processing registrations and sales
- Planning and supporting events
- Marshalling audience
- Supporting Education programs
- Supporting Summer Camp programs
- Concession ticket sales
- Fundraising
- Outreach
- As Cultural Ambassadors in our community

Volunteers & staff | Royal Wood Live and Livestream

Organizational Key Performance Indicators





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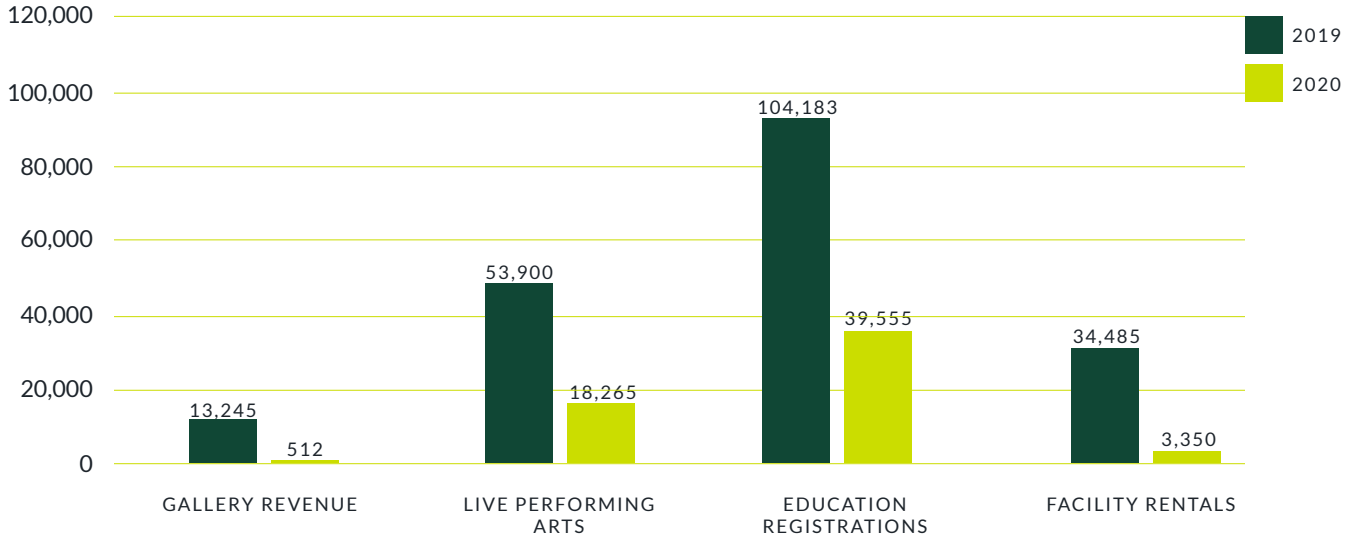
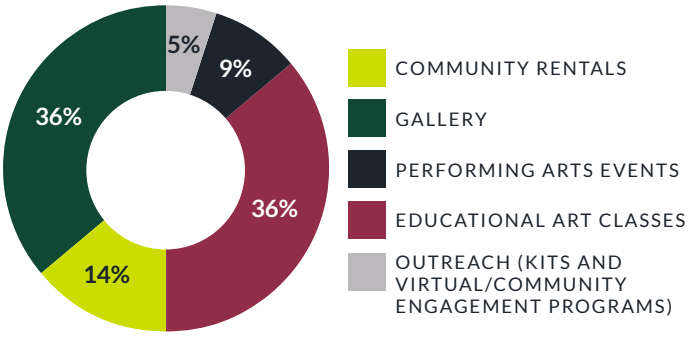
Organizational Key Performance Indicators

Program Revenue

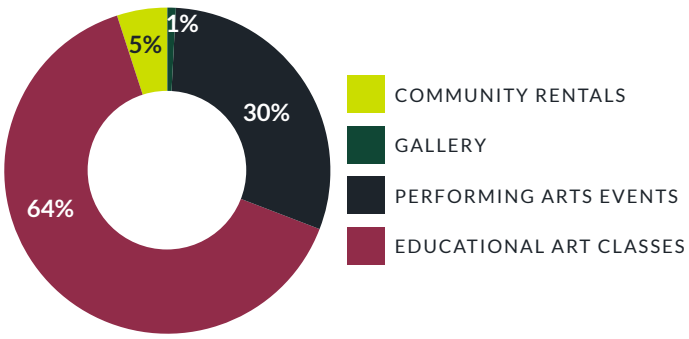


2020 Programming Mix

Types of Activation



Direct Revenue



Board Finance & Audit Committee Report and Treasurer Report

Finance & Audit Committee Report

The Finance & Audit Committee meets monthly to assess the financial position of the Aurora Cultural Centre. 2020 brought many changes and financial challenges as we moved through the year with respect to our vacating 22 Church Street as part of the Library Square project construction, as well closures prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our budget and projections were therefore continuously evolving and required monthly reviews as a result. Our revised budget, factoring in extraordinary costs for our construction re-location, was approved by the Board on March 11, 2020. On March 13, 2020, the venue closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the extreme uncertainty in the year, the Board chose not to revise the budget again but instead to operate reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in comparison to the year we had intended to have. Projections became monthly updates to track the deep loss of programming and fundraising revenues.

As a not-for-profit charity, we received the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) to cover a portion of staff wages, which allowed us to keep our full-time staff in place. As we have a broad diversity of revenue, a portion of other funding sources were redirected from salaries to programs which made it possible to deliver cultural programming to the community. We also received the maximum contribution from the Canada Emergency Business Account, a loan to be repaid by 2023 with a forgivable portion.

The uncertainty of whether additional subsidy or support would be forthcoming, alongside the uncertain timing of our programming made the allocation of programming expenses difficult. At the conclusion of the year, late contributions of CEWS meant a surplus for the organization. The Board agreed that these funds should be used to support strategic initiatives and sustainability for the organization since there continues to be uncertainty about what level of programming will be possible for 2021.

Treasurer's Report

Each year, the Aurora Cultural Centre has an external audit. The 2020 audit is now complete and there were no significant misstatements or difficulties encountered. The Board of Directors approved three reserve fund transfers. The Great Artist Music Series experienced a small surplus, which was transferred to the Classical Music Fund Reserve. There was a transfer to the Contingency Reserve to close much of the shortfall for that reserve, and a transfer was made to the Special Project Reserve to support 2021-2023 diversity & inclusion strategic initiatives. Investments were renewed at current rate in June 2020.

Laura Hostick, CPA, CA

Financial Position

Revenue	2020 Budget		2020 Actual	
Town of Aurora Operating Grant	482,700	47%	482,700	68%
Town of Aurora KITS contribution	50,000	5%	0	0%
Town of Aurora Library Square contribution	80,810	8%	0	0%
Fundraising: Grants, Donations and Sponsorships	232,220	23%	156,946	22%
Programs	184,070	18%	68,118	10%
Total Income	**1,029,800**	**100%**	**707,764**	**100%**

Expenses	2019 Budget		2019 Actual	
Administrative salaries and benefits	109,704	11%	56,482	9%
Program salaries and benefits	520,281	51%	341,190	55%
Program Expenses	289,461	28%	132,247	21%
Professional fees	43,000	4%	35,151	6%
Fundraising	5,385	1%	3,279	1%
Other (Office, phone, equip lease, bank, insurance etc.)	61,969	6%	48,607	8%
Total Expense	**1,029,800**	**100%**	**616,956**	**100%**
Excess/-Deficiency of Revenues over Expenditures*	0	0%	90,808	
Amortization			(10,056)	
Program Surplus (Deficit)			80,752	
Transfer to Reserves			(80,200)	
Net Surplus (Deficit)			552	

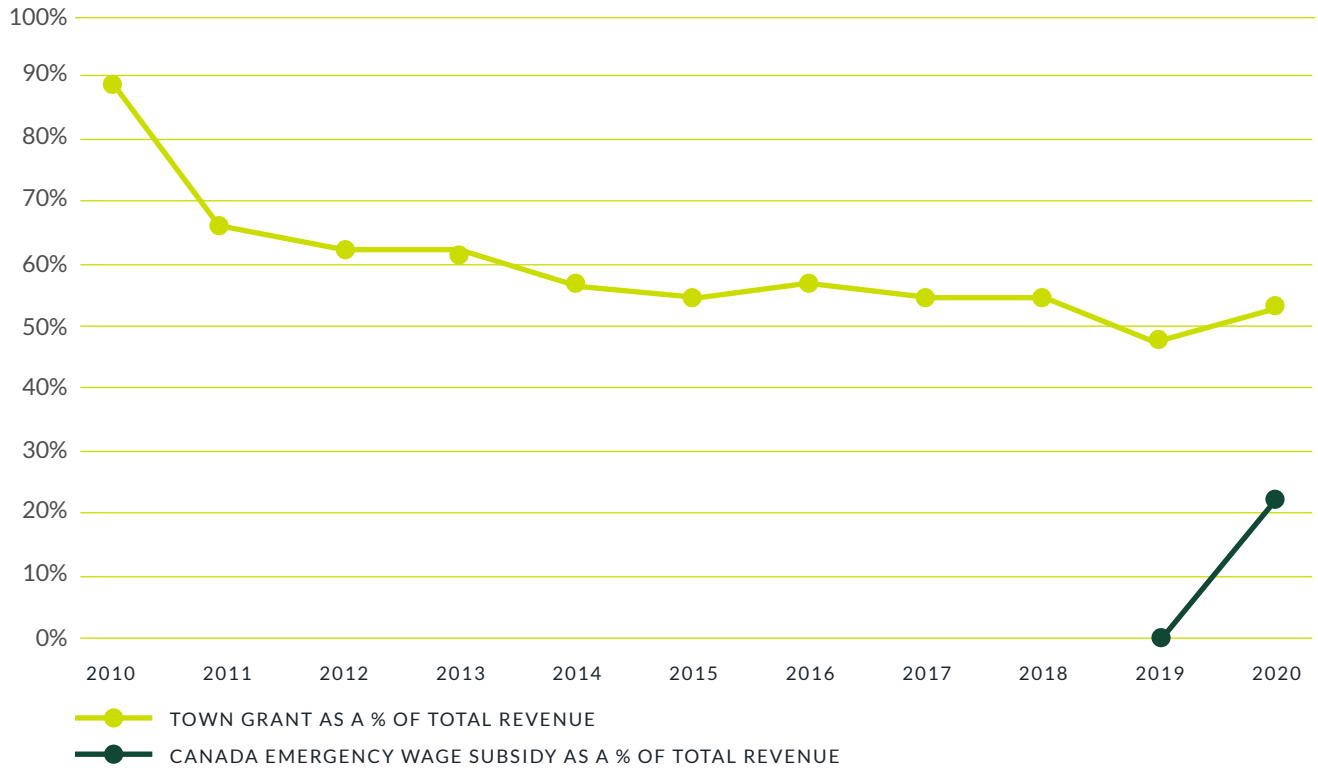
Full Audited Financial Statements available at www.AuroraCulturalCentre.ca

2020 Reserves

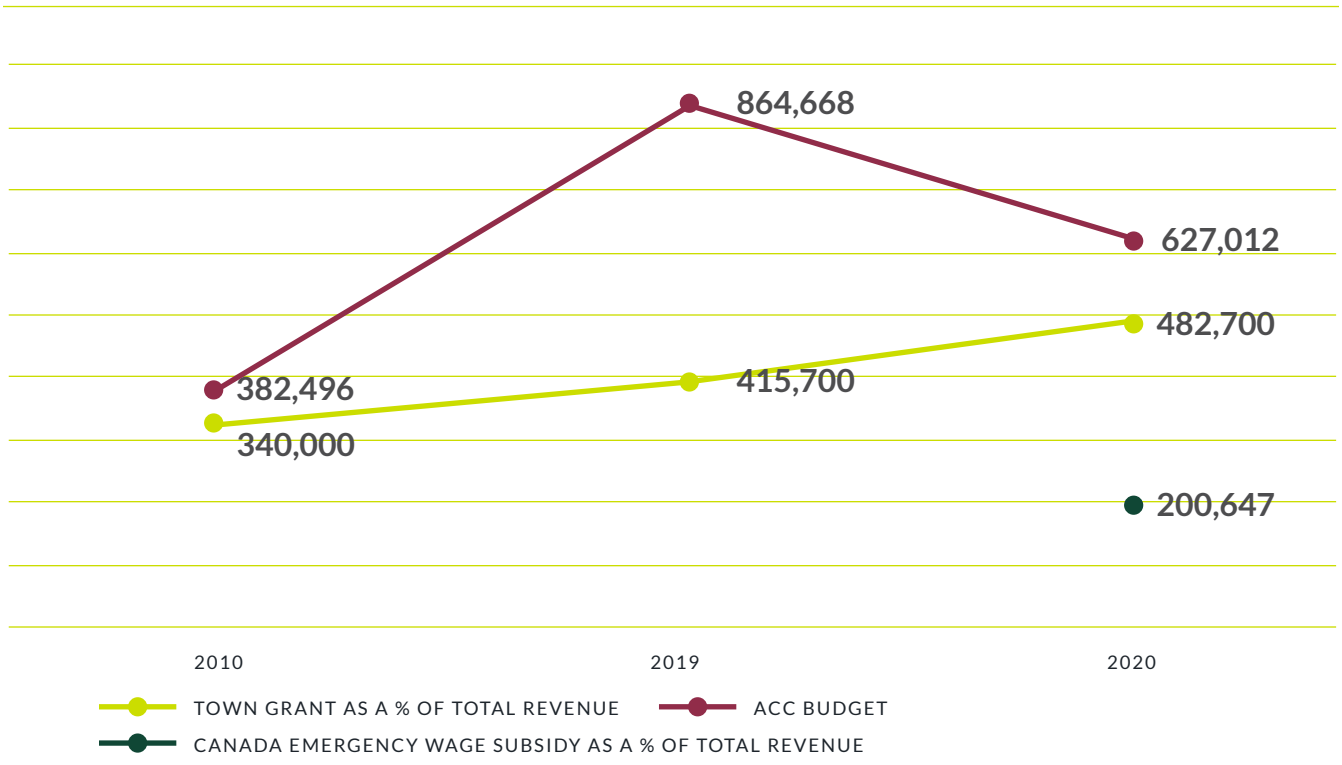
Contingency Reserve Funds	182,724
Classical Music Reserve Funds	69,467
Special Project Reserve Fund	70,000

Metrics

ACC Dependency on Town Funding

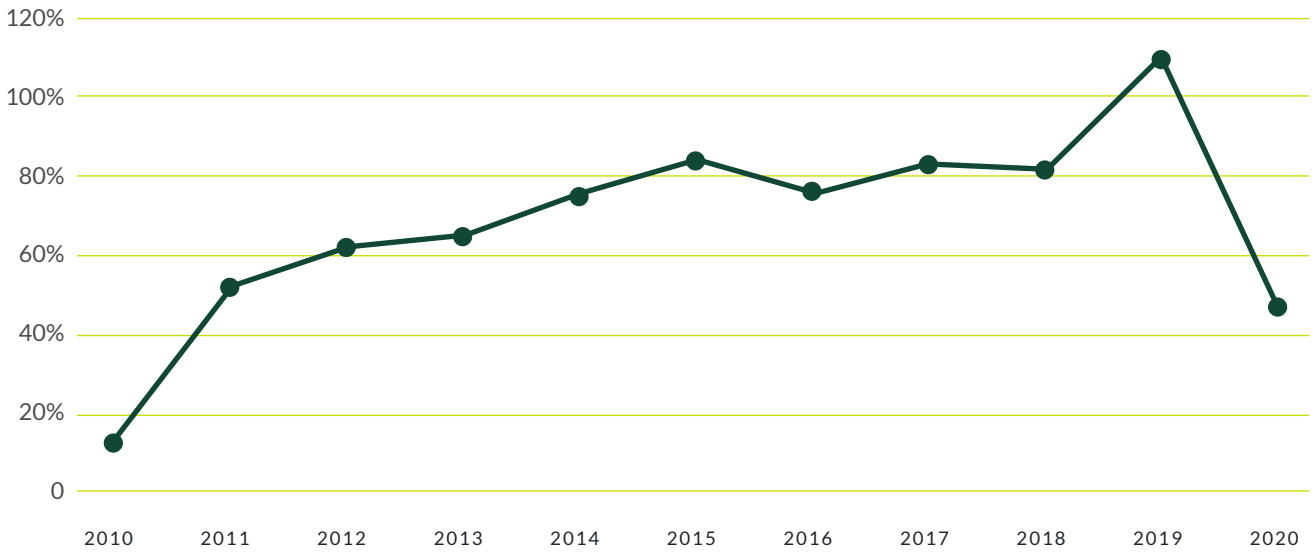


Town Grant to Total ACC Budget

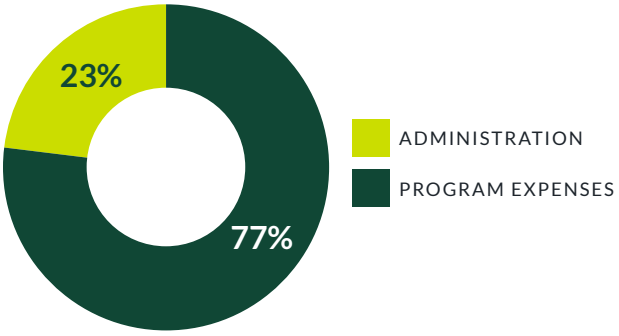


Metrics

Earned Revenue as a % of Town Grant



2020 Expense Breakdown



Outreach Committee Report

The Outreach Committee supports marketing and patron-facing staff in promotion and outreach relating to all programs at the Centre. The committee's work started in earnest in 2019 under a joint committee and was divided to provide more focus to the goal of increasing brand awareness by promoting programs and Centre initiatives, and ultimately encouraging participation and attendance for Aurorans and beyond. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the committee remained active virtually, supporting programs through social media channels, and word of mouth. The committee took advantage of this 'pandemic pause' to help gain a better understanding of the Aurora Cultural Centre's marketing collateral and digital imprint on social media. This unplanned opportunity allowed for new discussion surrounding untraditional markets we could explore. The ever-changing health restrictions meant in-person efforts were stalled, longer campaigns were halted and quick turnarounds were expected, however new markets were indeed created through the opportunities presented by digital offerings. The committee will continue to look at ways that the organization can leverage these new relationships in the future.

Amy Lane

Fund Development Committee Report

The Fund Development Committee supports the staff team in individual and corporate fundraising. Committee members participate in prospecting, corporate connections, stewardship to donors, and supporting events to promote participation. Grant and foundation applications are handled by staff. The 2020 year was particularly challenging as programming was deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding directed to a cancelled program has been deferred until we can deliver the program. We are grateful to the many individual and corporate partners who chose to continue to give and to support our sustainability and our virtual offerings. Your unwavering support meant we could continue to offer cultural programs to our community and indicates your deep understanding of our impact in the community. Thank you to our incredible committee members for all of your time and efforts to support the Aurora Cultural Centre's needs. A very special thank you to our donors, sponsors and grant funders who stuck with us to help us plan, learn, pivot and press forward in a very challenging year.

Christopher Mercer

Individual Donors

- Eric Acker
- Gerri Adam
- Camille Anderson
- Janette Armour
- Marlene Ash
- Nicole Asquith
- Nitin Bagga
- Steve Balgobin
- Cindi Bartel
- Sandra Bartle
- Gemma Bernardo
- James & Sharon Bradley
- Joan Brownlow
- Lyndsay Calder
- Joao Canhoto & Suzanne Haines
- Damien Chan
- Arthur & Judy Craig
- Leanne Dimonte
- Joan Dottori
- Gerald Dubois
- Joan Gardner
- Geraldine Gerardo
- Rosalyn & George Gonsalves
- Elizabeth Maynard-Gregg
- Catherine Gross
- Rebecca Haggith
- Michael Hennessy
- Linda Hollingworth
- Laura Hostick
- Shannon Ippolito
- Anna Jenkins
- Sharon Kelly
- Christina Kerr
- Bonnie & Norbert Kraft
- Marylou Kumagawa
- Amy Lane
- Sean Lewis
- Celene Lyon
- Chandra Magill
- Paul Martin
- Jennifer Martinez
- Carol Mathers
- Craig Mather
- Steven Mcintosh
- Christopher Mercer
- Heather Miller
- William Miller
- Stan & Mary Neal
- Stephanie Nicolo
- Christa Nimmo
- Mr G Leslie & Mrs Mary Jeanne Oliver
- Susan Partridge
- Jonathan Pippy
- Katherine Pollock
- Terri Price
- Alyssa Ramsay
- Elizabeth Ramsell
- Jo Anne Richardson
- Tracy Rodway
- Anne & David Rosevear
- Dave Ross
- Parisa Sabet
- Anne Sharp
- Don Sheldon
- Andre Siegel
- Dan Sinclair
- Jane St Germain
- Allison Stuart
- Jane Taylor
- Louise Taylor
- John Thomson
- Stella Trainor
- Angela Trevivian
- Mike Vasil
- Patricia Wallace
- Jennifer Walker
- Peter & Louise Walter
- Nancy Watson
- Donna Whale
- Gary Wiebe
- Howard Weiss
- Don & Sharon Wilston
- Hassan Yamini
- Doug & Linda Zack

Corporate Donors

- Fidelity Investments Canada ULC
- Maple Cross Fund
- RBC Foundation

Corporate Sponsors & Funders

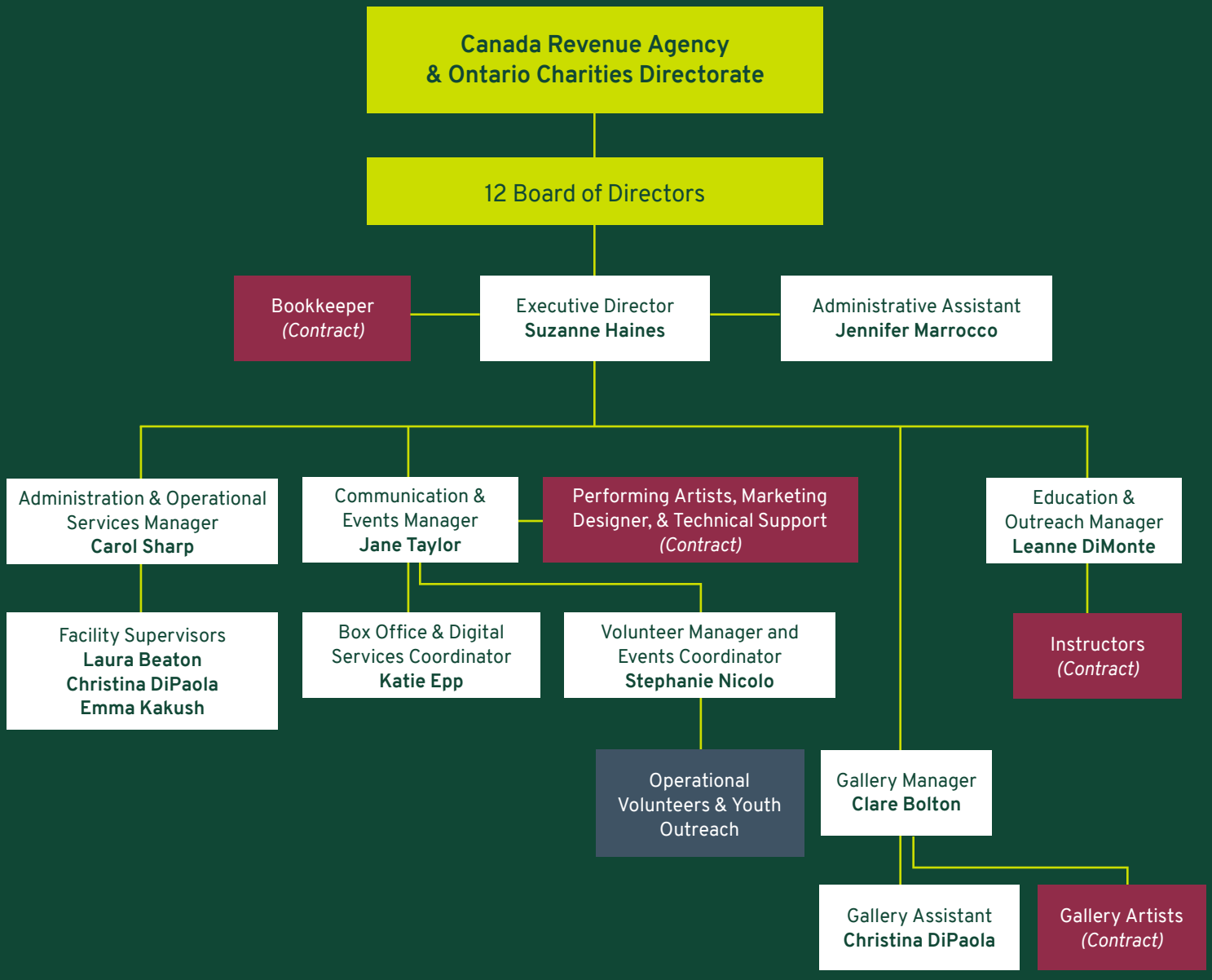
Sustaining Partner

Naming Partners

Program Sponsors

AuroraCulturalCentre.ca 34

Organizational Leadership



White boxes indicates **staff**

December 2020

Board of Directors

Executive:

President • Eric Acker

His professional career began in the early 1970s in the political milieu of Ottawa. He then spent sixteen years in the aerospace industry followed by fourteen years in the health sector. Eric retired after serving as President of one of Canada's largest behavioural health companies where his focus was on operations including human resources, information technology, finance, customer relations, and service delivery. Born and educated in Nova Scotia, Eric made Aurora his home in 1989.

Treasurer • Laura Hostick

Laura Hostick is the owner of a local Accounting and Bookkeeping firm, LMH Professional Corporation. Laura founded LMH in 2013 with the goal of making a larger impact to her clients while being more client facing. Her team has since expanded to include a number of accounting and bookkeeping professionals. Laura has been in the accounting business since 2007 and has always worked with small to medium sized businesses, working with business owners to teach them about accounting, taxes and how to see beyond the numbers. You can always strike up a conversation with Laura about running, wellness and her two daughters, Isla and Maren.

Secretary • Sharon Kelly

Educator with 45 years of experience with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Served in a variety of roles: elementary and secondary teacher, department head, consultant, program designer and administrator. Spent 10 years at Covenant House developing in-house school, Chair of Project Work and a variety of board committees with the focus of integration for students with developmental and/or physical disabilities. Member of the community colleges' advisory committees.

Directors:

Director • Nicole Asquith

Nicole Asquith founded Nicole Asquith Consulting in 2011; providing strategic consulting services to small and medium organizations. Prior to this Nicole was Global Head, Engagement at ME to WE Social Enterprise and Vice President. Nicole has been a resident of Aurora since 2005.

Director • Nitin Bagga

Nitin has 15+ years of experience in marketing, advertising and strategy. As the Chief Operating Officer and Head of Strategy at Barrett and Welsh, he leads brand strategy and analysis, development of brand strategy and strategic direction, market & competitive analysis and project management. He earned his degree in engineering from the Milwaukee School of Engineering and an MBA at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. He is an award-winning planner with multiple wins for Marketing Awards, Summit Marketing Effectiveness Awards, and a Midas Award for Financial Advertising. He has been ranked as a top 200 planner in Canada by Strategy Magazine. Jury Member for the 2020 Marketing Awards and 2021 Canadian Marketing League. Guest lecturer at University of Toronto and St. Lawrence College. 2021 Volunteer for POCAM (People Of Colour in Advertising And Marketing).

Director • Damien Chan

VP Personal and Small Business Technology at CIBC with responsibility to transform the client experience in the Banking Centres. Prior to this, Damien was a Client Director at HP Enterprises and IBM Canada. Damien is also a mentor at Futurpreneur Canada for young entrepreneurs.

Director (until June 2020) • **Mike Kennedy**

Currently Partner and Principal, arc Health Management. Active volunteer as coach and trainer in Aurora Minor Hockey Association and Newmarket Ball Hockey Association.

Director (as ofJune 2020) • **Christina Kerr**

Currently Manager, Program Development Creative Learning at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. She has over ten years of experience working in arts education in teaching, developing and managing various types of programs for learners of all ages, and abilities. She holds a B.F.A in studio arts from SUNY Plattsburgh and an Indigenous Knowledge Certificate from Humber College. Christina is an active volunteer and coach with the Central Girls Hockey Association and a studio member with the Pine Tree Potters' Guild.

Director • **Amy Lane**

Amy Lane manages Marketing, Communications and Proposal Development for the *Ontario Clean Water Agency*, where she has led many community outreach/educational initiatives over the past decade. Previously she worked with the broadcast division of *Alliance Atlantis* in various communications roles. She holds a B.A. from *Ryerson University* (Radio and Television Arts), as well as a post-grad certificate (Public Relations) from *Humber College*. Originally from Montreal, she has been a proud Auroran since 2011. She encourages everyone who will listen to ditch the plastic and drink tap!

Director • **Christopher Mercer**

A resident of Aurora for the last 9 years Christopher Mercer has worked with various technology companies including Salesforce, and Amazon Web Services to help clients achieve their goals. Chris has worked with various private and non-profit organizations to help solve complex technical issues to improve business performance. From an educational perspective Chris has an Honors degree from Wilfrid Laurier University and a Masters from the University of Waterloo.

Director • **Parisa Sabat**

Award-winning composer Parisa Sabet writes music that is commissioned and performed internationally. Her distinctive musical language springs from her Iranian roots, Western education, and passion for socially engaged arts. Interweaving sounds both recognizable and new, her compositions evoke emotions, conjure images, and relate stories, often about pressing social issues. Sabet earned the Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees in composition from the University of Toronto, where her honors included the Mirkopoulos and Miller/Khoshkish fellowships and the Tecumesh Sherman Rogers Graduating Award given to a musician on the cusp of making important contributions to the field. She completed her Bachelor of Music degree with honors at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Among her teachers are Christos Hatzis, Keith Tedman, Kyong Mee Choi, Ka Nin Chan, and Stacy Garrop. Her adventure with music began at age 9 with piano lessons in Shiraz.

Ex Officio Director • **Councillor Wendy Gaertner**

Wendy Gaertner has been a resident of Aurora since 1987. She has served on Aurora Council since 2003. Councillor Gaertner sat on the Cultural Centre Board last Term. She is currently one of the two Councillor Representatives on the Centre's Board. Wendy has been a strong supporter of the Church Street School since its inception. She was also Chair of the Culture Committee which provided Recommendations to Council on the formation of the Centre. Wendy Gaertner has a history of service to the Community including providing a drop in for Youth, HOT SPOT, for 18 years.

Ex Officio Director • **Councillor John Gallo**

Resident of Aurora since 1996. Member of Aurora Council - 2007-2014, 2018-present. Director at Aurora Cultural Centre since 2015. Past chair of Central York Fire, Environmental Advisory Committee, Trails and Active Transportation Committee. Director at Aurora Soccer Club. Vice Chair, St. Jerome Catholic Parent Council. Principal in a Property Management since 2005. Bachelor of Arts Degree from U of T, Architectural Technologist from Humber College.

2020 **ANNUAL REPORT**

Aurora Cultural Centre

2020
Annual Report

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BUSINESS Excellence AWARDS 2019 WINNER