An artistic installation in a dark space. Two people, seen from behind, are reaching up towards a large projection of a landscape with trees and a body of water. Above them, several framed artworks are suspended in the air, and a wooden chair is tilted and floating. The floor is dark and reflective, with some objects like a small table and a basket of sticks scattered around. The overall atmosphere is surreal and creative.

**creative futures
start here**

2024 / 25
annual review



University
of Victoria

Fine Arts



FINE ARTS BY THE NUMBERS: 2024/25

RAISED FROM DONORS: \$4.4M
AWARDED TO STUDENTS: \$1.3M
AWARDS DISTRIBUTED: 585
CURRENT FINE ARTS DONORS: 486
FACULTY GRANTS: \$313K
NEW ALUMNI: 200

ANNUAL EVENTS: 300+
PUBLIC ATTENDANCE: 20K+
VISITING ARTISTS & SCHOLARS: 28
CAREER & CO-OP PLACEMENTS: 24
EARNED MEDIA STORIES: 150+
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS: 30+K

AHVS professor Carolyn Butler Palmer leading a curator's tour of her Winter 2025 exhibit, *Victoria & Expressionism's Second Wave: The Point Group*, at UVic's downtown Legacy Gallery



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@UVicArts



@UVicArts

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to the Faculty of Fine Arts' Annual Review!

When I look back at the 2024-2025 academic year, I think about the future because this past year, the Faculty of Fine Arts launched *Bright Lights: 2025-2030*, our new Strategic Plan. The result of many months of consultation and bold thinking, this new plan highlights six strategic priorities that will guide the Faculty of Fine Arts for the next five years:

- Foster an inspiring and healthy creative community;
- Design experiential, experimental, and innovative learning opportunities that prepare students to lead lives fueled by creativity;
- Build the future of our Faculty on a foundation of resiliency and sustainability;
- Reimagine the potential of creative technologies;
- Listen, learn, and act with courage and humility to advance our equity, diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility goals;
- Amplify the impact of the creative arts for the well-being of society and our planet



Throughout this Annual Review, you will see that our Fine Arts community — faculty, staff, sessional instructors, students, and alumni — have already embraced these priorities with urgency and passion.

I am grateful for the partners across campus and in the arts community who support the ambitious goals that define our new Strategic Plan. Similarly, our many donors and industry collaborators have made it possible for us to dream with confidence. Kudos and thanks to all of you!

I hope you enjoy reading the Faculty of Fine Arts' 2024-2025 Annual Review. It is a record of another impactful year, and an invitation for you to join us as we head towards our very bright future.

Dr. Allana C. Lindgren
finedean@uvic.ca



1200+

Undergraduate students



85+

Graduate students



35+

Areas of study



20+

Degree options



200+

Teaching & support staff

Dean Allana Lindgren (left) and the Rubinoff Foundation's Betty Kennedy sign a new gift agreement that sees a further \$1.64 million for the Faculty of Fine Arts to renew and expand support for the Jeffrey Rubinoff Nexus for Art as a Source of Knowledge to mentor the next generation of artists and scholars.



Visual Arts MFA Rainy Huang becomes the latest recipient of a travel grant from our partners at the Audain Foundation, which she used to further her research and creative practice by attending a ceramics residency in China.



Following an impressive career highlighted by a Guggenheim Fellowship and faculty positions at both Yale and the University of Chicago, acclaimed sculptor and Visual Arts alumni Jessica Stockholder returns to campus to meet with students and present a Visiting Artist talk.



2024

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER



Starting a year filled with international appearances, AHVS professor Allan Antliff speaks at the Archive Caggiano Symposium at Italy's Morra Foundation, which highlights the lasting impact of Living Theatre, the ground-breaking avant-garde American performance company whose archives are held at the Morra.



Theatre students & alumni have been a big part of the Victoria Shakespeare Festival since it started in 1991. Case in point? 2024's *Much Ado About Nothing*, which featured a mix of 14 current students & alumni on stage & behind the scenes as part of the overall creative team.



Phoenix Theatre's season kicks off with *im:print*, a special presentation with the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria featuring a creative team of diverse artists and facilitators weaving spoken word, dance and song together with personal stories of Indigenous, settler, immigrant and refugee artists.

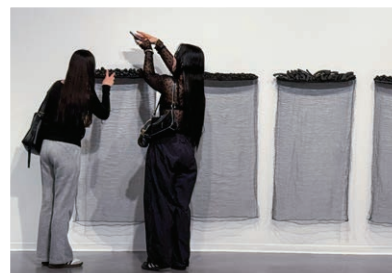
P-h-e-n-o-m-e-n-a-l was a word that the cast and audiences learned first-hand when Phoenix Theatre presents the Tony-winning musical *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, guest directed by Jacques Lemay with music direction by Stephanie Sartore.



When it comes to attracting fresh talent, national borders are no barrier: new professor Lauren McCall — who specializes in composition, music technology and extended reality interactive systems — joins our School of Music all the way from Atlanta, Georgia.



Visual Arts professor Beth Stuart's new installation "Delible" anchors the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria's summer exhibition *Architectures of Protection*, which reflects on ideas and modes of protection and refuge with regards to oneself, community, knowledge, culture, identity and land.



NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

2025



Icelandic/Red River Métis poet Jónína Kirton is one of two guests (along with Cree author Joseph Kakwinokansum) to headline this year's sx'wí'e'm "To Tell A Story" Indigenous Writers & Storytellers Series, organized by Writing professor Gregory Scofield.



Each year, Music Education students organize and run Music Discoveries, a three-day intensive camp that sees over 130 middle-school string, band and choir students visit UVic to increase their music skills and foster meaningful social connections.



As part of a year-long process, Fine Arts conducts an ongoing strategic-planning process, connecting with faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members to draft a new Strategic Plan which will guide our decision-making through to 2030.



Applied theatre alumni present the employee-focused workshop, "Do Workplace Conflict Differently: A Conflict Theatre Experience", which sees nearly 100 UVic staff members discover how applied theatre skills can be used effectively at work.

THE FACULTY



Fine Arts was well-represented when the Right Honourable Governor General Mary Simon (left) visited campus in February, with Impact Chair Carey Newman speaking (centre) and current graduate student Kylie Fineday participating in a student roundtable



1969

Year established



4

Dedicated buildings



5

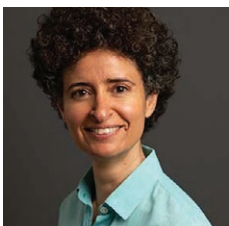
Academic units



12,500+

Degrees granted

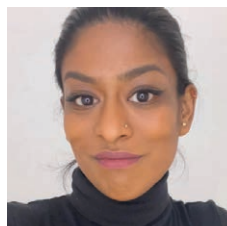
ADMINISTRATIVE



Yasmine Kandil
Chair,
Theatre



Catherine Harding
Associate Dean,
Fine Arts

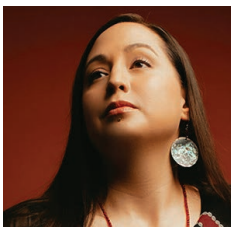


Mahisha Canagasuriam
Secretary, Theatre



Elena Stalwick
Secretary,
Writing

NEW FACULTY



Mique'l Dangeli
Assistant Professor,
AHVS



Lauren McCall
Assistant Professor,
Music



Marion Newman
Assistant Professor,
Music



Wayde Compton
Assistant Professor,
Writing



As recounted in Brazil's *O Globo*, landslides destroyed Cristiane Gross' home

CLIMATE DISASTER PROJECT INCREASES SCOPE

A warmer world is a more traumatic world, warns Climate Disaster Project founder Sean Holman, and we need new forms of climate storytelling to help us recover from these traumas — and prevent them from happening again. Given that framework, it's no surprise that UVic's award-winning Climate Disaster Project (CDP) continues to find new partners with which to work.

Housed in the Department of Writing as the Wayne Crookes Professor of Environmental & Climate Journalism, Holman and the CDP broke new ground this year with the world premiere of *Eyes of the Beast: Climate Disaster Survivor Stories*, a creative collaboration with Vancouver's Newworld Theatre. Presented at UVic's Phoenix Theatre in September, *Eyes* (see cover) is the world's first full-length documentary theatre production based upon on-the-ground climate disaster reporting.

Directed and co-written by Theatre alumni Chelsea Haberlin and Sebastien Archibald, *Eyes* is also the first play to win (or even be nominated for) a Canadian Association of Journalists award, before being remounted for a 2025 Vancouver run.

Among the CDP's other projects this past year:

- a \$2.5M SSHRC Partnership Grant for *From Catastrophe to Community: A People's History of Climate Change* (pending confirmation)

- collaborating with influential UK media outlet *The Guardian* to publish a series of internationally focused climate-survivor testimonies timed to COP29, the UN climate change summit
- creating a partnership with Brazil's *O Globo* newspaper
- appearing at UCLA's Sci Art Gallery in an installation by Canadian media artist Joel Ong (who joins our Visual Arts department in 2025)
- releasing a set of survivor testimonies by Thompson Rivers University students, part of an exhibit at Kamloops Art Gallery
- presenting a two-day workshop as part of the UVic Legacy Gallery exhibit, *Fire Season*.

Holman was also selected as one of just 20 speakers at the international *My Climate Story* project, hosted by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, the Penn Center for Science, Sustainability & the Media and the Princeton High Meadows Environmental Institute.

"We are entering a new era of disaster, where our seasons will become increasingly defined by the traumatic events they bring, and we need to learn how journalism can help us survive those traumas together," he says.

The CDP
since 2021:



250+
Students
trained



320+
Survivor
testimonies



35+
Educational,
media &
cultural
partners



10
Major
journalism
nominations/
awards



Theatre students Simran Kang (left), Isabella Derilo and Alynne Sinnema in 2024's *The Salty Scent of Home*

CELEBRATORY THEATRE EMPOWERS ACCEPTANCE

It can be hard for people who never experienced immigration to understand the challenges faced by immigrants and refugees, but new research is showing the positive impact “celebratory theatre” practices can have on newcomers.

Funded by a three-year, \$200,000 Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council Partnership Development Grant, Theatre professor Yasmine Kandil's project — *Celebratory Theatre for Building Inclusion, Resilience & Social Acceptance of Racialized Newcomer Immigrants & Refugees to Canada* — is a partnership with the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria, the Vancouver Island Counseling Centre for Immigrants & Refugees and UVic's Psychology department, with participation by professors Monica Prendergast (Curriculum & Instruction) and Fred Chou (Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies). “We're invested in learning how theatre — particularly celebratory theatre, where the participants benefit and the audience learns — can support successful integration and thriving of newcomers,” says Kandil.

A leading expert in applied theatre techniques, Kandil had previously partnered with ICA on 2022's *Homecoming: A Queer Journey* — funded through a 2019 SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant — which focused on building empathy for LGBTQ2S+

immigrants and refugees. “People don't want to be seen as pitiful or needing help,” she says. “They want others to see their rich culture, what they bring to the community — that they're resilient, productive citizens, worthy of an equal share in society.”

Led by Kandil and Psychology professor Cathy Costigan, the 2024 *Celebratory Theatre* research project involved seven theatre students working with six ICA and VICCIR clients in a series of workshops in February and March, followed by a devised performance in May, which was then performed as *The Salty Scent of Home* to nearly 300 audience members in June — all aimed at testing how celebratory theatre techniques can impact the well-being, social cohesion and sense of self-worth of immigrants and refugees.

Costigan developed evaluation tools to test various measures (i.e., confidence, belonging, acceptance) both before and after the workshops and performance, which were then applied to the participants, students and audience members during the workshops and performance. “The data has come back positive that celebratory theatre is making a difference and impacting people's acceptance of immigrants and refugees, as well as making a significant impact in the way that newcomers perceive themselves and chances of success in Canada,” says Kandil.



COMPOSING MUSIC TO INSPIRE AND HEAL

From ancient Greece to Paris 2024, music has long been an essential part of international sporting events: think of John Williams' inspiring Olympic Games fanfare or David Foster's "Man in Motion" theme for Rick Hansen's global wheelchair marathon. Now, School of Music professor and composer Steven Capaldo has added his own creation to that legacy.

When over 550 wounded warriors walked and wheeled into the closing ceremonies of Vancouver's 2025 Invictus Games, they entered to the triumphant sounds of Capaldo's "Invictus Fanfare," performed live at the Rogers Arena by frequent UVic Music collaborators, the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy.

An international multi-sport event started in 2014 for wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women (both serving and veterans), the Invictus Games were co-founded by Prince Harry, who was in attendance for Capaldo's performance. With Invictus participants coming from 25 different countries, Capaldo was the ideal composer for this piece: a new Canadian who received his citizenship in 2023, he served in the Australian military and has composed "celebration music" for national events before.

"The producers loved the fact that this piece was

new, fresh and Canadian," he says. "It doesn't sound like a staid, old 1800s fanfare: it has a modern feel and a modern flare."

Set to a tempo suitable for wheelchairs and assisted walking, Capaldo was surprised at how quickly he was able to compose the three-minute fanfare.

"I thought about my own experiences in the military, the philosophy of the Games and how it should be a celebration but also respectful of the athletes' particular journeys," he says. "I also knew it needed a moment of introspection to acknowledge their sacrifice: the reason they're at these games is because they've had an injury through war, through their service. I wanted to pay respect to that."

Capaldo says his fanfare was an instant hit when presented to organizers and is now in consideration as the official theme for future Invictus Games processions. And given the 20,000-seat capacity of Rogers Arena, plus the worldwide television broadcast of the closing ceremonies — which also featured performances by the Barenaked Ladies, rapper Jelly Roll and blues duo The War & Treaty — Capaldo says this was definitely the largest audience for any of his pieces.

EXPLORING BC'S PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Given live theatre's inherently ephemeral nature, it can be difficult to assess its historical impact or significance — yet many artifacts of theatre history are housed in museums and archives, waiting to be found. Now, a new research project is telling the story of our region's performance history through an interactive website offering the chance to explore a unique collection of costumes, props and objects.

Initially spurred on by a UVic Internal Research Project Grant and funded by a SSHRC Insight Development Grant, *Performance in the Pacific Northwest* is led by Department of Theatre professor Sasha Kovacs and the University of Lethbridge's Heather Davis-Fisch, with contributions from project researchers Matthew Tomkinson, Laurel Green and Lee Cookson.

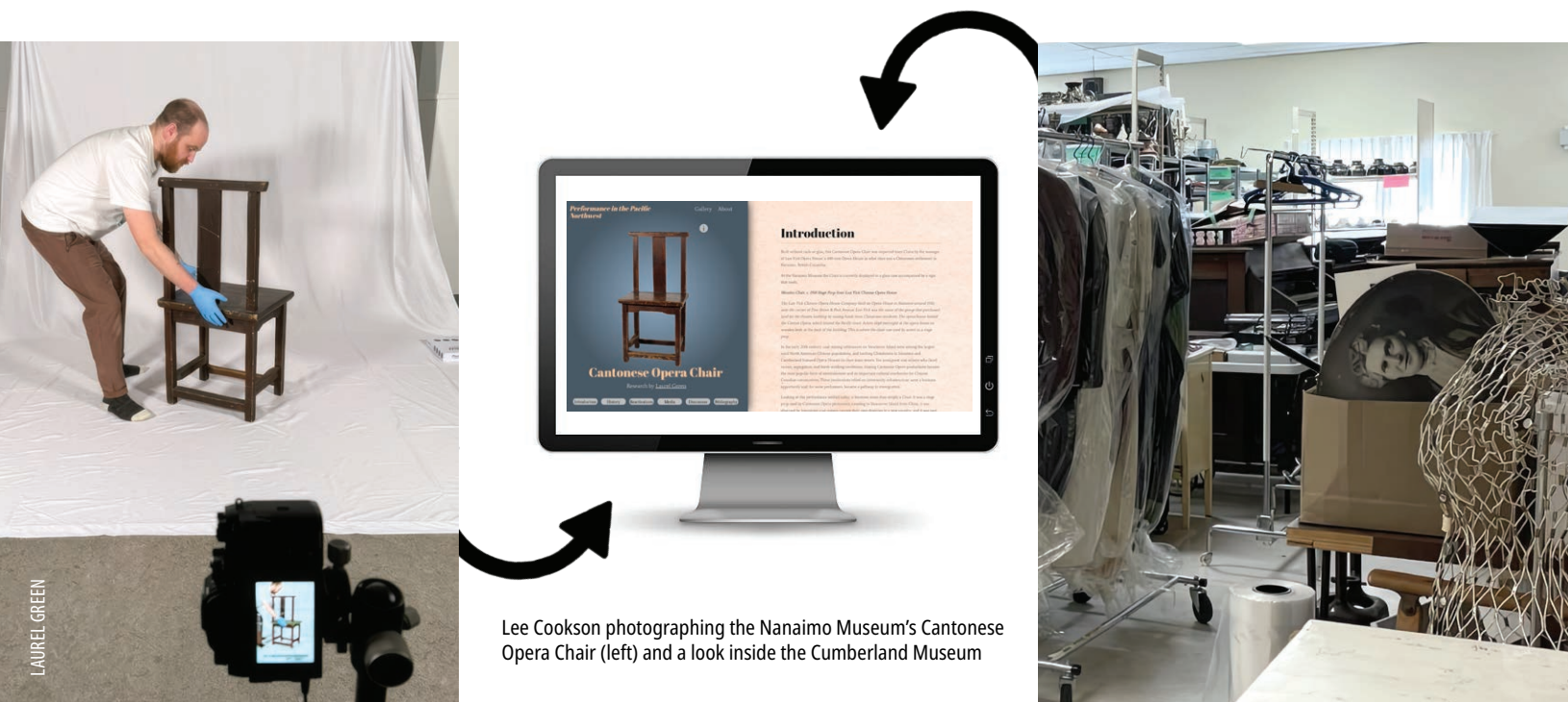
This project builds on the initial findings of the 2020 Royal BC Museum symposium, *Preserving Performance in the Pacific Northwest*, which determined that collaborative research with museum and archives was key to identifying performance-related material remains (costumes, props and other artifacts) that could reveal more about the cultural, social and political function of a given performance.

"[This project] takes performance-related materials and objects out of their museum drawer, display case or archival folder to uncover their stories, reactivate their creative and imaginative uses, and discuss the significant cultural and political impact made by a range of performances across the Pacific Northwest region," says Kovacs.

The website has been integrated into theatre history courses across Canada, and was profiled at the American Society for Theater Research plenary presentation in 2024.

Kovacs will develop and build more case studies for this website — as well as continue her investigation of theatre archives — in her role as co-director for *Gatherings: Archival and Oral Histories of Performance*, a seven-year, \$2.5 million SSHRC Partnership Grant awarded in 2024.

Watch for more digital and physical exhibitions plus other research outputs from this project, in partnership with Canada's Theatre Museum, Dance Collection Danse and Playwrights Canada Press, as well as a range of other local artistic, heritage and museum organizations.



Lee Cookson photographing the Nanaimo Museum's Cantonese Opera Chair (left) and a look inside the Cumberland Museum

HISTORICIZING THE PRESENT THROUGH ART

When Sm Łoodm 'Nüüsm (Mique'l Dangeli) was hired in 2024 as a professor of Indigenous Arts in our Art History & Visual Studies department, the Ts'msyen scholar knew it would be a good fit.

"I liked the fact that it isn't just about art history here, it's also about visual studies — so all of my interests are supported in terms of what I can teach," she says. "Being a dancer and choreographer, I teach everything through music and performance as well as visual arts, and I also love Indigenous filmmaking, so I bring that in too. My classes are very much passion projects — like my Indigenous tattoo course — so it's really enhanced my teaching to be able to explore all these other areas."

Prior to UVic, Dangeli taught at the University of Alaska Southeast, UFV and UNBC, as well as serving on various curatorial teams for Canadian, American and European museums — all of which offered the perfect background for this position.

"The approach I take is historicizing the present, so all of the artists I talk about are producing now," she explains. "As Northwest Coast First Nations People, we live our art history every day, so I look at not only the historical roots of a wide array of art practices but also distinct and important differences Indigenous artists are making for future generations."

Dangeli is also careful to avoid problematic terminology in her teaching.

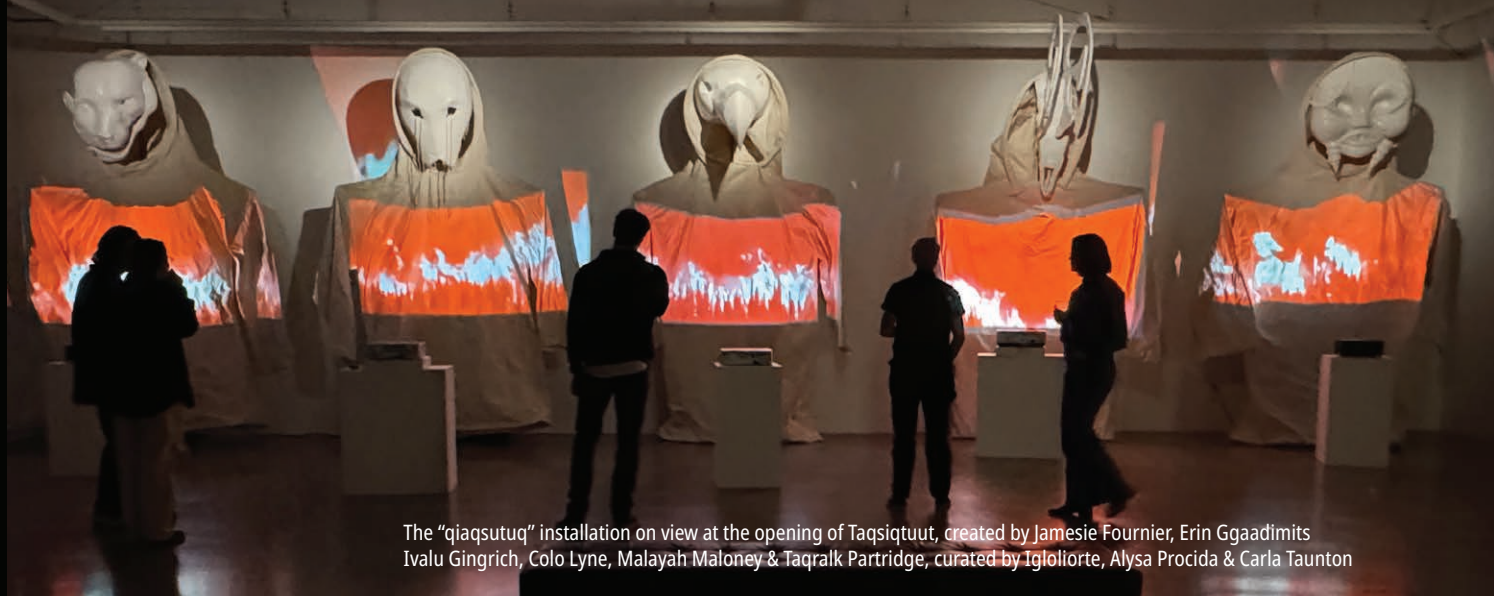
"I steer away from oppressive terms like 'traditional' and 'contemporary,'" she says. "It's a continuum: Indigenous artists are still doing the work of their ancestors who incorporated all the tools, materials and technologies that came through many trade routes before and after colonial invasion. If we're going to talk about tradition, the most ancient tradition we have as Indigenous people is to use the tools, materials and technologies of the time period that we live in to express who we are today."

Over the past year, Dangeli has found a home in Fine Arts: not only through her teaching but also by leading panels, engaging with other units and using the building lobby to rehearse her First Nations dance group, the Git Hayetsk Dancers. But her biggest highlight? The students.

"The students at UVic are amazing: critical, intellectual, thoughtful and willing to create a safe space in my classroom to have challenging conversations about historical and ongoing colonization and about how Indigenous artists are engaging with today's issues through their work," she says. "There's a gratitude here for the opportunity to learn that I haven't encountered at any other university."



Dangeli's dance group (left) and her moderating at the 2025 *Across Lands & Waters* conference



The "qiaqsutuq" installation on view at the opening of Taqsiqtuut, created by Jamesie Fournier, Erin Ggaadimits Ivalu Gingrich, Colo Lyne, Malayah Maloney & Taqralk Partridge, curated by Igloliorte, Alysa Procida & Carla Taunton

CERC-FUNDED TAQSIQUUT LAB OPENS

There's a new Indigenous arts research space in the Department of Visual Arts that is looking up — way up — to the arts of the circumpolar region, as well as all along the Pacific shoreline and from Alaska to New Zealand, with Victoria at the centre of it all.

Launched with a public opening in February 2025, the Taqsiqtuut Research-Creation Lab is the latest project by Heather Igloliorte, UVic's inaugural Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Decolonial and Transformational Indigenous Art Practices — a prestigious eight-year, \$8-million position where, out of 45 current CERC chairholders nation-wide, she is the only artist/curator in a field dominated by hard sciences.

The Taqsiqtuut lab addresses the key pillars of Igloliorte's CERC by offering a space for practical and digital skills but also somewhere to create exhibitions, mentor students and develop new policies and best practices for institutions that engage with Indigenous art and artists. The lab also has a video/media arts editing suite and technician to help students with their projects.

"Indigenous people don't necessarily have access to the same cutting-edge technologies that others do, just like they lack access to museums and galleries in the North," says Igloliorte. "So we'll keep building the lab as we go: if we do a stop-motion film project, we'll

invest in stop-motion technology, and when we work with seamstresses on an Indigenous customary clothing pattern-making workshop, then we'll purchase a pattern-imaging device."

In May, Igloliorte and the Taqsiqtuut lab also hosted an international gathering of 60 artists and curators: the three-day *Across Lands and Waters* was the first major gathering of Igloliorte's CERC network of mostly Indigenous artists, scholars, museum/gallery directors, curators, students and community members. Together, they engaged in land-based activities, gallery visits, discussions and performances, sharing current research and projects while also making plans for the future.

"I have a large network of colleagues and artists I've been working with for a long time — partners who are thinking across Indigenous cultures and learning from each other in order to move towards this place of transformation and decolonization," she says.



Heather Igloliorte (left) with student Chris Mockford & lab coordinator Natalie Rollins



EXTENDING REALITY

Work continues on the creation of the Canadian Centre for Extended Reality (CCXR), an ongoing partnership between UVic's Writing and Computer Science departments. While planning progresses on a redesign collaboration with the Royal BC Museum's climate exhibit and a deal is pending with Sony Canada for new extended reality gear, in fall 2024 the CCXR partnered with the annual national PXR Festival/Conference and their XRtist Student Link-Up.

The XRtist Link-Up program brings together performing-arts and game-design students from across Canada and challenges them to create a short virtual- reality experience.

Using grant funding from Co-operative Education & Work-Integrated Learning Canada, five Fine Arts students were able to participate in the week-long intensive where they learned how to create an immersive VR experience and then demonstrate it for conference attendees (above).

UVic fielded a mix of undergraduate and grad students, including Abby Fry (Writing), Zoe Bechtold (Writing/Theatre), Lesley Marshall and Nick Patterson (Visual Arts) and Stella Drinkwater (Music+Computer Science) — all of whom participated in the conference via VR headsets provided by the Fine Arts Media Commons.

Talks are already underway between PXR and the Fine Arts Technology Advisory Committee to see about getting even more students involved in 2025 to learn how to create in VR/XR.

FUNDED RESEARCH (SELECT)

Grants awarded to faculty members from the Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council & others

Melia Belli Bose (AHVS) received a UVic Research/Creative Project Grant for her project, *Indigeneity, Allyship and Art in Bangladesh*.

Mo Bradley (Writing) received funding from both Creative BC and Telefilm Canada for the feature film project *Inheritance* (with Writing MFA Letay Williams as screenwriter, producer & co-director), and a UVic Research/Creative Project Grant for *Whatever Will Be*, a feature POV documentary.

Danielle Geller (Writing) received a BC Arts Council grant for a future writing project.

David Gifford (Visual Arts) received a BC Arts Council grant for the latest development of his ongoing *Puppets Forsaken* sculptural project.

Heather Igloliorte (Visual Arts) received funding from both MITACS and Business Strategy Internships for the Aunte Indigenous Residency.

Marion Newman (Music) received co-applicant funding from the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts to create an audio recording of the opera *Missing*.

Kelly Richardson (Visual Arts) received a UVic Research/Creative Project Grant.

Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta (Theatre) received a SSHRC grant for the latest phase of *Staging our Voices: An Indigenous Theatre Festival*.



Victoria Symphony conductor & UVic Music instructor Giuseppe Pietraroia leading the UVic Orchestra

AWARDS

Three Fine Arts professors were named recipients of UVic's REACH Awards — David Leach (teaching excellence), Kelly Richardson (creativity & artistic expression) and Kirk McNally (activism & EDI). Writing's Kathryn Mockler was shortlisted for a number of national awards for *Anecdotes*, which won the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize; tangentially, Mockler and Writing chair Kevin Kerr were on the 2024 Governor General's Literary Awards judging committee. Sean Holman's Climate Disaster Project won Silver at the Canadian Association of Journalists awards, plus had four nominations in two categories at BC's annual Webster Awards.

Visual Arts professor Heather Igloliorte earned an Outstanding EDI Award from Canada's art historical association UAAC and is on the jury for both the Salt Spring National Art Prize and the Yukon Prize for Visual Art, while MFA candidate Rainy Huang won an Audain Foundation Travel Grant. AHVS professor Mique'l Dangeli won the Art Association of Australia & New Zealand Prize for "Best Scholarly Article", while Music's Merrie Klazek was nominated in two categories at the Canadian Folk Music Awards.

INTERNATIONAL

In Music, professors Benjamin Butterfield and Anne Grimm taught at Sicily's Music Festival & Competition; Ajtony Csaba conducted the Mikamo Central European Chamber Orchestra in

Hungary and Austria; Virginia Acuña presented at the *Women in the Hispanic World* conference in Mexico and the American Musicological Society conference in Chicago; Marion Newman participated in the *North American Indigenous Songbook* in New York City and performing in the world premiere of *Mountain Visions* with the Vancouver Symphony; Anthony Tan had the world premiere of a new composition in Edmonton; and Merrie Klazek performed at the International Trumpet Guild Conference in Anaheim before going to Spain to teach at the SBALZ Festival and hold masterclasses in the UK.

In Theatre, professor Patrick Du Wors designed the set and costumes for Edmonton Opera's *Die Fledermaus*; Carolyn Choo was named lead faculty for the Banff Centre's Props Builder: Interplay 2025 program; and Sasha Kovacs spoke at the American Society for Theatre Research meeting in Washington.

In AHVS, professor Allan Antliff spoke at Italy's Morra Foundation, Colorado's Clyfford Still Museum, New York's College Art Association Conference and Moscow's School of Social and Economic Sciences; Catherine Harding, Carolyn Butler Palmer and PhD candidates Amina Ejaz and Anna O'Meara all participated in the Universities Art Association of Canada annual conference in Ontario; Erin Campbell gave a paper and led a panel at the Sixteenth Century Conference in Toronto and at the 71st annual Renaissance Society of America Conference in Boston.

Visual Arts professor Kelly Richardson exhibited at Spain's Lo Pati Centre d'Art, the Buffalo History Museum, Colombia's Institute of Fine Arts in Cali and Toronto's Image Centre; Impact Chair Carey Newman presented the exhibit *ka'yasu'/ne'hakw [driven away/returning home]* at Ohio's Denison Museum; and Heather Igloliorte hosted Montreal's international symposium, *Qinnirajaattuu / Ripples: Making Waves in Inuit Art*.

PERFORMANCES

The School of Music continued its busy annual schedule of over 120 public concerts, recitals, masterclasses and events, including the 10th SALT New Music Festival and much-loved seasonal favourites Tuba Christmas and Christ Church Cathedral's Winter Choral Concert, as well as the more somber *Remembering Alexander Dunn*, an evening of music and memories honouring the unexpected 2024 passing of our longstanding guitar instructor.

Highlights of faculty performances included Pamela Highbaugh Aloni's *Stories Within the Notes*, Joanna Hood's *Goldberg Variations for String Trio* and guitar instructor Simon Farintosh's *Nocturne*. Student ensemble standouts included *hamalkwala* with the Voice Ensemble, Sonic Lab's *A Degree of Beauty*, the debut of our new Concert Band with *Ride!*, both the Wind Symphony's *Ignite* and *Beauty Broken*, the Symphony Orchestra's *Jubilation* and *From Darkness to Light*, and their combined concert *Free Running*, as well as the annual Concerto Competition concerts and our ongoing partnership with Pacific Opera Victoria, which saw students and alumni perform in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* and professor Benjamin Butterfield in *Little Prince*.

Phoenix Theatre had a busy season, adding two special shows — *Eyes of the Beast* and *im:print* — to their regular performance schedule: the musical *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, the surreal comedy *The Killing Game* and Shakespeare's mistaken-identity classic *Twelfth Night*. Students also did a regional school tour of Yasmine Kandil's new celebratory theatre performance *The Salty Scent of Home*, coming to the mainstage in 2025.

The Writing department saw faculty members Wayne Compton and Marita Dachsel both headline the venerable Planet Earth Poetry series, students present new work at the Belfry Theatre for the Playwright's Cabaret and guest authors Jónína Kirton and Joseph Kakwinokansum speak on "Writing as Healing through Trauma" at the second annual Indigenous Storytellers Series. This year also saw the world premiere of the immensely popular *Playing Shylock*, a new play written by Writing/Theatre alumnus and longtime instructor Mark Leiren-Young, which sold out its original Toronto run, grew into a holdover production and is now booked for Montreal in 2026.

AHVS professor Carolyn Butler Palmer curated the exhibition *Victoria & Expressionism's Second Wave: The Point Group* at UVic's Legacy Gallery.

PUBLICATIONS

Theatre's Conrad Alexandrowicz published *Performing the Nonhuman: Towards a Theatre of Transformation* (Routledge) and Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta co-edited the *Routledge Handbook of Arts and Global Development*; AHVS' Allan Antliff co-authored *Julian Beck's Scroll Painting for the Living Theatre's The Yellow Methuselah* (Morra Foundation).



REACH Award winners (above)
Leach, Richardson & McNally



The Killing Game at the Phoenix



Writing nominees at the Victoria
Book Prize: Tim Lilburn, Ali Blythe,
Arleen Paré & Kathryn Mockler (rear)



Routledge Handbook of
Arts and Global Development

Edited by Vicki Ann Ware, Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta,
Tim Prentki, Waam al Kurd and Patrick Kabanda



Atom Egoyan



Anosh Irani



Don Kwan



Barbara Hannigan

KRISTY PARKAS

GUEST LECTURERS BRING THE WORLD TO OUR DOOR

Pop quiz: what's the common denominator between award-winning filmmaker Atom Egoyan, virtuoso soprano Barbara Hannigan, Canada Council for the Arts CEO Michelle Chawla, acclaimed playwright Anosh Irani and celebrated alumni artists Jessica Stockholder, Carleigh Baker and Richard Van Camp? Answer: they all came to campus this year as guest lecturers to share their creative excellence and industry insights with our students.

The remarkable number of guests we host each year is one of the things that makes the Fine Arts experience distinct. Whether through our regularly scheduled Orion Lectures and Visiting Artist program or via annual donor-funded initiatives like the Martha Cooke Visiting Artist series, the Wurlitzer Professorship or the Southam and Lehan lectures, we delight in bringing the world to our door.

This past year saw over 30 authors, artists, musicians, scholars, curators and other industry professionals speak to students faculty-wide, offering invaluable insights into the realities of being a working artist today. Mixing classroom visits with public talks, our guest speakers offer

opportunities for both students and the public alike to learn from today's arts leaders.

Whether tackling issues facing racialized artists, presenting new arts technologies, offering hands-on creative critiques or simply reflecting on their own alumni journeys away from campus and into the arts sector, each of our guests offers unique insights that speak to the future faced by our students.

Anyone who went through university will remember the first time they connected with a prominent personality who led to a lightbulb moment illuminating the infinite possibilities ahead. Together with our committed donors, Fine Arts is proud to offer that same opportunity to our students by presenting an enviable schedule of world-leading talent each year.

Whether from across Canada or around the world, our guests offer exclusive access to those who might not otherwise be able to experience their work. These opportunities also often lead to more permanent connections and relationships, transforming the arts ecology of Victoria and beyond.

NAMED PROFESSORS ENHANCE OUR EXPERIENCES

When it comes to funded research chairs, Fine Arts is tied for the most number of named professorships at UVic (alongside the faculties of both Science and Social Sciences). Add in our annual donor-funded lectureships, however, and Fine Arts leads the campus when it comes to hosting academic and industry leaders who are keen to share their practical experience.



Lansdowne Chair (Fine Arts)

Writing professor Deborah Campbell is the current holder of this annual position funded by the 1978 sale of UVic's former campus, which became Camosun College.

While some — like Writing's Southam Lecturer or the Wurlitzer Professor in AHVS — rotate as annual positions, others provide us with full-time faculty members who greatly benefit the Fine Arts community, both on and off campus. We are grateful to our funders who share our vision of providing the finest educational experience to our students.



Crookes Professorship (Writing)

Sean Holman is the Wayne Crookes Professor of Environmental & Climate Journalism, and founder of the Climate Disaster Project.



Lehan Lecturer (Fine Arts)

Theatre instructor d'bi.young anitafrika was our third guest speaker in this annual series named for the Lehan Family, which explores the connection between activism and the arts.



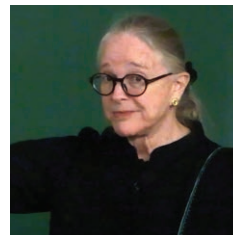
Southam Lecturer (Writing)

Acclaimed author John Vaillant (*Fire Weather*, *The Golden Spruce*) was our latest guest speaker in this 31-year annual lectureship named for UVic alumnus Harvey Southam.



Audain Professorship (Visual Arts)

Lindsay Katsitsakatste Delaronde is the seventh professor to hold this limited-term position, funded by Victoria College alumnus OC OBC Michael Audain (LLD) and the Audain Foundation.



Wurlitzer Professor (AHVS)

Visiting art historian Mary Storm was our second guest in this rotating professorship that engages artists and scholars in dialogue about global religion and sacred arts.



CERC Research Chair (Visual Arts)

Heather Igloliorte is the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Decolonial and Transformational Indigenous Art Practices, a prestigious eight-year, \$8 million position.



Williams Legacy Chair (AHVS)

A permanent research and curatorial position, the Michael Williams Legacy Chair in Modern & Contemporary Arts of the Pacific Northwest is held by Carolyn Butler Palmer.



Impact Chair in Indigenous Art Practices (Visual Arts/AHVS)

Since 2021, Carey Newman has been UVic's Impact Chair in Indigenous Art Practices, focused on decolonization and Indigenous resurgence.



Rubinoff Legacy Professor (AHVS)

Allan Antliff is the inaugural Jeffrey Rubinoff Legacy Professor in Art As A Source of Knowledge, one aspect of our continuing partnership with the Jeffrey Rubinoff Foundation.

EXPANDING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT THE JRSP

This past year saw our longtime partnership with the Jeffrey Rubinoff Foundation develop even further with a new donation of \$1.64 million to renew and expand support for the Jeffrey Rubinoff Nexus for Art as a Source of Knowledge in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

The Nexus will mentor the next generation of artists and scholars by evolving our curriculum to include experiential learning, field trips and scholarly activity that intertwines with educational programs at the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park (JRSP) on Hornby Island.

Over the next five years, the Rubinoff Foundation has pledged \$300,000 to support

the Rubinoff Legacy Professor (currently held by AHVS professor Allan Antliff), \$500,000 for ongoing graduate student scholarships (to be shared across each of the Fine Arts units), \$350,000 for a Knowledge Engagement Fund, \$150,000 for a new JRSP/UVic Visiting Artist/Scholar term Residency plus a further \$340,000 to finance an overall project coordinator, based out of Fine Arts.

Our relationship with Jeffrey Rubinoff began in 2016 when he established a million-dollar endowed award, ensuring exceptional opportunities for our students to study the complexities and richness of the history of modern and contemporary art.



"Jeffrey Rubinoff held that art was an existential necessity — an expression of mature conscience, evoking our innate sense of the sacred and the sublime," says JRSP curator Karun Koernig says of the late BC-based sculptor.

That partnership has continued to evolve over the past nine years with a regular series field schools, a robust package of graduate scholarships and the establishment of the Rubinoff Legacy Professor, as well as the continued participation by faculty and graduate students with the international Company of Ideas forum, held annually at the JRSP on Hornby Island.

This latest phase of growth will see us forge new creative links between Fine Arts, the

JRSP community, and creative and scholarly networks around the world. One of the newest developments is the creation of an artistic/ scholarly residency: Canadian artist Siobhan Humston will develop new work at the JRSP involving music, synesthesia and humanity's entanglement with the natural world, which she will then exhibit and discuss at UVic in fall 2025.

This past year also saw three School of Music graduate students attend a JRSP field school to compose new pieces inspired by Rubinoff's sculptures, which were then performed by cello students at public concerts at UVic and the JRSP.

Together, Fine Arts and the Rubinoff Foundation are continuing to expand experiential learning opportunities for students across Fine Arts.



SCENES FROM A YEAR

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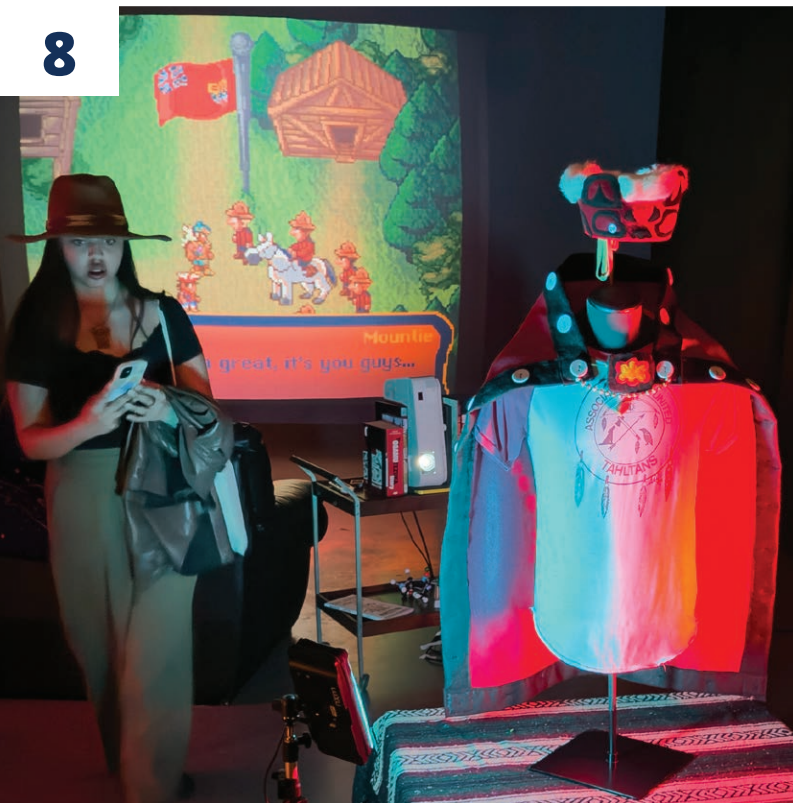
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1. Music professor Marion Newman performs at the *North American Indigenous Songbook* concert in New York City
2. Ocean Networks Canada artists-in-residence Neil Griffin (centre) & Megan Harton discuss their projects with ONC's Pieter Romer (left)
3. Real-life twins Makayla and Mariah Madill anchor *Twelfth Night* at the Phoenix
4. Cello students perform new work by composition students, inspired by a field school at the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park
5. The public gets hands-on with Carey Newman's new *Witness Blanket* VR project
6. President Kevin Hall & Heather Igloliorte at UVic's GameChangers research series
7. Martha Cooke Visiting Artist Minsoo Sohn leads a masterclass during his residency
8. Multimedia work by Indigenous student Waylon Asp at the Visual Arts BFA exhibit
9. Writing students offer readings of new plays at the Belfry Theatre's SPARK Festival
10. Music professor Benjamin Butterfield stars in Pacific Opera's *The Little Prince*

SPIRIT OF THE PHOENIX

While scholarships and bursaries are an important part of the UVic experience, nothing beats the sheer joy of winning an unexpected award. Consider the Spirit of the Phoenix Award, presented annually since 2019 to a Theatre student who best embodies initiative, positivity, excellence and a love of learning — attributes all found in 2025 recipient, El Newell.

A self-directed Theatre major, El has been active with both the Theatre Course Union and the Student Alternative Theatre Company. “[SATCo] produced my play *Horse Girl* in my first year, which was a huge moment for me as an artist and a stepping stone to Timetheft Theatre, a company started with my peers for which I am now playwright-in-residence. Through Timetheft, I’ve had my work produced independently at SKAMPede and the Victoria Fringe Festival.”

Graduating with a focus on playwriting, design and directing (plus an American Sign Language certification), El is now off to pursue an MFA at London’s Royal Central School of Speech & Drama in England. “I’d always expected I would go into theatre, but the breadth of knowledge, experience and confidence that I’ve gained at UVic has been beyond my wildest dreams.”

YOUTH POET LAUREATE

2025 saw Writing student Eva Haas complete her two-year term as the City of Victoria’s Youth Poet Laureate. Originally from Newfoundland & Labrador, she is the fourth Writing student to serve as YPL.

As Youth Poet Laureate, Eva not only wrote a new series of poems but also organized an annual community poetry event, held youth writing workshops at local high schools and public events, collaborated with other local poets, attended the Victoria Book Prize gala, and shared her own literary talents with the community at a number of live public readings, both solo and alongside Victoria’s outgoing Poet Laureate, Marie Specht.

Describing her poetry as “playful, vulnerable and sensory,” Eva says the best part of her position was “the chance to work with so many other talented poets and artists in the city.”

In addition to her public YPL work, Eva continued to exceed by earning a 2025 Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Award, publishing in *The Malahat Review*, receiving two separate Writing scholarships and making the longlist for the CBC Poetry Prize. She is currently completing her first poetry collection.



STUDENT IMPACT AWARDS

The annual Fine Arts Student Community Impact Awards recognize individual achievements or outstanding efforts made by full-time students beyond their traditional studies — and 2024 saw us surpass \$13,000 presented to 11 students since 2021, all thanks to the generosity of our donors.

Open to submissions from across the Faculty, these juried awards are presented annually at the Greater Victoria Regional Arts Awards, this year held at downtown's Baumann Centre in November 2024, where three students each received \$1,000: Rebecca Fux (left) and Claire Jorgensen (both Visual Arts) and Thomas Moore (Theatre).

Rebecca (left) earned the award for mounting two exhibits of new paintings at separate local artist-run centers; Claire (right) was honoured for creating a large-scale mural embodying themes of diversity, community and wellness for UVic's Island Medical Program; and Thomas (centre) was recognized for his work directing and producing three shows at the Victoria One Act Play Festival and the 2023 Fringe Festival, each of which provided opportunities for young queer and neurodivergent artists — he then went on to design the set for Phoenix Theatre's 2025 mainstage production *Twelfth Night*.

INTERNATIONAL ART OPTIONS

For Canadian students, an international exchange can be one of the most exciting opportunities of their academic career. This year, Fine Arts had over 20 students at partner institutions across Asia, Australia, Europe and the UK. For her first exchange, second-year AHVS student Hazel Macdonald opted for Aberystwyth University's School of Art in Wales.

"I was interested how the teaching of art history would change in a different country," says Hazel. "Aberystwyth's collection contains work by incredible artists like Rosetti, Whistler and Constable." That gave her the chance to "engage with important and sometimes fragile works of art . . . which was a really valuable experience. It also gave me an insider's view into how museums and galleries are working to adjust their concepts and systems into places where everyone feels seen."

As a small campus with a lot of international students, she felt Aberystwyth's vibe offered a "tight-knit community . . . which really helped when trying to make connections and friendships." Looking back, Hazel feels her international exchange gave her more confidence not only in herself but also in sharing her thoughts and opinions — which, she says, "will help me in every area of life, including finishing my AHVS degree."



EXPLORING DIGITAL SPACE

Intrigued by the possibility of expanding the theatrical experience, Adrienne Wong is interested in asking audiences to make connections with the environments and people around them by “re-seeing” the familiar and re-imagining the everyday.

“My work straddles theatrical and digital spaces,” she explains. “My particular interests are in developing new work and using theatre and engagement as a strategy to promote progressive change.”

Currently pursuing her MFA in Writing, she is the former artistic producer of Vancouver’s Newworld Theatre, the current artistic director of *SpiderWebShow* — the first and only nationally-driven performing arts website of its kind — and co-curates the annual Festival of Live Digital Art (FOLDA).

Adrienne’s passion for using theatre for progressive change is exemplified in online projects like *The Apology Generator*, which earned her the inaugural artist-in-residence position on CBC Radio’s *Q* (for which Theatre alum Amiel Gladstone was also shortlisted), and *SadSongs.ca*, commissioned by Nightswimming Theatre in Toronto. Her show *Landline* (created with Dustin Harvey) toured nationally and internationally in French and English, and *Me On The Map* (created with JD Derbyshire) is a children’s show about urban planning and collective decision-making that continues to be adapted for young citizen designers.

TAPPING INVISIBLE SYSTEMS

The mysterious nature of invisible systems has long intrigued Parvin Hasani: “Hidden networks have always sparked my imagination and fueled my exploration of the intersections between art and science.”

An MFA candidate with Visual Arts, Parvin is now exploring deep-sea hydrothermal vents as the sixth Fine Arts grad student selected for the annual Ocean Networks Canada ArtScience Fellowship. By drawing on ONC’s research, Parvin’s conceptual sculptural installations will explore how unseen forces sustain both marine life and human experience, linking oceanic and bodily systems that shape identity and memory.

By using ONC’s oceanographic research on the Endeavour Hydrothermal Vent Field — an active, mineral-rich environment on the deep-sea Juan de Fuca Ridge — Parvin will draw metaphoric parallels between the rhythms of the ocean and the processes of the human body.

“Just as superheated, mineral-rich water rises from the seafloor, memory often lies beneath consciousness, waiting to surface,” she explains about the concept behind her residency. “This extreme ecosystem will be mirrored in sculptures embodying the rhythms of both the ocean and the body.”

Parvin will complete her residency with an exhibit and presentation in September 2025.



IN LOVE WITH OPERA

The School of Music's long-running Concerto Competition is one of their most exciting annual events. This year, soprano and Master's candidate Olivia Hancinsky-Charette was named one of the three student winners (alongside pianist Jiran Miao and flautist Spencer Leong Cowie) for her performance of Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate* K. 165 with the Uvic Symphony Orchestra.

A Slovak-Montreal soprano coloratura with a style that combines opera, art song, musical theatre, operetta and film classics, Olivia was also a featured singer in Pacific Opera Victoria's "Coloratura" series; in addition to her academic work, she also sang in the POV chorus for the Spanish opera *Ainadamar*.

Other recent highlights include being invited as a guest artist to Montreal's annual *Viva Italia!* festival, having a lead role in Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* with Edmonton's NUOVA Vocal Arts, and competing as a scholarship recipient and finalist at the 2024 Sicily International Voice Festival, where she worked with internationally acclaimed soprano diva Maestra Casolla.

Olivia says she's very grateful to her School of Music teachers and mentors, especially Benjamin Butterfield for his support and inspiration — and for introducing her to Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate*. "After hearing the 'Alleluia', I had to sing it," she says. "When Ben suggested I learn the whole thing . . . I fell in love with it!"

THE QUIET POWER OF ART

Setareh Barzehkar is currently pursuing her MA in Art History and Visual Studies, where her research explores contemporary Iranian art through a feminist and postcolonial lens. Her work focuses on how visual storytelling reflects experiences of gendered restriction, displacement and fragmented identity, particularly in the context of exile and diasporic life. Through iconographic analysis and feminist theory, she examines how artists use layered compositions and symbolic forms to challenge dominant narratives and create space for agency and resistance.

"Having grown up navigating the borders of belonging, my research is inspired by a personal understanding of what it means to feel out of place," she says. "There's a quiet power in the way art can speak to displacement and identity when words fall short."

Setareh is also a practicing photographer and maker of traditional handicrafts, which inform her sensitivity to materiality, texture and visual meaning. Over the past academic year, she presented at a graduate conference, was elected co-chair of Uvic's Graduate Art History Association and presented at the annual Company of Ideas forum at the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park on Hornby Island.

Her combined academic and creative practice reflects a commitment to amplifying marginalized voices and exploring how art becomes a site for healing, memory, and resistance.



CHALLENGING RACISM & OPPRESSION

In addition to her teaching role as our current Audain Professor in the Department of Visual Arts, in February this year Lindsay Katsitsakatste Delaronde also took on a week-long artistic residency as part of UVic's Department of Art Education SSHRC-funded project, *Artistic Approaches to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression*. Led by professors Natasha Reid, Natalie LeBlanc and Michelle Wiebe, the project looked at how artists and university students could engage in transformative action in a campus gallery.

Inspired by Canada's 2019-2022 Anti-Racism Strategy calls for urgent and radical societal changes to expose, resist and transform racist and oppressive practices — while disrupting systems of nationhood built on colonialism, white supremacy and heteropatriarchy — the project draws on the power and potential of art and art education to stimulate empathic responses, critical consciousness, radical imagination and social transformation.

Delaronde was an ideal choice for this residency. A Kanienke'haka woman from Kahnawake (Quebec), she holds both an MFA and MA (Indigenous Communities Counseling Psychology) from UVic. Her

art projects intimately converse with the socio-political relationship to land, body, cosmos, identity, Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous feminisms to forge artistic pathways towards a liberatory existence for self-actualization and self-determination.

Her Art Education residency, titled *Walking Into Consciousness*, encouraged participants to unlock the power of art to open doors, expand consciousness and transform spaces of learning. "Making change on an institutional level is always a top-down approach, but my philosophy is around grassroots mobilization of new ideas that really surface from the community," says Delaronde, who also held a May 2025 residency *Reconstellation of the Village* at Kahnawake's KOR Art Centre.

"We're working with a generation of students who are more aware than we were 15 or 20 years ago. They're looking for anti-oppressive and anti-racist models, an increased sensitivity around cultural appropriation and a safe atmosphere of inclusivity and diversity that retains and encourages the rigor of learning how to talk about culture in good, productive, generative ways."



Lindsay Delaronde leading one of her residency workshops for UVic's Art Education department



Jeanette Armstrong (centre) with the UVic & En'owkin team who supported her Honorary Doctor of Letters

HONOURING EN'OWKIN FOUNDER JEANETTE ARMSTRONG

When Jeanette Armstrong was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters (DLitt) during UVic's November 2024 Convocation ceremonies, it was something of a homecoming for this multi-faceted Syilx Okanagan writer, visual artist, researcher, educator, leader and activist. Now an associate professor in Indigenous Studies and the coordinator of Interior Salishan Studies Centre at UBC Okanagan, Armstrong is also a member of the Royal Society of Canada and an Officer of the Order of Canada — but the last time she crossed UVic's convocation stage, it was back in 1978 to receive her Creative Writing BFA.

Armstrong has long been an influential advocate for Indigenous peoples' rights, and a force of change and widescale community impact through her artistic, research and educational vision. She was also one of our two alumni authors at 2023's inaugural *sx'wí?e'm* "To Tell A Story" Indigenous Writers & Storytellers Series, organized by Writing professor Gregory Scofield.

As a founder of the acclaimed En'owkin Centre — located on the traditional territory of the Syilx people in Penticton BC — Armstrong originally sought to provide Indigenous students with strong cultural and academic foundations for

success; now a registered private post-secondary institute and member of the Indigenous Adult & Higher Learning Association, the En'owkin Centre's International School of Writing has partnered with Fine Arts for over 40 years, helping to train two generations of Indigenous artists and writers — including the best-selling likes of UVic Writing alumni Eden Robinson and Richard Van Camp.

We are proud of our long and continuing partnership with En'owkin on their Foundations in Indigenous Fine Arts (FIFA) certificate, offered jointly by Fine Arts and UVic's Continuing Studies. Together, we nurture emerging creatives with an Indigenous worldview, exploring traditional and contemporary storytelling, performance, painting, sculpture and installation art.

Students studying at the En'owkin Centre are immersed in a rich cultural community of learners from diverse Indigenous nations from across North America, engaging with educators and artists like Gregory Scofield and Art History & Visual Studies professor Mique'l Dangeli. Academic studies are additionally supported by traditional practices such as seasonal feasts, ceremony and social gatherings.



FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Cara-Lyn Morgan grew up as a bit of a nomad, living at various times in Saskatchewan, Ontario and BC's Okanagan region. She originally moved to Victoria to attend Camosun College's criminal justice program and complete a criminology degree begun earlier at the University of Windsor.

But it turned out that Morgan was a poet at heart. UVic entered the picture as her Camosun program was wrapping up, when she decided to enroll as a Visual Arts student — initially only taking Writing courses on the side. “I had no plans other than four years of creating art and maybe writing a few things,” she recalls. “But I never even finished my Visual Arts degree because I was so taken by poetry.”

Morgan eventually earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2008, and her third poetry collection — 2024's *Building a Nest from the Bones of My People* — finds her weaving the various strands of her life into a powerful book fusing both sides of her cultural history: Indigenous (Métis) and immigrant (Trinidadian).

“I feel like poetry has to do with the human voice in all of us,” she says. “I realize now that I’ve been a poet my whole life, but I just never understood what poetry was until I took my first class [at UVic] — no one had ever told me it was about more than just making up little cute rhymes.”

Part of that love of the lyrical stemmed from the Writing department's poetic giants of the day: Lorna Crozier and Tim Lilburn, plus acclaimed alumni instructors Carla Funk and Steven Price. “My professors saw the value of my work and recognized that I had a fresh perspective,” Morgan recalls. “That made me realize there was a seat at the table for me as a poet. That faith really fueled my desire to put my work out in the world.”

Off-campus, her criminology background led to a job with the Canada Border Services Agency. “I wrote my first poetry collection in between ferries while sitting in the Victoria/US border booth — a lot of that work was actually written on those little declaration cards you get when you come across the border,” she chuckles.

Currently based in Toronto, Morgan still works for the Canada Border Services Agency (now in Indigenous affairs) — a position she holds thanks in part to some advice from Lorna Crozier.

“She basically told me that the idea of the starving poet is a myth, which freed me up to realize that a good, steady government job can actually be inspiring and offer the space and time and money to create work in a way that’s really free.”





Emily Armour with Pipe Major Roger McGuire of the Canadian Scottish Regiment

SOUNDS FOR SOLDIERS

When it comes to honouring veterans, many people wear a poppy on November 11 and then literally call it a day. School of Music grad Emily Armour created the Music for Veterans Project as a cross-generational way to honour those who have served. Armour's program involves sharing profiles of Canada's military with young musicians; the youth then create an original musical composition to honour that person.

"It's wonderful that we all unite and honour veterans in November, but it's important to have other moments throughout the year to make them feel special as well," Armour says.

Now in its fifth year, the Music for Veterans Project provides meaningful connections between Armour's students and Canadian veterans. Over 100 pieces have been written by students ranging in age from just five years old to 18. These works (which you can hear on her website) honour both deceased and living veterans, including those who still are on active duty or have served as reservists.

"What makes this project unique is that every piece is inspired by and dedicated to an individual person," she says.

Armour is a professional piano teacher who received both her Bachelor's (2012) and Master's (2017) from UVic. But it's her family's strong ties to the Canadian Armed Forces that inspired this project. "Not only was my husband in the military, but my grandmother served overseas during World War II. I've seen how important and valuable it is for veterans and people in the Armed Forces to have these moments of acknowledgment and positive recognition — but it's so amazing when it's coming from youth."

Averaging between one and four minutes long, each simple but evocative instrumental composition is inspired by a profile compiled by Armour. The age range of the veterans reflects Canada's involvement with international conflicts, from WWI to today's peacekeepers. The program has honoured two living centenarians and a 35-year-old Afghanistan veteran — with a century's worth of military service in-between.

As a veteran told Armour after hearing the piece composed for him, "You and your students have no idea how much this piece of music means to me, and I will use this gift to get me through some of the tougher days ahead."

2025 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Fine Arts was proud to see four outstanding graduates included among the 15 recipients of UVic's 2025 Distinguished Alumni Awards. This year's winners include (from left) Canadian-British composer **Cassandra Miller** (School of

Music, BMus 2005) and land-based artist-curator **Tania Willard** (Visual Arts, BFA 1998), both of whom earned the Presidents' Alumni Award; artist and Indigenous education specialist **Crystal Clark** (Visual Arts, BFA 2002), who received the Indigenous Community Alumni Award; and Emerging Alumni Award winner **Chari Arespacochaga** (Theatre, MFA 2015), a theatrical director and post-secondary educator. The awards were presented by UVic Chancellor Marion Buller at a gala event in March at the Victoria Conference Centre.



Theatre student Ava Harvey (centre) with donors Jacqueline Prowse & Tim Davidge



\$4.4M
Received
from donors



\$1.3M+
Awarded
to students



486
Overall
total donors



\$2.14M
Received from
estate gifts

CAREER WORKSHOPS FOR THEATRE

While the Department of Theatre is founded on creating industry-ready graduates, Fine Arts donors and UVic alumni Jacqueline Prowse and Tim Davidge realize that sometimes students need a hand up . . . just like puppets. And while their Oak Bay Puppet Collective charitable trust technically has nothing to do with actual puppets, they are dedicated to providing \$42,000 for a series of workshops to assist students with their career development.

As long-time Phoenix Theatre subscribers — they've been coming to our shows since 1993 — Prowse and Davidge are more than familiar with the creative accomplishments of our students, and hope this endowment will inspire and support the next generation of performers. "The kids here always work so hard and give so much," says Prowse, "so we wanted to support young people who are trying to get a start in theatre."

Davidge agrees. "We want to help them fulfill their dreams: it's a bit more of a linear procession if you're in the sciences or engineering, but the arts can be less straightforward . . . so we contacted a couple of alumni to ask how they thought we could make a meaningful contribution."

The first of these workshops was led by industry veteran (and frequent Phoenix director) Jacques Lemay, and attended by fourth-year student Ava Harvey.

"It was all about the business of theatre — the not-pretty-but-real stuff your acting professors don't tell you about . . . like how to get an agent, how to do your taxes," says Harvey, who is going into her fourth year and was seen in 2025's mainstage show *The Killing Game*. "Jacques has been working in this industry so long, he has so many stories about everything."

Harvey feels workshops like these can help supplement the broader topics covered in class. "We can't get into the nitty-gritty in class because not everyone is going into performance — some will go on to other things, like teaching — so this was a great chance to hear from someone who knows what you really have to do as an actor."

When it comes to future workshops, she'd love to see one with a musical theatre focus. "That's something we don't get taught here . . . but having someone do a one- or two-day intensive about how to audition for musical theatre — how to do a dance call, how to do a singing call — would be incredibly helpful!"

NEW COMPETITION PRIZE FOR MUSIC

Let's say it's 1912 and you're a young, musically inclined girl who enjoys whistling . . . but your father says it isn't "ladylike" to whistle: what do you do? If you're Eleanor Gray, you embrace the song in your heart and pursue singing lessons instead.

Fast-forward 113 years and that lifelong love of music has now become the foundation for the School of Music's new \$40,000 Eleanor Gray Memorial Piano & Voice Duo Competition Prize — an addition to the overall \$2 million bequest, created by donor Douglas Gray (LLB) to honour his mother.

Eleanor Gray was a talented pianist, singer and Royal (then Toronto) Conservatory of Music alumna who ensured that all five of her children were also part of the RCM piano program. A lifelong singer and pianist, Eleanor remarkably sang in a choir and played piano for church services up to the age of 100, stopping only before her passing at 101.

Beginning in the 2025/26 academic year and running through 2028, the Eleanor Gray Prize will be earmarked for School of Music students who take part in an annual art song competition for piano and voice, with cash prizes awarded for the duo winners in both first (\$1,500 each) and second place (\$1,000 each).

A portion of this bequest will also go towards the existing donor-funded Collaborative Piano Endowment, which ensures that our 63 Steinway pianos remain concert-ready — a huge benefit to our status as the only All-Steinway School in Canada, thanks to the efforts of critically acclaimed pianist and professor Arthur Rowe. "Maintaining our excellent instruments is crucial, so these funds will help ensure the longevity and excellence of our Steinways," says Rowe.



Music professor Marion Newman leading a voice recital

A piano and voice competition prize is ideal for our School of Music, given the enviable reputation of our Voice program — anchored by the likes of tenor Benjamin Butterfield, soprano Anne Grimm, mezzo-soprano Marion Newman and acclaimed vocal coach Kinza Tyrrell, plus an ever-increasing number of alumni stars like Isaiah Bell, Josh Lovell and Newman herself.

Had Eleanor Gray been a student a century later, her infectious enthusiasm, intellect and energy would have made her an ideal student at our School of Music. Given her deep appreciation for piano and voice duets, as well as her encouraging attitude and natural caring and warmth for others, we're sure Eleanor would appreciate this new competition prize.

A longtime resident of Victoria who truly loved life and lived it to the fullest, Eleanor was always young at heart and was full of joy. She now rests in Ross Bay Cemetery, ensuring her spirit remains close to the city she so loved.



Sohee Hong (left) & Mary Jane Laronde at work

VISUAL ARTS FUNDING CHANGES LIVES

While reasons for giving are as myriad as donors themselves, the most heartfelt gifts seem to be the ones that best reflect the interests and passions of their namesakes. Consider Alan Steven John, a creative soul who feared of being a “starving artist” in post-war England and so worked his way through a diploma in graphic arts before moving to Canada and starting his own advertising and design firm in the 1980s.

After retirement and before his untimely early passing, Alan expressed a desire to change the life of someone he had never met, paving the way for the Alan John Foundation for Fine Arts. Thanks to his partner, donor Marilyn Johnson, the \$162,000 Alan Steven John Award provides three annual awards to second-year Visual Arts undergrads who, like Alan, have an interest in painting and sculpture.

One of the most recent recipients of Alan’s generosity is Mary-Jane Laronde, who is enjoying the opportunity of getting hands-on in her sculptural classes: two of her pieces were recently featured in the student exhibit *Continuum*, part of the international Indigenous conference *Across Lands and Waters* held in the Visual Arts department in May 2025.

“I selected UVic because all my high school mentors had attended this university,” says Laronde. “After graduation, I would like to go

back to my hometown of Salmon Arm to teach art at the local high school . . . I hope to inspire the next generation of artists just like how this award is inspiring me to keep pushing my limits and achieve my greatest dreams.”

Sohee Hong is another recent recipient of this award. A budding filmmaker, Hong chose to explore visual arts because she felt it “would expand my knowledge and skill-set to become well-rounded with knowledge of all departments — whether that is props, writing, set design, construction, graphic design, and audio or light technician.”

As with all of our students who receive donor funding, Hong says she is “very honoured and thankful to receive this generous scholarship that will make a great impact on my life and support me in my studies.”

Second-year student Lina Yang was grateful to receive this funding for her studies in Visual Arts & Computer Science — one of our most popular and increasingly in-demand programs.

“Beyond easing the financial burden, this award holds deep meaning for me,” she says. “It represents not only your belief in my potential but also the opportunity to fully pursue my passion for merging contemporary art and technology.”

TEACHING, QUESTIONING AND LEARNING

When the final curtain came down on the life of legendary Applied Theatre Professor Emeritus Juliana Saxton in December 2024, she left behind a legacy of alumni whose lives and careers had been impacted by her work — but she also made a point of planning for the future success of students she would never know.

Thanks to a \$100,000 gift to the Department of Theatre's Kirby Special Projects Fund, Juliana's influence will continue to shape the future of drama in education at UVic.

"A fierce advocate of pedagogy and learning, Juliana was committed to the Department of Theatre and its students," says Theatre chair Yasmine Kandil. "She attended every symposium, performance, presentation and class she was invited to and loved to speak with those presenting the work after the event. She has entrusted the Department with funds to ensure that students can pursue their dreams for furthering their knowledge and application of Applied Theatre practice and scholarship, and to receive the mentorship and support they need from faculty and instructors at UVic and beyond."

Together with her writing partners, Juliana published 10 books, among them *Applied Theatre: International Case Studies and Challenges for Practice*, *Asking Better Questions*, *Into the Story* and — in what could be the title of the autobiography she never wrote — *Teaching, Questioning and Learning*.

A person of great pride and dignity, Juliana was always passionate and curious about her work, and continued writing literally until the week of her death. Her insights into the importance of drama in education and citizenship have never been more urgent.



She was also a longtime board member of both the University of Victoria Retirees Association and the Victoria Visual Arts Legacy Society, proving her commitment to learners on all sides of the educational spectrum, and was honoured with a special citation for her service as a UVic Orator. ("Her enunciation, her poise and her wit as Orator are unrivaled by any of the rest of us who might somehow deem ourselves qualified to stand here and present laudatory comments," noted UVic History professor Andrew Rippin in his 2014 presentation.)

Juliana's gift to the Kirby Fund ensures we continue to celebrate Theatre and its achievements. "Given how much she devoted herself to the education of her students, these funds will go towards Applied Theatre students pursuing projects, travel, field trips, community-based initiatives and any endeavors that advance their learning and passion for the field," says Kandil.

As an indicator of the high regard Juliana was held, she was also honoured posthumously as part of the 2025 International Drama in Educational Research Institute conference in Vancouver.



353
Fine Arts
students who
received awards



464
Awards available
for undergraduate
students



121
Awards available
for graduate
students



3
New Fine Arts
awards created



Music grad Daniel Lapp launches new record label Woodbox Records to preserve historic fiddle music



Theatre grad Chris Wilson as Justin Trudeau on *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* (where he also plays Pierre Polievre!)



Theatre grad & comedy sensation Laura Ramoso opens for *Saturday Night Live* legends Tina Fey & Amy Poehler



Music grad Tobin Stokes co-created *If You Could Read My Mind*, the Belfry Theatre's 2025 smash hit



Professor Mo Bradley & Writing grad Chen Wang as his film *Aisha's Story* opens both DOXA & Hot Docs festivals

THIS YEAR'S
ALUMNI
ALL-STARS!



Theatre grad Amiel Gladstone is now Director of Theatre Arts at the Banff Centre



RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars winner Jimbo picked Theatre grad Britt Small to direct his 2025 world tour



Writing grad Kyeren Regeher is the City of Victoria's new Poet Laureate



Writing grad Mark Leiren-Young (right, with lead actor Saul Rubinek) at his Toronto smash hit, *Playing Shylock*



Distinguished Visual Arts Alumni Tania Willard, Rose Spanan & Crystal Cook with Dean Allana Lindgren



THE ARTS REMAIN ECONOMICALLY VIBRANT

As the political landscape continues to fragment, many in the arts sector feel it's time to stop talking about an "arts crisis" and stress Canada's cultural impact story instead: \$60 billion in annual GDP contributions and 850,000 jobs nation-wide, with \$24.5 billion in cultural exports creating an enviable legacy as global ambassadors.

This was the message shared by Canada Council for the Arts Director and CEO Michelle Chawla during her two-day visit to Fine Arts in March 2025, where she met with faculty, students and local arts leaders, and attended some of our student performances.

"We're not doing this alone: we're part of a dynamic arts ecosystem . . . universities are an important part of this world," Chawla said while in conversation with Visual Arts chair Megan Dickie (above). "We need to tell the story of what the arts bring to our communities and why that matters. Every sector struggles, so instead of telling the instability story, we need to focus on impact stories."

UVic is an essential part of that story: home to BC's only stand-alone fine arts faculty, we're busy training the next generation of arts practitioners, cultural leaders and creative researchers, and equipping them with the skills and knowledge to succeed in an ever-challenging world.

According to a 2024 Hill Strategies study, one in every 12 workers has a cultural occupation in Victoria. That's nearly 5,000 people working in the arts, culture and heritage sector — including 1,300 professional artists and over 300 arts leaders — which accounts for 8.5%

of the 56,800 people in the local labour force: a much higher percentage than both the provincial average (5.4%) and the national average (4.4%). Expand that across the Capital Regional District, and the number of arts workers doubles to over 10,000, generating \$800 million GDP activity annually.

But those are just the numbers. Not only does engagement with the arts reduce stress, the World Health Organization has found the arts play a major role in preventing, managing and treating illnesses, as well as promoting health and well-being. That means the overall health of Canadians is strongly linked to their participation in arts, culture and heritage activities. And, significantly, arts and cultural education improves students' academic performance.

It's also been proven that cultural participation boosts civic engagement, democracy and social cohesion, giving people who participate in the arts a stronger sense of belonging. Given the current economic and political uncertainty, there's never been a more important time to highlight the impact and relevance of Canada's diverse and vibrant arts scene.

Here at the Faculty of Fine Arts, we are proud to welcome over 20,000 people a year to campus to engage with our 300+ cultural and scholarly offerings — making us UVic's largest and most consistent academic unit for public engagement.

Keep up on our public events by subscribing to our monthly e-news at finecomm@uvic.ca



A scene from Newworld Theatre's *Eyes of the Beast*, the Climate Disaster Project's award-winning play which had its world premiere at Phoenix Theatre in 2024