



ARTS COUNCIL
WOOD BUFFALO

PROGRAMS REPORT

2023

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2023

AT A GLANCE



179 artists recruited throughout 2023's programming



3750 participants in 2023 programming.



Over \$117,000.00 paid out to artists through ACWB programming



14 organization collaborations on various programs and projects in 2023



Arts Council Wood Buffalo offers a variety of programs that build the capacity of local artists to compete and thrive, enabled by collaborations between artists, arts organizations, non-profits and industry, and through municipal, provincial and federal advocacy for our region's arts community.

As we reflect on a dynamic and successful year of programs, we are elated to share the impacts that our initiatives have had on artists and our community. Arts Council Wood Buffalo looks forward to building on this momentum and uniting through the arts in the coming years.

OVERVIEW



SENIORS & THE ARTS

Arts Council Wood Buffalo and St. Aidan's Society have been partners since 2020 in bringing arts-related programming to Seniors and Elders in the Wood Buffalo region.



The Arts in Action subprogram was launched in April 2022, with the goal of engaging seniors through a set of in-person arts-based workshops of varying disciplines. This program continued throughout 2023 bringing together Senior and Elder attendees aged 60 and up in a creative and connective way. Facilitators ranged from local seniors, local youth and other community members.

Program Goals	Arts Council Strategic Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased awareness of the value that seniors bring to our community; combatting ageism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The arts community has resources needed to thrive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased opportunities for seniors to engage in a program with artists and youth; intergenerational mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The arts community has resources needed to thrive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging youth in paid arts-based opportunities shows youth and parents there is value in pursuing a career in the arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACWB sets the standard for how the arts are valued in our region.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to pay artists for their work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACWB empowers individuals and organizations to produce arts in our region.



2023 ARTS IN ACTION: BY THE NUMBERS



23 workshops hosted through the 2023 edition of Arts in Action



71 unique participants (179 total) attended workshops through the 2023 edition of Arts in Action.



20 artists hired to facilitate workshops through the 2023 edition of Arts in Action

98%

of participants reported improved personal engagement as a result of Arts in Action

98%

of participants reported improved social relationships as a result of Arts in Action

81%

of participants reported improved meaning and purpose as a result of Arts in Action



Arts in Action - Soapstone Workshop



1 artist
hired



15 seniors
in attendance

Instructor Shawn McClure guided workshop participants in mastering the fundamentals of working with soapstone. Attendees were presented with two choices: they could either craft their own designs using supplied soapstone chunks, or they could personalize pre-cut pieces featuring various animals and objects during the workshop. Each attendee took home a one-of-a-kind soapstone creation.



OCT
25
TO
NOV
1

Arts in Action - Woodworking Workshop

Led by Dave Hynes of Hynes Woodworking, this workshop allowed individuals to express their creativity by transforming raw materials into a functional and decorative storage box. During the process, participants had the opportunity to learn how to use tools such as bandsaws, table saws, and sandblasters. Seniors completed the workshops with a sense of pride, completion of a specific project and valuable skills.



2 artists
hired



10 seniors
in attendance

MAY
04
TO
MAY
18



Arts in Action - Mini Mittens Workshop



2 artists
hired



19 seniors
in attendance

During this workshop with Treasure Cooper, participants created and designed their own mini mittens through beading and stitching techniques. The beading teachings allowed the seniors to add a wonderful artistic dimension to their mini mittens while the sewing allowed them to ensure a long life for their creations. There were many added optional elements of designs such as snowflakes and tiny flowers creating a sense of personalization for each attendee.



SEPT
14
TO
SEPT
21

Arts in Action - Mixed Media/Water Color Workshop

During this workshop, Seniors created a mixed media landscape painting. Seniors were exposed to different elements and principles of design with a focus on value, colour, line, shape, balance, and unity. Participants not only produced a beautiful mixed media landscape painting but gained insights into the foundational aspects of visual art.



2 artists
hired



20 seniors
in attendance

**FEB
09
TO
MAR
09**



Arts in Action - Tea Bag Texture Art Workshop



2 artists
hired



22 seniors
in attendance

In the first workshop, participants were guided through the art of crafting textured paintings using acrylic paints, led by our skilled instructor, Hira Noor. This acquainted attendees with the intricacies of working with acrylics and provided hands-on experience in techniques to achieve captivating textures. In the second workshop, participants explored crafting personalized tea bag cards. This unique endeavour involved the use of dehydrated tea bags and watercolors to bring their cards to life, resulting in individualized and visually striking creations.



**OCT
4
TO
OCT
11**

Arts in Action - Theatre Workshop

This workshop was hosted under the guidance of Theatre; Just Because. Centered on "Introduction to Theatrical Creation," this series explored various facets of theatre and performing arts, aiming to cultivate improvisational skills, scriptwork, and ensemble dynamics. The intention was to offer participants an opportunity to delve into the world of theatre in a playful and explorational way that resonates with their experiences and fosters a sense of creativity and community.



3 artists
hired



7 seniors
in attendance

**JAN
20
TO
FEB
03**



Arts in Action - Mindfulness Workshop



2 artists
hired



20 seniors
in attendance

In this workshop, seniors delved into the significance of mental health during their golden years. The session provided insights into the importance of mindfulness and introduced techniques for guided meditation, offering valuable tools for promoting mental well-being. Additionally, participants engaged in discussions on addressing loneliness, and sharing strategies to cope with and overcome this common challenge. The workshop raised awareness about mental health and equipped seniors with practical approaches to enhance mindfulness to foster a supportive and holistic approach to aging.



**MAR
24
TO
APR
18**

Arts in Action - Photography Workshop

Participants in this workshop had the opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of their cameras. Instructor Allan Reeve skillfully guided them through the intricacies of capturing various shots and navigating different camera settings. The practical aspect of the session unfolded as participants explored Lions Park, using their newfound knowledge to photograph the surrounding nature. Allan assisted participants in capturing the best possible shots, ensuring a hands-on and enriching experience in honing their photography skills.



1 artists
hired



12 seniors
in attendance

SEPT
06



2 artists
hired



22 seniors
in attendance

Arts in Action - Painting Workshop

During these workshops with visual artist, Chris Finn, participants crafted two distinct art pieces to bring home. In the initial session, attendees painted a picture of ostriches using acrylics, bringing the elegant birds to life on canvas. In the subsequent workshop, participants engaged in the festive spirit by creating Christmas trees. This involved using paint, light bulbs, and beads to craft unique and personalized Christmas tree decorations.



NOV
14
TO
NOV
24

Arts in Action - Christmas Card Workshop

In this workshop, attendees crafted Christmas cards by utilizing watercolor paint, markers, and sharpies. As a result of their creative efforts, participants departed with a set of 10 uniquely designed Christmas cards to share with others during the holiday season.



NOV
29



Arts in Action - Bookbinding Workshop

Under the skillful direction of Ashley Makey, attendees gained a foundational understanding of bookbinding, encompassing the process of crafting signatures (paper stacks forming the text-block or body of the book) and sewing these signatures into the book cover. Upon concluding the workshop, participants left with two personally crafted and adorned books.



DEC
01

“

I have been involved with Arts Council Wood Buffalo for about 6 years and have **learned many new things** as a result. This past couple of months have really been an **eye opener**. Through Arts Council, in cooperation with The St. Aidan's Society, I conducted an Introduction to Photography Workshop. We had an enthusiastic group who stayed involved as we went outside to take photos of whatever they saw and as a result we saw some truly artistic photos. The photos were judged by members of the St. Aidan's councillors.

I took a two day seminar on Soapstone carving which was conducted through (Seniors & The Arts) Arts in Action. The instructor was brought in for these classes as the result of meetings with Byron Gard. **I will be happy to stay involved with Arts Council Wood Buffalo because of the great team atmosphere that I so enjoy.**

”

Alan Reeve
Teaching Artist & Senior
Seniors & the Arts 2023



ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



Goals	ACWB Strategic Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CREATION – Support incoming artist in the creation of new work, inspired by their time spent in the Wood Buffalo region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arts community has resources needed to thrive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MENTORSHIP – Further develop local artists' growth through mentorship opportunities that the Artist in Residence can provide (i.e. workshops). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arts are recognized as essential in creating a balanced community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INNOVATION – To inspire innovation for local and non-local artists, through exposure to new perspectives, artistic ideas and techniques that the Artist in Residence can bring to our region and can learn from. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arts community has resources needed to thrive. • Arts Council Wood Buffalo is an influential voice for the arts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWARENESS – Bring awareness of Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo among non-local artists, motivating creative reflective and artistic production, inspired by our unique region and its people, landscape, infrastructure, culture and heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arts are recognized as essential in creating a balanced community. • Arts Council Wood Buffalo is an influential voice for the arts.

The Artist in Residence (AiR) program follows the traditional residency model, in which local or non-local professional artists spend time creating work inspired by the environment, culture, and people of Wood Buffalo.

The Suncor Indigenous Artist Program endeavours to make the program more equitable and accessible for Indigenous artists. Both streams run concurrently, offering broader learning and collaboration opportunities.

The Resident Artists engage with the community in a variety of ways, showcase their work through a final event and, most importantly, spend time mentoring a select group of emerging, established and professional artists from our region. The program is open to artists in any discipline.

Each residency lasts 3-4 weeks, with Arts Council providing accommodation, creation space, administrative support, consultative services and financial support.



LOUISE CASEMORE



Photo provided by Louise Casmore

Louise is based in Alberta on Treaty 6 and Treaty 7 territory. She is a playwright, researcher, and arts advocate. Specializing in new play development, immersive/participatory storytelling, and HR mechanisms within the performing arts sector.

Her work in Wood Buffalo was focused on crafting site-specific theatre experiences and learning how to navigate the unique challenges of providing and receiving feedback within the specialized genre of theatre. These workshops empowered participants to refine their artistic vision collaboratively, leading to richer, more impactful immersive theatre experiences.

DANIELLE PIPER

Danielle Piper is a interdisciplinary visual artist and lifelong resident of Mohkinst'sis. She is a band member of Cold Lake First Nations and is of nehiyaw, Métis, and denesuline ancestry.

During her time in Wood Buffalo, Danielle worked on fibre art portraits of her ancestors and facilitated a fibre landscape art workshop and a fish scale art workshop to the community.



Photo provided by Danielle Piper

JUNE
14
& 20



8 local artists in attendance



Participating artists left with **site-specific theatre skills, and techniques for giving and receiving feedback.**

LET'S GET CRITICAL - LET'S GET WEIRD WORKSHOPS



Louise hosted two workshops during her time in Wood Buffalo. Both were held in Fort McMurray at our local theatre and dance studios. Participating artists got to hop into the driver's seat of reviewing written material, learning the ins and outs of what makes for effective critique. They were given tools for analysis that can be helpful for creators wanting to approach both their reading and writing with more thought and compassion.



JUNE
16 &
21



26 local artists in attendance



Danielle was invited to **spend time in Fort Chipewyan** while visiting. Sadly, due to the wild fires and evacuations, this wasn't a possibility.

MINI FIBRE ART LANDSCAPE - FISH SCALE ART WORKSHOPS



During her time on Treaty 8, Danielle hosted two workshops. Participants were guided through a series teachings in Anzac and Fort McMurray. Using materials such as hide, caribou hair, fish scales, and the artistic disciplines of beading and sewing, participants each created their own unique piece to take home.



Photography By Emma Carter





“

During my residency,
I felt truly **embraced and welcomed**
by the Arts Council Wood Buffalo
team and the community they
serve.

I am so grateful for the time spent
making, connecting, travelling and
learning in a place that was new to
me, but now occupies a soft spot in
my heart.

Kinanaskomitin!

”

Danielle Piper
Resident Artist
Artist in Residence 2023

Photo of Danielle Piper by Emma Carter

“

My time as
Artist In Residence was a **gift!**
Having the space, resources, and
support to create
was wonderful, and being able to
connect deeply with the
community was truly inspiring.

”

Louise Casemore
Resident Artist
Artist in Residence 2023

BUFFYS 2023



The Buffys, also known as the Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards, is an annual program that recognizes and celebrates excellence in various areas of the arts and builds awareness of the incredible contribution artists make to Wood Buffalo. The Buffys invest in the future of our growing arts community by supporting our most exceptional artists through appreciation and employment opportunities, and by connecting artists to the wider community.

Goals	Arts Council Strategic Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise artist's profiles and engage Wood Buffalo residents with the arts in our region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council Wood Buffalo is an influential voice for the arts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect Artists to each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts community has resources needed to thrive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate artists' value in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts are recognized as essential in creating a balanced community



THEME SELECTION

Every year, Arts Council selects a theme for the Arts Awards in an effort to educate the public on the different arts movements of the past, as well as to establish a visual language for the Awards Showcase itself. This year's theme was voted on by Buffys 2022 attendees and revealed at the end of the event!

This year's theme was....



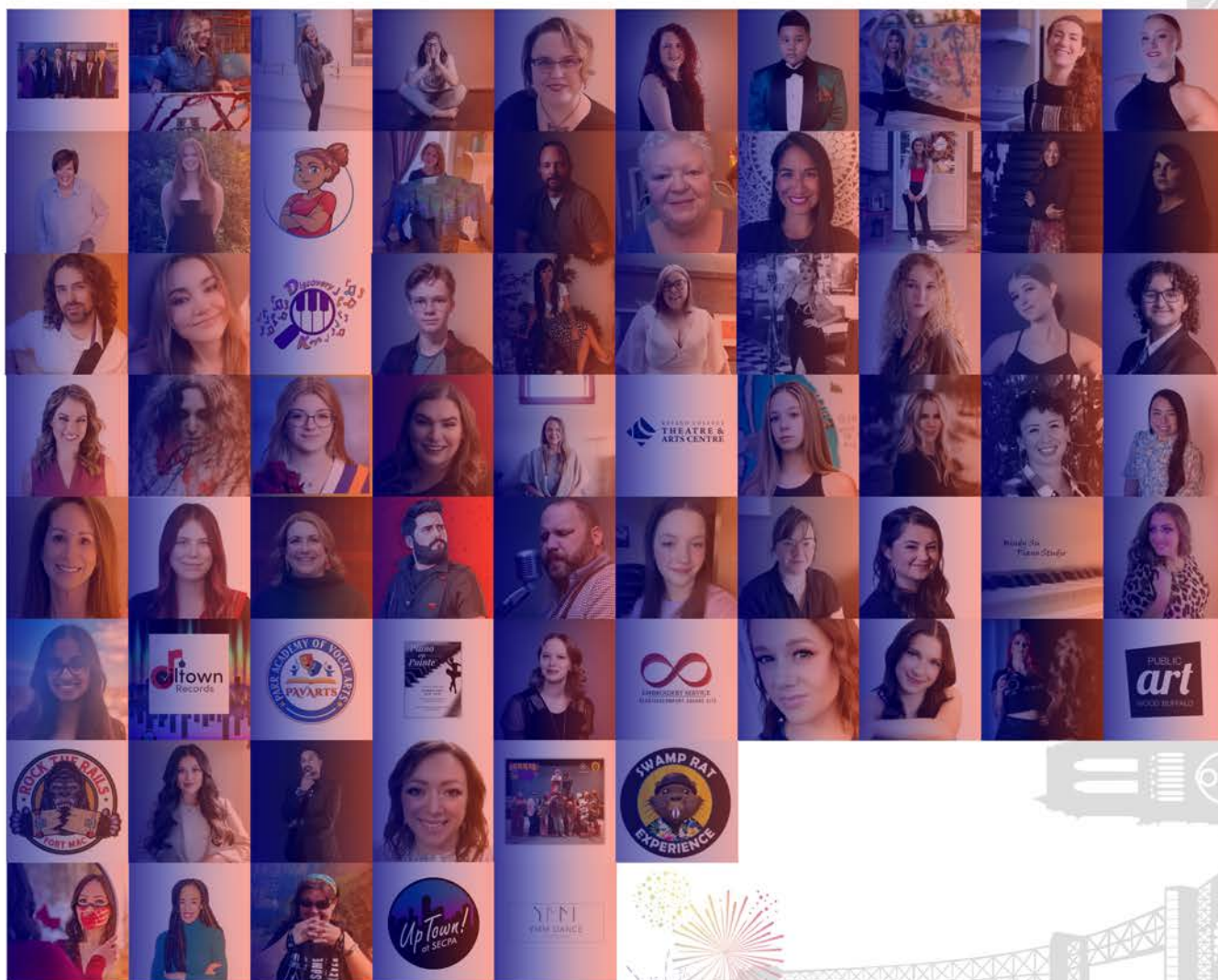
Glamour, extravagance, romance, and the wild bohemian spirit come together to create the enchanting and captivating world of the Moulin Rouge.

A world-famous cabaret and entertainment venue located in the historic Montmartre district of Paris, The Moulin Rouge was first opened in 1889. Since then, it has become a cultural icon and a symbol of artistic expression. The Moulin Rouge is renowned for its extravagant cabaret shows featuring can-can dancers, singers, acrobats, and magicians. It also served as the backdrop for Baz Luhrmann's Academy Award winning film, *Moulin Rouge!*

Buffys 2023 channeled this iconic venue with the theme, Midnight at the Moulin Rouge. The audience was transported to Paris and dazzled by world-class performances, breathtaking decor, and an unforgettable atmosphere.

*"the greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love
and be loved in return."*

-MOULIN ROUGE! (2001)



Nomination Statistics



NOMINATIONS

Arts Administration	13
Arts Education	32
Craft	19
Creative Collaboration	06
Dance	38
Indigenous Arts	09
Literary Arts	07
Performing Arts	17
Media Arts	09
Music	16
Rising Star	30
Visual Arts	18
TOTAL	214



COMPLETED ENTRIES

Arts Administration	05
Arts Education	11
Craft	06
Creative Collaboration	05
Dance	09
Indigenous Arts	03
Literary Arts	05
Performing Arts	07
Media Arts	03
Music	05
Rising Star	11
Visual Arts	10
TOTAL	80

ARTIST HIRES

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR:
NILS HOGNESTAD

SET DESIGN:
KARLIE CHRISTIE

HOSTS:
BILLI GOLD
STELLA L'AMOUR

ARTIST SHORTLIST VIDEOS:
NEVILLE VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

**ARTS CHAMPION &
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT VIDEOS:**
MATT LORENZ PRODUCTIONS

THEME REVEAL VIDEOS:
HEXWAVE MEDIA

DRONE VIDEOGRAPHY:
MIGUEL'S DRONE STUFF

PERFORMERS:
BENTLEY PENN
GENERATION DANCE PRODUCTIONS
NILS HOGNESTAD
XACH EDWARD & MEGHAN WHITMORE
WARRIOR SOCIETY
UPTOWN! DANCE
MKD THE SPACE

HOUSE BAND:
A TOUCH OF CLASS

SEAMSTRESS:
SHARON HEADING

PROMOTIONAL PHOTOS:
RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT:
WOOD BUFFALO MEDIA GROUP



AWARD RECIPIENTS

ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Public Art Wood Buffalo

ARTS CHAMPION

Erica Moeskau

ARTS EDUCATION

Brooke McMillan

CRAFT

Meagan Magson, Small Pals Felting

CREATIVE COLLABORATION

The MMIWG2S Awareness Project

DANCE

Nishka Rai

INDIGENOUS ARTIST

Melinda Richter

LITERARY ARTS

Dene Plews

MEDIA ARTS

Madilyn Hite

KEN FLAHERTY MUSIC

Mychela

PERFORMING ARTS

Faith Kippenhuck

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Alan Roberts

RISING STAR

RhiAnna Albrecht

VISUAL ARTS

Ashley Laurenson



AWARDS CREATION

Each year, Arts Council Wood Buffalo puts out a call for artists interested in creating bespoke works of art to serve as the physical awards at the Buffys.

The 2023 Buffy Awards were created by Stacey Grant, Métis multi-disciplinary artist and beadworker. Each award is a unique beadwork medallion, made using traditional techniques. Utilizing her botanical knowledge, Stacey created floral motifs inspired by the award categories. Each finished medallion is about two inches in diameter, with a beaded edge and hide backing. Each award was proudly bestowed upon the award recipients by Métis Elder, Marlene Cardinal.





“

The amount of love and time that goes into beadwork, the amount of spirit, of connection between the artist, the medicine, and the recipient is keystone to what the original meeting place of Nistawayaw was - 'where the three rivers meet.' Where knowledge, goods, love, and laughter were **shared for generations** in one form, and now, in another entirely.

The medicine of beadwork in its entirety is a test of **patience, meditation, and love**. You leave everything negative at the door, you send it up with sage: to hold onto it while you bead is to stitch those thoughts and energy into it for eternity, an omen which the person gifted will feel

It's a lesson on creating with love and patience, and for another to receive and benefit from as a medicine in the purest form. To me, that's what art is. **Art is medicine. Art is healing. Art is honouring the garden in which we are so fortunate to nurture.**

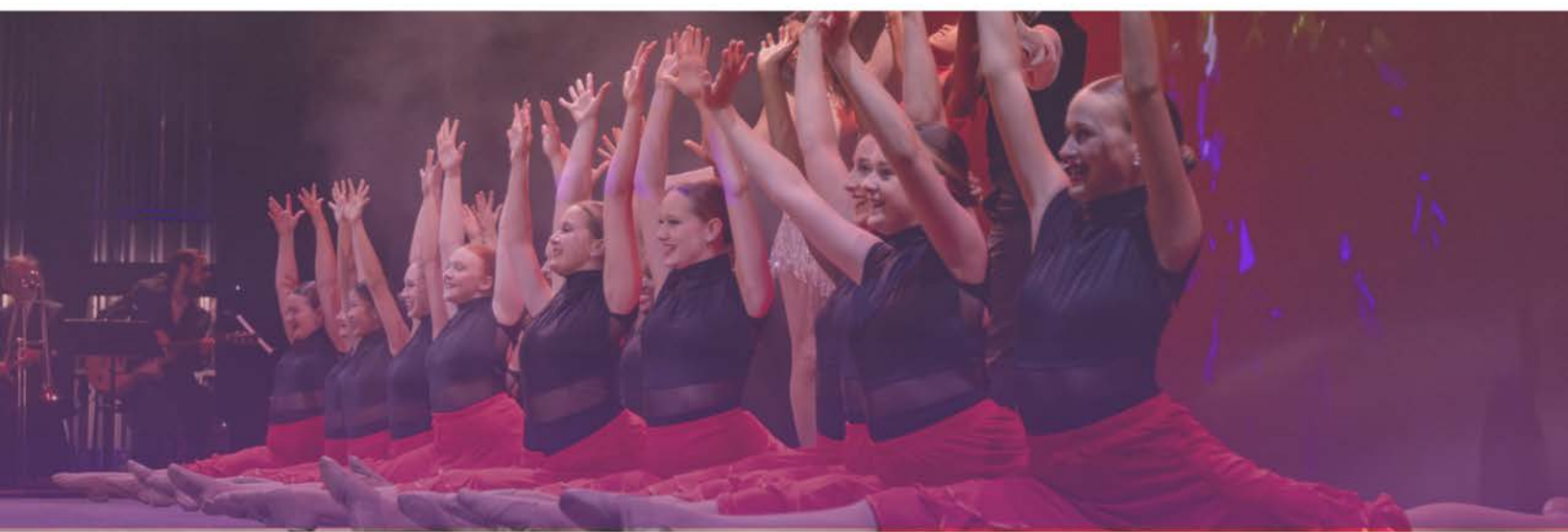
”

Stacey Grant
Awards Creation Artist
Buffys 2023

THE ADJUDICATION PROCESS

The 2023 Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards adjudicators were chosen and hired based on their expertise in each category to ensure that the adjudication was credible and unbiased. Our adjudication panel consisted of local, national, and international experts.

Each category was reviewed by three subject experts and the nominees were scored according to individual category rubrics. The three nominees who received the highest scores in each category were named the Shortlisted Nominees. The Nominee who scored the highest of those shortlisted was deemed the recipient of the award in their respective category.



THE ADJUDICATORS



Katie Tupper
Keiran Bohay
Loraine Humphrey
Louise Casemore
Marita Dachsel
Michael Mankowski
Molly Allen
Roxanne Dicke
Scott Meller
Sheri Donovan
Steve Reeve
Tyler Whelan



Ashley Brockway
Brandon Mitchell
Brittany Davies
Carli Erin Boisjolie
Cat Sivertsen
Colin Funk
Colin Wolf
Dave Hynes
Georgia Tooke
Jasmine Piper
Jason Beck
Jennifer Lynch
Jonathan Gunaseelan

“ Thank you Arts Council
Wood Buffalo for
highlighting local artistry
and promoting our region’s
local artists. I started
practicing performance art
in 2018 and since then I have
had the privilege and
honour to work with local
theatre organizations as
well as independent artists
showcasing their talent and
medium and overall
enthusiasm for
entertainment. Hosting
Buffys 2023 was the
highlight of my performance
career thus far, as well as
the most challenging role. I
am forever grateful for
being a part of Midnight at
the Moulin Rouge.
Thank you again. ”

Brandon
“Stella l’Amour”
Folmer
Performer & Host
Buffys 2023

*Photo of Stella L’Amour
by Outside Optix*



BUFFYS 2023: BY THE NUMBERS



Photo of Warrior Society by Outside Optix



57 artists hired towards the creation of Buffys 2023



80 completed nomination entries submitted through Awards Force



\$44,611.00 paid out to artists for the creation of Buffys 2023



190 in-person attendees.

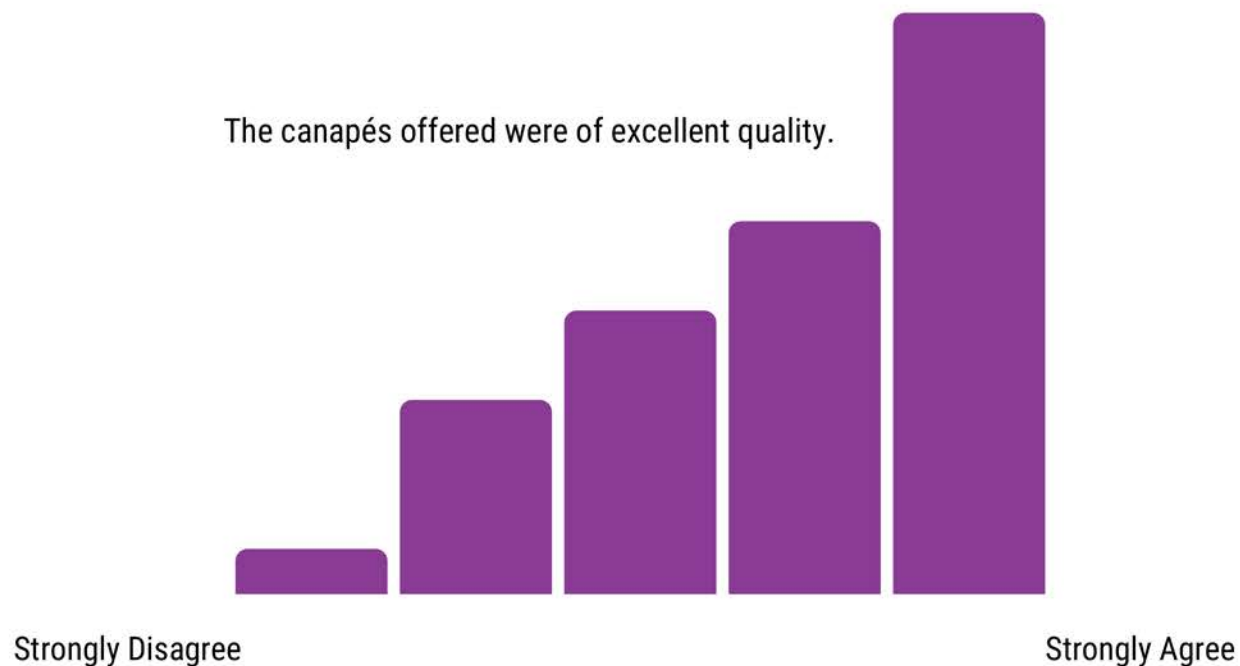
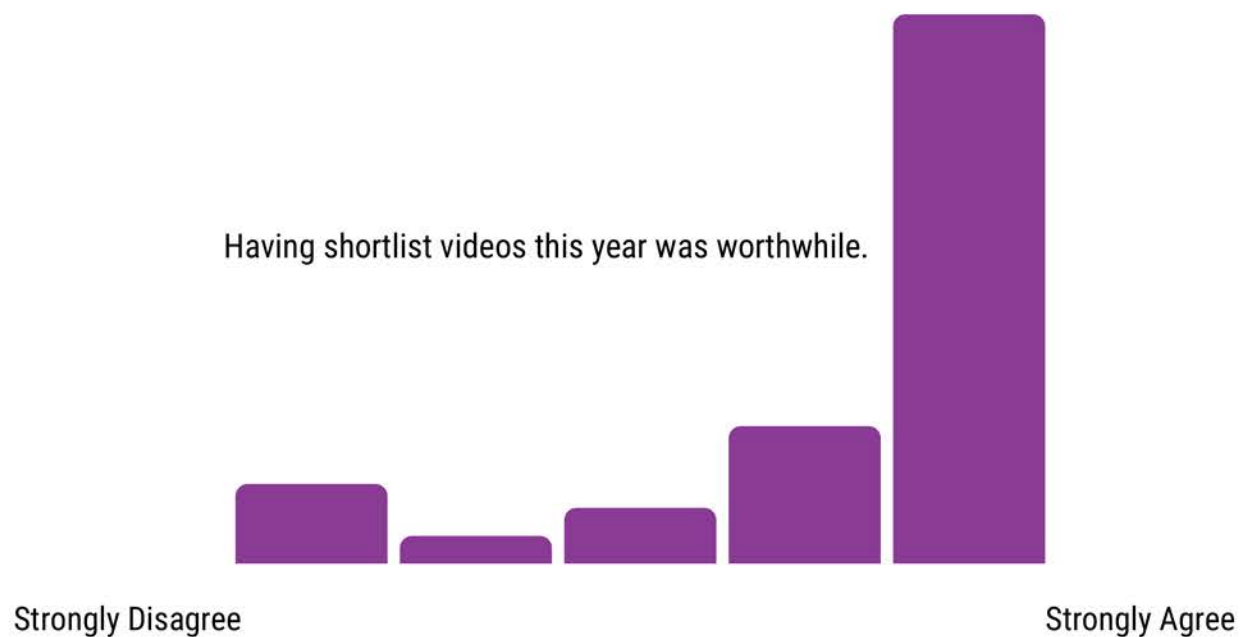


214 artist-nominees



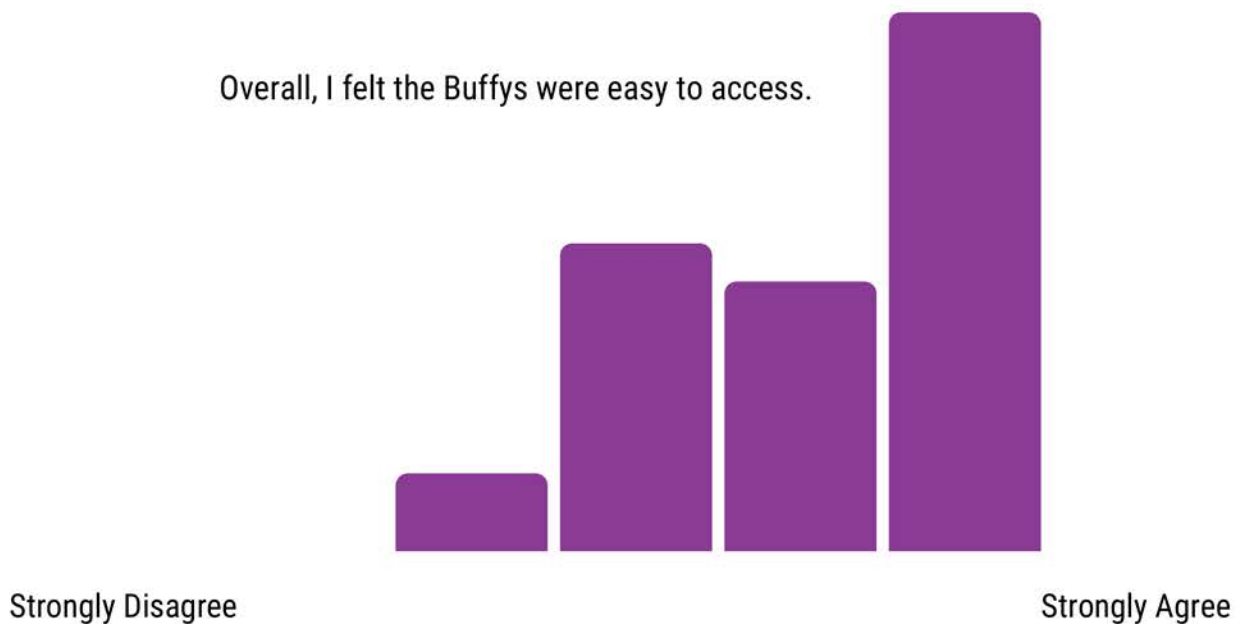
25 adjudicators hired

BUFFYS 2023: SURVEY RESULTS



BUFFYS 2023: SURVEY RESULTS

Overall, I felt the Buffys were easy to access.



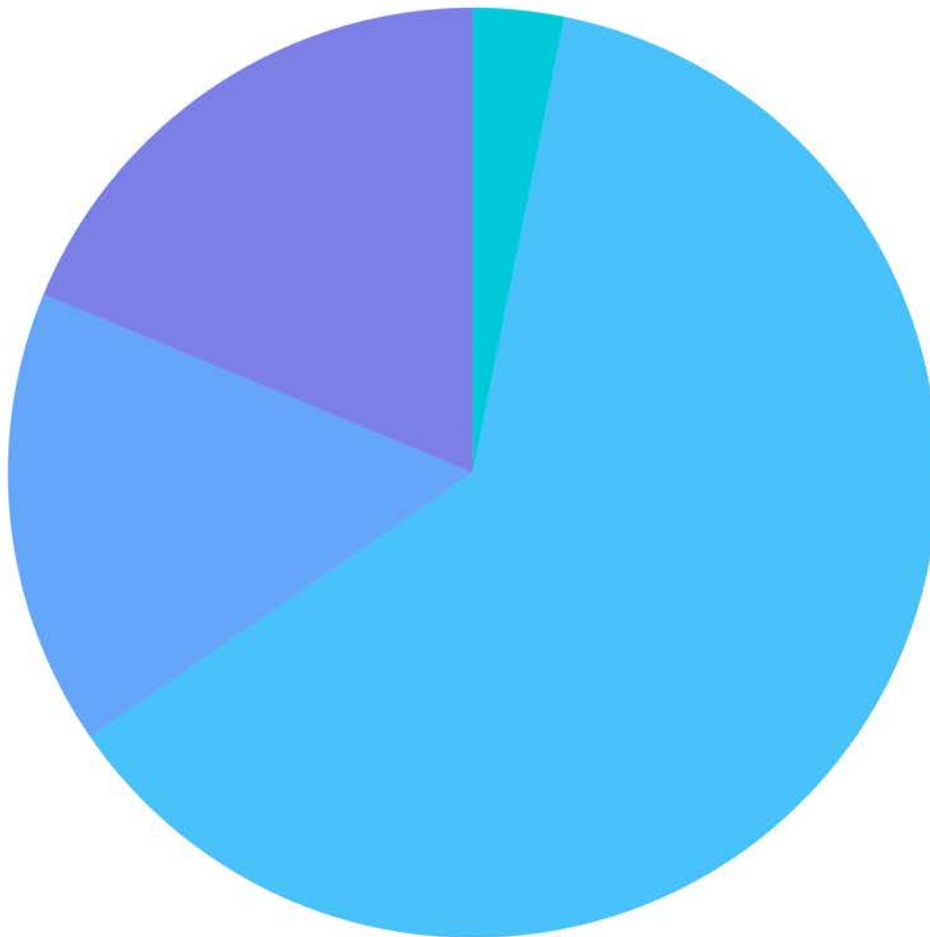
I felt the experience was a good value overall for the ticket price.



BUFFYS 2023: SURVEY RESULTS

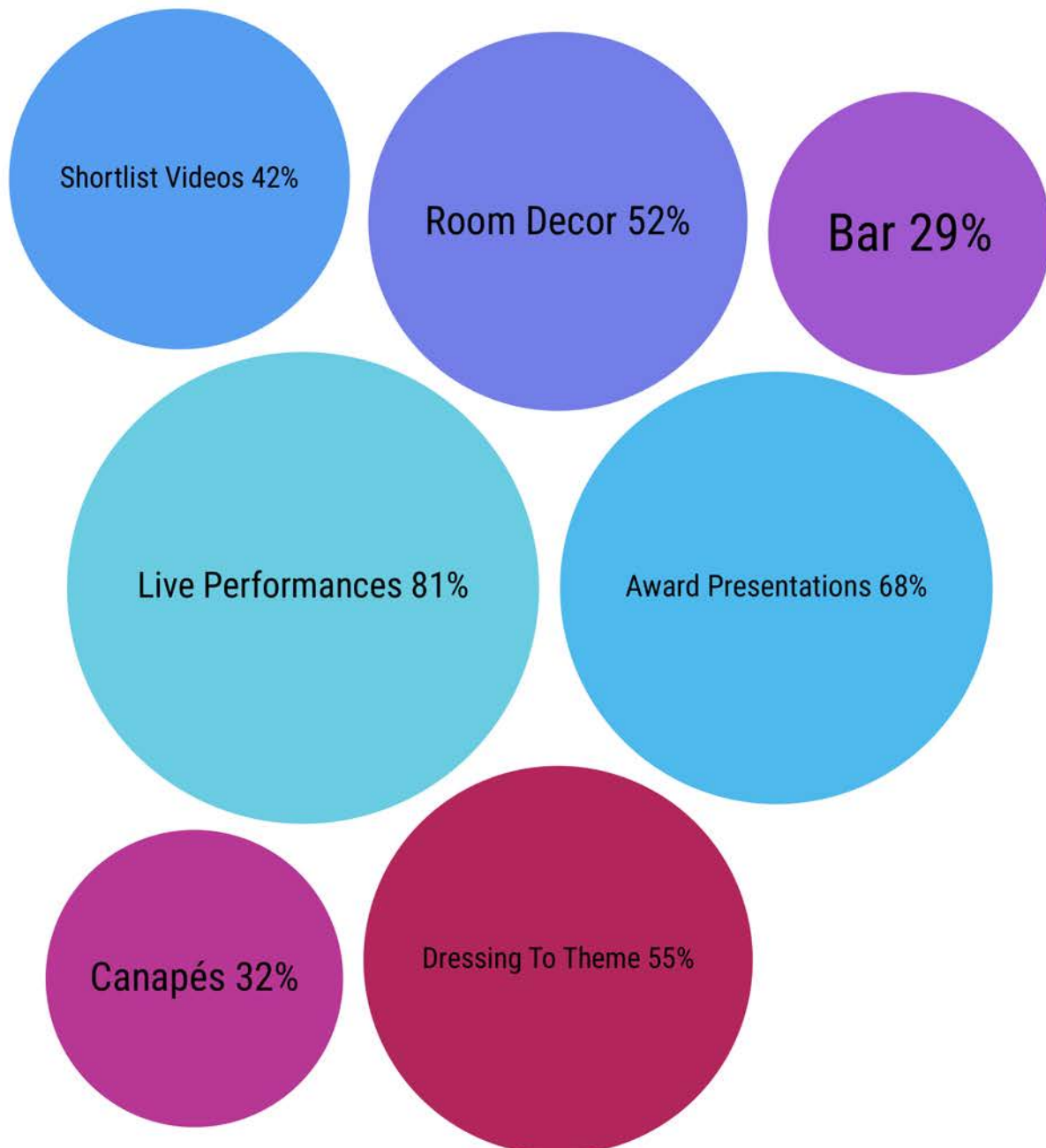
How did you feel about the bar pricing structure?

- 2.8% Underpriced, for a fundraiser
- 62% Well priced, for a fundraiser
- 15.8% Overpriced, even for a fundraiser
- 18% Not applicable



BUFFYS 2023: SURVEY RESULTS

Which of the following elements of the Buffys were of most importance to you? (Select all that apply)





Survey Comments and Suggestions

Survey respondents were given an opportunity to provide written comments and/or suggestions, if they wished. All responses are provided below.

"More time to socialize after the program."

"The emcee's were great!"

"I would love if Arts Council would look into efforts to provide accessible opportunities for people to attend the event, whether that is through limited pay-what-you-can ticket options, a larger venue to support more ticket sales, or other options. The event was fantastic! I just am unsure I will be able to continue attending with the current cost of the event."

"Overall, the Buffys 2023 was breathtaking! If I was to give any constructive feedback, it would be to diversify the live performances (in the past, they havent been bound to the theme, this year was a bit heavy on the dance/cancan). I missed the effort of as many art forms being represented as possible. Loved the creative use of space! Skip the shortlist videos next year, and have more live performances of different diciplines that arent necessary tied to the theme. Well done, ACWB!"

"Best Buffy's yet! Absolutely amazing!!"

"Ticket prices are still exclusive and high for someone buying out of their own pocket."

Survey Comments and Suggestions Continued

"The bar tickets were confusing. Maybe having a list of how many tickets per drink? Or just have the cashier by the bar."

"There seemed to be quite a few tech problems with the microphones being on or off at the wrong times and some of the lighting on the stage felt not well planned. For an event that is celebrating artists and their art (including performing arts) I feel like the tech should be as good as possible to showcase the artists properly."

"Great event, thank you for having us <3"

"Have a dress rehearsal with all presenters, or at least explain to them what they should do. It was clear many had no idea."

"I think the Buffys should be a celebration of Art not a competition. The selection process is tainted and has not proven to be acceptable by many by either means of local selection committee or remote selection committee. There are faults across the board for both avenues. Im not sure how to rectify this but being a long time member of this community their are some very questionable awards being handed out and I think many are discussing amongst themselves the process being a bit messy. Also, feel most can not afford the opportunity to attend with such high priced tickets. I would suggest a night of showcasing all artists so all can attend and be rewarded."

"I generally enjoy the mocktails so perhaps having 2 or more choices would be great."

"Adding a rising star dance category instead of the dancers from same studio always winning in the rising star category."

"Buffys were a disaster this year."

"More importance on performances, speeches for winners."

"Need to promote event as "a gala" type event so the ticket price isn't as shocking."

“

**Congratulations to everyone
involved with this year's
Buffys.**

**Once again, such an
amazing event. We enjoyed
it so much. The food this
year was
delicious.....entertainment
was wonderful. The band
was great too. Everything
about the evening was
fantastic. Well done!**

”

**Deby Flaherty
Attendee & Sponsor
Buffys 2023**

RURAL ARTS SUPPORT PROGRAM



RURAL ARTS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Arts Council's Rural Arts Support Program (RASP) was created in response to the needs of the rural and Indigenous communities, previously identified through ACWB's Arts Recovery Project. ACWB employs Indigenous staff to co-envision and create meaningful cultural arts programs and services to meet the unique needs of the residents of rural communities within our region. Doing so enables the community-at-large to engage with the arts, crafts, traditions, and values of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO

Goals	Arts Council Strategic Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders feel connected to youth and are supported in sharing their culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council Wood Buffalo is an influential voice for the arts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are heard and supported to lead the way and develop their full physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts Council Wood Buffalo is an influential voice for the arts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents of the rural communities feel connected to the larger region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts community has resources needed to thrive. The arts are recognized as essential in creating a balanced community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members are provided with broad opportunities to engage with arts and culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts community has resources needed to thrive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and social development in the rural and Indigenous communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts community has resources needed to thrive. The arts are recognized as essential in creating a balanced community.



Throughout the year 2023, a series of empowering and culturally enriching workshops were held in the rural communities of Anzac, Fort McMurray, and Fort Chipewyan dedicated to the well-being and preservation of Indigenous traditions. These workshops, tailored specifically for the local Indigenous population, showcased a diverse range of skills and crafts. Participants engaged in the art of crafting beaded red dress pins, symbolizing the cultural significance of these garments. Jigging lessons provided a lively and spirited exploration of traditional dance, fostering a sense of community and pride. Additionally, the community came together to learn the intricate techniques of ribbon skirt and shirt making, allowing for the celebration of their unique cultural heritage. This programming not only served as platforms for skill-building but also as spaces for fostering connection, resilience, and the continuation of time-honored traditions.



Over 1,575
participants engaged
in these programs



**RURAL ARTS
SUPPORT PROGRAM**



\$10,000 paid out to
participating artists

2023 RASP HIGHLIGHT

Silent Screams

MMIWG2S Awareness Project

Silent Screams, a MMIWG2S Awareness Project, sought to amplify the voices of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people, while bringing attention to the systemic violence and injustice these groups face.

Artist and RASP Coordinator Treasure Cooper painted and taped two canvases to create the silhouette of a woman on each. Community members in Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan were then invited to add their red handprints to the canvases, resulting in two unique and thought-provoking artworks. The paintings were then donated to Athabasca Tribal Council and Nunee Health in Fort Chipewyan.



2023 RASP HIGHLIGHT

The Journey Home: The Baby Moccasin Project

The Journey Home: The Baby Moccasin Project was organized by RASP to support healing in the aftermath of the discovery of the unmarked graves of Residential School children. This is an ongoing project, creating traditional moccasins to honour those who survived or those who did not make it home.

In 2023, The Baby Moccasin Project was exhibited at the Jubilee Centre, as a part of the exhibition ᓂᐱᑦᓴᑦᓴᑦ **sâkhitowak elghānuwutq̃ they love each other**, which featured historical images and artworks that highlighted the Indigenous experience through intergenerational love. The exhibition included a poem by RASP Coordinator Donna Aubichon, *My Moccasins Have Not Walked*.



My Moccasins Have Not Walked

I have never got to see my Kokum sew the moccasins she made for me

I have never got to smell the moosehide on the moccasins my Kokum made for me

I have never got to feel her beadwork on the moccasins my Kokum made for me

I have never got to wear the moccasins my Kokum made for me

I have never got to see how fast I can run in the moccasins my Kokum made for me

I have never got to dance powwow in the moccasins my Kokum made for me

I have never got to walk the trails to my Kokum's favourite berry picking spot in the moccasins she made for me

I have never got to run down the road to visit my Kokum and have bannock and tea in the moccasins she made for me

I have never got to sit by the fire and listen to my Kokum tell her stories in the moccasins she made for me

I have never played with my cousins in my Kokum's yard in the moccasins she made for me

I have never met my Kokum but I could feel her love in the moccasins she made for me

Donna Aubichon

BEADING & HEALING


Through a partnership with Athabasca Tribal Council, every Wednesday evening in Fort Chipewyan a special gathering focuses on beading and healing, offering a space for connection and growth. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own supplies for pieces they may be already working on, or can begin something new, engaging in the therapeutic art of beading. Rural Art Support Coordinator, Donna Aubichon, is always there to lend a hand in teaching and a thoughtful heart in listening. This program holds significant importance each week as it provides an avenue for individuals to connect with each other and their cultural heritage, utilizing art as a tool for healing and promoting wellness.



CRAFTER'S CIRCLE

In partnership with the Anzac Family Community Support Society, the Crafter's Circle, a beloved monthly gathering in Anzac, provides a nurturing space for individuals to convene with like-minded artists and enthusiasts. This cherished program is led by Rural Arts Support Coordinator, Treasure Cooper, and fosters a strong sense of community and friendship among participants. The Crafter's Circle is held for encouraging collaboration and the completion of various projects in a supportive environment. Through the Crafter's Circle, individuals find solace in the company of peers and celebrate the joys of creativity and companionship





“ A year ago I felt I had no direction in my life. Donna taught me good energy and patience through Beading & Healing and I am here a year later doing very well because of her and the work she does in our community. Thank you for always believing in me and supporting me. ”

Anonymous
Rural Arts Support Fort Chipewyan 2023

“ The Seniors & the Arts program has really given value to the Seniors in Wood Buffalo. The program gives seniors something to do and learn and allows us to meet artists of different disciplines to teach us something new every time we come to a workshop. ”

Daryl Price
Seniors & the Arts 2023

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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