



Alberta Foundation for the Arts

2024-25 Annual Report

Alberta

Table of Contents

Message from the Chair.....	3
Overview	4
Mandate.....	4
Linkages to the Ministry's Business Plan	4
Board Governance	5
Board Compensation Disclosure	5
Membership.....	6
Results Analysis.....	7
Performance Measure Results.....	7
Core Businesses and Goals.....	7
Note on Financial Statements	23
Social Media Contact Information	23

Message from the Chair

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) provides vital support to the community through funding for arts organizations and artists throughout Alberta. The arts contribute to thriving communities, improve quality of life, foster positive health and well-being, and drive economic development.

The AFA has been fortunate to receive a significant increase to its funding. In 2024-25, the Government of Alberta increased funding to the AFA by \$4.5 million, as part of the government's commitment to increase arts funding to nearly \$44 million by 2027. I am pleased to note that the AFA received the same increase for 2025-26.

We are grateful for these important investments. We are well positioned to strengthen our support for Alberta artists and arts organizations. This support helps enrich the tapestry of our communities in every corner of the province.

2024-25 represented another successful year for our organization. As a result of our initial increase, we prioritized support for individual artists. We increased the total number of Individual Project Grants awarded to artists and raised the maximum eligible amount for these grants from \$15,000 to \$18,000.

In addition, we approved and implemented a Community Connector Pilot Program. This initiative was intended to bridge that gap between the AFA and diverse artistic communities. This important outreach program supported a wider range of artists engaging with the AFA.

The AFA was pleased to partner with the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM) to exhibit new acquisitions to the AFA Art Collection. The AFA is committed to increasing promotion and public circulation of the collection. The *Here & Now* exhibition at the RAM last year is one example of the proactive approach we are taking to ensure Albertans can access the world's largest collection of visual art by Alberta artists.

These are just some of the highlights from a very full year. I invite you to read through the entire Annual Report to get a robust understanding of all our accomplishments as we look ahead to build on our successes.

On behalf of the AFA board, I am pleased to present the 2024-25 Annual Report.

With kindest regards,



Cynthia P. Moore, Chair
Alberta Foundation for the Arts Board of Directors

Overview

The AFA was established in 1991 as a public agency and a provincial corporation of the Government of Alberta. The AFA provides funding to artists and arts organizations, researches and promotes the arts and manages an extensive provincial art collection.

Mandate

Reporting to Alberta's Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women, the AFA is guided by the objectives found in the [Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act](#):

- To support and contribute to the development of and to promote the arts in Alberta,
- To provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts in Alberta,
- To foster and promote the enjoyment of works of art by Alberta artists,
- To collect, preserve and display works of art by Alberta artists, and
- To encourage artists resident in Alberta in their work.

In addition, the AFA is guided by direction included in the Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women Tanya Fir's December 2023 mandate letter to the AFA, which directed the AFA Board to prioritize Alberta artists, art and cultural materials.

Linkages to the Ministry's Business Plan

AFA programs are linked to the following outcome articulated in the [2024-27 Business Plan](#):

Outcome Two: All Albertans have the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from vibrant, inclusive and active communities that enrich their lives.

Specifically, the AFA worked on Key Strategy 2.3:

"Ensure the Alberta Foundation for the Arts prioritizes and invests in Alberta artists, art and cultural materials."

In 2024-25, initiatives supporting key objectives under Outcome Two included:

- Provide \$30.1 million in funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts to support Alberta artists and Alberta's arts sector.

This investment included an additional \$4.5 million for the AFA, or an 18 per cent increase, from the amount provided in 2023-24.

The work of the AFA also contributed to the results of performance measure 2.a:

Percentage of Albertans attending and participating in arts events and activities.

Board Governance

The AFA is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by government through Order in Council. The AFA Chair reports to the Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women on behalf of the board. The AFA Board of Directors encourages and supports Alberta's arts community by:

- Developing and implementing the AFA's strategic plan,
- Allocating the annual budget,
- Approving AFA funding and scholarships, and
- Approving and monitoring the acquisition, exhibition and preservation of works in the AFA collection.

The board operates under a code of conduct that reflects a commitment to the AFA's values and provides a framework to guide ethical conduct in a way that upholds the integrity and reputation of the agency.

On February 28, 2025, the terms of board members Nabil Malik and Andrea True Joy Fox ended. The AFA thanks Mr. Malik and Ms. True Joy Fox for their service to the board and acknowledges the significant contributions they made.

Board Compensation Disclosure

The AFA publishes the [names and compensation of board members online](#) as required per the [Public Sector Compensation Transparency Act](#).

Membership



Cynthia P. Moore

Chair, Calgary



Le Bo

Vice Chair, Calgary



Robert Fernandez

Edmonton



Yasmin Jivraj

Edmonton



Melody McKnight

Red Deer



Sylvester Ndumbi

Calgary



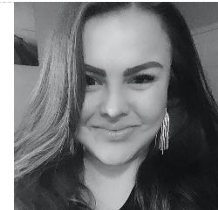
Shana Yang

Calgary



Nabil Malik

*Fort McMurray
(term expired
February 28, 2025)*



Andrea True Joy Fox

*Lethbridge/Blood Tribe
(Blackfoot)
(term expired
February 28, 2025)*

Results Analysis

Performance Measure Results

Results for performance measure 2.a from the [2024-27 Business Plan](#) are gathered through the annual Survey of Albertans.

In 2024-25, 81.6 per cent of adult Albertans attended arts activities or events.

Core Businesses and Goals

AFA activities are developed through adherence to goals set out in the [AFA 2024-27 Strategic Plan](#).

Finalized and approved in 2024, the plan affirms the foundation's commitment to Alberta's arts community and identifies key priorities for the next three years. The AFA aligns its strategic priorities for the arts sector with those of the Government of Alberta, which includes ensuring the AFA prioritizes Alberta artists, art and cultural materials. For the first time, the strategic plan is available in [French](#).

Core Business One: Funding

The AFA's support for the arts is primarily delivered through its granting programs. Operational grants provide ongoing support to organizations that create and provide access to art experiences and generate job opportunities for artists and cultural workers. Project funding is awarded to organizations and individual artists primarily through an expert panel adjudication process.

Impact of Funding

AFA expenditures 2024-25

\$30,523,000

AFA expenditure breakdown¹ (\$ in Millions)



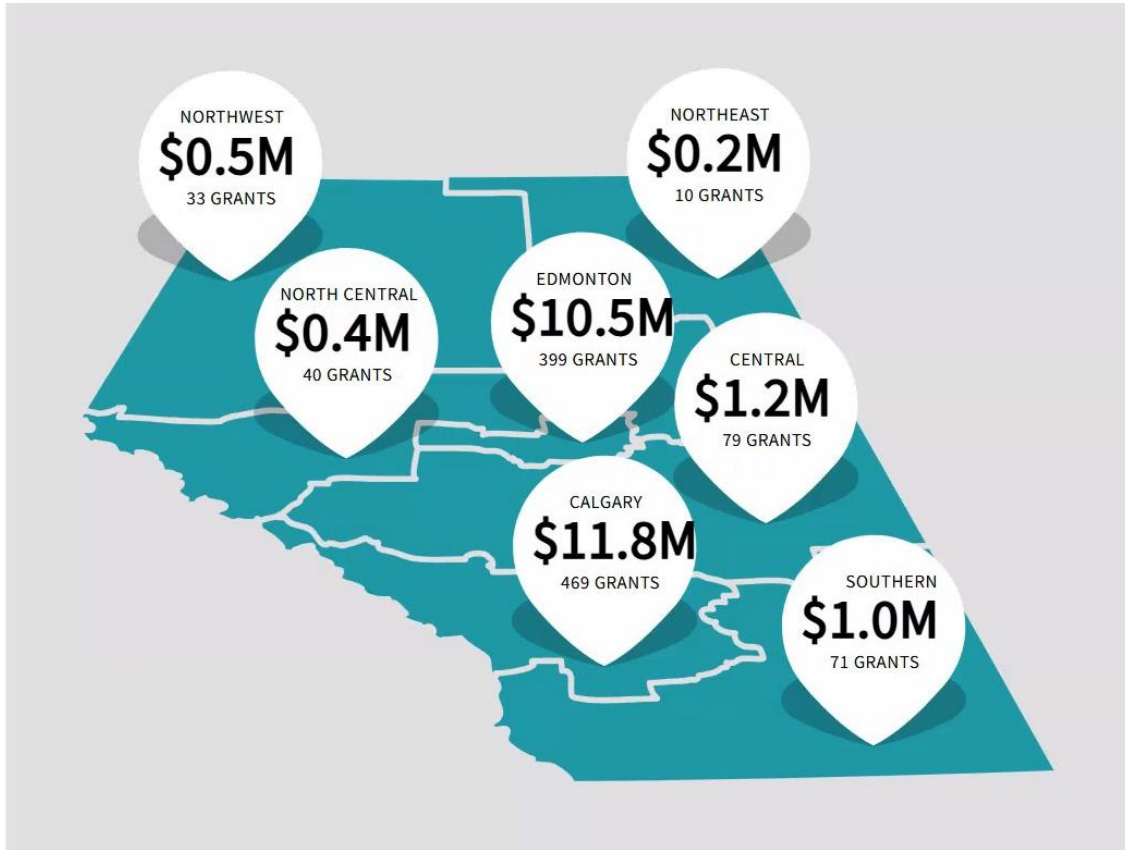
Funding awarded by recipient type² (\$ in Millions)



¹ Expenditures for each category include program support expenses.

² Funding awarded does not include program support expenses.

Funding approved by region



Interested in exploring our data? More details are available on our [Impact of Funding](#) page and on open.alberta.ca.

Funding awarded to organizations

\$ amount (grants awarded / eligible applications)

Professional Performing Arts		\$8,048,940.00	46/47
Community Support		\$2,600,000.00	146/146
Community Performing Arts		\$1,985,000.00	183/183
Arts Presenting		\$1,800,000.00	158/158
Major Arts Presenters		\$1,630,000.00	12/12
Public Art Galleries		\$1,547,000.00	15/15
Provincial Arts Service		\$1,195,000.00	9/9
Summer Schools		\$642,401.20	9/11
Artists and Education		\$594,780.85	66/114
Organization Activation Projects		\$291,057.00	11/14
Projects Development		\$50,000.00	1/1

Funding awarded to individuals

\$ amount (grants awarded / eligible applications)

Music		\$1,387,528.84	140/397
Film and Video		\$973,768.27	71/266
Visual Arts and New Media		\$880,404.20	82/316
Literary Arts		\$828,760.69	64/253
Theatre		\$407,637.36	31/106
Dance		\$355,245.94	31/127
Indigenous Arts		\$353,255.88	25/85
Arts Awards		\$14,000.00	2/11

Support for Individuals

As part of Budget 2024, Alberta's government announced a commitment to increase funding to the AFA by \$4.5 million per year. This annual commitment will see the AFA reach a record-level investment of more than \$43 million in annual funding by 2027. The AFA announced in June 2025 that for this first year of budget increases, it would prioritize support for individual artists, primarily through support through Individual Project Grants. Individual project grants support activities in art production (creation), marketing, research or training/professional development. The AFA accepts applications for these grants twice per year, on March 1 and September 1.

In 2024-25, the AFA:

- increased the total number of successful Individual Project Grants awarded, and

- increased the maximum eligible amount for Individual Project Grants from \$15,000 to \$18,000.

This increased support provided funding to 446 individual project grants through seven different artistic disciplines. This represents a 42.4 per cent increase in the number of individual project grants provided compared to the previous year.

Ashley Laurenson, a filmmaker from Fort McMurray, received funding through the AFA's Film and Video Individual Project Funding. This funding provides up to \$18,000 to support the development of individual Alberta artists, arts administrators or an ensemble of artists by providing funding for a specific film and video arts project. Laurenson's grant funded the development of her documentary, *Rendering Visions*. The documentary delves into the vibrant arts scene of Fort McMurray, a place more commonly associated with the oil industry than with the culture sector.

Laurenson shared how her project grant was the crucial element that elevated the project from a concept to a reality. "The funding from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts," she emphasized, "allowed us to essentially bring the name of *Rendering Visions* to fruition." With this support, the



Figure 1. Still from *Rendering Visions*
Image Credit: McGuphyn Media

team was able to commission art from 18 regional artists and digitally render it into the film's landscape. For example, creating murals on walls that do not exist and bringing sculptures to life in nature. "Until we had the AFA grant, it wasn't something that we could achieve."

This funding did more than just enhance the film's visual appeal. It provided paid opportunities for the artists involved, as well as for three film student interns who gained hands-on experience. For Laurenson, the ability to fairly compensate her team and fellow artists was one of the most rewarding aspects of the project. She says, "Being able to fairly compensate not only my own team but those artists out there... I never would have felt like I could have asked artists to create something new for us."



Figure 2. Still from *Rendering Visions*
Image Credit: McGuphyn Media

The experience has been a significant turning point in Laurenson's career, giving her the confidence and the skills to take on larger projects within the region. "One of the things that I learned about myself throughout this process was, essentially that 'I can'." Ultimately, Laurenson hopes *Rendering Visions* will inspire hope for the future of the arts in Fort McMurray and encourage a deeper understanding of what artists need to not only survive but thrive. "I think one of the things that I really hope people take away from this film is hope for the future of the arts."

Support for Organizations

In addition to increased funding for individuals, the AFA provides funding to organizations, including:

- Arts Presenting Project Funding,
- Artists and Education Project Funding,
- Community Performing Arts Organizations Operating Funding,
- Community Support Organizations Operating Funding.

The AFA also maintained funding levels for organizations receiving multi-year operating grants. In total in 2024-25, the AFA delivered 411 operating grants and 245 project grants to diverse organizations across the province. These funding programs included the Public Art Galleries Operating Funding program.

This program provides annual funding in three-year cycles to eligible professional organizations that program and display public exhibitions of visual arts. In 2024-25, the AFA provided \$1,547,000 to 15 organizations to support expenses such as:

- programming,
- administration,
- maintenance of equipment and fixed assets,
- promotion, and
- other expenses as required to fulfil the organization's mandate.

The Southern Alberta Art Gallery Maansiksikaitsitapiitsinikssin (SAAG) receives support through the Public Art Galleries Operating Funding program. A cornerstone of Lethbridge's arts community for nearly five decades, SAAG functions as a community hub, a supporter of artists and a connection to the wider arts world. Its deep-rooted community engagement has been built on a foundation of stable and long-term support from funders like the AFA.



**Figure 3. Southern Alberta Art Gallery
Maansiksikaitsitapiitsinikssin**
Image Credit: Southern Alberta Art Gallery
Maansiksikaitsitapiitsinikssin



Figure 4. Southern Alberta Art Gallery
Maansiksikaitsitapiitsinikssin
Image Credit: Southern Alberta Art Gallery
Maansiksikaitsitapiitsinikssin

As the Public Art Galleries Operating Funding program provides operating funding in three-year cycles, SAAG has leveraged this stability for ambitious, long-range planning. “That long-term artistic planning and visioning and trying to develop something special to share with our communities, is only possible through operating funding,” says Executive Director Su Ying Strang. Ongoing AFA funding helps support the gallery to mount 12 exhibitions annually, working with artists at local, national and international levels, and providing many with their first major solo show.

In recent years, SAAG has deepened its community connection by building direct partnerships with organizations like Lethbridge Family Services, Alberta Health Services and the local francophone society, helping the gallery create targeted programs that make the space truly accessible. “We want you to come in,” Strang says of their philosophy. “This space is for you.” This impactful work has been met with a surge in community demand. “The need is just growing,” Strang notes, explaining that the gallery is now “bursting at the seams.”

In a smaller urban centre like Lethbridge, SAAG’s role is critical. It provides local artists paid opportunities and serves as a professional development hub by connecting local talent with international figures. Strang sees the gallery’s role as evolving from simply being a window to the world to something more dynamic. “It’s not so much about just looking outward. It’s about it being a portal,” she explains, describing a place for a two-way exchange of ideas that connects Southern Alberta with the global arts community.

SAAG’s story is one example of the transformative impacts AFA annual operational funding can provide community-focused arts organizations. AFA support helps ensure that SAAG remains a vital institution for contemporary art in Southern Alberta.

Core Business Two: Art Collection

Acquisition value of AFA Art Collection as of March 31, 2025

\$18,367,723

Number of artworks

9,563

Acquisitions

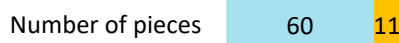
The AFA actively collects artworks that document the province's visual artistic achievements over time through competitive purchase, curatorial purchase and donation programs. Each new acquisition is a valued cultural resource for Albertans, today and for future generations.

Value of new acquisitions, 2024-25

\$297,115

Number of new acquisitions

71



■ Purchases ■ Donations

Art Acquisitions by Application

The Art Acquisitions by Application program is an annual competitive purchase program that sees the AFA acquire artworks created within the last five years by individual Albertan artists. In 2024-25, the AFA acquired 49 artworks by 42 artists, including 14 artists new to the AFA Art Collection. These works will be shared with communities across Alberta through outreach programs and initiatives like the Travelling Exhibition Program and the Art Placement Program, ensuring that art remains accessible and celebrated throughout the province.

In 2024-25, the AFA acquired *Bird Vase* by Carrie Wheeler through the program. A long-time Edmonton resident and a dedicated artist at the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts since 2011, Wheeler brings a whimsical and heartfelt perspective to her ceramic and painted works. Her sculpture *Bird Vase*—crafted from Plainsman clay and adorned with colourful, low-fire glazes—reflects her deep appreciation for nature and her imaginative spirit.



Figure 5. Carrie Wheeler, *Bird Vase*, 2023, stoneware and glaze

“I fell in love with birds a long time ago when I started taking pictures of Canada geese and realized birds are one of the things that I like,” Wheeler shares. “I love painting leaves—they are one of my favourite things to paint as well.”

Bird Vase was previously exhibited at the 2023 AccessAbility Symposium at NAIT and Wheeler’s artworks were featured in the Art in Transit project, a collaboration between the Edmonton Arts Council and the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts.

Curatorial Purchase

Annually, the AFA dedicates funding to purchase works of art that address specific gaps in its art collection not addressed through other acquisition programs. In 2024-25, the AFA purchased ten artworks by five artists: Richard Boulet, Dick Der, Brenda Draney, Kenzie Housego and Kablusiak.



Figure 6. Richard Boulet, *Haldol Ex Voto*, 2003, cotton, cotton/polyester, embroidery floss, lace, yarn, thread

Richard Boulet is an Edmonton-based artist. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Alberta and both a Bachelor of Environmental Studies in Architecture and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Manitoba. Boulet creates textile works that blend fine craft, abstraction and text, using traditional techniques such as cross-stitching and quilting. His work is deeply informed by his experiences with mental health, with the creative process serving as a form of explorative reflection to express his experiences with schizophrenia.³

Haldol Ex Voto is a seminal work, marking Boulet’s first use of cross-stitching. Drawing on his Catholic upbringing, the ex-voto (a religious offering given in order to fulfil a vow) references the offering of prayer for relief from suffering. Created in response to his difficult experience with the antipsychotic medication Haldol, the work contrasts a negative experience with hope and comfort, serving as a pivotal work in Boulet’s exploration of lived experience through craft.³

³ Wayne Baerwaldt et al., “Interview Richard Boulet: 2009/2022 What Seest Thou Else in the Dark Backward and Abyss of Time?” in *If I May Digress: Richard Boulet and Collaborators*, ed. Wayne Baerwaldt (Edmonton: DC3 Art Projects, 2022), 61–69.

Donations

The AFA considers offers of donations of artworks from artists, individual collectors, organizations and corporations as another avenue of art acquisition.

In 2024-25, the AFA received a generous donation of nine artworks from the Society of Northern Alberta Print-Artists. Among the donated artworks is the print *Over the Fence* by Emmanuel Osahor.

Osahor is a Nigerian-born artist who holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Guelph and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art and Design from the University of Alberta. He is currently based in Ontario, where he works as an Assistant Professor of Studio Art at the University of Toronto. His work has been exhibited in multiple solo and group exhibitions at venues including the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, the Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto and the Art Gallery of Guelph. In 2014, Oshaor was the provincial winner representing Alberta for the BMO 1st Art! Invitational Student Art Competition.

His images originate from photographic snapshots of private garden spaces, which he transforms through collage, abstraction and gestural drawing. By distilling compositional elements and expressive mark making techniques, Osahor reimagines these exclusive spaces as inclusive sanctuaries. Through an intentional focus on beauty, the artworks offer a space to reflect on the complexities of marginalization and inequity in contemporary life.

Over the Fence is the first acquisition of Osahor's work for inclusion into the AFA Art Collection.

Artwork Loans

The AFA shares artwork locally and abroad by working with partners to exhibit, tour and place work in public spaces. Artworks are shared through the Art Placement, Travelling Exhibitions and Exhibition Loans programs. In 2024-25, the AFA saw a small decrease in its total circulation rate compared to 2023-24, mostly due to decreases in the number of artworks placed in the Alberta Legislature and in government and non-profit organizations. The percentage of collection on display in 2024-25 was the same as in 2022-23.

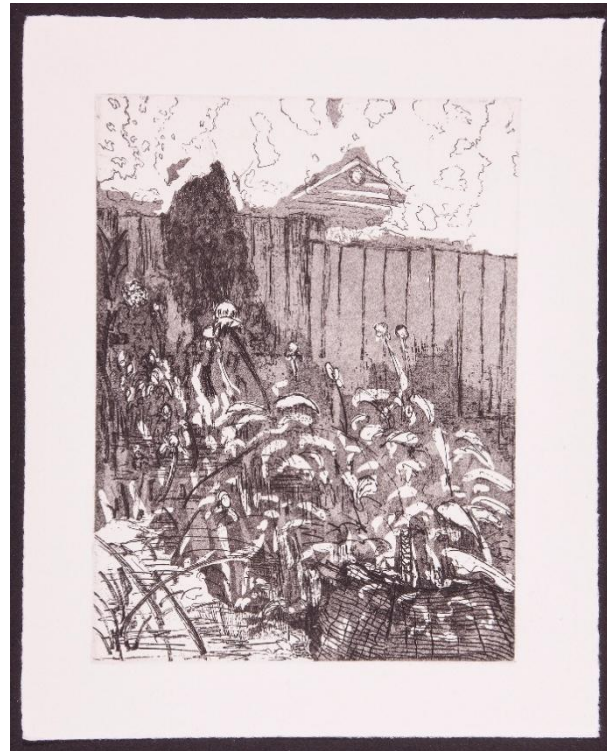


Figure 7. Emmanuel Osahor, *Over the Fence*, 2021, etching on paper

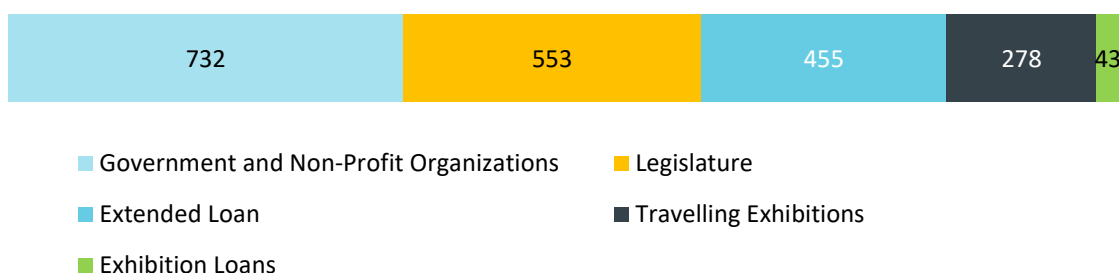
Number of artworks on display

2,061 (-11)

Percentage of collection on display

21.6% (-0.2%)

AFA artworks on display by program 2024-25



While the number of artworks placed in the Legislature, government and non-profit organizations was lower in 2024-25, the AFA saw increases in its other artwork loans programs.

- Artworks placed in the Legislature: -9
- Artworks placed in government and non-profit organizations: -8
- Artworks circulated through extended loans: -1
- Artworks circulated through exhibition loans: +4
- Artworks circulated through Travelling Exhibitions: +3

While these programs allow the AFA to ensure its art collection is accessible to Albertans and to meet its goals to increase its public circulation and recognition, the AFA also recognizes that all these programs are dependent on requests by third parties. In 2025-26, the AFA announced plans to open and operate an art gallery in Calgary dedicated to displaying artworks from the AFA Art Collection and Albertan artists. It will provide the AFA a direct role in curating artworks for display in this venue.

Art Placement

The Art Placement program fulfils the commitment to ensure the AFA Art Collection is accessible by facilitating requests from eligible recipients for the placement of artworks from the collection to foster public enjoyment. Eligible recipients for the Art Placement program include government, non-profit organizations and the Alberta Legislature.

Maryuska by Vivian Thierfelder was installed inside the office of the Deputy Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism through the Art Placement program. The painting reflects Thierfelder's signature realistic watercolour style focused on exquisite and elaborate compositions ranging from still life to bountiful florals.

Thierfelder was born in Edmonton and has been painting in the region for over 40 years. She is a longtime member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Artists and the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour, and her award-winning works are held in public and private collections across Canada. Throughout her paintings, Thierfelder uses lush colour and carefully rendered imagery to deliver complex illusion and exuberant pictorial energy across the picture plane.



Figure 8. Vivian Thierfelder, *Maryuska*, 1993, watercolour on paper

Travelling Exhibition Program

Venues visited by travelling exhibitions, 2024-25

187

Number of visitors

617,052

The AFA's Travelling Exhibition Program (Trex) strives to ensure every Albertan is provided with an opportunity to enjoy fully developed exhibitions in schools, libraries, health care centres and smaller rural institutions and galleries throughout the province. The program also offers educational support materials for teachers to encourage visual arts exhibitions to be included in school curriculum.

The program has a provincial reach and divides the province into four Trex regions. Each region is served by a regional partner who co-ordinates and curates exhibitions from a variety of sources, including the AFA Art Collection.

In 2024-25, the Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre in Medicine Hat (Trex Southeast Region) curated *Athletic Aesthetics*. This multidisciplinary exhibition drew from the AFA Art Collection and

featured 20 works across photography, video, printmaking, drawing and painting. The exhibition explored the similarities between visual arts and athletic performance.

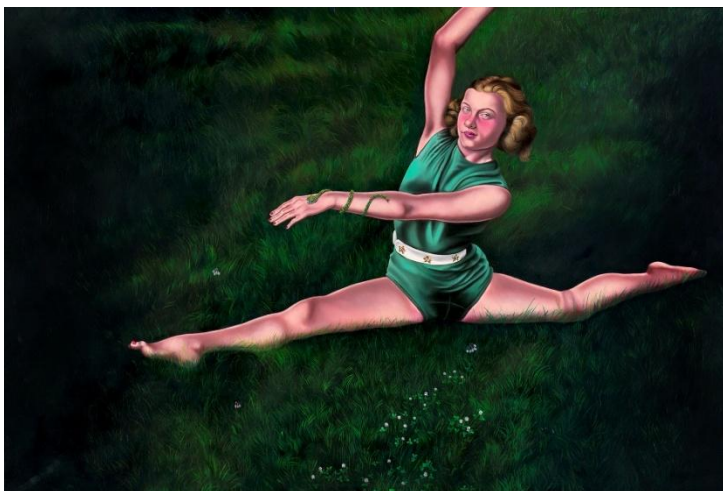


Figure 9. Dana Holst, *Slither*, 2018, oil on board

Dana Holst's oil painting *Slither*, which portrays a young gymnast casually practicing the splits on a sunlit lawn, captured the exhibition's central theme: that both artistic and athletic pursuits require discipline and dedication, yet remain sources of joy and fulfilment throughout one's life. While only a few individuals may reach elite levels in either field, countless others participate for community, personal expression and pleasure.

Through meaningful parallels, *Athletic Aesthetics* encouraged audiences to reconsider traditional cultural dualities and to recognize the shared values that unite art and sport in celebrating human ability and potential.

Exhibition Loans

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts regularly lends artworks from its collection to recognized cultural institutions—including museums, galleries, interpretive centres and archives—for public exhibition. In 2024–25, the AFA collaborated with eight institutions across the province and internationally to facilitate these loans. While the AFA typically provides access to its collection without curating the exhibitions themselves, a notable exception occurred in 2024.

In a special partnership with the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM), the AFA not only loaned artworks but also curated the exhibition *Here & Now*, featuring its recent acquisitions from the 2023-24 Art Acquisition by Application program. Together, the AFA and the RAM developed a dedicated display space within the museum's Human History Hall to present the exhibition.

Here & Now featured 16 paintings, prints, fibre works and sculptures by 12 Alberta-based artists, exploring the themes of Identity, Female Strength, Human Impacts on the Land and Dis/Ability. Included in the exhibition were works by AJA Loudon and Esther Suzanne Scott.

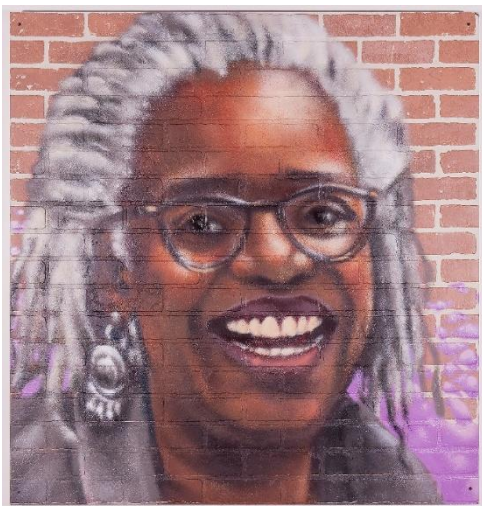


Figure 10. AJA Loudon, *Elsa Robinson*, 2019, acrylic spray paint on wood



Figure 11. Esther Suzanne Scott, *Special Needs*, 2023, plastic sequins and polyester threads on

AJA Loudon's *Elsa Robinson* is a spray-painted portrait on reclaimed wood, inspired by street art aesthetics. The piece pays tribute to Edmonton multidisciplinary artist Elsa Robinson and reflects Loudon's ongoing commitment to celebrating Black identity and creative legacy through street art inspired portraiture.

Esther Suzanne Scott's *Special Needs* is a fibre artwork composed of glittering sequins arranged to spell out the phrase "special needs." Drawing from her lived experience with a learning disability, Scott reclaims this often-stigmatized term by transforming it into a bold declaration of pride and self-acceptance. Through this work, she challenges conventional perceptions of disability and affirms the value of difference.

The exhibition exemplified the AFA's ongoing commitment to finding new opportunities for Albertans to enjoy its treasure of artworks and sharing Albertan stories through visual art.

Core Business Three: Research and Engagement



Figure 12. Caribbean Expressions
Image Credit: Laine Ellis

Community Connector Pilot Program

In 2024-25, the AFA approved and implemented a Community Connector Pilot Program. This marketing and engagement initiative was intended to bridge the gap between the AFA and diverse artistic communities. By focusing on outreach to underserved and marginalized communities, the program is intended to support and represent a wider range of voices and expressions across the province.

In February 2025, local artists contracted to be AFA Community Connectors hosted community engagement events to promote AFA programs and services. Two connectors were engaged for the pilot: Danielle George (Edmonton region/Caribbean community) and Hanna Fridhed (Fort McMurray and the wider Wood Buffalo region).

- George's event, Caribbean Expressions, was held on February 8 at CKUA in Edmonton. It was attended by approximately 70 community members. Three AFA staff also attended.
- Fridhed's event, Inspire & Create: Networking Event, was held on February 15 at Suncor Energy Centre for the Performing Arts in Fort McMurray. It was attended by approximately 75 community members. Four AFA staff also attended.



Figure 13. Caribbean Expressions
Image Credit: Laine Ellis

Access, Belonging and Community Connection

The AFA continues to work toward its goal of full and equal participation of all Albertans—both in and through the arts—by ongoing implementation of its Pluralism policy. The AFA integrates the policy's principles into its governance and strategic planning, ensuring that diverse voices and perspectives are represented at all levels, as well as its business operations, programs and service delivery.

The 2024 cycle of the AFA's Organization Activation Projects Funding program focused on supporting emerging artist engagement programs in rural communities intended to address intergenerational gaps and cultivate the next generation of artists outside of the major urban centres. The deadline to apply was December 1, 2024, and in March 2025, the AFA approved \$291,057 to support 11 engagement projects across Alberta.

In December 2024, the AFA Board approved guidelines to establish an Accessibility Program intended to provide financial assistance to help artists—such as those who are D/deaf, have a disability or whose primary language is not English—access the AFA's individual project grants, scholarships and the Art Acquisition by Application program. Assistance could be provided to eligible applicants to access AFA programs or to past grant recipients that require supports to complete their project reporting. The AFA is implementing the Accessibility Program in 2025-26.

Engagement

The AFA actively engages with various segments of the broader arts community. Throughout the year, the AFA hosts grant information sessions to provide tips and guidance on preparing successful grant applications.

Number of funding information sessions held, 2024-25

39

Attendees

595

In addition to grant workshops provided by staff, the AFA is establishing an additional outreach practice of board-led opportunities for informal conversations and relationship building amongst its funding community. As part of this initiative, the AFA hosted a reception in Calgary during the evening of September 5, 2024, for funding clients to meet and get to know members of the Board of Directors.

Communications

The AFA uses a variety of tools to connect with stakeholders, disseminate information about programs and promote awareness of the arts community.

In 2024-25, the AFA undertook a comprehensive update of its website core and the homepage of affta.ab.ca. This strategic initiative was driven by the goal of creating a more accessible, intuitive and user-friendly digital platform for artists, administrators and organizations across the province.

The project involved significant enhancements to the site's foundational technology and user interface. Key improvements include:

- Streamlined Navigation: Menus and content have been reorganized to provide clearer, more intuitive pathways to essential information.
- Enhanced Grant Accessibility: Finding information on specific funding streams, deadlines and eligibility criteria is now simpler and more direct.
- Improved User Experience: A refreshed visual design and mobile-responsive layout ensure the website is easy to use on any device.

Research

The AFA is actively involved in evaluating the impact of arts and culture in Alberta and beyond through specialized research projects.

Throughout 2024-25, the AFA continued to support *Spotlight on Arts Audiences*, a two-year research project surveying arts-inclined audiences in Alberta. Three waves of reports were released over the year, with results on Alberta audiences as a whole, and specific results for Calgary, Edmonton and regional Alberta audiences, available for each wave.

Developed by the firm Stone-Olafson and co-funded by the AFA, Calgary Arts Development, Calgary Foundation, Edmonton Arts Council, Edmonton Community Foundation and the Rozsa Foundation, the project provides specific, relevant and reliable data to support arts sector leaders in understanding their audiences and increasing attendance.

Note on Financial Statements

In accordance with 9(4) of the *Sustainable Fiscal Planning and Reporting Act*, financial statements are available in the [Ministry of Arts, Culture and Status of Women 2024-25 Annual Report](#).

Social Media Contact Information

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