



Alberta Foundation for the Arts
2019-20 Annual Report

Alberta 

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Message from the Chair

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) has diligently acted as the Government of Alberta's primary funding body for arts organizations and artists for nearly 30 years now, and we are proud to serve in this role. The AFA provides invaluable support through funding programs; by acquiring, preserving and sharing artworks by Albertan visual artists; and through arts research and engagement activities.

The AFA's activities in 2019-20 reflect our commitment to delivering consistent support to Alberta's arts community, in spite of a challenging fiscal environment, by delivering 738 grants to organizations and individuals across the province.

We participated in two research projects focused on helping guide art placement in health care centres and hospitals. Previous studies on art and health have shown the positive effect art can have on patients' mental and emotional well-being. The two projects undertaken by the AFA provided several key recommendations on how curatorial and programming decisions can be improved to provide appropriate and engaging art in a hospital setting.

In December 2019, the Government of Alberta appointed five new members to the Board of Directors, myself included. The other new board members included Paul R. Baay (Vice Chair), Maryann Chichak, Tom Jackson, and Peter Kiss. We are honoured to help guide the work of the AFA – work that took a new urgency in March 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 11, the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. Six days later the Government of Alberta implemented restrictions on mass gatherings in order to quell the spread of the virus. The impact on the arts community was immediate and devastating. By March 31, 2020, the AFA recorded more than 100 arts organizations that had to cancel events and programming. The resiliency of Alberta's arts community will be severely tested in the coming months, but the AFA will continue to provide valuable support to the sector as we face these challenges together.

On behalf of the AFA board, I am pleased to present the 2019-20 annual report.

Sincerely,

Mary Rozsa de Coquet, Chair

Alberta Foundation for the Arts Board of Directors

Overview

Mandate

The AFA encourages and supports the arts as a significant contributor to quality of life in Alberta.

The AFA was established in 1991 as a public agency and a provincial corporation with a mandate to support and contribute to the development of the arts in Alberta. We provide funding to artists and art organizations and manage an extensive provincial art collection featuring work from artists all over the province. We promote the arts in order to increase social cohesion, health and creativity.

Reporting to Alberta's Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, the AFA follows the objectives found in the [Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act](#).

Linkages to the Ministry's Business Plan

AFA programs are linked to the following outcome articulated in the [Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women 2019-23 Business Plan](#):

Outcome Two: Albertans have vibrant, active communities and access to cultural opportunities and services that enrich their lives.

Specifically, the AFA worked on Key Strategy 2.1:

“Provide support for artists and organizations to promote a healthy, vibrant and inclusive arts ecosystem that contributes to increased opportunities for participation in the arts and greater awareness of the value of art and artists in Alberta.”

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

Performance measure 2.d: Percentage of adult Albertans who attended arts activities or events, and who participated in arts activities or events.

Board Governance

The AFA Board of Directors encourages and supports Alberta's arts community by:

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

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.

In 2019-20, the AFA board membership changed. Five new members were appointed in December 2019, with their terms beginning on January 11, 2020. The appointments included a new Chair and Vice Chair, who assumed their positions on April 15, 2020.

The new members are:

- Mary Rozsa de Coquet, incoming Chair
- Paul R. Baay, incoming Vice Chair
- Maryann Chichak
- Tom Jackson
- Peter Kiss

On December 31, 2019, Chair Liam Oddie resigned from the board, and vice chair Luca Petryshyn assumed the acting chair position. The AFA thanks Mr. Oddie for his service to the board and acknowledges the significant contributions of all outgoing members.

Board Compensation Disclosure

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

Membership

Liam Oddie

(no photo available)

Chair, Calgary



Luca Petryshyn

Vice Chair, Edmonton



Paul R. Baay

Incoming Vice Chair, Calgary



Aleem Bharwani

Calgary



Maryann Chichak

Whitecourt



Mary Rozsa de Coquet

Incoming Chair, Calgary



Candace Hook

Grande Prairie



Tom Jackson

Calgary

Peter Kiss

(no photo available)

Calgary



Nabil Malik

Fort McMurray



Christy Morin

Edmonton (term expired
January 10, 2020)



Jane Edmundson

Lethbridge (term expired
December 31, 2019)



Jamie Leong-Huxley

Calgary (term expired
January 10, 2020)



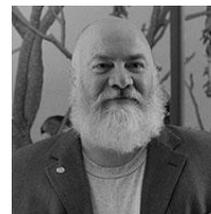
Cameron McCormick

*Edmonton (term expired
January 10, 2020)*



Holly Turner

*Edmonton (term expired
January 10, 2020)*



Ian Warwick

*Red Deer (term expired
January 10, 2020)*

Results Analysis

Performance Measure Results

Results for the performance measure from the [Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women 2019-23 Business Plan](#) are gathered through the annual Survey of Albertans on Culture and Tourism.

In 2019-20:

- 77.4 per cent of adult Albertans attended arts activities or events.
- 54.5 per cent of adult Albertans participated in arts activities or events.¹

Core Businesses and Goals

AFA activities are developed through adherence to goals set out in the [AFA 2019-22 Strategic Plan](#), as described below.

Finalized and approved in 2019, the Strategic Plan lays out how the AFA plans to encourage a healthy arts sector, build meaningful and reciprocal relationships with the arts community, and harness the capacity of the arts to connect communities and be a catalyst for positive change. The plan affirms the AFA's commitment to promoting equitable access in the arts and to building relationships with Alberta's equity-seeking communities, particularly with Indigenous artists, culturally diverse and francophone artists, as well as Deaf artists and those with other disabilities.

¹ This is a new metric for 2019.

Core Business One: Funding

AFA's support for the arts is primarily driven by our granting programs. Operational grants provide ongoing support to organizations that provide access to art experiences and create 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, 2019-20

\$28,791,210

AFA expenditure breakdown^{2,3}



Funding awarded by recipient type⁴

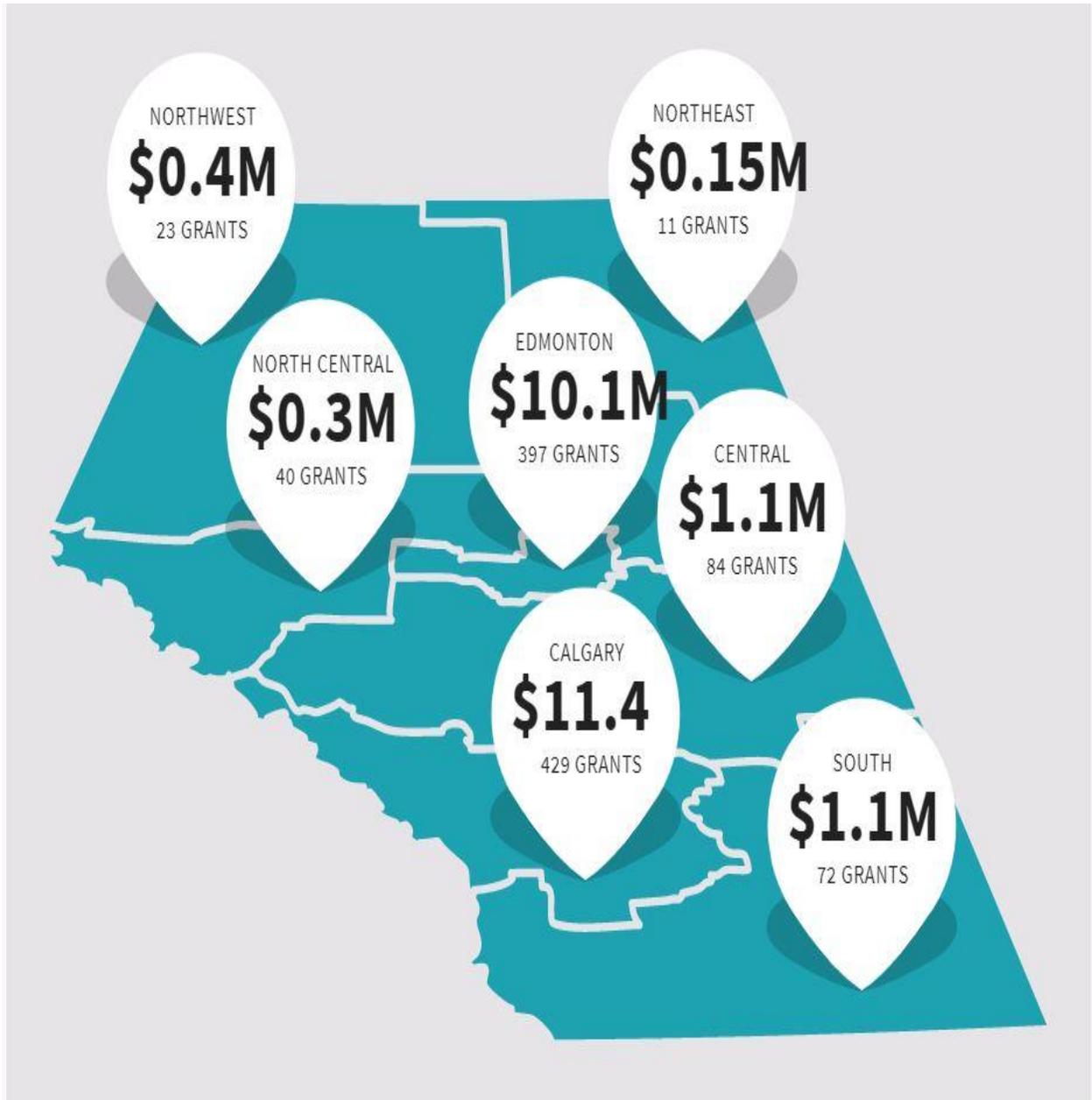


² Expenditures for each category include program support expenses.

³ Funding of \$1.67 million for Cultural Industry Grants has been transferred back to the Alberta Media Fund.

⁴ 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		\$8,674,358.63	51/51
Community Support		\$2,595,994.73	142/142
Arts Presenting		\$2,236,035.00	179/179
Public Art Galleries		\$1,900,566.56	18/18
Community Performing Arts		\$1,741,000.00	195/195
Major Arts Presenters		\$1,725,000.00	12/12
Provincial Arts Service		\$1,180,000.00	8/8
Artists and Education		\$653,872.33	96/156
Organizations Arts Projects		\$416,819.79	25/75
Summer Schools		\$370,552.99	5/6
Indigenous Arts Projects		\$96,834.00	2/4
Projects Development		\$50,000.00	1/1
Cultural Relations		\$30,152.45	4/4

Funding awarded to individuals

\$ amount (grants awarded / eligible applications)

Music		\$755,294.23	90/300
Visual Arts and New Media		\$559,137.78	58/232
Film and Video		\$441,698.25	36/189
Literary Arts		\$385,534.39	33/166
Theatre		\$240,818.52	13/55
Dance		\$240,101.50	22/75
Indigenous Arts		\$186,829.54	28/94
Travel Grant		\$83,720.18	35/62
Cultural Relations		\$13,500.00	2/2
Arts Awards		\$10,000.00	2/10

Support for Organizations

In 2019-20, support for organizations provided funding to diverse organizations across the province. AFA programs delivered 426 operating grants and 312 project grants. These programs include the Summer School Project Funding grant program.

This program helps organizations deliver residence-based art summer schools that offer:

- An arts intensive training experience in any discipline through technical skills workshops with professional artists and instructors; and
- Opportunities for young people from across the province to engage in the creative process.

In 2019-20, the AFA provided four organizations with five grants amounting to more than \$370,000. With this funding, the organizations were able to provide creative, immersive summer learning experiences for 806 youth and teens from dozens of communities.

One of those organizations is Theatre Alberta. They run the Artstrek theatre camp for teens (ages 13 to 18 years old). In the 59-year history of the program, 2019 had the highest number of

participants—355 youth. This is a nearly 50 per cent increase over the past two years.



Figure 1: Artstrek Instructor Tenaj Williams works with students. Photograph taken by Sui-Fan Wong and provided courtesy of Theatre Alberta.

Theatre Alberta has worked hard to expand the Artstrek program, and thanks to AFA funding support, Theatre Alberta says they are protected from significant financial risk while the program grows, and this allows them to focus on promoting Artstrek and creating an exceptional experience for participants.

School project grant: Red Deer College, The Writers' Guild of Alberta and YouthWrite Society Canada.

The AFA was also pleased to support the following organizations through the Summer

Support for Individuals

In 2019-20, the AFA provided 319 grants to artists working in a variety of fields.

One of those recipients was the team behind the *Sweetie Treaty Show* podcast, who received an Indigenous Individual Project Grant to produce the podcast. The Indigenous Individual Project Grant provides up to \$15,000 to support the development of an individual Indigenous artist, arts administrators, or an ensemble of artists in Alberta, by providing funding for a specific cultural or

artistic project. The team comprised a quartet of Mount Royal University students: Michael Broadfoot, Wacey Little Light, Nick Thiele and Elijah Flowers-Nelson.

The *Sweete Treaty Show* was a podcast that focused on Hip Hop and current events with an Indigenous perspective. Michael, Wacey and Elijah, the show hosts, would freestyle Hip Hop together and feature many guests who could also freestyle and/or discuss current events.



"We also built up our business skills as a team because the AFA grant forced us to make a budget, take turns working the economics of the project and to stick to it. It also allowed the Team to grow our skills together while we grow our relationships together."

Michael Broadfoot, *Sweete Treaty Show* host and producer

Figure 2: *Sweete Treaty Show*.

Back row (left to right): Nick Thiele (AKA Teealeaves), Elijah Flowers-Nelson (AKA JahhFlores), Abdi (podcast guest) and Wacey Little Light (AKA Tasty Wacey). Front row: Michael Broadfoot (AKA MC GoodMedicine).

Michael says the team saw themselves as artists who would create art together. During the run of the podcast, they were able to further develop their Hip-Hop freestyling abilities and learn new skills, such as podcast production and business skills, like budgeting, as the AFA grant requires recipients to develop and stick to a budget. The *Sweete Treaty* team members are emerging artists and their professional development was an important outcome of this grant.

During the podcast's run, the *Sweete Treaty Show* team published 34 episodes featuring 74 guests. This works out to be approximately 100 hours of content. The podcast episodes have been played over 3,000 times by people in over 50 different countries!

Core Business Two: Art Collection

Acquisition Value of AFA collection as of March 31, 2020

\$17,409,579

Number of artworks

9,223

Acquisitions

The AFA acquires artwork to support steady and diverse art collection growth.

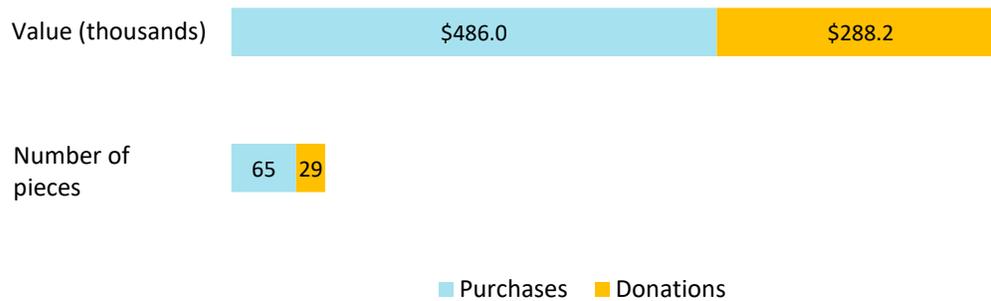
Value of new acquisitions, 2019-20

\$774,200

Number of new acquisitions

94

New acquisitions, 2019-20



Art Acquisition by Application



Figure 3: Alayne Spafford, *Fifty-51*, Acrylic, oil, collage on canvas, 2019. Collection of Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

The Art Acquisition by Application (AAA) program is a competitive program dedicated to the purchase of new Alberta artwork from individual artists.

Acquisitions through the AAA program in 2019-20 included 37 artworks by 20 artists, six of whom were not previously represented in the AFA Collection.

One of those is Alayne Spafford, an abstract artist whose work attempts to reconcile her natural tendency to organize and polish, with her strong desire to reject those principals in favour of chaos and disorder. Based in Edmonton and newly represented in the

collection, Spafford has a dedicated full-time studio art practice. The artwork shown in Figure 3 was acquired through the AAA program and is now on extended loan to the new, award-winning YW Hub facility in Calgary.

Donations

The AFA encourages artists, individual collectors, organizations and corporations to donate works of art.

In 2019-20, the AFA received a generous donation of nine paintings by Arlene Wasylynychuk, including the artwork shown in Figure 4. Wasylynychuk (1947–2012) was well known and recognized within the artistic community of Alberta. The donation is a curated selection of her work and includes early representational landscapes and abstract, highly gestural landscapes created later in her career. Through her distinct use of mark making, colour and composition, each of the works strongly evoke a sense of place, history and geography. Wasylynychuk was committed to exploring the power and complexity of the environment throughout her career. The donated works capture Alberta and British Columbia landscapes and depict her experience attending a 2003 residency at the Fundacion Valparaiso in Majácar, Spain.



Figure 4: Arlene Wasylynychuk, *Iberian Suite #3* (from the *Spanish Series*), oil on canvas, 2005. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

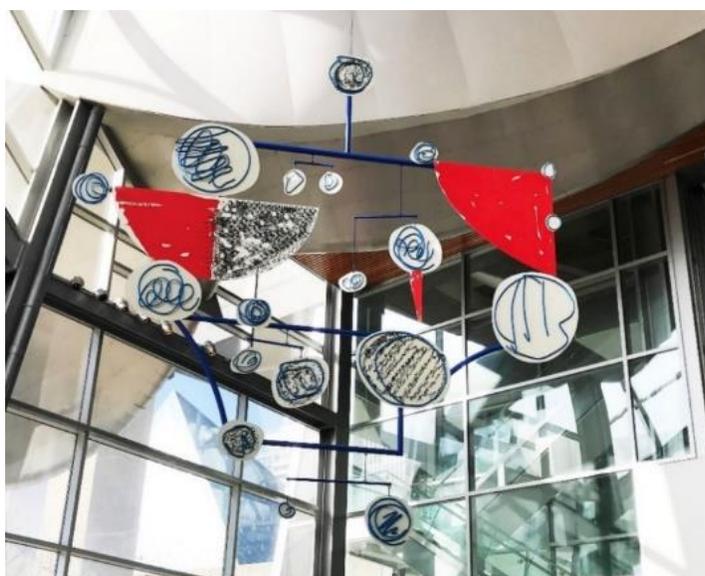


Figure 5: Damian Moppett, *Untitled Abstract Drawing in Space*, stainless steel, aluminum plates, copper pipe and enamel, 2019-2020. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Public Art Commission

The Public Art Commission program assists not-for-profit organizations to commission a specific public art project, with the intent that the final work becomes part of the AFA permanent art collection.

In 2019-20, the Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA) installed a work by artist Damian Moppett in the AGA's main foyer supported by the Public Art Commission program. The suspended mobile, entitled *Untitled Abstract Drawing in Space*, is made of stainless steel, aluminum plates, copper pipe and enamel. The shapes and

lines of the fabricated of aluminum plate have been cut, arranged and painted to recreate the quality of a spontaneous gestural drawing.

Curatorial Purchase

Each year the AFA dedicates funding to purchase works of art that address specific gaps in the collection that other acquisition programs do not easily address. In 2018-19, a special curatorial initiative was launched, to research and increase the representation of Indigenous artists in the AFA collection. Becca Taylor, who was the recipient of the Joane Cardinal-Schubert Indigenous Curator Fellowship in 2018, provided recommendations for acquisition. In 2019-20, a modest budget supported the acquisition of 23 artworks by four Indigenous emerging artists.

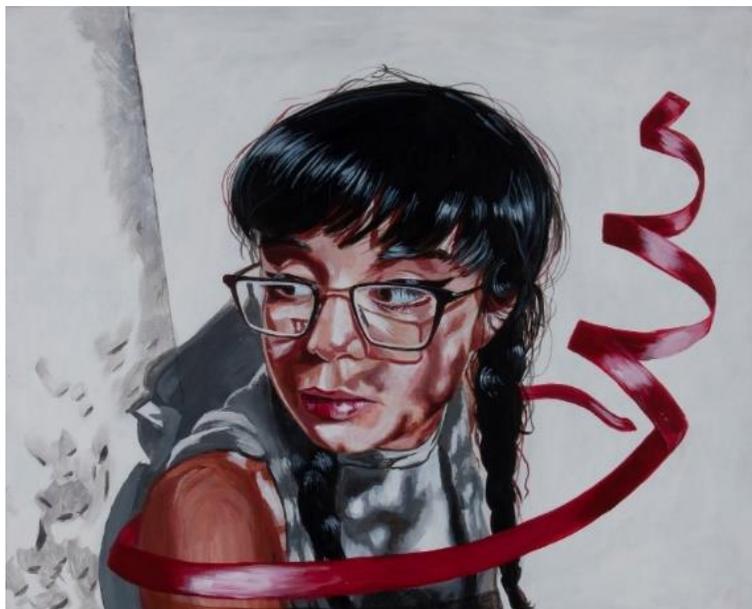


Figure 6: Lauren Crazybull, Self Portrait, acrylic on board, 2018. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

One of those emerging artists is Lauren Crazybull, a Blackfoot Dene painter, muralist, and documentarian based in Edmonton. She was named Alberta's first Artist in Residence in January 2019, and is a recent recipient of both the Eldon + Anne Foote Edmonton Visual Arts Prize (2020) and the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Emerging Artist Award (2020). The AFA acquired two portraits by Lauren Crazybull this past year; the artist was not previously represented in the collection.

Artwork Loans

The AFA shares artwork locally and abroad by working with our partners to exhibit, tour and place work in public spaces. Artworks are shared through the Art Placement, Travelling Exhibitions, and Exhibition Loans programs.

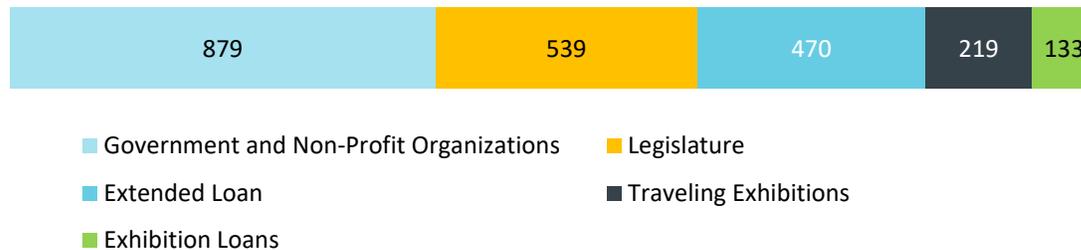
Number of artworks on display, 2019-20

2,240

Percentage of collection on display

24.3%

AFA artworks on display by program 2019-20



Art Placement

The AFA Art Placement program facilitates the display of artworks from the collection to foster public enjoyment of Alberta artwork. There are two types of eligible recipients for art placement services: government and non-profit organizations, and the Alberta Legislature.

Looking East from Pincher Creek by Douglas Barry (1923–2019) was installed in the Appeals



Figure 7: Douglas Barry, *Looking East from Pincher Creek*, acrylic on canvas, 1981. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Commission for Workers' Compensation, Edmonton building, in 2019-20. Barry was well known as a landscape painter in oil, acrylic and watercolour. After World War II, he travelled rural Alberta with fellow artists Henry G. Glyde, Harry Wolfarth and Jack

(J.B.) Taylor, providing a variety of art programs and encouraging the visual arts. *Looking East from Pincher Creek* was acquired through the Curatorial Purchase program in 1981.

Extended Loan

An extended loan is a long-term loan of artwork(s) from the AFA collection to an external client. Extended loan projects are generally site-specific and require special arrangements such as a work specifically commissioned for a building.

The AFA has entered into a partnership with the City of Edmonton to curate a selection of AFA artworks for extended loan to the city-owned and renovated Yorath House. The modernist style



home, constructed in 1949, is located in Edmonton's river valley and opened to the public in September 2019. This attractive facility is available for event rentals and hosts an artist residency program. The AFA loaned 18 site-specific artworks, curated to complement and reflect the modernist period of the home.

Figure 8: John Snow, *Suzanne*, woodcut on paper, 1950. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Travelling Exhibition Program

Venues visited by travelling exhibitions, 2019-20

177

Number of visitors

704,276

The AFA's Travelling Exhibition (TREX) program includes exhibitions in schools, libraries, health care centres, and smaller rural institutions and galleries throughout the province.

In 2019-20, the Alberta Society of Artists (Region 3) curated the TREX exhibition *Creatures*. The exhibition features 16 AFA artworks and two artworks from a private collection, representing a diverse variety of media. The curatorial theme explores our continued fascination with contemporary mythologies and fantastical beings. Jude Griebel is represented by three AFA-owned drawings, all preliminary studies for sculptural installations, which reflect his interest in "historical visualizations of the grotesque and



Figure 9: Jude Griebel, *Roundabout*, acrylic and pencil crayon on Yupo paper, 2017. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

anthropomorphic landscape paintings of the Renaissance period. The figures embody complex spaces jeopardized by industry and our shifting environments”.

The exhibition will tour throughout the province for three years.

Exhibition Loans

The AFA frequently lends artwork to cultural institutions for public exhibition.

The retrospective exhibition, *Katie Ohe*, features 10 of Ohe’s artworks from the AFA collection. Organized and hosted by the Esker Foundation Gallery in Calgary, the exhibition (January 25 to September 6, 2020) is the most in-depth and comprehensive retrospective in the artist’s lifetime. It showcases abstract sculptures by this renowned sculptor, teacher, and mentor. A celebrated master, Ohe has committed to a dedicated artistic practice for over six decades and continued to instruct at the Alberta University of the Arts into her 80s.

Katie Ohe is represented by 43 artworks in the AFA collection spanning over 50 years. *Janet’s Crown* is a tribute to Ohe’s friend and mentor, artist Janet Mitchell (1912-1998), to honour her with a crown and 80 stars to celebrate each year of her life. This is one of Ohe’s works from the AFA’s collection on loan for the Esker Foundation Gallery.



Figure 10: Katie Ohe, *Janet’s Crown*, steel, 1999. Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Core Business Three: Research and Communications

Engagement

The AFA is engaged in outreach with different facets of the broader community. Our activities range from hosting funding information sessions for artists to supporting the artistic development of Indigenous youth through the Alberta’s Future Leaders program.

Number of funding information sessions held 2019-20

8

Attendees

231

Alberta's Future Leaders

Number of arts workshops held, 2019-20

179

Attendees

1,355

The Alberta's Future Leaders (AFL) program collaborates with Indigenous communities to offer a summer youth program. Host communities invite AFL to learn about their culture and history, and to facilitate meaningful, positive experiences for youth. Youth are engaged through arts, sports, recreation, leadership and cultural activities facilitated by mentors living and working in each community from May to August.



Figure 11: A Tribe Called Red at K-Days.

The AFA hires Indigenous artists to deliver workshops in AFL communities and coordinates Arts Week, which is a retreat held in Edmonton that includes arts workshops by Indigenous artists, presentations and the Evening of the Arts showcase. The Evening of the Arts is a public event featuring an art exhibition and performances by youth who participate in the program.

The theme for the 2019 Evening of the Arts showcase was *mâmwikamâtôtân*, which in Cree means "lifting each other's spirits", and it was held at the ATB Branch for Arts + Culture in Edmonton.

One of the highlights from Arts Week was having Angela Gladue (aka Lunacee) teach a hip-hop dance workshop. After the workshop, the youth went to K-Days to see the hip-hop group A Tribe Called Red. At the show, Gladue invited three AFL participants to dance on stage with the group. It was an amazing and inspiring experience for the teens.

Communications and Social Media

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

AFA website sessions⁵, 2019-20

109,701

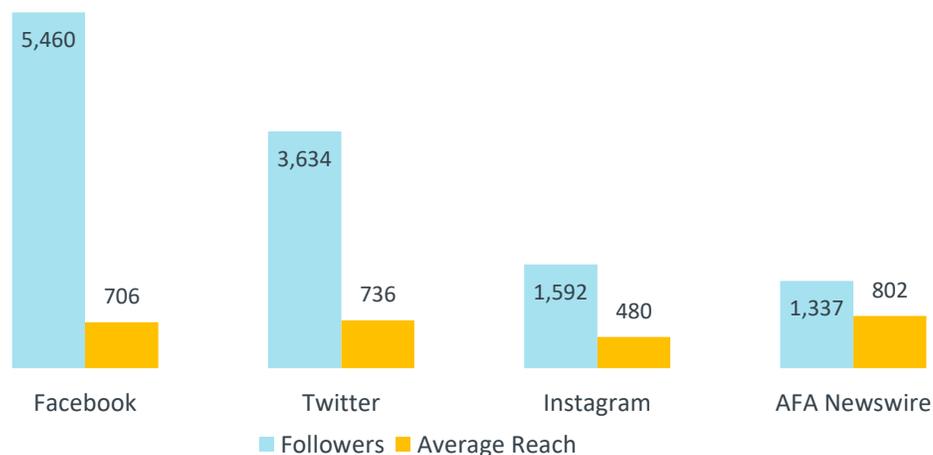
Users⁶

65,791

Community submissions for website newsfeed

637

Online engagement, 2019-20⁷



The AFA frequently uses social media to help amplify its work and share news and arts opportunities with followers.

Starting in 2019-20, AFA is increasing its focus on new, original content created in-house, such as artist profiles or curator interviews, and well-thought-out curated content, which included fun, arts-related stories and different funding opportunities. Thanks to these efforts, the AFA saw a 46 per cent increase in the reach of its posts on Facebook and Twitter.

⁵ Website sessions refers to the number of times a site was visited by individual users.

⁶ Users are the individuals participating in website sessions.

⁷ Average reach refers to the average number of users who see a unit of published content (i.e. a Facebook post, tweet, Instagram post, newswire).

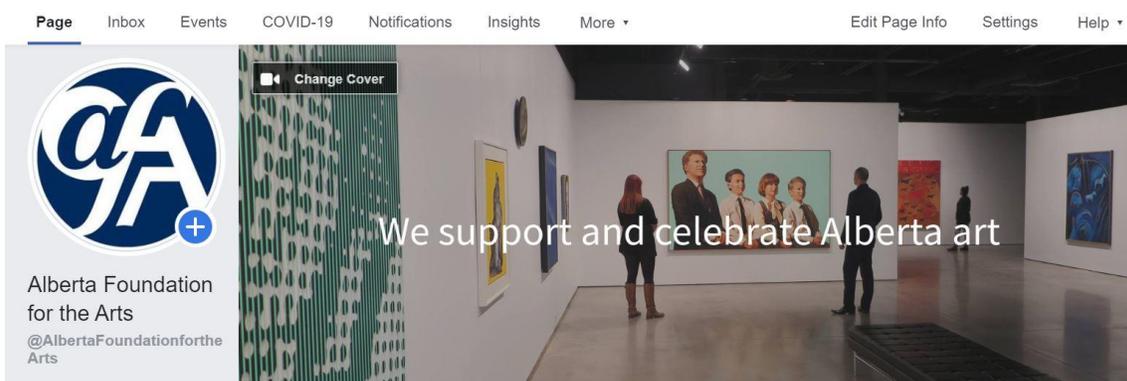


Figure 12: AFA’s Facebook profile banner.

Research

The AFA participates in efforts to evaluate the impact of arts and culture in society through specialized research projects.

In 2019-20, the AFA undertook two collaborative arts and health research projects along with, the



Figure 13: Poster for the exhibition *This Art Make Me Feel...*

Friends of University Hospitals and Alberta Health Services partners.

These projects – an exhibition titled *This Art Makes Me Feel...* and a research project exploring the perceptions of artworks in hospitals by patients and staff – examined how art

programming in hospitals can promote intellectual, emotional, and spiritual enrichment and contribute to wellness in often stressful and difficult circumstances. Through dialogue with audiences (patients, staff, and visitors), curatorial and programming decisions can be enhanced to better adapt to the needs of these populations. Interviews with audiences demonstrated the value of art in hospitals and the varied impact of specific works.

These projects provided the following information on future implications for curatorial practice:

- Audience engagement is valuable:
 - For curatorial process;
 - For evaluation; and
 - For enhancing patient, staff, and family experiences.

- Hospital art collections and galleries should consider:
 - There is no one size fits all approach;
 - Quality and condition of artworks;
 - Diversity;
 - Audiences (patients, staff, families);
 - Patient/family sensitivities; and
 - Context for placement.

These projects demonstrated that research and engagement with audiences in non-traditional museum settings can provide insights on exhibiting and programming art collections, which can help bring appropriate and engaging art to those in a hospital setting.

Note on Financial Statements

In accordance with 9(4) of the [Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act](#), financial statements are available in the Ministry of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women 2019-20 Annual Report.

Social Media Contact Information

Keep up to date with Alberta Foundation for the Arts programs and initiatives by [signing up for the AFA Newswire](#), or connect through [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#). You can also browse or share community news, events or arts opportunities on the [AFA website news feed](#).