

The first word on arts, culture and heritage in the Columbia Basin

Articulate

2025

FREE



ENSHRINED: TANYA PIXIE JOHNSON

THROUGH THE LENS: BRIAN CLARKSON

ART AND DISABILITY



Our Place. Your Pace.

WHERE TIME IS WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT.

From uncovering hidden gems crafted by our talented artisans, to exploring the kaleidoscope of murals of our vibrant community, and every brushstroke of creativity in between - live beyond the routine.

FIND YOUR RHYTHM.
nkl.t.travel/yourpace



#FINDINGAWESOME

Ainsworth Hot Springs | Balfour | East Shore | Kaslo | Nelson | North Kootenay Lake

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES



Observant *Articulate* readers—I'm sure that description applies to most of you—will notice a few things that look and feel different about this issue of the magazine. First, we're fatter: we've increased the number of pages we publish from 32 to 48, making more much-needed room for

stories and photographs. Second: we are publishing one fat issue per year, cutting back from our usual two.

Hand-in-hand with those changes is the introduction of a new feature and the reintroduction of another. The new Previews section will sample upcoming theatrical and musical events to whet your appetite. You can find the inaugural Previews starting on page 35. And Ten Tips returns in this issue, with excellent, practical suggestions (10 of them!) on how to publicize and celebrate B.C. Heritage Week in your organization and community.

I'm also excited that we are able to feature the work of two very different but equally prolific visual artists without scrimping on space. Tanya Pixie Johnson's intricate drawings, watercolours and assemblages have taken her on some interesting journeys, both interior and around the world. Cranbrook photographer Brian Clarkson has spent a lifetime recording people and places with his camera, and the last 30 years as house photographer for Key City Theatre. The images he produces are sensitive, energetic and very human.

Lastly, our events listings section has gone online, to ensure that we are able to add new, up-to-date information on cultural doings throughout the year. You can access the online events submission page here: wkcartsouncil.com/event-submission/. Speaking of which, we have engaged graphic designer Keiko Lee Hem of Keiko Creative to rebrand the print and online editions of *Articulate* to unify our presence. I hope that you like the changes—we'd love to hear your reactions.

Margaret Tessman, editor



On the Cover:
Tanya Pixie Johnson, *Tuning(in): Two eyes closed and one eye open*. Mixed media on antique ledger paper.

Articulate
MAGAZINE

The first word on arts, culture and heritage in the Columbia Basin

Community Snapshots	4
Creative Journey: Shannon Fraser	8
Rhythm By Nature: Patrick Carrick	10
On Stage: Celebration of India	14
Re-emerging: Sinixt Artists	16
Televised: <i>Southern Interior</i>	18
Art & Disability	21
Access & Equity: Pathways Program	24
Cover Story: Tanya Pixie Johnson	26
Picture This: Brian Clarkson	32
Ten Tips: B.C. Heritage Week	35
Previews: Upcoming Productions	36
On His Own Terms: Ernest Hekkanen	38
New & Noteworthy: Book & CD Reviews	40
Last Word: Editorial	46

2025
ISSUE #46

Editor: Margaret Tessman

Contributors:

Jennifer Dunkerson, Bre Harwood, Ryan Hunt, Ian Johnston, Sean Arthur Joyce, Erin Knutson, Kallee Lins, Susan Little, Moe Lyons, Bill Macpherson, Corrina Mae, Zaynab Mohammed, Maggie Shirley, Carla Stephenson, Erich Stoffels, Margaret Tessman, Galadriel Watson.

Design: Guy Hobbs

Proofreader: Anne Champagne

Project Management/Sales:
Kallee Lins

ISSN #1709-2116
Articulate is produced in
Nelson as a project of the
West Kootenay Regional Arts Council:
ph: 250-352-2421
email: articulate@wkcartsouncil.com

The West Kootenay Regional Arts Council acknowledges the generous support of the following funders and corporate sponsors:



Printing generously supported by:

MITCHELL

Reasonable care is taken to ensure that *Articulate* content is current and as accurate as possible at the time of publication, but no responsibility can be taken by *Articulate* or the West Kootenay Regional Arts Council for any errors or omissions contained herein, nor for any losses, damages or distress resulting from adherence to any information provided. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of *Articulate*, the West Kootenay Regional Arts Council or funders and supporters.

Copyright: The contents of *Articulate* magazine are protected by copyright and may be used only for personal, non-commercial purposes. All other rights are reserved and commercial uses, including publication, broadcast or redistribution in any medium, are prohibited. Permission to copy must be sought from the copyright owner. Contributors retain the copyright of their original work. By submitting work to *Articulate* for publication, contributors are granting permission to *Articulate* for one-time use in the print and digital/online versions.

The Aunte Indigenous Residency



Anishnaabe artist Jayme Campbell at The Aunte. Painting by Tlingit artist-in-residence Guná Megan Jensen. Photo: Zoya Lynch

by Moe Lyons

The Aunte Indigenous Residency is a non-profit artist residency that launched in New Denver in July 2024. The program was founded by Jaymie Campbell and is led by a developing board of primarily Indigenous women and under-represented artists. Situated in a renovated building behind Campbell's home, a few hundred metres from Slocan Lake, it offers a unique opportunity for Indigenous artists across the full spectrum of disciplines.

The residency features exhibition space, a workshop area and two conjoined suites for visiting artists. "Inspired by hearing stories across our communities of residencies that didn't focus on our well-being over the production of work, we built a space to cultivate a supportive ecosystem where collective knowledge and creativity can flourish," says Campbell.

According to The Aunte's promotional material, "Through a variety of initiatives such as workshops, training programs, mentorship opportunities and collaborative projects, we provide artists with the resources and support they need to develop their craft and enhance their professional skills."

The Aunte was named to honour Indigenous women and their role in our communities, a play on words from the phrase "the aunties upping the ante." Campbell acknowledges her great debt to the women who came before her and who continue to sit alongside the project.

"I am passionate about our inherent rights and how we assert these," she says. "We want to provide spaces for people to do that work how they want to do it. The practice of art is an inherent right. Art is healing our communities and is an expression of our relationship to the land and each other." She stresses that she did not do this alone. "This happened with a great, supportive team and an engaged arts community and was also led by our ancestors."

The board members of the organization represent areas of expertise including visual arts, writing, governance, land-based knowledge and curatorial skills. Campbell says that The Aunte is essentially operating with the age-old concept of "knowledge keepers."

The Aunte currently plans to offer eight residencies per year, in the spring and fall, which will be available to both established and emerging artists. The intent is to pay artists in residence a stipend, as many artists work other jobs to support themselves and cannot afford to take time off for the development of their art. Initially, artists will be chosen by an advisory council, but eventually past artists will help choose those who come subsequently, so that participants are chosen by their peers. Summer and winter will have different residency program offerings, focused on community building, governance development and partnership.

To find out more, visit theaunte.com.

Harrison Memorial Cultural Centre

by Margaret Tessman

Harrison Memorial Church has been a fixture in the East Shore community of Crawford Bay for over 100 years. The church was constructed in 1920 by Commander Matthew Harrison in memory of his departed family: two sons who were killed in the First World War; a young son who died from scarlet fever; and his wife of 45 years, Lucy.

Groups from any recognized denomination were welcome to use the church for worship, and it later became part of the Anglican Diocese of Kootenay. It also has a noteworthy association with the Crawford Bay Women's Institute, which was started by Harrison's daughter Anne in 1926, and which cared for the church until 1974.

In 2020 the deconsecrated church came up for sale. Historically, the church had been used for occasional concerts, so it felt important to maintain it as a performance venue. Support from the community slowly grew and the ArtConnect Society was formed. A mortgage was secured, and the building was finally purchased in November 2021.

Now renamed the Harrison Memorial Cultural Centre, the building retains its original stained-glass windows and a two-storey bell tower. A building inspection has shown it to be in excellent condition, although it lacked amenities such as an indoor toilet and air conditioning. Challenges included navigating through COVID and ongoing fundraising to pay down the mortgage and make needed alterations.

The society's first event was a Christmas concert in 2021. Since then, it has sponsored performances and art shows and has gradually built up membership and participation. The goals for this year include more connection with local Indigenous groups and expanding the use of the building for poetry readings, book launches and art shows, as well as continuing with a successful series of musical performances. The venue draws audiences from neighbouring East Shore communities, and from as far afield as Wynndel and Creston.

ArtConnect Society president and artistic director Zora Doval calls the process of acquiring the building as "quite an odyssey." She says that the building evoked for her memories of growing up in Europe, where each village had its church that was always open for people to come in and meditate or sing. "I have a sense of history and respect and gratitude for the past," she says. Doval hopes that the vision for the venue will expand to include "other muses," such as healing arts, community forums and cinema nights. "Some musicians just want to play in our venue for its acoustic qualities. Several groups have rented the building for recording sessions and a film shoot."

On December 4, a Ukrainian cultural gala is planned, with traditional food and fusion folk music. And on December 22, the annual community Christmas concert will take place.



July 2024 Harrison Cultural Centre concert with folk duo Wherzpeter. Performers are drawn to the venue by its excellent acoustics. Photo: Lorna Robin

Lorna Robin, the society's publicity director, says that "Zora has been able to secure some wonderful performances, and the Harrison now is on the map with performers contacting us. The acoustics of the building are outstanding, and performers constantly comment on that, as well as their enjoyment of the beautiful and intimate space."

Website: artconnect.cc

Quilting as an Art Form

by Erin Knutson and Susan Little



"I Quilt" exhibit at the Cranbrook Arts 1401 Gallery.
Photo: Cranbrook Quilters' Guild

In 2022, the Cranbrook Arts 1401 Gallery hosted a groundbreaking exhibit entitled "I Quilt." This exhibit not only celebrated the unique and innovative quilting techniques of the Cranbrook Quilters' Guild (CQG) members but also left the audience intrigued and inspired by their exceptional creativity and skill.

"I Quilt" marked a significant milestone for quilting in Cranbrook, where quilts and smaller quilted pieces were seen as art. "With its distinctive approach to preserving the art of quilting, the Guild firmly established itself as a beacon of the craft," said CQG member Susan Little.

The CQG reached out to the Columbia Basin Institute of Regional History (CBIRH) to build a virtual exhibit documenting their journey as a guild.

With the successful launch of the online exhibit (cranbrookquiltersguildhistory.ca), the CBIRH and the CQG have effectively brought the rich history and art of quilting to a global audience, fostering connections among enthusiasts and historians worldwide.

The historical Guild website showcases the contributions made by the Guild and its members to the broader Cranbrook community since its inception in 1985. The work on this site was funded by the Columbia Basin Trust, the Regional District of East Kootenay, ReDi Grant contributions from the City of Cranbrook, Electoral Area C and E and entailed many hours of donated time.

Viewers can scroll through the CQG's narrative and witness the evolution of the art of quilt-making. From its humble beginnings as a gathering place to learn and share quilting skills to hosting workshops and building a reference library, the CQG has emerged as a significant and respected member of the East Kootenay regional community.

Through their dedication and skill, these women have donated thousands of quilts to local social and health services and to individuals affected by natural disasters and personal tragedies. The Guild's significant participation in national and international campaigns such as Rotaplast and Quilts of Valour reflects their strong community spirit, global impact and the importance of mixing art with utilitarianism. These heartwarming stories and more are viewable in the exhibit.

The CBIRH is a non-profit digital historical organization that collaborates with nine community partners and museums from throughout the Columbia Basin. It has also collaborated with groups as diverse as the City of Cranbrook, School District No. 5 and *Trench* magazine, and has published two volumes of East Kootenay history: *Forgotten Cranbrook* and *Forgotten Kimberley*.

The public can also view the exhibit at cranbrookquiltersguildhistory.ca or under "Exhibits" on the CBIRH website, basininstitute.org. Donations are welcome to help support the critical work of preserving our shared history of arts and culture. Historical photographs can be purchased through the CBIRH online kiosk for print or digital copy.



All Aboard

Erich Stoffels' mural at Fernie's Station Square celebrates public art and the age of steam.
Photo: Erich Stoffels

by Erich Stoffels

I use spray paint, I use brushes, I even use my hands. Whatever it takes to achieve what I'm looking for in my paintings, I'll try at least once. People have been painting on walls since the dawn of time. So really, am I just following an instinctual reflex, or is it something else? I believe it's both. I have a passion for painting that makes me feel like nothing else matters. I submerge myself in my art and the world stands still. Minutes, hours, days, it doesn't matter how long it takes, I gain immense joy from creating. If even one person finds joy or inspiration in my work, it just makes it all the better. I feel the world is improved when there is art, so just like cave people, I leave my mark everywhere I go.

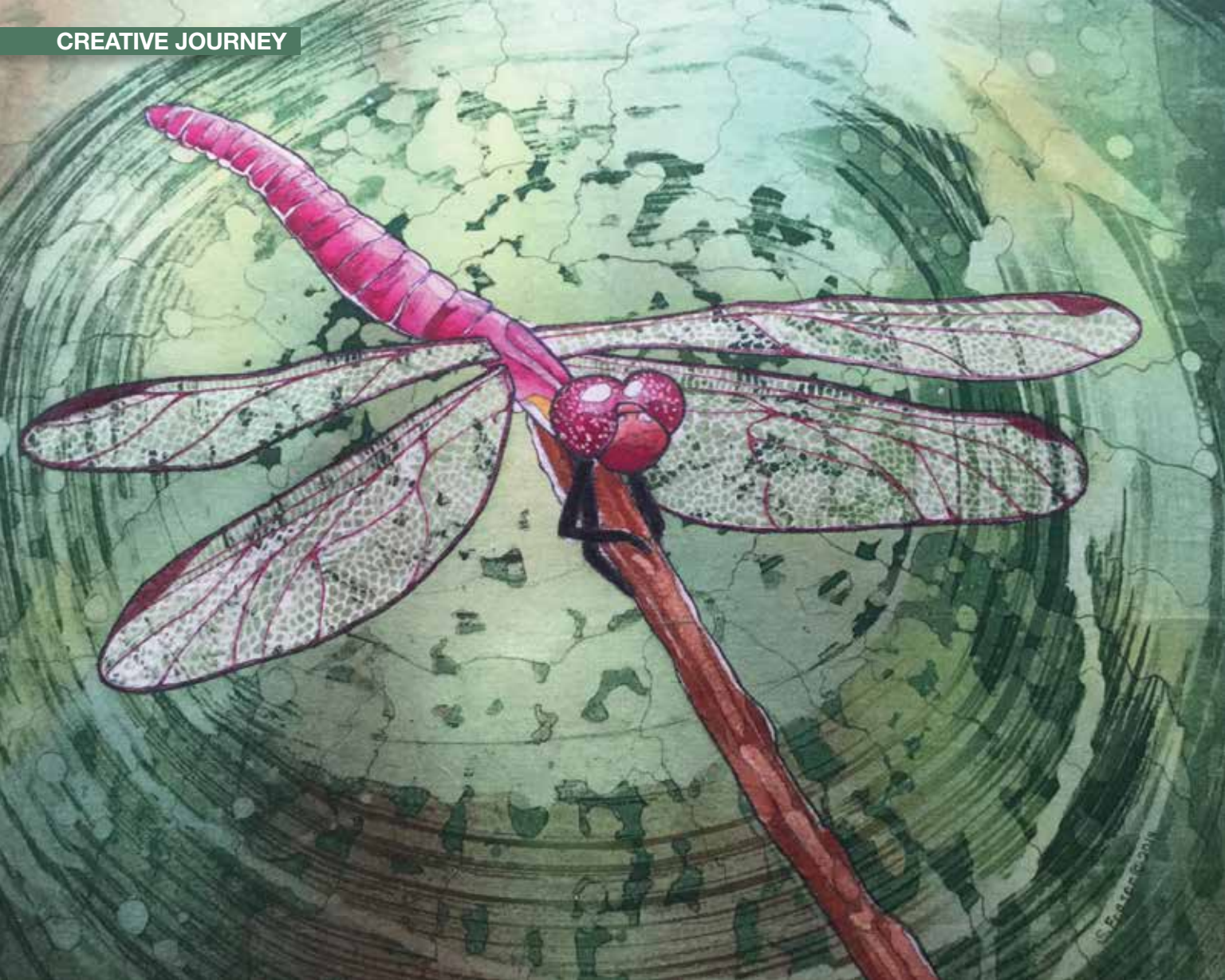
In addition to my love of painting, I have always loved trains, so when I heard there was a mural installation planned at the Station Square in Fernie, my eyes lit up. *All Aboard* incorporates the style of steam engine reminiscent of the ones that would have last chugged through Fernie before they switched to

diesel engines in 1951. The train depicted has a typical CPR paint job for that time. The steam in the painting consists of overlapping poppies in a variety of reds, all shaded to appear as though they are flowing out of the train and off the wall. The poppies are to commemorate the men, women and service animals that were lost in service to our country.

The train itself is, to me, a symbol of this community and all of British Columbia. Without those first steam engines, Fernie would not have been able to grow into the community it is today. They brought people, they brought supplies, and they brought community. They were used to move coal and lumber out of the valley, just like the diesel engines do today.

Instagram: @coasts.creatures

The Fernie Mural Project was made possible through grant funding to the Fernie & District Arts Council from the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance and the Resort Municipality Initiative, with additional support from Fernie Legion Branch #36.



Shannon Fraser

The healing art of colour

by Margaret Tessman

Fabric artist Shannon Fraser describes herself as “a little old lady who lives in the wilderness in the mountains on a lake near Kimberley,” but she is so much more than that.

A former registered nurse who was forced to abandon her career due to illness, Fraser found her artistic self as she worked through the lengthy process of healing from chronic fatigue syndrome. “While trying to heal, I decided to use the creative part of my brain to give myself hope and passion,” she says. “Colour therapy was one of the modalities I used to help with the healing process. Colour has powerful energy frequencies that affect us on many levels.”

Fraser began her creative journey by learning to weave baskets, then dabbled in oil, acrylic and watercolour painting, and eventually gravitated to batik, which she had first fallen in love with during her travels around Southeast Asia in the 1970s. Batik is an ancient art form that uses hot wax as a resist and fabric dye for colour. While visiting Thailand in 2009, Fraser encountered a women’s group on a small island teaching basic batik, and her passion was ignited.

Wanting to learn more, she returned the following year to Bangkok, where she was given a two-week private course with a local artist, Jaa. Fraser then found artist Kiranada Sterling Benjamin, who taught the ancient Japanese batik techniques ro-kata and rozome. She then studied one-on-one in Toronto with Ugandan-Canadian artist David Kibuuka. Kibuuka specializes in batik portraiture and what he calls

a “modern batik” technique. To add even further to her repertoire, Fraser learned gyotaku, Japanese fish rubbing, from Mya DeRyan. Fraser’s piece combining batik with a fish rubbing using a local trout won an honourable mention at a local juried art exhibit.

“I finally had all the tools I needed to get going, so my very supportive husband built me an art studio,” she says.

However, everything changed when Fraser’s friend Colleen Bowers of We Be Jammin asked her to tie-dye a tablecloth for her market table. She discovered a new passion when she saw the joy that her colourful tie-dye garments brought to people, especially during the bleak days of the pandemic. Fraser advocates for tie-dye as a legitimate art form and had a month-long solo exhibition of her framed tie-dye art and functional pieces at Centre 64 in 2023. She has opened her studio during the Columbia Basin Culture Tour and continues to sell her work at markets and the Two J’s Café in Kimberley. Fraser particularly loves it when kids come into her farmers market tent with big smiles and make a 360-degree turn, taking in all the colours.

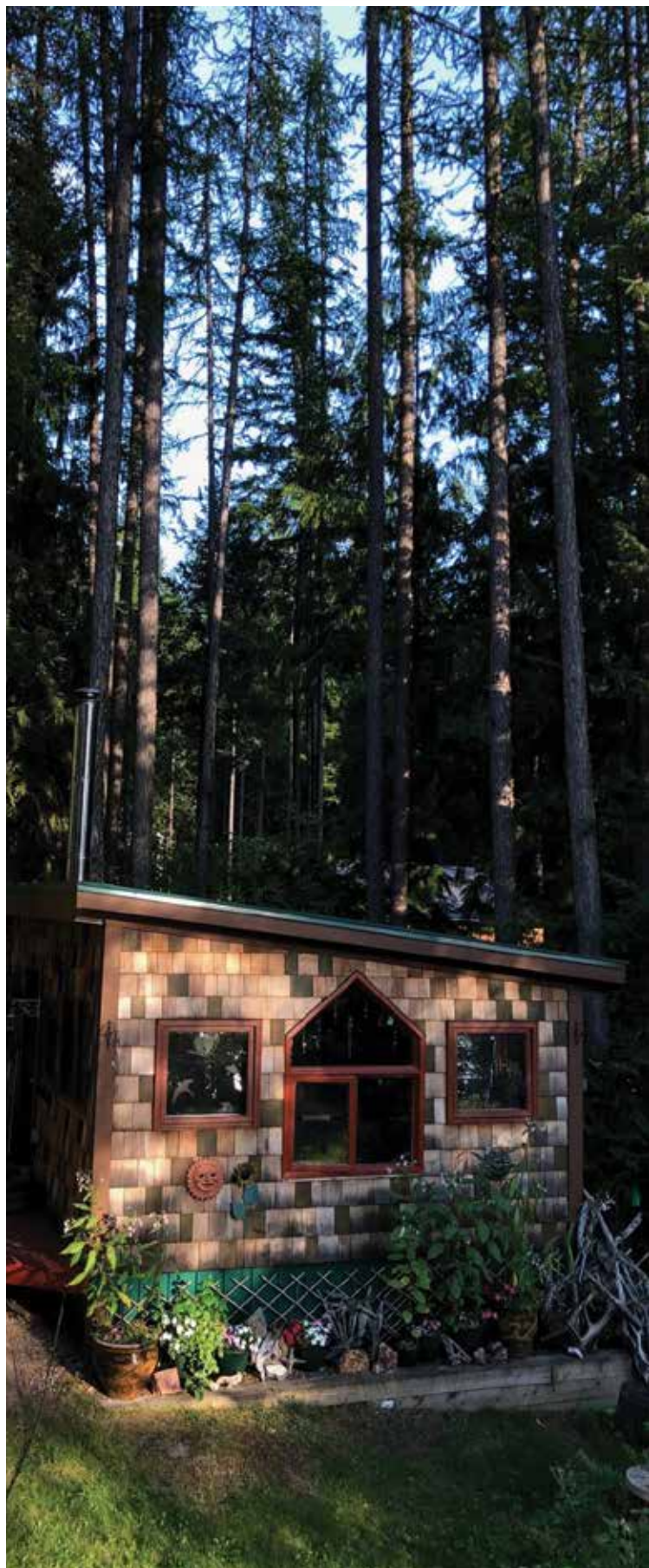
Fraser continues to evolve by learning and applying new techniques and ideas to her repertoire. The latest design she has been working on is created with an ice dye technique. By adding ice to a powdered fabric dye blend, the dye splits and creates beautifully unexpected variations of colour.

Living and working off the beaten track is just the way Fraser likes it. As she walks through the forest around her studio every day, she gathers inspiration from her wilderness home.

Facebook: Tie Dye by Shani



Left: Dragonfly batik
Above: Shannon has been experimenting with ice dye. This T-shirt shows one of the beautiful results.
Right: Shannon’s husband built her sweet studio in the woods.
Photos: Shannon Fraser



By the Beat of the Drum

Patrick Garrick at the Destination BC Tourism Showcase in Invermere.
Photo: Nora Moll

Collective drumming empowers individuals and cultivates connections

by Galadriel Watson

Amongst wildflowers or at the base of a snowy slope. In a school gym or in a city park. Such settings may not have much in common, except when Patrick Carrick encourages people there to sit in a circle, equips them with hand drums and with gentle guidance allows the participants' own rhythms to arise.

"By the end, you can see a transformation that's happened," Carrick says. "A lot of people get surprised with how much joy and connection they receive from drumming."

Through his business, Rhythm By Nature, based out of his home in Radium Hot Springs, Carrick travels the Columbia Basin and beyond to bring the joy of drumming to folks of all ages and abilities—no musical background required. "I love it, and I want to share it with more and more people."

Originally from Australia, Carrick has been drumming since he was about 14. The piano, guitar and flute are also among his talents, but "drums have always been my favourite." He studied

music in university and began a career playing with musicians live and in studio, creating small ensembles and teaching the drum kit. In search of the thrill of mountains and snow, he found himself in Canada, where he has now settled with his wife and their children.

Early jobs in Canada included working in hospitality and as a musician. He also taught music privately. However, "I had a few people come to me wanting to learn to play various hand drums, and I didn't have a huge amount of experience in that."

To boost his knowledge, he trained with Calgary's Circles of Rhythm, and then with Australia's Rhythm2Recovery. "It was less about the instruction of drumming," Carrick says, "and more about the communal experience of drumming." He learned that rhythm can even help people struggling with issues like trauma, depression or addiction. "That really opened my eyes."

These days, Carrick continues to play for a variety of bands as a drummer-for-hire and works with promising young artists as they develop their careers. The core of his time, though, is spent with Rhythm By Nature.

He may find himself handing out drums at a corporate team-building event, community festival, wellness centre or even a



Patrick teaching at the Headbanger Festival in Radium Hot Springs.
Photo: Richard Leger

wedding ceremony. “There’s really no limit to where this can be applied,” he says. “I’ve done all kinds.”

Part of his wide-reaching appeal is the fact that the drumming he introduces is culturally inclusive. Many people think of Indigenous drumming and might wonder if a non-Indigenous person taking part is appropriating this important cultural heritage. However, Carrick’s approach doesn’t focus on any one culture, tradition or technique.

“It really highlights everyone’s ancestry,” he says. “As a species, we’ve been using drums for as long as we’ve really been on the planet. We’ve used drums for celebration, for ceremony, for songs of war. We’re gifted with rhythm before we even take our first breath. It’s instilled in us.” Your own ancestors likely drummed in some way or another. “The drums that I use are modelled after drums from many different cultures around the world,” such as those from Africa, South America, Australia, Europe and Asia.

Obtaining this wide range of drums has been the work of many years. He credits the Columbia Valley Arts Council for obtaining a grant from the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance in 2018, which enabled it to purchase drums that Carrick then used to deliver free programs to the community. He has since purchased these drums from the council.

He’s also endorsed by the Remo company, based in the United States. Its drums are “very high quality; they’re very strong,” he says. They can be easily repaired if need be, and stored without damage in plus 40 C weather, or minus 40—an essential as Carrick travels through the Basin.

Some of this travel will be taking place this winter, as Carrick already has contracts to visit eight schools over the school year. Gathering with children is especially fun and rewarding. “I think it’s so valuable to be working with young people, to get to them early, to instill confidence, to empower them,” he says.

At first, the playing may sound like random pops of popcorn, but soon the students’ playing unifies. And then, when the music ends, “there’s silence. And you can see it in their faces, in their body language, that something special just happened.”

At the other end of the energy spectrum are retreats, where Carrick may introduce his drumming between yoga sessions or during forest therapy. “I love the very low and calming energy that’s required for a retreat of some kind.” He may even place the drum near a participant’s back, letting the instrument’s low-frequency sound send out vibrations. “It’s like rhythmic acupuncture without contact.”



Bird’s-eye view of a team-building event at Radius Retreat, Radium Hot Springs.
Photo: Matt Loyola

He’s also about to launch his second CKCA-funded Community Drumming Tour, which will bring him and his drums to several communities in the Basin, likely in spring 2025. “The first tour I went on” (in fall 2023) “was wildly successful. I invite the entire community to come and experience drumming—doesn’t matter who you are. If you’ve never touched a drum before in your life, it doesn’t matter.”

Rhythm By Nature’s goal is to empower people, to get them out of their shell and through the drum to enable them to use their individual voices. They needn’t even participate but can simply watch. If someone closes their eyes, their imagination may take over and “you really go to a place of something very ancient, something very ancestral. That really brings out emotions.”

Many participants end a session filled with curiosity: What just happened? Others abound with gratitude. “There’s a lot of surprise, a lot of thanking, which I love. I have an attitude of gratitude myself.” Learn more at rhythmbynature.ca.



Art Gallery Kimberley

At “The Laundromat”

Original fine, functional, and decorative art by Canadian artists specializing in the Kootenays: nature, wildlife, and small-town living. We strongly believe that art is for everyone - the art experience at Art Gallery Kimberley is easygoing, entertaining, and essential! Also, it’s more fun than doing laundry.

Art Gallery | Gift Shop | Huckleberry Books | Monthly changing exhibitions | Venue rental



Artist Sam Crawford adds a creative touch to the **Kimberley Platzl Cuckoo Clock** restoration project.

Together, we're ensuring that creativity has a place to grow, **for generations to come.**

Discover how we're supporting arts and culture projects: ourtrust.org/arts.



Columbia Basin Trust is grateful to operate on the unceded traditional territories of the Ktunaxa, Lheidli T'enneh, Secwépemc, Sinixt and Syilx Nations.

Celebrating India's Heritage in Nelson

by Corrina Mae

Reflecting on her life in Hyderabad, India, Surya Sameera Gonella remembers gathering at local temples and city halls for large celebrations involving her entire community. “We celebrate with lots of dance and music. Everyone gets to enjoy!” she says.

Celebrating her heritage continues to be of significant value to Gonella. In January 2024, she and her family travelled back to southern India for Sankranti, a celebration of the sun deity Surya. They flew kites and won second place in a rangoli competition, a traditional Indian art form typically drawn on a floor or tabletop or outside of entrances to welcome gods and good fortune.

As a Nelson resident for almost a decade, Gonella has connected with many Kootenay residents who value the diverse country of India. After she attended A Journey Through Las America, a fundraising event featuring the cultures of Latin America at Nelson's Capitol Theatre in the fall of 2023, she felt inspired to showcase the “roots, traditions and culture” of her own Indian heritage. Her vision has led to the birth of A Celebration of India, a two-hour journey into the culture of India, which will take place on April 12, 2025, at the Capitol.

Gonella initially reached out to her close friend and organizer of A Journey Through Las America, Taina Gaitan, to share her adoration for Gaitan's cultural celebration and explain that she would love to organize a similar event. Gaitan, a Capitol Theatre board member, told Gonella to “go ahead, and we will support you.”

As A Celebration of India started to become a reality, Gonella collaborated with the Capitol on the project. While recognizing that it is very difficult to highlight the vastness of India in just two hours, Gonella has focused on capturing the varied traditions and ethnicities that comprise Indian culture. “I know there are so many people in Nelson that I've met who have been to India and have lived there for quite a bit. But for the others it [Indian culture] can be superficial, so I think knowing more would be much better,” says Gonella.

Anneke Rosch is the Capitol's Community Engagement and Outreach manager. She started her position in early September 2024, and despite still feeling new, she appreciates the opportunity to connect with community groups and collaborate with event organizers, like Gonella, throughout the logistical process. In her new role Rosch looks forward to “investigating what people in the community are looking for from the Capitol Theatre. The theatre belongs to the whole community and productions are a fun way to showcase our diversity.”



“I am hopeful that everyone in Nelson, both from the Indian community and in every community, gets to appreciate the culture, learn about it and celebrate it.” Rosch continues, “If we wanted to cover everything, I think we would need to have a thirty-two-part show.”

Rosch is a founding member of the Oxygen Orkestar, a Balkan brass group, and is a board member of the Overture Concerts Society, a local organization promoting classical music in the community. Being a musician herself, she is “passionate about participating in the arts and involving people in all aspects of theatre.” While understanding that performing in front of an audience is not for everyone, she explains that the behind-the-scenes work in theatre, such as staging, technical and set design “can be a fun way to get people involved in production and build our community.”

Gonella has become more connected with the city's Indian youth population since meeting other Indian families in Nelson. She describes many as being exceptionally talented and passionate about integrating their heritage into their lives. One local Selkirk College student who is the daughter of a friend told Gonella that she continues to follow her culture's calendar and observe Indian celebrations. "Every state in India has its own New Year so there are lots of celebrations throughout the year," Gonella says. "New Year is in April for me."

Gonella and Rosch are excited to provide an opportunity to present these talented vocalists, instrumentalists, dancers and performers as part of the celebration. One of Gonella's major goals for this event has been to connect with people from the community who are from various states in India. Her intention is to create a secularistic event to recognize the diversity of traditions, textiles and cuisines throughout the country. "It's not about one community, it's about the whole country," Gonella says.

The Capitol Theatre released a call-out for video auditions to the community in October. The performers will be "local to the Nelson community and are professionals in their field, representing different regions of India," Rosch explains.

Throughout the organizing process, Gonella has felt motivated and excited, largely due to the enthusiasm of friends and the overall community. "I met with some of my friends, and I got to know that, yes, we can do this. They were very enthusiastic to perform and involve themselves," she says.

"It's going to be fun, it's going to be interesting and there's going to be food!" says Rosch.

With this in mind, Gonella connected with Kootenay Tamil Kitchen, a family-owned and operated South Indian restaurant based in Nelson. Founded by chef Ciraj Premanantham and his wife Martina, Kootenay Tamil Kitchen serves authentic and healthy recipes that have been passed down in the couple's families for generations. They will be serving finger foods throughout the celebration, so that guests have an opportunity to experience a variety of authentic Indian cuisine.

Join Nelson's vibrant Indian community in celebrating the medley of traditions, tunes and textiles that defines India's heritage, and indulge in the abundant flavours of the Eastern world.

Tickets to A Celebration of India can be purchased online through the Capitol Theatre website, capitoltheatre.ca.



Do you love:

Arts, culture & heritage?
Articulate magazine?

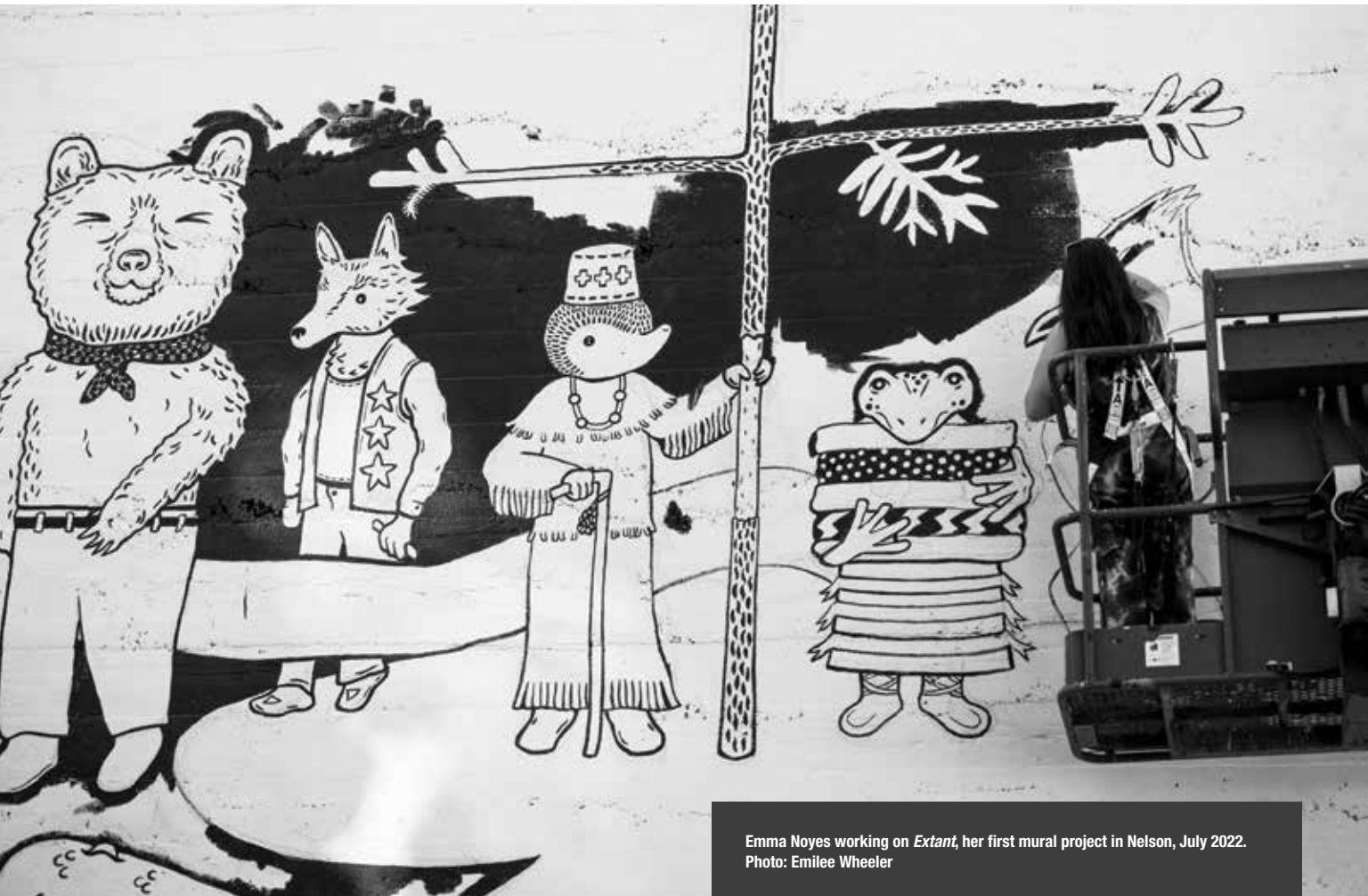
*Then join Articulate's new
editorial advisory committee!*

We're looking for volunteers who wish to provide input to help shape future content, both online and in print.



Express your interest! Email: director@wkartscouncil.com

We Have Always Been Here



Emma Noyes working on *Extant*, her first mural project in Nelson, July 2022.
Photo: Emilee Wheeler

Sinixt artists reclaiming their traditional territory

by Bill Macpherson

It is appropriate that some of this story is being written on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada, September 30. The national holiday focuses on recognizing past injustices and behaviours while moving forward in the future.

While the recognition is sorely belated and relatively insignificant given the scope of actions taken in colonizing Indigenous peoples across this country, it is a small step forward. Many larger, concrete actions need to occur concurrently and continually.

One of the gravest miscarriages of justice was the 1956 declaration by the Canadian government that the Sinixt people were extinct in Canada. To learn of it from the perspective of those impacted, readers should visit the Sinixt Confederacy's website, sinixt.com, click on the link *We Have*

Always Been Here and read the *Historical Timeline*. Indeed, explore the entire website to enhance your knowledge and understanding.

With their nation's validity and rights re-established in Canada as ruled in the April 2021 Supreme Court of Canada decision *R. v. Desautel*, the Sinixt (Lakes, Arrow Lakes are other names often used historically) peoples are re-establishing themselves in what has always been their traditional territory.

And, as part of their methodical, meticulous approach to establishing this right, undertaken over decades and decades, cultural activities are integral. It's been a generational process, and younger Sinixt artists are making their mark on ancestral territory previously known only through the stories, songs and remembrances of their elders.

Emma Noyes is a visual artist, an author, a full-time research director and the mother of two small children. She grew up in Omak, Washington, located on the northwestern edge of the Colville Reserve; now she lives and works in Spokane. Her father Stephen Noyes is an artist also. He, along with other

Sinixt artists like Ric Gendron, has been a huge influence on her.

“Dad was one of the first students at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, from 1963 to 1964,” says Noyes. “His experience there launched him as an artist. His understanding of the many variations of native art experienced through living and working in the Southwest and Northwest were hugely influential on him and subsequently on me, as was my understanding growing up of our history and the experience of living in diaspora. I am thankful for those who have done so much towards overcoming the impacts of Sinixt displacement, always being resolute in sharing our history and culture and moving forward toward recognition and reconnection to our way of life.”

Noyes notes that there are still many areas in Sinixt territory she has yet to see. “My great-grandparents spent time in the Revelstoke area, but it is part of our territory that I don’t really know.”

Nelson is more familiar. Noyes has worked here on several occasions. Recently, she attended the Elephant Mountain Literary Festival as an invited author, sharing poetry, sitting on a panel, hosting a sold-out workshop and enjoying the vibe.

“It’s a place that is welcoming to artists and Sinixt people. For me, it is a truth-telling place—somewhere that the groundworks have been laid by the arts community and the Sinixt Confederacy.

“I’ve done installations and murals in various locations. Currently, I’m working with Nelson Public Library staff and three other Sinixt artists designing illustrated banners that will enhance the outside of the library.”

Two of Noyes’ Nelson works can be found at the Capitol Theatre: the black and white, appropriately titled *Extant* mural on the back of the theatre and a stylized, interactive “lodge pole” at the front entrance. Another of her distinctive murals adorns a wall at Selkirk College’s Tenth Street campus.

“My art is an expression of the Sinixt experience in a contemporary style. I try to project the joy and beauty of tradition, the land and the world around us as a people.”

Back home, she’s working with the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture and the Washington State Historical Society on two of her many concurrent projects.

Even with all of this on the go, she stays connected with other Sinixt artists like filmmaker Derrick LaMere, musician and spoken-word artist James Pakootas, musician Tony Louie and others.

Of the ideas and goal sharing among Sinixt artists, Noyes says, “Emergence is the word that best describes it. Our desire to create regardless of the genre is strong. There’s a shared responsibility for all of us to work collectively in determining where art lines up in terms of governance, promotion of growth, rights and society.”

Filmmaker Derrick LaMere (he executive produced, edited and shot much of the documentary *Older Than the Crown*;

it aired on PBS and can be viewed on the Sinixt website) is in complete agreement.

“Even though our mediums are quite different, the intentions and goals are the same. I grew up on the Colville Reservation. As a youth, I often wondered about my grandparents’, and their parents’, way of life in the northern part of our territory.

“Coming to Kaslo with Tony [a week-long stint at Propel Studios funded in part by the Nelson & District Arts Council; James Pakootas joined them for part of it] to film, make music, record, it was something of a revelation.”

LaMere was in the area again in late September, attending the second annual STOODIS (native slang, a contraction of “Let’s do this!”) Indigenous Film Festival that showcased *Older Than the Crown*.

He likes to work independently when possible but understands collaboration is often critical. He uses music from Sinixt artists frequently in his films, and, like them, wants to amplify the history, culture and pride of his people through his chosen medium.

Last October, the Sinixt Confederacy opened an office at #202-514 Vernon Street in Nelson. It encourages all to stop by to learn about the history and story they have to tell. Their message and credo is straightforward: We are Sinixt. We are still here.

Artists are playing a big part in making that known.





Left to right: Aidan Croskrey, Bohdan Doval, Amy Bohigian, Matthew Anderson.
Photo: Elora Braden

Southern Interior

Real life on the small screen

by Bre Harwood

"You know that when goats show up to your set, it's getting real." Amy Bohigian

Southern Interior, coming out later this year, is a TV series inspired by the quirkiness, community and culture of Nelson. Amy Bohigian, the founder of Watershed Productions and showrunner, describes its vibe as "a certain kind of *Portlandia*, from a different perspective." After receiving funding two years ago, Bohigian, her team and what feels like the entirety of Nelson have been working hard on this sketch comedy, with scenes that draw inspiration from many of Nelson's characters, slice-of-life events and conversations heard in local grocery stores.

"Going to the Co-op and shopping for groceries is never just a generic grocery shop," Bohigian says. "I can always come

away from the produce section overhearing conversations about chakras and alignment, and then turn the corner and someone's telling me about a threesome that just broke up."

It's moments like this that Bohigian and her team aim to capture, drawing on what she describes as the "authenticity" of the people of Nelson. The idea is to create comedy that allows us to laugh at ourselves and pay homage to the area's culture, wackiness and spirit of honesty. "[*Southern Interior*] is such a funny, creative and heartfelt way to present what Nelson is all about," says Lynne Karey-McKenna, one of the main actors on set. It was hinted that the show might include things like babies with dreadlocks, something to do with goats, snakes, kids, the farmers market and lots of hula hoopers. "Amy asked me early on if I wanted to be an extra for a specific part," Ben Euerby, the show's music composer, recounts about his role in one of the episodes. "One could almost make it a game of Where's Waldo? but in this case it could be Can you spot the composer?"

Southern Interior may be a wacky comedy, but it was important that the show have something unique to say—something that people from any walk of life can relate to. By using humour to tell relatable stories, the goal is to create connection and build community. Thankfully, there are a lot of shared experiences the team could draw on. “People get it right away because they’ve lived in Nelson,” says Bohigian, “or have a cousin who’s lived here, or know someone who passed through. Everyone has a story from Nelson.”

But it’s not just the obvious stories Bohigian and her team want to tell. The stories and perspectives *Southern Interior* aim to showcase are those living just below the surface—the easily forgotten and often overlooked pieces of our community. “It may make people uncomfortable, but I think that’s what good comedy can do: It can make you uncomfortable and laugh at the same time.”

Filmed locally, a large source of pride for the show was its ability to capitalize on some of the incredible talents existing right in the local community. “There’s the costuming and

performing, to the technical and filming side of it, and right up to producing,” says actor and writer Lucas Myers. “These are all very specific and challenging jobs. To have people that are so proficient with them, living in a small town like this, is really inspiring.” *Southern Interior* was able to provide space for this diverse range of local artists and professionals to shine without having to leave the area—a rarity in a small town. “Having an industry project like this going on in Nelson was really exciting for all of us, because it really showed that we could create our own work here,” Bohigian says. “Coming from Vancouver,” Karey-McKenna says, “I thought my film work would be over. But I have found an incredibly lovely and super talented and creative pool of film artists here.”

Working alongside showrunner, director and editor Bohigian are many others, including story editors Sioux Browning and Morgan Brayton; head writers Jackie Atkins and Michelle Hart; staff writers Deryn Collier, Lucas Myers and Jon Ramos; cast Lucas Myers, Michelle Hart, Jon Ramos and Lynne Karey-McKenna; producer Gregory Mackenzie; director of



Back row left to right: Brian Lye, Jessilyn Leckie, Mike Meaney, Aidan Croskrey, Siloën Daley, Carlo Alcos, Corene Collins, Gregory Mackenzie.
Front two rows – left to right: Lesley George, Ian Johnston, Michelle Hart (blue/black checkered shirt), Bobbi Poirier, Amy Bohigian, Lynne Karey-McKenna, Bohdan Doval, Lucas Myers, Kelsea Dorosz (glasses), Jon Ramos (hat), Matthew Anderson (mermaid tail), Jackie Atkins.
Not pictured: Zoe Bingham and Violet Barisoff.

Photo: Jackie Atkins

Hopefully this excerpt from an episode of *Southern Interior* will give you a “taste” of what to expect when the series hits the airwaves.

INT. CO-OP GROCERY STORE – DAY

CO-OP SAMPLE GUY

JON, a middle-aged employee of the co-op grocery store, stands in the store holding a sample tray full of small empty white cups. EMMA, 32, walks by in yoga clothes and catches Jon’s eye.

JON

Hey – how’s it going? Wanna try our new promo cups?

Emma looks over his tray. Grabs one and examines it. There is nothing in it. She puts it back and starts to walk away.

JON

No – no food inside. It’s these new true local, edible cups that we’re running for our demo program. Actually, my friend Sand Seed grows them on her farm in Krestova. It’s a long story how we met, but she’s from my tripping days. We did a lot of ceremonies together . . .

Emma is trying to be polite, but wants to go.

JON

I don’t do that anymore. I am 5 years sober. Well, other than weed and some casual drinking.

Jon places one of the cups in his mouth and just gives it a little taste.

JON

Hmm.

Jon looks at cup and decides to put the whole thing in his mouth.

photography Bohdan Doval; and production sound and sound designer Carlo Alcos. Funders for *Southern Interior* include the Bell Fund, Creative BC, Columbia Basin Trust through the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance and Canadian Media Producers Association.

However, it wasn’t just the cast and crew who came out in support of the show. The whole town, it felt like, was there to help with the project. “Nelson is the star of the show,” Jon Ramos, actor, writer and visual effects artist says. “Everyone was just excited to be represented, and that responsibility remained in our hearts and minds while performing.” When it came to things like locations and logistics, even things like having goats and babies on set, everything was local. “Nelson has seen a lot of changes,” Myers says, “but one

thing that hasn’t changed is the incredible support of the local community for creative endeavours.”

Ultimately, behind the hula hoops and chakras, *Southern Interior* was created through community, diversity, support, vulnerability and love. “Every role was equally important and led to real humility and kindness on set,” Ramos says. “I live to be on those teams and offer more of myself as a result.” And that’s the exact spirit the show hopes to capture and inspire in its audience. “With humour leading the way, I hope to help lead us toward a kinder way with each other. This is a place to relax, have some good times and think about how we can make a better world,” says Bohigian.

Southern Interior will be streaming in late 2024 through Shaftesbury Productions’ digital platform out of Toronto, though Bohigian and her team are aiming to get it out into the world as far as they can. Other potential releases and streaming information will come out closer to the release date, so keep an eye open for more details.

Website: watershedproductions.ca



Lynne Karey-McKenna and Sprout the goat on Baker Street in Nelson.
Photo: Jackie Atkins

A Boat to Carry Us Across the Water



Nik Black



Rielle Oswald

by Maggie Shirley

Many people outside of the art world perceive that the life of an artist is one of leisure and frivolity, whimsically dabbing paint onto canvases. But if you ask any artist, they will tell you it is hard work, pushing yourself to go beyond the obvious to find something new to explore. They might experiment repeatedly with different materials and ideas to make their vision come to life. Artists are also entrepreneurs who spend almost as much time applying for exhibitions or promoting their work on social media as they do in the studio. Making art can be physically, mentally and emotionally draining.

Now imagine you are an artist with a disability. The challenges—and perhaps the rewards—may be even greater. This article is based on my conversation with four artists from across the Columbia Basin who create art while living with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Their health challenges have impacted their relationship to creativity and art in different and unique ways.

Sab Curtis (she/her), based in Silverton and Nelson, describes herself as a self-taught landscape painter. An exhibition of

Curtis's stunning paintings, focused on overcoming adversity, has been on tour around the Columbia Basin over the past couple of years, including the Fernie Arts Station, the Revelstoke Visual Arts Centre, the VISAC Gallery in Trail and most recently, the Hidden Garden Gallery in New Denver. In 2019, Curtis experienced a significant brain injury that altered her life and career path. In the time that followed her injury, she picked up a paint brush for the first time. Through painting and writing, Curtis has come to terms with what has become a new life.

For Rielle Oswald (she/her), art was a part of her life before developing myalgic encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS). In 2000, Oswald was hired as an art and music teacher in Kaslo, and also worked as an artist, creating very large-scale multimedia artworks that she exhibited. In 2022, when she was diagnosed with CFS, Oswald's work shifted to accommodate the resulting physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. She is still working creatively, whenever possible, under the name of Butch and Rosie's Emporium, making beautiful indigo-dyed cotton clothing (among other things) and selling them in markets.



CJ Louray

Fernie has been home to generations of CJ Louray's family where Louray (she/her) grew up with a deep love for nature. It's there she traded hunting for a practice in wildlife and conservation photography. She is also a writer and musician. In 2020 Louray experienced a neck injury while operating industrial equipment, which ended her career. This injury has been part of a long journey of numerous discoveries about her life as a trans woman, including living with autism/ADHD and accumulated complex post-traumatic stress disorder. Creativity has been an important conduit for expressing her unique experience and world view.

Nik Black (any pronouns/none), based near Nakusp, creates a variety of paintings, both abstract and non-abstract. Black describes the work as "big and small and bright." Black has always been making art, but life took a turn as they developed multiple sensitivities to the environment, among other physical challenges. These sensitivities mean that Black is limited to home and to the art studio. As a result, Black spends a lot of time in the studio and is very prolific.

While the four artists have differences in their circumstances and their practices, they do share some similarities.

For Oswald, creativity has been a blessing while she has gone through the process of transformation from able-bodied to living with her chronic illness. She describes creativity as a way to connect with other humans. Curtis says that exhibiting her work around the Columbia Basin has helped her meet other people going through all sorts of changes, which makes her feel less alone in her own situation. This helps to build her understanding of herself and others. Connecting with people through art is especially important to Nik Black. Because



Sab Curtis

Black must physically isolate as part of the illness, they have developed a media presence through Instagram and a Discord channel to reach Black's audience.

Black talks about an aspect of having a disability in the difficulty of showing up "imperfectly," as they describe it. Our society values perfection, particularly physical perfection. But perfection is an impossible expectation. Black says, "By allowing ourselves to let go of that expectation and embrace imperfection in self and in the work we produce, to allow for ourselves to be misunderstood, we achieve freedom." Black invites artists to take this approach, which requires curiosity, play and "happy accidents" (as Bob Ross calls them) into their art practice.

For CJ Louray, the creative process is political, and she describes her artistic practice as revolutionary. Louray sees art as having potential for both liberation and oppression. Art has been used to spread disinformation about marginalized people and this practice is rising in the current political climate. Given the long history of banning books and art of queer and trans people, she says art-making is about using her voice to say, "you're not going to erase me."

When Louray said this during our group conversation, it struck a nerve with the other artists. People with disabilities want to be present in spaces in meaningful and tangible ways. For example, Black appreciates when art organizations offer classes and other activities online. They say, on behalf of themselves and other people who are forced to isolate, "keep on reaching out. Even when I'm not there, even when I'm too sick, we're still here, we still see it happening. We just can't participate at that moment."

All the artists spoke of the power of creativity to transform themselves and other people. Art has been a part of our human existence since the earliest days of our species. CJ Louray sees a correlation between art and evolution. Before we shared language, we communicated through images on walls of caves and, perhaps, other spaces that have been lost in time. The images that our ancestors created may have communicated ideas about food sourcing, stories of epic experiences, stories of our beginnings or even thoughts of spirituality. There is deep knowledge communicated through visual imagery that speaks with a power beyond words. It was intricately linked to the advancement of our ancestors' cultures. Louray says the power of art has helped shape our evolution ever since, including in the present moment.

Prior to Oswald's chronic illness she was "an engineer of community development" through her art practice. Now she doesn't have the capacity to fill that role, but, Oswald reflects, "what art has allowed me to do and to realize is that no matter what has been taken from you, or what you feel you've lost, you can still make change, and art is just such an enabler of that." Now Oswald honours the therapeutic aspect of creativity and expression when presented with massive life changes.

Similarly, for Curtis, her identity shifted following her injury. She needed to re-evaluate her expectations of what she could do. But in taking up an art practice, Curtis has realized another shift in identity to that of "artist," a change that has been empowering. As part of her artist talks, Curtis encourages visitors to make a mark on a canvas with paint. She wants people who don't consider themselves as creative to experience the potential and freedom. She says that "we all have the ability to transform from within. The ability is inside us to persevere through whatever kind of adversity we may be going through."

Nik Black summed it up: "Art can be a boat to carry us across the water, you know, when we feel isolated, and we feel not included. It's a way to bring people together."

Find out more about these artists and their work:

Sab Curtis website: sabcurtis.com

Rielle Oswald on Facebook: facebook.com/kasloart/

CJ Louray website: point726studios.ca

Nik Black website: theopaldoor.com

There is help available from some arts funders to assist artists with disabilities in preparing grant applications:

BC Arts Council Application Assistance: bcartscouncil.ca/program/application-assistance/

Canada Council for the Arts Application Assistance: canadacouncil.ca/funding/application-assistance

All photos courtesy of the artists except Sab Curtis photo: Whitney Taylor, En Vogue Photography

CAPITOL

THE CAPITOL THEATRE PRESENTS
2024 / 2025 SEASON

THEATRE - MUSIC - COMEDY - DANCE



Capitol Season

For the Love of Drag
January 17 at 7:30 PM

Epidermis Circus
February 8 at 7:30 PM

Ali Hassan
Does This Taste Funny?
February 11 at 7:30 PM

Shane Koyczan
February 20 at 7:30 PM

Juliet: A Revenge Comedy
March 13 at 7:30 PM

Symphony of the Kootenays
April 27 at 2:00 PM

Capitol Family

The Baby Tyler Show
February 9 at 3:00 PM



Capitol Films

Catalyst Theatre
The Invisible
January 7 at 7:00 PM

National Theatre Live
Present Laughter
January 21 at 7:00 PM

Urban Ink Theatre
Les Filles du Roi
February 4 at 7:00 PM

Capitol Homegrown

Lbee and Bella Cat
January 5 at 7:30 PM

Son of John
January 12 at 7:30 PM

Zaynab Mohammed
January 19 at 7:30 PM

Penny Shades
February 16 at 7:30 PM

Chloe Albert
June 22 at 7:30 PM

THE CAPITOL THEATRE
PURCHASE YOUR 2024/2025 TICKETS NOW!

BUY TICKETS ONLINE

WWW.CAPITOLTHEATRE.CA

PHONE: 250.352.6363

421 VICTORIA STREET, NELSON, BC
BOX OFFICE: TUESDAY-FRIDAY, 11-3PM



Thank You To Our Sponsors and Funders!



Some members of the Pathways team.
Front row: Carla Stephenson, Yun-Jou Chang.
Second row: Jenna Reid, Sidi Chen, Allison Girvan, Kia Kadiri, Elliott Hearte.
Back row: Ryan Hunt, Darb Erickson.

Pathways Program

Learning, supporting, transforming

by Carla Stephenson and Ryan Hunt

How can we make meaningful shifts towards equity and access in art, culture and heritage organizations across the province?

How can we authentically include more perspectives in our programming and in our staff without tokenizing the people with lived experiences?

How can we create conditions in spaces where we can have difficult conversations about change without alienating people who have put many years of hard work into building these organizations?

These are some of the questions at the heart of what we are working on in the Pathways program.

Society is shifting, as are the expectations of funders, audiences and the communities we serve. The majority of arts, culture and heritage organizations in B.C. are smaller, often volunteer-run non-profits operating in non-urban

areas. All too often these organizations are doing their work in places of extreme precarity, with limited access to professional development resources or even the time to invest in learning and growth. Even when an organization has the desire to lead equity work and invest in improving, balancing the realities of sustaining basic operating levels and programming can strain staff and volunteers to the point of burnout. The challenging work of shifting towards more equitable organizations cannot be done as an add-on.

Many organizations were faced with trying to do this work in isolation without the support of a learning community. Many people have taken courses about equity, reconciliation and access but despite this learning, have been unable to implement meaningful change in their organization.

While the arts, culture and heritage sector may have a reputation for working within silos and competing for limited resources, Pathways is an innovative program that was born from an intersection of relationships, trust and value alignment.

Pathways is an equity, reconciliation and access-centring program that is managed through an ongoing partnership between the BC Arts Council, Arts BC, the BC Museums Association, Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance and Rural Arts Inclusion Lab. Relationships are at the centre of Pathways, both in the program's co-leadership model and in the way the program attempts to co-create a community of practice within British Columbia's arts, culture and heritage sector.

We have adopted a co-leadership model for the development and management of Pathways and from its inception. In creating Pathways, we worked with an advisory council of intersectional leaders to shape the program, its learning framework and its goals. Many of these initial advisors now work as Guides in the program, directly supporting the many Pathways participants.

Since the pilot year of Pathways in the fall of 2023, nearly 140 organizations and hundreds of individuals have participated in the program. The design of the program strives to create spaces where participants are given space to make mistakes and explore nuanced challenges addressing equity and access in a supportive environment. Many Guides and participants have shared that this feels different than any other space in the sector. Monthly cohorts bring together arts, culture and heritage professionals and volunteers in virtual spaces to have open and often challenging conversations. We tackle polarizing topics and practice holding nuances and complexity during conflict.

Approaching this work in a different way has been both successful and challenging. We have witnessed examples of participants becoming unstuck after years of trying to implement equity and access in their work. At the same time, we have seen participants bristle at the thought of change and put up defenses when asked to evolve long-standing programs or practices.

The program also provides support for participants from marginalized communities who are often asked to balance the overwhelming task of "transforming" organizational practices while working under unsafe conditions with little or no peer support.

Building relationships, learning, reflecting and integrating new knowledge takes time. The ability to devote time to growth is often antithetical to a funding landscape and status quo that forces our sector to constantly do more with less. Our approach with Pathways is to support a community of learners with an individualized program that centres on reflection and intentional action. We have structured this program to take place over a full year to allow time for supported learning-to-action cycles.

We hope that after this program, participants will choose to continue integrating ongoing learning practices into their lives, work and organizational policy. After the pilot year of Pathways, so many participants wished to continue holding space for reflection and learning that we have launched an extended offshoot of the program for organizations that have already completed the one-year program, offering quarterly facilitated meetings with Guides and peers. To date, nearly 100 percent of pilot participants have signed on to return for this extended program.

The Pathways program would not be possible without the trust and support of the BC Arts Council. As part of the council's Extending Foundation Action Plan, there was a clear demand from the sector for practical implementation help with equity training, actions towards reconciliation, policy development and resource sharing. Instead of trying to build a new program by itself or work with a single external partner to develop a new program, the council chose a community-led approach that intentionally built upon existing work and relationships already underway by arts service organizations throughout the province. A program with the scope and scale of Pathways does not exist anywhere else in Canada and this would not be possible without the investment, partnership and leadership of the BC Arts Council.

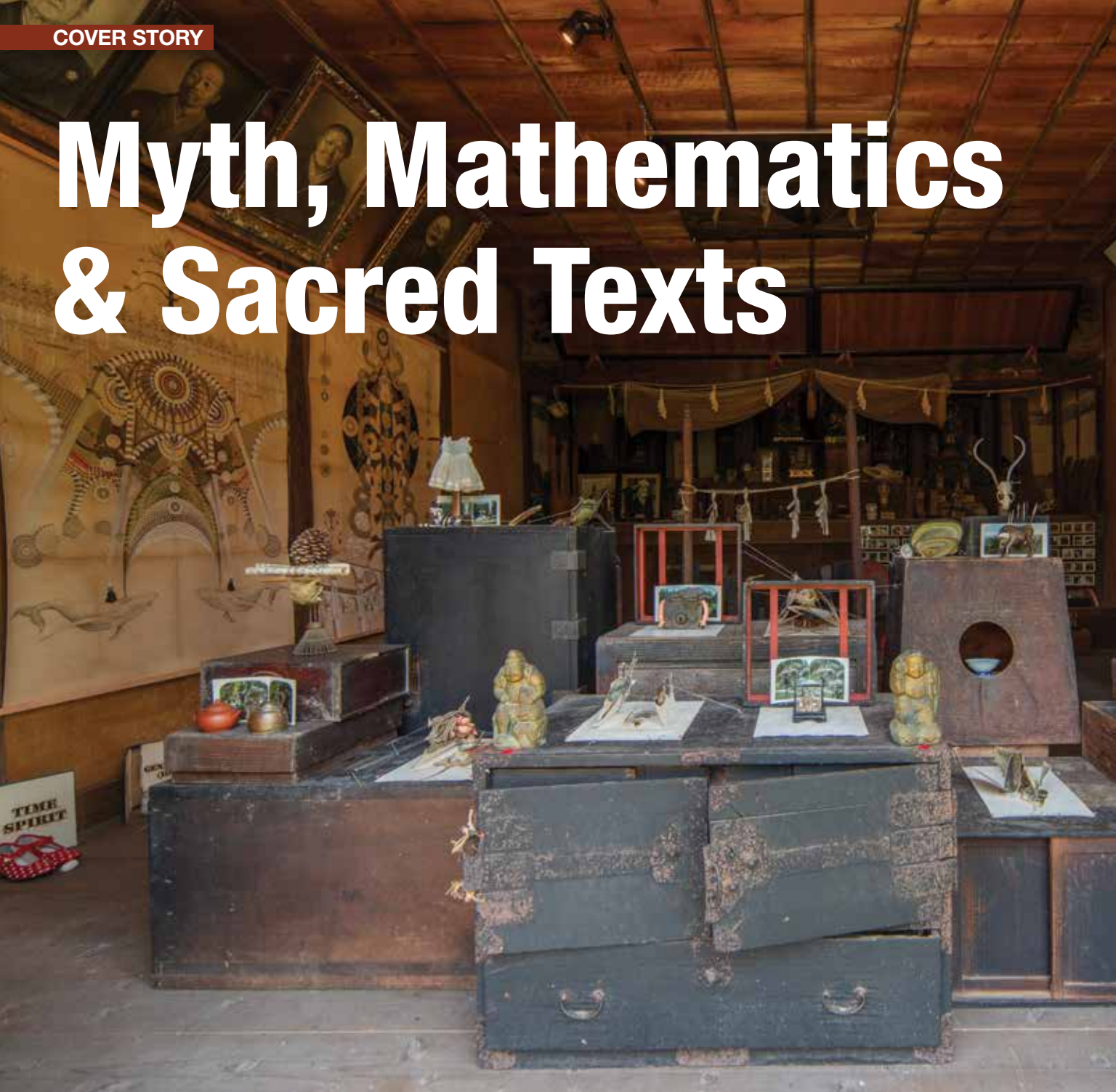
From the development to administration to delivery of the Pathways program, we aspire to act in ways that model the values of the program itself. As we co-create this program we are also learning, reflecting and embedding what we learn into our work. We are mirroring the same process as Pathways participants. With this ethos in mind, we hope to continue to deepen, grow and evolve the program in relationship with our advisors, participants, funders and sector. Meaningful change does not happen quickly or easily, but the relationships supported by Pathways help to provide a roadmap for change.

Pathways is a free program and is accepting applications to its next cohort.

Website: manypathways.ca

Carla Stephenson is the Pathways program director. Ryan Hunt is executive director of the BC Museums Association.

Myth, Mathematics & Sacred Texts



The art of Tanya Pixie Johnson

by Ian Johnston

Floating into a cloud of dreams comes to mind as I search for a metaphor to describe my voyage into Tanya P. Johnson's work. It only begins to describe her: suffice to say that Johnson is a prolific artist who shies away from nothing and bathes with pleasure in speculation and uncertainty.

Since meeting her almost 20 years ago, I have witnessed Johnson's practice wend its way through printmaking,

painting, collage, assemblage, paper cutting, installation, murals, performance, writing and language as a means of trade, among other media. These different practices are woven through her work like water and time, both concepts with which she often grapples.

In my recent visit to Johnson's studio, we sat in front of a sprawling symmetrical drawing/watercolour painting on antique ledger paper. Watercolour is a medium that Johnson expresses surprise at using but with which she has nonetheless developed a high level of skill. My attention fluctuates between her words and being drawn into the



Reincarnation of a Shrine—installation view (2023). Nakanajo Biennale, Japan.
Photo: Kazuyuki Miyamoto

intricate soft imagery she uses to plot the boundaries between here and there and one thing and another.

The piece we were looking at, like all the pieces in this body of work, has a rich, almost baroque title that is a work unto itself. The titles are a spinoff from a series of “Concentric Stories” that were begun during her residency in Mongolia, created as an offering to and of the land in flour, water and salt. The texts touch on Johnson’s exploration of the awareness of awareness, described below, as a major theme in her work of the last few years. These symmetrical shrines are a subset of a larger body of work she calls “Wisdom

RESOURCES, COMMUNITY
& COLLABORATION
FOR KOOTENAY
THEATRE ARTISTS:
www.RuralTheatreLab.com

A PROJECT OF THE VALLICAN WHOLE

Got Art Prints?

Canvas | Greeting Cards | Prints | Post Cards

hp HALL PRINTING

TRAIL 1.800.663.7820 | NELSON 1.877.354.1666 | www.hallprinting.ca

Making great impressions.

Engines: Technologies for Evolution and Happiness,” also symmetrical and in the same medium.

“Wisdom Engines are vector map drawings of perception, boundlessness, and prana/life force that explore the awareness of awareness. They are at once a download and an upload. The maps explore the elasticity of time and space, the relationship between frequency and image/pattern and the synesthetic correspondence between sound, form and colour. The spiritual drawings integrate study of myth, mathematics and ancient sacred texts, an interest in alchemy and ecology, and a devotional practice. They reflect the observation of my own mind and my relationship with the animate, the unseen and the elemental.”

Johnson described to me how these drawing practices stemmed from a transformation of her approach to the world from that of travelling outward to biennales in places like Japan, Turkey, Mongolia and South Africa, to a focus inward as she wrestled with the realities and constraints of the pandemic. In this drawing practice, time has indeed slowed down and her previous work, of manipulating the physical world in the prolific production of collages and assemblages, has fallen into slumber. The visceral talismanic objects from her “Anthropomorph” and “Interventions” series (2014–17) transmuted into two dimensions and the process of creation into a meditation practice or to a mapping of her inner being and mantras.

The symmetry of a previous body of work, “River Spines” (2010–12), which explored “the above of the sky” and its reflection in “the below of the water,” makes its return as a

recurring device of division and mirroring. It is also present in Johnson’s “Beacons” series (2017), where she harnessed light to explore the inherent conflict of colonization. Like all the dichotomies that Johnson explores, the symmetry and balance subtly break apart upon closer scrutiny. The symmetry functions like the imbalance in facial features that the brain automatically eliminates and then allows revelation upon closer examination.

Johnson brought the idea and means of expression of the “Beacons” project to a residency in Portugal where she was exploring the history of the slave trade relationship between South Africa and Portugal. I note this because she often finds a way to bring the ideas of one project and transplant them into a foreign project or context like Japan or Mongolia or Turkey, thus transforming and imbuing them with fresh purpose and direction.

A case in point is the introduction of her “Wisdom Engines” and “Anthropomorphs” into the “Reincarnation of a Shrine” project at the Nakanojo Biennale in 2023. Here Johnson was able to create an installation in consultation with elders in the traditional silkworm farming town of Akaiwa in Gunma Prefecture. The Shugendo shrine called Goma-do had been



Intervention (2015). Mixed media, collage, silkscreen, vintage photo.
Photo: Jeremy Addington

Words bring us together,
emlfestival.com

national WORKSHOPS READINGS BOOKS oral storytelling
songs ZINES JOURNALS
local readers COMICS SPOKEN WORD THEATRE
ESSAYS WRITERS discussions poetry
FILM

Elephant Mountain Lit Fest | Fall 2025

ENGAGE. ENERGIZE. ENRICH.

Discover the Vibrant Pulse of Art & Culture in Golden



Kicking Horse Culture's programming includes *10 free **Summer Kicks** concerts*, the Fall/Winter ***Live Kicks** Performance Series*, a ***Film Kicks** Series*, Visual Art ***Workshops***, the ***Christmas Market***, and our annual winter festival, ***EmberFest***, which brings the community together in a celebration of creativity and storytelling.

The Art Gallery of Golden (AGOG) & Studio Gift Shop proudly showcases and sells the handcrafted work of over **150 artists** from the Golden and the Columbia River Basin. Each year, AGOG hosts up to **10 carefully curated solo and group exhibitions**, highlighting a diverse range of artistic expressions and mediums.



"I choose to have life in Golden enriched by the events and activities present by Kicking Horse Culture"
Golden Resident

Learn more about upcoming events, visit the gallery, or get involved at

KICKINGHORSECULTURE.ca

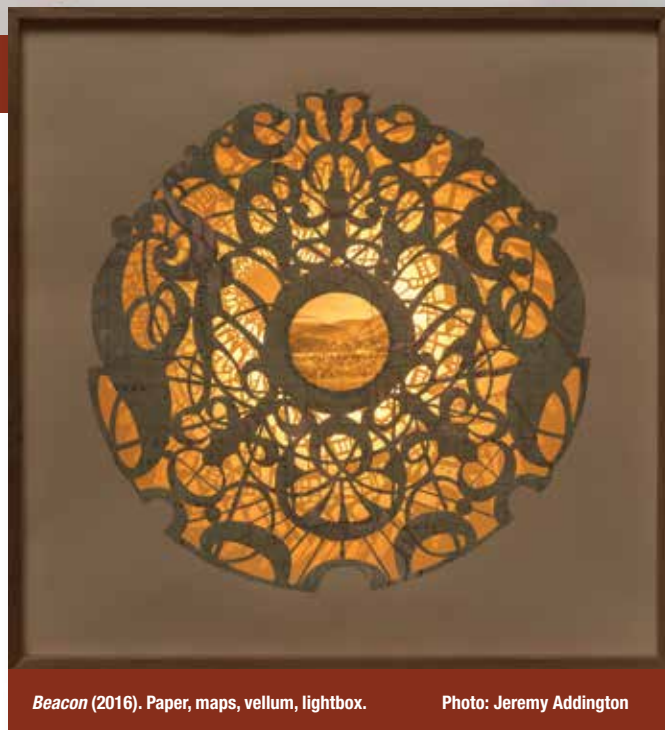


Above: *Anthropomorph* (2015). Animal bones, doll parts, found objects.
Photo: Jeremy Addington

shut for 40 years. Her work sought to reanimate the space and altar, carefully removing 40 years of dust and strategically introducing her own work into the space. Shugendo is a syncretic cosmology that merges shamanic animist practices, Tantric Buddhism and Shinto. The centrepiece of the installation,

“Altar to the Animate Forces was an installation on old wooden crates and boxes containing Buddhist texts. On them I displayed antique natural history pop-up illustrations of animals (Bee, Frog, Rat, Butterfly, Clam, Snail) that were splayed open using pins and red thread and found-object effigies called Anthropomorphs. These sculptural assemblages inhabit the edge of the light and are guardians of the thresholds between the living and ancestral realms.”

Johnson describes her process as “an obsessive gathering and sorting of found object and image.” Whether paper cutting, collage, drawing, assemblage or painting, her engagement with materials and ideas repeatedly takes her down a rabbit hole and on a journey until there is a level of competency and completeness that allows her to move on to the next thing. Each approach and process has a lifespan that



Beacon (2016). Paper, maps, vellum, lightbox.

Photo: Jeremy Addington

must run its course, sometimes to its end and others simply paused until next time.

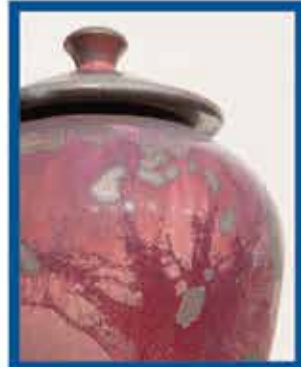
In this text it was difficult to unravel all the threads that Johnson continues to weave and explore such as her Wordmaps and collaborative theatre work. I encourage the reader to visit her website for a broader view. I look forward to seeing what will appear or make a return when she travels to Nakanajo for the third time in 2025 for the 10th anniversary of the Nakanajo Biennale.

Website: tanyapjohnson.com; Instagram: @tanyapixart;
Facebook: Tanya Pixie Johnson



CRAFT ■ ■ ■ ■ CONNECTION

A Cooperative of Kootenay Artists



FEATURING OVER 200 LOCAL AND CANADIAN ARTISTS & DESIGNERS

Come and experience the Kootenay's highest quality selection of Pottery, Jewelry, Paintings & Prints, Clothing & Textiles, Metal work, Sculptures, Furniture, Lighting, Glassware, Bath & Body products, Children's items, Leather goods, and so much more!

378 Baker st, Nelson, B.C. 250-352-3006



Adolf Hungry Wolf



Jesse Cooke



Whitehorse



Ethan Askey and the Elevators

Brian Clarkson

Photography and memory

by Margaret Tessman

Brian Clarkson figures that he has taken in excess of a million photographs of people over the course of his career but can count on one hand his favourites.

Clarkson's relationship with the camera began at age 16 when he started working for the *Nelson Daily News*. "I spent one afternoon a week processing film in the darkroom," he says. "I became passionate about photography." In 1967, editor Art Gibbon offered him a job as full-time photographer for the paper. A week into his job, Clarkson photographed Prosper Ralston, a musician who was living in a basement apartment in Nelson with his collection of harps and very little else. Clarkson positioned a table lamp beside Ralston and took the photo, which ended up getting national attention from Canadian Press. "It was very emotional. My heart broke," says Clarkson of the encounter. "The camera has brought me in proximity to some amazing individuals."

Incidentally, Clarkson was invited to help put the last issue of the *Nelson Daily News* to bed before the paper closed in 2010. "It meant a lot to me," he says.

By 1969 Clarkson was working at Eddie Black's camera store in Toronto while looking for a job in journalism. On his days off, Clarkson would get into tourist mode and drive around southern Ontario. "I stopped the car when I saw a horse and surrey one day," he says. "I took one photo and started talking to the driver to ask for directions."



The Little Jazz Orchestra



Prosper Ralston, 1967

Visit the Trail Museum & Archives and Trail Visitor Centre in the Riverfront Centre

TRAIL MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Explore Trail's sporting and industrial roots in the Kootenays' newest heritage facility

our reflections. our connections.

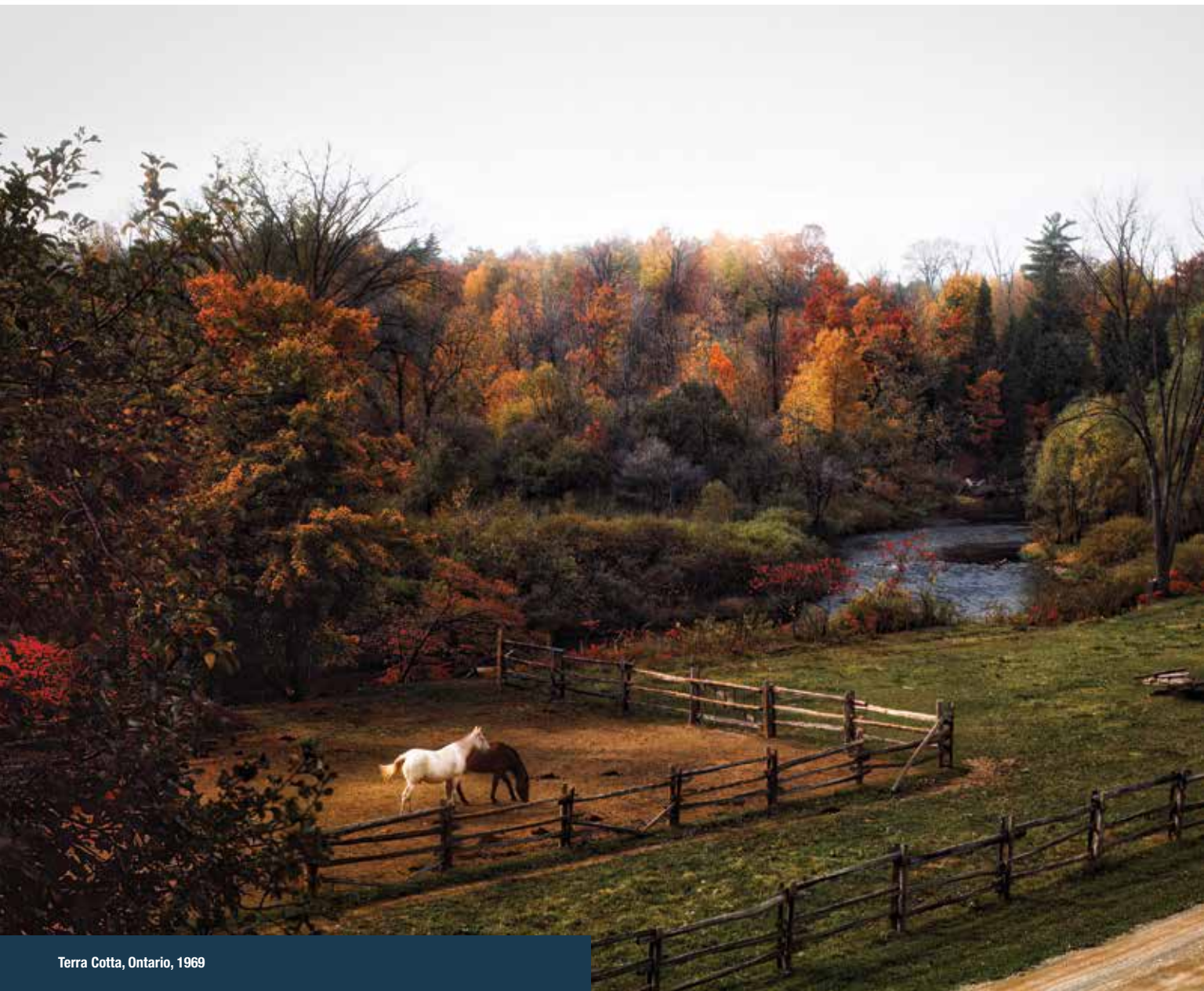


tourism@trail.ca
tourismtrailbc.ca



museum@trail.ca
trailmuseum.ca

1505 Bay Avenue, Trail, BC 250.364.0821



Terra Cotta, Ontario, 1969

Years later, Clarkson found the image on a roll of slide film and made an 8-by-10 print. “I thought it looked pretty good. A voice in the office asked, ‘Who authored this photograph? That’s my farm.’” By some crazy serendipity, Clarkson and the surrey driver had ended up at the same newspaper in the same Ontario town. The photo is now hanging in Clarkson’s dining room.

Fast forward to 1975. Clarkson returned to B.C. and opened Cranbrook Photo, operating it for 38 years before retiring in 2013. Later, “I got involved with environmental issues and travelled the world to work as a photographer for a number of NGOs,” he says. Clarkson has been a hospice volunteer for the last 13 years and currently is the intake coordinator for the Cranbrook Kimberley Hospice Society.

A solo show of Clarkson’s photos entitled “Bookends” opened at the Key City Theatre in Cranbrook on November 12 and will

run until December 20, 2024. As house photographer for Key City for 30 years, “I always have the best seats in the house,” he says. “It’s a nice recognition for me.” In addition to the 40-odd prints on display, five of his favourite photos were framed and auctioned off as a fundraiser for the Hospice Society. The exhibit will make its way to Fernie, Invermere, Creston and Kimberley over the winter.

Clarkson is a storyteller with fascinating (and typically humble) anecdotes to tell about a life lived well behind the lens, in his community and in the wider world. “Photos are my diary,” he says. “I can recall the minutest details. After all these years I’m still engaged.”

Instagram: [@brian.clarkson.71](https://www.instagram.com/brian.clarkson.71)

Virtual gallery: [keycitytheatre.com/brian-clarkson-gallery](https://www.keycitytheatre.com/brian-clarkson-gallery)

Amplifying Heritage Week



by Jennifer Dunkerson

It happens every year across Canada. Some provinces preface it with a holiday, like Family Day, Islander Day, Louis Riel Day, *Fête du patrimoine* and Heritage Day. This week in February offers an opportunity to drag ourselves out of the vestiges of winter to celebrate and commemorate our local history, our diverse cultural heritage and our historic places. It's the third week in the

shortest month of the year and it is affectionately referred to as Heritage Week.

With a focus on promoting this country's heritage and to celebrate the formation of the National Trust for Canada, a new charitable non-profit organization, Heritage Day was created in 1974. Fifty years later we continue to recognize this federally appointed day, which has expanded into a week to allow for communities and organizations to offer programs and activities in ways that suit schedules and capacity. The National Trust works with provincial, territorial and regional governments, as well as provincial heritage organizations to support heritage programs and activities, but has handed the reins of Heritage Week to these entities to develop their own themes with a goal to inspire local communities to engage with heritage that speaks directly to them in their unique spaces.

In B.C., a theme for Heritage Week has been created and promoted by Heritage BC for several years now. Along with establishing a theme, Heritage BC provides valuable resources to access and engage, to generate ideas, to promote an event and to advocate for additional recognition for this special week. While anyone can participate, hosts often include museums, cultural centres, historic houses, historical societies, First Nations governments, heritage commissions, libraries, parks, schools, community centres, cultural organizations or businesses.

Here in the Columbia Basin region, Heritage Week falls at a challenging time of year. Many heritage organizations and museums operate only during the warmer months and the winter weather is a deterrent for many, making hosting in-person events difficult and the results unpredictable. However, it is an excellent time to focus on the local community and encourage people to recognize that heritage is a part of all of us. Family Day, a statutory holiday here in B.C., is often taken as an opportunity to take a week for travel and family recreation. It's a time when local communities can focus on what makes them a great place to live, and to build on what makes them a great place to visit when tourist season arrives. Participating in Heritage Week, no matter how small an effort, encourages families, friends and neighbours to consider how heritage impacts their lives.

Here are ten tips to help your organization prepare for a successful engagement:

- 1 **Plan ahead.** Include Heritage Week in your perpetual and long-term calendar planning. Follow events that are being held nationally, provincially and regionally to find out what others are doing. Begin by checking out Heritage Week's web page at heritagebc.ca/events-activities/heritage-week/.
- 2 **Find out more.** Incorporate the theme initiated by Heritage BC or create your own. Think about any past activities and consider repeating them or generate a new idea.
- 3 **Access resources.** An online calendar of events, posters, social media graphics and customizable templates are among the supportive resources available on Heritage BC's website.
- 4 **Plan an event or program or project.** If an in-person, stand-alone event is not practical, consider adding a component to another event or activity that is already planned, such as an exhibit opening or a tour. Set aside a day for free admission to your facility or a discount in the gift shop. Offer an online program such as an oral history workshop or a talk on a topic of local interest. Post a quiz on social media. Use that week to launch a new website or introduce a new brand and logo.
- 5 **Promote your program online.** Be sure to include hashtags and other tags in your posts to increase your online reach. Start with #BCHeritageWeek, @heritagebccanada, for Facebook and Instagram, and #HeritageDayCanada.
- 6 **Advocate in your community.** Many local governments make an annual proclamation to recognize Heritage Week. This is a good opportunity to reach out to council members and municipal staff to encourage recognition of the impact of heritage in your community. Offer a workshop on best practices in heritage conservation or a presentation on a specific topic of interest. Inform your local MLA or MP as well, and invite their participation and support.
- 7 **Engage with community and schools.** Find out how you can work with teachers to present Heritage Week in ways that relate to potential learning outcomes in the classrooms. Collaborate with other arts, culture and heritage organizations in the region to share activities and cross promote. Invite the community to share their cultural heritage with you.
- 8 **Members-only program.** Offer an event, a special program or use that week to host a membership campaign with incentives to attract new members. Review your organization's membership policy and consider including Heritage Week offerings as benefits for members.
- 9 **Gather statistics and take photographs.** Track statistics about your event, activity or promotion. Take photographs and share with members, partners, the local community, other heritage organizations, etc., for use in promotion of other events and activities throughout the year. Advantageous when advocating for support and applying for grants, too.
- 10 **Share experiences.** Be sure to send feedback, reviews, photographs and media coverage to Heritage BC and to others to share your experiences. There is always the opportunity to provide input into future planning and to reinforce the importance and impact of this annual, heritage-focused celebration.

February 17 to 23 is Heritage Week and the theme is Pastimes in Past Times. What are you doing to celebrate?

Jennifer Dunkerson is the executive director of the Nelson Museum, Gallery and Archives.

Barbara McFarlin-Kosiec

The Relatives

Fernie Arts Theatre Ensemble

April 2025



Barbara McFarlin-Kosiec.
Photo: Cassy Schneider, Cassy Lee Photography

A whimsical, three-act play, *The Relatives* explores the dynamics of intergenerational family life and contrasts rural and urban life. The play begins the first Saturday after New Year's in the Pearson home. Mark Pearson plans to relax reading his spy novel. His wife Kate is working in the attic while their 17-year-old daughter Corina is awaiting the delivery of the gown for her piano performance.

The day is disrupted when Cousin Larry, a journalist/photographer, arrives. After exchanging pleasantries, Larry asks about Corina's spring graduation. She dramatically reveals that her secondary school is in chaos, her drama class cancelled and her life ruined.

In the second act Mark and Larry's Aunt Sybil appears. She is an eccentric country woman who has invited herself to come live with the family until after Corina's piano recital and graduation. Aunt Sybil reveals disturbing stories about the extended family and a series of chaotic events follows.

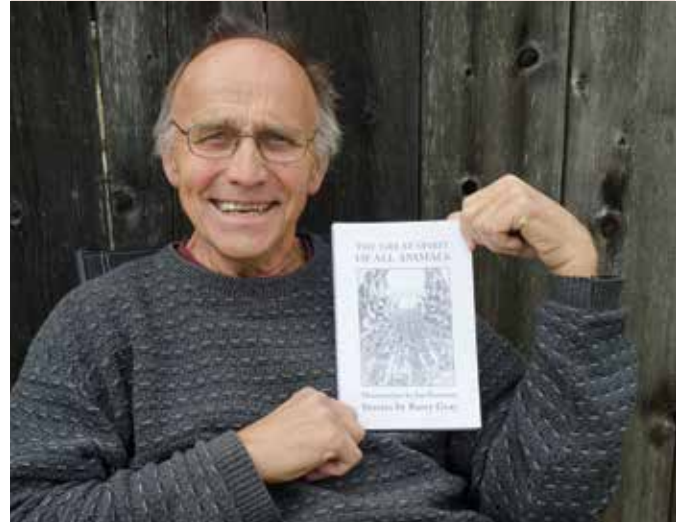
In the final act, the family all return home after the performance. Kate exits to help the caterers prepare dinner. The others enjoy conversation in the living room. Larry takes pictures. Aunt Sybil shows that she has adjusted to the urban lifestyle of the family. She also reveals the resolution to the family's problems. Finally, Corina learns that she will have an opportunity to act in a community play, thus meeting the university requirements for her fine arts program.

The Relatives will be directed by Barbara McFarlin-Kosiec, who has worked on three other productions for the Fernie Arts Theatre Ensemble. *The Relatives* will be staged at the Holy Family Church hall in Fernie in late April 2025.

Barry Gray

The Great Spirit of All Animals

Fall 2025



Author and playwright Barry Gray.
Photo: Ursula Heller

The Kootenay Musical Theatre Society (KMTS) is planning its next production for the fall of 2025. The last few years have seen the society stage successful musicals such as *Forty Words for Yes*, *Donuts of Mass Destruction*, *Fastlane to Paradise* and *Jorinda*. The current project, *The Great Spirit of All Animals*, is based on a book of animal stories by Harrop resident, local storyteller and author, Barry Gray. The book was launched last fall in the Harrop Hall, and since that time Gray has sold out the first printing, ordered a second and conducted a book tour to libraries across the entire Columbia Basin.

The board of the KMTS asked Gray if he would transform the stories into a script for a multigenerational cast. Composer and KMTS president Doug Jamieson will contribute an original song or two, complemented by other songwriters from the Nelson area, including graduates of the Selkirk College music program.

The project has received funding from the Columbia Basin Trust through a Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance touring grant and a Major Projects grant.

A multitude of Kootenay artists are involved in the project including composers, actors, singers, puppet and mask makers, puppeteers, costumers, set designers, choreographers and more. The stories themselves depict the lives of animals in the wilderness of the mountains and valleys of the Kootenays, with realism and a touch of fantasy.

Véronique Darwin

Good Dog

Rossland Miners' Hall

April 2025



The dogs are (left to right): Kade Moroney, Jamie Davies, Alison Stockdale, Juliette Recompasat, clown course leader Marya Folinsbee and Danielle Lussier, with Shannon Udall in the front row.
Photo: Véronique Darwin

In spring 2024 Véronique Darwin began work on *Good Dog* by researching the history of dogs in Rossland, attending online clown and playwriting courses and working with an editor and dramaturg to write the script. Darwin and the six dog actors also worked with Winlaw-based clown and theatre maker Marya Folinsbee to learn the basics of clowning and get into their characters.

The premise of *Good Dog* is that dogs have stopped playing “dog.” When one day all the humans go missing, a local dog pack of roaming mutts asks: What is a good dog without the humans to tell us? Some choose adventure (a journey to The Good Dog), others mystery (let’s track down the humans) and some follow an existential/clown plot line (am I your best friend or your sidekick?). The play is fun and funny, while also examining the relationship between dogs and their humans in a mountain town.

Phase two of the play development will include bringing in local bands to write original songs—Darwin and musical director David Stubbs already have a dozen signed up—and workshopping the script with the actors and the help of a choreographer, improvisation instructor and a local puppeteer.

Véronique Darwin is a recent Creative Writing MFA graduate from the University of Guelph.

Good Dog will be staged at the Miner’s Hall in Rossland in April 2025.



your community-owned
grocery store



Open Daily 8am - 8pm

777 Baker Street, Nelson | www.kootenay.coop

Celebrating the Outsider

The career of Ernest Hekkanen

by Sean Arthur Joyce

Maverick. Iconoclast. Outsider. All these terms come up when the name of Ernest Hekkanen is mentioned. The author of more than 50 books of poetry, plays, essays, short stories and novels, Hekkanen gives new meaning to the word prolific. And given his ability to cross over into painting and printmaking, yet another term, polymath, might be added. Sadly, a productive 50-year career is now closing, as he struggles to cope with debilitating Parkinson's disease. His illness makes it hard for him to find words, a tragic fate for an artist whose primary paintbox was language.

The New Orphic Gallery, based in the Nelson home he shared with life partner, editor and creative collaborator Margrith Schraner, was named by *BC BookWorld* in its map of BC Literary Landmarks—the only one in the Kootenays so far. He and Schraner produced the bi-annual *New Orphic Review* literary journal for two decades (1998–2017), now fully archived on the *British Columbia Review* website, UBC libraries and the Selkirk College Library local history collection.

His perceptive, funny and often acerbic editorials were one of the highlights of the journal. Its eclectic choice of poetry and prose hewed to no particular school of aesthetics beyond what pleased Hekkanen's eye. For both the journal and the books published by their press, New Orphic Publishers, he was determined to avoid dependence on arts grants. He and Schraner worked hard to make the *New Orphic Review* self-sufficient, supported by subscribers in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. He was never one to mince words. In an early *NOR* editorial he explained: "Art and literature, if it is to survive in this country, must never lose the underpinnings of self-sufficiency," or risk becoming "weak and devalized, hobbies practised by sycophants."

Hekkanen is named in the Who's Who of Finnish-American literature thanks to his stories incorporating traditional mythic themes drawn from his Finnish-Irish-American heritage. Most importantly, he's done it all on his own terms, often going against the tide of mainstream art and publishing. Yet to talk to him you'd never suspect such an impressive CV, given his self-effacing nature. He inscribed my copy of his poetry collection *Straying from Luminosity* with the words: "I hope these poems don't disappoint too much." Hardly. His poetry reveals the same depth of insight and skill as his prose. His determined outsider stance may have cost him fame in the literary community, but he often treats it as a joke.

"I discovered that I didn't have to worry about what people thought about me or my writing. In the end, history sorts out everything one does, whether it's good, bad or merely mediocre."

Hekkanen co-organized the 2006 Our Way Home reunion that brought together American and Canadian dissenters to the Vietnam War for the first time in decades. Having grown up near Seattle, while attending the University of Washington to study the sciences, he joined Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and learned of the draft dodger movement to help male students avoid being drafted to fight the Vietnam War.

Knowing his draft call-up was only waived until he completed his degree, he decided to bolt for Canada with the help of the SDS, arriving in Vancouver in 1969. He obtained his landed immigrant status and, realizing the sciences weren't his strength, enrolled in the creative writing program at UBC. He quickly recognized he had a facility for words and an ability to work hard at writing. To support himself he worked as a renovator and estimates he's held more than 35 different jobs in his lifetime. When the Naomi Lewis sculpture commissioned by Our Way Home organizers to commemorate war resisters sparked controversy, he satirized local politics with his usual ironic humour in the novel *Of a Fire Beyond the Hills*. It's hard not to smile, recognizing a certain former Nelson mayor.

Schraner published an informal study of her partner's work in her 2006 book, *The Reluctant Author: The Life & Literature of Ernest Hekkanen*, a fascinating insight into a complex personality. She recalls her first meeting with the author while reading his short story collection, *The Violent Lavender Beast*, published in 1988 by Thistledown Press.

"This is the first book where I fell in love with the author," says Schraner. "I laughed out loud on the bus while reading his story, 'The Wooden Arms of the Angel.'"

As with many artists, he faced an uphill battle both with his own demons and the hypocrisy of a society that claims to value literature yet often does little to actually support it. Following the bankruptcy of a press that had contracted to publish his first novel, *Chasing After Carnivals*, in 1985, and a disappointing response to his second book, the short story collection *Medieval Hour in the Author's Mind*, Hekkanen fell into a major depression. It didn't help that he was grappling with alcoholism and so poor that for a time he lived rough on the UBC endowment lands. His first marriage was in tatters. Luckily, he was sent an angel in the form of writer and CBC broadcaster Jürgen Hesse, who encouraged him to establish his own press and gave him his first computer. That sealed Hekkanen's decision to turn to self-publishing, and New Orphic Publishers was born in Vancouver in 1995, moving to Nelson in 2000. Its first title was his novel *From a Town Now Dreaming*.

Writers at times possess a kind of prophetic insight about their society. A quarter century ago, Hekkanen, in his essay collection *Sometimes I Have These Incendiary Dreams*, seems to have foreseen the current trend toward increasing censorship and AI. His observation is both a fitting tribute to his own body of work and the vital role of human creativity:

“In the society of the future, I fear the last battlefield to be won or lost will be the imagination. However, we the people will decide what we will allow to flourish there—whether it will be something incendiary or luminous in nature.”

Photo: Sean Arthur Joyce



Brian d'Eon

Lunatics: Last Men on the Moon

Home Star Press

October 2024

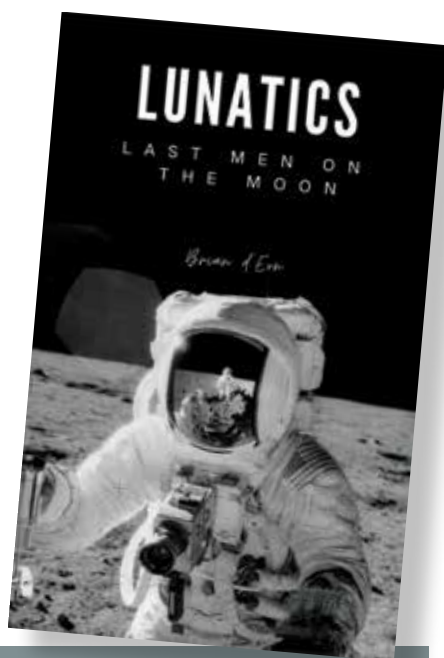
Nelson author Brian d'Eon's third novel follows the fortunes of men and women—mostly historical—intimately involved in a fictional last mission to land humans on the moon. Apollo XX is NASA's last scheduled mission. Mankind may never again set foot there. Planners have pulled out all the stops, choosing for the final landing site the bowels of Copernicus Crater. What to call those dedicated to such a mission but lunatics?

The action centres around the dreams and anxieties of three astronauts: Alan Bean (NASA's only painter), Deke Slayton (one of the Original Seven) and, most notably, Wernher von Braun. Each astronaut is haunted by his past, but none more so than the brilliant von Braun. He is a complicated man—ex-Nazi and friend of U.S. president Lyndon Johnson. The path leading to his becoming an astronaut is full of twists and turns, some hilarious, some heartbreaking.

More than a simple recounting of a technological adventure, *Lunatics* explores the poetic impact the moon landings have had on the human psyche, looking beyond the politics and technology to understand why this moon landing should be remembered as mankind's last great collective act of optimism.

Author D. Thomas Minton writes, "Built on strong characters and grounded in historical fact, d'Eon weaves a wondrous story of courage and dedication, in a what-if tale that effortlessly lifts you to the stars and beyond. A must read."

Lunatics is available from online distributors in all formats, including audiobook.



Zaynab Mohammed

Are You Listening: Weaving a Tapestry from Pain into Beauty

Pownal Street Press, 2024

by Zaynab Mohammed

The buckets of fear I had to swim through to get to where I am today would make you think I can breathe underwater. I can't. What I can do is hold my breath for a long time and hope to come above water before it's too late. Fear of owning my story, who I am, who I come from, what makes me who I am is what I have been fighting against from a young age.

Brown bodies are new to the media. I didn't grow up seeing anyone who looks like me or my family while developing into the person I am today until the past few years. If I did, we were always the bad guys, the terrorists, the ones laughed at. Do you know what that does to a human being who is wired for belonging and connection?

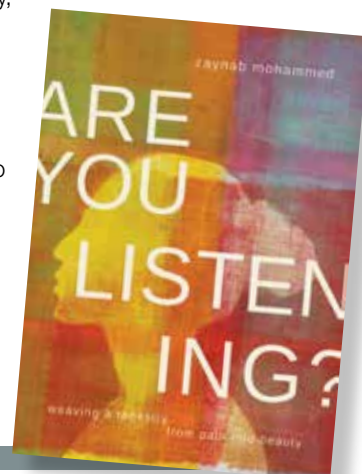
It made me fight with myself. It made me hate who I am, who I come from and who I was avoiding to become. Until I mustered enough courage to face my demons. I didn't learn how to swim. I learned how to keep my eyes open underwater, how to hold my breath.

I am a writer, a poet, a performer, a creative. I did what I know how to do best. I wrote my story. I filled notebooks, Word documents, notes on my phone app and typed pages on my typewriter. Then I edited hundreds of pages into 6,000 words. This became my first one-woman show.

It was the first time I spoke about who I am, about my Palestinian grandmother, about the racism my family endured on stage. My show moved people to tears. I was thanked, embraced and appreciated for the courage I showed the people who witnessed me telling my story. All the while, I watched and continue to watch all the countries I come from be bombed. The timing gave me purpose. My voice was meaningful and timely. Just under a year later, a day before my 34th birthday, my show became a book.

I lay my heart bare in *Are You Listening?* Now, I am thrilled and forever thankful to be an Arab woman. I love who I am. I love who I come from. I love my homelands. I feel whole and relaxed when I am in Lebanon, despite how hard it is to exist in the conditions there.

My book is how I weave the tapestry of my life from pain into beauty.



David Garneau

Dark Chapters: Reading the Still Lives of David Garneau

University of Regina Press

March 2025

Renowned Métis artist David Garneau and the Nelson Museum, Archives and Gallery are launching *Dark Chapters: Reading the Still Lives of David Garneau*, a book project and accompanying exhibition that pairs Canadian writers, artists and academics with select pieces of Garneau's work. The exhibition is curated by Arin Fay and will tour to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Yukon Arts Centre in Whitehorse and the Dunlop Art Gallery in Regina over the next few years.

"The residential school system...is one of the darkest, most troubling chapters in our nation's history," writes Chief Justice Murray Sinclair in the opening sentence of the Truth and Reconciliation final report. Garneau pulls from this text the title of *Dark Chapters*. The book, edited by artist and writer Nic Wilson, draws together the work of 17 writers, artists and academics who each contribute text to accompany and respond to a Garneau painting of their choice. Contributors include Fred Wah, Paul Seesequasis, Jesse Wenthe, Lillian Allen, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Larissa Lai, Susan Musgrave, and more. The text takes the shape of poetry, literary essay, creative writing and anthropological study.

Garneau's still-life paintings combine common objects (books, bones, teacups, mirrors) and less familiar ones (a Métis sash, a stone hammer, a braid of sweetgrass) to reflect the complexity of contemporary Indigenous experiences. The paintings explore colonialism, vertical and lateral violence, Christian influence on traditional knowledge and the museum treatment of Indigenous belongings.

Dark Chapters is the first full-length collection of Garneau's work. A painter, curator and critical art writer interested in creative expressions of Indigenous contemporary ways of being, Garneau is head of Visual Arts at the University of Regina.

The book is available for pre-order now from the University of Regina Press, uofrpress.ca/Books/D/Dark-Chapters.



The Doggone Brothers Band

Hard Luck Livin'

January 2025



The Doggone Brothers entertaining at the Canmore Folk Festival, August 2024. Photo: Ric Irwin

Kootenay-based band the Doggone Brothers plays a mix of traditional and original tunes in straight-up, toe-tapping bluegrass mode. "Brothers" is a bit of a misnomer as two of the band members, Rhonda Shippy (upright bass) and Leah Gardner (fiddle), might be part of the brotherhood but are definitely women. Other band members are Mike Hepher (mandolin and guitar) and Clayton Parsons (banjo, guitar and dobro). The band's first full-length album, *Hard Luck Livin'*, is a follow-up to their 2022 EPs *Salty Dogs* and *Don't Fence Me In*.

Parsons and Hepher met at a mutual friend's birthday party in Kimberley in 2016. "Our friend rented the Green Door in Kimberley and just wanted to hear all his friends play music together. It ended up that Clayton and I had so much fun playing together that we just kept on playing," says Hepher. "The core of our stage show is still Clayton and I being the Doggone Brothers, but it's wonderful to have a couple sisters along too—it's just a richer experience."

In the last few years, the band has been gigging and touring all over western Canada. "Our music is not strictly bluegrass—more like a fusion of bluegrass, old-time, old-country and folk music. At a folk festival like Canmore this summer, we are the bluegrass band, but at a bluegrass festival, we are the folky-old-country band. We like being a bit hard to pin down because it gives us freedom to pick the songs we like," says Hepher.

The new record will be 12 tracks: 11 originals and one traditional song. The songs run the gamut of what the Doggone Brothers Band is known for: blistering bluegrass, crooning country and sweet instrumentals. The album will be available on vinyl, with pre-sales starting sometime in January.

You can check out the band's material on their website, doggonebrothers.com, on Instagram #doggonebrothers and on YouTube @doggonebrothers.

Philip Seagram

No Judgment and Other Busking Stories



Caitlin Press

February 2025

At the height of the COVID pandemic, B.C. provincial court judge Philip Seagram faced a personal reckoning. His work had been consuming so much of his life he had been unaware even of his own son's university graduation. He came to the blunt realization that he needed to leave his career.

The internal turmoil felt by Seagram during this time reflected the chaos of the outside world: the pandemic wore on; B.C.

was ravaged by heat domes, massive floods and forest fires; Canada's divisions, be they over politics or vaccines, were deepening; increasingly, social media was being used as a weapon instead of a means of connection.

In the spring of 2022, as the pandemic wound down and the war in Ukraine ramped up, Seagram embarked on a cross-Canada journey, travelling the country busking on the sidewalks of major cities. The sign he placed before him as he played invited people to give or take money from his guitar case. Anything left over was donated to Ukraine humanitarian relief.

In *No Judgment and Other Busking Stories*, Seagram recounts his eight-week busking venture. He chronicles the challenges faced and insights gained while driving from city to city and meeting people through his street performances. Canada, vast as it is, began to feel smaller as he connected with strangers through music. And by extension, so did the world. At its core, *No Judgment* is a tale of human connection in a disconnected world and the part music can play in this.

Busking, Seagram learned, is both an expression of trust and an invitation. The busker, like any musical performer, asks, "Do you feel this too?"

Thanks to Caitlin Press, caitlinpress.com, for the review.

Richard Soltice

The Light That Brings Us Back

Rossland Image Enterprises, 2023



Columbia River at Gyro Park #1.

Rossland landscape photographer Richard Soltice's black-and-white photos immediately make me think of Ansel Adams. Even beyond the mountain vistas and the cloudy skies, it is the scope, the sharpness and the beautiful contrasts that black and white make possible that are all in evidence in Soltice's work.

Soltice was born in Penticton and got his first camera at age 14. He says that Adams was "a huge influence" on his work. When Soltice was working as a newspaper photographer in Kansas in the 1980s, he sent a copy of a full-page spread of his photos to Adams. Soltice still treasures the postcard that he received back from him.

Soltice feels that working in black and white not only provides a more emotional experience for him, but also allows the viewer to make an emotional connection to the work. As he writes in the foreword to the book, "Perhaps monochrome encourages the viewer to pause a little longer and think a lot more, and in a world that seems to push us in the opposite direction, this may be a very good thing."

Soltice describes his relationship with the world as "purposeful, thoughtful and insightful. I want others to feel what I feel when I look at my images, and to be appreciative, inspired and amazed that we are so fortunate to live where we do."

Graphic designer Heather Fortin Johnston of HLF Images in Rossland did the design work on the book, which can be purchased online through Soltice's website, richardsoltice.com.

Soltice still has a working darkroom in his home. His current project is based on the discovery in an old house in Rossland of a box of negatives from the 1930s and '40s. Soltice wants to print and frame the negatives and is excited about what he will find. He hopes that locals will be encouraged to come forward to identify places and people in the photos, to provide a historical context to the images.

Frantisek Strouhal, Chantal Robert and Corinna Calvert-Smith

Inspirations: Art Embracing Awareness 2, Path to Transformation

Mirage Studio Publishing, 2024

Slocan Valley artist Frantisek Strouhal's second book brings together 44 images of his artwork, alongside poetry and prose written by Strouhal and his partner, Chantal Robert. The book also features the work of Valley writer and poet Corinna Calvert-Smith.

Robert writes: "*Inspirations* explores the transitional realm between our present reality and the ethereal realm beyond; the tangible world we experience through our senses and the boundless world of imagination; the physicality of our bodies and the spirituality of our souls." One of the intentions of the images and meditative writings in the book is to encourage the viewer/reader to go deeper, and perhaps discover a source of transformative engagement.

The oil-printing process Strouhal uses to create his artwork combines photography, digital collage, contact printing and lithography inks on watercolour paper. The paper is soaked in a gelatin bath and dried, and a digital negative is contact printed under UV light on the sensitized paper. The paper then becomes a matrix for applying lithography inks, building layer upon layer to create the desired image.

Calvert-Smith writes in the introduction to the book: "There is a consistently mysterious aesthetic within Frantisek's art. His artistic journey radiates through each painting. To describe the feeling of observing Frantisek's art is like trying to describe the feeling of seeing the aurora borealis. It feels profound."

And Valley author Tom Wayman writes: "Strouhal's art radiates a calm, humble and generous spirit, urging viewers to increase their awareness of their feelings toward self, as well as toward the human, natural and spiritual environments amid which we live."

Inspirations can be purchased online at frantisekstrouhal.com.



Melissa Owen

Epiphany Bakes

TouchWood Editions

October 2024

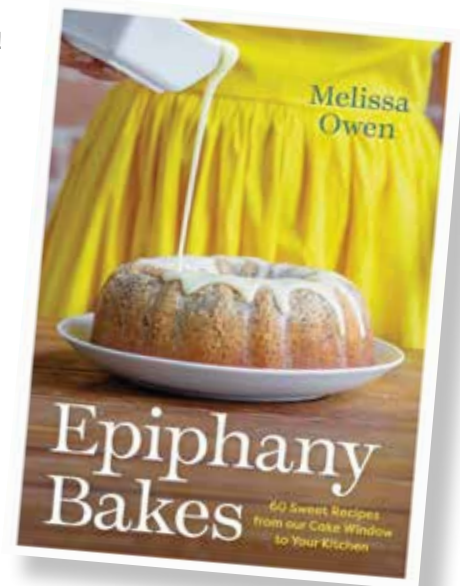
Have you ever eaten quinoa chocolate cake? I have, it came from *Epiphany Bakes* and it is the best darn chocolate cake I've ever had. Fortunately for us, it is one of the recipes that cookbook author Melissa Owen has included in her first baking book, *Epiphany Bakes*. Owen has chosen 60 recipes from her Nelson bakery to feature in the book and has interspersed them with profiles of individuals in her neighbourhood and community. Argenta's Louis Bockner photographed the profile subjects and contributed the cover image. The photographs of the baked goods are by Owen.

Owen's circuitous route to bakery owner started from a background in fine arts. She has an MFA in photography with a mass communications specialty. In 2001 she moved to Canada as a newlywed and "had an epiphany when I was baking one day. I thought, 'Wow, this feels like art to me.'" She enrolled in a six-month pastry program at the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts in Vancouver and opened her little Nelson bakery after the birth of her son in 2006. "I baked in the basement with the baby monitor on," she says. "The product and the business grew as my son got older.

"I've thought about a book for the past 10 years. It's a perfect fit for me."

Owen still operates the bakery from her home but now has a team of bakers working with her. The little red door on the Observatory Street side of her house opens into the takeout cake window where the daily dessert menu is posted.

Copies of *Epiphany Bakes* can be ordered online at epiphanycakes.com, through the bakery (1124 Stanley Street, 250-352-9980), or purchased at Otter Books in Nelson. Yum!



Sean Arthur Joyce

Pole Shift & Other Poems

Ekstasis Editions, 2024

New Denver-based writer Sean Arthur Joyce has released his 7th book of poetry and 12th book overall. In *Pole Shift*, Joyce blends science and poetry to discuss the question: Could cosmological and terrestrial events be having an impact on human society during this time of worldwide sociopolitical upheavals? Given that we are electrochemical beings, are we being subtly affected by the current geomagnetic pole reversal scientists say has been underway for the past several decades and is now speeding up? What about other cosmological events, such as the Solar Maximum cycle currently spewing coronal mass ejections (a.k.a. solar flares) and the Milankovich cycles affecting the tilt of the Earth and possibly the climate?

Pole Shift & Other Poems is divided into four sections:

- “Pole Shift,” the 12-poem title sequence and other poems that incorporate both political and mythological elements;
- “Odes to Earth II,” pastoral poems that follow the “Odes to Earth” section in Joyce’s 2021 *Diary of a Pandemic Year*;
- “To My Unborn Children,” a section of personal poems;
- “House of Blues,” elegiac poems and poems of tribute.

In the best Socratic fashion, Joyce engages with esoteric questions in poetic form, not to prescribe answers, but to stimulate thought and awareness. As always in his work, Joyce seeks not only to confront the pressing issues of the day but to offer the reader a spiritual uplift—one of the great gifts of poetry.

To read more about the book and find order links, read the Introduction to *Pole Shift* published on Joyce’s Substack channel: seanarthurjoyce.substack.com/p/my-new-book-pole-shift-has-been-released



Ru Rose Cabodyna

Revival

November 2024



The 12 original tracks of Ru Rose Cabodyna’s sacred-earth folk album *Revival* were done as art en plein air, recorded live off the forest floor in the mountains of the West Kootenay. She and her partner Kai would find an ideal location and set up an F6 field recorder, professional microphones, instruments and cameras.

The outdoor recording process was not without its challenges. “We would need to attune to the seasonal and daily soundscape shifts, from winds to croaking frogs, weather patterns and the potential of an unanticipated airplane noise that could ruin a take,” she says. “If this wasn’t challenging enough, I was pregnant for the recording of eight of the twelve songs, with the remaining four songs recorded while performing with our sleeping baby daughter upon my back. Not to mention an evacuation order due to wildfires in the middle of finalizing tracking...”

Cabodyna has a background in visual arts as a painter, muralist and graphic/architectural designer. She is in the process of creating 12 watercolour paintings using natural inks, which will become the album artwork.

Cabodyna describes *Revival* as “a devotion of love” that she hopes to share with the local Slocan Valley community and beyond. She received support from the Columbia Basin Trust through the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance for an album release event and performance at the Vallican Whole Community Centre in November.

Website: rurose.earth; Instagram: [@ru.rose.sings](https://www.instagram.com/ru.rose.sings)

WWW.NDAC.CA

nelson international

MURAL FESTIVAL

AUGUST 8-10, 2025

nelson & district arts council

ARTWALK

JUNE 27 / AUG 1 / SEPT 5 / 2025

GF AG



GRAND FORKS ART GALLERY - ESTABLISHED 1984

Art Gallery
Gift Shop
Visitor Centre

Hours

Tuesday	10 am - 4 pm
Wednesday	10 am - 4 pm
Thursday	10 am - 4 pm
Friday	10 am - 4 pm
Saturday	10 am - 3 pm

524 Central Avenue Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0 | 250-442-2211 | info@g2gf.ca | gallery2grandforks.ca

GREAT SELECTION OF FINE ARTWORKS



- * BRIGITTE DESBOIS : MAY 9 - MAY 24
- * PERRY HADDOCK : MAY 27 - JUNE 14
- * BRYN STEVENSON : JUNE 17 - JULY 5
- * DELREÉ DUMONT : JULY 8 - JULY 26
- * FRANCINE LANOIE : JULY 29 - AUGUST 16
- * DALE BYHRE : AUGUST 19 - SEPTEMBER 6
- * KENTREE SPEIRS: SEPTEMBER 9 - 27

&

WINTER GROUP SHOW

MID-NOVEMBER to CHRISTMAS

250.265.8888

www.studioconnexiongallery.com

203 FIFTH AVENUE NW. NAKUSP, BC

COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION IN COMMUNITY CULTURAL PLANNING



by Kallee Lins

How do you measure the value of the arts? Economically? Socially? In terms of cultural capital? With any of these lenses, you can make an evidence-based case for greater support of the arts and culture sector. As Michelle Chawla, CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts, shared in an open letter in October 2024, “The arts and culture sector contributes \$60 billion towards Canada’s GDP and employs

over 850,000 people in cultural jobs. The arts attract businesses, which invest in communities. They draw tourists from all over the world, with arts and culture tourism having three times more economic impact than other types of tourism.” And yet, this impact story too often falls on policymakers’ deaf ears.

How do we craft a narrative for the arts that resonates broadly? And what narratives hold our sector back from playing its full role in social transformation? The Vancouver Creative Cities Summit hosted by the Creative Cities Network of Canada brought together cultural planners around the theme of “Culture Shift.” From October 1 to 3, delegates—predominantly working within municipalities—explored the complexities of supporting vibrant communities through the arts. Lingered behind most presentations and panels was the question of whose voices are being centred in our city’s cultural projects.

Cultural placemaking is not a values-neutral activity. Any public sculpture, mural, festival or civic event that shifts the way people engage with the material world around them has the potential to express principals of accessibility, equitable representation and connection to the land, or to reinforce harmful historical divisions.

In her keynote “Languages the Land Remembers: Revitalization of Salish Design and Placemaking,” Salia Joseph spoke about the power of specificity in cultural projects. Indigenous design systems were not created arbitrarily, Joseph explained; the shapes of traditional Salish design reflect the shape of the land on Salish territory. In public art projects that cobble together the work of Indigenous artists without attention to local cultural history, spaces can easily depict a version of “pan-Indigenity,” which further erases the traditional inhabitants of that place. By shifting to artist-led processes, cultural producers can create opportunities for place-based work that is deeply informed and supportive of true cultural representation.

Conference presenters powerfully acknowledged that sometimes the narratives that most need changing are the ones we hold within ourselves. Sarah Faria, a cultural programmer at the District of Saanich, spoke with honesty and humility about the process she went through to recognize—and then redress—the racial and cultural biases that were

present in a music series she had previously programmed. Following a redesign of her process to diversify jury composition, compensate jurors fairly and collect data to ensure that selected musicians equitably represent the community, she is now a powerful internal advocate for decolonizing the work of her municipality.

Organizations and municipalities looking to critically examine their own practices now have a new tool to support their work. During the conference, the Creative Cities Network of Canada launched their IDEA Toolkit. This resource aims to support municipal arts and culture workers to “embed truth, (re)conciliation, inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility into their work.” The resource is structured in three parts to take the user on an intentional journey that starts with themselves as cultural workers, then moves onto the level of the municipal/organizational structure, before extending into the community. (Find this free resource at creativecommons.ca/.)

On display in a plenary session were the new cultural plans for Lethbridge, Vancouver and Mississauga. A cultural plan can be an excellent tool for positioning the work of arts and culture within a city’s broader objectives, and it can provide a framework for increasingly equitable processes of cultural production. But not all plans are created equal. If you have any role to play in the development or implementation of a cultural plan, learn from those who have recently spent years on the process.

Here are three tips to consider before embarking on a planning process:

1. Consider the values you want to embed in your plan and integrate them into your community consultation activities. How can you centre Indigenous voices in the engagement process? How can you model care in your in-person events? Is the event format prioritizing accessibility? Are you going to places where artists already are or are you making them come to you?
2. Remember that arts and culture should be available to everyone, regardless of whether they’re a member of the local museum or a season subscriber at the theatre. Don’t just ask the existing arts community how they can be served better; seek out opportunities to ask community members why they do not engage with arts and culture. They may provide critical information about barriers to participation.
3. Consider how the plan can be adopted as a city plan, with responsibilities for the whole municipality, not just a roadmap for the cultural services team. (I say this recognizing that a department, or even a single staff role, dedicated to arts and culture is a missing piece in many of our communities here in the Kootenays. The takeaway here, no matter the size of local government, is for cultural plans to recognize the centrality of the arts to other priority areas like tourism and economic development.)

As I reflect on my first Creative Cities Summit, a strong narrative emerges for me about the need for greater connection and collaboration between municipalities, non-profit organizations and individual artists. Cultural workers like myself working in arts organizations were hard to come by at this conference, but I know our relationships with artists have so much to add to the conversation about cultural placemaking and the role of municipalities in that effort. Let’s all look for opportunities to change the narrative of the arts... together.

Kallee Lins is the executive director of the West Kootenay Regional Arts Council.

THE
**B
A
I
L
E
Y**
THEATRE

MUSIC - DANCE - COMEDY THEATRE & MORE



Photo: Larry Doell

MUSIC IN THE PARK

GYRO PARK, TRAIL

NIGHT MARKETS

FOOD & BEER GARDEN
MARKET

THURSDAYS
END OF JUNE
TO MID-AUGUST



TRAIL-ARTS.COM

250-368-9669





Cowan's
OFFICE SUPPLIES LTD.

VISIT US AT
COWANS.ORG

SHIPPING is FREE
OVER \$100

* Some Restrictions Apply

GOLDEN
ARTIST ACRYLICS

 **PRINCETON**
ARTIST BRUSH CO

 **FABRIANO**

 **STAEDTLER**


CANSON

Sharpie

Speedball

ARCHES


APOLLON
GOTRICK

NEEDEN

MONTANA
CANS 

POSCA

*For ALL your
creative
needs*



(250) 352-5507
800-332-4474

517 VICTORIA ST, NELSON , BC

WEEKDAYS 8:30AM - 5:00PM
SATURDAYS 9:00AM - 5:00PM