



CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS  
CENTRE DES ARTS DE LA CONFÉDÉRATION



William Lincoln, Aidan Burke, Dharma Bizier,  
and Lawrence Libor in *MAGGIE* (2023).  
Photo: Dahlia Katz

# 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT

CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS

145 Richmond Street  
Charlottetown

[confederationcentre.com](http://confederationcentre.com)

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Mi'kmaq Heritage Actors  
Photo by: Simon Reid

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO AND BOARD CHAIR



Sixty years after the creation of Confederation Centre of the Arts, we are at an important inflection point in our organizational history. Established as a memorial to commemorate the 1864 Charlottetown Conference, the Centre has evolved into an important space for learning how this nation was formed, and how our identity continues to evolve – with the arts as our messenger. It’s more than a venue. It’s where Canada connects.

As the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan comes to an end, the Centre is preparing for its most significant transformation to date. This year marked a pivotal milestone towards the creation of a new cultural leadership institute. This new initiative will engage greater audiences through performing and visual arts, reflect our vibrant and rich cultural communities, ensure accessibility, and represent our shared voices.

We would like to express our gratitude to the hundreds of artists, staff, patrons, donors, sponsors, and partners who bring the Centre to life. The arts play a crucial role in uniting us, challenging us, and helping people understand the experiences of others. As we move forward to this next chapter, Confederation Centre of the Arts is committed to ensuring the long-term viability of the Centre, and its impact on the arts, an evolving Canada, and the world.

Steve Bellamy  
Chief Executive Officer

Robert Sear  
Chair, Board of Directors



This ambitious renovation project is the culmination of years of strategic planning and community engagement. Guided by voices from a broad representation of stakeholders, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, we have refined our priorities and are committed to promoting our cultural heritage and connecting more deeply with Canadians of all walks of life.

For more information, visit:  
[confederationcentre.com/project](https://confederationcentre.com/project)



- **620**  
annual donors



- **\$146,160**  
donations to the Gallery  
(includes in-kind artwork donations)



- **5,037**  
individual donations  
to the Centre



- **\$1,187,905**  
total donations  
to the Centre



# CENTRE'D THANKS TO YOU

The support and philanthropic leadership of our community is foundational to all that we do at Confederation Centre of the Arts. Your generosity provides opportunities for artists to find new ways to connect you to the arts, continue arts education programs, and return to our stages for live performances. As a supporter, you are vital to the success of all that we do and are part of an extraordinary community of philanthropists dedicated to making a meaningful impact in Prince Edward Island and across Canada through the arts. Thank you for continuing to support the Centre and for choosing to be an arts champion.



# ANNUAL DONORS

# 2023-24

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List current as of March 31, 2024

# CENTRE'D ON STAGE

**55,931**

patrons attended

The 2023 Charlottetown Festival



**15,000**

Patrons attended

LIVE @ the Centre

The 2023 Charlottetown Festival was full of stories of resilience, inspiration, empowerment, and plenty of laughter. The lineup included a new Canadian musical, celebrated a variety of performance styles and theatrical forms, and featured lots of Island talent.

The new Canadian musical **MAGGIE** made its world premiere, telling the inspirational tale of a fiery school cleaner living in a mining town in post-war Scotland. The heartfelt show featured a soul-stirring score by award-winning recording artist Johnny Reid, a Scot who immigrated to Canada as a teenager. The musical is based on the true story of his grandmother who, after suffering an unthinkable loss, had to rely on her strength, sense of humour, and fiercely loyal group of friends to raise her boys and protect them from the harsh and ever-changing world around them. The musical was co-produced with Theatre Aquarius in Hamilton, ON.

Also at the Sobe Family Theatre was **The Play That Goes Wrong**, an award-winning smash-hit comedy. The *Sherlock Holmes* meets *Monty Python* production is a play within a play, telling the story of a theatre troupe trying to put on a murder mystery where things are quickly going from bad to utterly disastrous. With an unconscious leading lady, a corpse that can't play dead, and actors who trip over everything (including their lines), this masterpiece of malfunction is chock-full of mishaps and madcap mania that delivered fun for all ages. The show starred Islanders Graham Putnam, Aaron Reid Ryder, and Dawn Ward-Dames.



Clea McCaffrey, Nicola-Dawn Brook, Dharma Bizier, Alyssa LeClair, and Michelle Bardach in *I'm Every Woman* (2023). Photo: Louise Vessey.



The Festival's lineup also featured two cabaret shows. After playing packed houses on a tour of the Maritimes, ***The Songs of Johnny & June*** returned to The Mack. Starring PEI powerhouse duo Jacob Hemphill and Melissa MacKenzie accompanied by a rockstar band, the energetic show celebrated the lives and songs of Johnny Cash and June Carter – country music's most iconic couple. The biographical performance followed the legendary pair's storied relationship through renowned songs, like "Jackson", "Folsom Prison", and "Ring of Fire".

Also at The Mack was ***I'm Every Woman***, a revue of iconic music that changed the world. The cabaret featured five powerhouse vocalists performing empowering songs from legendary women. The show travels through several decades of hit music, with songs from Aretha Franklin, Dolly Parton, Chaka Khan, Taylor Swift, and more.

Family-friendly programming returned to the Outdoor Amphitheatre. Back by popular demand, the high-energy show ***Munschables*** brought to life a new selection of stories from beloved children's author Robert Munsch through an interactive and musical performance. The show was performed by the Centre's Young Company and was made up entirely of Islanders. The Mi'kmaq Heritage Actors also returned to the Outdoor Amphitheatre with the new show ***Mi'kmaq Stories of Rabbit and His Friends***, a fun performance for all ages that shared the history of the Mi'kmaq people through stories, songs, and beautiful traditional dance.



LIVE @ the Centre presented an eclectic season of music, dance, comedy, and more throughout the fall and winter. Acts included comedian **Whitney Cummings**, dance performances from **Atlantic Ballet Atlantique** and **Ballet Edmonton**, contemporary circus **FLIP Fabrique**, energetic performances from the **Harlem Gospel Choir** and **Pack Drumline**, and musicians like **Jeremy Dutcher**, **Donovon Woods**, **Matt Dusk**, and **Tara MacLean**.

*Munschables* (2023).  
Photo: Simon Reid.

# CENTRE'D ON COMMUNITY



Cathy Murchison-Krowlikowski, *Portrait of Fiona*, 2023, stained glass



**581**

**students at Arts  
Discovery Days**



**\$36,885**

**in-kind donations  
made through the  
Lou MacEachern  
Community  
Partnership Program**

We believe in community engagement and opening our doors for more people to experience and access the arts.

Nearly a year after Hurricane Fiona impacted Prince Edward Island, a new exhibition at Confederation Centre Art Gallery from the PEI Crafts Council (PEICC) offered a platform for Islanders to reflect on shared experiences in the wake of the storm. ***Destruction Recrafted: Hurricane Fiona Up Close and Personal*** featured work from 17 Island artists who shared their experiences and emotions through their art to help bring Islanders together, move past the trauma, and to make something beautiful out of the devastation.

Island students were welcomed back for **Arts Discovery Days**. These classes are offered in partnership with the

Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, which provides promotional support for the program. These hands-on sessions are tied into students' social studies and arts curriculum, which focuses on the concept of exploration. Students from across Charlottetown, Belfast, and Georgetown attended.

The **Lou MacEachern Community Partnership Program** continued to allow a diverse cross-section of local organizations, whose goals and objectives are aligned with those of the Centre, to have better access to the Centre's facilities and resources. Organizations who benefitted from the program included: Art In The Open, Black Cultural Society of PEI, L'nuey, United Way of PEI, and the PEI Symphony Orchestra.



Kent Monkman (b. 1965), *Study for "mistikôsiwak (Wooden Boat People): Resurgence of the People (Final Variation)*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 107.3 x 213.4 cm, Collection of the Sobeys Art Foundation, © Kent Monkman.

# CENTRE'D ON VISUAL ARTS



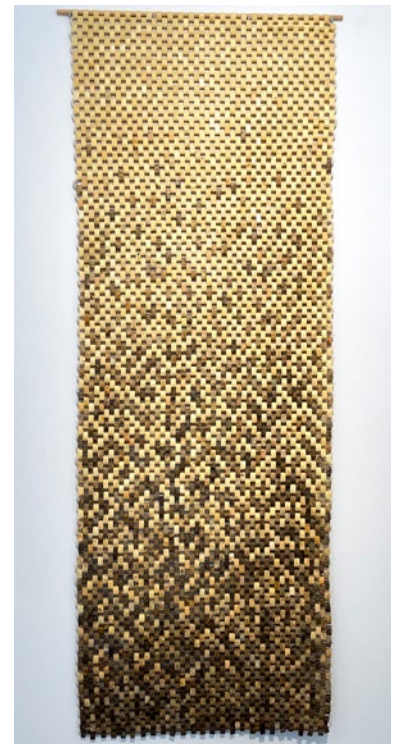
**31,124**  
visitors to the Gallery

Confederation Centre Art Gallery was the first stop in the Maritimes for the touring collection ***Generations: The Sobeys Family and Canadian Art***. One of Canada's most impressive private collections of Canadian art, the exhibition braided together works by early European newcomers, titans of Canadian 20th century art, a rich display by the Québec Impressionists and Les Automatistes, as well as trailblazing artists of today, including contemporary Indigenous artists. Organized and circulated by McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the exhibition comes from the private collections of Nova Scotia's Sobeys family, who have championed Canadian art for three generations.

The Gallery featured artworks by contemporary emerging, mid-career, and senior artists. The ***currents that carry us*** exhibition highlighted eight early-career artists from the Atlantic interested in stories of place, often using salvaged materials. This project was supported by the RBC Foundation. ***Common Collective: 40-Tonne Viewfinder***, responded to the changing patterns of life and land use in the region of Stratford, Ontario, where all five artists were raised. The Gallery also exhibited two retrospectives from Island-based artists: Donald Andrus and Daphne Irving.

***Donald Andrus: A Retrospective*** looked at the career of an artist known for experimentation with the materials, processes, and ideas that underpin the making of images. Drawn from over thirty years of work, this exhibition provided an overview of the artist's career, featuring highlights from his various bodies of work, ranging from drawings and abstract painting to his later portraits.

***Daphne Irving: A Painter's Journey*** brought together loans from the artist and regional collectors to celebrate the lush and fluid paintings of her 50-year career. Her work includes fluid and inventive watercolour landscapes, a period of abstraction, and then a more figurative approach in the 1980s focused on depictions of religious narratives.



Carley Mullally, *Bit-by-Bit*, 2023, reclaimed rubber lobster claw bands, cotton rope.



Johnny Inukpuk, *Mother and Child*,  
c.1963, soapstone, 77.5 x 35 x 30.5 cm.  
Gift of the Imperial Order of the Daughters  
of the Empire, 1964. CAG 64.3.



*Pisuwini* by Atlantic Ballet Atlantique as part of LIVE @ the Centre.

# CENTRE'D ON DIVERSE VOICES

**Arctic Visions, Arctic Life** featured nearly the entire Inuit collection at the Gallery – the majority of which was acquired as gifts, along with artworks depicting the North or Inuit communities.

There is a significant number of newcomer children in the **Youth Chorus**, and it is wonderful to see the growing diversity of PEI being reflected in our education programs. To better serve newcomer families, we are in discussions with Immigrant and Refugee Services Association PEI (IRSA) to learn best practices in communicating with families where English is not a strong or spoken language.

LIVE @ the Centre staged *Pisuwini* by Atlantic Ballet Atlantique, a dance performance based on a Wolastoq tale. The multidisciplinary piece blended Indigenous storytelling and ballet, redefining the classical form for a contemporary audience.



Youth Chorus (2023).  
Photo: Louise Vessey



*The Nutcracker* (2023). Photo by Simon Reid.

# CENTRE'D ON ARTS EDUCATION

With a new director in place, this was a significant transitional year for the choral music program. The Youth Chorus is now comprised of junior and intermediate sections to better meet the wide range in age and musical experience of these young singers. Confederation Singers saw some decades-long members return, as well as many new faces joining the choir.

In April 2023, the Confederation Centre Youth Chorus traveled to Florida to participate in the Disney Performing Arts OnStage program. Choristers performed to the public at the Disney Springs stage. The opportunity to travel to Disney World with the choir proved to be a significant draw for the Centre's choral music program, which saw its highest registration numbers in several years.

In July 2023, dance umbrella's performance group participated in Disney's Dance the Magic program. This is an auditioned program open to dance studios around the world with high performance standards, providing an exciting and challenging opportunity for dancers to learn and grow as artists. During the trip, dancers learned from Disney teaching artists, and had performance opportunities, and participated in networking events.

For the 2023 holiday season, in partnership with the PEI Symphony Orchestra, nearly 100 dance umbrella students took to the stage to perform the beloved holiday classic *The Nutcracker* with a live orchestra.



• **51,277**  
training hours provided



• **254**  
students in dance



• **61**  
singers in choral  
music programs



• **599**  
participants in arts camps  
and classes

Confederation Singers (2023).  
Photo by Louise Vessey.



Charlottetown Forum (2023). Photo by Louise Vessey.

# CENTRE'D ON HERITAGE

The **2023 Symons Medal Presentation and Lecture** honoured writer, historian, and former politician Michael Ignatieff. He discussed issues such as the climate crisis, artificial intelligence, and nuclear war. The lecture asked how we can revive hope in the human project as these issues raise the spectre of humanity's end, and explored whether Canada is meeting these challenges. Although the lecture explored some weighty topics, Ignatieff's optimism about the future of humanity inspired many to continue discussing the lecture in the days that followed.

The inaugural **Charlottetown Forum** directly followed the Symons Medal Presentation and Lecture and featured 12 speakers on three panels that covered the topics of immigration, economic reconciliation, and finding shared national narratives in a fractured time. Forum speakers came from five provinces and included Jesse Wentle, journalist, author, and chair of the board of the Canada Council for the Arts; Naheed Nenshi, political commentator and former mayor of Calgary; Kateri Coade, executive director of the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I.; and Elamin Abdelmehmoud, author and journalist. Alongside the panels were additional programming, including a guided tour of the Gallery, a historic walking tour of downtown Charlottetown, and networking opportunities with attendees and speakers.



**1,005**

tickets booked for the Symons Medal Presentation and Lecture



**114**

attendees at the Charlottetown Forum



2023 Symons Medallist  
Michael Ignatieff  
Photo by Louise Vessey.



**\$402,250**  
in sponsorship  
investment

# CENTRE'D ON PARTNERSHIPS

Sponsors, donors, volunteers, patrons, and government funders continue to passionately support the Centre, which enables us to make a meaningful impact on the Island and across Canada through the arts.

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# CENTRE'D ON THE FUTURE



## PROJECT COSTS

**\$65M**

Construction

**\$5M**

Sustainability

**\$1.5M**

Cost of Campaign

**\$71.5M**

TOTAL COST

A goal for the 2023/2024 fiscal year was to build internal capacity for a national capital campaign to revitalize the Centre's south pavilion.

In March 2024, the federal and provincial governments announced a historic infrastructure investment of \$47 million towards the project. Announced by Minister Lawrence MacAulay, MP Sean Casey, MP Heath MacDonald, Premier Dennis King, Minister Ernie Hudson, and the Centre's CEO Steve Bellamy, this project will create greener spaces for diverse and inclusive programming and learning opportunities, enriching the community and boosting the region's arts sector.

Additionally, it will pave the way for the establishment of a national cultural leadership institute at Confederation Centre of the Arts – a pioneer initiative in Canada. The institute will support the development of new Canadian work, offer training opportunities for professional artists, provide accessible arts classes for the community, facilitate diverse conversations, and expand existing partnerships with Indigenous communities.

The federal government is contributing a total of \$25 million through Infrastructure Canada's Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program and more than \$2.3 million through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

(ACOA) – Innovative Communities Fund (ICF). The Province of Prince Edward Island is contributing \$20 million, and Confederation Centre of the Arts will be contributing \$16.5 million through donations. Securing this funding was vital as it allows the Centre's fundraising team to confidently move forward with soliciting support from donors.

A silent phase of the campaign began this year with a total of \$3.5M in gifts and pledges. The public phase of the Shared Voices Capital Campaign will be launched later.





# 2023-24

CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS

# CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (AT MARCH 31)

(in thousands of dollars)	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash	6,963	2,310
Accounts Receivable	4,330	1,178
Inventory and Prepaids	318	390
Capital Assets	36,462	35,161
	<b>\$ 48,073</b>	<b>\$ 39,039</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; FUND BALANCES</b>		
Bank Advances	1,947	808
Accounts Payable and Accruals	3,142	1,420
Deferred Revenue	1,380	1,163
Long Term Debt	-	7
Capital Fund	40,554	33,927
Cultural Development Fund	434	859
Operating Fund	616	855
	<b>\$ 48,073</b>	<b>\$ 39,039</b>



*Generations: The Sobey Family and Canadian Art (2023). Photo by Louise Vessey*

# 2023-24

CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS

# CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Complete audited financial statements of the Fathers of Confederation Buildings Trust for the year ended March 31, 2024 are available on the website

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (AT MARCH 31)

(in thousands of dollars)	2024	2023
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Programming	3,033	6,120
Commercial	940	1,086
Fundraising and Development	1,624	2,228
Investments and Other Revenues	27	73
Public Sector Grants - Operating	6,533	5,608
Public Sector Grants - Capital	8,576	1,779
	<b>\$ 20,733</b>	<b>\$ 16,894</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Programming	7,128	8,786
Commercial	672	727
Fundraising and Development	969	433
Building Operations	4,637	4,456
Administration and Other Expenses	1,365	1,429
	<b>\$ 14,771</b>	<b>\$ 15,831</b>
<b>EXCESS REVENUES (EXPENSES)</b>	<b>\$ 5,962</b>	<b>\$ 1,063</b>
<b>NET REVENUES (EXPENSES) ALLOCATED TO:</b>		
Operating Fund	(240)	(5)
Capital Fund	6,627	1,122
Culture Development Fund	(425)	(54)
	<b>\$ 5,962</b>	<b>\$ 1,063</b>

CENTRE DES ARTS  
DE LA CONFÉDÉRATION



CONFEDERATION  
CENTRE OF THE ARTS

# 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT