



University
of Victoria
Fine Arts

creative futures start here

2023 / 24 annual review

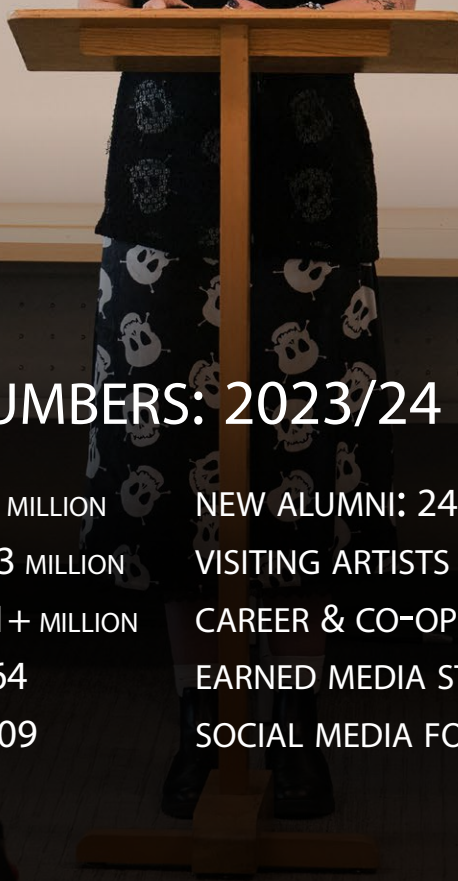


Poetry

1st Place

Cate Freeborn

“At 19, I am diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder”



FINE ARTS BY THE NUMBERS: 2023/24

FINE ARTS FACULTY GRANTS: \$11.6 MILLION
FUNDS RAISED FROM DONORS: \$1.3 MILLION
FUNDS AWARDED TO STUDENTS: \$1+ MILLION
STUDENT AWARDS DISTRIBUTED: 564
CURRENT DONORS TO FINE ARTS: 509

NEW ALUMNI: 249
VISITING ARTISTS & SCHOLARS: 36
CAREER & CO-OP PLACEMENTS: 25
EARNED MEDIA STORIES: 250+
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS: 30+K

BETH BINGHAM

Writing student Cate Freeborn was one of the winners in the annual UVic Libraries/EQHR essay contest, *on the verge*



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UVic_FineArts



@UVicArts

Message from the Dean

Four years ago, I welcomed the incoming cohort of students on Zoom. This was the first fearless group that began their university degrees during the pandemic. Applauding them as they walked across the stage during the June 2024 convocation, I was reminded of their resolve in the face of COVID. Their commitment to creativity continues to inspire me and gives me confidence that the next generation of arts leaders has the temerity to transform life's challenges into opportunities for intellectual reflection and artistic innovation.

I am also impressed by our fabulous faculty, staff, sessionals and music performance instructors. As you will see in the pages that follow, this past year colleagues continued to reconceptualize the contours of arts education, creative expression, and scholarly knowledge. We are recording the stories of climate disaster survivors. We are reclaiming the music of composers who were exiled or executed for their religious or political beliefs. We are staging and celebrating the stories of newcomers' successes despite the recalcitrance of racism, cultural isolation, and financial hardship. We are using emerging technologies such as virtual reality, alternate reality, extended reality and artificial intelligence to create new immersive narrative experiences.

Our exciting activities during the 2023-2024 academic year also included welcoming Heather Igloliorte, UVic's only Canada Excellence Research Chair. As a world-renowned curator and researcher, Dr. Igloliorte's work in Decolonization and Transformational Artistic Practice is dismantling colonialist understandings of resilience, health



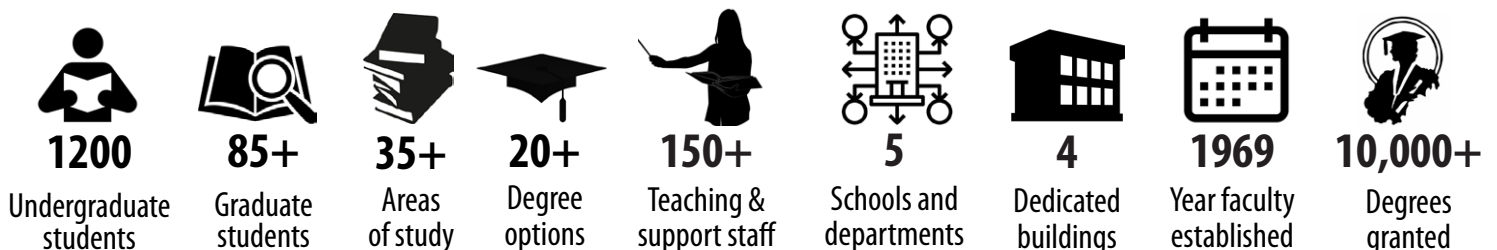
and technologies while foregrounding Indigenous perspectives and creativity.

Our greatest source of pride is our graduates. This past year, I had the pleasure of meeting many Fine Arts alumni. Whether they have become practicing artists, professional scholars or have leveraged the transferability of the skills they honed in Fine Arts to become leaders in an array of careers, these former students were all laudatory about the formative impact of their time at UVic. They reminded me that the arts continue to be essential for cultivating dexterity through creative thinking and fostering the empathy needed to navigate our increasingly complex world.

As always, the success of the Faculty of Fine Arts depends on our partnerships with our incredibly generous donors. We also are grateful to our wonderful colleagues across the campus and throughout the cultural sector — thank you!

Please reach out to me at any time. I invite you to join us as we redefine the future of the arts!

Dr. Allana C. Lindgren
finedean@uvic.ca



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Led by professor Patrick Du Wors, 11 Theatre students exhibit a group project at the prestigious Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design, alongside work by fellow professor Carmen Alatorre

Visual Arts MFA alum Leanne Olson leads the workshop "Room Without a Trace: Projection Possibilities & Installation Art" for Continuing Studies' Summer Arts Series

Award-winning author Erica Gies is Writing's 2023 Southam Lecturer, speaking to an overflow audience on "Water Always Wins: Working with Nature in an Age of Drought, Fire & Flood"

Five students in the Philippines' Campus Journalism Lab receive certificates from UVic's Continuing Studies for their work connected to Writing's Climate Disaster Project



2023

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER



As part of his seven-month exhibit *Hard Look Soft Gaze* at Ontario's Art Windsor Essex Gallery, Visual Arts professor Rick Leong curates 30 landscapes from AWE's collection and activates them by creating his own large-scale landscape painting (seen here)



Writing professor Danielle Geller explores the idea of emergence (a phenomenon of observation and interpretation) within the context of game design, the personal essay and the mind in her Dean's Lecture, an ongoing partnership with UVic's Continuing Studies



Distinguished Alumni pianist Eve Egoyan and producer Mauricio Pauly spend two days with Music students doing a workshop and performance of their new *Hopeful Monster* project, which breathes new life into the piano's sonic and expressive capabilities

School of Music double alumna and award-winning composer Linda Catlin Smith (seen here with UVic Chancellor Marion Buller and President Kevin Hall) is awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music at Fall Convocation



Kwakwaka'wakw author, artist & activist Gord Hill presents our annual donor-sponsored Lehan Family Activism & the Arts Lecture Series to a packed house: watch his talk (and our other public talks) on the Fine Arts YouTube channel



The Wind Symphony presents two world premieres: Canadian composer Andrew George's *The Paperpushers* plus Mexican composer Jorge Garcia's *Pequeña Suite*, with visiting brass virtuoso Faustino Diaz (below, with conductor Steven Capaldo)



NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

2024



After a remarkable 44 years, piano professor Bruce Vogt marks his retirement with a pair of signature concerts, including the final performance of his popular live-music-for-silent-films series



AHVS professor Carolyn Butler-Palmer (left) curates *Latent* at Legacy Gallery, featuring meditations on the work of women artists in UVic's art collection by Visual Arts Professor Emeritus Lynda Gammon (right)



The School of Music announces acclaimed mezzo-soprano, alumna and national CBC Radio *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera* host Marion Newman is joining their acclaimed Voice program as faculty



Visual Arts BFA Honours student Jude Wolff Ackroyd is part of the Spring 2024 graduating class that sees Fine Arts break the 10,000 mark for overall alumni since the faculty was established in 1969

THE FACULTY OF FINE ARTS

Movement in our five units—Art History & Visual Studies, Theatre, Visual Arts, Writing and the School of Music—always offers exciting opportunities for growth: here's who we welcomed between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS



Erin Campbell
Chair,
Art History &
Visual Studies



Megan Dickie
Chair,
Visual Arts

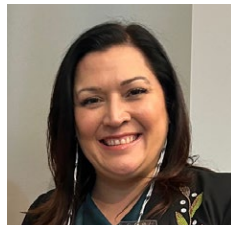


Kristi Blythe
Director of
Administration,
Fine Arts

NEW FACULTY



Anne Grimm
Assistant Teaching
Professor,
School of Music



Heather Igloliorte
Canada Excellence
Research Chair,
Visual Arts



Rose Cory
Department
Secretary,
Theatre

NEW STAFF



Sophie Ladd
Project Coordinator,
Jeffrey Rubinoff
Sculpture Park



Bernadette McKelvey
Marketing &
Communications
Manager, Theatre



Louise Thornton
Administration
Officer,
School of Music



Sophie Zhang
Administrative
Assistant,
Art History &
Visual Studies

RESEARCH & CREATIVE PRACTICE

Research and creative practice are the core of who we are: they are how we define ourselves, and are central to our continued growth and development



TRANSFORMATIONAL RECONCILIATION THROUGH EXHIBITIONS

Globally renowned art historian and curator Dr. Heather Igloliorte joined the Department of Visual Arts in November 2023 as UVic's Canada Research Excellence Chair in Decolonial and Transformational Indigenous Art Practices.

As Canada's first Inuk and Nunatsiavut art historian to hold a doctoral degree, Igloliorte has developed a well-deserved reputation as an internationally acclaimed curator whose work has positioned circumpolar Indigenous arts and knowledge at the centre of global exhibition practices.

"A big part of what I want to do with this position is to bring more Indigenous peoples into spaces that weren't designed for them — but that they absolutely deserve to be in," says Igloliorte. "How do we change the structures to make the institutions better and more welcoming and more inclusive? This new role is going to amplify things that we've been wanting to do for a long time."

This eight-year, \$8-million position is funded through the Canada Excellence Research Chairs program and administered by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, on behalf of Canada's federal granting agencies.

Her new position will advance reconciliation through the transformative power of art and innovative exhibition practices, and support a new generation of students, researchers, educators, curators and artists to drive change.

More than just decolonizing physical spaces and creating capacity for diverse arts opportunities and leadership, however, Igloliorte is also passionate about extending the artistic reach of technology through digital literacy and media arts.

"Indigenous people don't necessarily have access to the same cutting-edge technologies that others do," she says. "The potential is there for people to grow in really exciting directions."



ALLAN ANTLIFF NAMED INAUGURAL RUBINOFF LEGACY PROFESSOR

The Faculty of Fine Arts has developed a strong relationship with the Jeffrey Rubinoff Foundation since 2016 when the late BC sculptor created UVic's Jeffrey Rubinoff Scholar in Art as a Source of Knowledge Endowment.

That relationship has now been further strengthened by the new Jeffrey Rubinoff Nexus for Art as a Source of Knowledge — which includes \$230,000 for a named professorship, \$100,000 in annual graduate student scholarships (to be shared by each of our five units) and the expansion of experiential learning initiatives at Hornby Island's Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park (JRSP).

Art History & Visual Studies professor Allan Antliff has been selected as the inaugural Rubinoff Legacy Professor in Art as a Source of Knowledge. Antliff brings to the position not only a personal history with Rubinoff and an interest in the Modernist ideas expressed in his sculptures, but also a deep history of engagement with the JRSP's annual Company of Ideas forum — an international gathering of scholars, artists and thinkers which has been exploring key issues in art and knowledge since it was established in 2008.

"I first met Jeffrey in 2015 and we quickly forged a personal friendship based on shared intellectual interests and ethical concerns related to the arts," recalls Antliff. "Since then, I've been organizing annual graduate student participation in the Company of Ideas with the invaluable help of JRSP curator Karun Koernig and Company of Ideas director and Cambridge University art historian James Fox . . . Our students derive great benefit from these forums: they are 'idea generators' and a chance to meet scholars of note in a congenial atmosphere unlike any other."

Antliff is particularly pleased with the graduate student scholarships, which he feels reflect Rubinoff's own "spirit of generosity and commitment to learning". Fifteen Fine Arts graduate students benefited from the new funding this year, providing them with the opportunity to both visit the JSRP and further their own academic and creative work (see pages 22-23).

"These scholarships will give students time to contemplate and develop their research free of economic pressures," notes Antliff. "This is an extraordinary gift — the gift of creative freedom."



BETH STUART'S MONUMENTAL MONTREAL COMMISSION

When it comes to her creative output, award-winning Visual Arts professor Beth Stuart works in an expanding range of media including writing, painting, ceramics, performance, textiles and sculptural installations. Picking up on overlooked historical moments, as well as characters and material techniques, she creates alternative plot points in the narrative of modernist abstraction in order to examine the physical and metaphysical implications of dissolving the figure-ground relationship.

Her newest public art sculpture is *Les Tendresses* (above), commissioned by La Banque Nationale du Canada and installed in the lobby of their Montreal headquarters at a cost of nearly \$1 million. "*Les Tendresses* represent a playful offshoot of a longer artistic passage through the history of the relationships between architecture, garment construction, modernist abstraction, queer embodiment and feminist practice," says Stuart.

Les Tendresses offers three monumental sculptures that animate the architectural forms of three adjacent columns through

a lively transformation of stone into the suggestion of clothed figures. Each "posture" and "costume" is distinct from the others: one upright and elegant, one soft and flowing, one ornate and whimsical. The molded sculptures are made using a centuries-old architectural plaster technique called *scagliola*, which authentically imitates marble, creating a double *trompe l'oeil*: architecture come to life, and cloth turned to stone.

Les Tendresses is inspired by the delight emerging from unexpected transformations of the inanimate into the animate; the hard into the seemingly soft; the inorganic into the organic. The sculptures introduce a playful distortion of regular geometries, contrasting the calm, sober look of the surrounding grey stone and concrete against bright, lively columns made of the same materials. This juxtaposition suggests a bridge between the architecture of the space and the humans who move through it — recognizing the role of individuals within the community and the capacity of the imagination to draw connections.

FACULTY RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY

While our faculty is very active locally, provincially and nationally, their commitment to creative activity and research excellence also sees them presenting, performing and partnering internationally: here's a quick glimpse into where some have been this past year





JOHN THRELFALL

EVA BABOULA MARKS A DECADE AS ASSOCIATE DEAN

For the past 10 years, Art History & Visual Studies professor Eva Baboula has been a consistent and guiding force as our longest-serving Associate Dean — a position from which she is now stepping down. During that time, she not only continued teaching with AHVS but also worked with three different Deans, was Acting Dean for six months and served a year as the Associate Executive Director with UVic’s Learning & Teaching Support & Innovation division.

“When I first came into the position, I was really interested in helping students in a wider way than just teaching — there was an opportunity to understand what they were going through, and what issues were affecting them beyond content and courses,” she reflects. “I was also very interested in supporting students with accessibility issues, which has become an increasing priority in the last few years.”

With Fine Arts being the only UVic faculty with a single Associate Dean, Baboula has seen her role grow well beyond student support. Her portfolio includes not only academic success and support, but also recruitment and retention, curriculum development, international and Indigenous partnerships, interdisciplinary programs, and working closely with the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

“It’s a joy to lead these initiatives,” she says.

“This has developed into a more holistic position over the years: how can we support the students from the beginning to the end? I also often took on the support of research and creative activity in Fine Arts and across UVic; I have truly loved coaching graduate students with their SSHRC applications. And helping the professors also supports the students — I have enjoyed mentoring sessional instructors and taking care of our growing interdisciplinary programs.”

Baboula is particularly proud of the relationships she has developed with the entire Fine Arts community over the years: students, staff and teaching faculty included. “The kind of mentoring we do and the relationships we all have are quite different from the rest of the university; maybe it’s because we’re a relatively small faculty, but I find we’re all very close in an organic, integrated way.”

She also feels her skills as a mother of two have helped her succeed as Associate Dean. “I think we’re very much like parents to our students . . . you need to have compassion and understanding but, at the same time, you have to have good judgment and clear boundaries. That’s very important for a position like this.”

CREATIVE OVERVIEW

Research & creative activity are directly relevant to the teaching mission of our Faculty

AWARDS

Eva Baboula and Marcus Milwright (AHVS) won “Best Edited Collection” at the Universities Art Association’s 2023 Book Awards for their recent publication, *Made for the Eye of One Who Sees: Canadian Contributions to the Study of Islamic Art and Archaeology*.

Sean Holman (Writing) and the Climate Disaster Project were honoured with a Special Recognition Citation at Canada’s National Newspaper Awards; the CDP was also a finalist in the Covering Climate Now Awards and the Canadian Association of Journalists Awards.

Yasmine Kandil (Theatre) earned a UVic REACH Award for “Excellence in Creativity & Artistic Expression” for her ongoing work amplifying the voices of Indigenous, Black and racialized artists; she also won the Wayman Mullins Award for “Best Journal Article”, which she co-authored for the *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*.

Merrie Klazek (Music) saw her album, *Dance Around the Sun*, win a Bronze Medal in two categories at the 2023 Global Music Awards; she also earned a nomination for “Jazz Artist of the Year” at the Western Canadian Music Awards.

Allana Lindgren (Dean) and Tony Vickery (Theatre) were named co-winners of “Best Edited Collection” by the Canadian Association for Theatre Research for their new book, *Canadian Performance Documents & Debates: A Sourcebook*.

Kathryn Mockler (Writing) was shortlisted for the 2023 Writers’ Union of Canada Danuta Gleed Literary Award for her short story collection, *Anecdotes*.

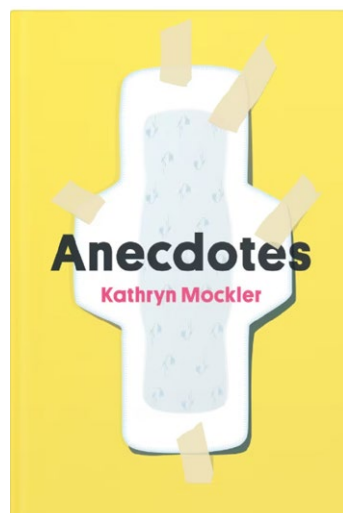
Carey Newman (Visual Arts) won five 2023 Leo Awards (plus other film festival prizes and nominations) as co-producer of the film, *Aitamaako’ta-misskapi Natosi: Before The Sun*. Newman also received a Doctor of Laws Honoris Causa from Royal Roads University, and the non-fiction prize at the Canadian Children’s Book Centre Awards for *The Witness Blanket: Truth, Art & Reconciliation* (with former instructor Kristy Hudson).

Gregory Scofield (Writing) won a pair of Saskatchewan Book Awards for “Publishing in Education” and “Indigenous Peoples’ Publishing” for his new book, *Kôhkominawak ocihciwâwa: Our Grandmothers’ Hands: Repatriating Métis Material Art*.

Staff members also earned accolades this year: Cliff Haman (Visual Arts) was elected president of BC’s Professional Employees Association; Sandra Guerreiro (Theatre) earned a PEA Service Award for 29 years of service to the union; and James Thurmeier (Theatre) won Actsafe BC’s Safety Ambassador Award.

Among our current students, Arnold Lim (MFA, Writing) was nominated for three 2024 Leo Awards for his short film *Obscura*; Stella McCaig (Visual Arts) earned the Victoria Medal for the highest Fine Arts GPA this year; and Eva Haas (Writing) is the City of Victoria’s newest Youth Poet Laureate—the fourth Writing student to be YPL in the last decade.

Finally, celebrated Haisla/Heiltsuk alumna author Eden Robinson (Writing) was honoured “as a role model and mentor to other Indigenous authors” at the national *Indspire* Indigenous achievement awards.





A scene from Paul Walde's climate-themed audio-visual installation *Weather Events* at the Grand Forks Art Gallery

EXHIBITIONS

Professors in our Visual Arts department had a busy year, with Paul Walde's *Glacial Resonance* at Ontario's McIntosh Gallery, *Weather Events* at the Grand Forks Art Gallery and *Imaginary Landscapes* at Toronto's MGK127. Montreal saw the unveiling of Beth Stuart's monumental sculpture *Les Tendresses*, while Rick Leong's solo exhibit *Long Time No See* ran at the Bradley Ertaskiran gallery.

Laura Dutton's 60 mini-screen video installation *Night Comes On* exhibited as part of the Winter Arts Festival in Victoria and Vancouver; also in Vancouver was Cedric Bomford's mobile Crummy Gallery, whose *Signal House* presented work by five alumni as part of the Capture Photography Festival. Meanwhile, Kelly Richardson's work appeared in exhibits, screenings and conferences in Ontario, England, California, Spain and, thanks to Metallica, at the Grammy Awards.

PERFORMANCES

All three mainstage shows at the Phoenix Theatre this year — *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *100 Years of Broadway* and *The Hot L Baltimore* — were verifiable hits, and all were directed by alumni. Phoenix also mounted a double-bill of Staging Equality: Theatre for Young Audience shows, *The Woman Who Outshone The Sun* and *Shi-shi-etko*.

Among the highlights of the School of Music's season were two commissioned world premieres by the Wind Symphony; the UVic Chorus & Orchestra's grand *Messa di Gloria*; and powerful performances by Concerto Competition student winners Carey Wang and Xavier Marican.

Notable Faculty Concert Series recitals include Arthur Rowe playing Bartók, Schubert and Brahms; Ajtony Csaba's avant-garde music experience *I Have Been to Tibet*; the multimedia recital *Popular Culture Through the Centuries*; and the final series of performances by retiring piano professor Bruce Vogt.

Other memorable musical moments include a 50th anniversary mini-tour by the Chamber Singers; the annual Winter Choral Concert at downtown's Christ Church Cathedral; and the Survivor-Centred Visual Narratives Project, which featured flutist Suzanne Snizek, violist Joanna Hood and pianist Alexandria Le performing works by politically suppressed composers.

Music also welcomed some remarkable guests, including pianist Minsoo Sohn; trombonist Faustino Diaz; mezzo-soprano Allyson McHardy; composer Sandeep Bhagwati; violin and piano collaborators Mark Lupin and Ayke Agus; the Viano String Quartet; the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy; interdisciplinary artist Malik Gaines; and Distinguished Alumni Eve Egoyan with Mauricio Pauly.

STAFF PROFILES

Aside from their invaluable supporting roles on campus, many of our Fine Arts staff are also busy creatives themselves



CARLY GREENE: WORKSHOP TECHNICIAN

An MFA alum, educator and visual artist whose creative practice ranges from sculpture to video, Carly has overseen the workshops in the Visual Arts department since 2021. What's her favourite part of the job? "Problem-solving the unique and challenging ideas dreamed up by students and training them to utilize traditional tools and equipment in creative ways," she says.

SAMANTHA KRZYWONOS: DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

For over a decade, Samantha has facilitated relationships between Fine Arts donors, faculty and students. A retired naval combat information operator with the Royal Canadian Navy, she is a Certified Fund Raising Executive who focuses on implementing highly personalized, consistent donor relationships and development strategies, and has overseen significant growth in our donor base and overall donations.



TIM O'GORMAN: OPERATIONS MANAGER

Tim oversees all technical aspects for the Department of Theatre and its Phoenix Theatre. With over 40 years of professional experience, his credits include everything from the Belfry, Arts Club and Tarragon theatres to the Shaw, Stratford and Blyth festivals. He joined Theatre in 2006 and is grateful to be able to share his professional knowledge and experience with our students.

ILA ZBARSKY: MUSIC TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANT

A musician, composer, arranger and MMus alum, Ila is our music technology assistant and live sound engineer. She joined us after completing her Master's in Music Technology in 2022, and is active in Victoria's arts scene as a teaching assistant, audio editor, digital music archivist. During the summer, you can often find her working as a live sound technician at various province-wide festivals.



NEW INITIATIVES

Each year, Fine Arts launches new projects responding to societal, cultural and institutional priorities: here are a few of this year's highlights

MORE MICRO-CERTIFICATES FOR THE GLAM SECTOR

Working in partnership, the department of Art History & Visual Studies (AHVS) and the Division of Continuing Studies launched two new micro-certificate programs this past year: Digital Planning for the Cultural Sector and Indigenous Cultural Stewardship.

Fine Arts is at the forefront of this new professional development area at UVic, thanks to the continued popularity of our long-running Cultural Resource Management program, through which AHVS and Continuing Studies already offer a diploma and professional specialization certificates.

Micro-certificates are small, focused, competency-based qualifications that align with the needs of industry and community, foster respectful relationships with Indigenous communities, and offer opportunities to upskill or reskill with new practices that are in demand with cultural organizations.

While largely of interest to professionals already working in the GLAM sector (galleries, libraries, archives and museums), these new micro-certificates consist of a single course each and can also be taken by undergraduate and graduate

students and applied toward any certificate, diploma or degree program to be more industry-ready upon graduation.

Digital Planning for the Cultural Sector provides timely training for working professionals to develop the critical competencies and skills needed to make informed decisions around the future of digital technologies for cultural organizations. Learners develop a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities for cultural organizations in a digital economy, alongside tools and strategies to successfully plan and implement digital initiatives.

Indigenous Cultural Stewardship weaves together skills and knowledge to create a more diverse, positive and sustainable future in the GLAM sector, while enhancing relationships with Indigenous Peoples by recognizing and safeguarding Indigenous cultural heritage and cultural practices.

Both courses are proving to be successful additions to our professional development offerings: Indigenous Cultural Stewardship has run once and Digital Planning has already run twice at full enrollment — with a waitlist each time.



Indigenous Cultural Stewardship instructor Lucy Bell



INDIGENOUS WRITERS SERIES DEBUTS

When the new sxʷiʔeʹm “To Tell A Story” Indigenous Writers & Storytellers Series launched in November 2023, it was offered as a gift to the community by the Department of Writing and professor Gregory Scofield. “My goal is to honour the nations on whose territory we live, and to celebrate and honour the writers and storytellers in our communities,” he says.

Inspired by a similar series he ran while teaching at Ontario’s Laurentian University, Scofield began working on this new series shortly after joining Writing in 2019.

“It has been and continues to be a very exciting time for Indigenous writers and storytellers,” he says. “There are so many important stories to be shared, told and celebrated across Turtle Island through the mediums of literature, film, music, dance and oral storytelling.”

To launch this latest offering in the local literary landscape, Writing honoured two acclaimed alumni: multidisciplinary Syilx Okanagan author Dr. Jeannette Armstrong — an Order of Canada recipient and founder of Penticton’s acclaimed En’owkin Centre —

and award-winning WSÁNEC poet Philip Kevin Paul, a past Governor General’s Award poetry finalist and former instructor with the Writing department. The event also benefited from a generous gift by longtime Fine Arts donor Anne McLaughlin.

Armstrong and Paul are among a number of notable Indigenous alumni who have graduated from Writing over the years, including the award-winning likes of Haisla & Heiltsuk novelist Eden Robinson and multi-disciplinary Tłı̨ch̓ Dene author Richard Van Camp — both of whom originally came from the En’owkin Centre program — plus Métis & Trinidadian poet Cara-Lyn Morgan, and Xaxli’p & Métis freelance journalist Jenessa Joy Klukas, to name a few.

“We now have specific generations of Indigenous writers: there are the writers of Jeannette’s era and the writers of my own generation, plus new writers like Billy-Ray Belcourt, Joshua Whitehead and Shari Narine,” says Scofield. “As more Canadians become aware of truth and reconciliation, more people are reading works by Indigenous writers and gaining knowledge of our history.”



Syilx Okanagan author & alumna Jeannette Armstrong



Gregory Scofield hosting the series at First People’s House



WSÁNEC poet & alumnus Philip Kevin Paul

CONNECTING ART & WELLNESS

When the head of UVic's Island Medical Program decided it was time to freshen up the lobby of the Medical Sciences building, he reached out to Fine Arts Dean Allana Lindgren for inspiration. Together, they came up with a plan that would result in the commissioning of a new mural by a Visual Arts student plus the curation of a new set of artworks from UVic's 18,000-piece collection, with the participation of the Art History & Visual Studies department.

Selected by a jury to create an uplifting and welcoming mural reflecting themes of health, wellness and happiness, Visual Arts undergraduate student Claire Jorgensen created the large-scale painting "A Dream of Vitality", which is now a permanent addition to the Medical Sciences building.

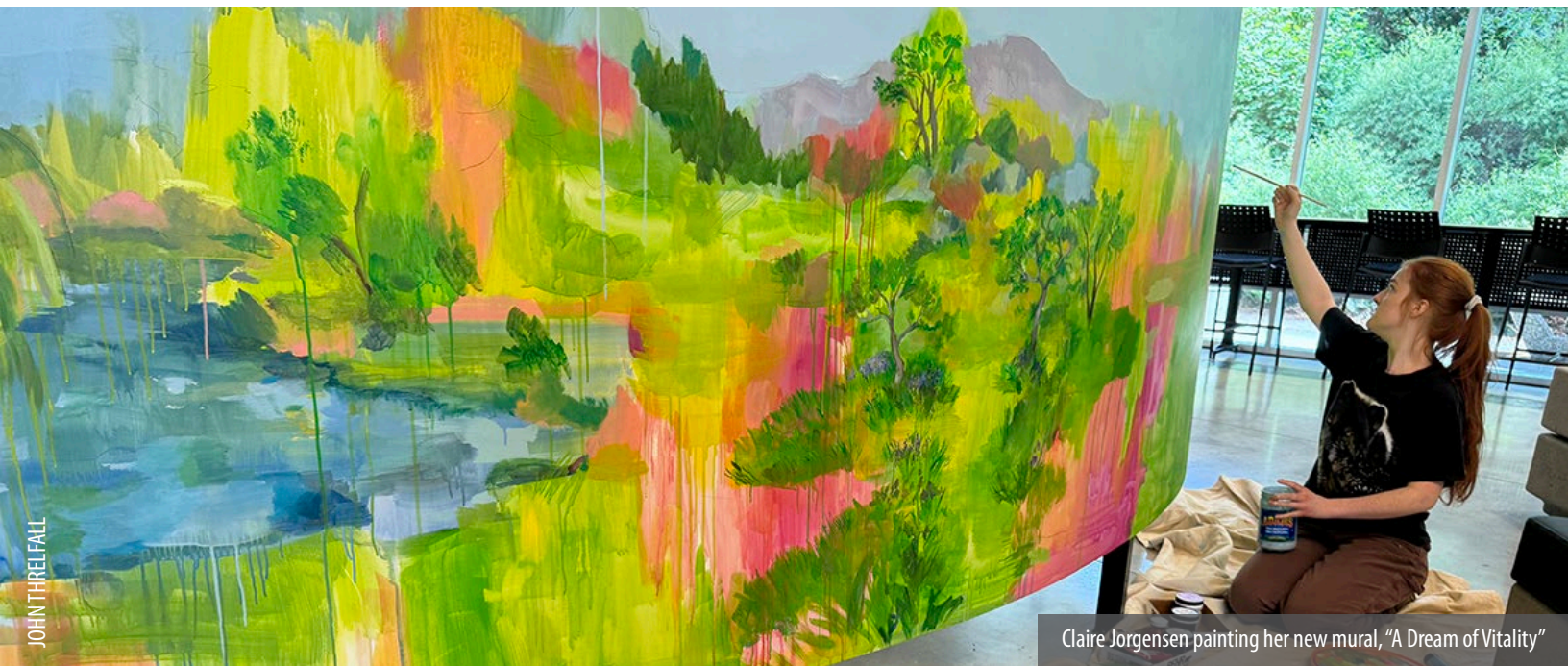
"I wanted to enliven our lobby with something happy and beautiful that would inspire a sense of wellness in our building's community," notes Dr. Bruce Wright, head of UVic's Division of Medical Sciences and the Regional Associate Dean (Vancouver Island) of UBC's Faculty of Medicine. "Partnering with Fine Arts to install a mural was the perfect way to do this, and including a curated art collection was an amazing opportunity to

spread that positive energy throughout the rest of the first floor. The Island Medical Program is proud of the successful collaboration between our programs and, especially, to have supported student learning through this project."

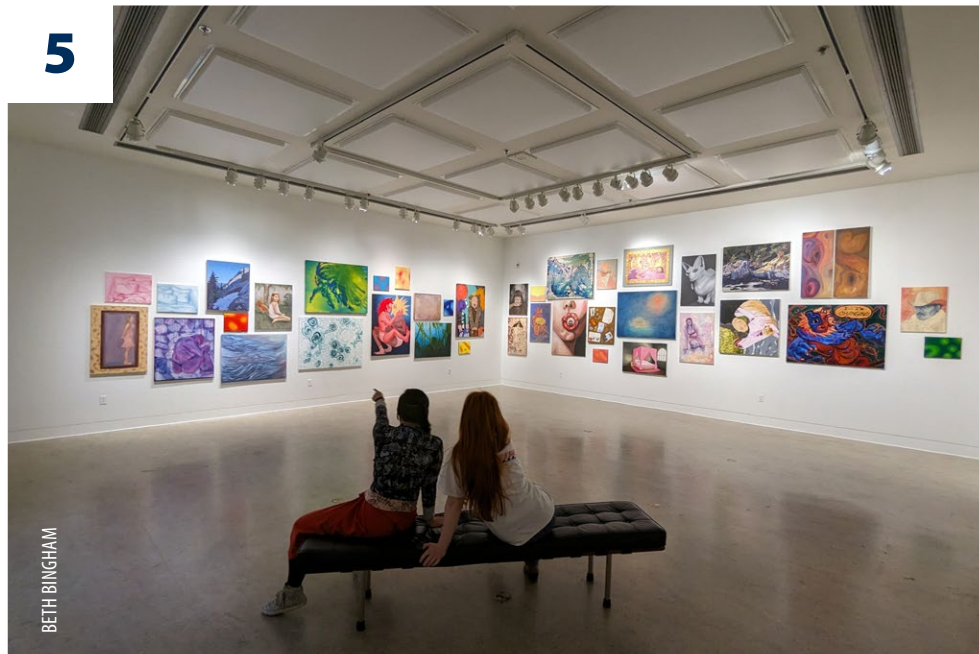
Jorgensen feels her mural is a good fit with Wright's vision. "It depicts native plants and landscapes as a demonstration of the resilience of the land and people in the face of oppression," she explains. "I chose a nature scene because of the role the natural world plays in health and wellness: whether it be climate change, colonization or other factors, the continued pursuit of wellness and health shines through. It's a hopeful piece, and works to instill optimism into those who view it."

Together with Jorgensen's mural, the newly curated art on display not only enlivens the building's lobby but also offers Island Medical's community of students, faculty and professional staff a new relationship with visual art when they gather in the building.

This new collaboration is just one of the many ways Fine Arts contributes to health and wellness on campus, and in the community.



SCENES FROM A YEAR



2



KRISTY FARKAS

3



DEAN KALYAN

6



CHEN WANG

7



JOHN THRELFALL

10



MEGAN FARRELL

1. David Leach (Writing, centre) & Derek Jacoby (Engineering) speak to MLAs at the BC Legislature about UVic's Canadian Centre for Extended Reality
2. The Lafayette String Quartet take their final bow as a performance ensemble
3. *The Importance of Being Earnest* kicks off Phoenix Theatre's mainstage season
4. Writing's Marita Dachsel launches her new fabric-arts anthology, *Sharp Notions*
5. Admiring a student painting exhibition in the Visual Arts building's Audain Gallery
6. Theatre Chair Tony Vickery & faculty at the annual Fine Arts Honouring Ceremony
7. Chancellor Marion Buller with student Rebecca Fux at the Visual Arts BFA exhibit
8. The annual *5 Days of Action* series sees Music's Merrie Klazek improvising alongside local Indigenous artist & MC Alex Taylor-McCallum
9. Audain Professor Lindsay Delaronde teaches traditional Indigenous hide tanning, which Visual Arts student Connor O'Toole then transformed into moccasins
10. Theatre's Staging Equality production, *The Woman Who Outshone The Sun*

UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES

As BC's only dedicated Fine Arts faculty, we offer a vibrant and engaging learning community that supports student success on campus, in the region and after graduation

KATIE MOORE

First-year Art History & Visual Studies student Katie Moore was one of two inaugural recipients of the Faculty of Fine Arts Indigenous Student Award (along with Writing student Jaime Rogers, see page 33). The incoming head of the '24/'25 AHVS undergraduate student association, Moore has a passionate interest in how different cultures influence the way people create, and is excited to be part of what she calls "a welcoming, engaging community".

Moore also notes the importance of this award. "Without financial support, a post-secondary education would not be an option for me," she says. "Receiving this award — and others — was a huge relief. The Faculty of Fine Arts Indigenous Student Award was one of the more emotional awards I received."

Moore understands the difference student awards can make. "I know there are so many others who are also in financial need," she says. "Not everybody has the opportunity to go to university. I am so grateful for this . . . I wish there was more support for everyone."

STUDENT IMPACT AWARDS

For the third year, Fine Arts honoured the winners of our annual Student Community Impact Awards as part of the Greater Victoria Regional Arts Awards. Dean Allana Lindgren presented three separate \$1,000 prizes to School of Music students Heidi Goetz and Nathan Malzon (below), as well as recent Visual Arts grad Laveen Gammie (currently pursuing her Master's in Chicago).

Goetz won for her work as the coordinator of Music Discoveries, an annual two-day music camp which involved over 100 middle-school students and more than 40 volunteers in 2023. Malzon helped create the livestream system for Victoria's Christ Church Cathedral, which has become essential for broadcasting regular services and music performances. Gammie won for transforming an unwanted room in downtown's vibrant Rockslide Studio into the very busy Vault Gallery.

Including our current winners, Fine Arts has now given over \$10,000 to eight different students over the last three years — all thanks to the generosity of our donors.



JOHN THRELFALL



JOHN THRELFALL

Goetz (left) with Dean Lindgren & Malzon

SIE DOUGLAS-FISH

Technology, creativity and student art all came together in an episode of CBC's popular show *Dragon's Den* in October when the work of Visual Arts undergrad Sie Douglas-Fish was featured. While representatives from Montreal's Acrylic Robotics pitched their robotic painting technology to the "dragons", Douglas-Fish's digital images of the judges were presented to them as finished robotic paintings (below).

A digital artist and freelance illustrator, Douglas-Fish's work was widely seen on campus through their job as design director of UVic's *Martlet* student newspaper. But during their studies, they also worked as an intern for Acrylic Robotics — who create cutting-edge technologies to modernize the \$70 billion art market — which not only led to their work being featured on *Dragon's Den* (season 18, episode 3) but also their hiring as an employee (and moving to Montreal) as soon as they graduated.

As well as appearing in the "artist alleys" at pop-culture conventions, Douglas-Fish's work appeared in local indie galleries and in the book *Sharks Forever* by Writing instructor and alum Mark Leiren-Young.

AASHNA KULSHRESHTHA

Taking online classes during COVID at 3am in Dehli was definitely not an ideal first-year experience, but it didn't deter Aashna Kulshreshtha from pursuing her undergraduate degree in Art History & Visual Studies here at UVic, where she was impressed by the global approach.

"I was just so surprised to see the amount of diversity here and the focus on Indigenous cultures, which had never even been brought up before in other places," she says. "UVic is a great place to study art history because the people here will support you and believe in you and are there to help you get your work done. Honesty, that open dialogue has been the most important thing for me."

Now graduating (but already accepted into the AHVS Master's program for 2024), a favourite part of Aashna's studies was being a paid workstudy student in the AHVS Visual Resources Collection.

"Working here, you kind of get to see your degree in action before you even finish it," she says. "I've learned so much about how to archive and research properly doing this job."



Talia Pike (Visual Arts)



Chelanne Wolff (Visual Arts)



Hadley Macherson (Writing)



Alex Edwards Danica (Writing)



BALANCING ARTS & ATHLETICS

When it comes to making goals, dual US/Canadian citizen Harry Ritter West is scoring two-for-two. A varsity athlete with UVic’s men’s soccer team, West knows how to keep his eye on the ball — but as a fourth-year Visual Arts student, he also has the creative vision to shoot as a photographer.

“It takes a lot of scheduling,” he says. “You have to plan when you need to shoot because, as an athlete, you’re going to be gone for a period of time and not have access to a camera or have time to actually create your work. You can’t waste a day.”

Only one of a number of Fine Arts students who are also Vikes varsity athletes, Ritter West was drawn to UVic from his Portland home both by the Island lifestyle (“Victoria is such a beautiful place, it’s got a unique environment”) and the Visual Arts department’s reputation. “I’d heard good things about the arts program here—it’s a really tight-knit community and the teaching is at a very high level.”

No question, it’s tricky balancing

varsity athletics and visual arts: as the team’s left wingback, Ritter West is typically looking at a 12-hour day, six days a week (depending on season), mixing classes, practices, training, games, study and photography. “Soccer usually takes up the space of at least a course, especially with the traveling,” he says.

When asked if his teammates appreciate his work as an artist, he offers a quick laugh. “Some have kind of cliché views around art, but I’ve shown them a lot of my work and they really seem to appreciate it.”

But while balancing training, practices and games with classes, photography and creative practice may sound like a lot, Ritter West wouldn’t want it any other way. “I’ve always had this kind of lifestyle, balancing athletics and art—I’m a very high energy guy,” he laughs. “If I were to focus on just one and not put as much time and effort into the other, I’d feel like less of a person. I really value all the creative thought I put into my day-to-day life.”

CO-OP BRINGS LEARNING TO LIFE

When it comes to mixing the theoretical with the practical, Fine Arts students have been participating in UVic's vibrant Co-op program since 1986. In the past five years alone, we've had more than 300 students earn both academic credit and a monthly wage while getting work experience in their chosen fields.

This past year, we had 25 students getting first-hand experience in a variety of positions not only in Victoria but also in Parksville, Vancouver, the Sunshine Coast and farther afield in Kelowna, Revelstoke and Alberta. Their positions ranged from museum interpreter and heritage collections assistant to graphic designer, communications technician, assistant public affairs advisor, junior antiquarian bookseller, communications technician and software programmer and developers.

AHVS student Burke Camara — seen here in the vault at the Revelstoke Museum & Archives, where he worked as a collections assistant — experienced real-world applications of the theoretical practices he's been studying. "This was a great opportunity to see what jobs are out there and possibly take away some of the anxiety regarding career planning," he says. "I learned several programs and archival practices, and was able to build meaningful connections in an environment I would want to have a career in."

Meg Winter is pursuing a Professional Writing minor in journalism and publishing, so was ideally suited for her position as a social media coordinator for UVic's Faculty of Education. "This has been the most amazing experience I've had so far during my time at UVic," says Winter, seen here shooting video at Victoria's Pride Parade. "I've been able to transfer the skills from my classes into professional experience. The incredible mentorship I received has allowed me to develop both professionally and personally."

AHVS student Athena Ivison worked as an interpreter at the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies in Banff, Alberta — not only giving daily tours but also operating in a curatorial capacity. "I was tasked with going through objects that didn't have current photos on file and updating the records," says Ivison (seen here holding a pennant from Banff's alpine Skoki lodge. "This co-op gave me excellent insight into what it's like to work in a museum setting. I also had an opportunity to work with museum objects, which will contribute to my understanding of art history."



Camara

RYAN WATSON



Winter

MICHELLE BUTTERFIELD



Ivison

ABIGAIL FRANCESCHETTI

GRADUATE RESEARCH

Our graduate students continue to push the boundaries of artistic expression, community engagement, and the integration of research and education

MEGAN HARTON

A passionate composer, audio engineer and sound artist currently pursuing a Master's of Music Technology at the School of Music, Megan Harton is also our latest Artist-in-Residence with Ocean Networks Canada. Their proposed project, *Solastalgia [soon to be what once was]*, is envisioned as an immersive intermedia art installation employing nostalgic retro iconography to create a multi-sensory experience delving into the emotional and psychological effects of environmental change.

"I found that Ocean Networks Canada had all these hydrophones up the Pacific Coast: there are new recordings every hour, both visual and audio," says Harton. "I'm interested to see if there's a way to juxtapose the same recordings over a period of time."

Proposed for Fall 2024, *Solastalgia* will explore themes of grief and nostalgia, emphasizing the delicate state, and impending loss, of our ecosystems. The installation will foster a deeper connection between individuals and their evolving surroundings, while also raising awareness of environmental issues and bridging the gap between art, science and the community.

ARNOLD LIM

Award-winning Korean-Canadian filmmaker, producer and photographer Arnold Lim is currently pursuing his MFA in Writing. Twice selected as a recipient of Telefilm's Talent to Watch program, he is a graduate of the National Screen Institute's Features First program, has been a juror and programmer for numerous film festivals, photography manager for four Olympic Games and is one of our new Jeffrey Rubinoff Arts as a Source of Knowledge graduate scholars. "I'm a storyteller at heart, and the opportunity to continue that journey as a grad student has been so much greater than I could have ever imagined," says Lim (below, right).

This year, he was writer/director of the mystery/thriller *Whisper*, the latest (and most ambitious) short film yet created for Writing's popular film production class, where local film professionals mentor a student crew.

"Writing and directing a film in concert with like-minded, passionate classmates under the tutelage of instructors and a supervisor who has gone above and beyond to tailor the program to our learning outcomes has supported tangible and important growth for me as a screenwriter and filmmaker and is a gift I could never repay," he says.



STEPHEN MARKWEI

Hailing from Ghana and another of our Rubinoff Graduate Scholarship recipients, Stephen Markwei is continually evolving as a dancer, choreographer and multi-disciplinary artist.

During his time with Ghana's Ministry of Tourism, Creative Arts & Culture, he worked closely with the National Theatre of Ghana; his artistic talent, combined with a strong social conscience, demonstrates his commitment to his craft and his devotion to addressing important societal issues.

Markwei is currently pursuing his MA in our Department of Theatre by investigating theatre-based interventions to assist individuals with dyslexia. He aims to understand how incorporating sensory modalities into interventions through theatrical activities can benefit those with learning disabilities.

Indeed, his passion for artistic expression and commitment to enhancing human experience through the arts is evident in his dedication to addressing societal issues related to learning disabilities. "Utilizing multi-sensory methods, including movement and visual cues, in designing learning experiences for individuals with dyslexia can be valuable," he explains.

MELISSA CISTERO

When it came to her Writing MFA, Melissa Cistaro found inspiration in her own family's history. Her narrative installation *What Was Lost On Mount Temple*, mounted in the Visual Arts Audain Gallery in December, offered an intimate look at personal history as told through old letters, archival photographs, family documents and artifacts left behind.

The *Mount Temple* exhibit revealed the story of her uncle, who was one of seven teenage boys who died in a 1955 avalanche on the Alberta mountain after their camp counselor sent them up the mountain unsupervised.

"I was thinking about the different ways stories can be experienced, and the many ways in which memory and grief can surface," Cistero explains. "The installation provided a physical space for me to share the narrative of a story that has haunted me for much of my life. I was interested in the layers of inter-generational trauma, and how in my family it felt as if the avalanche had never stopped its descent. As a writer, I suppose I'm drawn to loss and the efforts of retrieval."

She was also keenly aware of the visitor's experiences with the installation. "I wanted to not just provide them with a history lesson about the tragedy, but allow them space to draw connections to their own experiences and losses."



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

An integral part of Victoria's vibrant cultural community for over 50 years, Fine Arts seeks to build on existing partnerships and explore new opportunities with the local arts scene

STUDENTS AND SENIORS WORK TOWARDS WELLNESS

Over the past several decades, Applied Theatre artists have been developing activities that help communities access joy and connection with others. This spring, a group of third-year Applied Theatre students learned how to facilitate interactive, creative workshops with Victoria seniors at the James Bay New Horizons Activity Centre.

Working under the guidance of Theatre professor Yasmine Kandil, students explored how creative functions can make a difference in the lives of the elderly or their caregivers. Through a series of short workshops, seniors were able to reflect on their backgrounds, celebrate their identities and find community through active creativity; these workshops then culminated in a pair of student performances, each featuring a topic of importance to the seniors with whom they had worked.

Student Lauren Fisher facilitated a workshop surrounding “teenagehood” in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. “We wanted to compare the parallels of teenagers then versus teenagers

now,” she explains. “We asked the seniors to remember how they felt when they were younger, and what adversities or external factors may have been in play — like economic hardships or family pressures. For those who were teens in the ‘50s, there were things like the aftermath of WWII, the Cold War and clearly defined gender roles.”

One of the creative projects was to ask the seniors to draw a place where they felt safe as teens — their bedroom, say, or backyard. Another project involved the seniors offering advice to Fisher while she role-played a 2024 teenager.

“What was most valuable for me was having such open dialogue between such different generations,” says Fisher, who has no living grandparents. “I think a lot of seniors feel like they’re so separate from people today, so this was like involving them in a conversation with modern society. It was very cool because we got to learn from them while they learned from us. It was all very beneficial!”





Victoria Symphony's Giuseppe Pietraroia leading the UVic Symphony Orchestra (above) and Philip Manning (below)

KEEPING IN HARMONY WITH THE VICTORIA SYMPHONY

No question, the School of Music has deep ties to the Victoria Symphony thanks to more than a dozen instructors and alumni who perform with them, frequent faculty guests the Lafayette String Quartet and VS associate conductor Giuseppe Pietraroia, who has been teaching in Music and leading the UVic Symphony Orchestra since 2022.

Add in Pacific Opera Victoria — for whom the VS play, and which regularly features students from Music's acclaimed Voice program singing in the chorus (to say nothing of our Department of Theatre's grad student design partnership), and you've got a thriving collaboration with one (or two) of Victoria's leading cultural organizations.

Then there's 32-year-old Philip Manning, who took a different approach to his own musical career: graduating in spring 2024 with a Bachelor of Music, he's already been performing as a full-time violinist with the Victoria Symphony since 2016. "It doesn't matter where you are in your career, there's always more to learn," he says. "Coming back to school when you're a bit older, you take different things away from your classes and

your instruction . . . you just need a clear focus on whatever it is you want to do."

For Manning, the Victoria Symphony's COVID-era performance closures offered the ideal chance to enroll in our School of Music in 2020. "I've known Ann Elliott-Goldschmid and the other LSQ members for a long time, so it just made sense to study at UVic because of our good relationship."

During his degree, Manning undertook a directed study focused on the audition process with Elliott-Goldschmid; this became very important when he auditioned for the position of assistant concertmaster with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in spring 2024. He recently accepted the offer of a trial period with the orchestra — a next-step success story that might not have happened without that directed study.

"Ann was instrumental in helping me prepare for that audition," he says. "Now, I have a much better focus and have gotten so much more out of my education. This has been a really good experience for me."



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

We are proud of our alumni, who continue to share their expertise, passion and creativity in their careers and roles after graduation

LAURA RAMOSO IS IGNITING THE INTERNET

Like many artists, comedy sensation and Theatre grad Laura Ramoso struggled to find a way to practice her craft when the pandemic turned out the stage lights in 2020. Her fledgling career in live comedy was just beginning when the world shut down. Instead of giving up, however, Ramoso got creative.

She decided to post a quick-cut observational comedy montage on TikTok as way of pivoting to a new platform and, when that was well-received, she posted more videos over the following year. Then she posted one about her German mother — which changed everything.

“I’m flabbergasted by it all,” says Ramoso. “I just got really lucky. I mean, I prepared for it and did the work, but it is weird: what I was doing somehow cosmically matched up with people who were ready to receive it. I honestly don’t know what I would be doing if COVID hadn’t happened.”

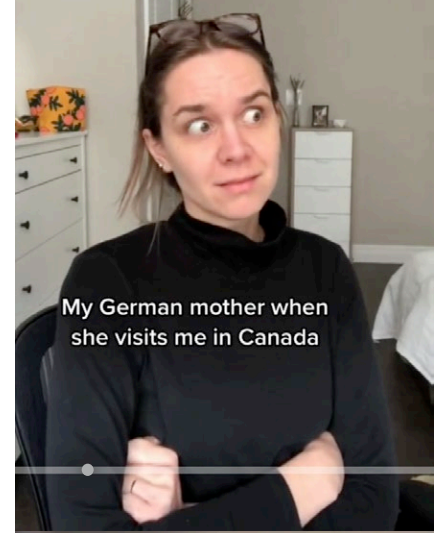
Today, the 28-year-old is based in Toronto and has over a million

followers on TikTok and Instagram — each — plus over 300,000 more on YouTube and Facebook, all thanks to her enormously popular videos featuring characters like German Mother, Italian Father and That One Girl Who Just Got Back From . . . (Italy, Australia, France, Copenhagen, etc).

But she also re-embraced live audiences in 2024 with a 25-city global tour of her new show *Sit Up Straight*, culminating in a performance at LA’s *Netflix Is A Joke* comedy festival alongside A-listers like Jerry Seinfeld, David Letterman, Chris Rock, Maya Rudolph, Seth Rogan and most of the contemporary comedy scene.

“It’s my first time in LA and it’s totally unbelievable this is why I’m going,” she admits. “I’m honoured to be part of that lineup, but I’m really excited to just go and do my thing — which is actually a great feeling, because it doesn’t mean I have to change anything about myself.”

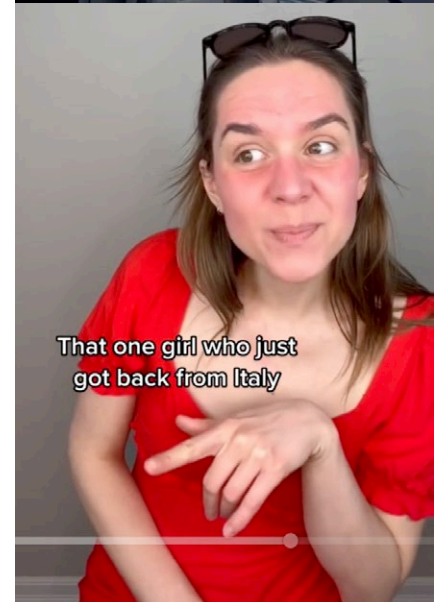
Read the full stories about Laura Ramoso and Medina Hahn (next page) in the Spring 2024 issue of UVic’s Torch alumni magazine



My German mother when she visits me in Canada



My Italian father on a road trip



That one girl who just got back from Italy



2024 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Fine Arts was proud to see three outstanding graduates included among the 18 recipients of UVic’s 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award: (from left) Indigenous Community Alumni Award winner Ivy Martin (AHVS/CRM), Presidents’ Alumni Award recipient Carrie Tennant (Music) and Emerging Alumni Award winner Dennis Gupa (Theatre).



TACKLING RECONCILIATION WITH INTERACTIVE THEATRE

Theatre is all about taking risks, whether in subject matter or production style. But when it came to her most recent show — the reconciliation-based suspense play, *Inheritance: A Pick-the-Path Experience* — Theatre alum Medina Hahn decided to tackle both at once.

Due to COVID, *Inheritance* only had one live production (at Vancouver’s Orpheum Theatre Annex in 2020) but went on to be published by Talonbooks, recorded as an interactive audio book with Penguin Publishing, filmed as a choose-your-own-adventure-style movie, and shortlisted for the 2022 Governor General’s Award for English-language drama.

Co-written and co-performed with frequent collaborator Daniel Arnold and Darrell Dennis, an Indigenous performer from the Secwepemc Nation, *Inheritance* focuses on an immigrant/settler urban couple (Hahn and Arnold) on a getaway to visit her father at his rural estate. But when they arrive, they find him missing and a local Indigenous man (Dennis) staying there instead. The couple asks the man to leave . . . and, with an anonymous click of a handheld controller, the audience chooses what happens next as this story of

colonial land rights unfolds with humour and suspense, as well as over 50 possible script variations.

“I had so much to learn about Canada’s true history, all the things we were never taught in school,” says Hahn, who is Lebanese. “It became a great example of how theatre can push essential conversations and put new concepts in front of audiences.”

While she’s thrilled with the show’s success (watch for the film adaptation to be released in 2025), Hahn feels the show has a much-needed message for our troubled times.

“*Inheritance* is so refreshing and was such a gift to be a part of: the conversations we all had to have to create it were very difficult,” she explains. “But the goal was to create an understanding of all points of view, and for no side to be the ‘right’ one . . . That’s an essential part of creating art, yet it’s just so hard to do in the world now: everyone’s on their devices and fighting for their own point of view. I wish we could all have those conversations in our own lives—but if we can’t do it in life, at least we can still do it in art.”

NUMBER OF 23/24 ALUMNI: 249

226 UNDERGRADUATE

23 GRADUATE

TOTAL NUMBER OF ALUMNI: 10,151



As part of the 2024 Academy Awards, American comedian John Mulaney presented a whole routine inspired by the work of famed Writing alum WP Kinsella’s *Field of Dreams*

DONOR SPOTLIGHTS

From individual donations to the establishment of new programs and professorships, the impact of donor gifts lingers long after students graduate: here, we look at the significance of just a few



UVIC CHAMBER SINGERS STILL GOLDEN AT 50 YEARS

For over 50 years, the UVic Chamber Singers have proven to be one of the most endearing — and enduring — ensembles in our School of Music. Over the years, they have performed to enthusiastic audiences in 140 cities and 30 countries on six continents, and have been recorded for broadcast both nationally and internationally. Spring 2024 saw the Chamber Singers mark their golden anniversary with a mini-tour of Vancouver Island and Vancouver, as well as a pair of public performances in Victoria.

Professor Emeritus Bruce More was the ensemble's longest-standing conductor with an impressive 37-year tenure leading the group. While More retired in 2008, he was able to lead the group once again during the anniversary celebrations. "This is a wonderful reminder of the joys of working with gifted young musicians," he says.

A generous contribution from a Chamber Singers alumni in 2023 led to the creation of the Bruce More Legacy Fund to support the Chamber Singers and their future tours. "I am truly honoured to loan my name to the Legacy Fund, and I look forward to the benefits provided by its growth," says More.

Music professor Adam Con currently leads the ensemble. "There's something about having that very high-level experience that sparks a huge interest in composing, conducting and many other activities in music," he says. But he also points out how the Chamber Singers fills an essential pedagogical role for music educators. "This is part of a solid education in music and singing, and it practices the decolonized approach to choral music education."

We encourage all past and current Chamber Singers members to join in this vision to grow the Bruce More Legacy Fund through future gifts.

ESTATE GIFT HIGHLIGHTS ALL-STEINWAY ANNIVERSARY

Fifteen years ago, the School of Music was named Canada's first All-Steinway School and, while there are now over 200 All-Steinway schools globally, UVic is still the only one in Canada — a significant designation currently being celebrated with both a new \$300,000 estate gift and a signature concert series.

"Steinways are recognized worldwide for their excellence and are by far the most preferred concert piano in the world," says School of Music piano professor Arthur Rowe.

But keeping 63 pianos ready for daily student use also requires constant tuning and repairs, which makes the new Martha Cooke Fund so important. Named for the late Public Archives Canada curator, Cooke's legacy earmarks \$200,000 for essential piano maintenance. "These pianos are now 15 years old, so this gift comes to us at a critical time," says Rowe. "Maintaining our excellent instruments is crucial, so these funds will help ensure the longevity and excellence of our Steinways."

The Martha Cooke Fund also sets aside a further \$100,000 for at least three years of annual concerts and masterclasses with internationally renowned Korean-American pianist Minsoo Sohn, who performed at UVic in both fall 2023 and spring 2024, and offered masterclasses with our students.

Known for his musical intelligence and masterful virtuosity — qualities that have earned him worldwide acclaim — Sohn's readings of the works of Rachmaninoff, Bach and Beethoven have placed him among the elite in this repertoire, and the inspired ingenuity of his performances of orchestral repertoire have earned him many accolades.

As the winner of many prestigious competitions and a teacher of renowned pianists himself, Sohn's concerts and masterclasses demonstrate his own pursuit of musical excellence for the benefit of UVic students. This continues to be an extraordinary partnership that transports audiences to a realm of emotion, virtuosity and musical brilliance.



Sohn, Rowe and fund executor Keith Mullback



Carson Schmidt (left) designed the set & lighting for the SATCO play *Road v Wade* (above)

“THIS FUNDING IS AN ABSOLUTE LIFESAVER”

While Theatre student Carson Schmidt never knew the late Fine Arts donor Jack Henshaw, his success as an undergraduate is exactly what Jack had in mind with his JTS Scholarship, which annually funds three Fine Arts areas.

Created through a bequest in his will, the JTS Scholarship provides financial assistance for students — like Schmidt — who are determined to succeed in the arts. Faced with a number of post-secondary choices, the Calgary-raised Schmidt chose UVic’s Theatre department based not only on its reputation but also on recommendations from colleagues and friends. “UVic was compared to the prestigious National Theatre School . . . after hearing first-hand accounts, I was sold,” he says.

Once enrolled, Schmidt excelled in his studies, working towards a planned future as a lighting designer: it’s actually his work with the Phoenix Theatre’s mainstage production *100 Years of Broadway* that’s seen on the cover of this publication. In addition to his course work, this year Schmidt also led the long-running Student Alternative Theatre Company (SATCo),

which offers students the opportunity to create their own productions . . . many of which help launch future careers through the likes of the Fringe Festival or the local SKAMPede festival.

Another remarkable opportunity for Schmidt was attending the 2023 Prague Quadrennial; thanks again to donor funding, students were able to submit their own scenographic proposal and attend PQ in person. “This was genuinely a life-changing project to work on, as we got the opportunity to travel to Prague for the exhibition and workshops,” he says.

Schmidt is already building his future by working as a technician for the Belfry Theatre and a number of Vancouver Island festivals and events. But even as he looks ahead, he is appreciative of the support he has received.

“Going to school on the Island is a once-in-a-lifetime experience I’ll cherish forever,” he concludes. “The honour of receiving such an award as this will not be forgotten. During tough economic times especially, this funding is an absolute lifesaver for myself and other students.”



\$1.3M+
Received
from donors



509
Overall
total donors



\$579,325
Funds received
from estate gifts



564
Overall student
awards distributed



4
New Fine Arts
awards created



Writing alumna and donor Dr. Sarah de Leeuw

STUDENT AWARD HONOURS NORTHERN ROOTS

Writing with a sense of place is a core teaching in our Department of Writing: our connection with the land can not only inspire us but also be a source of creativity in our life and works. The connection between health and the arts is also essential, either as part of a holistic sense of wellness or as a way of helping us emotionally navigate difficult times.

Celebrated alumna Dr. Sarah de Leeuw clearly had all that in mind when she created the Skeena Award in Creative Writing, which specifically supports Indigenous or women undergraduate students who have either grown up or spent the majority of their lives in rural and northern communities in BC (or Canada), and have a focus on poetry or creative nonfiction.

Now a professor with UNBC’s Northern Medical Program and UBC’s Faculty of Medicine, as well as a Canada Research Chair in Humanities and Health Inequities, de Leeuw created the Skeena Award in honour of her parents — both UVic alumni themselves — who raised her in northern BC near the Skeena River. A member of

the Royal Society of Canada and the director of UNBC’s Health Arts Research Centre, de Leeuw teaches in the areas of anti-colonialism and health humanities. She is also an award-winning writer, having won a BC & Yukon Book Prize for her poetry, the CBC Literary Award for her creative nonfiction (twice), and a Western Magazine Gold Award for her essay about murdered and missing Indigenous women in northern BC.

Given all that, it’s hard to image anyone more suitable for the Skeena Award than current recipient Jaime Rogers — a mature Indigenous woman who, after many years working, came to UVic to pursue poetry and creative writing. “To study art has long been an aspiration of mine — though one that seemed out of reach, having grown up in a small, northern community with limited access,” says Rogers. “To pursue the arts at UVic was a brave choice, made easier by this generosity.”

It’s connections like these that continue to inspire our donors, and help create a community of support for our students.



342
Students who received awards



\$1M+
Awarded to students



438
Undergraduate awards



126
Graduate awards



1 in 3
Donor support for students

EXTERNALLY FUNDED RESEARCH (SELECT)

We are proud to announce a selection of grants awarded to faculty from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council and others



\$11.6M
Faculty
grants awarded



14
Faculty
grant holders

- **Cedric Bomford** (Visual Arts) received support from Canada Council's Arts Abroad program.
- **Mark Leiren-Young** (Writing) received a BC Arts Council Creative Writing grant.
- **Kathryn Mockler** (Writing) received a BC Arts Council Creative Writing grant.
- **Kirsten Sadeghi-Yekta** (Theatre) received a SSHRC Insight grant to support the five-year project *Staging Our Voices: Strengthening Indigenous languages through theatre*.
- **Suzanne Snizek** (Music) received a SSHRC Partnership Grant for her work supporting Visual Storytelling & Graphic Art in Genocide & Human Rights Education.
- **Jennifer Stillwell** (Visual Arts) received a UVic Research/Creative Project Grant and a SSHRC Explore Grant.
- **Anthony Tan** (Music) received a UVic Research/Creative Project Grant and a SSHRC Explore Grant.
- **Paul Walde** (Visual Arts) received support from the Canada Council's Arts Abroad program.
- **Taylor Brook** (Music/PEA) received funding from Harvard's FROMM Foundation to support new work for piano and electronics.
- **Ajtony Csaba** (Music) received two Canada Council grants, a BC Arts Council grant (for the SALT New Music Festival) and funding from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation.
- **Sean Holman** (Writing) received a SSHRC Connection grant for the fall 2024 Climate Disaster Project verbatim theatre project, *Eyes of the Beast*.
- **Heather Igloliorte** (Visual Arts) received SSHRC support as the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Decolonization & Transformational Artistic Practice.
- **Sasha Kovacs** (Theatre) received a SSHRC Partnership Grant as co-director of *Gatherings: Archival & Oral Histories of Performance*, with Dean Allana Lindgren as co-investigator.



Heather Igloliorte (centre) at Legacy Gallery's *Latent: Critical Conversations about Collections* roundtable with Erin Campbell (left), Ry Moran, Anne Dymond and Alice Ming Wai Jim

FINE ARTS PUBLIC ATTENDANCE BREAKS 20,000 THIS YEAR

It was a banner year for public participation in the Faculty of Fine Arts, with over 20,000 people attending nearly 300 scheduled events during 2023/24. Thanks to our wide variety of cultural and scholarly offerings — including concerts, plays, recitals, exhibits, readings, poster fairs, film screenings, visiting artist talks and other special events — Fine Arts remains UVic's largest and most consistent academic unit for public engagement.

It was a record-breaking year at our Phoenix Theatre, with over 8,000 tickets sold for the four mainstage productions: not only did we sell out of subscriptions before our season's first show even opened, but we regularly had over 20 people a night on stand-by to see if tickets became available.

The School of Music mounted 125 concerts and events for nearly 9,000 people, while Legacy Gallery's AHVS exhibition *Latent* attracted some 1,500, and the annual Visual Arts BFA graduation art exhibit drew nearly 1,000 over its 10-day run.

Fine Arts remains an essential and vital cultural partner on campus and in the community, with a direct and lasting impact on the region's quality of life. Victoria's arts and culture sector employs over 10,000 people across the CRD and generates about \$800 million GDP activity annually (2021 CRD study) — a core part of the \$1.8 billion in added income UVic contributes to Greater Victoria.

Keep up on our public events by subscribing to our monthly e-news at fincomm@uvic.ca



The opening night crowd at *Silver Bullets*, the annual Visual Arts BFA graduation exhibit



Our front and back covers feature the student-designed set and lighting for the 2024 Phoenix Theatre mainstage production *100 Years of Broadway*, with set design by Jaeden Walton and lighting design by Carson Schmidt (see page 34)