



2025 Impact Report

VANCOUVER
INTERNATIONAL

CHILDRENS

FESTIVAL



Vancouver International Children's Festival Society Celebrates 48 Years!

May 26 – June 1, 2025

Mission

The Vancouver International Children's Festival inspires and motivates young minds with professional artistic experiences that transform a child's understanding of the world around them and what is creatively possible.

By delivering new and diverse world-class live performances, we open a world of creative possibilities. A world in which future generations build on the passion for art and performance we share with them today.

What Guides Us

- **SIMPLE:** We make it easy for a family or class to spend a day being creatively playful at our family festival.
- **FUN TOGETHER:** We make activities fun and creatively adventurous for kids and adults to enjoy together.
- **QUALITY:** We surprise you every year with the extraordinary quality of our programming and our performers.
- **CREATIVITY:** Imagination and artistic ingenuity governs our decision-making. We are comfortable taking creative risks.
- **LOCAL:** We look for ways to incorporate and celebrate BC artists including Indigenous representation, especially from the land the Festival is held on.
- **GLOBAL:** We demand diversity in emotional experience: in people, language, ideas, attitudes and culture.
- **ARTISTIC RISK:** Our mission is to always look for new, different work that pushes the boundaries for young audiences 6 months – 13 years of age.

Report from Katharine Carol, Artistic & Executive Director



In 2025, the Vancouver International Children's Festival Society (VICFS) celebrated its 48th annual Festival — nearly five decades of inspiring wonder, laughter, and imagination. Families, educators, and children once again gathered to experience the magic of live performance — stories and sounds from around the world, created especially for young people and the adults who come with them.

This year, our international lineup brought together artists from four countries, weaving a rich global tapestry of creativity. From the playful inventiveness of *Club Origami* (UK/Japan), to the imaginative storytelling of *The Librarian* (Ireland) and *I Wish I Was a Mountain* (England), to the high-energy fun of *Whipped Up* (USA) — each performance offered something truly unique, something that could only be experienced here, at the Festival.

Our national and local artists returned in full, lighting up our stages with music, clowning, theatre, and circus arts. A particular highlight was the world premiere of *Luminarium* by Cause & Effect

Circus, a mesmerizing performance that quickly became a Festival favourite! Together, these artists embody our shared mission: to inspire and motivate young minds with professional artistic experiences that transform a child's understanding of the world around them and what is creatively possible.

I believe that experiencing the performing arts is essential to a child's development — nurturing imagination, empathy, and creativity. At the Festival, children encounter a kaleidoscope of artistic expression. They discover what sparks their curiosity, what moves them, and what possibilities unfold when art invites them to dream. Nearly half a century on, our Festival remains as vital and relevant as ever — a space where young audiences, families, and educators connect through the joy of shared artistic discovery.

None of this would be possible without the steadfast support of our community. My heartfelt gratitude goes to our sponsors, donors, and government funders, who believe deeply in this work; to our incredible Board of Directors, staff, production and technical teams, artists, and volunteers, whose passion fuels every moment of the Festival.

And to you — our audience: you are the beating heart of this Festival. Thank you for your curiosity, your laughter, and your boundless enthusiasm for the arts. I can't wait to welcome you back for our 49th Festival in 2026 — another year of imagination, creativity, and connection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katharine Carol". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. To the right of the signature is a large, faint, light purple star graphic.

Katharine Carol, Artistic & Executive Director

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

The Vancouver International Children's Festival Society acknowledges that we create and work on the ancestral, traditional, stolen and unceded territories of the hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm speaking xʷməθkʷy̓əm (Musqueam) and sə́lilwətaʔt̓ (Tseil-Waututh) people and the Sníchim speaking Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish) people. We acknowledge the on-going cultural genocides of Indigenous Peoples by Canada, particularly the atrocities committed against children. We commit to work with the Indigenous Peoples of this land to raise the voices of Indigenous children through creativity and play.



Photo by Moonrider Productions

SQUAMISH OCEAN CANOE FAMILY HONOURED THE 2025 FESTIVAL WITH A CULTURAL SHARING. IN ADDITION TO PADDLING TOGETHER, MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO SHARING SK̓W̓X̓WÚ7MESH CULTURE THROUGH TRADITION SONGS AND DANCES



Photo by Moonrider Productions

*INDIGENOUS ARTS WITH CHRISTINE MACKENZIE,
KWAKIUTL FIRST NATION ARTIST*



Photo by Free West Photography

KYM GOUCHIE (TURTLE ISLAND)



Photo by Javier Sobres Photography

WHERE HAVE ALL THE BUFFALO GONE? AXIS THEATRE (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

You helped us realize our Artistic Vision – ensuring that at least 60% of our artists come from equity-seeking groups.

10 of our 12 mainstage shows feature diverse artists who reflect the world we live in.



Photo by Millissa Martin Photography



LUMINARIUM
CAUSE & EFFECT CIRCUS (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

The Festival Society is a trustee organization for the African Friendship Society since 2020. This relationship enables the AFS to apply for grants with the United Way and the Vancouver Foundation.



Photo by Millissa Martin Photography

AFRICAN FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

You helped us bring new and diverse stories
to 16,844 children, teachers and families!



Photo by Jeshia Ludisinger

*SING THE WORLD! WITH GINALINA AND FRIENDS
(BRITISH COLUMBIA)*

Accessibility

Financial assistance from donors like you help the Festival create an environment where any person or group feels welcomed, respected, represented, supported, and valued to meaningfully participate.



Photo by Anita Murphy

LIBRAVIAN BRÚ THEATRE (IRELAND)

Relaxed Performances

You came together so that 281 audience members could benefit from a more relaxed performance experience.

“For the first time, our whole family—including my older child, who is autistic and ADHD—could enjoy a live show together. He stayed engaged the entire time, clapping and cheering! Thank you for creating an inclusive Festival where he could be himself.”

Youth Council

We partnered with other theatre for young audience presenters to establish a Youth Council, engaging children and their caregivers who face barriers in traditional theatre settings. Their insights are guiding improvements to our relaxed performances for future Festivals.



SAME SAME DIFFERENT THE
MYRTLE SISTERS (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Friendly Shows



WON'MA AFRICA
KALABANTÉ PRODUCTIONS (QUÉBEC)

With your support, we brought an **ASL-interpreted performance of Won'Ma Africa** to 14 Deaf and hard of hearing children.



Bringing the World to Vancouver

With your support, the Vancouver International Children's Festival is both a global showcase and a launchpad for home-grown talent. Each year we present world-class international shows and premiere new Canadian creations that attract presenters and delegates looking for the next big thing in TYA.



Photo by Summer Dean

CLUB ORIGAMI SEVEN CIRCLES (UNITED KINGDOM)



— and Vancouver to the World



Photo by Millissa Martin Photography

LUMINARIUM CAUSE & EFFECT CIRCUS (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Premiered at the 2025 Festival and went on to win *Best of the Fringe* in September 2025.

OTOSAN LITTLE ONION PUPPET CO. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Premiered at VICF in 2024 and made a major splash at the 2025 Jessie Awards, taking home 4 awards including **Outstanding Production** (TYA).



Photo by Erin Palm



Photo by Falecia Potatoes

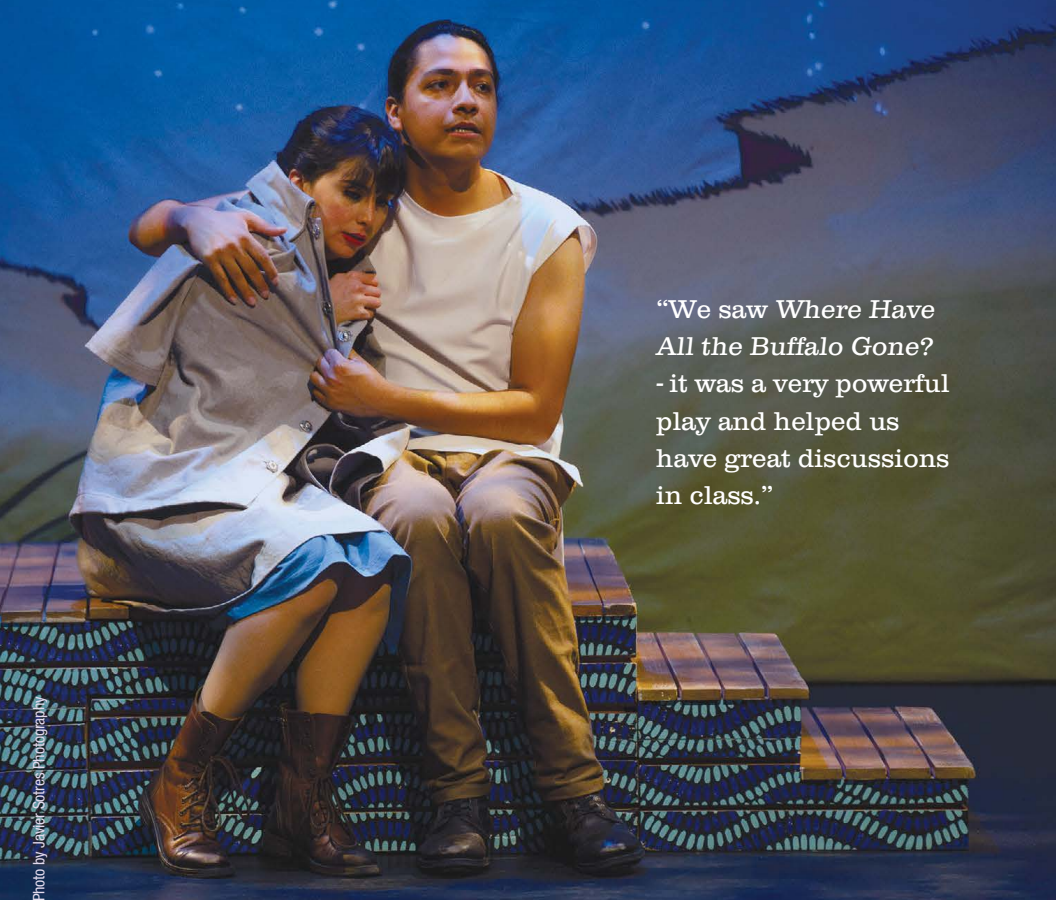
MISSY D (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Festival artists continue to rise on global stages: **Missy D** performed at Lincoln Center in 2025, building on the momentum of her work at VICF.

Arts Education

You helped over 8,000 school children experience a live performance at the Festival.

With arts funding in schools continuing to decline, now more than ever experiences like the Children's Festival play a pivotal role in the arts education of BC children. For most, a visit to the Festival is their first experience at a live performance.




*"We saw *Where Have All the Buffalo Gone?* - it was a very powerful play and helped us have great discussions in class."*

Photo by Javier Soares Photography

WHERE HAVE ALL THE BUFFALO GONE?
AXIS THEATRE (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

French Programming

You brought 2,524 French students to the Festival to experience French language and culture outside of the classroom.



“During the show, two of my students got picked as volunteers to go on stage and be a part of the performance. That was awesome! The kids are still talking about it!”



Photo by Mood Media Productions

LIWANDA AFRICA!

JACKY ESSOMBE AND FRIENDS (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

Building a Community

The support of donors helps us enrich the lives of children and ensure the Festival remains affordable and accessible to everyone through our community programs such as:



GINALINA AT CANUCK PLACE

Hospital Outreach

The Hospital Outreach Program brings the Festival experience to children receiving treatment and hospice care at child-centre healthcare facilities. Children unable to leave their facilities can experience the Festival and benefit from the healing power of music and laughter.

You brought a smile to the faces of 66 sick children and their families.

“What an incredibly special tradition and relationship we have built. Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for bringing so many smiles to so many faces over the years. We sincerely appreciate it! -

L. Fielding, Canuck Place Therapist



Good Neighbours

The Good Neighbours Program provides a day of learning, laughter and inspiration for children and their families who would otherwise be unable to attend the Festival.

You gave a day of fun to 78 limited income families.



Photo by Tilly Nelson

“We had a great time at the Children’s Festival! We enjoyed watching Librarian and participating in the Activity Village. Wow - what a great night for me and my daughter. Without your support this would not have been possible. We are grateful!” - 2025 Good Neighbours Recipient



Photo by Jilly Nelson

Adopt a Class

This program provides a day filled with laughter, awe and learning for elementary school children attending enhanced support schools across Metro Vancouver.

With your help 881 children from enhanced support schools experienced an arts performance this year.

“We made so many wonderful memories that day, and it truly wouldn’t have been possible without your support. Your kindness gave our students a joyful and meaningful experience they will always remember.”

~ 2025 Adopt a Class Recipient



Photo by Moonrider Productions

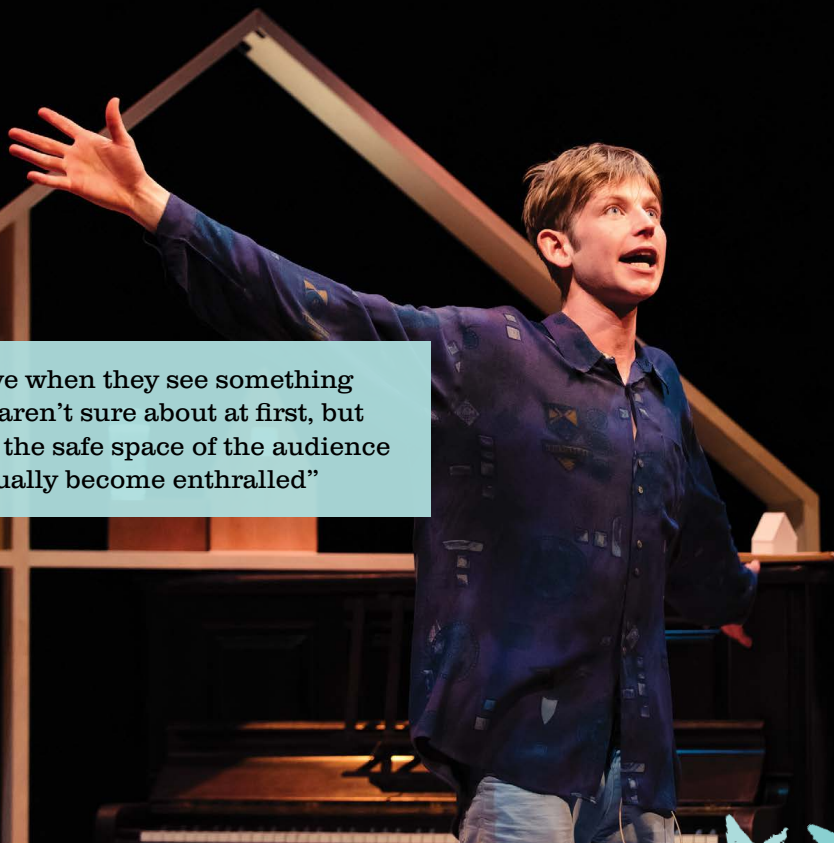


Art Knows No Boundaries



You brought important issues to the stage.

You built a community that values shared experiences



“I love when they see something they aren’t sure about at first, but from the safe space of the audience gradually become enthralled”

Photo by Jack Clifford

I WISH I WAS A MOUNTAIN
THE EGG, THEATRE ROYAL BATH (UNITED KINGDOM)





Photo by Moonrider Productions

Volunteers

The Festival relies on a large team of volunteers. They donate their time, energy and enthusiasm to help us deliver a successful event!

574 volunteers dedicated over 8,223 hours to make the Festival come to life.



Photo by Amy Nelson

“Thank you very much for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I truly enjoyed volunteering and being part of such a joyful and meaningful event.”

- 2025 Volunteer



Special Events

The Festival is involved with many special events throughout the year. It's an opportunity to provide the Festival's intelligent, thoughtful and quality programming all year long.



October 22 – 1:00 pm
08. Storytime with Nature
Andrea Fritz,
Candace Savage &
Monique Gray Smith



STORYTIME WITH NATURE
Presented with
Vancouver
Writers Fest –
Oct. 22, 2024



October 23 – 10:15 am
18. Big Hope for Little Ones
Adam Potelle, Monique
Gray Smith & Nancy Yu



BIG HOPE FOR LITTLE ONES
Presented with
Vancouver
Writers Fest –
Oct. 23, 2024



Photo by Jonathan Lorange

DE GLACE (FROM ICE)
Presented with Théâtre La Sezième and
PuSh Festival – Jan. 31 – Feb. 2, 2025



YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION WITH CHRISTINE MACKENZIE AT LUNARFEST
Feb. 8, 2025



VANCOUVER CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING
Nov. 29, 2024

Numerically Speaking



Photo by Tilly Neilsen

83

SHOWS AND EVENTS

43

SOLD OUT SHOWS

10

VENUES

11

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

12

NATIONAL ARTISTS

66

LOCAL ARTISTS

15

*ART INSTALLATIONS /
ACTIVITIES*

7

DAYS

13

*YEAR-ROUND STAFF
MEMBERS*

65

*CONTRACT STAFF
MEMBERS*

53

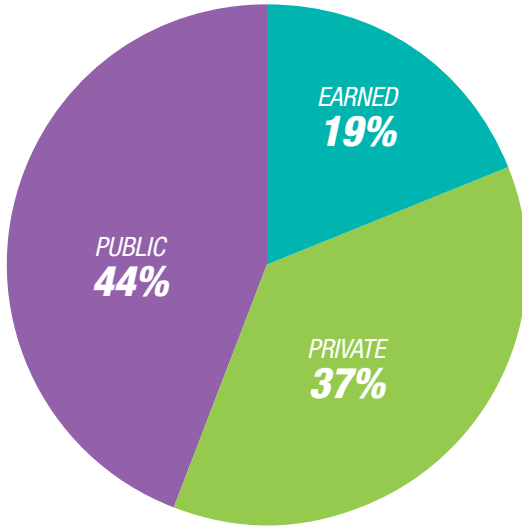
SOCIETY MEMBERS

9

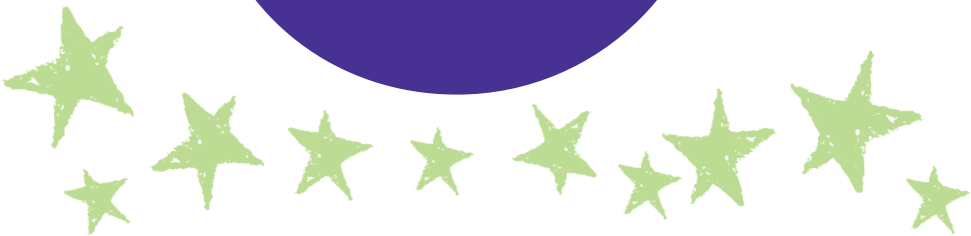
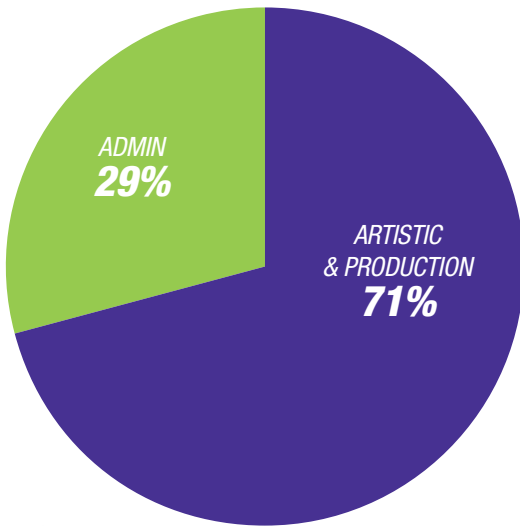
BOARD MEMBERS

2025 Financials

Revenue



Expenses



Thank you to our donors and supporters

You did this for us! All the financial support the VICF receives allows us to create this rich annual arts experience for our young audience and the adults who come with them. We could not do it without you. Thank you so much!

POTS OF GOLD - \$5K+

Amacon Foundation
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\$100-\$499

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Rammer Badyal
Sally & Wilfrid Mennell
Stewart McGillivray
Tom Stulberg

FIREFLIES

UP TO \$99

Cobs Bread
Chibuzor Aniekeh
Jeremy Yu
Melanie Gris
Nadine Carew
Olivia Zeng
Rob Corcoran

Samad Raza
Sunita Sinha

LADY BUGS - IN KIND

Aquabus
Bard on The Beach
Baza Dance Studios
Birdhouse Kids
Blue Water Cafe / Tabletop
Book Warehouse
C'est La Vie Boutique
Catoro Pets
Cheeky Ranch
Cobs Bread
Cookies by George
Cork it Wine Making
Craigdarroch Castle
Dashing Dawgs
District 1881
Discovery Organics
Firehall Arts Centre
Flying Squirrel Sports
Foraging with You
Fox & Oak
Frankie's Italian Kitchen
Gatley Lifestyle
Go Wireless
Grandview Lanes
Ground up climbing centre
Hard Bean Brunch Co.
Immortal Dragon Kung Fu
IRON DOG BOOKS
Jazz Festival
Jericho Beach Kayak Centre
Kidtopolis
Lagree West
Lee's Donuts
Little Mountain Gallery
MAKE Vancouver
Marika Productions
Miku (Sushi)
Modo Yoga: Vancouver

Muffin Granny
Museum of Anthropology
Nature's Path
Nellie's Clean
One Under
Origins Parkour
Quality Inn & Suites
Quazar's Arcade
Rain or Shine Ice Cream
Rick Bronson's House of Comedy
Science World British Columbia
Sequoia Restaurants
Taste Vancouver Food Tours
Terra Breads
The Comedy Department
The Hive Boulderling Gym
The Improv Centre
The Keg
The Old Spaghetti Factory
The Sandbar Seafood Restaurant
The Sunday Service
The Tipper
Turiya Wild Rose
Vancouver Folk Music Festival
Vancouver Opera House
VIFF
YWCA Hotel

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Stewart McGillivray, Secretary
Cameron Wilson
Grace Starke
Jason Dubois
Christoph Clodius
Clara Ruiz-Larrea
Rahima Kara

Staff Credits

Artistic & Executive Director	Katharine Carol
Development Manager	Marika Kovalcikova
Communications & Marketing Manager	Joanne Da Silva
Operations Manager	Leanne Zacharias
Audience Services Manager	Kelly Creelman
Production Manager	David Kerr (DK)
Technical Director	Jessica Han
Site Manager	Lauren Palidwor
Volunteer Coordinator	Alayna Y
Access Activator	Anika Vervecken
Accessibility Sidekicks	Jessica Hood & elika mojtabaei
Deaf Consultant	Pengchao (Paul) Shao
Low-Vision Youth Consultant	Tom Gatenyo
Audience Services Assistant Manager	Frances Fee
School & Information Administrator	Norah Gillen
Operations Assistant	Liam Taylor
Digital Content Specialist	Marjolyn "MJ" Dimapiis
Bookkeeper	Ewa Borkowska
IT Consultant	Wayne Stewart

Many thanks to our awesome interns and volunteers!



Photo by Tilly Neill

Thank you to our sponsors

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We acknowledge the support of the
Canada Council for the Arts.
Nous remercions le Conseil des arts
du Canada de son soutien.

To learn more about the impact you or your organization can make,
contact **Marika Kovalcikova**, Development Manager
development@childrensfestival.ca | 604-708-5655, Ext. 106

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