

SEPTEMBER 30 - CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY ARTS & CULTURE

What's happening?

What stories and experiences can you share about what's working well when it comes to arts & culture in Calgary?

- Calgary is growing up, seriously on the map with a strong level of participation and lots of arts & culture choices. There is a sense of something happening and good support for local artists.
- More opportunities for low-income Calgarians to attend events
- Arts Recreation Pass – a good thing!
- FastForward, Swerve are showcasing local music and event...many for free
- First Thursday
- Established gallery in Arts Central that includes “disability arts” – appreciated by a caregivers who can't do/attend all the events and performance
- Strong collaboration between disciplines
- Support for creativity (i.e. Pecha Kucha nights)
- Accessibility to arts (relative to bigger cities)
- New movement away from cowboy hats to more modern and diversified culture
- Every weekend we are met with a potpourri of choices
- City is VIBRANT, especially relative to overseas
- Collaboration between venues – sharing with other places
- Strong number of multicultural events (i.e. GlobalFest)
- High level of innovation due to ACAD, generates more opportunities than many other major art institutions
- CBE mosaic and statues – public art is very accessible here
- Calgary Arts Development Authority and other institutions that create an infrastructure for arts
- There is a lot of choice. As the city has grown it attracts more attention, more international performers, more investment.
- More breadth & depth – cross cultural lines
- Lots of local talent, local institutions for teaching, networking

What stories and experiences can you share about what's not working well?

- FMS “Fear of Missing Something”
- Need better marketing
- Need more street art / evidence of culture on the streets
- How to reach out into different cultures all over the city – we are too spread out
- How can we decentralize? How can Calgary adopt a model like Chicago?
- Make venues and space available outside the central zone
- Not enough programmed art in downtown – need to make public spaces more accessible, studio space is hard to come by
- Events such as Vital Conversations are not attracting Calgarians from NE & SE communities
- Lack of sense of community amongst Calgarians – need to have better public transit to encourage attendance OR move arts and culture out of downtown in to the suburbs
- Distance to arts events from outlying communities is a barrier to participation
- More Canadian content in local architecture
- Geared mainly towards middle class “Canadians” (i.e. not much for the ethnic communities)
- Need to overcome barriers to exposure to venues or different types of art
- Variety of affordable space is a challenge
- There are opportunities, but the downside is there are no institutions that tie everything together. We have multiple institutions but a scattering effect that reduces the level of awareness of the arts
- Art communities are isolated and not much cross-over (i.e. between dance, visual arts, musical)
- Larger audience for an educational component
- It still requires a certain level of socio-economic prosperity for citizens to participate.

What's possible?

How is it possible to energize and engage the wider community to get more citizens involved in addressing these challenges and in supporting what's working?

- Accessible art, no physical and mental barriers/stigmas
- Young people are doing independent creative. Figure out how to support them
- Effective marketing tools
- Arts Buddy – if you can buy 2 tickets, do it. Make the extra ticket available to someone who could not afford
- Season tickets – give a voucher or discount to bring a guest
- Get more volunteers, organize them and then get them to extend the circle
- Invite someone to join you and encourage them to do the same
- Find/take the time to support and engage our children. Collaborate interculturally to reduce the sense of “otherness”
- Food and music always bring people together
- Many gallery openings but not sure if they are open “open to all” – invite a person to go with you
- Plan a multicultural event featuring all the festivals (i.e. Latin, African, Chinese) to help people see possibilities
- Free days at art galleries or museums
- Schools – expose children to different arts such as plays, operas, etc.
- Free tickets targeting different groups like maybe “family passes” when kids get to a certain age
- “Pay What You Can” nights
- Use schools for community events in time off
- Connect more of the different organizations
- Work arts component into the city identity
- ArtsVote in Edmonton and Calgary – affecting politics
- Getting citizens aware of political issues to support the arts
- Volunteers
- Loving/honouring your individual calling to inspire others
- Do things on a larger scale
- Demystify, simplify and breakdown what “arts” actually is
- Make use of social media to achieve a greater community connection.
- Try to challenge public perception about art and its value to society by placing more emphasis at younger ages in school