

encore

NMC Annual Report 2024

NMC BEYOND BORDERS

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StudioBell



National
Music
Centre

Centre
National
de Musique



Letter from the
Chair of the Board

It's a rare and rewarding thing to witness an institution take a confident leap forward, growing not only in reputation, but in purpose. In 2024, the National Music Centre did just that. What we witnessed was not simply the continuation of NMC's remarkable work in exhibitions, education, collections, public programs, and artist support, but a decisive step onto the world stage as a leading Canadian cultural institution.

As Chair of the Board of Directors, I have the privilege of working alongside an exceptionally dedicated group of people, staff, volunteers, partners, and fellow board members, who share a bold vision for what the National Music Centre can become.

That vision came into sharper focus this year as NMC expanded its presence across Canada, deepened international relationships, and shared Canadian music stories that resonated far beyond our borders through our Canadian Music Halls of Fame partners.

From the deeply moving *Violins of Hope* exhibition to the extraordinary turnout for our inaugural Mid-Autumn Festival, to the partnership announcement with the Bruce Springsteen Archives and Center for American Music, 2024 was a year that proved international doesn't mean distant, it means open. NMC opened its doors to new communities, new audiences, and new ideas, all while staying true to its mission of celebrating the full spectrum of Canada's musical diversity and identity.

We were also proud to welcome esteemed business leaders Greg Kwong and Bilal Hydrie to our Board of Directors. Their expertise and broad networks have already brought valuable insight and momentum to our strategic direction.

At its best, governance empowers institutions to take bold steps while remaining rooted in their values. I'm proud of the work this Board has done to guide NMC into its next chapter. We remain focused on long-term sustainability, responsible growth, and a deep commitment to the

public good.

To all of our donors, partners, and friends, thank you. Your belief in the National Music Centre fuels our progress and ensures that Canada's music stories are shared with ambition, creativity, and pride. This past year was proof that the world is listening.

And we're ready to be heard.

With deep appreciation,

Rob Braide
Chair, NMC Board of Directors

NMC GOVERNANCE

The National Music Centre (NMC) is a non-profit, non-governmental registered charity guided by a dedicated Board of Directors and Governance Committees composed of passionate volunteers.

NMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Madeleine Allakariallak
- Leela Gilday
- Alan Greyeyes
- Eldon Weasel Child
- Steve Wood



Letter from the President and CEO

Dear Friends, Colleagues, Partners, and Supporters,

I'm pleased to share with you the 2024 edition of *Encore*, the National Music Centre's Annual Report.

This year marks eight remarkable years since we opened Canada's home for music in Calgary. Studio Bell continues to be a place where music's stories, sounds, and communities come together under one roof.

In 2024, NMC reached new heights by going global, crossing borders and sharing Canada's music story with the world. Through international partnerships, impactful exhibitions, and deeper community engagement, we

proved that the power of music knows no boundaries. With over 150,000 guest visits, NMC reaffirmed its position as a national leader in music heritage preservation, artist development, live performance, and education.

We launched five new exhibitions this year, including tributes to 2024 Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee Maestro Fresh Wes and Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame inductees k.d. lang and Gilles Godard. Our *Speak Up!* gallery featured a new group of Indigenous trailblazers, while *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada 1964–1966* took visitors on a nostalgic journey through a pivotal moment in pop culture history. We also presented our first international exhibition, *Violins of Hope*, a powerful and emotional collection of restored instruments once owned by Holocaust victims and survivors.

A defining milestone of 2024 was the announcement of NMC's first international partnership with the Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music and Stevie Van Zandt's TeachRock education initiative. This collaboration marks a new era of cross-border cultural exchange and positions NMC to share Canadian music stories with audiences across the U.S. and beyond.

Artist development remained at the heart of our mission. Over the past year, we supported 90

artists through mentorships, professional development, and residencies. Among the most moving projects was composer Daniel Pelton's original album, created using the *Violins of Hope* instruments to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Our OHSOTO'KINO Indigenous Programming Initiative also continued to empower Indigenous artists with meaningful, career-building opportunities.

In partnership with the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, we hosted our first-ever Mid-Autumn Festival, featuring over 430 performers from Chinese and Asian performing arts communities. Thousands of guests attended the three-day celebration, many visiting Studio Bell for the first time. It was a beautiful example of music's power to bridge cultures, foster understanding, and welcome new audiences to NMC.

Live music remained a cornerstone of our programming, with 197 concerts and 995 artists showcased across our stages. From emerging voices to celebrated icons, the year was filled with unforgettable moments, including the return of Rock the Nation, a record-breaking Family Day with over 6,000 guests, and The Andy Kim Christmas concerts in both Calgary and Montreal. These events not only raised

vital funds for NMC but also united audiences across regions, languages, and communities.

Supporting the next generation of music-makers remains central to our purpose. In 2024, we welcomed over 14,000 students for hands-on, curriculum-connected programs and summer camps that inspired creativity and a lifelong love of music.

These achievements have not gone unnoticed. This year, NMC received the Canadian Live Music Industry Award for Best Teamwork in a Soft Seat Theatre/Performing Arts Centre. I was honoured to be named one of Billboard Canada's Power Players, and NMC received multiple Western Canadian Music Award nominations, making us the only charitable organization in the country to be recognized at this level by the Canadian music industry.

All of these accomplishments are a testament to the passion, creativity, and commitment of our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters. Each of you plays a vital role in our ongoing success.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our generous philanthropic donors, corporate sponsors, and government partners. Your support makes NMC's charitable work possible and fuels our ability to educate, inspire, and connect through music.

In 2024, NMC proved that Canada's music story is one the world is eager to hear. With your continued support, we'll keep elevating that story—locally, nationally, and globally—while remaining a vibrant hub for heritage, education, and innovation here at home.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Sincerely,

Andrew Mosker
President & CEO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It's an honour to share this land.

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity, and truth, we honour and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy, comprised of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Iyârhe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta District 6. Finally, we acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – who live, work, and play on this land, and who honour and celebrate this territory.

This sacred gathering place is located near the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, and this spot has always been a gathering place where people come together to tell stories, express themselves, and share ideas and wisdom. Today, NMC amplifies that tradition here bringing many different communities together to learn about our musical heritage and celebrate the stories of music in Canada. It's truly a remarkable place steeped in rich authentic history.

STAFF

Thank you to the volunteers, staff, and supporters who work to make NMC a success.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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President & CEO

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Executive Assistant

Nandita Aggarwal
Director of Administration

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Director of Operations

Kristen Muncy
Volunteer Coordinator

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Audio Engineer

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Chad Schroter-Gillespie
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Isaac Martinez
Jonathan May
Brad McGillvrey
Renato Niro
Rafael Salas Lopez
Jakob Svahn
Niall Vos



PHOTO: NMC team members Justine, Julijana, Kaite, and Kristen celebrating the launch of the *Beatles in Canada* exhibition. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.

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Senior Publicist

Emily Holloway
Marketing & Website Coordinator

Brett Cassidy
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IT

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Jesse Shurmer
AV Specialist

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Visitor Experience & Café Manager

Kaite Saparco
Visitor Experience & Retail Coordinator

Jasmine Down
Visitor Experience & Café Coordinator

Nick Senaraine
Visitor Experience Team Lead

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Florian Michelutti
Oliver Pennock
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Janilyn Peredo
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Adrian Sanders
Sales and Event Specialist

Shruti Sharma
Event Lead

EVENT STAFF

Emily Deitsch
Ally Ferris
Rachelle Jovellanos
Yasmeen Kachour
Seth Lindland
Chad Samphire

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ABOVE: National Music Centre's *Violins of Hope* exhibition at Studio Bell. Photo by Ozzy Stone.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTORS:

Kaden Chynoweth, Jaxi Barton, J. Edmund Photography, Brett Cassidy, Max Iapaolo, Ozzy Stone, Brandon Wallis, Paige Foley, Chad Schroter-Gillespie, Emily Holloway, Brad MacMillan, Allison Seto, Lucas Watts, Canadian Country Music Association, Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame, Canada's Music Incubator, EarthCam Network, Glenbow Library and Archives Collection, JB Music Therapy, and MediaTribe. Front cover photo by Kaden Chynoweth. Back cover photo by Jonathan Zoeteman.

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Original design concept by Three Legged Dog. Additional design and layout by Brandon Wallis and Emily Holloway.

WORDS BY:

Julijana Capone, Brandon Wallis, Andrew Mosker, Rob Braide, Emily Holloway.



NMC’S MISSION

To give Canada a home that amplifies the love, sharing, and understanding of music.

NMC’S VISION

To be a national catalyst for discovery, innovation, and renewal through music.

AT NMC WE...

ELEVATE all voices, ideas, and genres of music.

EDUCATE through the lens of music.

PRESERVE Canada’s music stories, artifacts, and heritage.

FOSTER innovation, creation, wellness, and renewal through music.

CELEBRATE our music icons and those who came before us.



PREVIOUS & ABOVE: Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre. Photos by Brandon Wallis.

KEY FOCUSES

- ARTIST/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- EDUCATION AND LEARNING
- PERFORMANCE AND RECORDING
- EXHIBITIONS AND COLLECTIONS
- MUSIC AND WELLNESS

WHAT’S INSIDE

- FIVE FLOORS OF EXHIBITIONS
- 300-SEAT PERFORMANCE HALL
- MULTIPLE RECORDING STUDIOS
- THE ROLLING STONES MOBILE STUDIO
- EDUCATION CLASSROOMS
- ALBERTA MUSIC’S CALGARY LOCATION
- CKUA RADIO BROADCAST STUDIO
- NMC GIFT SHOP AND CAFÉ
- KING EDDY RESTAURANT

ABOUT NMC

The National Music Centre (NMC) is a registered charity that exists to amplify the love, sharing, and understanding of music. From its home at Studio Bell in Calgary, NMC celebrates Canada’s rich musical legacy, honouring legendary artists, nurturing new voices, and bringing the power of music to life.

NMC houses four Canadian music halls of fame; a vast collection of rare instruments, artifacts, and memorabilia spanning over 450 years of music history; and interactive exhibits for all to enjoy. Through world-class recording studios, artist residencies, and

live performances, NMC fuels creativity and provides a platform for musicians at every stage of their careers. A hub for learning, NMC’s education programs inspire the next generation of artists, music lovers, and industry leaders.

Beyond the stage, NMC is committed to harnessing music’s extraordinary capacity to heal, offering on-site programs and a music therapy initiative in hospitals and care facilities across Western Canada. More than a museum, NMC is a monument to music’s power to connect, inspire, and heal.

OVERVIEW

- Exclusive home to four of Canada’s music halls of fame.
- Renowned “living collection” used to create new music.
- World-class recording facilities used for artist residencies and commercial bookings.
- Integrated location with the legendary King Edward Hotel historic building.
- \$191 million dollar award-winning architectural landmark.
- Cultural bridge between Calgary’s East Village and Sport & Entertainment District.
- Completely unique in Canada — rivals international comparables.

CORE VALUES

WORK ETHIC & TEAMWORK

We show up for each other—committed to our responsibilities and united in shaping the future of music through collaboration and respect.

COMMUNITY & DIVERSITY

We take our cues from the community, creating space for diverse voices and meaningful connections through inclusive, relevant work.

PASSIONATE MUSIC CHAMPIONS

We are fierce advocates for music, believing in its power to shape identity, strengthen communities, and spark change.

INNOVATION & CREATIVITY

We boldly push boundaries, blending tradition with experimentation to fuel creativity and reimagine what’s possible.

WHO WE SERVE

- TOURISTS
- MUSIC, ARTS AND CULTURE ENTHUSIASTS
- FAMILIES OF ALL AGES
- ARTISTS AND MUSICIANS
- RECORDING ENGINEERS, PRODUCERS, AND TECHNICIANS
- EVENT PRODUCTION PROFESSIONALS
- SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION GROUPS
- RESEARCHERS, ACADEMICS, AND HISTORIANS
- EVENT PLANNERS
- STUDENTS

NMC'S HISTORY

NMC's roots trace back to the installation of the Carthy Organ in Calgary's Jack Singer Concert Hall in 1987, inspiring the International Organ Festival and Competition, presented annually by TriumphEnt from 1990 to 2002. This success led to the founding of the Chinook Keyboard Centre in 1996 to build a collection of keyboard instruments. Soon after, it was renamed Cantos Music Museum, expanding to include electronic instruments and sound equipment. By 2000, Cantos was hosting concerts and gallery tours.

In 2003, TriumphEnt and Cantos merged as the Cantos Music Foundation, enhancing programming. Then, a 2005 exhibition on Alberta's music history broadened the organization's vision to celebrate music nationwide. In February 2012, Cantos officially became the National Music Centre (NMC).

A new era began in 2013 when construction started on Studio Bell, NMC's stunning 160,000-square-foot home in Calgary's East Village. Built alongside the historic King Eddy Hotel, an iconic blues venue, the building both honours local music heritage and elevates NMC as a cultural landmark.

Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre, opened on Canada Day 2016 and now houses over 8,200 rare instruments and artifacts, four of Canada's music halls of fame, interactive programs, live performances, exhibitions, and artist incubation. More than a museum, it's a hub for music, innovation, and cultural discovery in Canada.



ABOVE: The King Edward Hotel historic building circa 1920. Photo courtesy of Glenbow Library and Archives Collection.



ABOVE: Future location of Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre, prior to construction in 2013. Photo courtesy of EarthCam Network.



ABOVE: Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre, in Calgary's East Village on October 20, 2024. Photo by Brandon Wallis.

NMC'S TIMELINE

- 1987** The Carthy Organ is installed in Calgary, inspiring interest in rare instruments.
- 1990** With the Carthy came the genesis of the International Organ Festival and Competition.
- 1996** The Chinook Keyboard Centre opens, later becoming the Cantos Music Museum with a broader instrument collection.
- 2000** Cantos starts public concerts and tours.
- 2003** Cantos and TriumphEnt merge to expand programming as the Cantos Music Foundation.
- 2005** A music exhibit shifts Cantos' focus to all Canadian music.
- 2012** Cantos rebrands as the National Music Centre (NMC).
- 2013** Studio Bell construction starts in Calgary's East Village.
- 2016** Studio Bell opens, featuring exhibits, programs, and Canada's music halls of fame.
- 2018** NMC revives the historic King Eddy as a live music venue, restaurant, and bar.
- 2024** NMC marks eight years at Studio Bell, advancing music education and culture.



OUR PARTNERS

National Music Centre is proud to work with over 70 partners from across Canada. This year, we are excited to announce a new international partnership with the Bruce Springsteen Archives & Centre for American Music that will launch in 2025 with an exciting opportunity to be announced soon.



LOCAL

- Annerin Productions
- Calgary Academy for the Development of Music Education
- Calgary Airport Authority
- Calgary Arts Development
- Calgary Board of Education
- Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre
- Calgary Folk Festival
- Calgary International Blues Festival
- Calgary International Film Festival
- Calgary Jewish Federation
- Calgary Music Studio
- Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra
- Calgary Public Library
- Calgary Separate School District
- Calgary Sports & Entertainment Corporation
- ChamberFest West
- CJAY 92
- Craig Senyk Initiatives
- Cree8
- JazzYYC
- Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary
- Kesher Klub
- Korinnya Ukrainian Folk Ensemble Calgary
- Honens
- Madhuban Performing Arts
- Music Calgary
- Oscill8
- Palliser School Division
- Partake Brewing
- PJ Library

- RISE UP Calgary
- Rocky View School Division
- Sarb Akal
- Simply Elegant Events
- Stampede Entertainment
- Tri-Tone Rhythm Society
- University of Calgary (EMI Music Archives)
- YYC Music Awards
- YY Music Studio

REGIONAL

- Alberta Electronic Music Conference
- Alberta Music
- Alberta Showcase
- Alberta Vocal Arts
- Banff Centre for the Performing Arts
- Chinook Historical Society
- Chronograph Records
- JB Music Therapy
- Prairie Regional Presenters Consortium
- She-Q Audio
- Western Canadian Music Alliance
- Women Band Directors International (Alberta Chapter)

NATIONAL

- ADISQ (Québec Hall of Fame)
- Air Canada
- Bell
- Bell Media
- Canada's Music Incubator
- Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS)

- Canadian Country Music Association
- Canadian Live Music Association
- Canadian Museum of History
- Canadian Museum for Human Rights
- Canadian Music Hall of Fame
- Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame
- CBC
- The Chabad on Bayview
- CIBC
- iHeartRadio
- JUNO Awards
- Library and Archives Canada
- Make Music Matter
- Music Canada
- TD
- Unison Benevolent Fund

INTERNATIONAL

- American Musical Instrument Society
- Bruce Springsteen Archives & Centre for American Music
- Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Library & Archives
- Sound Diplomacy/Music Cities Convention

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

In 2024, the National Music Centre and its programs earned significant praise across the Canadian music industry, underscoring NMC's expanding impact in performance, artist development, education, and community leadership. From national accolades to regional recognition, NMC's work was celebrated by peers, press, and presenting organizations. These honours reflect not only the success of our programs and partners, but also the strength of the community we continue to build through music – locally, nationally, and internationally.

NATIONAL MUSIC CENTRE

2024 Canadian Live Music Industry Awards

- Winner – Best Teamwork in a Soft Seat Theatre/Performance Space

2024 Western Canadian Music Awards

- Nominated – Community Excellence Award
- Nominated – Impact in Artist Development
- Nominated – Impact in Live Music
- Nominated – Impact in Music Marketing

NMC STUDIOS

2024 Western Canadian Music Awards

- Miesha & the Spanks – Winner – BreakOut Artist
- Miesha & the Spanks – Nominated – Rock Artist

2024 JUNO Awards

- Rich Aucoin – Nominated – Electronic Album of the Year
- Caity Gyorgy & Mark Limacher – Nominated – Vocal Jazz Album

2024 YYC Music Awards

- Nominated – Recording Studio
- Eric Cinnamon – Nominated – Industry Person

KING EDDY

2024 Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) Awards

- Winner – Country Club

2024 Country Music Alberta Awards

- Winner – Talent Buyer (Adam Oppenheim, Stampede Entertainment)

2024 Calgary Herald & Calgary Sun Readers' Choice Awards

- Winner – Silver for Favourite Live Music Venue

2024 Western Canadian Music Awards

- Nominated – Impact in Live Music

2024 YYC Music Awards

- Nominated – Venue or Presenter



MORE THAN MUSIC.

NMC is more than music—it's where innovation, culture, and community meet to shape the future.

The National Music Centre (NMC) is what it claims to be and much more. Indeed, it's Canada's glorious home for music. But step inside, and you'll find something far more ambitious. NMC is a monument to music, a hub for culture, a space for connection, and a bridge between the past, present, and future.

Housed in the gleaming architectural marvel of Studio Bell, in the heart of Calgary's East Village, NMC isn't merely preserving Canada's music story, it's a living blueprint for what the future of civic institutions can be. Here, music is a starting point: for education, for reconciliation, for healing, for innovation, and for community.

The Cultural Beat of a City

In an age where cities search for meaning beyond infrastructure, NMC stands as a true cultural heartbeat. It's a place where artists and audiences meet not just to be entertained, but to feel grounded in shared identity. It's where Calgarians bring visitors from out of town and where newcomers discover something unmistakably Canadian.

Education that Echoes

Across Alberta, NMC is tuning classrooms to a new frequency. Every year, thousands of students engage with NMC's education programs, not just learning history but experiencing it firsthand. Hands-on activities and curriculum-connected programming make learning fun.

Whether it's a child exploring sound for the first time or a teen forming their first band, NMC's programs resonate far beyond the classroom.

Pathways to Truth

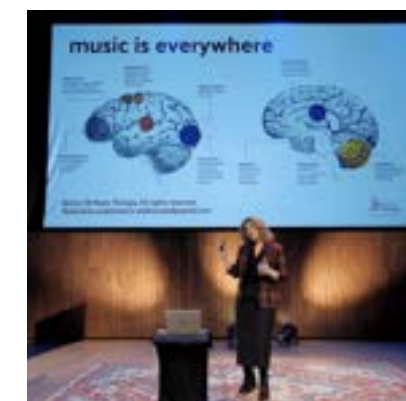
NMC's commitment to reconciliation is woven into everything we do. Through the OHSOTO'KINO Indigenous programming initiative, Indigenous artists are empowered to forge their own creative paths. The program amplifies voices that have too often been silenced, offering meaningful opportunities for skill-building, mentorship, and artistic growth. It's an ongoing collaboration that is nurturing talent, and ensuring Indigenous stories are heard, honoured, and celebrated.

LEFT: NMC's Mid-Autumn Festival in 2024. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

BELOW 1: Drumming in honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day. Photo by Brandon Wallis.

BELOW 2: Students learn the science of music in NMC's education programs. Photo by Paige Foley.

BELOW 3: Jennifer Buchanan of JB Music Therapy discussing the power of music in health and wellness. Photo by NMC.



Healing in Harmony

Few institutions bridge music and healthcare as seamlessly as the National Music Centre. Through NMC's Music Therapy Initiative, we bring hope and healing to hundreds of patients each month in hospitals and care facilities across Western Canada. By providing comfort to individuals and families dealing with various challenges, music is being used as a powerful tool to transform lives, enhance well-being, and restore a sense of connection. It's a testament to music's timeless role in healing, and a reminder that its work is far from over.

Fuel for an Economy in Transition

While cultural capital is difficult to quantify, the ripple effects of NMC are measurable. It creates jobs, anchors local businesses, and drives tourism to Calgary's core. Artists gain exposure, entrepreneurs find collaborators, and the city benefits from a cultural identity that draws investment and fosters pride. We champion economic diversification, one note at a time.

A Cultural Home for Everyone

What truly sets NMC apart from other cultural organizations is its unwavering sense of purpose. Our home is open to all – everyone is welcome. This is a space where communities converge, where youth find expression, and where cultural traditions are preserved, performed, and passed on.



ABOVE: Music fosters change, creativity, and healing. Photo by Brad MacMillan.

- 1** A place where music, technology, and creative industries intersect.
- 2** A space for non-profit and for-profit companies, individuals, and foundations to work together.
- 3** A hub for people to collaborate, inspire, and create in a place made for this sole purpose.
- 4** A catalyst that elevates the Alberta music, culture, and tech sector, strengthens our communities, and helps revitalize downtown Calgary.

1,000,000 VISITS

NMC ANTICIPATES WELCOMING OUR ONE-MILLIONTH GUEST TO STUDIO BELL BEFORE CANADA DAY 2025.



ECHOES ACROSS THE BORDER

Announcing NMC's New International Partnerships with the Bruce Springsteen Archives and TeachRock

In November 2024, the National Music Centre (NMC) in Calgary announced a groundbreaking international partnership with the Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music (BSACAM) and Steven Van Zandt's TeachRock initiative. This collaboration aims to bridge Canadian and American musical narratives, fostering cross-border cultural exchanges and highlighting the intertwined music histories of both nations.

A Harmonious Collaboration

The Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music, located at Monmouth University in New Jersey, serves as the primary repository for Bruce Springsteen's extensive collection of written works, photographs, periodicals, and memorabilia. Beyond preserving Springsteen's legacy, the center develops exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives that explore the contributions of American music icons such as Woody Guthrie, Billie Holiday, and

Frank Sinatra. In 2026, BSACAM is set to relocate to a new facility featuring expanded exhibits and a 230-seat theater.

TeachRock, founded by E Street Band guitarist Steven Van Zandt, delivers dynamic arts-integration resources to classrooms worldwide, aiming to bring engaging educational experiences to teachers and students alike.

This partnership marks NMC's first international collaboration, emphasizing the organization's commitment to sharing the Canadian music story with a broader audience.

New Initiatives and Future Endeavors

The collaboration outlines multiple key initiatives:

- Symposium on Musical Synergies: A one-day event featuring panels and artist discussions to explore the cultural connections between Canadian and American music scenes.

- Co-Developed Traveling Exhibition: Scheduled for 2026-2027, coinciding with the opening of BSACAM's new facility, this exhibition will delve into the shared musical heritage of both countries.

Strengthening Cultural Ties

This alliance underscores the deep-rooted connections between Canadian and American musicians, illustrating how artists from both nations have influenced and inspired each other. By combining resources and expertise, NMC, BSACAM, and TeachRock aim to create enriching experiences that honor and preserve the rich musical heritage that binds Canada and the United States.

As this partnership unfolds, it promises to offer music enthusiasts and scholars alike a deeper understanding of the collaborative spirit that defines North American music history.

“We’re proud to join forces with the National Music Centre to celebrate the shared legacy of Canadian and American music.”

– ROBERT SANTELLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BSACAM



“National Music Centre is going global through this partnership and bringing the Canadian music story to a wider audience.”

– ANDREW MOSKER, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF NMC

RIGHT: Garry Tallent, Robert Santelli, Stevie Van Zandt, and Andrew Mosker came together in Calgary to launch this exciting new cross-border partnership between BSACAM, TeachRock, and NMC. Photo by Brandon Wallis.

EXHIBITIONS

Telling the Stories of Music in Canada

The year 2024 saw significant updates across Studio Bell’s fourth and fifth floors, deepening the presence of Canada’s music halls of fame and adding new interactive elements to enhance accessibility and engagement. The revamp marked the largest transformation of these spaces to date. NMC relocated the ADISQ Hall of Fame, the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame, and the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, allowing for an expanded presentation of artifacts and newly developed interactives. These included “learn-to-play” kiosks and music trivia terminals designed to engage visitors of all ages.

Exhibitions also played a key role in NMC’s efforts to grow

national and international awareness. The updated Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame opened in 2024 with new artifacts from inductees k.d. lang and Gilles Godard, and a first-of-its-kind interactive experience where visitors could virtually perform alongside inductees. The Canadian Music Hall of Fame gallery was refreshed with a tighter focus on past inductees, anchored by images from the late concert photographer Dee Lippingwell’s archive, which was donated to NMC in 2022.

In 2024, NMC’s exhibitions painted a vivid portrait of music’s enduring power and Canada’s place in its global evolution. *Violins of Hope*, the organization’s first international

travelling exhibition, brought audiences face-to-face with string instruments that once belonged to Jewish victims and survivors of the Holocaust, an evocative reminder of music’s role in resilience and remembrance. *Randy Bachman: Every Guitar Tells a Story* offered an intimate look at the guitars behind some of rock’s most iconic hits, while *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada 1964–1966* explored Canada’s early role in Beatlemania. Tributes to Maestro Fresh Wes and k.d. lang showcased the cultural influence of Canadian artists across genres, underscoring how music made here continues to resonate across borders.



“This year’s featured *Speak Up!* artists have not only made significant contributions to music, but have also played crucial roles in promoting Indigenous culture and heritage.”

– DAVID MCLEOD, CURATOR OF NMC’S *SPEAK UP!* EXHIBITION



2024 EXHIBITIONS BY THE NUMBERS

NEW & UPDATED EXHIBITIONS

11

DIGITAL EXHIBITIONS

3

EXHIBITION ATTENDANCE

64,523

LEFT: Interactive guitar playing kiosk in the Canadian Music Hall of Fame exhibition. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.

RIGHT: *Speak Up!* exhibition. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

Violins *of* Hope

“We played music for
sheer survival. We made
music in hell.”

- COCO SCHUMANN

RESILIENCE THROUGH MUSIC: VIOLINS OF HOPE EXHIBITION SHOWCASES HISTORIC INSTRUMENTS CONNECTED TO THE HOLOCAUST

National Music Centre, in partnership with the Calgary Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary, was proud to host the Violins of Hope collection, meticulously restored string instruments that once belonged to victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

Today, these instruments stand as enduring symbols, serving to educate and memorialize those affected by one of history’s darkest chapters through concerts, exhibitions, and other commemorative projects.

Originally curated by Israeli violin maker Avshi Weinstein and his late father Amnon, the Violins of Hope collection has toured globally with orchestras. In 2024, NMC created the first exhibition in Canada using the Violins of Hope collection. At a time of rising antisemitism, the exhibition shared the stories of Holocaust victims and survivors, ensuring that their voices were not forgotten.

Additional research, curatorial interpretation, and a carefully selected range of archival images helped contextualize the instruments within broader historical narratives. The result was a rich, multi-sensory environment that honoured both the individual lives connected to each violin and the larger cultural loss endured during the Holocaust.

Violins of Hope is the first of internationally-themed exhibitions that will be coming to Studio Bell in the future. Through this exhibition and others, NMC seeks to catalyze meaningful discourse, share diverse stories, and offer inclusive educational experiences in an innovative and accessible format, all through the lens of music.

WATCH PERFORMANCES AND MORE
▶ **AMPLIFY.NMC.CA/VIOLINS-OF-HOPE**



LIVE PERFORMANCES



Violins of Hope instruments were powerfully incorporated into live performances to coincide with the exhibition at Studio Bell. Montreal artist Socalled, known for blending klezmer and hip-hop, performed live with his international string quartet on May 26. NMC also presented JUNO Award-winning singer and composer Lenka Lichtenberg, featuring Drew Jurecka and Rebekah Wolkstein, on June 2.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



The Daniel Pelton Collective was selected by an internal jury of NMC staff and professionals as the Violins of Hope Artist in Residence, granting access to a portion of the historic instrument collection to create new, original music. Inspired by the novel *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, Pelton took concentration camp tattoo numbers and translated them into their 12-tone counterparts. The result was a powerful 10-minute composition for chamber orchestra, released in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of Auschwitz’s liberation, a moving tribute bridging history, and artistic expression.

PREVIOUS, MIDDLE, TOP: *Violins of Hope* exhibition. Photos by Ozzy Stone.

RIGHT, 1: Socalled performing at Studio Bell. Photo by NMC. RIGHT, 2: Daniel Pelton recording *Violins of Hope* in NMC’s studio. Photo by NMC.

The Beatles in Canada

FROM ME TO YOU

1964 → 1966



ABOVE: Beatles historian and author Piers Hemmingsen visiting the *Beatles in Canada* exhibition. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF BEATLEMANIA

In 2024, the National Music Centre marked a cultural milestone with *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada 1964–1966*, an exhibition commemorating the 60th anniversary of The Beatles’ first arrival in Canada. The exhibition opened in the summer of 2024 and was extended through to May 2025 due to popular demand. It offered a look back at a pivotal moment in music history, when Beatlemania swept across Canada and helped ignite a global phenomenon.

Curated by Beatles historian Piers Hemmingsen, with collaboration from Robert Santelli, the exhibit uncovered Canada’s role in The Beatles’ rise to stardom. NMC designed interactive elements to

create an experience that was the first of its kind in Canada. Featuring rare photographs, authentic memorabilia, and archival media, it brought the era to life, from the band’s frenzied performances in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal to their enduring influence on Canadian youth and pop culture.

The exhibition resonated deeply with visitors across generations, drawing longtime fans and newcomers. It served as a nostalgic trip through time and an educational experience, illustrating how Canada was the first country outside the U.K. to embrace The Beatles’ music, and how that early embrace helped set the stage for their North American breakthrough.



READ THE STORY BEHIND THE EXHIBIT
▶ [AMPLIFY.NMC.CA/BEATLEMANIA](https://amplify.nmc.ca/beatlemania)

LEFT, RIGHT: *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada 1964–1966* exhibition. Photos by Kaden Chynoweth.

HALLS OF FAME

Preserving Canada’s Musical Legacy

The National Music Centre is the proud home to four of Canada’s music halls of fame: the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame, and Quebec’s ADISQ Hall of Fame. These partnerships represent a foundational pillar of NMC’s national mandate – preserving the stories, artifacts, and legacies of Canada’s most

influential artists. Each hall of fame gallery has its own focus, style, and curatorial lens, but together they offer a comprehensive chronicle of the country’s soundtrack and cultural evolution through music.

In 2024, NMC significantly enhanced the fourth floor of Studio Bell to better showcase these partners, relocating and

reimagining all four galleries. The refresh included new artifact displays, immersive media, and interactives designed to connect with both seasoned music fans and new audiences. Together, the updated spaces elevated the presence of the halls of fame within Studio Bell and reasserted NMC’s role as a steward of Canadian music heritage.



LEFT, 1-3: Canadian Music Hall of Fame, Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame. Photos by Kaden Chynoweth.

LEFT, 4: ADISQ gallery. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

RIGHT: Canadian Music Hall of Fame. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.

CANADIAN COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME

As the official home of the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, NMC houses more than 2,000 artifacts representing generations of country music artists. In 2024, the gallery was completely refreshed to honour new inductees k.d. lang and industry builder Gilles Godard.

The exhibition showcased a collection of lang’s personal artifacts, including instruments, awards, photographs, sheet music, and notably, her iconic stage outfits. These items

provided visitors with an intimate glimpse into lang’s artistic journey and her profound impact on country music.

The exhibition also celebrated Gilles Godard’s contributions as a builder in the industry, highlighting his influential role in shaping Canadian country music. This tribute not only celebrated their individual achievements but also underscored the evolving landscape of country music in Canada.

Dedicated to preserving and celebrating the history and legacy of Canadian country music, the exhibition incorporates items from the 2024 inductees, as well as past honourees including Terri Clark, Paul Brandt, Anne Murray, Hank Snow, Michelle Wright, Ian Tyson, and many others. Also newly added to the exhibition this year is an interactive that encourages visitors to sit down and play along with a Hall of Fame artist.



“It’s such an honour to be inducted into the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame, and I’m thrilled to have some of my favourite outfits on display at the National Music Centre.” – k.d. lang

COLLECTION COMES ALIVE

To celebrate her induction, k.d. lang took the stage at the CCMA Awards in Edmonton with her band The Reclines — their first show together in 35 years.

For this momentous occasion, NMC reconnected lang with an ensemble she had donated many years ago — a blue skirt and button-up fringe shirt, decorated with a prairie landscape and miniature farm animals — paired with her iconic cutoff cowboy boots.

The outfit had been carefully preserved in the NMC Collection until our team got it ready to hit the stage once again.

k.d. lang also donned her black Nudie suit from the NMC Collection when she hit the CCMA Awards Red Carpet.



READ THE STORY OF THE OUTFITS
► [AMPLIFY.NMC.CA/K-D-LANG](https://amplify.nmc.ca/k-d-lang)

LEFT: Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth. **TOP:** k.d. lang artifacts on display. Photos by Kaden Chynoweth. **RIGHT:** k.d. lang at the 2024 CCMA Awards. Photos courtesy of CCMA.

CANADIAN MUSIC HALL OF FAME

In 2024, Maestro Fresh Wes became the first hip-hop artist to be inducted into both the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame. NMC celebrated this historic achievement with the *Milestone: Maestro Fresh Wes* exhibition. The gallery chronicled the groundbreaking career of

Toronto-born Wes Williams, from his 1989 hit “Let Your Backbone Slide” to his cultural impact as a pioneer of Canadian rap. Featuring iconic performance outfits – including those worn during his showstopping 2024 JUNO Awards appearance – the

exhibit illuminated Maestro’s enduring legacy. An exclusive interview with Maestro created an immersive experience, while interactive elements allowed visitors to explore his influence on music and culture, reflecting on how hip-hop in Canada has moved from the margins to the mainstream.

“It’s an honour to see my journey celebrated at the National Music Centre. I hope this exhibition inspires future generations to not just make records but make history.”

- MAESTRO FRESH WES



LEFT: Maestro Fresh Wes exhibition. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.
ABOVE: Maestro Fresh Wes performing at the Andy Kim Christmas. Photo by J. Edmund Photography.



CANADIAN SONGWRITERS HALL OF FAME

The Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame gallery continues to honour the artists whose words have shaped generations. In 2024, NMC celebrated the induction of Tom Cochrane, Sarah McLachlan, Diane Tell, and Blue Rodeo’s Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor. Their collective impact spans genres and

geographies, from McLachlan’s emotionally resonant global hits to Cochrane’s anthemic “Life Is a Highway,” to the signature Canadiana of Blue Rodeo and the pioneering French-language songwriting of Diane Tell. The exhibition spotlighted their creative tools, handwritten

lyrics, and musical instruments, offering a behind-the-scenes look at some of the nation’s most beloved songs. The updated display underscored Canada’s rich songwriting tradition, and the universal power of a well-told story.



ADISQ HALL OF FAME

Created in partnership with the Association québécoise de l’industrie du disque, du spectacle et de la vidéo (ADISQ), the ADISQ Hall of Fame gallery honours trailblazers in Québec’s vibrant music scene. In 2024, the exhibition highlighted the career of Mario Lefebvre, recipient of the Félix Hommage

award, who has played a defining role in the province’s music industry over the past five decades. Lefebvre’s journey from music journalist to influential artist manager and mentor was celebrated through archival video clips, photography, and

immersive media that re-created moments from the annual Gala de l’ADISQ. The gallery’s signature plaque wall was also updated to reflect more than 30 years of Félix Hommage recipients – an enduring tribute to the builders and creators of Québec music.

TOP: CSHF 2024 inductees: Tom Cochrane, Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor of Blue Rodeo, Sarah McLachlan, and Diane Tell. Photos courtesy of CSHF.
ABOVE, 1-2: ADISQ exhibition. Photos by Jaxi Barton.

COLLECTION

Preserving the Soundtrack of a Nation

At the heart of the National Music Centre is a singular mandate: to collect, preserve, and activate the sounds and stories that define Canada’s musical identity. The NMC Collection spans more than 450 years of innovation, including rare synthesizers, early harpsichords, and instruments that were owned and used by Canadian icons. In 2024, NMC deepened its commitment to stewardship and public access, cementing its position as one of the most vital and dynamic music collections in the country.

Major Acquisitions
One of our most significant acquisitions to date was confirmed in 2024: the Oscar Peterson legacy collection, entrusted to NMC through a partnership with Peterson’s widow, Kelly Peterson. The loaned collection, including Peterson’s instruments, awards, and archival materials, will form the foundation of a major 2025 exhibition to mark what would have been his 100th birthday. Additional highlights include artifacts from Myles Goodwyn,

the late frontman of April Wine. His donation features stage wear, guitars, and the fire alarm bell heard on “Oowatanite.” NMC also acquired a rare Double Novatron synthesizer donated by Sarah McLachlan, and awards from jazz and blues label Justin Time Records. **A Year of Firsts and Finales**
In early 2024, NMC closed Randy Bachman: Every Guitar Tells a Story, its most instrument-focused exhibition to date. To complement the exhibit, NMC published its first-ever



LEFT: Outfits and instruments of country music legends. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth. **TOP, 1:** k.d. lang’s awards. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth. **TOP, 2:** Oliver Jones’ Felix award, courtesy of Justin Time Records. Photo by Max Iapaolo. **TOP, 3:** Edmund Bull’s drum in *Speak Up!*. Photo by Jaxi Barton. **ABOVE:** Wurlitzer Jukebox from the Myles Goodwyn collection. Photo by Max Iapaolo.

exhibition catalogue, a richly illustrated 140-page hardcover tribute featuring stories, essays, and photography contributed by Randy Bachman, his daughter Bannatyne Bachman-Matson, and others.

Managing Growth and Infrastructure

Behind the scenes, the NMC Music Foundation (NMCmf) advanced its application for federal designation under the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB). Once granted, this designation will allow NMCmf to offer tax incentives for artifact donations of national significance, a critical tool for future growth.

Innovation in Access

NMC reinstated its digital infrastructure for collections access, renewing its agreement with Gallery Systems to relaunch the Collections Online database. Behind-the-scenes work is ongoing to update records and prepare the platform for public use.

Meanwhile, NMC’s presence expanded into new territory – literally. A striking new installation called the Plane Piano, located in Calgary International Airport’s international departures wing, debuted in 2024. Measuring 15 by 16 feet, the playable sculpture invites global travelers to engage

with the NMC Collection in an unexpected space, and reflects NMC’s growing focus on public engagement beyond Studio Bell.

Also completed this year was a long-planned infrastructure upgrade to the Rolling Stones Mobile (RSM) recording truck. Working with Revolution Recording Custom Shop, NMC installed refurbished monitors and made improvements to the vehicle’s acoustic fidelity, ensuring the legendary mobile studio remains a functional and inspiring space for artists into the future.



**2024
COLLECTION
BY THE
NUMBERS**

**ARTIFACTS
ADDED
TO THE
COLLECTION
930**

**HOURS
OF LIVING
COLLECTION
USE
5,364**

**RECORDING
STUDIO
HOURS
878**

LEFT: Artifacts from Oscar Peterson’s collection: His 75th Anniversary Shure Microphones from his studio and his 1978 award for his Canadian Music Hall of Fame induction. Photos by Max Iapaolo.

RIGHT: Terri Clark’s guitar on display in the updated Canadian Music Hall of Fame. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth.

NMC STUDIOS

Where History Meets Innovation

The National Music Centre’s recording studios continued to operate as one of Canada’s most distinctive creative spaces. By combining vintage gear from NMC’s Collection with modern recording technology, the studios offered artists a rare opportunity: to produce contemporary music using the tools that have shaped generations of sound.

Studio bookings remained strong across genres. Artists including Caity Gyorgy & Mark Limacher, Rich Aucoin, Brett Hansen Confluence, and Andrew Barr recorded new projects on-site, while returning clients helped reinforce NMC’s growing reputation as a trusted production partner.

“It’s because of them, as well as the wonderful team of engineers at the National Music Centre in Calgary, AB that this album became what it is,” said Juno Award-winning vocalist Caity Gyorgy about her NMC-recorded album.

Recordings made at NMC earned national recognition this year, with multiple studio projects receiving JUNO nominations, including in the Vocal Jazz and Electronic categories.

The studios also expanded their educational reach. Students from Robert Thirsk High School, She-Q Audio, and the Banff Centre participated in on-site workshops focused on analog

synthesis, drum mic techniques, and demo production. These programs gave emerging engineers and artists hands-on experience with legacy equipment, linking technical training with Canada’s musical history.

In total, over 5,302 hours of studio time incorporated instruments and gear from the NMC Collection in 2024. From award-winning albums to entry-level workshops, the studios played a vital role in bringing new recordings to life and equipping the next generation of engineers with essential hands-on skills.



LEFT: Artists at work in NMC’s world-class recording studios. Photo by Allison Seto.
ABOVE: In the studio with Tess Roby, NMC Artist in Residence presented by Partake Brewing. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Building Belonging Through Music

National Music Centre hosted over 107 public programs and 197 performances, positioning itself as a cultural catalyst in Calgary and beyond. Through a mix of civic celebrations, community-led festivals, and reflective moments of national significance, NMC reached thousands of visitors in 2024.

Studio Bell and the King Eddy remained the primary hubs for programming, complemented by select events at venues like the Calgary Public Library and Scotiabank Saddledome, in partnership with the Calgary Roughnecks. Each event was developed in collaboration with artists, educators, or cultural organizations, extending NMC’s reach and connecting audiences to Canadian music in new, accessible ways.

July’s Canada Day celebration was a standout moment, drawing a record 13,666 attendees to Studio Bell and the King Eddy. The free, building-wide activation – paired with rooftop and mainstage performances – resulted in one of NMC’s most successful single-day turnouts ever.

New programming milestones included the launch of the Mid-Autumn Festival, developed in collaboration with the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre. The three-day event attracted over 5,000 people and featured more than 400 performers and 15 community groups.

On the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, residential school survivor Kurt Blind led a powerful public presentation, followed by an evening concert by acclaimed Inuk artist Elisapie, amplifying Indigenous voices through both storytelling and song. Two days later, Alberta Culture Days welcomed another 1,400 guests into the building.

Whether it was exploring heritage through live performance or finding joy in a community jam session, NMC’s public programming in 2024 deepened NMC’s role as a space for connection, creativity, and belonging.



2024
PUBLIC
PROGRAMS
BY THE
NUMBERS

CONCERTS & LIVE
PERFORMANCES
197

LIVE MUSIC
ATTENDANCE
27,506

PUBLIC
PROGRAM
ATTENDANCE
15,823

GUIDED TOUR
ATTENDANCE
689



TOP: Jason McCoy performs at Studio Bell for his Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame induction. Photo by J. Edmund Photography.

BOTTOM: Jens Lindemann and friends pay tribute to *Rhapsody in Blue* live at Studio Bell. Photo by J. Edmund Photography.

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

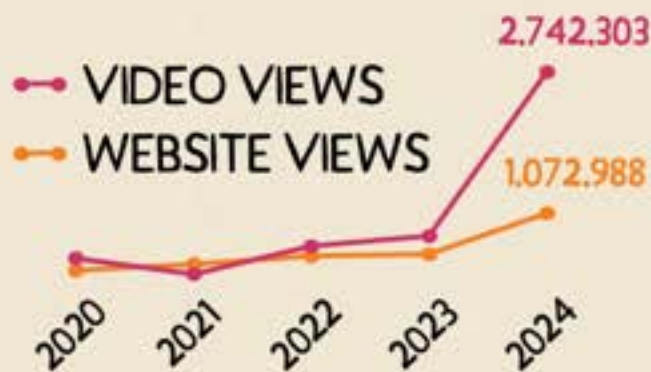
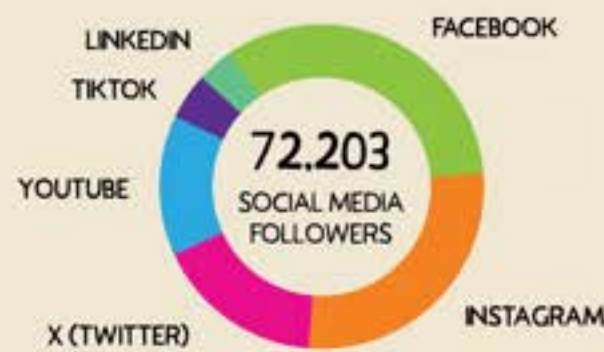
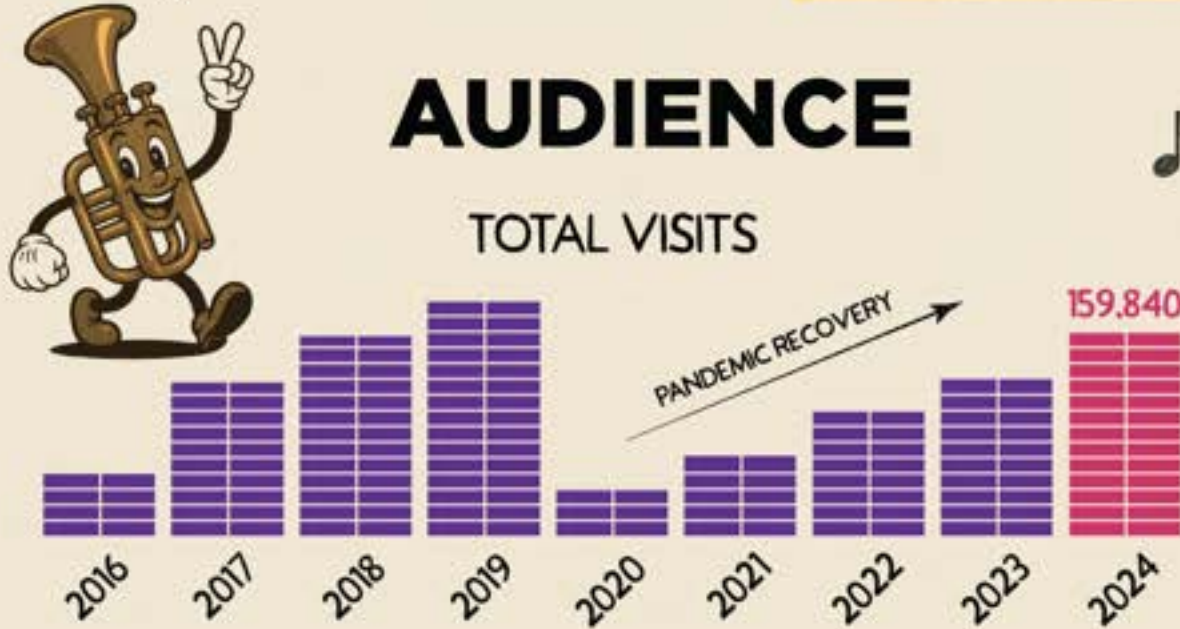
NMC by the NUMBERS

IN 2025 NMC WILL WELCOME OUR ONE-MILLIONTH VISITOR SINCE OPENING ON CANADA DAY 2016

800+ VOLUNTEERS HAVE HELPED MAKE ALL THIS POSSIBLE SINCE 2016!

AUDIENCE

TOTAL VISITS



TOTAL FOLLOWERS



EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS



NMC HOSTED 400+ SCHOOL CLASSES IN 2024!

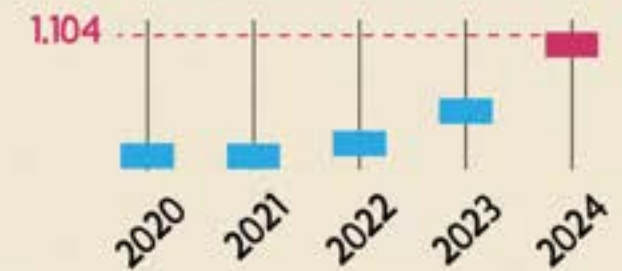


PROGRAMMING

STUDENTS SERVED



ARTISTS SERVED



RECORDING STUDIOS (HOURS BOOKED)



LIVE PERFORMANCES (INCL. w/ ADMISSION + TICKETED)



EXHIBITION OPENINGS (NEW & UPDATED)



450+ YEARS OF MUSIC HISTORY COMES ALIVE IN OUR COLLECTION!



A group of women are seated in a row, playing guqins (Chinese zithers). They are wearing blue qipaos with intricate patterns. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, reddish-orange glow from the left side, creating a soft, atmospheric effect. The women are focused on their instruments, with their hands positioned over the strings. The background is dark, and the overall mood is serene and traditional.

NMC
Mid-Autumn

中秋节

FESTIVAL

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL: A MOONLIT CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

From September 20-22, 2024, the National Music Centre launched its first-ever Mid-Autumn Festival, developed in collaboration with the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre. Celebrated across East and Southeast Asian cultures as a time for reunion and reflection, the three-day event welcomed over 4,500 daytime visitors and nearly 500 concertgoers, making it one of NMC's largest new public programs of the year.

Held across all five floors of Studio Bell, the festival featured music, dance, martial arts, crafts, and workshops led by 15 community groups. The scale of participation – over 400 performers – spoke to the strong relationships built during the planning process and the festival's broad community reach.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Community-Curated Programming

Cultural organizations helped shape the weekend's performances and activities, which included traditional and contemporary showcases spanning multiple disciplines. NMC staff and volunteers worked closely with group leaders to coordinate programming and logistics across several high-traffic areas of the building.

Featured Concerts

Jasmine Jazz blended traditional Chinese instrumentation with modern jazz arrangements, offering a distinct and accessible musical experience.

XIA-3 fused Western post-rock with Eastern guzheng virtuosity, attracting a younger, genre-curious crowd.

Engagement Across Ages and Audiences

Workshops, a community singing contest, and family-focused activities ensured wide appeal. The festival attracted a large number of first-time visitors to Studio Bell, many of whom discovered the event through a coordinated outreach and advertising campaign that included Chinese media, digital promotion, and partner networks.

The success of the Mid-Autumn Festival underscored the importance of responsive, community-driven programming. It strengthened NMC's relationships with Calgary's Chinese and Asian cultural communities and demonstrated the value of large-scale events that reflect the city's evolving demographics.



PREVIOUS: Harmony Guzheng Ensemble performing at Mid-Autumn Festival. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

LEFT, ABOVE: NMC's inaugural Mid-Autumn Festival at Studio Bell. Photos by Jaxi Barton.

BLACK HISTORY, BLACK FUTURES: A CELEBRATION OF LEGACY, CREATIVITY, AND COMMUNITY

In 2024, the National Music Centre expanded its Black History Month programming into a wider, year-round commitment to celebrating Black artistry and amplifying underrepresented voices. Through public concerts, school outreach, workshops, and the launch of its first Black Music Month event, NMC helped create space for reflection, joy, and connection.

This year's programming was curated in close partnership with renowned broadcaster and cultural advocate Master T, and spanned two signature events: Pass the Mic, and Black Music Month at the King Eddy. Each program explored different aspects of Black Canadian music, past, present, and future, while engaging artists and audiences across generations.

Pass the Mic (February 27)

Hosted at Studio Bell and curated in collaboration with Master T, Pass the Mic was a multigenerational showcase of Black Canadian excellence.

Performers included:

- Liberty Silver, JUNO-winning trailblazer and the first Black woman to win the award
- Nonso Amadi, Nigerian-Canadian Afrobeat artist
- Georgia, a 14-year-old vocalist from Calgary
- Wakefield Brewster, Calgary Poet Laureate, who performed an original spoken word commission

The evening also featured custom video montages by Master T and Paula Johnson tracing the evolution of Black music in Canada, along with visual art by Sam Obadero, Joyce Nseyi, and Anthony T. Russell. All three artists were invited to speak about their work during the program, creating a full-spectrum evening of performance, conversation, and creative exchange.

In-School Tour (February 26)

A day earlier, NMC brought a condensed version of Pass the Mic to two Calgary high schools in Forest Lawn and Falconridge, reaching approximately 2,000

students. This mobile program marked NMC's first-ever in-school Black History Month activation and featured curated video, live facilitation, and a portable sound system to ensure a high-quality experience for students and teachers.

Black Music Month at the King Eddy (June 7)

To extend the momentum beyond February, NMC hosted its first Black Music Month celebration at the King Eddy. Curated by Master T and hosted by CBC's Tarik Robinson, the evening featured:

- A panel on navigating the music industry as a Black artist
- Open mic sessions with live feedback from industry mentors
- Performances by Sargeant X Comrade, K-Riz, Timothonius, and DJ Jadé

Artists were selected through an open call and received professional honorariums, an intentional step toward sustainable support for emerging Black creators.

Much of the success of NMC's Black History Month programming in 2024 can be credited to the leadership and creative vision of Master T. As a cultural curator, broadcaster, and longtime advocate for Black music in Canada, his partnership helped shape Pass the Mic, If You Believe in Love, and Black Music Month into thoughtful, community-rooted programs that blended storytelling with celebration.



ABOVE: Liberty Silver performs at NMC's Pass the Mic event. Photo by Brett Cassidy.



Rock

-THE-

NATION

SINCE 1957

ROCK THE NATION: CELEBRATING CANADIAN MUSIC AND ELEVATING CANADIAN TALENT

In its second full season, Rock the Nation proved itself as a cornerstone of the National Music Centre's public performance programming. Co-produced with Annerin Productions, this multimedia revue delivered a joyful, high-energy tribute to more than 60 years of Canadian music history, while doubling as a powerful artist development platform for local performers.

The 2024 run launched with an opening night concert on January 26, followed by regular weekend matinees from January 27 through April 28. After a short hiatus for rehearsals and reprogramming, a refreshed summer season resumed on May 11 and ran through August 25, culminating in a total of 62 performances.

The shows featured hits from Canadian icons like Joni Mitchell, The Guess Who, k.d. lang, Paul Anka, Bryan Adams, Tom Cochrane, Shania Twain, Drake, and Justin Bieber, charting a sweeping and diverse journey

through this country's musical landscape. Repertoire updates between seasons, including the addition of songs by The Band, kept the production fresh and reflective of audience feedback.

A Launchpad for Emerging Talent

More than just a crowd-pleaser, Rock the Nation served as a professional platform for a cast of Calgary-based emerging artists, offering them sustained opportunities to grow as performers. The production featured a rotating ensemble of vocalists and instrumentalists, many at early stages in their careers, who gained experience performing weekly across multiple genres and decades of repertoire.

As part of their involvement, each cast member also received dedicated time in NMC's recording studios, giving them access to professional facilities and historic gear for their own creative projects. This added layer of support helped artists strengthen their portfolios and

expand their practice beyond the stage.

In addition, select performers participated in testimonial interviews and video shoots, expanding their public reach and providing valuable documentation of their work. With audiences averaging over 140 guests per show, and summer performances frequently nearing capacity, Rock the Nation offered both visibility and momentum for the performers.

Beyond the Stage

To complement the live experience, NMC educators offered free post-show guided tours tied to Rock the Nation on weekends, giving visitors historical context, deepening their engagement, and strengthening the production's educational value. These small-group tours became a regular feature, further reinforcing NMC's role as both a place of performance and a place of learning.

"Just saw the show and loved it. A great tribute to the music talent in Canada by very talented musicians."

- AUDIENCE MEMBER RICHARD E.

THE MUSICIANS

LISA JACOBS: Multi-instrumentalist Lisa Jacobs fell in love with the bass at 12. She's performed with Jann Arden, co-written a gold-certified song, and uses her music therapy degree to create with diverse communities, from schools to maximum-security prisons.

LISETTE XAVIER: CBC Kids TV host Lisette Xavier is a pop artist, emcee, and nine-time YYC Music Award nominee. She's recognized for her charity work and hosting major events with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and YYC Music Awards.

KATE MELVINA: A singer, pianist, and composer, Kate Melvina also leads the soul and funk group Tendavillage. Influenced by Stevie Wonder and D'Angelo, her music has earned international radio play, critical acclaim, and a devoted fanbase.

ZOE THEODOROU: Vocalist Zoe Theodorou has performed worldwide, with residencies in China, Sri Lanka, and Germany. Her vocals have appeared in commercials, as backing for artists, and in the Calgary Stampede Grandstand Show house band.

BEN MONTGOMERY: Scottish-born drummer Ben Montgomery moved to Calgary to pursue music and teaching. He's toured Europe and Canada, played in theatre productions, performed on cruise ships, and now records and performs with numerous artists across Alberta.

GRAHAM KO: An accomplished singer-songwriter and guitar player with a soulful voice, Graham Ko has released three albums, all of which have received critical acclaim. His favourite song to perform in Rock the Nation is "Sweet City Woman."

MATTY MCKAY: Multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, producer, and engineer Matty McKay has spent nearly two decades in Canadian music. A five-time CCMA Guitar Player of the Year, he's played on multiple chart-topping songs and earned CCMA Musician Hall of Honour recognition.

PREVIOUS & LEFT: Rock the Nation performances at Studio Bell. Photos by J. Edmund Photography.

A woman with curly hair, wearing a black sequined dress and high heels, is performing on a stage. She is in a dynamic pose, with one arm raised. The stage is lit with bright, starburst-like lights in blue and orange. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, and a red "EXIT" sign is hanging. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and energetic.

StudioBell

 National Music Centre | Centre National de Musique

After Hours

SLEIGH THE NIGHT AWAY: AFTER HOURS RETURNS WITH HOLIDAY HEAT

On December 14, 2024, the National Music Centre brought back its beloved late-night event series, Studio Bell After Hours, for the first time since the pandemic – and the return made a serious impact. Reimagined as a full-building, adults-only holiday blowout, the event drew 602 guests for an unforgettable night of DJs, drag shows, and festive fun.

From 7:00 pm to 1:00 am, Studio Bell was transformed. Five floors of immersive décor set the tone, while pop-up cocktail bars, interactive activities, dazzling photo ops, and roaming performers made it feel like anything but your average holiday party. At the heart of the energy was a killer lineup that turned the museum into a club-meets-cabaret.

Star Power + Dancefloor Magic

The showstopper of the night was Tynomi Banks, a Canada's Drag Race alum and internationally known drag performer, who brought big diva energy to the Performance Hall. Banks was joined by Alberta queen LILITH FAIR for a drag set that was equal parts glamour, fire, and fierce artistry.

DJ sets from Joanna Magik and DJ Pump kept the dance floors

in motion all night, spinning everything from house to hip-hop. Over in the chillout lounge, keyboardist Chris Maric laid down funk-infused grooves that gave guests a place to catch their breath without losing the vibe.

Adding to the spectacle were roaming circus performers from Cirque de la Nuit, who blended acrobatics and avant-garde theatrics, delighting partygoers in Studio Bell's most unexpected corners.

A Full-Building Experience

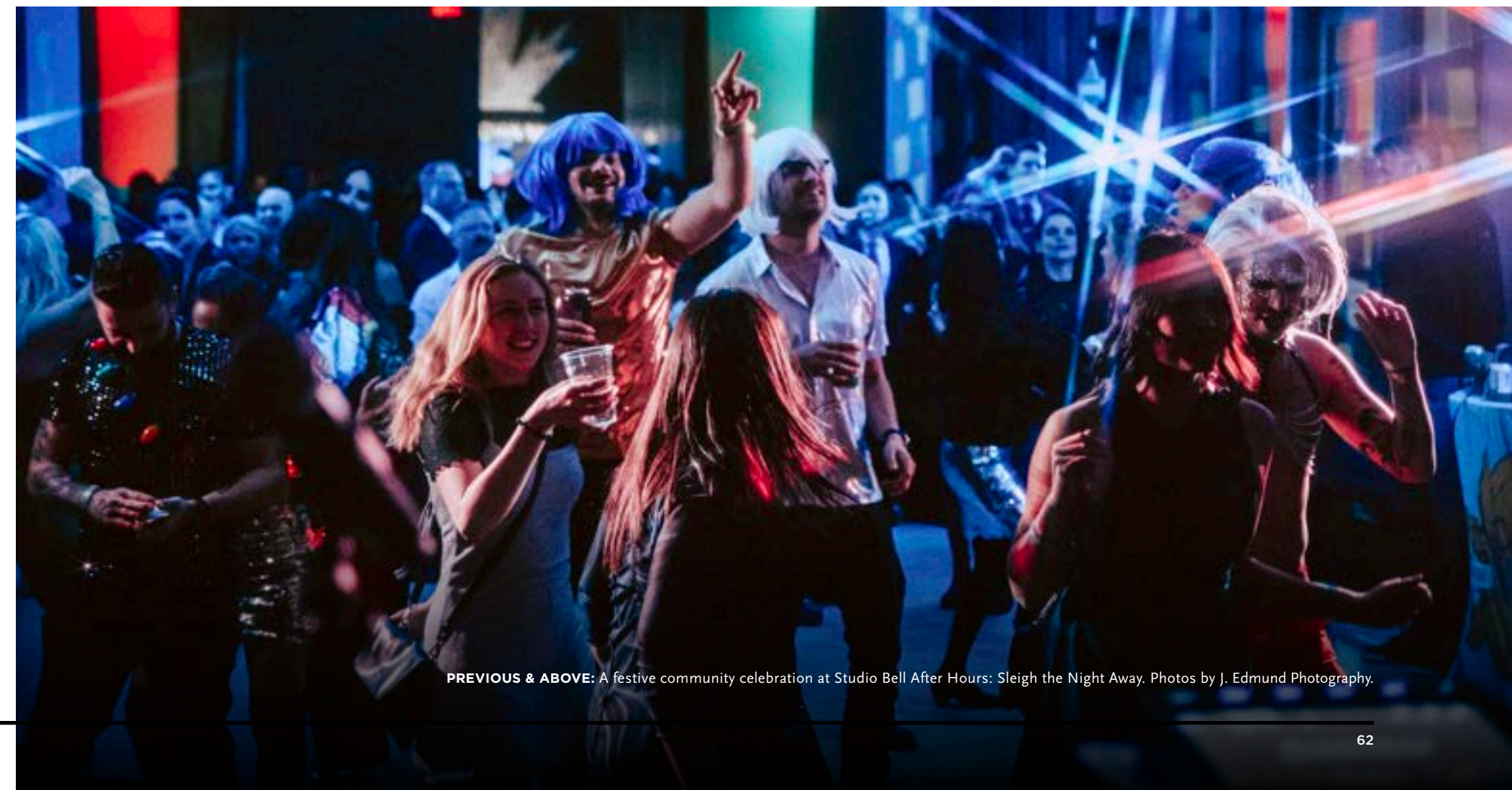
Unlike typical concerts or gallery nights, Sleigh the Night Away was a true full-building activation. Guests flowed between floors, interacted with music-themed games and experiments, and indulged in festive cocktails crafted just for the occasion. Meanwhile, the King Eddy kept the energy high with a funk and soul set by Tendavillage, Calgary's own groove collective, adding even more dimension to the night's soundtrack.

A Dazzling Comeback

This After Hours marked NMC's first large-scale late-night program since the pandemic, proving there's still strong appetite for cultural nightlife in Calgary. It was also a milestone in reconnecting with

younger adult audiences in an experiential format that mixes music, art, and entertainment.

With strong word-of-mouth, a distinct brand, and a fresh slate of creative collaborators, Studio Bell After Hours is poised for future growth, and remains a powerful reminder that museums can party, too.



PREVIOUS & ABOVE: A festive community celebration at Studio Bell After Hours: Sleigh the Night Away. Photos by J. Edmund Photography.



PHOTO: Brettyn Rose performs at the King Eddy during the 2024 OHSOTO'KINO Music Incubator program. Photo by Brett Cassidy.

“It’s amazing to be a part of this program. I’m trying to learn more about the Indigenous music industry and the culture and everything, so connecting with other artists has been really really inspiring to me.”

- BRETTYN ROSE, OHSOTO'KINO MUSIC INCUBATOR PARTICIPANT

OHSOTO'KINO

Amplifying Indigenous Voices Through Music, Story, and Action

In 2024, the National Music Centre deepened its commitment to amplifying Indigenous voices through OHSOTO'KINO—a growing, Indigenous-led initiative that honours music as a powerful form of cultural expression, knowledge sharing, and community connection. Supported by TD Bank Group, OHSOTO'KINO continued to evolve as a model for what inclusive, reciprocal programming can look like.

OHSOTO'KINO supports artists and educators across Treaty 7 and beyond through exhibitions, live performances, recording residencies, and public programming. Guided by NMC's Indigenous Programming Advisory Committee, the program reflects our responsibility to embed Indigenous perspectives throughout the organization and work in meaningful partnership with communities.

The name OHSOTO'KINO – a Blackfoot phrase meaning “to recognize a voice of” – honours language and the land on which NMC resides, while also embodying the initiative's mission: to amplify Indigenous voices, ensuring they are heard, supported, and celebrated.

Updated Speak Up! Exhibition

On June 19, NMC relaunched the *Speak Up!* exhibition, an evolving gallery that profiles Indigenous artists who use music as a vehicle for advocacy and change. This year's update introduced four new trailblazers: Willie Thrasher, Leela Gilday, The Bearhead Sisters, and Edmund Bull. Their personal items, including instruments, awards, and regalia, are presented alongside storytelling elements that connect visitors to their work and impact. A new interactive touchscreen allows guests to dive deeper into music, interviews, and media content.

Music Incubator and Recording Bursaries

The 2024 OHSOTO'KINO Music Incubator welcomed six artists from across Canada: Brettyn Rose, Darrian Gerard, Grace Clark, Jarrid Lee, Kaeley Jade, and Osani Balkaran. Over the course of a week at Studio Bell, they engaged in workshops, studio time, and mentorship, culminating in a live showcase on October 3. Earlier in the year, Chelsie Young and Warscout were awarded OHSOTO'KINO

Recording Bursaries, enabling them to record full-length projects using NMC's living collection and historic studios.

National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21)

NMC celebrated National Indigenous Peoples Day with free admission and a full afternoon of programming hosted by *Speak Up!* curator David McLeod. The lineup included live performances by Willie Thrasher & Linda Saddleback, Sandra Sutter, and Wyatt C. Louis, concluding in a community round dance. Approximately 220 visitors took part in the celebration.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30)

On September 30, NMC once again opened Studio Bell for free to mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Residential school survivor Kurt Blind led a moving afternoon talk on healing and truth. That evening, NMC hosted a sold-out concert with award-winning Inuk artist and activist Elisapie, whose work brings visibility to Northern Inuit realities and language revitalization through music.

Year-Round Impact

OHSOTO'KINO remained a constant thread across NMC's work in 2024, from exhibitions and recording residencies to school outreach and public events. Its influence could be seen and heard throughout the building and beyond, as NMC continued to honour Indigenous knowledge systems through respectful, community-informed collaboration.



ABOVE: OHSOTO'KINO Music Incubator artist Osani Balkaran. Photo by Jaxi Barton.
BELOW: Willie Thrasher and Linda Saddleback bring the audience together for song and dance on National Indigenous People's Day. Photo by Brett Cassidy.



WATCH ARTIST SPOTLIGHT VIDEOS
▶ AMPLIFY.NMC.CA/OHSOTOKINO

ARTISTS

Creating Space for Growth in Artist and Industry Development

In 2024, the National Music Centre strengthened its position as a national hub for career-building programs, offering transformative opportunities for artists and future industry leaders. Through residencies, recording bursaries, incubators, and mentorship-based training, NMC helped musicians deepen their craft, tell their stories, and build the skills to navigate an evolving music landscape.

These artist-first programs didn't just offer space and time, they fostered belonging, development, and real-world outcomes. With generous support from partners including TD, Partake Brewing, and Canada's Music Incubator, NMC's artist development initiatives reached farther and deeper than ever before.

NMC hosted two Artists in Residence in 2024—Tess Roby

sponsored by Partake Brewing, and Daniel Pelton for Violins of Hope—offering each artist five days of dedicated time with NMC's recording engineers, access to our world-class studio environment and living collection of instruments.

OHSOTO'KINO remained a cornerstone of NMC's year-round commitment to Indigenous artists. This multi-pronged initiative supports music creation, professional development, and cultural storytelling through the Recording Bursary and Music Incubator programs. The participating artists in 2024 demonstrated a wide breadth of diversity in genres and geography.

2024 ARTIST PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS

ARTISTS SERVED
1,104

PERFORMANCES
995

ARTISTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
7

Co-presented with Canada's Music Incubator, AE West 2024 marked the program's eighth year – and its first in Edmonton. Eleven artists from across Western Canada participated in the four-week intensive, held at CKUA Radio's historic studios. The program included over 120 hours of group learning, one-on-one mentorship, and tailored workshops on marketing, grant writing, performance, and more. It culminated in a final showcase in Edmonton.

In 2024, the Music Industry 101 pilot was launched in partnership with Ambrose University, designed to introduce students to behind-the-scenes careers in the music sector. The program combined classroom lectures, guest mentorship, and real-world experience in NMC's recording studios as students explored roles in production, tech, marketing, and administration.



NMC ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

- MATTMAC (2023)
- TESS ROBY (2024)
- DANIEL PELTON (2024)
- MAGGIE ANDREW (2025)

WATCH THE VIDEOS
▶ [AMPLIFY.NMC.CA/AIR](https://amplify.nmc.ca/air)



OHSOTO'KINO MUSIC INCUBATOR & RECORDING BURSARY

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| • BRETTYN ROSE | • CHELSIE YOUNG |
| • DARRIAN GERARD | • WARSCOUT |
| • GRACE CLARK | • PIQSIQ (2023) |
| • JARRID LEE | |
| • KAELEY JADE | |
| • OSANI BALKARAN | |



AE WEST

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| • ATO-MIK | • COCOLAROSA |
| • BELLA CAT | • JORDAN PERRY |
| • BERLYN | • ROBYN ASHLEY |
| • MARTINA DAWN | • RU |
| • TRAVIS DOLTER | • WALLGRIN |
| • CELIN | |

LEFT: NMC Artist in Residence Tess Roby, presented by Partake Brewing. Photo by NMC.

RIGHT, TOP: Mattmac's Artist in Residence video was released in 2024. Photo by NMC.

RIGHT, MIDDLE: Warscout in studio for the OHSOTO'KINO Recording Bursary. Photo by Brett Cassidy.

RIGHT, BOTTOM: 2024 AE West artist Berlyn at the showcase in Edmonton. Photo courtesy of CMI.



EDUCATION

Inspiring the Next Generation Through Music

In 2024, the National Music Centre’s education programs experienced major growth – reaching over 13,800 students through hands-on learning at Studio Bell and outreach in schools across Alberta. This marked a 56% increase from the previous year, driven by new partnerships, expanded programming, and a strategic focus on accessibility.

NMC continued to deliver dynamic, curriculum-

connected experiences for learners of all ages – from students discovering the science of sound for the first time, to high school and post-secondary students exploring the professional music industry. Education at NMC combines history, culture, technology, and creativity, encouraging young people to engage with music not just as an artform, but as a pathway to self-expression, career exploration, and cultural understanding.

“We loved how interactive and organized this was! The classroom experience was excellent, and I loved how friendly the staff were. There were so many things for the kids to explore throughout the museum.”

- TEACHER, LAKE BONA VISTA SCHOOL

2024 EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS

STUDENTS SERVED

14,093

CLASS VISITS

406

JAM CLUB STUDENTS

814

CAMP STUDENTS

47

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM: More than 2,600 students participated in a series of powerful programs linked to the *Violins of Hope* exhibition, including guided gallery tours, Holocaust survivor testimonies, and documentary screenings. The symposium was the largest single education initiative in NMC’s history.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: PASS THE MIC SCHOOL TOUR: A mobile version of Pass the Mic was delivered to two Calgary high schools in a single day, reaching nearly 2,000 students through a high-energy combination of storytelling, visuals, and performance. The response from educators and students was overwhelmingly positive.

MUSIC INDUSTRY 101 (PILOT PROGRAM): In collaboration with Ambrose University, NMC launched Music Industry 101 to introduce post-secondary students to the careers that power Canada’s music ecosystem, including production, tech, marketing, and management. Feedback from participants was 100% positive, setting the stage for continued development.

JAM CLUB AND YOUTH MENTORSHIP: Running weekly throughout the school year, Jam Club engaged 814 students in collaborative music-making and culminated in a showcase at the King Eddy. Seven guest mentors – professional musicians, engineers, and producers – offered youth personalized guidance and inspiration.

EQUITY ACCESS PROGRAM: Through support from the Max Bell Foundation, NMC provided full subsidies, including admission and transportation, for 2,940 students from schools with high diversity and alternative-learning needs. Removing financial and geographic barriers remained a top priority in 2024.

EDUCATOR ENGAGEMENT: At the 2024 Calgary Teachers’ Convention, NMC connected with 156 teachers and co-hosted a sold-out professional development session with music therapist and author Jennifer Buchanan, whose session was praised as “career-changing” by seasoned educators.



LEFT: The next generation of musicians participating in NMC Summer Camp. Photo by Paige Foley.

MUSIC THERAPY INITIATIVE

Growing the Impact of Music in Healthcare

The National Music Centre deepened its commitment to music therapy, supporting the growing demand for therapeutic programs that use music as a proven tool in clinical care. Through NMC's Music Therapy Initiative (NMCMTI), developed in partnership with JB Music Therapy and the Calgary Health Foundation, NMC is delivering real, measurable outcomes for patients across hospital and community settings.

In 2024, the program was also presented on national and international stages, including the International Association of Music & Medicine conference in Berlin and the i4 innovation conference in Canada. Research partnerships with the University of Calgary and University of Alberta are further validating music therapy's clinical value across many patient populations.

Making a Measurable Difference

NMC's Music Therapy Initiative continues to serve patients at four Calgary hospitals: Foothills Medical Centre, South Health Campus, Peter Lougheed Centre, and Rockyview General Hospital. Nearly 4,000 sessions were delivered in 2024 across 23 units, including intensive

care, mental health, stroke recovery, and palliative care. A pilot program in acute neurological units reported a 35% reduction in patient pain and anxiety in over 1,000 sessions. The results contributed to the renewal of the hospital-based program for another four years, reinforcing music's place as a valuable component of integrated healthcare. The AHS Connect Care system was rolled out across Calgary teams, enabling better data collection and documentation. A digital therapeutic pilot using tablets and headphones was also introduced, targeting pain, anxiety, and sleep challenges in neurological inpatients.

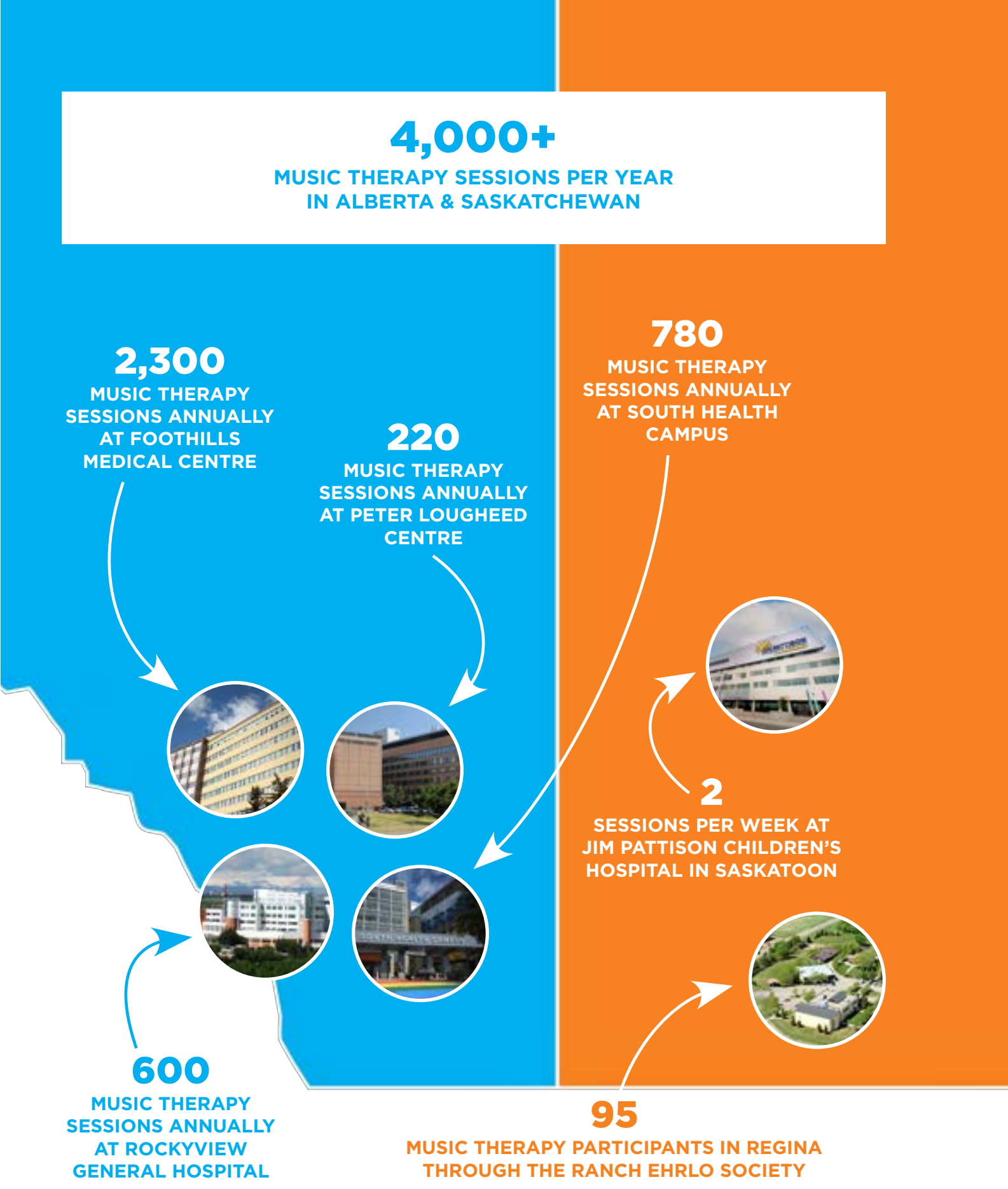
Expansion into Saskatchewan

The success of the program in Alberta has supported the initiative's expansion into new provinces. In 2024, music therapy sessions launched in Regina through a new partnership with Ranch Ehrlo Society. The program supports children, youth, and families in care, and includes community engagement activities. The Regina program reached 95 participants with five programs, delivering 20 hours of music therapy each week. A music

therapist was added to deliver sessions at Ranch Ehrlo, with the position supported locally through the organization. In Saskatoon, music therapy sessions began in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Jim Pattison Children's Hospital. Sessions now take place twice a week, with future plans underway to develop resources for families and explore early childhood music programming for NICU graduates.

Scaling the Impact

Over the year, NMC's Music Therapy Initiative received new philanthropic support to help drive its next phase of growth. This investment is laying the groundwork for future national expansion, including therapist recruitment, program evaluation, and the development of digital healthcare tools. A custom-built mobile app, led by JB Music Therapy, is in development to support the integration of music therapy into clinical care and boost accessibility. The app, MxApp, will feature mood-based playlists, gamified engagement tools, and integration with wearable technology to support high-stress populations such as healthcare students and frontline workers.



KING EDDY

Where Legacy Meets Live

As the National Music Centre's largest artifact and most active live music venue, the King Eddy continued to thrive in 2024, delivering a full year of concerts, events, and cultural experiences that honoured its storied past while driving its contemporary role in Calgary's music scene.

Over the course of the year, the Eddy hosted more than 275 live music events and private bookings, including 95 concerts and 12 private events in the final quarter alone. Whether it was a lively late-night event or a laid-back brunch show, the Eddy's stage remained a space where artists and audiences could connect up close.

A Local Engine for Cultural and Economic Activity

The Eddy posted \$935,000 in catering revenue, including a record-breaking \$460,000 during Calgary Stampede. These numbers reflected more than good sales—they highlighted the Eddy's growing role in the city's hospitality and entertainment economy. Staff logged over 710 hours of paid technician time in the first quarter of 2024 alone, with bookings that supported not only musicians, but servers, sound engineers, event managers, and more.

Recognition on the National Stage

For its work, the King Eddy received a string of honours, including:

- Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) – Country Club of the Year
- Country Music Alberta Awards – Live Venue or Presenting Series of the Year
- YYC Music Awards – Nominated: Venue or Presenter of the Year
- Western Canadian Music Awards – Nominated: Impact in Live Music
- Calgary Herald Readers' Choice Awards – Silver: Favourite Live Music Venue
- Avenue Magazine – Best Restaurants in Calgary – Runner-up: Best Brunch, Best Pub, Best of Downtown.

A Platform for All

At the heart of the Eddy's ongoing success is its ability to serve multiple roles: music venue, cultural destination, community gathering place, and hospitality leader. Its intimate setting and heritage aesthetic made it a top pick for audiences and artists, with many returning regularly to take in local favourites and emerging talent.

LIVE SHOWS
275

GUESTS
56,228

As one of the only venues in Calgary consistently programming year-round, the King Eddy proved that legacy and innovation aren't mutually exclusive – they're two sides of the same coin. And in 2024, that coin kept flipping magic, night after night.

2024 Highlights from the King Eddy Stage

From up-and-coming singer-songwriters to genre-defying ensembles, the King Eddy stage remained a beacon for unforgettable live music experiences in 2024. A few of the year's standout moments included:

- Andy Kim Christmas After Party – Oscill8 (Dec. 13)
- Canada Day (July 1)
- Black Music Month Showcase (June 7)
- CIBC Summer Series (July–September):
- After Hours: Sleigh the Night Away (Dec. 14)



LEFT: Tendavillage performs for After Hours. Photo by Brett Cassidy. **RIGHT:** Dishes from the King Eddy's 2024 menu. Photo by Kaden Chynoweth. **BELOW:** Devin Cooper performs on the legendary King Eddy stage for NMC's building-wide Canada Day bash. Photo by Brett Cassidy.



NMC CAFÉ & GIFT SHOP

A Year of Steady Growth and Smart Enhancements

The NMC Gift Shop and Café delivered strong results in 2024, showing year-over-year sales growth and achieving important milestones that elevated the visitor experience and brand visibility.

By year’s end, the NMC Gift Shop and Café had recorded \$142,339.48 in net sales, marking a 49.6% increase compared to the same period in 2023. This growth reflects both rising visitation and strategic upgrades to products, promotions, and the in-person shopping and dining experience.

Enhancing the Experience

Several guest-facing improvements were introduced in 2024:

- A new vinyl listening corner, encouraging browsing and music discovery
- Updated patio furniture and outdoor signage to increase comfort and curb appeal
- The addition of loyalty cards and seasonal beverage specials to drive repeat visits
- Revamped retail displays and merchandising fixtures to better highlight products

New Products and Retail Hits

The Gift Shop introduced new NMC-branded merchandise, with top sellers including stickers, keychains, and toy instruments. Exhibition-themed merchandise, such as the *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada* collection and Randy Bachman’s exhibition catalogue, helped connect visitors with the stories they saw in the galleries, and provided meaningful takeaways.

Additionally, seasonal clearance events and targeted promotions around high-traffic periods (like Black Friday and the holidays) contributed to strong sales momentum throughout the year.

Looking Ahead

Plans for 2025 include expanding NMC-branded apparel, adding new local consignors, and continuing to upgrade both café offerings and the overall space. The Café will also be launching weekend food options in collaboration with the King Eddy, expanding menu offerings to include sandwiches, salads, and soups.

With an eye toward accessibility, style, and visitor value, NMC’s café and retail operations continue to serve as an important part of the Studio Bell experience – and a key contributor to earned revenue growth.



LEFT: The NMC Café offers grab-and-go snacks, coffee, drinks, baked goods, and more. Photo by Lucas Watts.

ABOVE: The cozy and colourful NMC Gift Shop & Café is a welcoming space for our guests to shop and relax. Photo by Brett Cassidy.

VOLUNTEERS

A Standing Ovation for Our Volunteers

From gallery greeters to Jam Club mentors, event support to exhibit construction, the AMP Crew—NMC’s dedicated volunteer team—was essential in 2024. These passionate individuals contributed their time, energy, and skills to help deliver unforgettable experiences, support music education, and uphold NMC’s mission of amplifying the love, sharing, and understanding of music.

This year, they showed up in a big way. In 2024, NMC volunteers contributed over 7,000 hours — more than 50% higher than 2023 and exceeding 6,000 hours for the first time since pre-pandemic years.

Across Every Department

NMC volunteers are involved in a wide range of roles, including:

- Enhancing visitor experience
- Supporting school and education programs
- Constructing and maintaining exhibitions
- Mentoring youth in Jam Club
- Assisting with events
- Beautifying Studio Bell through facility projects
- Supporting collections care and interactives maintenance

Volunteer support was also key during major 2024 events like Canada Day, Family Day, and the Mid-Autumn Festival, as well as special exhibitions including *Violins of Hope* and *From Me to You: The Beatles in Canada*.

In addition to our returning team, dozens of new volunteers were onboarded, with orientation programs and department-specific training ensuring that all AMP Crew members felt confident and welcomed. This year also saw the launch of a ProServe certification scholarship, helping 10 volunteers diversify their skills and access new roles at NMC events.

A Year of Milestones

- 93 volunteers in 2024
- 7,043 total volunteer hours contributed in 2024
- Jam Club mentorship, event logistics, and even gallery build-outs benefitted from the AMP Crew’s talents
- Community partnerships with Chrysalis and Vecova continued, expanding inclusive volunteer opportunities

Behind the scenes, AMP Crew members helped with exhibit rotations, painted public spaces, constructed gallery fixtures, and

collaborated with operations staff on maintenance projects throughout Studio Bell.

With the guidance of Volunteer Coordinator Kristen Muncy, who joined the team in early 2024, the program has continued to grow in both scale and impact, all while carrying forward the incredible legacy of former coordinator Roberta Walker and the volunteers she helped to build into a super-class team.

Looking Ahead

As NMC prepares for 2025, the AMP Crew is already planning to support a wide range of exhibitions, events, and education programs. A winter building closure for maintenance will also bring opportunities for team-building and collaboration between volunteers and staff, further strengthening the community spirit at the heart of Studio Bell.

To everyone who wore the AMP Crew badge in 2024: thank you. Your time, care, and commitment make music come alive every day.



2024
VOLUNTEERS
BY THE
NUMBERS

TOTAL
VOLUNTEERS
93

VOLUNTEER
HOURS
7,043

TOP: Volunteers are valuable mentors for Jam Club students. Photo by Jaxi Barton.

TOP: The visitor experience at Studio Bell is enhanced by our dedicated volunteers. Photo by Emily Holloway.

FUND DEVELOPMENT

Building Partnerships for a Sustainable Future

In 2024, the National Music Centre made meaningful strides toward a more sustainable funding model—strengthening government partnerships, expanding its philanthropic base, and advancing corporate sponsorships that fuel NMC’s public programs and national mandate. These gains came at a time when fundraising across the nonprofit sector remained highly competitive and economically volatile, underscoring the importance of strategic investment and donor confidence.

To meet these challenges, NMC doubled down on storytelling, stewardship, and relationship-building—emphasizing transparency, long-term impact, and the value of music as a national unifier. New tools and strategies helped elevate donor experiences, while efforts to grow NMC’s reputation beyond Alberta laid the groundwork for broader philanthropic support in the years ahead.

To support this work, NMC engaged Arts & Communications to conduct

a comprehensive valuation of naming opportunities throughout Studio Bell. This initiative is laying the groundwork for future multi-year sponsorships, including the development of a new naming rights agreement to succeed Bell when their current term concludes in 2027.

The return of signature campaigns like Violins of Hope, the debut of new donor engagement events like Traffic Jam, and the successful staging of Andy Kim Christmas concerts in both Calgary and Montreal signaled renewed momentum—and growing support for NMC’s long-term vision.

RIGHT: Jam Club students practicing their skills. Photo by Chad Schroter-Gillespie.

TOP, 1: Robin Hatch makes music with TONTO—an example of artist access to 450 years of music technology. Photo by NMC.

TOP, 2: Visitors explored compelling stories and historic instruments in the *Violins of Hope* exhibition. Photo by Ozzy Stone.

TOP, 3: Canadian-Nigerian singer-producer Nonso Amadi performs at NMC’s Pass the Mic. Photo by Brett Cassidy.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Fundraising efforts in 2024 were structured around four key pillars:

- 1 GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TO INCREASE UNRESTRICTED OPERATIONAL SUPPORT.**
- 2 CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP GROWTH, WITH EXPANDED PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS MULTIPLE PROGRAM AREAS.**
- 3 PROSPECT ENGAGEMENT, INCLUDING DISCOVERY MEETINGS AND DONOR CULTIVATION.**
- 4 PRIORITY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS, INCLUDING EXHIBITIONS, ARTIST PROGRAMS, AND SPECIAL EVENTS.**

Major Campaigns and Community Impact

- *Violins of Hope* raised over \$340,000 from 33 donors, including 27 first-time contributors, making it one of the most successful campaigns in NMC’s history.
- Traffic Jam, a music-meets-car-culture fundraiser, attracted over 3,000 attendees and raised \$67,000 in support of Jam Club, NMC’s flagship youth music program.
- The 2024 Holiday Giving campaign, anchored by Andy Kim Christmas concerts in Montreal and Calgary, helped close out the year with strong donor energy. Full details appear in the following section.

Distinguished Patrons Program

The Distinguished Patrons Program – designed to recognize individuals who contribute \$100,000 or more – remained a foundational pillar of major gifts strategy. As of 2024, the program had secured over \$1.8 million, with each donor receiving lifetime recognition and exclusive opportunities to help shape NMC’s future direction. Relationship stewardship in this tier remained a top priority, with personalized engagement plans tailored to each individual donor’s interests and legacy goals.

Tommy Banks Theatre Campaign

The Tommy Banks Theatre naming campaign saw steady progress throughout 2024. A major \$200,000 gift was secured in May, with cultivation meetings continuing throughout the fall. The campaign serves as a legacy opportunity to honour the late Canadian music legend while funding long-term enhancements to NMC’s performance infrastructure.

The theatre campaign is also supported by NMC’s new asset valuation strategy, which identified naming opportunities throughout the building, ranging from gallery spaces to programmatic series, forming the backbone of a refreshed capital sponsorship model.

Expanding National Reach

NMC took its first steps toward building a broader national donor base in 2024. A highlight of this effort was a Montreal donor cultivation event, hosted by volunteer champion Rob Frances. Held at Le ge in December, the gathering introduced NMC to a new network of cultural supporters in Quebec and demonstrated the potential of relationship-based expansion outside Alberta.

While still in the exploratory phase, efforts like this are critical to positioning NMC as a truly national cultural institution, with support networks that reflect its coast-to-coast mandate.

Corporate Partnerships

NMC’s 2024 sponsorship portfolio grew through renewed and expanded partnerships:

- ATB returned as lead sponsor for Canada Day
- Partake Brewing supported two Artist Residencies
- Mid-Autumn Festival secured \$22,500 in new sponsorships from CNOOC, Sun Life, Trico Homes, and Silver Dragon
- Additional sponsors included TD, RBC, Peak Financial Group, Stantec, TransAlta, Phoenix Energy, and National Bank

These relationships not only provided financial support, but helped broaden the reach and visibility of NMC’s programs to new audiences.

Looking Ahead

As NMC approaches its tenth anniversary at Studio Bell, fund development efforts are focused not only on meeting present needs, but on building the foundation for a bold and sustainable future. In 2025, the organization will continue to pursue multi-year government support, advance legacy campaigns like the Tommy Banks Theatre, and begin activating newly identified naming opportunities throughout the building. With plans underway to grow its national network of supporters and prepare for a future naming rights transition, NMC remains committed to long-term vision and values-aligned partnership. Even amid broader sectoral challenges, the path ahead is clear: deepen relationships, tell compelling stories of impact, and invite more Canadians to help shape what comes next.

BELOW: Music therapy session in Calgary. Photo courtesy of JB Music Therapy.



WHY INVESTMENT IN NMC MATTERS¹

ECONOMIC IMPACT AT A GLANCE

Recent data from a third-party KPMG study (Oct. 2024) confirms that the National Music Centre delivers consistent economic and cultural returns—providing a strong case for continued donor and public investment.

- **\$10.15M/YEAR** in GDP impact (2020–2023 average), with 2024 projected to exceed this benchmark
- **\$1.67M/YEAR** in tax revenue generated across all levels of government
- **70** full-time equivalent jobs supported annually
- **83%** of visitors are Canadian, with a growing international presence
- Record-breaking earned revenue in 2024: over **\$2.5 MILLION**
- **150,000+** visitors in 2024, driven by exhibitions, concerts, and civic programming
- NMC returns **\$1.16** to the economy for every **\$1** spent

These numbers aren’t just historical—they’re proof that NMC is an engine of economic activity, tourism, and national identity. And 2024 was a year that built on this momentum in measurable ways.

¹ KPMG, National Music Centre Economic Impact Assessment, October, 2024.

NMC FUNDRAISER: THE ANDY KIM CHRISTMAS

Presented by MAWER

IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL MUSIC CENTRE

A Season of Song and Giving: Andy Kim Christmas Brings Holiday Magic to Calgary and Montreal

In December 2024, holiday cheer and heartfelt generosity took centre stage as the beloved Andy Kim Christmas concert returned to both Calgary and Montreal, raising funds for music education, community health, and the power of music to bring people together.

Led by the legendary Andy Kim, these star-studded shows combined joyful performance with meaningful philanthropy, proving once again that music can lift spirits, build community, and drive real impact.

“I’m proud to support the work NMC does and I’m excited to bring people together in Calgary for the third year of this very special annual tradition,” said Andy Kim.

A Growing Tradition

The Calgary edition of the Andy Kim Christmas delivered a sold-out night of music in support of the National Music Centre on December 13. Presented by Mawer Investment Management Ltd., the evening brought together a multigenerational mix of Canadian talent for a celebration that was as heartfelt as it was high energy.

Guests were treated to festive duets, solo performances, and collaborative moments that transformed the stage into a shared celebration. With proceeds going directly to support NMC’s music and education programs, the event showcased the life-changing power of music.

The lineup featured:

- Andy Kim, anchoring the night with timeless hits
- Dan Hill, JUNO and Grammy-winning artist
- Iconic 1980s synth-pop band Men Without Hats
- Country stars Beverley Mahood, Kyle McKearney, and Shantaia
- Wakefield Brewster, a Calgary Poet Laureate
- Rising Métis pop artist Kaeley Jade
- Graham, Lisette, and Kate from Rock the Nation



A Montreal Homecoming

One week earlier on December 7, Andy Kim returned to his hometown of Montreal to host the 11th annual Christmas concert in the city—this time at the historic Le 9e, perched atop the Eaton Centre. The lineup featured a vibrant mix of English and French-language performers, highlighting the musical richness of Quebec:

- Louis-Jean Cormier
- Safia Nolin
- Sara Dufour
- Dan Hill
- Sass Jordan
- Men Without Hats
- Dominique Fils-Aimé

Proceeds from the Montreal concert supported the National Music Centre and the Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation, underscoring the event’s dual commitment to arts and health.



A Legacy of Generosity

Since its founding in 2005, the Andy Kim Christmas series has raised nearly \$3 million for charities across Canada. What makes it unique is its spirit of community: artists donate their time, audiences give generously, and each performance is an act of giving, wrapped in celebration.

In 2024, the Calgary and Montreal shows continued that legacy, strengthening NMC’s national reach while giving music lovers across two cities something special to sing about.

LEFT: Andy Kim (left) and Men Without Hats (right) shared songs and stories at both concerts. Photos by J. Edmund Photography.

TOP: The all-star cast of the Andy Kim Christmas at Studio Bell in Calgary. Photo by J. Edmund Photography.

RIGHT: The Andy Kim Christmas at Le 9e in Montreal. Photo courtesy of MediaTribe.



FINANCE

Stability, Growth, and Momentum in 2024

In 2024, the National Music Centre demonstrated strong financial stewardship, securing diverse revenue streams, managing expenses effectively, and delivering a modest operating surplus that positions the organization for continued impact. In addition to prudent management, these results reflect steady upward trajectory across programming, visitation, earned income, and national visibility.

Importantly, NMC achieved this momentum amid a difficult climate for arts organizations across Canada, where inflation, economic uncertainty, and donor fatigue posed real challenges. In this context, a balanced year-end and a growing base of public support reflect both internal strength and external confidence in NMC’s vision.

To support long-term sustainability, NMC completed a comprehensive asset valuation study in 2024 with Arts & Communications. This initiative lays the groundwork for a new era of naming partnerships across Studio Bell, including the search for a future naming rights sponsor when Bell’s current agreement concludes in 2027.

Financial Performance

NMC generated \$14.2 million of total revenue in 2024, primarily derived from a healthy mix of public, private, and earned income:

- \$8.1 million in donations and sponsorships from individuals, corporations, and foundations
- \$1.7 million in government grants, including operational and project-based funding
- \$2.7 million in earned revenue from ticket sales, rentals, food and beverage, retail, and programs

Notably, earned revenue reached its highest level since opening, exceeding pre-pandemic benchmarks. These results were driven by strong performance at the King Eddy, increased venue rentals, and higher visitor volumes at Studio Bell.

Expenses

Operating expenses were approximately \$9.7 million, with investments directed to:

- Public programming and exhibitions
- Education and artist development
- Operations and building maintenance
- Administrative and staffing costs

In addition, interest expense on long term debt was \$3.5 million. NMC maintained a responsible and sustainable cost structure, while increasing its overall program delivery across departments. This resulted in net operating surplus of approximately \$1 million.

Sector Context and Public Value

Despite its national mandate and measurable impact, NMC receives significantly lower levels of government operating support than its peers in the museum and cultural sector. 12% of NMC’s funding came from government sources, compared to 40–60% at cultural organizations of a similar operating size and within a similar market to NMC, like Remai Modern, the Glenbow, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

NMC is working to change that. A key part of 2024’s strategy included building a stronger case for public investment through independent third-party evaluation. A socioeconomic impact study by KPMG, completed in fall 2024, revealed that between 2020–2023, NMC contributed an average of \$10.15 million annually to

Alberta’s GDP, supported 70 fulltime equivalent jobs, and generated \$1.67 million in annual tax revenue at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels – even during years of pandemic disruption.

This data strengthens NMC’s case for expanded multi-year public support, which remains a critical piece of its long-term financial strategy.

Looking Ahead

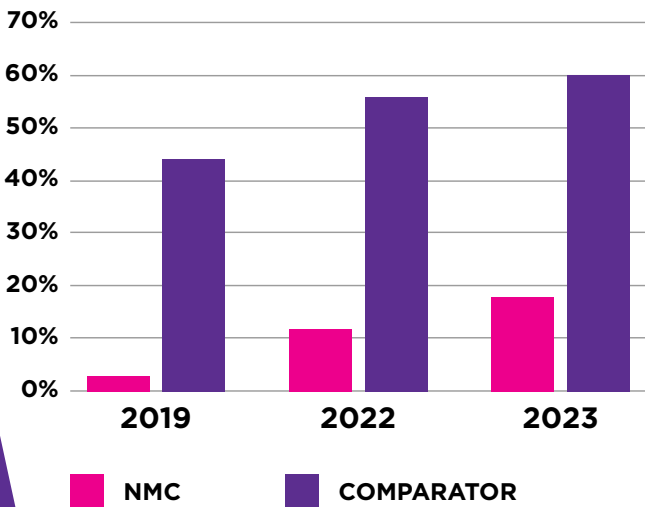
As NMC heads into 2025, its financial outlook is stable and forward-looking. With core systems in place, revenue growth, and expanding national recognition, the organization is now focused on scaling its impact through long-term funding agreements, national partnerships, and strategic investment in its people, spaces, and programs. The path ahead is bold, and thanks to a year of smart decisions and growing support, NMC is ready to take the next step.

¹ KPMG, National Music Centre Benchmark Analysis of Peer Organizations, October, 2024.

BENCHMARK COMPARISON¹

Scope of analysis from peer group based on prominent cultural organizations of a similar operating size and within a similar market to NMC: the Remai Modern, the Glenbow Museum, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

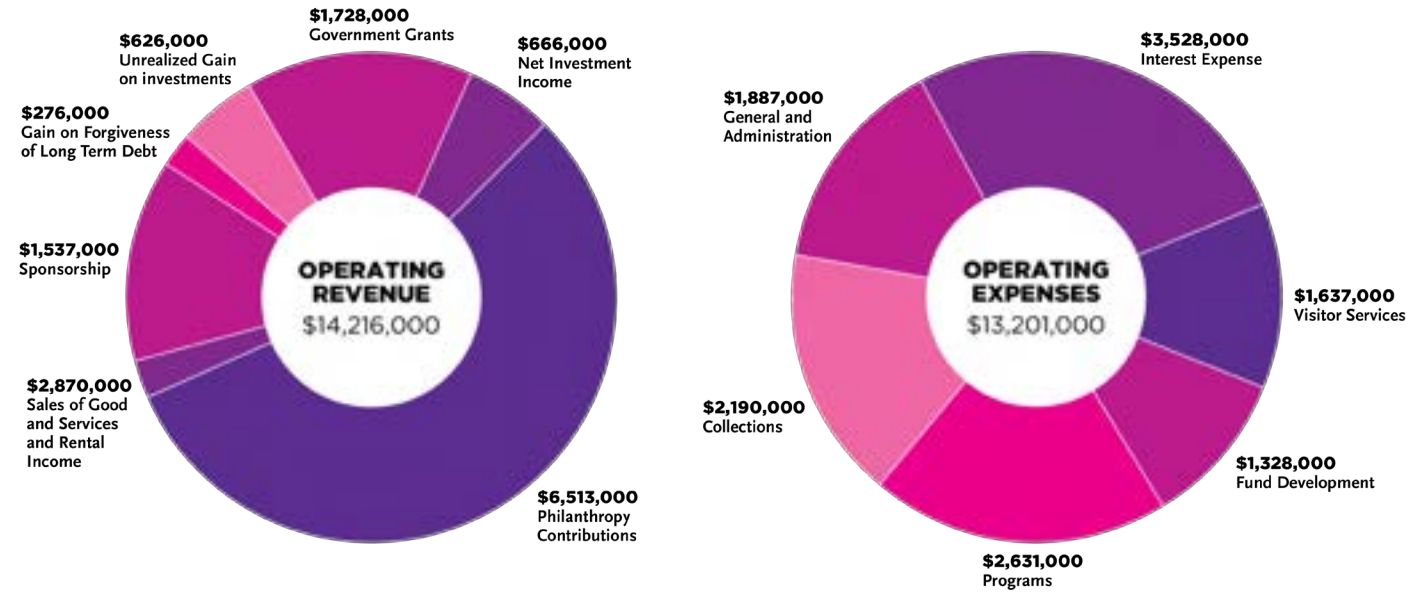
Government Funding for Operations



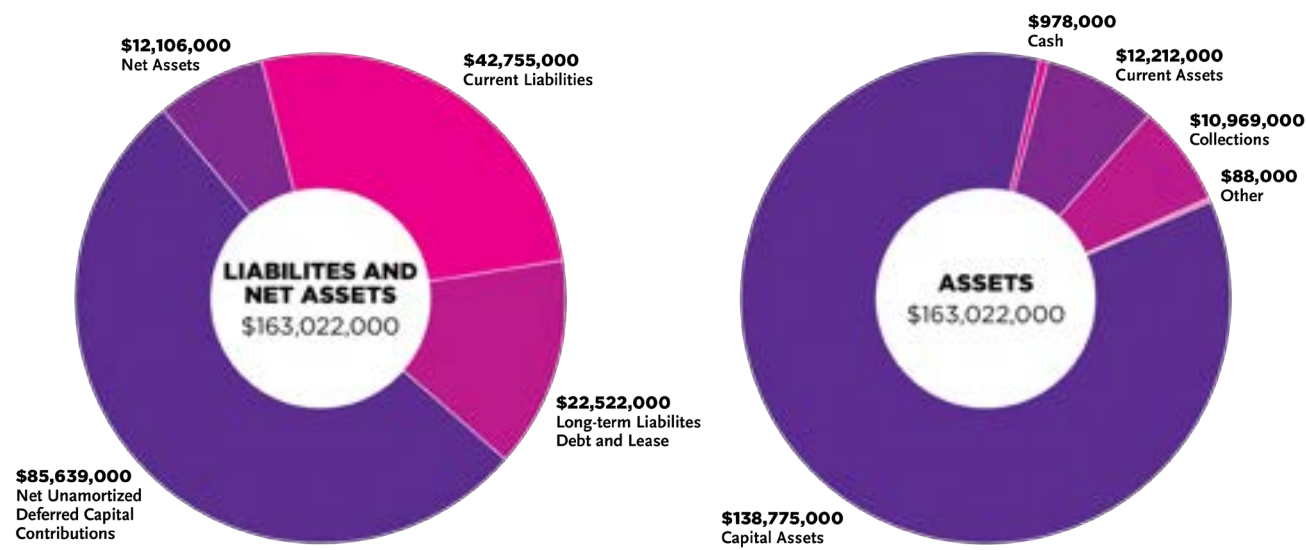
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND FUNDING REVENUES

The data provided reveals a striking disparity in the allocation of government funds for operations. In 2023, the National Music Centre (NMC) was allocated 18% of its funding from the government, whereas Remai was given a substantial 60%. In 2022, NMC was given only 12% of its funding from the government, while the Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) received a significant 56%. These percentages illustrate the portion of total government funding within the total funds each institution acquires. In 2019, NMC received 3% of its total funding from the government, while Glenbow was granted a considerable 44%.

SUMMARY OPERATIONS STATEMENT FOR 2024



SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2024

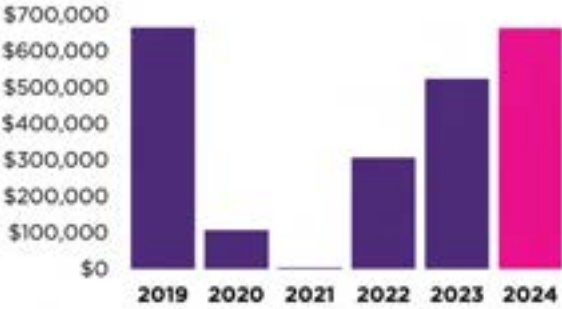


EARNED REVENUE SNAPSHOT:
A FIVE-YEAR RECOVERY

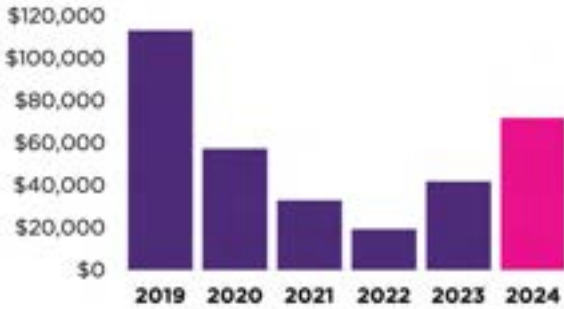
The following graphs highlight key earned revenue streams and tell a clear story of resilience and growth. While not exhaustive, they reflect the areas of greatest public visibility and engagement.

2024 marked NMC's highest total earned revenue to date, surpassing even 2019, the previous benchmark year. This upward trend signals a full recovery from pandemic-era disruptions and a strong foundation for sustainable operations going forward.

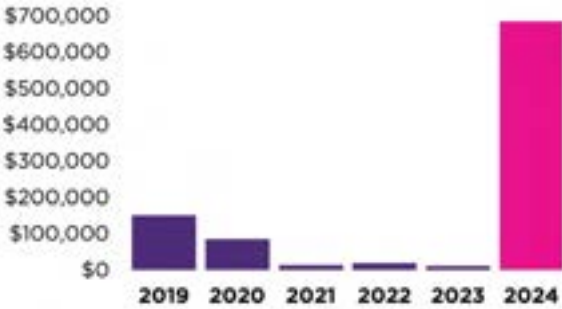
GENERAL ATTENDANCE



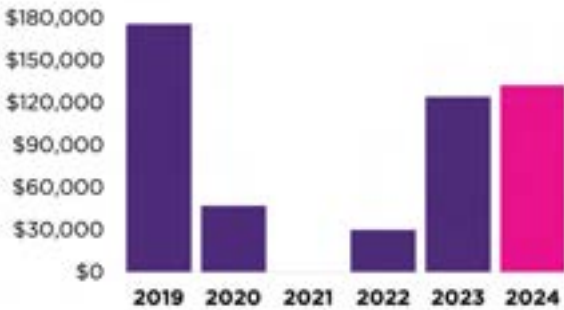
MEMBERSHIPS



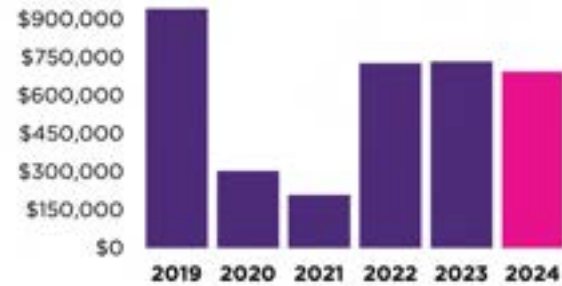
CONCERT TICKETS



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3RD PARTY RENTALS



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