

# CREATIVITY IS IN OUR NATURE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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## Vision

Whistler is a vibrant resort community where arts, culture and heritage are essential.

## Mission

We enrich Whistler by cultivating and celebrating artistic creativity, collaborating with stakeholders and engaging residents and visitors in arts, culture and heritage.

## Values

Integrity, Bold, Inspired, Engaging

## 2015-2020 Strategic Priorities

1. Supporting the development and creative expression of Whistler's artists and groups
  2. Fostering rich and diverse arts, culture and heritage offerings
  3. Growing arts, culture and heritage contributions to the resort economy
  4. Strengthening our organizational capacity
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**2020. In these "uncertain times", Arts Whistler managed "unprecedented" situations; we adopted the "new normal"; we "adapted"; we "repositioned"; we "transformed". And yes, we "pivoted".**

These iconic words of 2020 were constants in strategic discussions. Yes, they became clichéd, provoking eye rolls along with hope for better days ahead, but we worked through the challenges together. Eventually, ill-advised drinking games triggered by the word "pivot" or "you're still muted" resulted in unintentional drunken Zoom gatherings (or so we heard).

But in all seriousness, 2020 was a challenge - a huge challenge - one that the Arts Whistler team was determined to meet. As a creative organization, we were committed to using our creativity to support, uplift and engage our community during truly unprecedented times.

Shortly after the lockdown in March, we quickly gathered and shared expansive digital content, from kids' workshops to virtual tours of renowned museums, through Arts Whistler Online. We jumped in to support social service fundraisers and created live streaming music series. We proudly secured an event exemption order directly from Dr. Henry so that we could deliver Art on the Lake...literally - a community favourite from the get-go.



It's been a difficult time around the world, but in our small corner of it, Arts Whistler has been proud to serve Whistler with creative programs. We found new digital ways to connect with the community, sparking creative participation at record levels for events like the Anonymous Art Show.

The pandemic has reinforced the importance of community, connection and creativity and how essential they are to wellbeing. The Arts Whistler team looks forward to celebrating, connecting and creating with you in person in the not too distant future. We are so thankful to Arts Whistler's staff, our board, the Whistler community and the RMOW for your continued support and enthusiasm for the arts. We will indeed build back better. Stay healthy and keep creating!

Sincerely,

Michelle Ratcliffe, Board Chair  
Mo Douglas, Executive Director



# THE FOLKS WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Thanks to the Government of Canada's Emergency Wage Subsidy, Arts Whistler's team was able to keep working through 2020.

## ARTS WHISTLER STAFF 2020

Mo Douglas, *Executive Director*  
Susan Holden, *General Manager*  
Dean Feser, *Technical Director*  
Dawn Fryer, *Accounting Manager*  
Emily Suckling, *Development Officer*  
Kim Maitland, *Marketing and Communications*  
Alice Lambert, *Graphic Designer*  
Pete Crutchfield, *Digital Engagement Ninja*  
Imogen Osborne, *Programs and Events Manager*  
Amelia Brown, *Programs and Events Coordinator*  
Suzanne Gibson, *Programs and Events Coordinator*  
Chantelle Matthews, *Programs and Events Assistant (short-term contract)*  
Jamie Yates, *Programs and Events Assistant (short-term contract)*  
Anna Lynch, *Venue and Sales Supervisor*  
Tom Graham, *Venue and Building Operations*  
Rebecca MacKay, *Front of House Coordinator*

Thanks to our Arts Whistler contractors – production crew, photographers, videographers, bartenders and casual staff.

And a special thank you to our dedicated and exceptionally good-looking volunteers. We missed working with all of you in 2020 due to the pandemic, and we can hardly wait to invite you back!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-21 TERM

Michelle Ratcliffe, *Chair*  
Brianna Beacom, *Vice Chair*  
David Wilcox, *Treasurer (to May 2020)*  
Jeff Murl, *Treasurer (June 2020 onward)*  
Joan Richoz  
Suzanne Johnston *(to May 2020)*  
Liz Peacock  
Kimberley Stanger  
Shelagh Thiessen  
Jessie Morden  
Claire Ruddy  
John Rae  
Cathy Jewett

## MEMBERS

Arts Whistler is grateful to our 500+ members who have continued to share their enthusiasm for Whistler's arts scene. All Arts Whistler memberships active in March 2020 will continue to be active until we return to full operations at the Maury Young Arts Centre.



# MAURY YOUNG ARTS CENTRE

## Whistler's cultural community centre



### ARTS WHISTLER'S HEADQUARTERS

Arts Whistler manages the Maury Young Arts Centre on behalf of the RMOW, as Whistler's hub for arts, culture and inspiration. The building is home to a 230-seat theatre, a community art gallery, multi-purpose meeting rooms and production services, all managed by Arts Whistler. The Arts Centre serves as the information centre for arts, culture and heritage programs and services. The Whistler Youth Centre, Teddy Bear Daycare and the Village Host program also operate from the Maury Young Arts Centre building.

### ARTS WHISTLER LIVE!

When the building was shut down in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Arts Whistler Live!, our live performance series, had already presented three sold-out shows and just finished hosting year three of Lifting Our Voices - International Women's Day showcase. We closed our doors on March 18 and didn't reopen until September 1. Arts Whistler Live! will return once provincial health orders allow for public gathering in our theatre space.



### THE GALLERY

Arts Whistler is home to Whistler's only free community art gallery. Typically, we host eight to ten exhibitions in a year, but due to the pandemic closure, we hosted three in 2020. The year kicked off with *Bear Everything*, an exhibition showcasing the best in "bear art" from Whistler artists. We reopened on September 1 with the Anonymous Art Show, featuring 333 works of art from 240 artists. We wrapped up the year with a pandemic-inspired show, *Think-It-Over*, led by local artist Kylie Millar - where artists created work around key words the community had ruminated on during the year: *potential, resilience, justice, intimacy, humility, and learning*.



### THE GIFT SHOP

In the lobby of Maury Young Arts Centre, The Gift Shop showcases a selection of quality, handcrafted artwork and artisan goods created by Sea to Sky artists. Visitors can view local wares from pottery to glass, jewelry to metalwork, fabric arts, paintings, prints, art cards, and more. At any given time, The Gift Shop features the work of 25 to 35 different artists and artisans', providing locals and visitors with a place to purchase unique made-in-Whistler artistic works. Although sales were limited in 2020 due to the pandemic closure, we experienced robust sales during our annual 25% off sale in December, providing artisans with much-needed 2020 revenue.

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Partnering with the community makes both the arts and the community stronger.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Arts Whistler often collaborates with community partners in our collective efforts to grow the arts sector and enhance community life. 2020 saw us collaborate on the following events:

- **International Women's Day** – a showcase of female musicians and an annual fundraiser for Howe Sound Women's Centre.
- **Stay at Home Gala** – a live-streaming fundraiser for Whistler Community Foundation to support community social services.
- **Feed the Need** – directed audiences of The Bike Shop Sessions to donate online to Feed the Need, funding Sea to Sky foodbanks.
- **Provincial All-Candidates meeting** – Arts Whistler provided a venue and video hosting with the Whistler Chamber.
- **Whistler Wine Walk** – partnered with Tourism Whistler to host October Wine Walks.
- **Tour De Pumpkin** – worked with the RMOW to present a Halloween carved pumpkin tour.



## COMMUNITY NETWORKS AND ADVOCACY

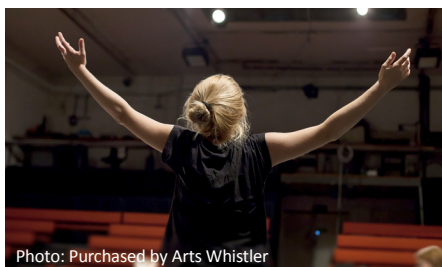
Arts Whistler's team participate on several committees and working groups to help further Whistler's cultural and community goals:

- Festivals, Events Working Committee
- RMI FE&A Investment Working Group
- One Whistler
- Whistler Nonprofit Network
- Sea to Sky Arts Councils Alliance
- Whistler COVID Recovery Task Force
- The Cultural Connector



Photos: Arts Whistler





## AWARDS AND BURSARIES

Since 1987, Arts Whistler's awards and bursary program has recognized artistic achievement by elementary and secondary school graduates from Whistler, Pemberton and Mount Currie.

### Grade 7 Art Award Recipients 2020:

Spring Creek Elementary School - Joey Luo and Stella Schwartz

Ecole La Passerelle & Ecole La Vallée -

Talia Wittenberg

Signal Hill Elementary School – Sam Tierney

Myrtle Philip Community School - Kiara Felice and Mhairi Smart.

### Grade 12 Art Award Recipients 2020:

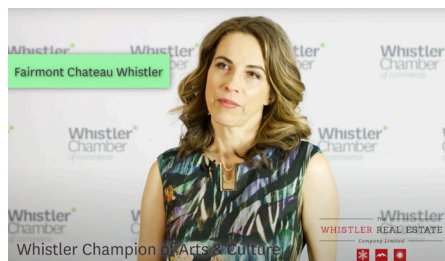
Whistler Secondary School – Soyoung Jeong

Pemberton Secondary School – LeeLoo Forest

Whistler Waldorf School - Grace Laverdiere

## WHISTLER CHAMPION OF ARTS AND CULTURE AWARD

Arts Whistler participates in the Whistler Excellence Awards presented by the Whistler Chamber of Commerce. We host the Champion of Arts and Culture Award with award sponsor Whistler Real Estate Company. The award alternates annually from honouring an individual or an organization. In 2020, the Fairmont Chateau Whistler was recognized for its long-term support of arts organizations and their own engaging arts and creativity programs.



2020 Whistler Champion of Arts & Culture:  
Fairmont Chateau Whistler - Yasmin Hauschild

Photo: Whistler Chamber of Commerce



## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Arts Whistler is honoured to offer arts and culture programs on the traditional, unceded territory of the Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation. Our Indigenous neighbours have been on this land since time immemorial.

Arts Whistler is committed to participating in the Truth and Reconciliation process, using the transformative power of arts and culture. After a robust offering of Indigenous content in 2019, Arts Whistler could not present Truth and Reconciliation or Indigenous programs in 2020 due to limitations imposed by COVID-19 safety protocols. We look forward to offering more Indigenous content in 2021 and beyond.

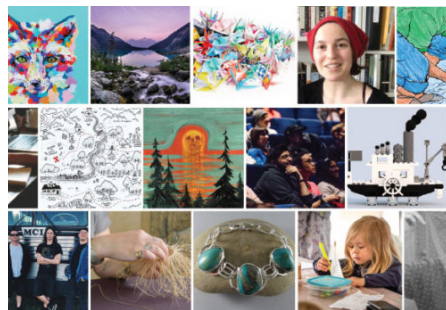


# THE PANDEMIC PROGRAMMING PIVOT

In March 2020, Arts Whistler's programming plans were suddenly on hold. Like many organizations, we initially laid off staff until government support materialized. With assistance from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, most staff were back working within three weeks. The team quickly developed new programs that offered the community creative outlets during an extended time of social isolation:

## ARTS ONLINE

Believing that "Creativity is an antidote to isolation," we quickly created a dedicated portal on our website, called "Arts Whistler Online." It offered arts adventures and distractions by sharing all kinds of creative links, projects, performances and home-based arts activities that helped to keep families and individuals creative during a stressful time.



## STAY AT HOME GALA

In May, the Whistler Community Foundation joined a national online fundraising initiative, the "Stay At Home Gala," raising funds for community foundations across Canada. Arts Whistler worked with the foundation to produce the live-streaming digital event and programmed it with local musicians. The performances were so joyful, as our local talents revelled in sharing their music after weeks of silence.

## THE BIKE SHOP SESSIONS

As our technological knowledge and capacity quickly grew, we invested in equipment that could stream live music in high-quality HD. This was a pretty impressive feat - put together with five crew, two basic cameras, MacGyvered software, a few cables, some duct tape, a rubber band and Facebook Live. Coastal Culture Sports in Creekside offered up a unique venue, and we created an eight-week music series – The Bike Shop Sessions. Local bands played their first "pandemic" gig, and the program raised funds for Sea to Sky's food banks. *More info:*

[artswhistler.com/blog/bike-shop-sessions](https://artswhistler.com/blog/bike-shop-sessions)



## WHISTLER CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL (WCF)

Whistler's longest-running festival couldn't take place in person, but we ensured it kept going with an online edition. The 37th year of WCF made its digital debut in early July and received more than 1200 visits in the first month. WCF 2020 kept kids engaged and creative with arts and crafts, storytellers, dance parties, sing-alongs, face painting, magic, balloon animals, silly science and internationally acclaimed children's performers.

*WCF 2020 Online:*

[youtube.com/watch?v=VLQMvd\\_C3Gw](https://youtube.com/watch?v=VLQMvd_C3Gw)



Photos: Arts Whistler



## ART ON THE LAKE...literally

Arts Whistler's Art on the Lake painting workshops have been a summer favourite for years, but provincial health orders made that impossible in 2020.

Enter a new, more literal idea. Art on the Lake... literally transformed the south end of Alta Lake into a floating art exhibit featuring live painters on docks and 50 large-scale art pieces on display. In kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, floats and boats, the audience paddled around Alta Lake, enjoying the locally-made art and the sounds of local musicians. The event required a provincial health order exemption with Dr. Bonny Henry's approval. *More info:*

[artswhistler.com/art-on-the-lake-literally](http://artswhistler.com/art-on-the-lake-literally)



Photos: Arts Whistler / @TheFullTimeHobby



Photo: Arts Whistler

## ANONYMOUS ART SHOW (AAS)

Voted favourite art event of the year in Pique Newsmagazine, the 2020 AAS required a significant pivot. This show invites artists to anonymously submit work on 8" x 8" canvases and is an annual fundraiser for Arts Whistler. With 333 pieces of art created by 240 artists, we had great art to sell but needed to replicate the insane energy and enthusiasm of the Buying Night Gala. The AW team produced a live three-hour show from the Arts Centre using ZOOM and spotty internet... and it worked! We had buyers online from the Sea to Sky, Ontario cottage country, Tofino, Texas and Turkey. We sold an impressive amount of art and had a night of big fun with the participants. And that's because you, Whistler, are awesome. Our thanks to all the wonderful artists who support this event with your artwork.

*More info:*

[artswhistler.com/past-exhibits/anonymous-art-show-2020](http://artswhistler.com/past-exhibits/anonymous-art-show-2020)

## VIDEO STUDIO

With no social gatherings, our need for digital tools and streaming content delivery became essential. The pandemic realities accelerated our investment in professional video cameras and supporting technology, enabling us to program, produce and share community arts content from The Theatre at the Arts Centre. Since installing the equipment, the Arts Whistler team has produced the Hear and Now Online music series and provided video production and streaming services to the RMOW, the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation, the Whistler Film Festival, and Whistler and Pemberton Secondary Schools.



Photo: Arts Whistler



## HEAR AND NOW – WHISTLER'S LOCAL MUSIC CELEBRATION

Hear and Now, typically a weekend of outdoor, live music, became a 17-week online video series. Featuring a Sea to Sky band each week, they performed all original music and took part in a fun-filled interview hosted by local musicians. We were thrilled to present great local talent and provide our local musicians with paid gigs and opportunities to shine.

*More info: [artswhistler.com/event/hear-and-now-whistlers-local-music-celebration-online](https://artswhistler.com/event/hear-and-now-whistlers-local-music-celebration-online)*

## TOUR DE PUMPKIN

Created as a way to lift community spirits, Tour De Pumpkin featured a community collection of carved pumpkins, displayed on a self-guided, early evening spooky walk through Florence Petersen Park on October 30. Even with required physical distancing, this event was a hit with dozens of "family bubbles" taking in the spectacular pumpkins carved by the Whistler community. Thanks to the RMOW for support and the Whistler firefighters for their help with the event. No one lights a pumpkin like they do.



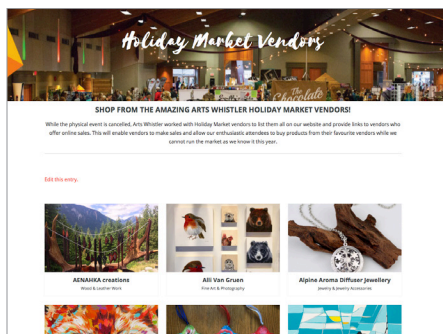
## WHISTLER WINE WALK

In partnership with Tourism Whistler, Arts Whistler participates in Whistler Wine Walk every Friday in October. Each week, five Whistler galleries offer a taste of Whistler's eclectic cultural mix and interactive art experiences. Participation in this valuable visitor-focused program has resulted in increased art sales for artists and Arts Whistler. *More info: [artswhistler.com/event/whistler-wine-walk](https://artswhistler.com/event/whistler-wine-walk)*



## ARTS WHISTLER HOLIDAY MARKET – VENDOR PROMOTION

This perennial community favourite was the only major event that Arts Whistler had to cancel due to the pandemic. Since the vendors couldn't come to the community in person, we hosted a Holiday Market vendor portal on our website. The portal provided links to dozens of artisans' websites so that loyal customers could still acquire their favourite products. We're hoping for a Holiday Market return in 2021, but if that's not possible, count on us in 2022.

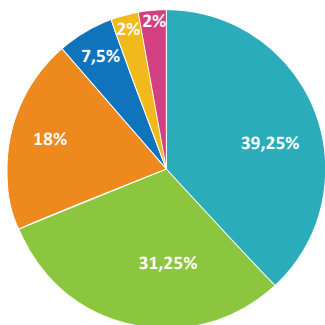


# FINANCIALS

## 2020 FINANCIAL ITEMS OF NOTE

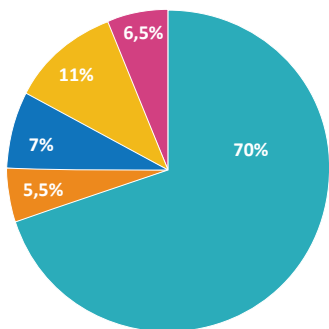
- Arts Whistler utilized the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy to offset wage costs. We received a total of \$317,477 in wage subsidy.
- Arts Whistler received the Canada Emergency Business Account with a forgivable portion of \$10,000.

- Due to public gathering limitations, the Maury Young Art Centre experienced a dramatic reduction in venue rental revenue, from \$101,976 to \$19,525.



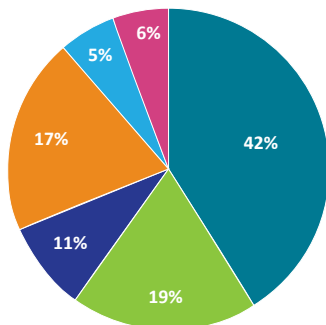
### REVENUE 2020 - \$1,035,660

- RMOW Fee for Service Operating Funds
- Gov.t of Canada (Emergency Wage Subsidy)
- Grants and Endowment Funds
- Productions and Ticket Revenue
- Earned Revenue from Facility
- Donations and Sponsors



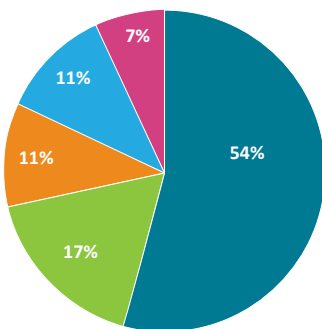
### EXPENSES 2020 - \$982,680

- Wages and Benefits
- Artist/Performer Fees and Awards
- Production Expenses and Contractors
- Building Operations and Administration
- Advertising/Promotions



### REVENUE 2019 - \$1,585,088

- RMOW Fee for Service Operating Funds
- RMOW Village Animation Programs
- Grants and Endowment Funds
- Productions and Ticket Revenue
- Donations and Sponsors
- Earned Revenue from Facility



### EXPENSES 2019 - \$1,619,357

- Wages and Benefits
- Artist/Performer Fees and Awards
- Production Expenses and Contractors
- Building Operations and Administration
- Advertising/Promotions

The 2020 Financial Statement, prepared by independent accounting firm Weir and Co., is available upon request to [info@artswhistler.com](mailto:info@artswhistler.com).



**A huge thank you to Arts Whistler's funders, sponsors and community cheerleaders for your support, especially through this exceptional year!**

us to apply existing grant funds to new COVID-safe programs. Arts Whistler is grateful to all our funders. *Please note, funders are listed alphabetically.*

BC Gaming Commission  
BC Touring Council  
Government of Canada - Canada Summer Jobs  
Government of Canada - Department of  
Canadian Heritage  
Government of Canada – Canada Emergency  
Wage Subsidy  
Province of BC - BC Arts Council  
Province of BC – Rural Dividend Project  
Resort Municipality of Whistler

Whistler Blackcomb Foundation  
Whistler Community Foundation

100 Women Who Care – Whistler  
Beedie Living  
Nesters Market Whistler  
Race and Company LLP  
Sushi Village  
Tourism Whistler  
Whistler Real Estate Company  
Whistler Blackcomb - Epic Promise

Delta Whistler Village Suites  
Tantalus Resort Lodge  
Summit Lodge Boutique Hotel

Bob and Sue Adams  
Dale and Charles Young  
Janice Lloyd  
Joan and Marcel Richoz  
John Nadeau and Mary Scott  
Rory & Jane Young  
Sushi Village

Thunderbird Café at the SLCC  
330+ amazing in-kind artist donors at the  
Anonymous Art Show

