



CITADEL THEATRE  
AND ACADEMY

**WE'RE**

**50**

2015/16  
ANNUAL REPORT

# Year in Review

The 2015/16 Season was a very special one. It opened with celebrations for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Citadel Theatre and closed with a change in artistic leadership. In the middle, there were special events, a fundraising campaign, the welcoming of Catalyst Theatre as a resident company, a search for a new Artistic Director, renovations, and a full season of shows!

The Citadel's commitment to developing new work, mentoring artists, establishing creative partnerships and engaging with our community, was reflected in the programming for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season. We were thrilled to bring an astonishing new musical, *Evangeline*, to our stage in co-production with the Charlottetown Festival. An exciting new partnership with the Stratford Festival and the National Arts Centre brought acclaimed family entertainment, *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, to our city with an all-Edmonton cast. Our Citadel/Banff Centre Professional Theatre Program introduced us to extraordinary talent from across the country and featured them in one of the world's greatest musicals, *West Side Story*. In a nod to our esteemed past, we produced Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* the play that opened the very first Citadel season in 1965. Edmonton's favourite holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol*, broke box office records. The Beyond the Stage Series and special anniversary commission, *Made in Edmonton Cabaret Premieres*, appealed to a wide range of tastes and attracted new audiences. *Encounters*, the 24 five-minute plays written by our Forum playwrights and performed by one actor for one spectator, explored the changing audience/actor/play dynamic.

The Season was well received. We achieved our combined subscription and casual ticket revenue goals and managed costs well but, unfortunately, were not able to garner additional grants or find a new major donor for the Academy, so we finished the year with a deficit.

Fifty years ago, Joe Shector, had a vision: to build a first class professional theatre in Edmonton and to nurture the arts in the heart of this city. Fifty years later, the Citadel is one of Canada's leading professional theatres and a thriving cultural institution in the downtown Arts District. Our vision is to ensure that the Citadel continues to shine as a cultural beacon, providing exceptional entertainment for our audiences and creative opportunities for our artists for the next 50 years. Through the generosity of our community, the modest but successful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Encore campaign was able to raise \$5 million to advance that vision, with a brand new entry and digital marquee, a fund for artistic creation, and contributions to our endowment fund. It is a remarkable acknowledgement and celebration of 50 years of passion and excellence.

We are thankful for the unwavering support of our donors, sponsors, funders, audiences, the Boards of Directors and Governors, management, staff, volunteers, artists, and our creative and production teams. Together we will dream big and write the story of our next 50 years.

Sheila Witwicky

President - Board of Directors



Sheila

Bob Baker

Artistic Director Emeritus



Bob

Penny Ritco

Executive Director



Penny



BOOM



EVANGELINE



CHELSEA HOTEL



A CHRISTMAS CAROL



GAY HERITAGE PROJECT



OTHER DESERT CITIES



WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?



ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS



WEST SIDE STORY



# The Academy



## CITADEL/BANFF CENTRE PROFESSIONAL THEATRE PROGRAM •

Twenty actors, singers, dancers, and two directors honed their varied skills, embracing the rigour of training, rehearsal and performance, to bring us the remarkable production of *West Side Story*.

Program alumni appeared on our stages this season in *Evangeline*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*, as well as in many theatres across the country. The Program has also spawned a number of innovative theatrical ventures founded through the collaboration of past participants, who also use their time with us to nurture and explore their skills as directors, writers and producers.

We auditioned over 400 applicants for Year 9 of the Program, which will begin in February 2017 and culminate in our World Premiere adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*.

**YOUNG COMPANIES** • Last season we welcomed 30 young artists into three companies (Acting, Musical Theatre and Playwriting). They spent a year training with and being mentored by industry professionals. The students took core classes, depending on their disciplines, in acting, voice, auditioning, movement, dance, and playwriting, as well as a series of workshops on a variety of topics. The Acting and Musical Companies performed an audition showcase for the public and the season ended with performances and staged readings in The Club.

Several of our students were accepted into prestigious post-secondary arts training programs including The National Theatre School, Sheridan College, Grant MacEwan and the BFA Acting Program at the University of Alberta.

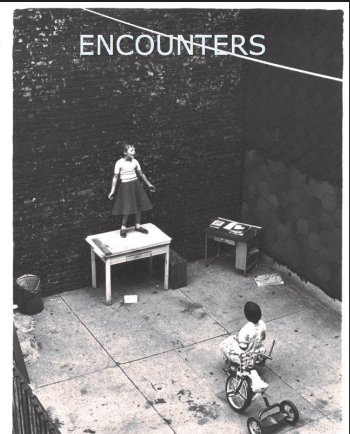


Year-end productions of *Polaroid Stories* and *Heathers: The Musical*

**FOOTE THEATRE SCHOOL** • Foote Theatre School classes were enjoyed by over a thousand children, teens and adults throughout the year. We provided classes for students of all ages, experience levels and needs, teaching skills in acting, musical theatre, improvisation and more. We introduced the *I Can Pretend!* program for children with autism, and have created partnerships with homeschoolers to provide training for them as well.

**PLAY DEVELOPMENT** • The Citadel's Playwrights Forum invited six playwrights to develop their work over a month long intensive. Return playwrights included Cat Walsh and Meg Braem, along with four new participants, Bevin Dooley, David Walker, David Van Belle and Daniel Greenways. In addition to this year's Forum, Play Development presented their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary initiative, *ENCOUNTERS*. Each of the twenty-four past participants in the Playwrights Forum wrote a new, five-minute micro-play to be performed by one actor for one audience member.

Beth Graham's play *The Gravitational Pull of Berenice Trimble* continues to garner attention and productions across the country. Meg Braem was named writer-in-residence at Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre for the coming season. Cat Walsh's play, *Do This in Memory of Me/Fais Ceci en Memoire de Moi*, will receive its world premiere next year in a co-production between L'UniTheatre and Northern Light Theatre.





# Beyond the Stage + Made In Edmonton



The **Beyond the Stage Series** attracted diverse audiences and captivated them with performances from Divine Brown, the Canadian queen of R&B; an evening with Ted Dyskstra and Friends; the soulful sounds of Men of Motown; Michael Bernard Fitzgerald's #waytoobig #waytooloud tour; Bridget Ryan's *Under the Influence*; and one of Alberta's premier Latin performers, Marco Claveria.

As a special 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary contribution to our artistic community, we commissioned the **Made In Edmonton Cabaret Premieres** showcasing the exceptional talent of five local artist/groups. The MIE lineup included Don Berner's Big Band Variety Show; Krystle Dos Santos' *'Blak*, an exploration of black culture in Western Canada; Rapid Fire Theatre's *We're Not Afraid*, an improvised homage to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Send in the Girls' *Bust 'em Up Burlesque*; and *The Runcible Riddle*, the latest perambulatory experiment from Catch The Keys Productions.

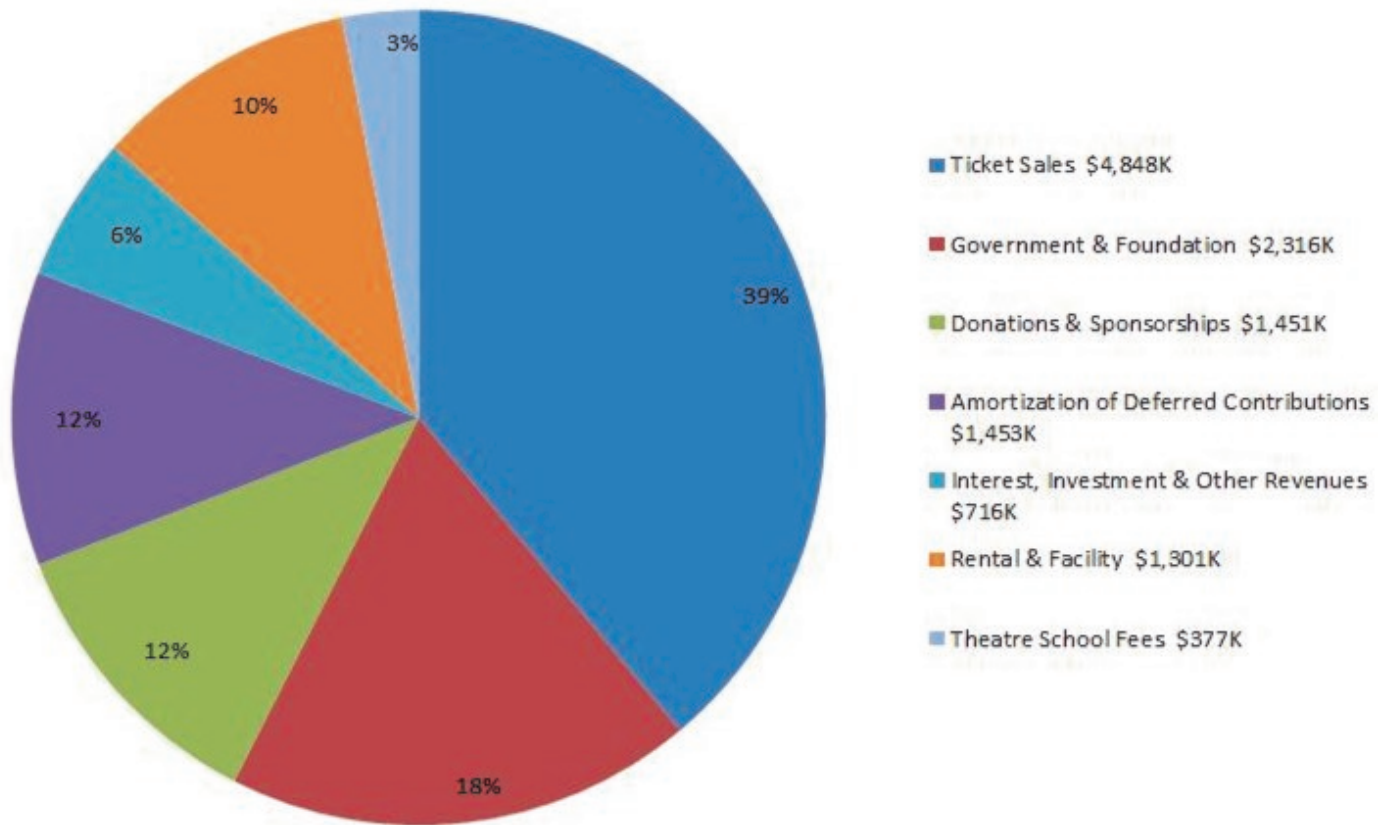


**CELEBRATIONS** • In September, during Culture Days weekend we celebrated not only the Citadel's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, but those of our resident companies, Catalyst Theatre's 20<sup>th</sup> and Rapid Fire Theatre's 35<sup>th</sup>. Together, we hosted the HeARTbeat Indoor Street Party, which was attended by over 4,000 people during a five-hour period. It featured incredible live, local bands, food trucks, an interactive art-installation/guest book, and exhibits of costumes and props from past productions. We handed out anniversary pins and boomsticks to hundreds of loyal patrons and arts enthusiasts who joined us for Hug the Citadel, and formed a human chain around the building to show their love of the Citadel and the arts. The digital marquee at the new grand entrance shone brightly above us as we honoured the past 50 years and dreamed of the 50 to come.

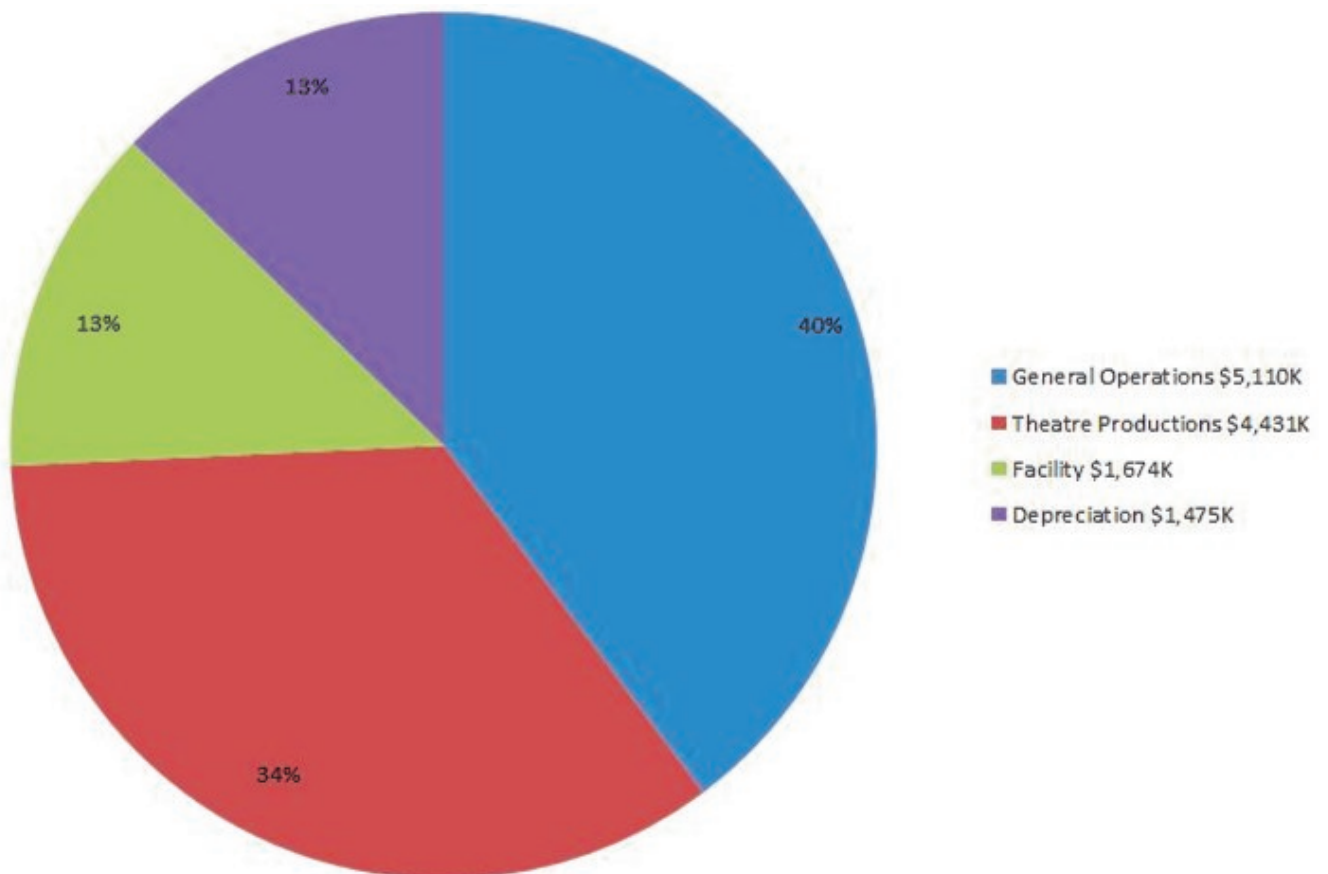




## Revenue 2015/16



## Expenses 2015/16





# Fund Development

The 2015/16 Season was a very special one for the Citadel Theatre. It marked the theatre's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Fund Development department was focused on a number of important initiatives to support and expand our philanthropic activities.

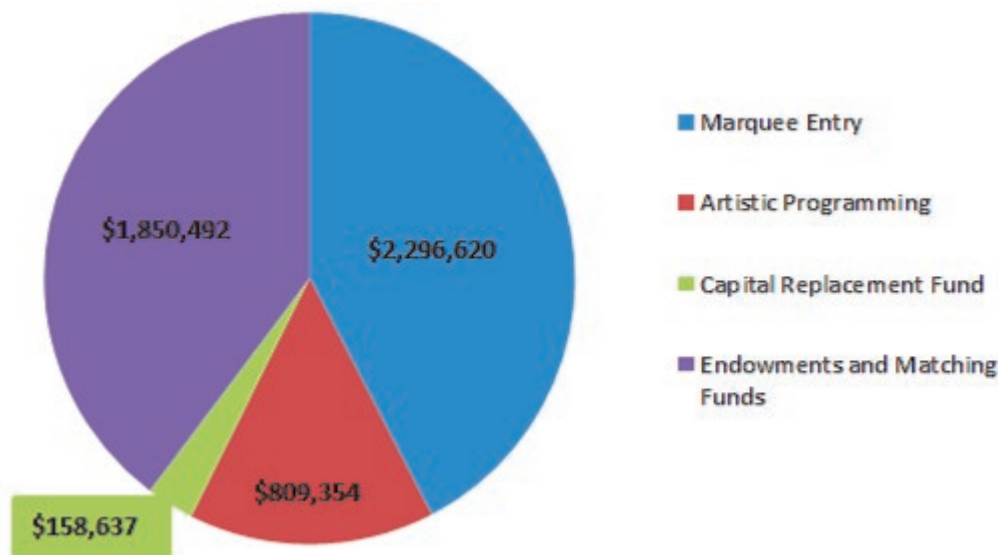
In September 2013, we launched the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **ENCORE** Campaign with the goal of raising \$5 million in community funding to support Citadel productions, Academy programs, audience development initiatives and an exciting facility enhancement. The Citadel enlisted some of Edmonton's most influential community leaders, Marc de La Bruyère, Darren and Laurel Durstling, Ashif and Zainul Mawji, and John and Maggie Mitchell, led by campaign co-chairs, Catrin Owen and Richard Kirby, to become our Campaign Champions and further this compelling cause.

With the help of these committed advocates along with passionate campaign team members Rob Reynolds, Margot Ross-Graham, Aroon Sequeira, Kayla Shoctor and Larry Staples, we are pleased to report that we met and surpassed our fundraising target for the **ENCORE** Campaign.

We owe a sincere and heartfelt thank you to all of our **ENCORE** Campaign donors and would especially like to acknowledge the leadership of Maclab Enterprises who made the first and very generous gift of \$1,000,000, as well as The Eldon & Anne Foote Fund at the Edmonton Community Foundation whose contribution exceeded \$750,000. We also wish to thank The Province of Alberta and City of Edmonton who awarded grants of \$500,000 towards this dynamic "grand entry" project.

The following chart reflects the designation of **ENCORE** Campaign donations.

## ENCORE Campaign \$5,115,103



Productions and Programs at the Citadel Theatre are made possible by the generous support of dedicated patrons who value the arts in our community. This support enables the work on our stages and behind the scenes, and is critical to our most important donor-reliant initiatives, including new play development, artistic training, and youth, education and outreach programs. In 2015/16 we saw hundreds of annual supporters and new donors continue to invest in the Citadel Theatre. Their generous gifts comprised approximately 12% of our budget.

The Fund Development Department continued to work closely with the Citadel's arts management consultant, TRG Arts, in strategizing current and future best practices to sustain and increase our donor base.

The following pages acknowledge the many dedicated **ENCORE** Campaign and Annual supporters whose generosity ensures that we can strengthen the community through the transformative power art.



# Donors

**THANK YOU!** WE EXTEND OUR HEARTFELT THANKS to all our donors, whose generosity, loyalty and commitment play a crucial role in ensuring our community has the opportunity to experience the joy of the performing arts. All of our donors have a profound and lasting impact on the quality, accessibility and relevance of the Citadel's productions, facility and educational offerings.

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