THE CITADEL THEATRE

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MEDIA RELEASE

Citadel Theatre and Edmonton Mural Festival unveil new mural

September 25, 2026

Edmonton, Alberta – The Citadel Theatre and Edmonton Mural Festival (EMF) have unveiled a new mural at Citadel Theatre.

Located along the north exterior-facing wall of the building, along 102 Avenue, this mural is a landmark cultural statement and foundational artwork for the Arts District. Métis/Cree illustrator Paityn Savoie, known as WÂPOSHPYII, was selected from more than 500 applicants. Paityn works across illustration, paint, print, textiles, and mural work; and previously created the mural on Co-op Place in Wetaskiwin.

“At the Citadel, we have the privilege of hosting artists and their stories not only inside our building, but now on it too, and this incredible mural by Paityn Savoie (WÂPOSHPYII) brings that idea to life,” says Citadel Executive Director, Jessie van Rijn. “The mural speaks to gathering, belonging, and connection and is a beautiful addition to the building and our shared downtown community.”

Presented by National Bank, in partnership with the City of Edmonton, Citadel Theatre, and the Edmonton Arts Council, the mural was unveiled on Friday, September 25, 2026, during a ceremony with Indigenous elders, Jo-Anna and Dr. Jerry Saddleback, and the public.

“We are thrilled to have worked with this incredible artist and bring this project to life with the support of our partners, funders, and sponsors. The Citadel Arts District Mural by National Bank is a reflection of the projects we can accomplish with this exceptional community,” says EMF Executive Director, Anand Pye.

Artist Paityn Savoie, graduate from the University of Alberta’s Bachelor of Design in Illustration with a minor in Printmaking, says that “being selected for this project alongside world renowned muralists was a huge honour.” To create the piece, Savoie said “I looked at the surrounding landscape, local plants and animals, cultural knowledge, and the physical space itself, along with stories and knowledge shared by the Saddleback Elders. Ultimately, I hope the mural reminds people to take a moment out of their day to indulge in art and beauty; a piece that people can pause in front of, observe, and connect with in their own way."

Information on the mural:

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“They Gather Together” by Paityn Savoie // Waposhpyii

"These pieces depict White-tailed Deer moving together as a herd through sweeping patches of prairie wildflowers, leaping with joy as they welcome the fresh growth of spring. Above them, the Red-winged Blackbird accompanies their journey, weaving through a landscape

abundant with wild strawberries, blueberries, fireweed, and Alberta wild roses, each deeply rooted in the ecosystems and stories of the Prairies.

At the heart of the composition is the wild strawberry, or têhimin ("Heart Berry"), a symbol of care, kinship, and gathering. Small yet resilient, it reminds us that community is nurtured through shared experiences, mutual support, and the quiet moments that create a sense of belonging. Blueberries speak to abundance and nourishment, fireweed represents resilience, renewal, and hope as one of the first plants to flourish after disturbance, and the Alberta wild rose reflects strength, perseverance, and a deep connection to place.

Together, these elements celebrate the importance of gathering. They speak to a place in constant motion where people arrive, depart, and return, connected through shared stories, creativity, and care for one another. The work honours the spaces that bring us together, reminding us that even through change there are places where we belong, where our hearts can gather, and where our hearts can rest."

The mural unveiling kicks off Alberta Culture Days weekend at the Citadel Theatre with free, family-friendly programming on Saturday, September 26 to Sunday, September 27, 2026. More information on these events can be found at citadeltheatre.com.

Photos of the mural and the unveiling are available here.

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