

ROYAL THEATRE



McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE

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the
ROYAL & McPHERSON
theatres society

FY 2018: ANNUAL REPORT

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018

I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report for the Royal and McPherson Theatres Society (RMTS) on behalf of our Board of Directors.

The RMTS has the responsibility and the privilege of managing the Capital Region's two historic theatres for their civic owners and the region's citizens. The two theatres form our de facto performing arts centre and we endeavour to see them full with classical, contemporary and popular forms of arts and entertainment to serve a wide, diverse population.

We also work hard to maintain and upgrade the theatres to ensure that they will continue to serve as places of gathering and celebration for many years to come. The theatres are in beautiful shape, which is a testament to the care and attention they have received since 1998, when our Society assumed their management.

The RMTS began a strategic planning process in 2017, which led to a new business plan and vision statement in 2018: To be the integral hub of the performing arts in the region, recognized for diverse and valued performances, professional standards, and historic spaces. This statement, along with our business plan, led the RMTS to announce future changes to rental rates and booking policies at the Royal Theatre. These changes are being implemented to ensure that the theatre is accessible to more presenters, artists and audiences, and that both theatres remain relevant and sustainable into the future.

I appreciate our Board and staff's thoughtful work to develop equitable rates and policies, and to communicate our rationale for making the changes to the theatres' many stakeholders. There have been many conversations with clients about the changes and we are thankful that these clients are as passionate about the theatres as we are.

We are grateful to the municipalities of Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria for their commitment to arts and culture through the theatres, and to the Capital Regional District staff for their professionalism in our collaborations.

We are excited about the bright future of the theatres and the important role they have in the region's quality of life and prosperity. Our strength in managing these theatres is our people and I am proud of our staff in fulfilling the many, complex pieces that go into running these venues. I am also privileged to serve alongside a group of dedicated and strategic Board members.

We will be wishing our Executive Director, Lloyd Fitzsimonds, bon voyage as he moves into retirement at the end of 2019. Lloyd has steadily guided the RMTS ship for over twenty years and he will be greatly missed. We appreciate all that he has done to promote the arts, enhance the quality of our two historic theatres and chart a strong financial course in what can be a difficult and ever-changing industry. Our staff, organization and indeed the region have benefited from his passion and strong business sense, which ensures that all of us will continue to enjoy excellent arts and cultural opportunities in first class venues.

On behalf of our Society, thank you to the artists who graced the theatres' stages this year, and the many audience members who gathered to support and celebrate arts, culture and entertainment.

Lorne DeLarge, *Board President*

WELCOME TO THE ROYAL & McPHERSON THEATRES SOCIETY

Recognized for diverse and valued performances, professional standards, and historic spaces, the beautifully maintained historic Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse are in their second century serving the Capital Region as the premier performing arts venues and play an integral role in enriching the cultural life of the community.

For over two decades, the Royal and McPherson Theatres Society (RMTS) has managed the theatres on behalf of their civic owners and, by extension, the region's citizens and visitors. The RMTS manages all aspects of the theatres, including administration, concessions, front of house, production and box office, in order to facilitate the use of approximately 75 groups a year. The Box Office and Front of House departments provide exceptional service to over 167,000 patrons annually, setting the stage for an exceptional customer service experience, from ticket purchase through to the final curtain.

The RMTS is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of three Municipal Councillors, six Elected Directors, and five CRD Appointed Directors, who work to maintain, preserve, and further develop the Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse by providing governance and management of the organization's resources.

The Royal Theatre is owned by the Capital Regional District and receives funding from the municipalities of Saanich, Victoria and Oak Bay. The McPherson Playhouse receives funding from its sole owner, the City of Victoria.

The RMTS acknowledges that the McPherson Playhouse and the Royal Theatre are on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Lekwungen peoples.



ROYAL THEATRE



McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lorne DeLarge, *President*
Raj Wirk, *Vice President*
Byron Smith, *Past President*
Tiffany Gartner-Bouffard, *Treasurer*
Judy Scott, *Secretary*
Councillor Marianne Alto
Tom Burley
Bruce Cameron
Gregory Damant
Christopher Devlin
Iain Hooey
Nathan Lampard
Councillor Tara Ney
Councillor Vicki Sanders
Richard Schick

MANAGEMENT TEAM





The RMTS is managed by an experienced professional team:

Lloyd Fitzsimonds *Executive Director*

Karen Ainey *Web & Software Application Manager*
Warren Busby *Assistant Technical Director*
Nancy Downer *Finance Manager*
Sheelagh Drever *Finance Assistant*
Tom Heemskerk *Assistant Technical Director*
Derry Hunley *Box Office Supervisor*
Ainslee Jessiman *Administrative Assistant*
Debora Johns *Front of House & Facility Services Manager*
Brian Johnson *Custodian, Royal Theatre*
Randy Joynt *Manager of External Affairs*
Darcy Lipsey *Finance & Communications Associate*
Blair Morris *Technical Director*
Mandy Niddrie *Manager of Client Services*
Melissa O'Shea *Box Office Manager*
Jennifer Phillips *Administrative Assistant*
Robert Rawson *Assistant Front of House Manager*
Cameron Stewart *Assistant Technical Director*
Kathleen Stewart *Custodian, McPherson Playhouse*
Adam Wilkinson *Assistant Technical Director*

The management team is supported by **235** full and part time theatre professionals, creating:

- **38 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs**
- **$2,351,000 Total Employment Income**

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

Victoria's two iconic live performance venues, the Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse, staged a memorable parade of diverse world class entertainers throughout 2018, who invigorated the senses, engaged minds, aroused emotions, and thoroughly entertained audiences.

The Royal and McPherson Theatres Society gratefully acknowledges our municipal funding partners who allow the theatres to continue to be accessible to local presenters.

- The Royal Theatre receives a total **$100,000** operating grant contributed by Oak Bay, Saanich and Victoria
- The McPherson Playhouse receives a **$350,000** operating grant from Victoria
- **87%** of the RMTS revenues are earned from theatre operations
- **$5,795,048** Total Box Office Ticket Sales



ROYAL ROADS CONVOCATION



RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE



MACY GRAY | JAZZFEST



WORLD OF DANCE



THIS IS THAT | CBC



JON AND ROY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL



FRANKENSTEIN | BALLET VICTORIA



LA BOHEME | PACIFIC OPERA VICTORIA

ROYAL & MAC ONSTAGE PRESENTS



AMI VITALE



NIZAR IBRAHIM



MIREYA MAYOR

DYNAMIC EVENTS. FASCINATING PEOPLE. CAPTIVATING STORIES.

Our Royal OnStage *National Geographic Live* speaker series featured three world-class explorers whose remarkable storytelling and visually stunning imagery delighted, surprised, and engaged audiences of all ages. Each speaker started their day with a school presentation, offering local students a rare opportunity for an up close and personal experience with inspiring stories of conservation, exploration, and adventure. The explorers then gave an evening show for an enthusiastic public.

Photojournalist Ami Vitale shared the tremendous lengths she's gone to in order to capture the power of the human spirit, even in the face of adversity. Nizar Ibrahim introduced us to Spinosaurus, the prehistoric giant almost lost to science before being brought back to light with the help of this remarkable young paleontologist. Primatologist Mireya Mayor's discovery of a rare species of mouse lemur inspired the prime minister of Madagascar to establish a national park by conserving the remaining 10 percent of the African island nation's once vast forest.

Reviews from teachers and students highlight the impact of the shared experience between these distinguished explorers and the audience:

"the whole series was excellent. Inspiring!"

"skilled story-teller who was able to spark excitement and curiosity"

"an outstanding opportunity for students to explore something quite extraordinary"

"a group of Grade 3/4 students have decided to be leaders in the school and start an Eco Club to educate the school and community about the need to make a change"

ROYAL & MAC ONSTAGE PRESENTS

Along with *National Geographic Live,* the RMTS presented two MAC OnStage performances in 2018.

RMTS co-presented The Comics Stippers to bring their fictitious male stripper troupe to the McPherson Playhouse. Played by a cast of some of Canada's best improvisational comedians, they performed a sexylarious improv comedy show semi-undressed and completely unscripted.

Featuring four of Victoria's most exciting bands, Malahat, The Leg-Up Program, Lorah the Band and Sexweather, Blender at the MAC brought rock, soul, funk, hip hop, folk and more to the stage of the historic McPherson Playhouse.



THE COMIC STRIPPERS



BLENDER AT THE MAC



NAT GEO LIVE SCHOOL AUDIENCE

CAPITAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout 2018, a number of capital projects took place at the Royal Theatre and the McPherson Playhouse.

One major upgrade included the installation of a new digital sign at the McPherson Playhouse. The Mac was fitted with a new double-sided digital sign, replacing the longstanding and cumbersome marquee sign in front of the south facing theatre entrance.

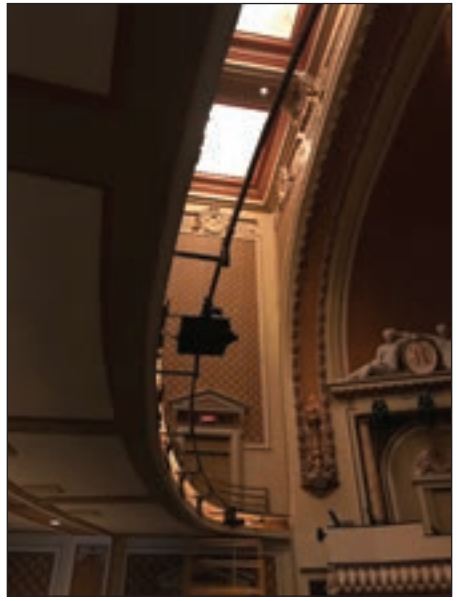
Lighting designers, especially with touring Broadway, opera and large-scale dance productions, are now able to use a brand-new lighting position to enhance the look of their shows with the newly installed Circle Rail at the Royal. The C-Rail is located along the front of the balcony, which includes a permanent projector and custom lighting positions. Before the paint was even dry on the new C-Rail, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's Nutcracker hung crucial lighting instruments on it, happily confirming that if we build it – they will use it.

While both theatres have been equipped with a Sennheiser Hearing Assistance System for many years, we introduced enhancements to this service in order to provide a superior theatre experience. In consultation with the Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre, our technical department made upgrades to these systems for better communication with hearing impaired patrons by providing both infrared and induction transmitters for hearing aids and cochlear implants.

Finally, not to be outdone by the Royal audio upgrade in 2017, a new Meyer LINA Compact Linear Line Array of speakers was installed in the McPherson balcony in order to enhance the sound experience for audiences.



DIGITAL SIGN



C-RAIL LIGHTING POSITION



SENNHEISER HEARING ASSISTANT SYSTEM



MEYER LINA COMPACT LINE ARRAY

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING



DANCE UNLIMITED YEAR END RECITAL



MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE | KALEIDOSCOPE



CATCH ME IF YOU CAN | ST. MICHAEL'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Children's programming is as much about empowering young people to make new discoveries about themselves and the world around them as it is about entertainment. Performing for a live audience helps build confidence, ignite imagination, inspire creativity, encourage curiosity, develop empathy, and for some children, it can plant a seed that will grow into a lifelong interest in the arts.

The Capital Region is home to a variety of exceptional organizations who create extraordinary theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire young people. Kaleidoscope Theatre for Young People, the Canadian College of Performing Arts, the Victoria Operatic Society, Victoria Academy of Ballet, Dance Unlimited, Dansko Studios, Allegro Performing Arts, Boston Dance Collective, Shawnigan Lake School, and St. Michaels University School all work with children in the cast and sometimes crew. They nurture young talent by providing opportunities for students to receive theatre production and performance experience, as well as mentorship and training, enabling them to participate in every aspect involved in the production of their shows.

Many other local organizations find various opportunities to engage young audiences in their seasons as well. The Victoria Symphony through their Community and Children's Programs, Pacific Opera Victoria through their Student Dress Rehearsal Nights, Dance Victoria through their "Pay Your Age" and "Nutcracker Kids" Programs, the annual Nutcracker performances, and the Naden Band through their student matinees.

Through our Royal OnStage presentations, the RMTS has introduced *National Geographic Live* for students at the Royal Theatre, which engages them in real-life topics connected to the BC school curriculum by providing a rare opportunity for Vancouver Island students to experience photographers, explorers, filmmakers, and scientists as they share their personal stories of conservation, exploration, and adventure.

Outside the Capital Region, national and international touring companies also bring a variety of popular children's performers to both the Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse throughout the year.

ROYAL THEATRE EVENTS



BAHAMAS



CORB LUND WITH IAN TYSON



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN THEATER DANCE COMPANY

ROYAL THEATRE EVENTS

The elegant 1416-seat Royal Theatre has graced the skyline of the Capital Region since 1913 and is Vancouver Island's largest venue for the performing arts. While preserving its original Rocco/Renaissance Revival style décor, the Royal elegantly fuses 19th century architecture with 21st century technology, enabling it to host a variety of arts and entertainment options, from Broadway tours to drag shows, dance to comedy, opera to jazz, and symphony to rock concerts, plus much more!

- **$4,356,527** Total Box Office Ticket Sales
- **117,144** Total Attendance

LOCAL NON-PROFIT: 104 PERFORMANCES



DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER | JAZZFEST



VICTORIA SYMPHONY



LISA FISCHER

COMMERCIAL: 16 PERFORMANCES



USS



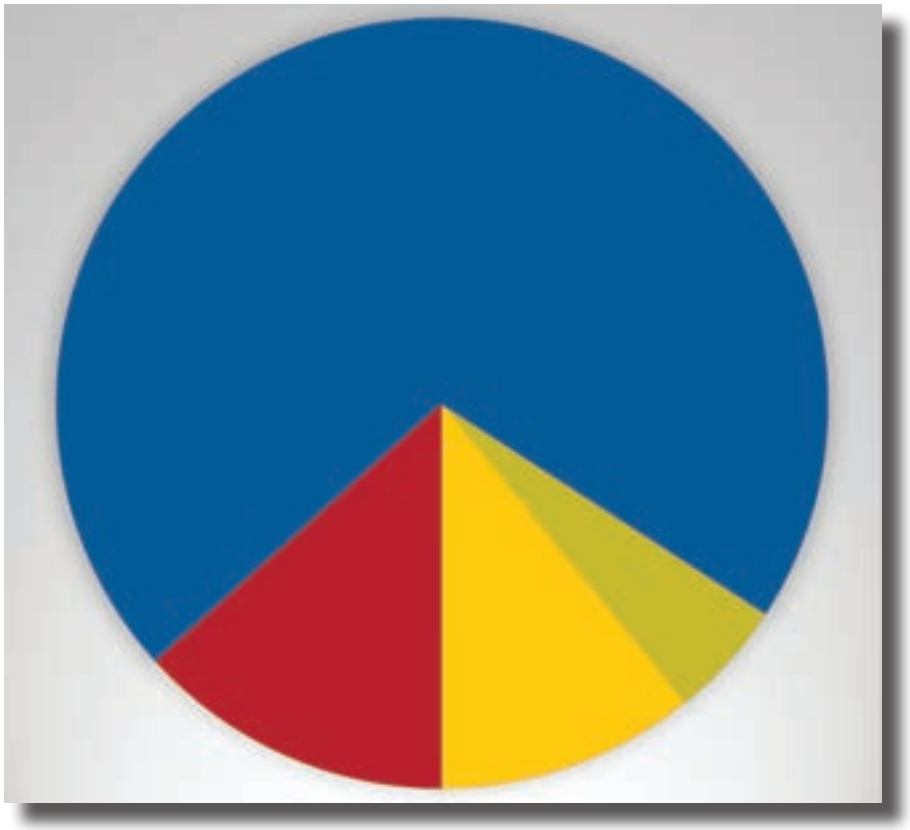
LETTERKENNY



RANDY BACHMAN

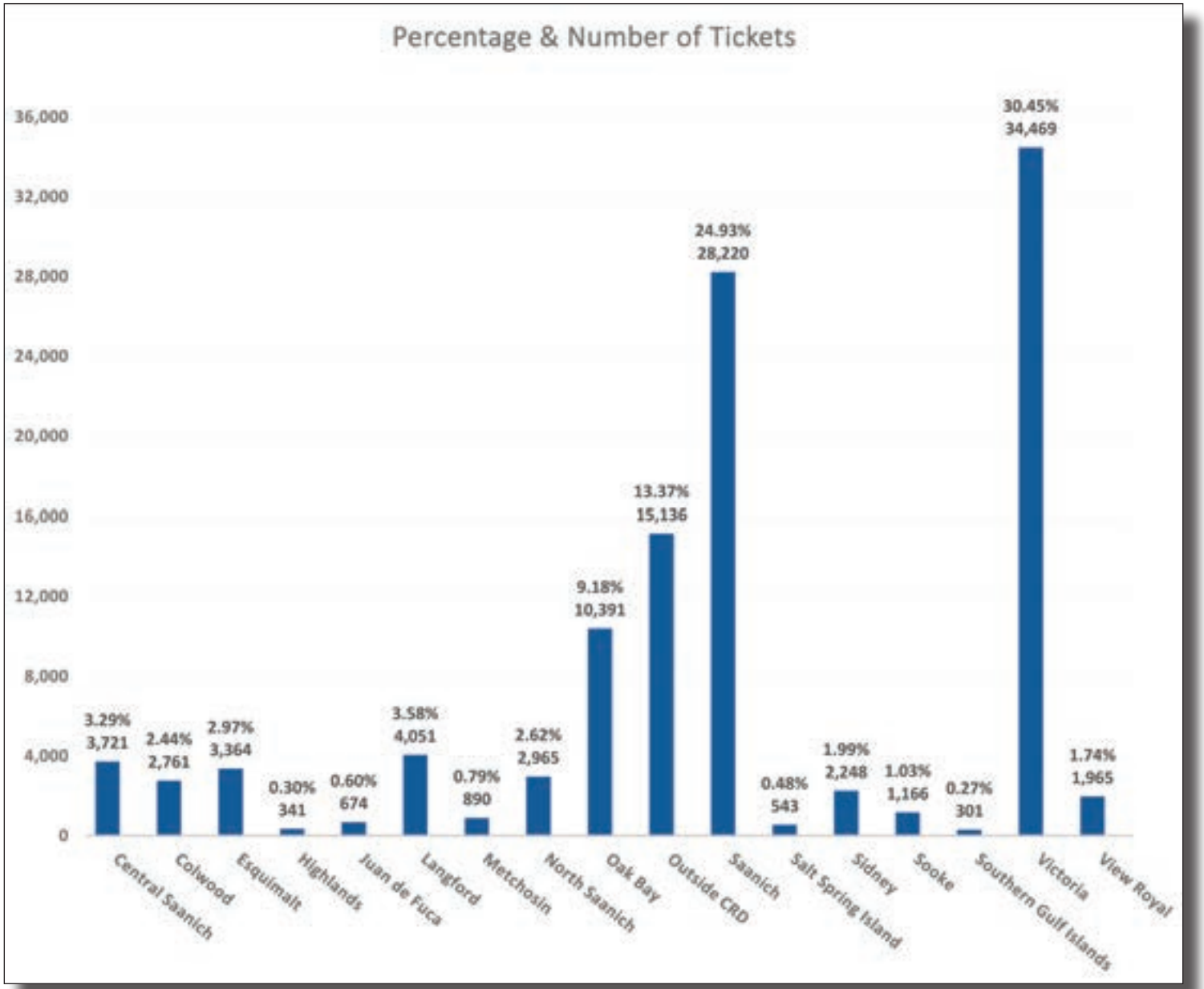
ROYAL THEATRE NON-PROFIT / COMMERCIAL USE DAYS





Commercial: 13% Non-Profit 71% School 11% Royal OnStage 5%

ROYAL THEATRE ATTENDANCE BY MUNICIPALITY



McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE EVENTS



54-40



JESSE ROPER



WORKING THE MUSICAL | CANADIAN COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS

McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE EVENTS

Located in the heart of Old Town Victoria, the McPherson Playhouse has been the home of intimate theatre in Victoria since opening in 1914 as part of the Pantages chain of theatres built across North America. Evolving from its vaudevillian roots, the McPherson hosts a variety of professional, community and amateur events throughout the year. The 772-seat theatre continues to be one of the most impeccably maintained and finest examples of theatres from its era still standing in Canada today.

- **$1,438,520** Total Box Office Ticket Sales
- **50,533** Total Attendance

LOCAL NON-PROFITS: 55 PERFORMANCES



LARKIN POE | COMMUNITY LIVING FUNDRAISER



ONE WORLD | PEARSON COLLEGE



RENT | VICTORIA OPERATIC SOCIETY

COMMERCIAL: 47 PERFORMANCES



CURRENT SWELL



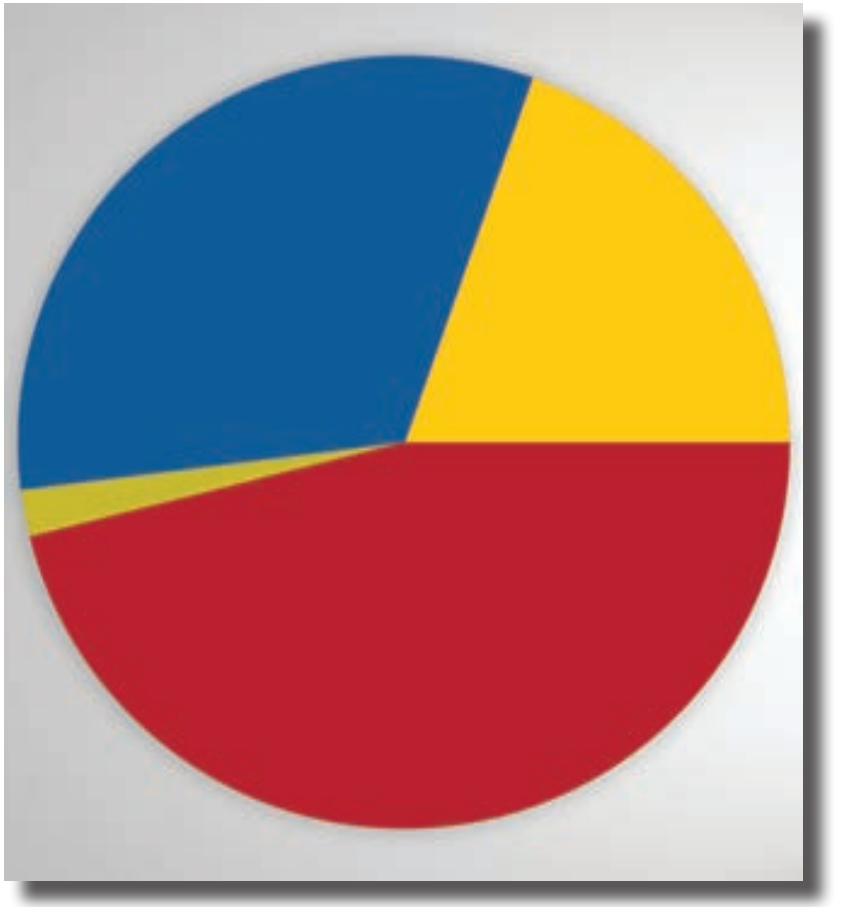
YELLOWPOINT CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR



GLASS TIGER

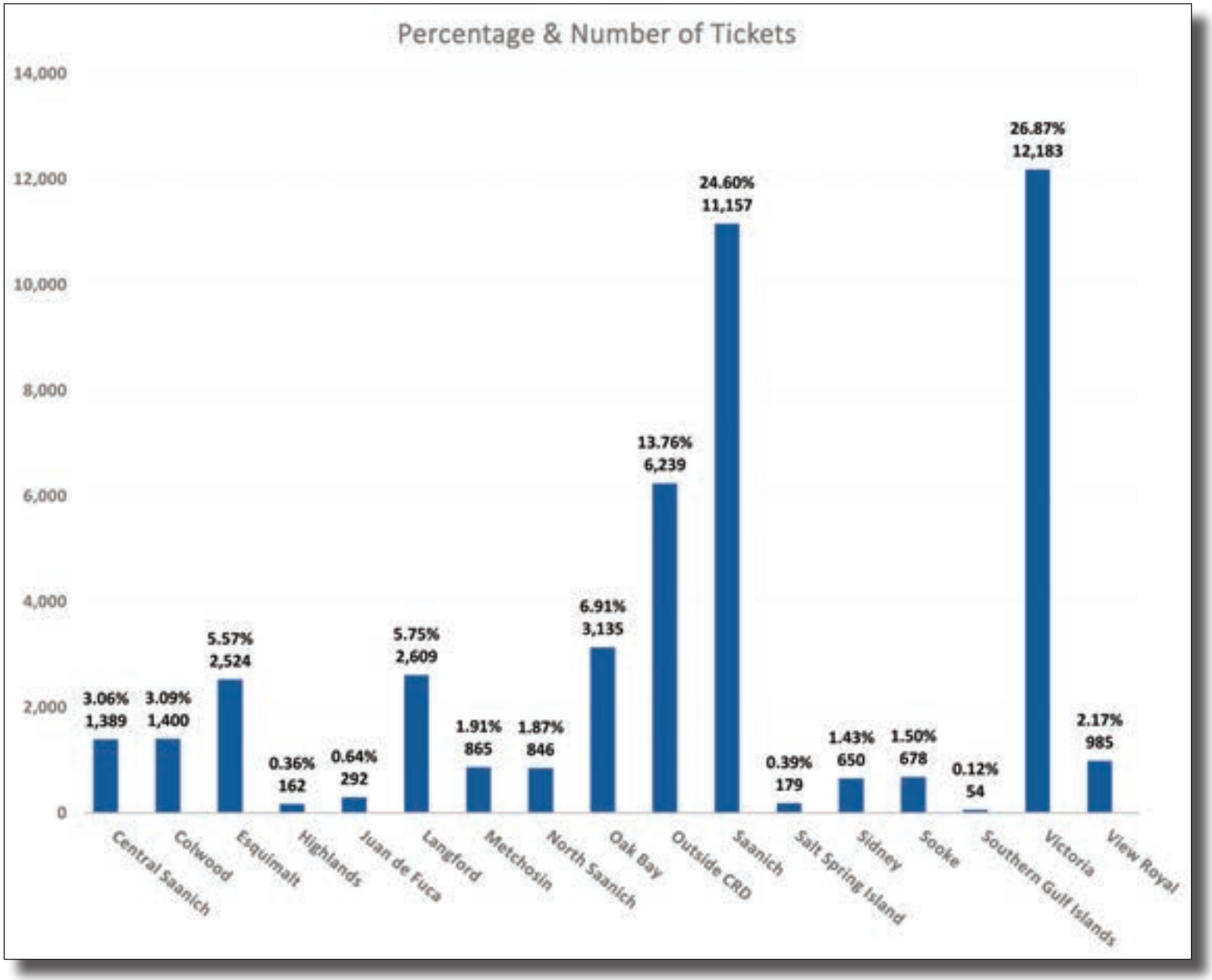
McPHERSON NON-PROFIT / COMMERCIAL USE DAYS





Commercial: 46% Non-Profit 32% School 20% Mac OnStage 2%

McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE ATTENDANCE BY MUNICIPALITY



RMTS & THE NADEN BAND: A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Navy Bands have been a part of the cultural life of the Capital Region since the Royal Navy Band arrived with Sir James Douglas.

Two Canadian cities enjoy the privilege of being home to the fleets of the Royal Canadian Navy and Victoria plays host to Canada's Pacific Naval Fleet. The Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse along with the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy share a long and rich history together and are vital parts of the community. For 106 years, the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy have been regular performers at both the Royal Theatre and the McPherson Playhouse.

In partnership with the RMTS at the Royal Theatre, the immensely popular Naden Band Christmas Toy Drive has proven to be a valuable annual contribution to the community for the past 40 years. In 2018, their concerts welcomed over 3,500 adult patrons and 2,600 students who donated over 4,000 toys.

The Royal and McPherson Theatres Society is honoured to be part of this important tradition.



NADEN BAND CIRCA 1985 | McPHERSON PLAYHOUSE



40th ANNIVERSARY NADEN BAND SALVATION ARMY TOY DRIVE | ROYAL THEATRE

COMMUNITY EVENT DONATIONS

The Royal and McPherson Theatres Society is pleased to support many community and charity events throughout the year. In 2018, RMTS provided ticket donations to 65 not-for-profit and community event fundraising efforts, which included the following organizations:

3rd Arbutus Scouts
Alberni Valley Pride Society
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
Atomique Productions
BC Cancer Foundation
Braefoot Community Foundation
Bridges for Women Society
Broken Promises Animal Rescue
Camosun College Medical Radiography
Canadian Border Services Agency United Way
Canadian Cancer Society
Canadian College of Performing Arts
Cat's Cradle Animal Rescue
Central Middle School
Child Find BC
Cordova Bay Preschool
Countryside Preschool
Crohn's and Colitis Canada
Dancers 4 Kids
Deep Cove Elementary
Girl Guides of Canada
Global Brigades
Great Kitchen Party
Intrepid Theatre
Kiwanis
Lakehill Little League
Lakewood Middle School
Lambrick Park Secondary
Lansdowne Middle School
Ministry of Education - PECSF
Mount St Mary Hospital
Northridge Elementary School
Oak Bay High School
Pacific Opera Victoria
Paddle for Health
Paw it Forward
Restorative Justice Victoria
Reynolds Secondary School
Rotary Club of Sooke
Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps
Royal Roads Indigenous Education and Student Services
Royal Roads President's Gala
Royal Roads United Way
Saanich Baptist Church
Sangster Elementary School
Selkirk Montessori School
South Park Family School
Special Olympics Victoria
Spectrum Community School
Stelly's School
The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
The Kidney Foundation Victoria Chapter
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Theatre Inconnu
Theatre Skam
Torquay Elementary School
Tourism Victoria
University of Victoria - Graduate Program
University of Victoria - MBA Weekend Program
Victoria Curling Club
Victoria Hospital Foundations
Victoria Humane Society
Victoria Racquet Club
Victoria Therapeutic Riding Association
Victoria Walk for ALS
Wild ARC

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The RMTS staff participated in two important community events during the summer of 2018, the 25th Annual Victoria Pride Parade and Car Free YYJ.









SUPPORT FOR LOCAL NON-PROFITS

Proudly supporting local non-profit organizations, the Royal and McPherson Theatres Society provides discounted fees and charges for the use of the Royal Theatre and the McPherson Playhouse to the following groups:





























the
ROYAL & McPHERSON
theatres society

Royal Theatre
805 Broughton Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1E5

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1005 Broad Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2A1

250.361.0800
Box Office: 250.386.6121

McPherson Playhouse
#3 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P5

www.rmts.bc.ca

Get social with us!