

For Immediate Release

Arts Commons Announces the Appointment of the New Vice-President of Programming

August 2, 2023 - CALGARY – Arts Commons is thrilled to announce the appointment of an acclaimed creative industry leader as the new VP of Programming, **Sarah Garton Stanley**. This announcement follows an international executive search conducted by Martin Bragg & Associates. Sarah Garton Stanley will be moving from Nova Scotia to Calgary to join the Arts Commons team on **September 20, 2023** where she will lead the department responsible for all areas of programming: Social Impact, Education, Visual and Media Arts, and Arts Commons Presents.

Originally from Montreal, Sarah Garton Stanley (SGS) brings her diverse expertise and passion as a producer, programmer, and artistic director to the Arts Commons leadership team. SGS is the co-author of [Manifesto for Now](#) and current Artistic Producer for [The National Arts Centre's National Creation Fund](#), where she leads the National Arts Centre team in the oversight of a \$2M annual budget supporting the creation of ambitious new works across Canada in theatre, dance, music, and inter-disciplinary arts. With her partner, she is also the co-steward of [Historic Birchdale](#), located in Nova Scotia.

An award-winning champion for the arts, SGS's career includes leading [The Cycle](#), a 7-year project focused on the intersections of contemporary performing arts practices with Indigenous creation, Deaf, disability and Mad arts, and Climate. SGS was the Associate Artistic Director of English Theatre and also served as Interim Facilitator for Indigenous Theatre at the National Arts Centre while the department was being created. SGS also served as the first female artistic director at Buddies in Bad Times, the inaugural Artistic Associate for the Magnetic North Theatre Festival, the founding artistic director of [spiderwebshow.ca](#) (Canada's first live-to-digital performance hybrid company), and co-founder of the [Festival of Live Digital Art](#). She is the recipient of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas' Elliot Hayes Award, the Honorary Member Award from the Canadian Association for Theatre Research, and was recently named a 2022 Arne Bengt Johansson Fellow at The Banff Forum. SGS has taught at Queen's, York, Concordia, and McGill Universities, Humber College, Vancouver Film School, Centre for Indigenous Training, and the National Theatre School. A graduate of Vancouver Film School, and a former student of Jacques LeCoq in Paris, she is currently finishing her Ph.D. in Cultural Studies at Queen's University, where her research revolves around the CBC Massey Lectures and the genealogical, political, and administrative structures that house professional arts organizations in Canada.

"I am beyond excited that Calgary and Arts Commons have been able to attract someone with SGS' expertise, thoughtfulness, and boldness to help imagine a new future for the arts in our city as we prepare to break ground on the Arts Commons Transformation next year," says Alex Sarian, President and CEO of Arts Commons. "SGS' work lives at the intersection of local impact and national dialogue, and at the intersection of so many different artforms and genres. Under her empathetic leadership, I can't wait to see how our thriving and growing arts community can inspire a new dialogue locally, regionally, and nationally for what it means to build community in and through the arts."

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“Arts Commons is a beacon for responding to the city and territory it calls home,” says Sarah Garton Stanley. “I can’t wait to get my feet on the ground to continue reflecting - through all our programming plans - what a forward-facing place Calgary is.”

Arts Commons looks forward to welcoming the new VP of Programming, Sarah Garton Stanley, to helm the programming department responsible for the 2023-24 season of Arts Commons Presents. Spanning three signature series including BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, and National Geographic Live, as well as high-demand special presentations, the pop-up performance series ArtsXpeditions, and the cutting-edge TD Amplify Cabaret series, Arts Commons Presents shares a wide diversity of events and performances with Calgary each season. To learn more about Arts Commons Presents, you can visit acpresents.ca. The programming department also oversees all visual and media arts exhibitions within the 560,000 square foot facility, the RBC Emerging Visual Artists Program, the TD Incubator Program, Education initiatives that reach over 13,000 students and teachers every year, as well as the forging of new community and artistic partnerships to better represent and reflect Calgary’s exciting future.

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Arts Commons is the steward of Western Canada’s largest arts centre, and the artistic and civic cornerstone of Calgary’s downtown core. For over 35 years, it has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians. It is home to six resident companies, including Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary. It houses six gallery spaces, five theatres, and the Jack Singer Concert Hall, and promotes local, national, international, emerging and established artists with a focus on championing inclusion and reconciliation, ensuring the arts’ rightful place at the centre of civic life. In 2024, Arts Commons will be breaking ground on the Arts Commons Transformation project, the single largest cultural infrastructure in Canadian history.