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For Immediate Release

2021-22 is Officially the Season of Gratitude – Enrolment is Open for Arts Commons’ Free Ticket Program for Calgary’s Essential Workers

Whether on the front lines in a hospital or delivering packages and meals – Calgarians self-define as “essential” to receive free tickets for their household to attend a performance in the 2021-22 season of Arts Commons Resident Companies, including Arts Commons Presents.

CALGARY, August 30, 2021 – As one of the hardest hit industries by the COVID-19 pandemic, the performing arts industry is indebted to the unparalleled efforts and sacrifices of essential workers in all areas of life – from postal workers to nurses and doctors to public transportation drivers and grocery store clerks. Starting today at 10 a.m., those who have performed these key roles and more during the pandemic can now enrol in **Season of Gratitude, a program to disseminate 10,000 free tickets to Calgary’s essential workers and their households from Arts Commons**. The window to enrol is open from today **until October 29, 2021**.

Thanks to the generous support of the Rodney & Karen McCann Family and the giving of Arts Commons Founders Circle and Explorers Circle members, the Season of Gratitude program will span the entire 2021-22 season of Arts Commons Resident Companies: Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents (containing the popular TD Jazz, BD&P World Stage, PCL Blues, Classic Albums Live, and National Geographic Live series), the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, Theatre Calgary, and One Yellow Rabbit.

Arts Commons is not designating who is or is not deemed “essential” – applicants to the Season of Gratitude program are encouraged to decide for themselves if their work qualifies. Did you teach or babysit to relieve working parents? Did you stock shelves or deliver meals? Season of Gratitude is open to you.

The enrolment form asks applicants to list their essential role, how many tickets they’re requesting (up to four), and what kind of performances and/or companies they’re interested in attending. Once the enrolment window has closed, the Arts Commons box office team will match applicants with an eligible production in the upcoming 2021-22 season later this fall (as supply lasts).

To learn more about Season of Gratitude, visit artscommons.ca/freetickets.

Season of Gratitude was publicly announced by Arts Commons President & CEO Alex Sarian on Thursday, August 26 from the stage of *Showtime: A Live Music Celebration*, a free, socially distanced outdoor evening of food, drinks, and live music performances by Classic Albums Live and local singer/songwriter Amelie Patterson in Arts Commons’ “front yard” of Olympic Plaza. That same

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evening, Arts Commons Presents announced its 2021-22 season of performers, including international stars like singer Lea Salonga and blues musician James “Blood” Ulmer, unforgettable acts like YAMATO – The Drummers of Japan and Australia’s post-post-modern diva Meow Meow, and the premiere performance of the Canadian National Jazz Orchestra, a years-in-the-making project conceived and produced entirely in Calgary. Also announced was the return of the sold-out series National Geographic Live to its home in the Jack Singer Concert Hall after a season of virtual shows. Learn more about the 2021-22 season of Arts Commons Presents by visiting artscommons.ca/presents, and read about the organization’s health and safety protocols at artscommons.ca/healthandsafety, which will be reassessed on a monthly basis as the pandemic continues.

As they recover from lost activity due to the pandemic, arts organizations across Calgary need audiences. As they recover from demanding and stressful responsibilities, essential workers need carefree artistic escapes. As the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada, Arts Commons recognizes its unique position to fill both of these vital needs while bringing Calgarians safely together after so long apart.

For media inquiries, high resolution images, or more information contact:
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Arts Commons Presents invites you to discover the transformative power of the Arts. As the programming arm of Arts Commons, Arts Commons Presents encompasses the programming and presenting of our in-house series: BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, National Geographic Live, PCL Blues, TD Amplify Cabarets, and TD Jazz. Arts Commons Presents programming also includes the work that we do alongside and in collaboration with community partners, like the summer outdoor pop-up performance series, ArtsXpeditions, and professional development programs to support Calgary’s local artists.