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For Immediate Release

Arts Commons Welcomes 2022-23 TD Incubator Cohort Under the Artistic Guidance of Lo-Fi Soul Heavyweights Sargeant X Comrade

October 14, 2022 - CALGARY – The 22-23 TD Incubator cohort is here! Entering its second season as an artist development program for interdisciplinary artists, Arts Commons is thrilled to welcome this season's cohort to the Arts Commons family. This year, cohort members will learn and grow under the leadership of vocalist Yolanda Sargeant and producer Evgeniy "Comrade" Bykovets, aka Sargeant x Comrade.

Launched in 2021, TD Incubator aims to accelerate the careers of 20-35 interdisciplinary artists each season who reflect the diversity and vibrancy of Calgary. Artists are increasingly moving between and blending artistic forms, genres, and industries to better reflect, create connections, and make sense of the complex world around us and Arts Commons is uniquely positioned to support these artists through performance opportunities and media art exhibitions. The first performance opportunity for this new cohort is through the TD Amplify Cabaret series, which this season takes the form of a variety show with its first iteration as *Mars: Second Home* in the **Engineered Air Theatre** on **November 18 & 19, 2022**.

The cohort members are Contra, Wilmer Aburto, Adetola "aloT of Poetry" Adedipe, Walter MacDonald White Bear, Mackenize Bedford, Tyrell "DaKidT" Bonnick, Evgeniy Bykovets Comrade, Ronnie Champagne, Many Eyes City, Jenny Crane, David Fyfe, Shumaila Hemani, Jonathan Kawchuk, Marvin Kee, Derek Leugner, Stefan Lewis, Asim Overstands, Vince Raquel, Chenelle Roberts, Yolanda Sargeant, Brandon Smith, Jae Sterling, gbohunmi, Bubba B The MC, Shone Thistle, Kue Varo, James Watson, Bjorn Horn, The Dirty Sample, and Zenon. You can learn more about the individual artists at artscommons.ca/incubator.



TD Incubator cohort. Photo by Francis Willey.

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"We're thrilled to have this nationally recognized artistic duo lead the second year of TD Incubator. Yolanda Sargeant and Evgeniy "Comrade" Bykovets are voracious collaborators, dedicated to drawing the best out of themselves and others. Their work elevates the entire artistic community around them and their leadership of this dynamic cohort was a no-brainer," says Joshua Dalledonne, Associate Director of Social Impact.

A key component of TD Incubator is their involvement in the TD Amplify Cabaret series. Now entering its fifth season, the TD Amplify Cabaret series has established its reputation for engaging local artists in conversation with the most pressing cultural, social, and artistic questions of today. It was a natural next step to integrate the series with the TD Incubator program and it has demonstrated success with performances that have challenged audiences with inventive expressions of music, dance, projection art, and spoken word.

Other opportunities for growth and learning include exhibiting their work in the media galleries of Arts Commons and participating in numerous professional development events and workshops. Some members will also engage with Arts Commons Education classes of students who come to Arts Commons as part of Campus Calgary and the Arts Commons Wonders program.

"Having emerging artists interact and teach classes in our building creates incredible moments of connection and learning – not just for the students, but for the emerging artists as well," says Karen Youngberg, Associate Director, Education at Arts Commons. "There is no other place locally where these sorts of connections are possible."

To learn more about the TD Incubator program, visit artscommons.ca/incubator.

For media inquiries, high resolution images, or more information contact:
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Arts Commons is the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada located in the heart of downtown Calgary. 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 inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and equity.

The **TD Incubator program** is designed to support this idea and the artists who are increasingly choosing to move between and blend artistic forms – musicians who make their own films, dancers who are blending movement with visual art, actors who are expanding into spoken word poetry. The possibilities are endless. Each edition of the TD Incubator program will shift slightly according to the guidance of the Incubator Fellow(s). But the season of programming will include these elements: networking, professional development, mentorship and performance & exhibition.

BIOGRAPHIES

Yolanda Sargeant is the Queen of Lo-Fi Soul. A genre that she and her producer **Comrade (Evgeniy)** pioneered after not being able to find an appropriate label that fits their eclectic style. The duo infuses jazz, soul, funk, dancehall, hip-hop, as well as other genres into a unique sound that combines the old with the new. Sargeant's rich vocals take centre stage while Comrade's production takes you on a multi-layered, genre-bending journey from beginning to end. Add some high-profile musicians and features in the mix and you have the Sargeant X Comrade rich formula for their own unique brand of music which has earned them multiple awards in 2021.

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