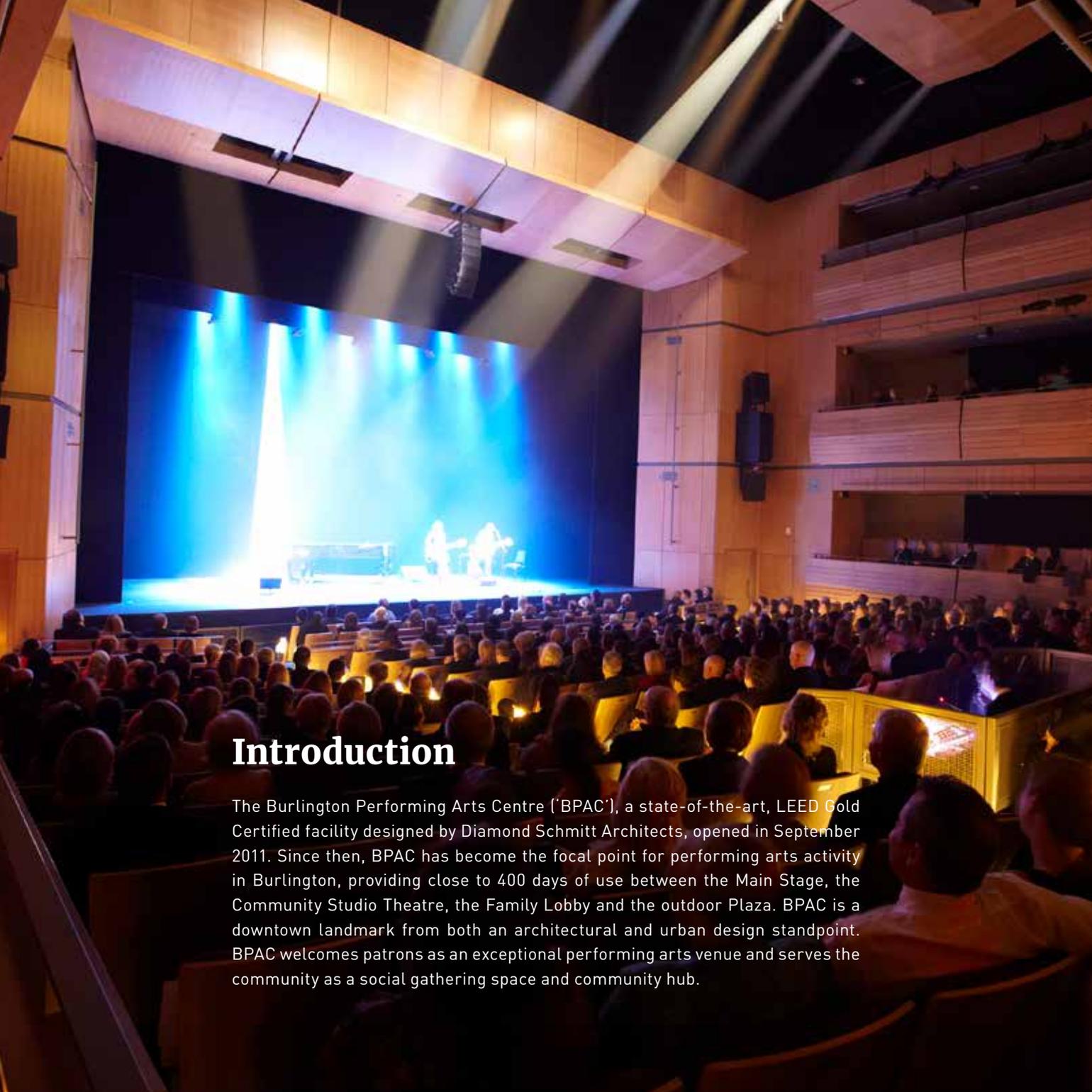




Strategic Plan

2020-2023





Introduction

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre ('BPAC'), a state-of-the-art, LEED Gold Certified facility designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects, opened in September 2011. Since then, BPAC has become the focal point for performing arts activity in Burlington, providing close to 400 days of use between the Main Stage, the Community Studio Theatre, the Family Lobby and the outdoor Plaza. BPAC is a downtown landmark from both an architectural and urban design standpoint. BPAC welcomes patrons as an exceptional performing arts venue and serves the community as a social gathering space and community hub.

Artistic Vision

Many municipal performing arts centres now fulfill the role of a cultural developer in their communities, curating and developing 'Presenting' seasons that bring cultural offerings not met either by commercial rentals or local performing groups. As the presenting field has matured and developed in sophistication, the presenting programs of many municipally supported performing arts centres are moving away from the old model of profit-focused programming and moving toward mission-driven, curated programming aimed at supporting important artistic work and community cultural development.

As Burlington's performing arts centre we play many roles. BPAC is a venue, a presenter, a cultural developer, an educator and a public place. On any given day we host and present artists and performing arts companies from across Canada and around the world. We collaborate with local artists and organizations; we introduce children to their first experiences with the performing arts; we create moments of context that bridge the space between artist and audience, all while ensuring that BPAC remains healthy, sustainable and dynamic.



The Presenting program of The Burlington Performing Arts Centre offers an eclectic mix of over 60 productions in a season inclusive of all genres of artistic activity, as well as educational programs for all ages.

In addition to presenting programs and rentals, both commercial and non-profit, there is a category of aspiring professional artists and small independent arts organizations that are critical to the cultural development of a community. BPAC takes the lead in supporting the growth of these types of organizations as part of our municipal mandate. Many of these groups are unable to afford the high costs of facility rentals and their attendant production costs, so a more flexible and creative partnership is necessary to support this critical type of community cultural development.

BPAC plays a major role in supporting the development of local performing arts organizations and artists. By providing a state-of-the-art facility, superior customer service, organizational infrastructure and technical expertise, we provide an opportunity for Burlington's arts organizations to grow artistically and develop audiences. BPAC also takes an active role in supporting local organizations by offering marketing support as well as more targeted artistic development initiatives.

A mix of events that includes the rental activity of both community and commercial nature, the presentations of performances by BPAC, as well as the support of professional local artists, offer the broadest spectrum of programming which will ensure participation, engagement and involvement by the community.

Municipal performing arts centres also play a key role in community engagement, educational activities and building diversity in their communities. Municipal performing arts centres support and encourage diversity through programming initiatives that reflect the different cultural backgrounds, lifestyles and experiences in their own communities and beyond.

In addition to the positive economic impact that BPAC has within the downtown core, the performing arts contribute to our collective creativity, long considered a component of a competitive local economy. The Burlington Performing Arts Centre will work in partnership with local economic development initiatives.

Our Vision & Our Mission

VISION

To capture the hearts and minds of the community through the power of the performing arts.

The vision is accomplished by:

- Entertaining, engaging and inspiring all of Burlington
- Maintaining active engagement with the whole community
- Taking a leadership role in community cultural development

MISSION

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre offers the best in performing arts to Burlington, nurtures and supports local artists, arts organizations and promoters, and engages the citizens of Burlington in meaningful arts experiences, animating the community and enriching people's lives.

The mission is accomplished by:

- Being Burlington's social and cultural hub for live performance
- Offering a balanced program of touring and local attractions
- Aligning with the City of Burlington's Cultural Action Plan by supporting and enhancing related community goals



Our Values, Beliefs & Our Role

VALUES & BELIEFS

- We believe The Burlington Performing Arts Centre is an integral part of the cultural heart of the community; an energetic catalyst for a vigorous arts sector and a strengthened sense of civic pride and identity
- We believe that our community deserves equitable access to meaningful cultural and artistic experiences, and to a gathering place for the community where the exchange of ideas and creative experiences inspire curiosity and understanding
- We engage and inspire our community through artistic excellence, diverse programming and quality learning experiences
- We believe that the performing arts has the ability to build a more creative and compassionate community
- We believe that bringing greater diversity to our programming will promote tolerance, challenge assumptions and reveal similarities in our community
- We cultivate an organizational culture in which all staff and volunteers are respected, appreciated, valued and recognized
- We maintain fiscal responsibility and financial stability in partnership with the City of Burlington
- We contribute to the economic vitality of Downtown Burlington and the City

OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

- A presenter of quality performing arts programs
- A community hub
- A producer of lasting reciprocal community relationships
- A catalyst for Burlington's artists and arts organizations
- A leader in arts education and inspiration

Our Strategic Goals

The following plan identifies our goals for the organization in support of our mission. These goals are established by the need to be fiscally responsible, while at the same time leveraging opportunities to integrate live performances with learning and participation.

The strategic plan identifies six priority goals to achieve over the next three years:

1. Engage the Community in Meaningful Arts Experiences through Curated Programming Choices
2. Nurture the Local Cultural Leadership by Supporting and Building their Capacity
3. Develop Comprehensive, Deep and Impactful Arts Learning Experiences for All Ages in the Community
4. Demonstrate an Organizational Commitment to Respect, Diversity, Inclusion and Access
5. Sustain and Strengthen the Organizational Capacity and Infrastructure of BPAC
6. Develop and Maintain an Effective Governance Structure



Goal #1

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN MEANINGFUL ARTS EXPERIENCES THROUGH CURATED PROGRAMMING CHOICES

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre Presents contributes to the fulfillment of The Burlington Performing Arts Centre's mission by bringing the best in performing arts to Burlington to perform and engage with the community. We strategically develop and nurture the foundation for a sustainable audience in music, theatre, comedy, dance and family programming. BPAC's presenting season provides Burlington and surrounding communities with direct access to the diversity and richness of Canadian and International work, in a wide variety of genres.

BPAC is a leader in developing the presenting field in Canada by sharing expertise and working co-operatively with artists and arts professionals to support artistic practice and foster greater engagement between artists and the community.

Curating the programming choices requires a process of exchange among audiences, the community and arts professionals. It is a process that helps communities to celebrate, question, participate and reflect on being part of a vibrant civic culture.

Applying a curatorial lens to our activities allows us to engage in long-term planning, engage with our audiences in more meaningful and relevant ways and to be more connected to our community.

Artists who are committed to and skilled at engaging communities in opportunities for learning, exploration and growth are selected for outreach opportunities in our community. Programs are selected to maximize the opportunity to strategically engage with the different communities in Burlington.

To accomplish these important roles in our community, The Burlington Performing Arts Centre believes its mission is to engage the citizens of Burlington through live performances in order to enrich their lives and encourage active participation in civic life. All of our programs and activities are directed to achieving this mission.



Goal #2

NURTURE OUR COMMUNITY ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS BY SUPPORTING AND BUILDING THEIR CAPACITY

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre has a profound impact on the artistic growth and development of our local performing arts community. Burlington has a substantial performing arts community that is reaching its creative and productive capacity in terms of scope, quality and volume of programs and performances it can deliver to the community. The Burlington Performing Arts Centre allows the City's local performing artists and groups to increase their creative capacity, reach new heights of artistic excellence, deliver richer and more diverse performances and ultimately grow their audience.

The City of Burlington has several independent professional theatre companies trying to gain a more solid and sustainable foothold in the community. Community performing arts groups have been strengthened by having new and well-equipped facilities in which to perform and showcase their art. We have seen robust growth in the capacity of these groups to attract an audience, and we have also seen them use BPAC's professional production staff and equipment to improve the quality of their performances.

As part of BPAC's mission to nurture and support local arts producers we have launched an Artist Development Initiative which provides access and opportunities for local artists and arts organizations to showcase their talents to BPAC's established, growing audience base by including them in our Presents Series programming under the 'Live & Local' banner.

Many local emerging professional and non-professional arts organizations are looking for opportunities to perform at BPAC, but cannot afford the rent and production costs and may not attract an audience large enough to financially sustain a performance in the theatre. BPAC is committed to fostering artist development through initiatives like our Live & Local music series. The creation of alternative performing spaces such as the Community Stage in the lobby, and use of the outdoor plaza for programming opportunities, enhances the experience of audiences and provides increased exposure for local artists.



Goal #3

DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE, DEEP AND IMPACTFUL ARTS LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ALL AGES IN THE COMMUNITY

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre's presenting season introduces new and exciting artists who are perhaps unknown to the general public, or whose work is more artistically challenging. By providing enhanced learning opportunities for audience members, the work will become more accessible and audiences can maximize their enjoyment of these performances.

Developing comprehensive K-12 education programs including special school performances, workshops, outreach and industry mentorships are integral to BPAC's programming. This includes a school performance series, curriculum-focused study guides, internships and co-op placements, workshops and professional development opportunities for educators. BPAC recognizes that the performing arts have a proven capacity to facilitate and enhance learning, and we have ensured that our excellent educational program for primary and secondary schools is accessible to all through our Golden Ticket program, which provides complimentary admission to students who would not otherwise be able to participate.

Adult educational opportunities through post-performance talk-backs, pre-performance lectures and masterclasses provide additional contextual information for audiences. Classes and workshops aimed at developing artistic practice for local artists are offered throughout the season.

Goal #4

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO RESPECT, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESS

BPAC welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds and identities. This includes, but is not limited to, members of any sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, social and economic class, educational level, color, immigration status, sex, age, size, family status, political belief, religion, and mental and physical ability. Burlington's Accessibility Advisory Committee was involved during the design of the facility, incorporating accessibility features that benefit patrons, employees and volunteers with disabilities wherever possible.



We believe that art is a fundamental aspect of the human experience that enriches the lives of individuals and communities, fosters empathy and builds essential bridges of understanding. Performing arts centres are uniquely positioned to facilitate engagement between artists and communities via curated programming choices. It is our endeavour to present quality performing arts experiences that open citizens' minds and hearts to the world and the peoples around them. We also strive to remove barriers to participation in the performing arts. We believe that all people deserve access to the arts, and as such inclusivity is integral to all that we do. We actively encourage inclusivity, equity and diversity in our programming

BPAC's commitment to respect, diversity, inclusion and access will continue to guide the organization and will be reflected in our programming, outreach initiatives, recruitment practices and governance. BPAC will continue to conduct Board and staff training on cultural equity, diversity and inclusion. BPAC will also continue to support diversification amongst the Board, staff, volunteers and patrons. BPAC has made a commitment to engage, inspire, challenge and provoke conversations related to diversity, inclusion and access to encourage positive change in the community. Our goal is to facilitate cultural enrichment, understanding and growth and achieve cultural equity in the organization and community at large.

The artistic integrity of an event will not be judged on criteria that is rooted in the dominant culture alone. Removing

barriers for participation in the arts, building diverse audiences and presenting truly inclusive programming requires time and an investment of risk capital. The credibility and effectiveness of the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion will require buy-in from BPAC's staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

Municipal performing arts centres and their presenting programs are seen as a resource to help address community issues where the arts can provide a unique point of access. Whether dealing with mental health, immigration, bullying, issues of tolerance, homophobia, etc., the performing arts can act as a tool and resource in addressing these community priorities through alignment with artistic works that explore these important societal issues. Building partnerships with social service agencies and educational institutions in the community can expand the impact of an arts experience into an in-depth community conversation with positive, wide-ranging impact where the arts can be a catalyst for community change.

BPAC is committed to playing our role in promoting reconciliation between Canada's Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to repair the harm that has been done. BPAC was the first performing arts centre in Canada to become a Downie-Wenjack Fund Legacy Space partner. In 2018 we dedicated a physical space in the Family Lobby where we provide information and encourage dialogue about Indigenous history and reconciliation to further awareness and education.



Goal #5

SUSTAIN AND STRENGTHEN BPAC'S ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Burlington Performing Arts Centre is an organization of operational excellence, functioning in accordance to established policies and characterized by fiscal responsibility, efficiency and an entrepreneurial spirit.

We believe that it is important to be a financially stable organization supported by the City of Burlington: one that is vital, that delivers on our mission, creates public value for our community and can develop the resources to adapt and change.

The key to our ongoing financial stability is our continuing ability to develop revenues from our activities and the community, the strength of our community partnerships, the support of the City of Burlington and growing our organizational capacity.

BPAC strives to achieve financial stability by developing and managing all avenues of earned and non-earned revenue and exercising control of expenses. We continue to identify funding resources through greater corporate sponsorships, memberships and other fundraising initiatives, as well as support through grants and charitable foundations.

BPAC will establish a workplace environment that fosters a high level of staff satisfaction, accomplishment, pride, growth and professional development. We will ensure the vision and goals are clearly stated, understood and measured regularly. We will foster communication and transparency between staff, volunteers, the Board and the community.

Goal #6

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Board of Directors has adopted a set of principles establishing the Board's relationship with management, the Board's mandate and governance process, the obligations of individual Directors to BPAC and the Board's use of committees.

The implementation of BPAC's goals and strategic objectives are monitored and supported by the Executive Director and senior management team, and as appropriate, by the Board of Directors. BPAC ensures that progress toward its goals is reviewed and reported regularly to the Board of Directors. Achievements and community impact are reported annually to all stakeholders, including the City, as part of the ongoing communication commitments made by BPAC, and include feedback from clients, staff, patrons, volunteers and industry colleagues.

The Board of Directors of BPAC provides oversight of the operation of the Centre as administered by management.

Board Relationship With Management

While individual members of the Board may have relationships and connections with members of management and staff (including as volunteers, on committees or project teams, and where special skills or community relationships exist), the formal connection of the board to BPAC's operational organization, achievement and conduct is through the Executive Director.

Only decisions of the entire Board (or if authorized by the Board, decisions of the Executive) are binding on the Executive Director. Individual Board members shall not instruct the Executive Director. Management and Staff are accountable to the Board through the Executive Director.

Board monitoring of the Executive Director's performance will be based on specific job performance targets established and agreed by the Board and the Executive Director.

Board Mandate & Governance Process

The Board's purpose or mandate is to help to ensure, through the development of policies and plans, BPAC achieves its strategic and business goals and objectives. In fulfilling its purpose, the Board's emphasis is to be on:

- Outward vision
- Diversity of opinion
- Strategic leadership
- The appropriate distinction between the roles of the Board and Executive Director
- Collective decisions
- Future focus
- Proactivity

The Board monitors and discusses its process regularly and enforces self-discipline in matters such as attendance, preparation, participation and ensuring adherence to an effective governance model.

It is the responsibility of the Board Chair to ensure the integrity and fulfillment of the Board's governance process, as well as to represent the Board. The Chair is responsible to ensure the Board respects its process and structure.

The Board is to maintain a consistent commitment to ethical, businesslike and lawful conduct.

The Board will invest in its development and governance capacity. Board skills, methods and supports will ensure governance excellence. Costs of governance development will be prudently incurred.

The Board has adopted policies dealing with its relationship with the Executive Director, the responsibilities authority of the Executive Director and its internal dealings.

Board Membership & Committees

Board members shall demonstrate proper use of authority and appropriate decorum.

Board members must maintain unconflicted loyalty to BPAC, an accountability which supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups, or associations with other organizations, or as a beneficiary of BPAC's services. This requires avoidance of conflict of interest with respect to fiduciary responsibilities, and maintenance of and respect for confidentiality. Board members are required to sign and respect a Confidentiality Agreement.

Board committees serve to assist the Board, not to usurp either Board authority or responsibility. Unless specifically authorized, Board committees shall not act for or speak on behalf of the Board. Committees shall not attempt to exercise authority over management or staff.



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