



The 2019/20 fiscal year seems too long ago... writing a message for an annual report is always an exercise in looking in the mirror, but this time it seems more than a little surreal. The fiscal year ending in March 2020 may have concluded in a lockdown, but it certainly didn't start that way.

April 2019 was the start of several new beginnings. Creative Manitoba's relationship with Manitoba Music and Film Training Manitoba was beginning to make some sense and our partnerships continued to grow over the fiscal year. We launched our first ever Canada Council Digital Strategy Fund project – Merging Mindsets – in partnership with New Media Manitoba and Video Pool Media Arts Centre. While these new beginnings flourished, so did our regular programming and the activity in our shared space at 245 McDermot maintained a hectic pace, with a record number of events in our classroom.

Under our new funding agreement with the Province of Manitoba, we settled in, working and learning from our partners in music and film. It took some time, but we began to understand what unique work each organization did and where it made sense to collaborate. It was often easier to see our differences, but it was clearly more rewarding when we found ways to work together – especially when we could connect our members – reaching across the creative spectrum to engender peer networks outside of the usual.

The Merging Mindsets project was a learning curve, engaging with two new partners, “exploring the digital tech in art and the art in digital tech while connecting the people in between”. We held round tables and a Think Tank in order to better understand the challenges and

innovations offered by digital tech. We offered a series of workshops that featured artists working in different tech settings, delving into the intersections of art and tech. We also presented the Merging Mindsets Conference – the first event of its kind in Winnipeg. Well, we almost presented the conference, landing as it did on March 13 and 14. We were able to hold day one with a limited audience, but day 2 was shut down amidst the first COVID cases in Manitoba.

Merging Mindsets isn't quite done yet. We are looking forward to releasing a series of mini documentaries – highlighting both the conference and also a few tech / art projects that have been created over the past few months. You can revisit the workshop series on our YouTube channel.

It seems like a long time since we did the things we did in 2019, like going to the office, hosting classes and events like First Fridays, engaging in real, and unmasked, interactions with strangers as we appreciated art together. It feels like it will be a long time before we can gather again. In the meantime, we need to find new ways to work together while we ride out this crazy and isolating time.

At Creative Manitoba we continue to support the arts, culture and creative communities in our home. We will be here, at a distance – committed to building virtual programs and facilitating supports like our weekly webinar series, our new online coaching program, and an online version of the Art of Managing Your Career.

Warm Regards,
Lyn Stienstra, Board Chair
Thom Sparling, Executive Director

Highlighted event:

Smoke Signals 2

In October 2019 we hosted the 2nd annual Smoke Signals Indigenous Communication Conference - a gathering of Indigenous artists and art leaders. Hosted by Kim Wheeler and David McLeod, the keynote was delivered by Dr Niigaan Sinclair with guest artists Christi Belcourt, Isaac Murdoch, Lori Blondeau, and KC Adams. The event was attended by **122** participants including 24 guests from around the world with the Canadian Network Of Arts And Learning.



Creative Manitoba strengthens, represents and connects Manitoba's arts and creative industries.

Strengthen through educational activity

- **855** participants in educational programs for independent artists and creative entrepreneurs, arts and cultural organizations and teaching artists
- Online training delivered to artists in over **23** rural communities throughout Manitoba and **7** out of province

Represent through awareness activity

- **156** audience members at a variety of outreach presentations by Creative Manitoba
- **680** individual artists responded to Artist Registry
- **119** Careers in the Arts Youth Mentorship Program participants, including **45** mentors and **74** youth mentees

Connect through engagement activity

- **364** people have engaged with Creative Manitoba through a variety of networking events

As of March 2020

- **206** individual and **91** organizational members
- **2300** Creative Connections e-news subscribers
- **3900** Twitter followers @Creative__MB
- **3000** Facebook/**760** Indigenous page followers
- **1900** Instagram followers @creativemanitoba

Creative Manitoba strengthens, represents and connects Manitoba's arts and creative industries.

Our entrepreneurship training and mentorship opportunities teach artists how to sustain themselves creatively and financially. Our arts specific management training increases productivity and profitability in arts and cultural organizations.

We promote the value of the arts. In support of this work, we create and publish directories of artists and creative workers, conduct research and share the findings through educational seminars and outreach.

Our creative coworking space supports business growth for independent creative entrepreneurs and creates a focal point for the arts and creative industries in Manitoba.

We unite and engage employers, workers, educators, professional associations and government in a strategic alliance, enabling the arts and cultural sector to thrive.