



TORONTO
BIENNIAL
OF ART

2022 EVALUATION REPORT

Bespoke
CULTURAL COLLECTIVE



Land Acknowledgement

As the Toronto Biennial of Art team, we are accountable to upholding our responsibility to the lands we are privileged to work upon. Our 2022 Biennial stretched from the Small Arms Inspection Building in Mississauga in the West, to the Port Lands in the East, from Sugar Beach in the South, to Arsenal Contemporary Art in the North; our events and activities would not be possible without the care that the stewards of these lands have given for thousands of years.

We acknowledge, first and foremost, that all of these spaces are located on land that has been a site of human activity for more than 12,000 years. This land is the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe peoples, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Their stories, beliefs, and concepts about the land and the water continue to guide and inspire us. These lands are now home to many Indigenous peoples from across the globe.

We understand the role of settler-colonial privilege and that this land acknowledgment cannot undo immensely violent histories against Indigenous peoples on these lands. As a team, and in close collaboration with artists, partners, colleagues, and our board, we continue working to dismantle the legacy of colonial systems that impact all aspects of our practices, to the best of our ability. Through our participation in this work and in holding ourselves accountable, we carry forward a commitment to listen, (un)learn, and grow.

We honour the individual histories and knowledge that every participant, colleague, guest, and visitor brought with them to the Biennial by producing exhibitions and programs that challenge us to do better. With participants from around the world, and tens of thousands of people taking part to witness their work and their words, we are thankful to be surrounded by all the teachings and wisdom contributed as part of this gathering.

We acknowledge our physical surroundings, from the many buildings and outdoor spaces that housed our exhibition and events to all that lies beneath, including the rocks and soil. The land below our feet was shaped and carved, after all, by the movement of prehistoric glacial ice sheets and running water. We recognize the many lost rivers below us that vein across the city, continually moving water south. These rivers connect us all, physically and psychically, to the lake and its tributaries.

We acknowledge the trees and plants that surround the sites, tracing their root systems up toward the surface, as well as the grass, plants, insects, animals, fungi, and microbial beings that live beside us, sharing the city and the lake. This expansive constellation of beings, both human and not, are always in relation, and we thank them all for being here.

Finally, we direct our intentions to the sky. We acknowledge the clouds, moon, sun, and stars, whose light has made this fantastic journey across space and time.

This Land Acknowledgement has been developed over a period of two years with the consultation and guidance of Ange Loft, and subsequently, with the wisdom of Camille Georgeson-Usher, in collaboration with Candice Hopkins, Ilana Shamoon, Katie Lawson, and Tairone Bastien.

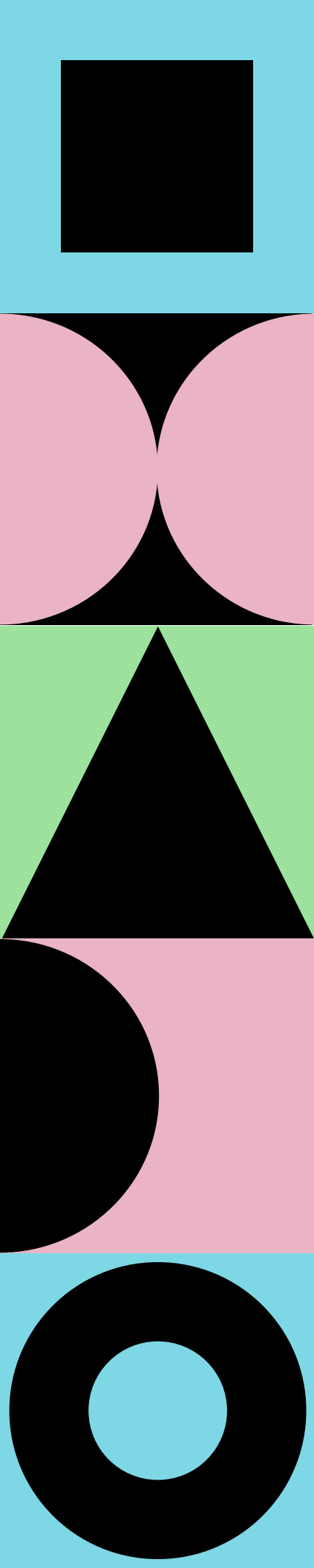
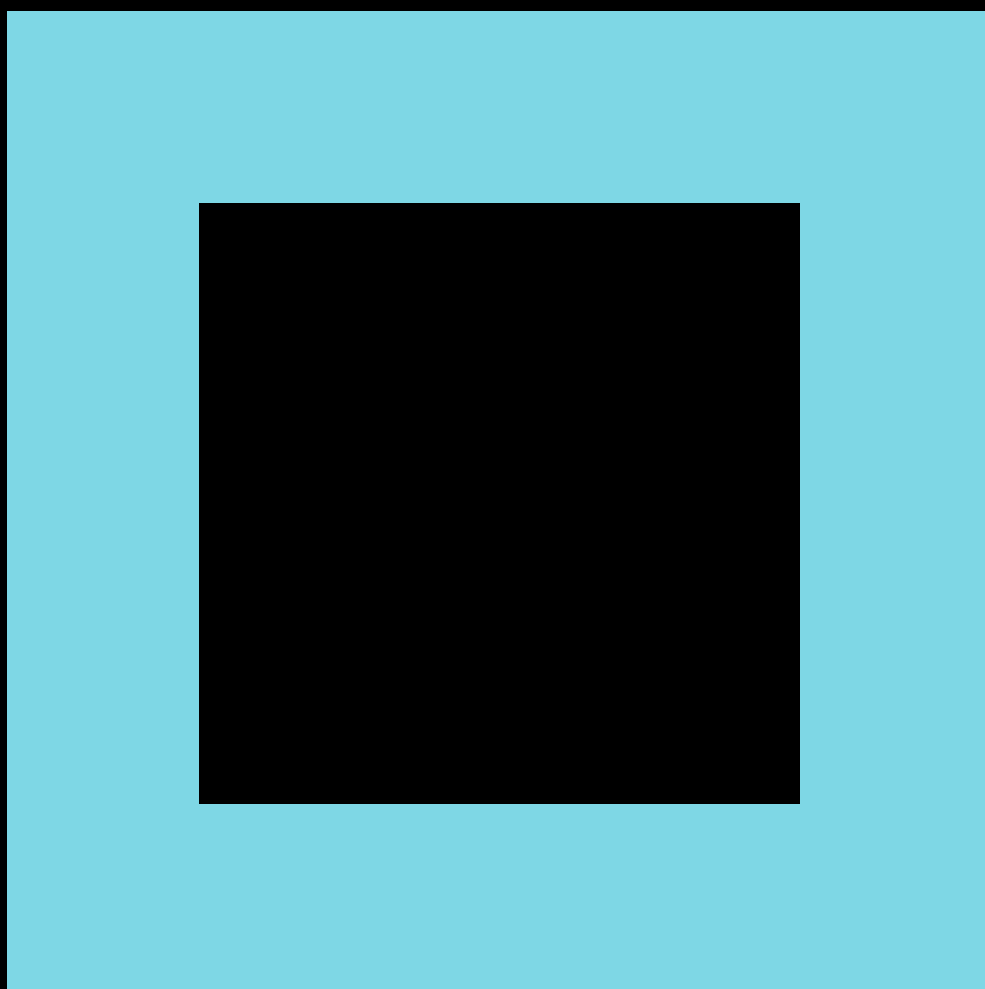


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1 INTRODUCTION



Executive Director's Introduction

I am so proud to share this report, which captures the impact of the second 2022 edition of the Toronto Biennial of Art: *What Water Knows, The Land Remembers*. In this edition, our curatorial team, Candice Hopkins, Katie Lawson, and Tairone Bastien, along with Curatorial Fellows Chiedza Pasipanodya and Sebastian De Line, created a biennial that speaks directly to the many facets of Toronto's contexts, geography, and culture that inform what our city is today.

This Biennial was built during some of the most challenging years in recent memory. In January 2021, we made the extremely difficult decision to postpone the second Biennial by six months due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this complex context, I knew we needed to maintain our priorities: keep artists inspired, keep working with communities, keep donors and supporters informed, and, most importantly, as a people-focused organization, keep the team employed.

In these times of great upheaval and reflection, I found myself thinking about how we can best show up for our community. We were working in the midst of a climate reckoning, a time in which Truth and Reconciliation felt increasingly urgent, and during what felt like a tipping point in our collective acknowledgment of, and action to address, our history of systemic racism – all of which was compounded by a global pandemic. We knew that to lead meant directing resources to the careful and focused work required to sustain a supportive, equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist organization. I have so much gratitude for my team, board members, colleagues, and trusted professionals who supported this journey. I feel proud of what we have accomplished together and remain committed to ensuring that we always ground our work in these principles.

At the beginning of the pandemic, a friend and donor told us that the Biennial could be a beacon of hope, a role we took very seriously as we continued with so many unknowns. As an organization we needed, and were expected, to play a significant role in the city's recovery by bringing artists, people, and communities together again.

Our goal is and will always be to make the biennial that Toronto needs. The 2022 Biennial was a moment of inclusion, of kinships new and old, and of deep reflection for our city. It was also a bold and thoughtful exhibition that explored the world's most pressing issues and sought to present new visions for our future from voices that have for too long been marginalized and silenced. It was a warm welcome back for many to our city. It was an invitation to experience art together again after so much time apart. It was also a celebration of what is possible when we dream together.

Over the many years of my Biennial work, and ever so deeply this year, I have been humbled and inspired by our team, artists, partners, colleagues, and trusted donors who have stayed the course with us. I have immense gratitude for you all. Thank you to each of you that helped to make the 2022 Biennial possible.

Sincerely,



Patrizia Libralato
Executive Director

About TBA 2022

The Toronto Biennial of Art was held from March 26–June 5, 2022. Its mission is to make contemporary art accessible to everyone. For 10 weeks every two years, local, national, and international Biennial artists transform Toronto and its partner regions with free exhibitions, performances, and learning opportunities. Grounded in diverse local contexts, the Biennial’s city-wide programming inspires individuals, engages communities, and contributes to global conversations.

The Toronto Biennial of Art first launched in 2019 and was both a popular and critical success. The Biennial provides expanded understandings of contemporary art practices and is building a legacy of free, inclusive, and accessible contemporary arts programming in Toronto, Mississauga, and their surrounding communities. As conversations about Truth and Reconciliation as well as inclusion, equity, and accessibility continue to evolve, the Biennial is committed to developing new ways of seeing and listening.

This second edition of a two-part Biennial, entitled *What Water Knows, the Land Remembers*, drew from histories sedimented in and around Toronto, revealing entangled narratives and ecologies across time and space. Exhibition and programming sites for the 2022 Biennial moved inland from the shoreline, following the tributaries, above ground and hidden, which shape this place. Situated alongside the Great Lakes, the world’s largest fresh water system, the event foregrounded the water to attune itself to ecologies, adaptations, a sense of time, and ecological cycles.

The COVID-19 Pandemic Context

The devastating effects of a long lasting global pandemic cannot be overemphasized and have been especially impactful to the culture and tourism sector. In 2022, as this latest iteration of the Biennial launched, the arts and culture sector remained amongst the hardest hit industries within Canada.¹ As lockdown procedures were gradually lifted in Ontario, simultaneously with the Biennial’s opening, the public was only just starting to ease back into attending public events.

Destination Toronto’s pandemic-related *Visitor Economic Study* identified that in the first year of the pandemic the city had lost 463 events, attendance had dropped by 380,000 people, and overall tourism-related revenue dropped by \$8.35 billion.² This overall decline in tourism, attendance, and revenue continues to present challenges for major cultural events with numbers expected to gradually recover over the next three to five years.³ The Biennial was one of the first and only public events to activate the city in the spring of 2022. Today, participation in the arts is still recovering. As of June 2022, only 41% of Ontarians had returned to indoor art events, further illustrating the long-term negative impact that COVID-19 has had on cultural attendance.⁴

Success metrics for an arts-based evaluation report tend to look at economic, cultural, and social impact, as well as the level of tourism generated and overall attendance numbers. It is important to acknowledge that, due to the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19, the overall arts and culture sector within Canada has significantly changed since the Biennial’s inaugural year in 2019. The data in this report should be understood in relation to our present day context. Efforts have been made to contextualize our research using pandemic data, comparables and benchmarking throughout this report.

1. Taylor, Kate “When the music’s over: COVID-19 decimated the arts in Canada, and the worst may be yet to come,” *Globe and Mail*, March 11, 2021.

2. This analysis is from Destination Toronto’s Visitor Economy Study released in late 2019, produced by Tourism Economics and done in partnership with the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

3. <https://www.colleendillen.com/2021/01/20/market-potential-by-quarter-in-2021-projected-attendance-to-us-cultural-entities-data/>

4. <http://www.businessandarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022-2100-Business-for-the-Arts-February-Tracking-Populated-Report-with-tabs.pdf>

2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

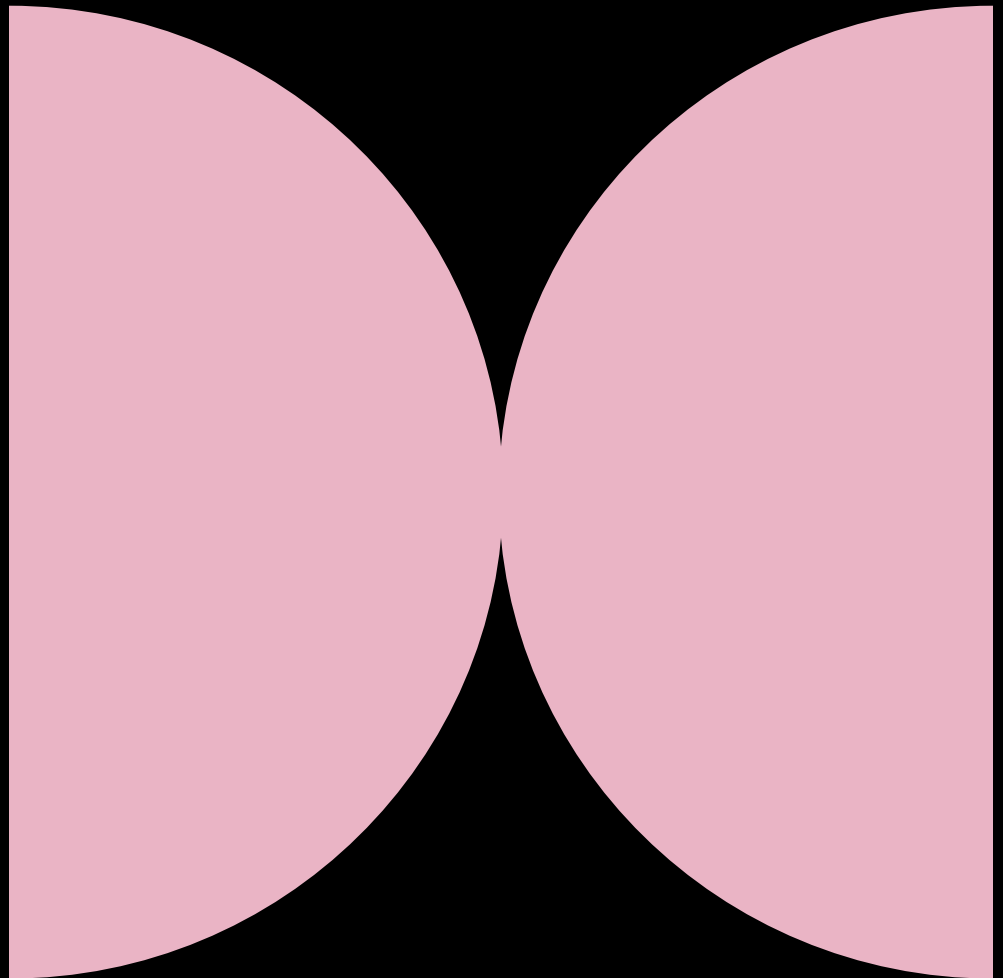




Image Caption:
Ange Loft, Jill Carter, Martha Steigman, and Victoria Freeman of the Talking Treaties Collective, *A Treaty Guide for Torontonians* Book Launch, June 5, 2022. Program held at Small Arms Inspection Building as part of Toronto Biennial of Art 2022. Photography: Rebecca Tisdelle-Macias.

The purpose of this Evaluation Report is to:

1. Continue to collect, document, and analyze foundational data
2. Report back and show accountability to partners and the public
3. Understand the Biennial's unique impact, locally and beyond
4. Enable the perspectives of artists, collaborators and community members to be heard

This evaluation report marks the second time that external cultural consultants, Bespoke Collective (Bespoke), have been tasked with delivering an independent impact report. Bespoke developed an evaluation framework, conducted key research, synthesized feedback, and reviewed key data collected by the Biennial team.

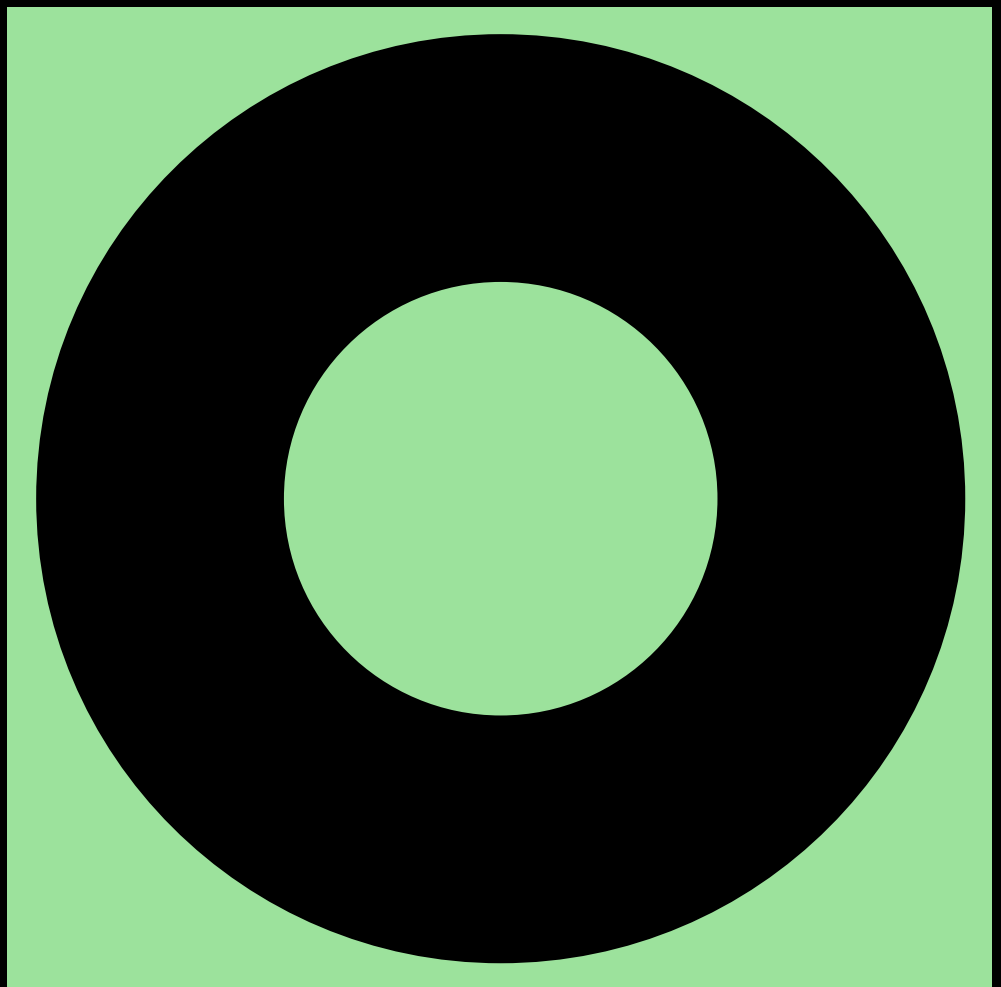
More specifically, we conducted artist surveys and visitor surveys, convened a staff reflection session, and also conducted one-on-one interviews with partners and collaborators. From a desk research standpoint, we looked at recent culture research conducted during the pandemic, and benchmarked this Biennial against other cultural events and biennials. Furthermore, the Biennial team supplemented our research by collecting, synthesizing, and sharing: attendance numbers; educational programming data; market research; and, the organization's financials. We synthesized these data sources to calculate TREIM (economic impact) and overall visits, as well as to assess changing audience demographics.

In this report, we continue to analyze: who visited the Biennial; what constituted a typical visit; and, which key motivators drove attendance. Based on the culmination of our research, we identified five key areas of impact that include the extent to which the 2022 Toronto Biennial of Art:

1. Supported Toronto's pandemic recovery
2. Celebrated and centred all artists
3. Made the visual arts accessible to a wider public
4. Supported Indigenous placekeeping
5. Raised the bar on the arts as a catalyst for placemaking
6. Developed innovative learning resources and experiences

3

KEY FINDINGS & IMPACTS



3

THE BIENNIAL BY THE NUMBERS

153,835

Visits

72

Artists, Participants,
and Performers

23

Commissioned
artworks

9

Venues

22,262

Top attendance for
a single art event
(Judy Chicago's *A
Tribute to Toronto*
at Sugar Beach)

44

School groups
visited TBA

1,000

First print run of
*A Treaty Guide
for Torontonians*
sold out

3.6

Average number
of sites visited

61%

First time TBA
visitors

87

Partners

5

Artist recipients
were awarded
a total of \$40,000
in prizes

88%

Visitors believe
that a free TBA is
important

80%

of exhibition artists
identify as BIPOC

88%

Visitors felt TBA
made contemporary
art more accessible
and inclusive

80%

Felt TBA centred
and supported
BIPOC artists

22%

Visitors engaged in
public and learning
programs

\$13M+

Total Economic
Impact

330

Jobs Created

21

Countries covered
the Biennial in
over 350 stories

175M+

Media Impressions



Image caption:
Andrea Carlson, *Cast a Shadow*,
2021. Installation view at
72 Perth Ave, Toronto Biennial
of Art 2022. Photography:
Rebecca Tisdelle-Macias.
Co-commissioned by the
Toronto Biennial of Art and
FRONT International Cleveland
Triennial for Contemporary Art.

Overview of the Visitor

This section of the evaluation report provides a basic understanding of who attended the 2022 Biennial, and captures key shifts from the Biennial in 2019. Questions addressed in this section include:

1. Who was the visitor?
2. What did a visit look like?
3. Why did visitors attend?

The data for this section draws from a digital visitor survey that received 370 responses. With a confidence level of 95%, the findings have a margin of error of only 5%. Based on this calculation we assume that the survey results are highly indicative of “typical” Biennial visitors.

WHO WAS THE VISITOR?

This iteration of the Biennial attracted a diverse and intergenerational mix of visitors across a range of life stages – from students to retirees. A high proportion were local and had never been to a biennial before. Similar to the 2019 survey, visitors tended to be highly educated and from a mix of income levels.⁵ The 2022 Biennial effectively attracted new audiences, people already connected to the cultural sector, and those who were easing back into the arts, just as most pandemic restrictions were being lifted in Ontario. Based on the surveys:

- 61% were first time visitors who had never been to the Biennial before
- 32% of visitors were artists or culture workers
- 8% of visitors stated that the Biennial was their first in-person outing since the last COVID-19 lockdown

5. Please refer to TBA's 2019 Evaluation Report for reference.

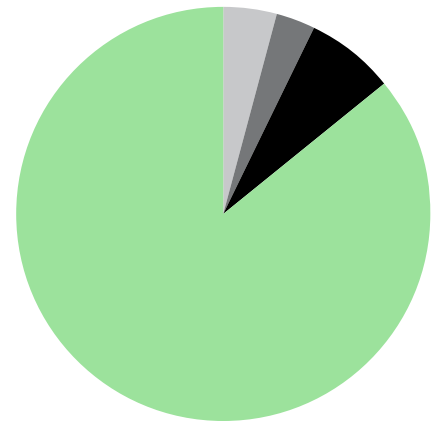


Image caption:
Crowd view for Judy Chicago,
A Tribute to Toronto, June 4,
2022. Exhibition performance
held at Sugar Beach as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Rebecca
Tisdelle-Macias.

The Biennial predominantly attracted a local audience with 86% coming from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Tourists who visited the Biennial include 7% from Ontario but outside the GTA, 3% from across Canada, and 4% international visitors. The 87% drop in tourism-related travel from 2019 can be largely attributed to a decline in international and domestic travel and tourism throughout the pandemic.

Origins

- 86% Greater Toronto Area
- 7% Rest of Ontario
- 3% Across Canada
- 4% International



6. Based on the 2016
Census data, Statistics Canada,
www12.statcan.gc.ca

Survey respondents ranged in age from 18 to 65 years old, with the average visitor skewing slightly younger than in 2019. The largest proportion of respondents (29%) were between the ages of 25 and 34 years old and were broadly representative of the ethno-cultural diversity found within Toronto's population.⁶

Ages

- 6% 18–24
- 29% 25–34
- 22% 35–44
- 16% 45–54
- 12% 55–64
- 12% 65+

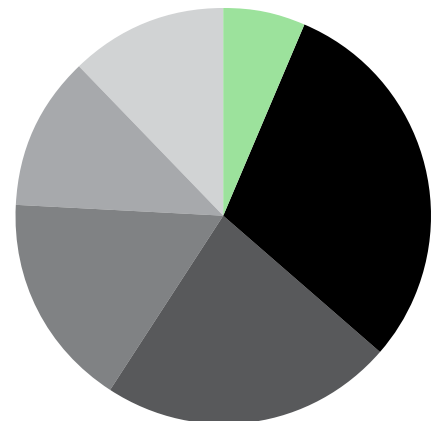




Image caption:
Exhibition installation view
of 72 Perth Ave as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Toni
Hafkenscheid.

WHAT WAS A TYPICAL VISIT LIKE?

With 9 sites to visit as part of a 72 day Biennial experience, 63% of respondents visited multiple sites over the duration of the Biennial. On average, respondents visited 3.6 different locations, with over half (57%) visiting different venues within the same day. Many partners noted in interviews that the close proximity of venues to one another encouraged visitors to explore neighbourhoods more deeply.

The top three Biennial sites included: 72 Perth Avenue (66% attended), Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto (61% attended), and Arsenal Contemporary Art Toronto (46% attended). The Biennial tracked 153,835 total visits, which was less than the inaugural year but consistent with declines in attendance levels at biennials globally throughout 2020 and 2021. Comparable biennial events held during the pandemic also saw decreases in attendance: Momenta (Montreal's 2021 biennial) reported 104,250 in-person visits (43% decrease from 2018); the Liverpool Biennial reported 164,313 visits (75% decrease from 2018); and, Prospect.5 (New Orleans-based triennial) reported 128,890 visits.

Sites Visited

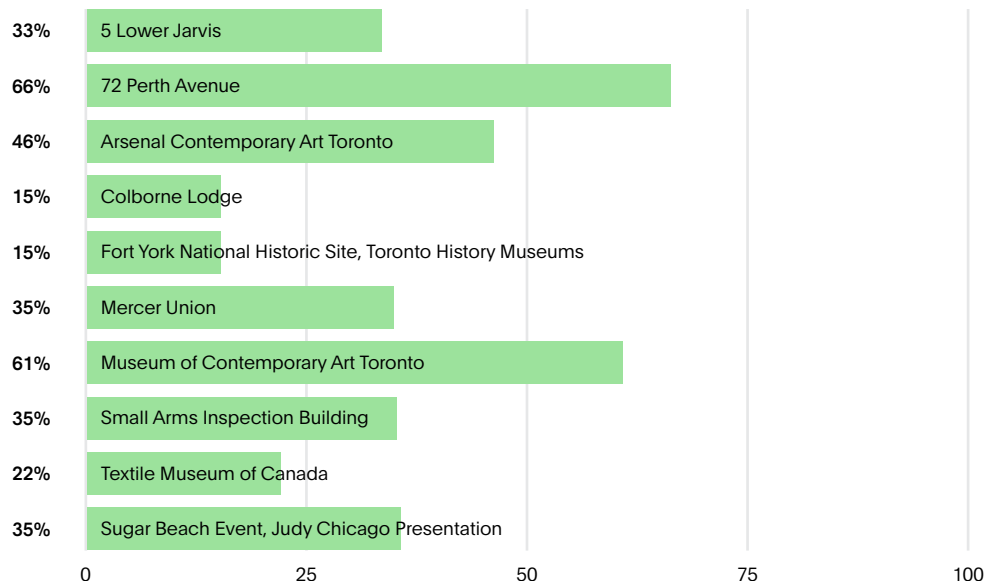




Image caption:
Toronto Biennial of Art
Closing BBQ, June 5, 2022.
Event held at Small Arms
Inspection Building as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Rebecca
Tisdelle-Macias.

7. Survey respondents were
provided the following
response options: very poor,
poor, good or very good.

WHY DID VISITORS ATTEND?

Based on the survey data, motivators for attending the Biennial in 2022 are similar to what we heard from visitors in 2019, even with the slight shift in demographics. Major reasons for attending include:

- 61% to expand my perspective and learn something new
- 54% to actively participate in the arts
- 51% to have fun
- 42% to immerse myself in an experience
- 40% to inspire my creativity

These findings remain consistent with responses from 2019, with the top five reasons ranking in the same order. When it comes to visitors' satisfaction levels with the Biennial experience⁷:

- 80% found venues and locations to be good or very good
- 79% found the Biennial did a good job of reflecting the diversity of the city
- 79% found the overall Biennial experience was good or very good

Key Motivators

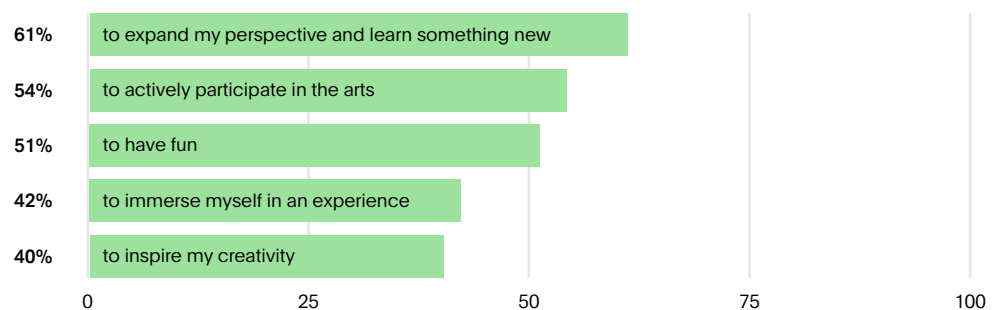




Image caption:
Exhibition installation
view of Small Arms
Inspection Building as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Toni
Hafkenscheid.

Key Impacts

1. TBA STRENGTHENS TORONTO'S PANDEMIC RECOVERY

The Biennial opened at a time when the public was eager, yet cautious, to re-engage with cultural life in the city. As Patrick Tobin, General Manager, Economic Development and Culture Division for the City of Toronto, points out, "[The Biennial] was very important in helping to signal a reopening of Toronto." The Biennial welcomed people back into the city in ways that felt comfortable, joyful, and socially connected. Despite opening in such an uncertain and challenging time:

- 85% of artists and 79% of visitors felt that the Biennial positively contributed to the post-pandemic recovery of the city
- 85% of visitors felt that the Biennial improved their mood
- 73% of visitors felt more socially connected after going to the Biennial

Many visitors reflected on how the Biennial enabled them to return to the arts after so much uncertainty at an individual, social, and citywide level. A number of visitors commented on what the Biennial brought to the city amidst the pandemic:

“

“The Biennial helped me get out of my extremely limited COVID-induced social rut. It reminded me that Toronto is a world class city.”

—
Visitor

“

“Diversity, creativity and an appreciation for the arts especially in a post-pandemic world. It was great to see artists and attendees come out to support each other. It was very uplifting.”

—
Visitor

“

“I remember playing in the blue plastic outdoor area at one of the exhibits. It was the first time I felt so free and joyful since the pandemic.”

—
Visitor

3



Image caption:
Opening Event, March 24,
2022. Event held at 72 Perth
Ave as part of Toronto Biennial
of Art 2022. Photography:
Tom Sandler.

The Biennial team carefully planned to safely welcome visitors into a pandemic context, exemplifying the positive role that the arts can play in the recovery of a city. As Patrizia Libralato, Executive Director, explains, “The Biennial represents resilience. Art still matters, we’re still here. The Biennial shows the resiliency of artists, arts workers, and philanthropists. It’s something that rallies people together. This is the power of art and what art is supposed to do.” This sentiment was also shared by partners and visitors:

“

“The Biennial brought our city a reason to celebrate and return to sharing cultural experiences with each other.”

—
Visitor

“

“[The Biennial] feels like a full city moment ... It creates impetus for people to engage outside of an [art museum] that is already established. I think those new points of entry are really exciting and important.”

—
**Corrie Jackson,
Senior Curator, RBC**

“

“This was a return to the way we used to do things and there was excitement.”

—
**Katherine Hebb,
Marketing Director,
Waterfront BIA**

8. <https://capacoa.ca/en/2021/01/2020-the-year-one-in-four-art-worker-lost-their-job/>

9. CAPACOA, January 15, 2021.

Throughout the pandemic, job security became more precarious for artists and arts workers, with one in four arts, entertainment, and recreation workers losing their jobs in 2020.⁸ This amounts to 114,400 artists, technicians, marketing staff, arts administrators, and culture workers who could no longer earn a living through the arts.⁹ In this challenging time, the Biennial converted many independent contractors into staff, ensuring more financial stability for its team. Further, as a result of the Biennial’s operations, economic impact models indicate that over 300 full-time equivalent jobs were created, across arts, culture, tourism, and their supportive industries. A staff member commented, “There is a culture of care here which impacts everyone connected to the Biennial.”



Image caption:
Ange Loft with Jumbliies
Theatre & Arts, *Dish Dances
Movement Workshop*, a *Talking
Treaties* movement education
initiative, May 21, 2022.
Program held at Fort York
National Historic Site as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Rebecca
Tisdelle-Macias.

2. TBA CELEBRATES AND CENTRES ALL ARTISTS

At a time when the arts is still struggling to rebound from closures and the pandemic, the Biennial played a vital role in supporting local and international artists, educators, curators, and culture workers. Bespoke conducted an artist survey that received 34 responses from 72 participating artists to gain a deeper understanding of their experience and perspective. Overall, **97% of artists acknowledged that the Biennial made a positive contribution to their work.** Some of the ways they qualified this impact included:

- 99% Connected to a new audience
- 82% Developed new artwork because of the Biennial
- 73% Expanded their career skills and built new capacities
- 88% Feel the Biennial strengthened the local arts community

As a commissioning Biennial, 23 new exhibition artworks were created as well as 17 new public programming and educational projects, enabling works—both big and small—to come to life. This commissioning model brought much needed financial opportunities for artists at a time when the arts sector was struggling. Newly commissioned works included Biennial audience favourite Lawrence Abu Hamdan’s *45th Parallel*, a powerful film exploring borders set at the Haskell Free Library and Opera House—a unique space that straddles the jurisdictions of Canada and the United States.¹⁰ This work was commissioned in collaboration with Mercer Union and will travel to reach an even wider global audience at Spike Island (UK) and Western Front (Vancouver). Sam Egan, from Jumbliies Theatre & Arts, commented on how the commissioning of a community-driven series of *Dish Dances* workshops conceived for TBA 2022 made an impact: “As an arts organization, when you get a commission and have dedicated resources – that is a gamechanger.”

With the Biennial opening just two days after many citywide pandemic restrictions were lifted, this economic investment came at a critical point when many local arts and culture organizations remained closed. The Biennial resulted in an economic impact of more than \$13 million for the City of Toronto and generated more than \$6 million in visitor spending.¹¹ The Biennial team also committed to ensuring equitable compensation for participating artists, by creating standardized rates that levelled the playing field across emerging and established, as well as local and international artists.

10. Lawrence Abu Hamdan was the recipient of the 2022 TBA Audience Prize, which recognizes an outstanding artistic contribution to the Biennial exhibition and is decided by a public voting process.

11. Refer to TREIM economic impact study in appendix for further details.



Image caption:
Lawrence Abu Hamdan,
45th Parallel, 2022.
Installation view at Mercer
Union, Toronto Biennial
of Art 2022. Photography:
Toni Hafkenscheld.
Courtesy of the artist.

According to the artist surveys:

- 75% agreed that the Biennial provided new opportunities for the arts workforce
- 84% agreed that the Biennial fairly compensated artists and culture workers
- 82% agreed the Biennial invested in capacity building for artists, in particular artists from underserved populations
- 91% found the Biennial gave their work local visibility and exposure
- 70% found the Biennial gave their work national visibility and exposure

When artists were invited to describe their experiences, there was an overall sense that the Biennial had made them feel valued and supported. Comments included:

“

“For me it was a very pleasant, enriching experience, full of surprises.”

—
Artist

“

“The team took time to listen to my needs.”

—
Artist

“

“Everybody I worked with was supportive and a joy to work with.”

—
Artist

“

“I was treated with welcoming and creative engagement. I was treated with trust and respect. I felt my ideas [were] received and encouraged.”

—
Artist

“

“[The Biennial] elevates the emerging artists that it works with. Importantly, it brings people into the city—other arts workers, curators, collectors, and new audiences—to be a part of cultural dialogues... [The Biennial] is really important to supporting international, Canadian... and Toronto artists.”

—
Corrie Jackson, Senior Curator, RBC

“

“I felt very taken care of and respected as an artist. The team was thorough and thoughtful in their communications and took care of my questions and needs.”

—
Artist

3



Image caption:
Exhibition installation
view of Small Arms
Inspection Building as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Toni
Hafkenscheid.

In addition to strengthening the overall arts ecosystem and economy, the Biennial worked hard to celebrate a diverse group of artists and artistic practices as well as to redress the historic underrepresentation of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Colour) artists within the arts sector. When looking at the selected artists:

- 75% Identify as BIPOC
- 30% Identify as Indigenous
- 50% Identify as women

For the 2022 Biennial, a Curatorial Fellowship Program was established that engaged two emerging Curatorial Fellows: Chiedza Pasipanodya and Sebastian De Line. The Program provided these Fellows access to mentorship and resources to curate works for the Biennial exhibition, as well as public and learning programs. This initiative further enabled the amplification of diverse artist voices and emerging practices.

Based on both the artist and visitor survey data:

- 90% of artists agreed that the Biennial collaborated with a diverse community of artists, in particular underrepresented and BIPOC artists
- 84% of artists agreed that the Biennial collaborated with a diverse community of Indigenous knowledge keepers and BIPOC arts leaders
- 80% of visitors agreed that this Biennial centred and supported BIPOC artists

A number of artists, partners, visitors, and staff talked about the importance of selecting a range of artists who were representative of Toronto and reflected the Biennial's ongoing work to dismantle colonial systems of power. Comments included:

“

“[The Biennial] was very representative of where Toronto is at in terms of thinking about contemporary art...It was a priority... to feature [a] balanced selection of creatives, internationally and locally, with a significant inclusion of BIPOC and Indigenous artists.”

—
**Kenneth Montague,
Wedge Curatorial Projects**

“

“[The Biennial brought to our city] an appreciation of the contextual layers to the city (Indigenous, Black, diasporic, immigrant) as a counter to the white colonial patriarchal hegemony of Canadian and North American culture.”

—
Visitor

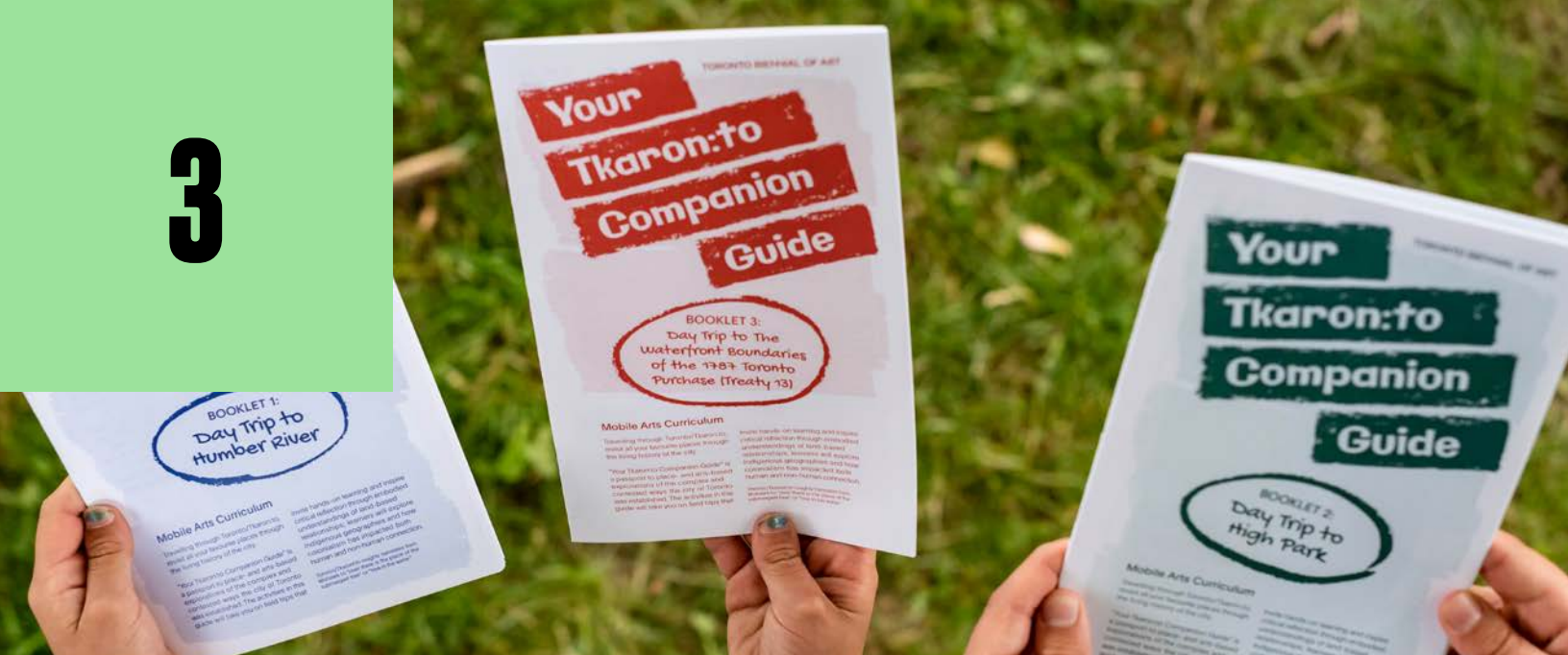


Image caption:
Mobile Arts Curriculum
materials. Photography:
Rebecca Tisdelle-Macias

3. TBA SUPPORTS INDIGENOUS PLACEKEEPING

The Biennial also played an important role in supporting Indigenous placekeeping. The foundations for this were set in motion at the inception of the Biennial when Ange Loft (Kahnawà:ke Kanien'kehá:ka) was commissioned in 2018 to create a resource, originally titled *The Toronto Indigenous Context Brief*. This was updated, expanded upon, and renamed *Indigenous Context and Concepts for Toronto* in 2021. This research, in conjunction with other Talking Treaties Collective-led projects, contributed to the 2022 publication *A Treaty Guide for Torontonians* (co-published by TBA and Jumblies Theatre & Arts in partnership with Art Metropole). Tracing the intercultural roots of treaty relationships in the place we now call Toronto, this book provides treaty awareness, land-based activities, theatrical exercises, and creative prompts that support taking up treaty responsibilities. Supporting this work in the context of a biennial is a precedent-setting approach for curating on Indigenous lands and ensures that TBA remains grounded in place.

In 2022, the Biennial continued to support Indigenous placekeeping through free public educational tours, performances, and workshops and collaborative partnerships with Indigenous artists and Indigenous-led organizations. Visitors, artists, and partners noted the importance and centrality of Indigenous themes and artists. **Based on the survey, 71% of visitors felt that the Biennial strengthened Indigenous placekeeping within the city.** In the staff reflection session, one team member remarked that, within the arts ecosystem, “nearly everyone who came wanted to know about Ange [Loft’s] Context Brief and the curatorial framework being built on land-based learnings.”

Indigenous artists were presented throughout the Biennial’s exhibition and programs in ways that partner Robert Durocher, Vice Principal at the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, described as, “thoughtful, intentional, and collaborative ... We learn about truth and engaging in reconciliation through listening to and learning from our First Nation, Métis, and Inuit artists and communities.” The Biennial created meaningful educational opportunities that invited students and teachers into virtual and physical exhibition spaces to explore the work of Indigenous artists. For example, TBA showcased the work of Inuit women artists through its exhibition ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ *Double Vision: Jessie Oonark, Janet Kigusiuq and Victoria Mamnguqsualuk*, which was presented in partnership with the Textile Museum of Canada. This unique project foregrounded Inuit knowledge and encouraged cultural exchange through artistic and educational activities.



Image caption:
Visitor viewing ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅ
ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ Victoria
Mamnguqsualuk (1930–
2016), *Qamani'tuaq* (Baker
Lake), *Woman with Too
Many Children*, 2001; wool
felt appliqué and cotton
embroidery thread on
wool duffel; 129.5 × 147
cm. Installation view at the
Textile Museum of Canada,
Toronto Biennial of Art 2022.
Photography: Darren Rigo.
Courtesy the collection
of Christopher Bredt and
Jamie Cameron.

12. Culture Track Canada,
LaPlaca Cohen & Nanos
Research, 2018.

4. TBA MAKES THE VISUAL ARTS ACCESSIBLE TO A WIDER PUBLIC

Providing free contemporary art throughout the city for 10 weeks continues to be a defining feature of the Biennial. When it comes to cultural participation, cost remains the second biggest barrier to participation and reaching new audiences within Canada.¹² Based on the survey data: **61% of visitors were new to the Biennial as this was the first time they had attended.** Additionally, 5% of visitors had never experienced the visual arts at all before, and 88% of visitors believe that free access is important. “Accessible contemporary art for everyone” emerged as a top theme amongst the visitor comments:

“

“(The Biennial) brought art programming that is accessible to everyone and I believe it enriches the entire community.”

—
Visitor

“

“Provided accessibility to less arts-involved folks.”

—
Visitor

“

“An opportunity for everyone to enjoy the arts and learn more about their environment and society.”

—
Visitor

“

“Thoughtful and accessible programming.”

—
Visitor

The second iteration of the Biennial extended its commitment to free programming, including the participation of partner galleries and institutions. As Lisa Abbott, Manager of the Small Arms Inspection Building in Mississauga, a key venue partner, commented, “the fact that the programming is all free makes it stand out.” For this iteration, every venue partner offered free admission throughout the duration of the festival. As Roxane Shaughnessy, Senior Curator at the Textile Museum of Canada, noted: “The Biennial was great context for art, it created deeper connections and our galleries were made free just for this Biennial.”

3

The 2022 Biennial also made intentional efforts to reach younger audiences and develop programs that felt accessible to intergenerational visitors. This programming focus and community partnerships played an important role in increasing accessibility. **84% of visitors felt that this Biennial made contemporary art feel more inclusive and accessible.** Both artists and visitors commented that:

“

“[The Biennial] made art accessible, both in terms of it being free and in terms of the programs that it offered ... I loved that it was as accessible to young people through school visits as it was to adults, that it reached out to underrepresented groups.”

—
Visitor

“

“What I liked is that ... students and visitors and other artists get to see work that I consider to be un-siloed ... We have a lot of different art practices that are contemporary, relevant, engaging, pedagogical. It takes it out of a museum setting.”

—
Robert Durocher,
Urban Indigenous
Education Centre

“

“People wanted connection and to be together. The walks and discussions we had confirmed to me that people are concerned about the issues facing them where they live and eager to participate in their future landscapes.”

—
Artist

Wherever possible, TBA worked to provide additional access to, and support for, the participation of a wider range of audiences. For instance, ASL tours, enhanced descriptive audio for the visually impaired, and audio didactics were provided. All venues were wheelchair accessible and an emphasis on family-based programming resources meant that interpretive texts were easy to understand. The weekly dynamic Storyteller Sessions, interactive explorations of main exhibition sites that were developed by five Storytellers based on their understanding of the exhibition artworks as well as their personal experiences as artists and educators, were informal and tailored to the interests of those in attendance.

The Biennial team also worked on the growth of its digital presence, which furthered the reach to both local and younger audiences, especially during pandemic times. The diversification of digital content included hosting virtual programs and the continuation of TBA's Podcast series. During this time, the Biennial strengthened its website communications, continued to invest in digital marketing, and more than doubled its social media following on Instagram to nearly 15,000 followers. Biennial staff commented, “the heavier lean into social media/digital marketing allowed larger audiences to become aware of the Biennial as a whole.”



Image caption:
Judy Chicago in collaboration with Pyro Spectaculars by Souza and Maude Furtado of GFA PYRO, *A Tribute to Toronto*, 2022. Installation view at Sugar Beach, Toronto Biennial of Art 2022. Photography: Rebecca Tisdelle-Macias. Smoke Sculpture™ commissioned by the Toronto Biennial of Art and made possible with the generous support of the City of Toronto, ArtworxTO, the Delaney Family Foundation, Menkes Developments, Waterfront Toronto, the Waterfront BIA, and the Women Leading Initiative.

13. Based on interviews with partners and staff.

5. TBA RAISES THE BAR ON THE ARTS AS A CATALYST FOR PLACEMAKING

This Biennial not only reawakened people's desire to return to cultural life after years of lockdowns, it also created a welcoming cluster of neighbourhood hubs. **84% of participating artists felt that the Biennial strengthened Toronto's reputation as a cultural destination.**

A Tribute to Toronto, a commissioned site-specific pyrotechnic work by senior American feminist artist Judy Chicago, was held on the waterfront on June 4, 2022 and was a highlight that demonstrated how art can play a transformational role in placemaking. The performance attracted 22,262 visitors in a single day and was the most highly attended Biennial event. These attendance numbers reflect the extent to which a free art event can effectively attract a large number of people. As Toronto continues to revitalize, transform and program along the waterfront, this "must see" event was an example of how the arts can animate communities at a scale not before achieved.¹³ In the words of visitors, staff and partners:

“

“(My most memorable moment at the Biennial is) listening to waves of awe from spectators as billows of coloured smoke shifted, grew and appeared, during Judy Chicago.”

—
Visitor

“

“Judy Chicago has the power to bring together all ages and backgrounds... When you engage in contemporary art in different ways, you engage different kinds of people. A lot of people in that crowd wouldn't have interacted with the Biennial if it wasn't a free public outdoor event.”

—
Staff

“

“Judy Chicago was the key differentiator for the Biennial as it was a spectacle we never had before on water. This 'spectacle on a barge' has engaged other conversations about what can happen along the waterfront.”

—
Katherine Hebb,
Waterfront BIA



Image caption:
Toronto Landscape
Observatory space, May
1–June 5, 2022. Installation
view, 72 Perth Ave as part
of Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Rebecca
Tisdelle-Macias.

The Biennial also succeeded in creating intimate community gathering spaces through neighbourhood locations that were well integrated into Toronto's west-end. For example, 72 Perth Avenue was a main Biennial site that offered an indoor public programming and learning space, a resource and materials library, an outdoor program and educational space, and an interactive outdoor artwork. This location hosted workshops, community gatherings, school groups, and performances that animated the neighbourhood. Kenneth Montague, Founder and Director of Wedge Curatorial Projects, noted: "for me, the thing that had the most impact was .. how the neighbourhood was transformed... I think the neighbourhood really embraced this edition of the Biennial."

During the staff reflection sessions, the team observed visitors who regularly attended TBA sites were often unfamiliar with the Biennial and contemporary art generally. Free access to the venues meant that the locations became welcoming hubs where locals could casually drop in, visit multiple times, and come back with family and friends. According to staff, a free hub in a residential area meant that "people could come in because they walked by or saw a sign. We reached people who might not otherwise come."

A key takeaway from TBA's 2019 Evaluation Report was the recommendation to cluster sites more significantly moving forward and the team took up this advice in selecting 2022 sites. Having venues embedded in neighbourhoods and clustered in close proximity to each other encouraged walkability and increased the average number of sites visited (3.6 in 2022 versus 2 sites in 2019). Based on the surveys, **73% of visitors agreed that visiting the Biennial enhanced the local character of the neighbourhood.** They could explore the art installations and then visit surrounding public spaces and businesses. Based on the survey data, over half of visitors enjoyed local amenities as part of their Biennial experience, with 53% visiting parks and public spaces, 49% visiting a cafe, 42% enjoying a commercial art gallery, and 31% eating at a local restaurant.



Image caption:
Mobile Arts Curriculum
Materials. Installation view,
72 Perth Ave as part of
Toronto Biennial of Art 2022.
Photography: Rebecca
Tisdelle-Macias.

6. TBA DEVELOPS INNOVATIVE LEARNING RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCES

The 2022 Biennial developed an exciting range of public and learning programs, workshops, and resources that were used by roughly 22% of visitors. For 21% of visitors, the Biennial exposed them to contemporary art for the very first time. Over the duration of the Biennial, 5,615 visitors attended public programs, including 1,120 students through School Programs and 2,359 visitors through weekly Storytelling Sessions. Visitors shared the following about the benefits of this educational program in surveys:

- 88% found it made the visual arts more accessible and welcoming
- 82% found it increased their appreciation of the arts
- 87% learnt something they didn't know before

One of the strengths of this year's learning programming were the learning tools developed for the Mobile Arts Curriculum. These seven new artist-led toolkits – accessible physically at TBA's sites as well as virtually online – address locally relevant issues in creative, unexpected, and accessible ways. For instance, artists Camille Turner and Yaniya Lee were commissioned to develop the *Black History Navigational Toolkit*, a deck of cards that guides readers through Toronto's Black histories and the authors' personal narratives of the city. Other examples include: *True & Functional: DARE (The Shimmering Mixtape)* (Timothy Yanick Hunter), a mixtape and vinyl record played onsite and online that uses archival sounds from Black diasporic and African artists, novelists and collectives to tell a story about Black culture and art; *Your Tkaronto Companion Guide* (Talking Treaties Collective), a series of three booklets exploring place- and arts-based explorations of the complex ways the city of Toronto was established; and, *A Hand Full of Wheat Seeds*, which included a colouring book, treasure hunt, and family recipe by artist Derya Akay whose work explores diasporic queer experiences.

These educational resources are innovative in terms of their playful delivery, co-creative development with artists, process-based learning methods, and for the flexible ways they activate TBA themes onsite and beyond. These resources are now being used by educators across the city to engage students in the arts.

3



Image caption:
Nadia Belerique, *HOLDINGS*,
2020–present. Installation
view at 72 Perth Ave,
Toronto Biennial of Art
2022. Photography: Toni
Hafkenschaid. Commissioned
by the Toronto Biennial of Art.

Another layer to learning was the Biennial’s School Programs, which had Storytellers leading students through customized in-person and virtual visits and learning activities. By shifting traditional docent tour models to participatory Storytelling Sessions, visitors engaged with the ideas at play within the Biennial exhibition through dialogue, self-expression and unlearning. One staff member recalls, “I overheard many of those tours and the Storytellers were teaching radical acceptance, highlighting Indigenous knowledge systems, LGBTQ and BIPOC narratives. This kind of education for youth is so vital.” Staff, artists, and visitors reflected on the impact of these innovative approaches to learning:

“

“The focus on land-based learning and land-based stewardship. So many teachers are trying to focus on this, but don’t have the resources. Having this as a free resource to inter-generational learners has been impactful.”

—
Visitor

“

“My kids loved the booklet project showcasing the history of the local Black arts community; our family took home multiple copies to pass around ... The stories of Black artists are not a monolith, and there was a good representation of different narratives.”

—
**Kenneth Montague,
Wedge Curatorial
Projects**

“

“The Storyteller Sessions ... [provided] such rich content. It really ... made the pieces so much more accessible just hearing a little bit more about someone else’s reaction to it, and to help encourage us as participants to articulate and share our reactions.”

—
**Lisa Abbott,
City of Mississauga**

“

“I was leading a listening event ... near the end of our ‘environmental dialogue’ ... that I had composed into an ambient sound piece, we all gathered and stood in a circle ... hummed in resonance together. Afterwards all faces were lit up.”

—
Artist

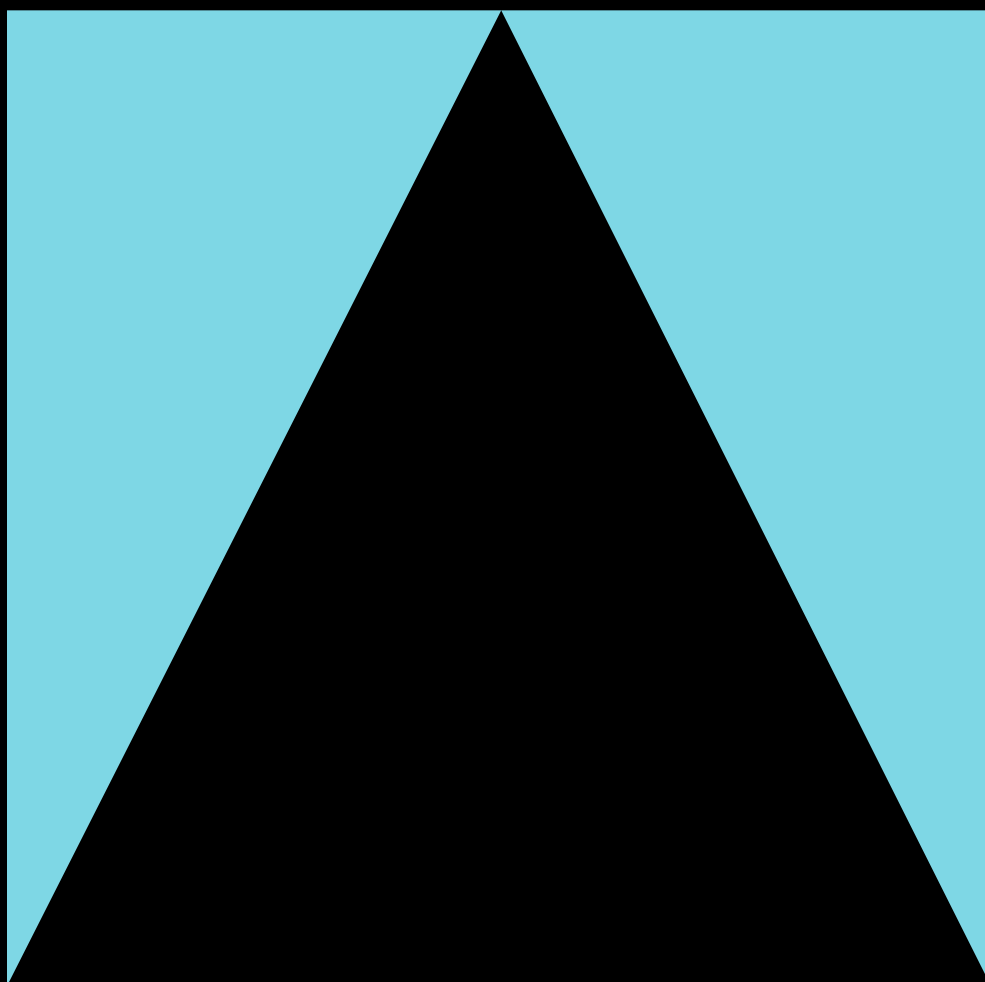
“

“The Biennial was an example of collaborative creativity and innovation that benefits the integration of arts, culture and community, and deepened connection with BIPOC histories and ‘[the] local landscape.’”

—
Visitor

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APPENDICES



A

a. Evaluation Parameters

In its second iteration, the Toronto Biennial of Art continued evaluating its social, cultural and economic impact, both as a stand alone event and in relation to the achievements from the inaugural 2019 exhibition. Working from the inaugural evaluation report as a baseline and benchmark, this evaluation tracks similar data and benchmarks, in order to understand the similarities and changes across the two events. Data for the evaluation is collected by both Bespoke and the Biennial. All synthesis and evaluation was performed by Bespoke.

KEY AREAS OF INQUIRY:

- Attendance numbers
- Audience demographics and characteristics (new visitors, returning, local, tourists, etc.)
- Visitor experiences
- Artist demographics, including diversity of representation
- Artist experiences
- Cultural, community and social impact, in particular in light of the COVID-19 impact on culture and the arts
- Economic impact data, contextualised against the current arts ecosystem
- Education programming data (attendance, demographics, educator feedback, learning experiences, exposure to the arts, etc.)

b. Methodology

VISITOR NUMBERS

In order to evaluate the 2022 Biennial attendance, the TBA internal team collected visitor data from all the exhibition sites, relying on information supplied by partner venues and real-time visitor counts for outdoor events. The total number of visits were then supplied to Bespoke to determine the number of unique visitors to the event across all sites.

VISITOR FIGURES FROM THE 2022 TORONTO BIENNIAL OF ART

Total Visits	153,835
Average reported visits per visitor ¹⁴	3.6
Total Unique Visitors	58,237

14. As reported by the digital visitor survey

VISITOR SURVEY

Bespoke replied on a digital visitor survey to gather information on audience participation, motivators, demographics, visitor origin, and tourism data during the 2022 Biennial. The information gathered directly contributed to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the social, cultural, and economic impact of the event, augmenting desk research and interviews with stakeholders and participants. The survey was distributed by TBA to the Biennial mailing list, as well as across social media platforms and promoted at Biennial venues throughout the event. This resulted in a total of 370 usable responses with a margin of error of 5% at a 95% confidence level. This is a sufficient number of responses to be confident that the survey is representative of a core, highly engaged Biennial audience.

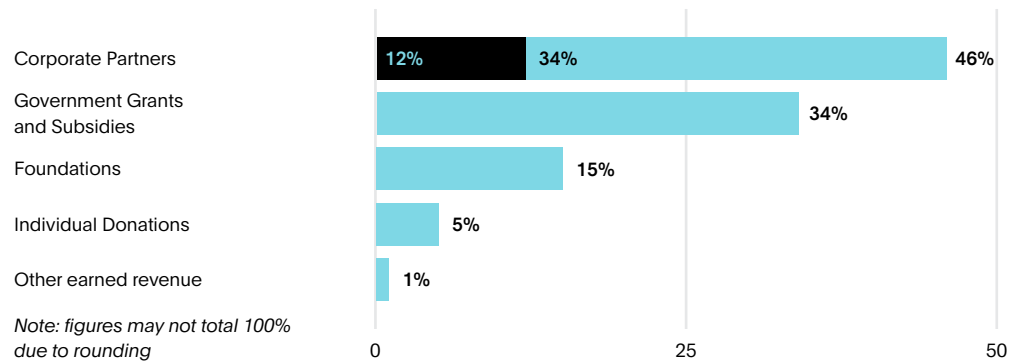
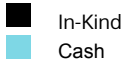
c. Revenue and Expenditure

The following outlines the percentage revenue and expenditure of the 2022 Biennial by categories. This data reflects 30 months of TBA's revenues and expenditures as the 2022 Biennial was postponed by six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

REVENUE 2022 BIENNIAL

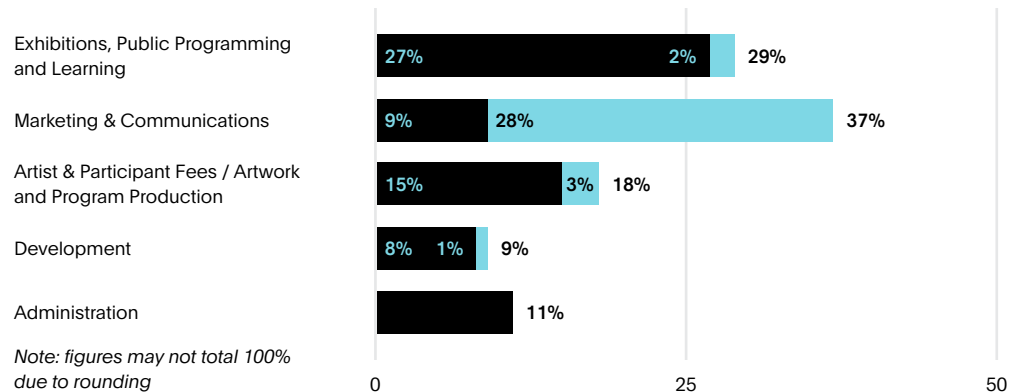
Revenue includes both in-kind and cash support. (Combined Budget of \$8.1M)

LEGEND

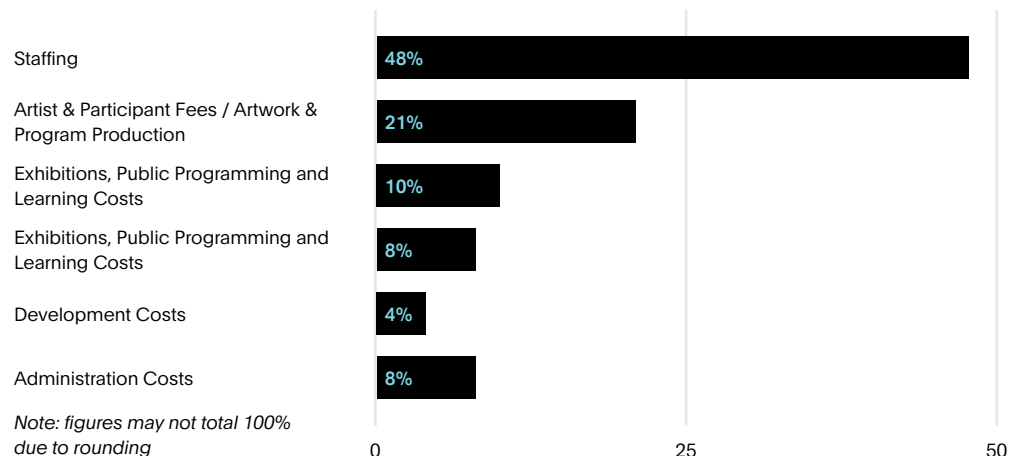


EXPENDITURE 2022 BIENNIAL (CASH & IN-KIND)

LEGEND



EXPENDITURE 2022 BIENNIAL (CASH ONLY)



d. Economic Impact

TREIM

Bespoke estimated the economic impact of the 2022 Toronto Art Biennial using the Ontario Tourism Regional Impact Model (TREIM). TREIM is the most widely used input/output system for measuring tourism related economic impacts and provides a measure of interdependency between these sectors and the rest of the economy. The provincial economic multipliers provide the direct, indirect, and induced effects on economic metrics and can be used to measure the impact of Biennial tourists and Biennial operations spending on the gross domestic product (GDP), employment, and government tax revenues.

For the purposes of the TREIM calculation, a Biennial tourist is someone who has taken an overnight, out-of-town trip or an out-of-town same day trip of 40km or more from their place of residence to see the event. Employment figures include direct, indirect, and induced full-time equivalent jobs for the region of Ontario, including the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The economic impact of the Biennial's operational expenses cover three fiscal years (2020, 2021, and 2022).

OUT OF TOWN VISITOR SPENDING

Average Out of Town Visitor Spending	\$482
Total Visitor Spending	\$6,296,855
Total Impact of Out of Town Visitor Spending on the Toronto Economy (Direct, Indirect, Induced)	\$5,162,552

DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT IN TORONTO (DIRECT, INDIRECT, INDUCED)

Operations Impact	\$8,671,491
Visitor Spending Impact	\$5,162,552
Total Direct Economic Impact in Toronto	\$13,834,043

NUMBER OF FTE JOBS CREATED (DIRECT, INDIRECT, INDUCED)

Operations FTE Jobs Created	262
Visitor Spending Jobs Created	68
Total FTE Jobs Created	330

TAXES GENERATED (FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL)

Operations Taxes Generated	\$2,573,745
Visitor Spending Impact	\$2,127,465
Total Economic Impact of Taxes Generated in Toronto	\$4,701,210

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2022 ARTISTS

EXHIBITION

Abel Rodríguez
Aki Onda
Amy Malbeuf
Andrea Carlson
Ange Loft
Anne Zanele Mutema
Augustas Serapinas
Aycoobo / Wilson Rodríguez
Brian Jungen
Buhlebezwe Siwani
Camille Turner
Dana Prieto
Denyse Thomasos
Derya Akay
Dr. Syrus Marcus Ware
Eduardo Navarro
Eric-Paul Riege
Erin Siddall
Ghazaleh Avarzamani
Janet Kigusiuq
Jatiwangi art Factory
Jeffrey Gibson
Jessie Oonark
Joar Nango
Judy Chicago
Jumana Manna
Jumblies Theatre & Arts
Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Mata Aho Collective
Nadia Belerique
Paul Pfeiffer
Shezad Dawood
Susan Schuppli
Tanya Lukin Linklater
Timothy Yanick Hunter
Ṭ̣ēmā Igharas
Victoria Mamnguqsualuk
Waqas Khan

PROGRAMS

Aeshna Ware-Huff
Aki Onda
Ange Loft
Anne Bourne
Anne Zanele Mutema
Buhlebezwe Siwani
Camille Turner
Carolyn King
Dainty Smith
Dana Prieto
Derya Akay
Dr. Brenna Bhandar
Dr. George Mahashe
Dr. Moyo Rainos Mutamba
Dr. Syrus Marcus Ware
Eduardo Navarro
Emilie Croning
Emily Johnson
Eric-Paul Riege
Erika DeFreitas
Francisco-Fernando Granados
Giselle Dias
Ivanie Aubin-Malo
Janice Lee
Jatiwangi art Factory
Jaz 'Fairy J' Simone
Jess Dobkin
Joar Nango
Judy Chicago
Ken Are Bongo
LAL
Moccasin Identifier
Naomi McCarroll-Butler
Paul Pfeiffer
Ravyn Wngz
Sandy Hudson
Sara Constant
Simon Speiser
Stephanie Comilang
Susan Schuppli
Talking Treaties Collective
Timothy Yanick Hunter
Tina Sherwell
Toronto Landscape Observatory
Troy Jackson
VIBE Arts
Yaniya Lee

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2022 BIENNIAL TEAM

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Ilana Shamoon, Deputy Director and
Director of Programs
Susannah Rosenstock, Deputy
Director and Director of Exhibitions

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Katie Lawson, Curator
Tairone Bastien, Curator
Melody Moon-Kyoung Cho, Exhibitions
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Sophia Oppel, Exhibitions
Coordinator and Registrar

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Lina Cino, Production & Site Manager
Matt Walker, Exhibition Design

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Kesang Nanglu, Public Programming
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Jeffrey Canton
Iwrds duniam
Melissa (Melly) Davidson
Nicole Markland

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Communications Coordinator
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Bow Bridge Communications,
Public Relations
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and Special Events
Lucas Eleusiniotis, Web and Tech
Support
Puncture, Brand and Graphic Design

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