



CALGARY PERFORMING ARTS
FESTIVAL

2025 Impact Report

Celebrating youth excellence, artistic growth, and community connection through the performing arts.

April 12 – May 9, 2025



A Legacy of Youth Arts Excellence

The Calgary Performing Arts Festival (CPAF) stands as one of Calgary's largest and most impactful youth-focused arts education events. In 2025, the Festival brought together over 4,300 young performers across 23 festival days, providing professional adjudication and transformative performance experiences in a supportive, inclusive environment that nurtures artistic growth and personal development.

This year marked a meaningful evolution in how CPAF celebrates excellence—modernizing programming to expand reach, increase accessibility, and create lasting impact for young artists. The Festival continues to serve as a unifying platform for Calgary's diverse performing arts community, connecting students, educators, families, and arts supporters across the city and surrounding regions.

Festival Vision

CPAF provides barrier-free opportunities for young performers to showcase their talents, receive professional feedback, and grow artistically in an environment that values education over competition.



2025 Festival at a Glance

4,300+

Participants

Young performers showcasing their talents

913

Classes & Performances

Across all disciplines and age groups

23

Festival Days

Consecutive days of programming

14

Professional Adjudicators

Nationally recognized artists and educators

200

Daily In-Person Audience

Average attendance per performance day

10K+

Digital Views

Livestream and online engagement

Together, these figures reflect both the impressive scale of the Festival and its expanding community reach, demonstrating CPAF's vital role in Calgary's cultural landscape and its commitment to making the performing arts accessible to thousands of young artists and their families.



Mission & Purpose

Inclusive Access

CPAF provides barrier-free opportunities for young performers from all backgrounds to showcase their talents and participate fully in Calgary's performing arts community.

Professional Development

Through live performance and expert adjudication, participants receive constructive feedback from nationally recognized professionals that guides their artistic growth.

Lifelong Impact

The Festival builds confidence, resilience, and a lasting appreciation for the performing arts—transferable skills that extend far beyond the stage into all areas of life.

At its core, CPAF is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of artists by creating meaningful performance experiences that shape young lives. The Festival's education-first approach ensures that every participant, regardless of skill level or experience, receives encouragement, professional guidance, and the opportunity to grow as both an artist and an individual.



Festival Overview

When

April 12 – May 9, 2025

23 consecutive days of programming featuring performances across multiple disciplines, age groups, and skill levels throughout the late spring season.

Where

Leacock Theatre, Mount Royal University

Engineered Air Theatre, Arts Commons

Two professional, centrally located venues that provide excellent acoustics, staging, and accessibility for participants and audiences.

These prestigious venues support accessibility for participants, families, and educators across Calgary and surrounding communities, ensuring that young performers experience professional-grade facilities that enhance their festival experience and prepare them for future performance opportunities.



Community Reach & Representation

In 2025, CPAF welcomed participants from a remarkably wide range of studios, schools, and independent instructors across Calgary and surrounding communities. This breadth of representation demonstrates the Festival's success in reaching diverse neighborhoods, training backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups throughout the region.

Private Studios & Academies

Participants from established music schools and performing arts academies throughout Calgary contributed to the Festival's artistic diversity and depth of programming.

Public & Independent Schools

Students from school music programs, drama clubs, and choir ensembles brought strong representation from Calgary's education sector, reflecting the Festival's integration with formal arts education.

Independent & Emerging Artists

Young performers working with private instructors or pursuing self-directed artistic development found a welcoming platform at CPAF, ensuring no pathway to participation is excluded.

This broad representation reinforces the Festival's essential role as a unifying platform—bringing together diverse training backgrounds, artistic disciplines, and communities under one shared celebration of youth performance excellence and artistic achievement.



Participation & Deep Community Engagement

Beyond impressive participation totals, CPAF demonstrates sustained, meaningful engagement that extends throughout the entire festival season. The Festival has become a multi-week cultural experience for many Calgary families, who attend multiple performances, support peers, and return year after year as their young artists grow and develop.

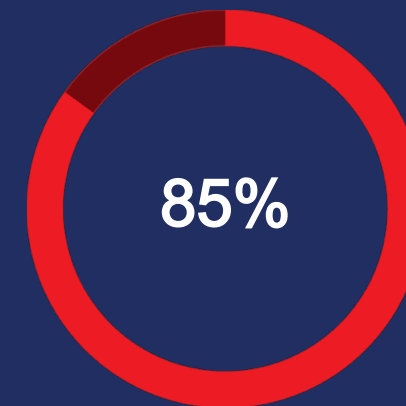
In 2025, the Festival featured strong participation across all age groups—from elementary-age beginners taking their first steps on stage to advanced senior performers preparing for post-secondary studies and professional careers. This age diversity creates rich opportunities for peer learning, mentorship, and artistic inspiration.

The 36 group and ensemble performances showcased in 2025 highlight another dimension of engagement—collaborative artistry that brings students together across studios, schools, and communities. These ensemble experiences create lasting connections and demonstrate the Festival's commitment to celebrating both individual and collective achievement.



Group Performances

Ensemble showcases across disciplines



Return Participation

Families and educators returning annually



Artistic Programming Highlights

CPAF's 2025 programming reflected the remarkable diversity and depth of Calgary's performing arts community, with strong representation across traditional and contemporary disciplines. Each program area demonstrated unique strengths while contributing to the Festival's cohesive artistic vision.

Piano & Strings

The Festival's largest program areas maintained robust participation with exceptional artistic growth. Solo piano performances spanned classical repertoire to contemporary works, while string instruments brought rich tonal variety and technical excellence to daily programming.

Band & Choir

Ensemble programming saw increased engagement in 2025, with school bands and community choirs delivering powerful group performances. These collaborative showcases highlighted the importance of teamwork, discipline, and shared musical expression.

Speech Arts

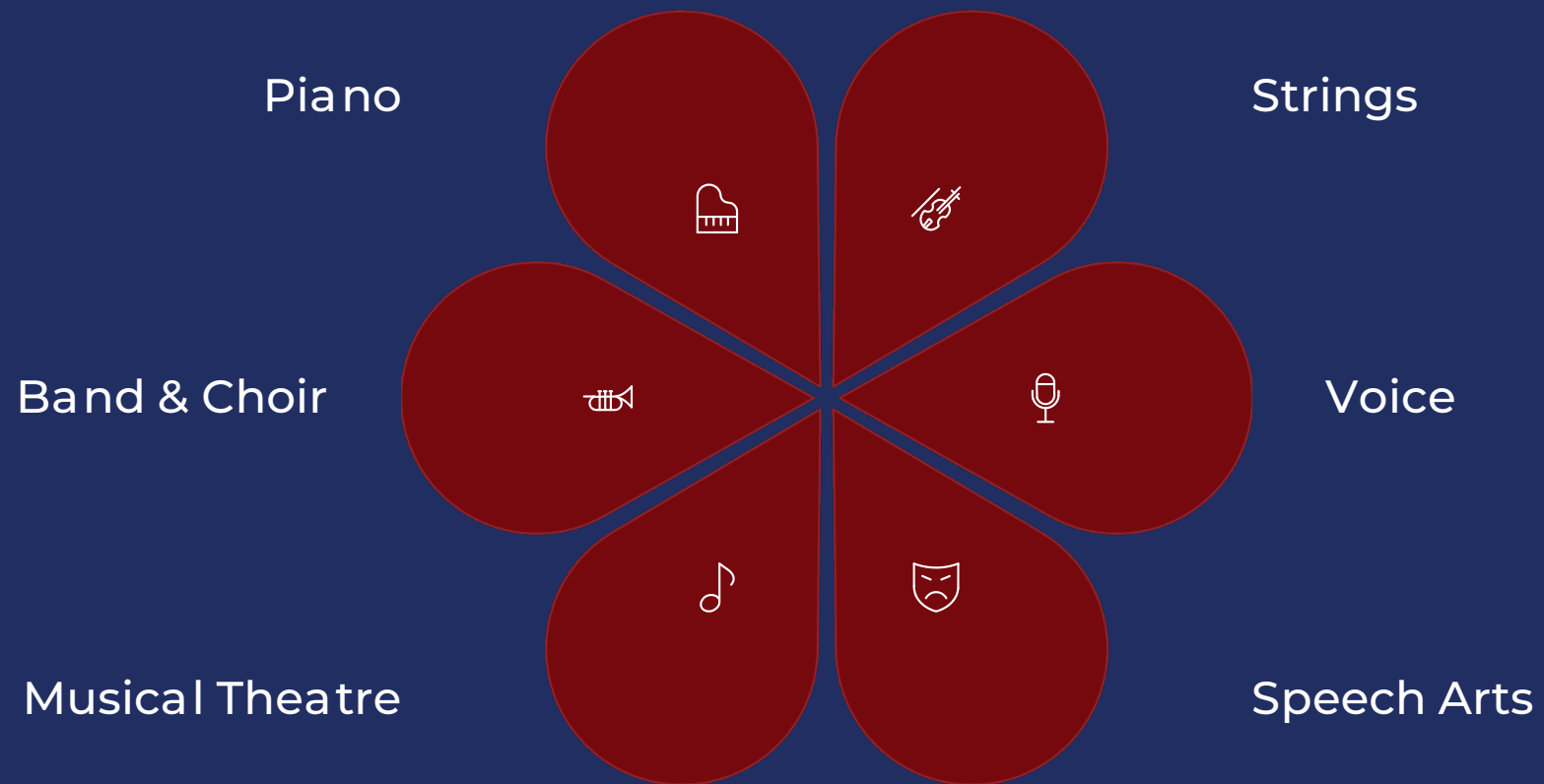
Through continued partnerships with Calgary's speech arts community, CPAF supported growth in dramatic performance, poetry recitation, and public speaking—disciplines that develop confidence, communication skills, and interpretive artistry.

Musical Theatre & Voice

Contemporary categories in musical theatre and contemporary voice continue to expand, reflecting evolving artistic interests among young performers and the increasing relevance of these disciplines in modern performing arts careers.



A Cross-Disciplinary Festival Model



CPAF is unique in its ability to unite multiple performing arts disciplines within one cohesive festival framework. By programming music, speech arts, musical theatre, bands, choirs, and ensembles side by side throughout the festival season, CPAF encourages shared learning, cross-disciplinary appreciation, and broader audience engagement.

This integrated approach strengthens connections across Calgary's arts ecosystem, introduces families to art forms they might not otherwise encounter, and demonstrates the interconnected nature of performing arts excellence. A pianist's family might discover speech arts; a musical theatre performer might be inspired by a string quartet; a choir member might appreciate solo vocal artistry.



Educational Impact



CPAF is fundamentally an education-first festival, prioritizing artistic development and personal growth over competitive rankings. This philosophy creates a nurturing environment where young artists can take creative risks, learn from constructive feedback, and celebrate progress at every level.

Participants benefit from a comprehensive educational experience that extends well beyond technical skill development. The Festival cultivates essential life skills and artistic competencies that serve young people throughout their educational journeys and beyond.

For many young artists, CPAF represents a pivotal milestone in their artistic journey—a formative experience that shapes their relationship with the performing arts and influences their decisions about future study, career paths, and lifelong engagement with the arts.

01

Performance Readiness

Students develop discipline, time management, and preparation skills through the process of selecting repertoire, rehearsing consistently, and preparing for public performance.

03

Confidence & Resilience

Performing in front of live audiences and receiving professional feedback builds self-assurance, emotional resilience, and the ability to accept constructive criticism gracefully.

02

Professional Feedback

Adjudicators provide constructive, individualized guidance that helps participants understand their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and set meaningful goals for continued growth.

04

Peer Learning

Observing and supporting fellow performers exposes students to diverse artistic interpretations, performance styles, and repertoire choices that expand their artistic horizons.



Educational Quality & Professional Adjudication

In 2025, CPAF participants were supported by **14 professional adjudicators**, many of whom are nationally recognized artists, educators, and post-secondary faculty members. This distinguished panel brought exceptional expertise across all festival disciplines, ensuring every performer received feedback grounded in current industry standards and academic expectations.



Academic Excellence

Many adjudicators hold faculty positions at leading Canadian universities and conservatories, connecting participants directly to post-secondary pathways and audition standards.



Professional Experience

Active performers and industry professionals bring real-world insights about career preparation, repertoire selection, and the evolving landscape of performing arts professions.



Mentorship Approach

Adjudicators balance technical expertise with encouragement and mentorship, offering feedback that inspires continued growth while celebrating each performer's unique artistic voice.

Their feedback reflects current industry and academic standards, ensuring participants receive meaningful guidance that supports both immediate artistic development and future educational pathways, whether students pursue performing arts professionally or carry these skills into other fields.



Leadership Perspectives on 2025

"Every young performer who takes the stage demonstrates courage and growth. We are grateful to the educators and adjudicators who make youth arts education possible in Calgary."

— **Mike Jewitt**, Executive Director

"The skills developed through performance—preparation, confidence, resilience—extend far beyond the stage. As a former participant myself, I've seen how these experiences shape lives."

— **Weston Jacques**, Board President

Festival leadership reflected thoughtfully on both CPAF's long-standing legacy and its ongoing responsibility to evolve. Executive Director Mike Jewitt emphasized the remarkable courage demonstrated by every performer who steps onto the stage, supported by dedicated educators and skilled adjudicators who commit their time and expertise to making youth arts education accessible and impactful.

Board President Weston Jacques, drawing from his own formative experience as a former CPAF participant, highlighted that the skills developed through festival participation—disciplined preparation, performance confidence, and emotional resilience—serve young people throughout their entire lives, regardless of whether they pursue careers in the arts.

Together, leadership reaffirmed CPAF's unwavering commitment to inclusivity, thoughtful innovation, and creating long-term positive impact for Calgary's young performing artists and the broader community that supports them.



Community & Cultural Reach

The Festival's impact extends significantly beyond the immediate experience of live performances at Leacock Theatre and Arts Commons. Through strategic digital engagement and community outreach, CPAF has expanded its reach to connect with thousands of additional supporters, families, and arts enthusiasts across Calgary and beyond.



Digital Views

Total online engagement across platforms

Instagram Followers

Active social media community

Engagement Rate

Highly engaged online audience

This digital expansion has strengthened community connection and pride, amplified the visibility of Calgary's young artists, and demonstrated CPAF's commitment to meeting audiences where they are in an increasingly connected world.



Reimagining Stars of the Festival

In 2025, CPAF made a bold and thoughtful decision to reimagine its long-standing *Stars of the Festival* concert—an event that had traditionally concluded each festival season with a live showcase of top performers. This evolution was driven by careful consideration of modern audience behaviors, emerging artist needs, and the Festival's commitment to maximizing impact and accessibility.

Rather than hosting a traditional live concert that reached only a few hundred attendees in a single evening, CPAF introduced a digital-first approach that significantly expanded reach while maintaining—and even enhancing—the prestige of the Festival's highest honour: the Rose Bowl scholarship.

This strategic shift reflects CPAF's willingness to honour tradition while embracing innovation—ensuring that the Festival remains relevant, impactful, and aligned with how young artists now build their careers and share their work in the digital age.

Why Change?

The decision was informed by declining live concert attendance, rising venue costs, and recognition that digital content offers lasting value for featured artists and reaches exponentially larger audiences.



Rose Bowl Winners' Showcase Video

In 2025, CPAF launched its first-ever **Rose Bowl Winners' Showcase Video**, featuring Alexa Andrews, the 2025 Rose Bowl winner and \$10,000 scholarship recipient. This professionally produced digital showcase marked a significant milestone in how the Festival celebrates and amplifies its most prestigious honor.

Production Investment

The showcase video was produced at a cost comparable to the traditional live concert, ensuring that the Festival's investment remained consistent while delivering dramatically different outcomes and lasting value.

Expanded Reach

The video reached over **10,000 viewers online**—more than 50 times the typical live concert audience of approximately 200 attendees, significantly amplifying Alexa's achievement and CPAF's recognition.

Cost Efficiency

This digital approach achieved far greater impact without increasing costs, allowing CPAF to redirect resources toward scholarships, accessibility initiatives, and other core programs that directly benefit participants.

The response from the community, the featured artist, and her family was overwhelmingly positive. The video became a shared celebration across social media, was viewed by extended family and supporters across the country, and provided lasting promotional value that a single evening performance could never match.



Lasting Impact for the Featured Artist

Beyond expanding audience reach, the Rose Bowl Winners' Showcase Video created tangible, long-term value for Alexa Andrews as an emerging artist navigating the next stages of her performing arts career. This shift demonstrates CPAF's commitment to supporting participants beyond the festival experience itself.

Career Development Benefits

Professional Portfolio Content: A high-quality, professionally produced video suitable for audition submissions, scholarship applications, and promotional materials

Post-Secondary Applications: Strong supplementary material for university and conservatory applications, demonstrating performance quality and artistic maturity

Digital Presence: Shareable content for building an online artistic portfolio and professional social media presence

Industry Standards: Experience working with professional production teams, preparing Alexa for future recording and filming opportunities



Modern Career Pathways

This approach reflects how emerging artists in musical theatre and performing arts now build professional identities—through curated digital content, online portfolios, and shareable performance videos that reach casting directors, educators, and audiences globally.



Why the Festival Model Still Matters

In an increasingly digital world where performances can be recorded, streamed, and shared instantly, one might question the continued relevance of traditional live festival experiences. However, CPAF's model demonstrates that in-person, adjudicated festivals remain deeply meaningful and irreplaceable for young artists' development.



Live Audience Connection

Performing in front of a live audience creates unique energy, immediate emotional connection, and authentic performance pressure that builds resilience and stage presence—experiences that cannot be replicated through recording alone.



Real-Time Professional Feedback

Receiving immediate, personalized adjudication from expert professionals provides context, nuance, and mentorship that written comments or delayed feedback cannot match, creating meaningful learning moments.



Peer Learning Community

Being physically present alongside fellow performers—observing others, supporting peers, experiencing shared nervous energy, and celebrating collective achievement—builds community and artistic growth through immersion.

Digital innovation at CPAF enhances and expands this core experience rather than replacing it. Showcase videos create lasting recognition. Social media builds community beyond festival days. But the foundational value remains the live, in-person experience that shapes young artists in ways no digital platform can replicate.



Awards & Scholarships

CPAF continues to make substantial direct investments in young artists through its comprehensive awards and scholarship program. In 2025, the Festival distributed **\$43,075 in scholarships**, supporting continued education, private instruction, summer intensives, and post-secondary studies for recipients.

Rose Bowl Scholarship



The Festival's most prestigious honour, the Rose Bowl carries a **\$10,000 scholarship** and recognizes the highest level of artistic achievement across all disciplines. This life-changing award supports post-secondary education and professional development.

Major Discipline Awards



Scholarships are awarded to top performers in piano, strings, voice, musical theatre, speech arts, band, and choir categories, ensuring recognition across all artistic disciplines represented at the Festival.

Provincial & National Advancement



Many CPAF participants advance to provincial and national competitions, with the Festival serving as an essential stepping stone in their artistic development and competitive experience.

These scholarships help reduce financial barriers that might otherwise prevent talented young artists from pursuing advanced training, attending summer programs, or accessing post-secondary performing arts education. By investing directly in participants' futures, CPAF extends its impact far beyond the festival season.



Partnerships & Community Support

CPAF's impact and sustainability are made possible through strong partnerships with foundations, sponsors, arts organizations, post-secondary institutions, and community partners who believe in the transformative power of youth arts education. These collaborative relationships strengthen both the Festival and Calgary's broader cultural ecosystem.



Institutional Partners

Mount Royal University and Arts Commons provide world-class performance venues and technical support that ensure professional-quality festival experiences for all participants.



Arts Organizations

Collaboration with Calgary's music teachers associations, speech arts groups, and performing arts organizations ensures programming quality and sector alignment.

These partnerships reflect shared commitment to youth development, arts education, and community building. CPAF is grateful to all partners who invest in Calgary's young artists and contribute to the Festival's nearly century-long legacy of excellence.



Corporate Sponsors

Business and corporate partners provide essential financial support, in-kind contributions, and volunteer expertise that expand the Festival's capacity and reach.



Community Supporters

Individual donors, volunteers, and community champions provide grassroots support that sustains the Festival's mission and expands accessibility for all participants.



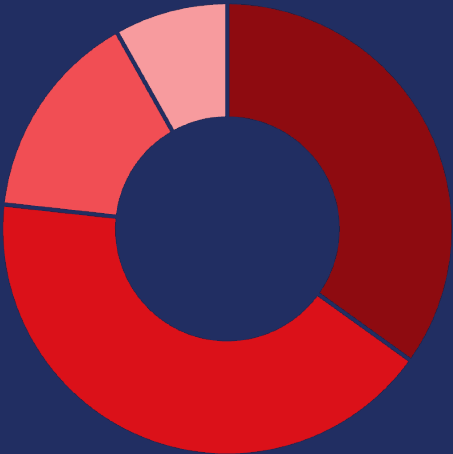
Financial Snapshot & Long-Term Sustainability

CPAF maintains strong financial health through diversified revenue streams, responsible stewardship, and strategic planning for long-term sustainability. The Festival's financial model balances participant fees, endowment income, sponsorships, and donations to ensure stable operations while expanding accessibility and impact.

2025 Financial Highlights

- **Continued growth** in festival entry fee revenue reflecting strong participation
- **\$43,075** in scholarship funding distributed to deserving young artists
- **Endowment distributions** representing approximately 42% of annual revenue
- **Strategic cost management** balancing quality programming with fiscal responsibility

The Festival continues to plan responsibly for future resilience, acknowledging rising operational costs for venues, technology, and professional services while maintaining commitment to accessibility and affordability for participating families. CPAF's endowment provides crucial stability, and ongoing fundraising efforts focus on growing this foundation for future generations.



■ Entry Fees ■ Endowment ■ Sponsorships
■ Donations

2025 Financial Statement



Volunteer Leadership & Organizational Continuity

Behind every successful festival day, adjudication session, and participant experience stands a dedicated group of volunteers, community leaders, and board members whose commitment ensures CPAF's excellence and continuity. Many volunteers have served the Festival for decades, providing irreplaceable institutional knowledge and unwavering dedication.



Board of Directors

Volunteer board members bring professional expertise in governance, finance, arts education, and community engagement, providing strategic leadership that guides the Festival's evolution while honoring its legacy.



Festival Operations

Volunteers help manage operations including registration, venue logistics, adjudicator support, and participant services—ensuring smooth, professional experiences for everyone involved.

This volunteer leadership plays a vital role in sustaining CPAF's nearly century-long legacy. Their dedication, expertise, and passion for youth arts education ensure that future generations of Calgary's young performers will continue to benefit from this exceptional community resource.



Looking Ahead: The Road to 2031

As CPAF approaches its **100th anniversary in 2031**, the Festival is actively planning for its next century of impact. This milestone provides both an opportunity to celebrate CPAF's extraordinary legacy and a responsibility to ensure the Festival remains relevant, accessible, and impactful for future generations of young artists.

Expand Community Reach

Prioritize outreach to underrepresented communities, emerging neighborhoods, and young artists who face barriers to participation, ensuring CPAF truly serves all of Calgary's diverse populations.

Increase Accessibility

Continue investing in accessibility improvements, including financial assistance, language support, adaptive programming, and digital access that removes barriers to participation.

Embrace Innovation

Balance respect for tradition with thoughtful innovation in programming, technology, and recognition models that meet evolving participant needs and modern artistic career pathways.

Strengthen Partnerships

Deepen relationships with sponsors, institutional partners, arts organizations, and community supporters to expand resources, reach, and collective impact across Calgary's cultural sector.

Ensure Financial Sustainability

Build endowment strength, diversify revenue streams, and maintain fiscal responsibility to guarantee CPAF's stability and independence for decades to come.

These priorities reflect CPAF's commitment to growth, inclusion, and excellence as the Festival enters its second century of celebrating Calgary's extraordinary young performing artists.



Thank You

Participants & Families

For your courage, dedication, and trust in CPAF to support your artistic journey

Educators & Adjudicators

For your expertise, mentorship, and commitment to nurturing the next generation

Partners & Supporters

For your investment in youth arts education and Calgary's cultural vitality

Volunteers & Leaders

For your tireless service, passion, and dedication to CPAF's mission

Thank you to our participants, families, educators, funders, partners, volunteers, and community supporters for championing Calgary's next generation of performers. Your collective commitment makes CPAF possible and ensures that thousands of young artists have opportunities to grow, perform, and thrive.

Together, we continue to build a vibrant, inclusive, and inspiring performing arts community that will flourish for generations to come.

