



**Organization**

**Contemporary Calgary At-A-Glance**

Contemporary Calgary was established in 2014 when three contemporary art societies in Calgary united with a shared vision of transforming the Centennial Planetarium into a world-class gallery dedicated to modern and contemporary art. What began as a dream became a reality with the official launch of Contemporary Calgary’s programming and exhibitions in January 2020.

As a non-collecting institution, Contemporary Calgary collaborates with leading art institutions across the country to bring the best of contemporary art programming to the community. The gallery hosts world-class exhibitions by drawing from national and international collections of modern and contemporary art, spanning from the early 20th century to the present and representing all global cultures. With eight to twelve exhibitions annually, Contemporary Calgary offers vibrant programming that encourages frequent visits.

Since opening its doors at the Planetarium, Contemporary Calgary has welcomed a diverse range of artists from local, national, and international stages, including Yoko Ono, Robert Houle, Chitra Ganesh, Diane Arbus, Marcel Dzama, and Paola Pivi, among many others. Beyond exhibitions, Contemporary Calgary is deeply committed to art education, community outreach, and exhibition interpretation, ensuring that modern and contemporary art is accessible to all. Programs are tailored to engage children, adults, families, and seniors, at all levels of art appreciation, fostering an environment where everyone feels welcome to explore contemporary art and engage in meaningful dialogue and community building.

Contemporary Calgary is governed by a 17-member Board of Directors, co-chaired by Carol Ryder and Kelly Streit, with David Leinster serving as CEO. The organization employs a team of 34 full- and part-time staff. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, Contemporary Calgary has budgeted revenues of approximately \$4 million, with \$2.7 million generated from charitable donations, \$1.5 million from various government agencies, and over \$650,000 from admissions, memberships, and other sources of income.



Installation view, Yoko Ono: GROWING FREEDOM, Sept 17, 2020 - Jan 31, 2021, Contemporary Calgary. Photo by Jesse Tamayo.



Installation view, Robert Houle: Red is Beautiful. Photo by Jesse Tamayo.



Installation view, Diane Arbus Photographs 1956 - 1971. Photo by Victoria Cimolini



Installation view, Paola Pivi



Installation view, Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama, Photo by Victoria Cimolini



Installation view, Chitra Ganesh. Photo by Jesse Tamayo.

## Brutal Vision: The Centennial Planetarium

Contemporary Calgary is housed in the historic Centennial Planetarium—an iconic Brutalist structure built in 1967 to celebrate Canada’s Centennial. Designed by McMillan, Long and Associates, the building has long served the citizens of Calgary, first as a planetarium, then as the city’s Science Centre, and now as a leading modern and contemporary art gallery. Over its lifetime, the Planetarium has undergone several renovations and transformations. Contemporary Calgary is proud to bring world-class contemporary art programs to this remarkable space. The unique architecture invites curatorial leadership in presenting exhibitions and programs, positioning Contemporary Calgary as one of the most distinctive contemporary art galleries in the country. This helps establish both Contemporary Calgary and the city itself as leaders in innovative art programming.

## Contemporary Calgary’s Renovation and Expansion Project

Curatorial leadership will be essential to shaping the gallery’s future, particularly with Contemporary Calgary’s capital renovation and expansion project. This initiative provides a significant opportunity to redefine the experience of contemporary art exhibitions. The project includes renovations to the existing Planetarium, the expansion of a new education and programming wing, and the transformation of the Centennial Planetarium Dome into Canada’s first LED dome dedicated to contemporary art. These developments present an exciting opportunity for Contemporary Calgary to lead the way in art innovation, and the gallery looks forward to the guidance and expertise of its Chief Curator in bringing this project to life.

## Community Cultural Landscape

Calgary is the third most diverse city in Canada, with a thriving arts and culture scene that offers a rich array of organizations and artists. Alberta Ballet is one of the country’s foremost ballet companies, and the Glenbow Museum houses extensive collections of art, history, and Indigenous belongings. Calgary also boasts the National Music Centre, a vibrant philharmonic and opera scene, a dynamic choral community, and numerous live music venues. The city is renowned for its new play development, with many outstanding theatre companies staging compelling productions at Arts Commons.

Modern and contemporary art is exhibited by both Contemporary Calgary and the Esker Foundation, while numerous arts and cultural festivals, such as the High Performance Rodeo, Chinook Blast, and the Calgary Folk Music Festival, keep the city buzzing year-round. Calgary is also a burgeoning hub for film and television production. Just a 90-minute drive from the city lies the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, an internationally renowned institution dedicated to artistic excellence.



Centennial Planetarium circa 1967.



Centennial Planetarium Renovation and Expansion Project, Entrance Pavilion, rendering by Norm Li, KPMB Architecture, GGA.



Centennial Planetarium Renovation and Expansion Project, Atrium rendering, KPMB Architecture, GGA.



Centennial Planetarium Renovation and Expansion Project, Gallery Wing, rendering, KPMB Architecture, GGA.



Calgary Folk Music Festival, Prince's Island Park, 2024.

Calgary has always had a vibrant arts and culture sector, and over the past decade, the city has experienced a surge in investment and support for the arts. Landmark projects such as the Glenbow Reimagined and the Arts Commons Transformation have attracted global attention. Contemporary Calgary's renovation and expansion project is part of this broader transformation, positioning the gallery for long-term success while creating innovative programming spaces that will draw international acclaim and attract premier contemporary art exhibitions.

**Welcome to Moh'kins'tsis**

Calgary (Moh'kins'tsis) is located on the ancestral territory of the Blackfoot people—which includes the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani Nations. It is also home to Treaty 7 signatories, including the Tsuut'ina Nation and the Îyârhe Nakoda Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Goodstoney First Nations. Additionally, the area is home to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Districts 5 and 6, along with many First Nations and Inuit from across Turtle Island. This land has been a center of art, music, dance, storytelling, and ceremony for millennia, and Contemporary Calgary proudly contributes in this spirit.

Calgary is the largest city in Alberta, with a metropolitan population of 1.4 million people. Alberta itself is home to about 4.7 million people, making it the fourth-largest province in Canada. As of the 2021 Census, Calgary's median age was 36.4 years, and the largest age group was 25 to 29. Calgary's Downtown West End is a particularly diverse neighborhood, where 48% of residents identify as visible minorities, compared to 36% of Calgarians overall, and 45% of residents are newcomers to Canada, compared to 31% citywide.

**Living in Calgary**

Calgary offers a high quality of life and a wealth of amenities. As a thriving business hub, particularly in the energy, technology, finance, and healthcare sectors, the city boasts a strong economy. Calgary's international airport connects it to key destinations around the world. Outdoor enthusiasts can easily access the nearby Rocky Mountains, which offer world-class hiking, skiing, and breathtaking scenery. The city also features an extensive pathway system that encourages cycling, jogging, and walking, supporting an active lifestyle. Additionally, Calgary is home to several top-tier educational institutions, including the Alberta University of the Arts (AUArts), one of only four arts-based universities in Canada.



Glenbow Museum Reimagined



Alberta Ballet presents Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and The Drum.



Arts Commons Transformation Project.



Fly Over Park, Bridgeland, Calgary, Alberta.



Juame Plensa's Wonderland. The Bow, Calgary, Alberta.



Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park



Mount Norquay, Banff, Alberta.

## Position Summary

The Chief Curator will oversee all programming at Contemporary Calgary and report directly to the Chief Executive Officer. As the leader of the Exhibitions and Programming department, the Chief Curator is a passionate advocate for the visual arts, capable of provoking thought and engaging a diverse public, while playing a key role in securing the next generation of support for Contemporary Calgary. The Chief Curator will advance the gallery's vision by embracing a wide range of styles, genres, themes, and discourses, creating meaningful connections with diverse communities. Their vision, dynamism, and leadership are essential to shaping the future and achieving the aspirations of Contemporary Calgary.

## Role and Responsibilities

### **Curation, Programming, and Publication**

- Develop a multi-year curatorial strategy that includes exhibitions, academic lectures, public programs, tours, and publications, reflecting local, national, and international histories, geographies, current events, and notable art histories, while incorporating mindful curatorial practices and new technologies.
- Collaborate with interpretive staff, curatorial colleagues, and community stakeholders to create relevant and engaging content for gallery programs, rotations, and special exhibitions, aiming to attract and engage a broad audience.
- Curate innovative, visitor-focused, and interdisciplinary galleries and exhibition projects that showcase modern and contemporary art, highlighting local, national, and international artists.
- Explore and implement digital initiatives and outreach activities that support Contemporary Calgary's mission and expand audience engagement.
- Foster diverse perspectives by building strong relationships with national and international artists, facilitating global dialogues and practices within the Calgary community.
- Expand opportunities for curatorial travel and research through local, national, and international studio visits, exhibitions, biennials, and fairs.
- Conduct original scholarly research, and produce catalog essays, publications, and other texts to support Contemporary Calgary's curated exhibitions, programs, and related events.
- Oversee special exhibitions and projects, including focused displays, multiple-venue exhibitions, ambitious loan-based projects, and book-length publications.
- Take on additional curation, programming, and publication responsibilities as needed to fulfill the goals of Contemporary Calgary.

### **Artistic Collaboration and Development**

- Forge collaborative partnerships with scholarly and museum organizations, art and educational institutions, professional societies, and relevant committees at regional, national, and international levels.
- Strengthen curatorial networks and advance partnerships with local, national, and international cultural organizations to foster meaningful discourse within and for the community.
- Develop and maintain relationships with Canadian artists, curators, visual arts professionals, and organizations to position Canadian artists for successful local, national, and international careers.
- Promote equity by engaging with local artists, cultural groups, disability organizations, and Indigenous communities, providing a platform for marginalized voices.
- Enhance relevance by supporting artists who embrace new technologies, offering immersive art experiences, and exploring innovation through technology, training, and critical assessment.
- Take on additional artistic collaboration and development responsibilities as needed.

### **Professional and Community Engagement**

- Act as a dynamic spokesperson for Contemporary Calgary in the press, media, and on social media, promoting a vision of modern and contemporary art that reflects the community.
- Develop and deliver keynote addresses, lectures, and presentations to the public, while actively participating in cultural and visual arts events in Alberta and across Canada.
- Represent Contemporary Calgary at national and international curatorial forums, symposia, and events, while also negotiating partnerships and agreements with international collaborators.

- Collaborate with organizational, curatorial, and development staff to identify, cultivate, and solicit financial contributions, while building strong relationships with current and prospective donors.
- Take on additional professional and community engagement responsibilities as needed.

### **Administrative and Financial Resiliency**

- Collaborate with the CEO, Board of Directors, and staff to ensure Contemporary Calgary's policies and procedures align with and support best practices in the field.
- Hire, train, develop, supervise, and empower programming staff and contractors, fostering teamwork and mentoring the curatorial team, researchers, students, and interns.
- Develop, oversee, and manage the annual programming budget, ensuring successful program delivery while containing costs and achieving efficiencies throughout the fiscal year.
- Contribute to Contemporary Calgary's planning and programming efforts related to the capital renovation and expansion project.
- Take on additional administrative and financial responsibilities to support the organization's resilience as needed.

### **Traits and Characteristics**

The Chief Curator will be a visionary and dynamic leader, creative, curious, and charismatic. With a deep passion for art and artists, they will be flexible, collaborative, and an approachable, open-minded leader, eager to embrace and grow with emerging trends in the curatorial field. The ideal candidate will have the ability to explore the unconventional, welcoming the whimsical, while bringing extensive experience and expertise at the forefront of contemporary art.

The Chief Curator should possess a spirit of independence, balanced with a strong connection to Alberta's culturally rich community. They must be adept at managing multiple projects, tasks, and priorities across the organization, with a demonstrated commitment to collaboration and building partnerships. Exceptional communication skills are essential, as the Chief Curator will be responsible for articulating a clear vision aligned with the mission and values of Contemporary Calgary.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Personal Accountability** – The ability to organize and influence people to believe in a vision by creating a sense of purpose and direction while also being answerable for their own personal actions.
- **Project Management, Planning, and Organizing** – The flexibility to identify and oversee all resources, tasks, systems, and people to obtain demonstrable results.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The capacity to prioritize and complete tasks to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames while establishing courses of action to ensure that work is completed effectively.
- **Diplomacy and Conflict Management** – The sensitivity to effectively and tactfully handling difficult or sensitive issues with the ability to also understand, address, and resolve conflict constructively.

### **Qualifications**

A minimum of five (5) years of leadership-level experience in an art gallery or museum and a substantial record of achievement and delivery of contemporary art in a public gallery or exhibition space. A strong understanding of Canadian art practice is expected. The ability to work effectively in a small team in the context of a growing organization with demonstrated experience driving ambitious programming is needed. Knowledge of museum standards, curatorial best practices, and identifying new artistic talent are required. Superior presentation and writing skills with the ability to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences are needed. A PHD or Master's degree in art history, curatorial practice, and museology or equivalent professional experience is preferred.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

Contemporary Calgary offers a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package, including a base salary estimated to be in a range between \$100,000 and \$140,000 commensurate with experience. The health, dental, and medical benefits program is delivered by Manulife Financial and is competitive with the gallery and museum sector. The employee in this position will benefit from three weeks of annual paid holidays plus time off between

Christmas and New Year's Day, along with one flex day per month—a total of between 30 and 32 days of paid time off per year.

### Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit [artsconsulting.com/opensearches](https://artsconsulting.com/opensearches). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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**Contemporary Calgary is proud to be an equal-opportunity employer that celebrates diversity and inclusiveness. Inclusion in the context of our own network of communities warrants work for, and with, Indigenous populations, and in particular, an effort to support the positions set forth in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.**