

THE ISABEL
COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
THE PANDEMIC THAT BROUGHT THE FUTURE FORWARD:
BUILDING MEANING AND RESILIENCY.

March 4, 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	RE-THINKING THE ARTS	3
II.	COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY PRIORITIES	7
1.	Safety: Create and implement extensive COVID-19 safety protocol consistent with Queen’s policies, communicate safety measures to audiences, gradually increase capacity so staff and audiences are safe and feel safe.	7
2.	Off the arts island: Community engagement and wellness: Involve and assist the Kingston artistic community, keep the music playing creating community wellness and cohesion, participate in the fostering understanding and discussion about the wicked issues of our time, and safely get our audience back to the Isabel?	9
3.	Multi-platform world: Build capacity, capabilities, collaborations, and equipment/software infrastructure for multi-platform delivery for university, regional, national, and international online world without borders.	10
4.	Diverse programming is destiny: Invest in strong and culturally diverse programming for 2022/23 season to which 2019/20 subscribers will be renewed. Program one-off (non-series) concerts in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to provide flexibility with capacity rulings.	12
5.	Creativity matters: Create IMAGINE arts incubation program to foster creativity at Queen’s University and support emerging and established artists and creators in these remarkable times.	15
6.	Boost marketing through dedicated staffing, audience communications through an improved CRM box office system, and significant developments for Queen’s student engagement.	16
7.	Learning: Build our learning-agile environment as the Isabel staff team to open our minds to future possibilities and hone our expertise and collective capabilities.	17
8.	Fundraising: Change the arts economic model from dependence on ticket revenue and boost major gift fundraising to enable greater public access and our dreams to be realized and for audience and artistic access to be increased.	19
9.	Pricing: Eliminate ticket price increases for 2022/23 and ensure \$10 student access.	19
10.	Online Monetization: Explore monetization of multi-platform arts delivery through earned revenue, fundraising including major gifts, and extended audience development.	20
11.	New Ways of Working: Develop new ways of working and supporting Isabel staff work volume through technology (e.g. implement venue management software and new box office CRM software) and increased project management expertise, casual staff roles during peak periods, and professional development such as project management.	20
12.	Education: Include challenges of COVID-19 in live case study for the Arts Marketing course in the M.A. in Arts Leadership program, focusing future arts leaders on solutions during a period of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).	21
13.	The Arts and Community: Creating Change through Multi-Sector Dialogue including the participation in the Mayor’s Kingston Economic Recovery Team and the establishment of the new Principal’s Advisory Committee on the Arts.	21
III	CONCLUSION	24

THE ISABEL

COVID-19 RESPONSE + RECOVERY:

THE PANDEMIC THAT BROUGHT THE FUTURE FORWARD:

BUILDING MEANING AND RESILIENCY

I. RE-THINKING THE ARTS

CONTRIBUTION TO UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

“Cultural aspects play a pivotal role for the 2030 [sustainable development goals] agenda to be successful. **Cultural rights, heritage, diversity, and creativity** are **core components** of **human and sustainable development.**”

– United Cities and Local Governments Culture 21 Committee.

“The **transformative power of culture** for **social inclusion, resilience and sustainable development** is increasingly recognized as a key enabler for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marked a major turning point in global efforts to address development challenges and opportunities, as the local authorities and communities take an increasingly important role in this global momentum alongside international and national actors and other relevant stakeholders.

Culture is also an essential component of human development, representing a **source of identity, innovation, and creativity** for all, it provides sustainable solutions to local and global challenges.”

- United Nations #culture4development, May 21, 2019

“**Artists are the ones who predict where we’re heading, and also unlock our imagination to imagine where we could be headed.**”

– **Jesse Wente**, Ojibwe broadcaster, curator, producer, activist, and public speaker and Board Chair of the Canada Council for the Arts

We are in a brave new world for the arts.

COVID-19 is not just a pandemic.

It brought the future forward to the arts and post-secondary education sector as a disruptive force that has forever changed the arts and post-secondary education environment and ecosystem. For the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts (“the Isabel”), this has been a time to leap into the ‘new normal’ to learn new vocabularies, methodologies, and paradigms of multi-platform performance delivery, creation, collaboration, creative placemaking, audience engagement, and access to the arts.

Throughout the pandemic, we are:

- **DEVELOPING HUMAN POTENTIAL** to give emerging and established artists SKILLS FOR LIFE through a transformative, holistic life journey in the brave new multi-platform world of the arts.
- **CREATING PATHWAYS FOR SUCCESS** for local and national artists as the foundation of lifelong learning in interdisciplinary collaboration and digital production.
- **EDUCATING IN OUR VUCA WORLD** as we nurture our arts leadership graduate students to become artists, leaders, change makers, and culture creators of our collective future in our world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.
- **PRIORITIZING DIVERSITY AND INCUSION** as central drivers of curricular, artistic, and cultural change at the Isabel as we expand our age, cultural, and aesthetic multiplicity of engagement as we champion solidarity with marginalized groups and explore the intersection of the arts and social justice.
- **CHAMPIONING CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY as ARTS INCUBATOR and CREATIVE PLACEMAKER** in Eastern Canada where very few arts incubators exists for artists to create new works.
- **LEVERAGING COMMUNITY, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION** and the Isabel’s strengths will create a dynamic and central future and elevate the profile of the Isabel and Queen’s University.

In short, we are collectively working on a new deal for the arts now that the disruptive force of COVID-19 has challenged our worldviews and thrust the Isabel into the future.

Henri Matisse said, “Creativity takes courage.” Creativity and human ingenuity are momentous fuels for human advancement. In the arts, we do some of our greatest work in the most difficult of times as this is when we are needed the most. After all, as artists and creators, we are gritty and brave change makers. COVID-19 has made us acutely aware of the needs of emerging and established artists and the importance of arts creation.

The Isabel envisions a university and community transformed through the power of the arts. We support **Queen’s University’s strategic goals** in the learning experience, the global campus, community engagement, and enhancing the social culture and values within the university. The DAN School of Music and the Department of Film and Media supports the research and research/teaching integration here at the Isabel and the Isabel collaborates and assists with these initiatives as we are needed.

The Isabel nurtures the inquiring spirit with a diversity of world-class artists and programming, artistic excellence, socially engaged performances connecting the arts to social justice and issues of inclusion and diversity, and interdisciplinary creativity with newly created works. Artists and audiences of all ages are at the centre of our being. During COVID-19, we have been especially active in providing work for local and national artists and arts workers and are at the centre of innovation for high-fidelity, multi-platform delivery of live performance and creation of new works.

We boldly challenge ourselves with supporting new creations, offering diverse artistic perspectives including Indigenous arts, producing high fidelity and multi-platform delivery of our performances with emerging, local, and internationally acclaimed artists, facilitating local cultural expression here at Queen's and in our community, undertaking major initiatives to develop astounding emerging artists and arts leaders, and ensuring all communities are valued as makers of culture. We commit to creativity that engages with culture, seeks a relationship with diverse audiences and artists, and aims to influence socially difficult issues such as racism to achieve a more inclusive society. In addition to the outstanding national and international artists we engage, we are especially aware of providing a platform for talented local artists through our series, festivals, and incubation initiatives.

We are an artistically ambitious, world-class university arts centre that inspires and strengthens the Queen's and Kingston community with the artists and programming we present, the academic programming we support, the innovation we inspire, and everything that we do to make the Isabel experience the best experience. This is a wonderfully adventurous and talented team whose initiatives have already formed a strong legacy for the Isabel at Queen's University.

Leaping into the Future of the Arts

COVID-19 is not the only change maker as our future comes to us at lightning speed in the 21st century. There are many plot turns to come our way in the post-pandemic world. Here are three significant disruptive forces in the world of the arts and university education.

DISRUPTIVE FORCE ONE:

The Digital Revolution is resulting in the multi-platform world of arts creation, dissemination, marketing, and customer relationship management.

DISRUPTIVE FORCE TWO:

EDII – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization... AND ACCESS ... is creating an enriched and fairer arts ecology. It is also threatening the status quo of traditionally funded western arts organizations who will need to develop new models of arts production when equitable distribution of public funds is implemented.

DISRUPTIVE FORCE 3:

COVID-19, a global pandemic, that has brought the future forward and challenged the current ecosystem of the arts and amplified the cracks in its foundation including the precarity of artist livelihoods as independent contractors and the need for diverse structures to support artistic creation.

The future world of the arts and post-secondary education will be radically changed.

What will be different or intensified?

Immersive multiple platform delivery of the arts including extended reality (e.g. virtual reality and augmented reality) will become commonplace.

Artificial intelligence will result in a massive restructuring in our society, the job market, artistic creation and AI and user-generated curation, and the education system with the most rapid rate of continuous new knowledge creation and digital capabilities that humanity has ever witnessed.

We will see the start of the bionic human with brain chips, greater effects of climate change, quantum computing, possible dominance of opaque digital currencies, the growth of the Internet of Things with smart spaces and smart devices, extended reality opening exciting artistic collaborations and the increase in gaming and simulations, and increased data surveillance - that could be a threat to democracy and human rights.

So, whereto from here for the arts?

It is still about content, connection, and community and the excellence to which we collaboratively strive.

We are looking to create great art by diverse creators and imaginative, immersive - and not passive - audience experiences, and in-person exposure to the performing and visual arts will continue to play an important role in our communal lives as a society.

II. COVID-19 RESPONSE + RECOVERY PLAN

This COVID-19 response and recovery plan not only addresses the practical issues faced by COVID-19 but also the post-COVID world which will be significantly different.

Our COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan includes the following.

1. **Safety:** Create and implement extensive COVID-19 safety protocol consistent with Queen's policies, communicate safety measures to audiences, gradually increase capacity so staff and audiences are safe and feel safe.
2. **Off the arts island: Community engagement and wellness:** Involve and assist the Kingston artistic community, keep the music playing creating community wellness and cohesion, participate in the fostering understanding and discussion about the wicked issues of our time, and safely get our audience back to the Isabel.
3. **Multi-platform world:** Build capacity, capabilities, collaborations, and equipment/software infrastructure for multi-platform delivery for university, regional, national, and international online world without borders.
4. **Diverse programming is destiny:** Invest in strong, culturally diverse programming for 2022/23 season to which 2019/20 subscribers will be renewed. Program one-off (non-series) concerts in 2020/21 and

2021/22 to provide flexibility with capacity rulings.

5. **Creativity matters:** Create IMAGINE arts incubation program to foster creativity at Queen's University and support emerging and established artists and creators in these remarkable times.
6. **Boost marketing** through dedicated staffing, audience communications through an improved CRM box office system, and significant developments for Queen's student engagement.
7. **Learning:** Build our learning-agile environment as the Isabel staff team to open our minds to future possibilities and hone our expertise and collective capabilities.
8. **Fundraising:** Change the arts economic model from dependence on ticket revenue and boost major gift fundraising to enable greater public access and our dreams to be realized and for audience and artistic access to be increased.
9. **Pricing:** Eliminate ticket price increases for 2022/23 and ensure \$10 student access.
10. **Online Monetization:** Explore monetization of multi-platform arts delivery through earned revenue, fundraising including major gifts, and extended audience development.
11. **New Ways of Working:** Develop new ways of working and supporting Isabel staff work volume through technology (e.g. implement venue management software and new box office CRM software) and increased project management expertise, casual staff roles during peak periods, and professional development such as project management.
12. **Education:** Include challenges of COVID-19 in live case study for the Arts Marketing course in the M.A. in Arts Leadership program, focusing future arts leaders on solutions during a period of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).
13. **The Arts and Community:** Creating change through multi-sector dialogue including the participation in the Mayor's Kingston Economic Recovery Team and the new Principal's Advisory Committee on the Arts.

III. COVID-19 RESPONSE + RECOVERY PLAN PRIORITIES

1. SAFETY: CREATE EXTENSIVE COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOL consistent with Queen's policies, communicate safety measures to audiences, gradually increase capacity so audiences are safe and feel safe.

Safety is our top responsibility. The key concepts are ensuring that the audience, artists, and staff are *safe* and *feeling safe* through clearly communicated safety protocol and a customer service framework.

ACTION

Development of COVID-19 protocol and implementation.

The Isabel developed policies and public messaging with top theatre health and safety consultant, Janet Sellery along with Queen's Environmental Health and Safety, Queen's Legal Counsel, Kingston Frontenac Lennox and Addington Public Health, and the Ontario Ministry of Health.

Here is a summary of the Isabel COVID-19 safety protocol.

- **PHYSICAL DISTANCING:** In all public spaces including lobby, concert hall, washrooms, elevator, etc.
- **REDUCED CAPACITIES:** 0% to 11% capacity to 40% capacity to 100% capacity.
- **FACE MASKS:** Always wearing face coverings over nose, mouth, and chin.
- **HANDWASHING:** Frequent handwashing, new sanitizing stations.
- **ELECTRONIC TICKETS:** Tickets sold electronically, contactless scanning and patron interactions.
- **SANITATION:** Increased cleaning measures with hand sanitation stations throughout all public spaces.
- **REDUCING CONGREGATING:** Reducing congregating with **no** coat check, merchandise, food and beverages, or intermissions.
- **STAGGERED ARRIVALS:** Audience members are assigned arrival times based on seating to restrict gathering in the lobby, limit guest interactions in passing by one another, and to make it easier to adhere to washroom capacities.
- **BOOSTED STAFFING:** Additional staff to assist with COVID-specific duties.
- **PROOF OF VACCINATION** with personal government-issued ID required for entry into the Isabel.
- **HEALTHY STAFF and VOLUNTEERS:** All staff and volunteers are provided COVID-19 protocol training and asked to stay home (without financial penalty) if they are ill.
- **WHAT WE ASK OF OUR AUDIENCE MEMBERS:**
 - Be **fully vaccinated** and provide proof of vaccination upon entry to the Isabel.
 - Perform COVID-19 **self-assessments** prior to coming to the Isabel (following current recommendations identifying symptoms of concern).
 - Practice **social distancing**.
 - Wear **face coverings** (over nose, mouth, and chin) in the Isabel always.
 - **Avoid touching** common surfaces as much as possible.
 - **Don't congregate** by following the assigned arrival time and leaving directly following the performance.
 - **Remain seated** once they have entered the concert hall as there is no intermission and no food and drink service that would create an unhealthy unmasked crowd.
- **LEGAL:** The Isabel at Queen's University at Kingston (the University) has put in place measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, however the University cannot guarantee that any individual attending the

University property, using the University's facilities, or participating in activities or events organized by the University, whether on-campus or off-campus will not become infected with COVID-19.

ACTION:

Online access to Isabel performances.

Audience members have the option to experience the Isabel's performance at home as well as limited live audience attendance.

ACTION:

Creation of the Isabel Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The JHSC was created with the Isabel, Department of Film and Media, and the DAN School of Drama and Music along with the two-part provincial certification training.

2. OFF THE ARTS ISLAND: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WELLNESS: Involve and assist the Kingston artistic community, keep the music playing creating community wellness and cohesion, participate in the fostering understanding and discussion about the wicked issues of our time, and safely get our audience back to the Isabel.

ACTIONS 2020/21:

- Conversion of the Bader and Overton Canadian Cello Competition to an online competition in collaboration with CBC.
- Streaming of a new Ballytobin Summer Festival in partnership with the Kingston community including Skeleton Park Arts Festival to bring live music performances to audiences in the height of the pandemic.
- Streaming of all concerts and some limited in-person attendance in the fall of 2020.



ACTIONS 2021/22:

- The Isabel will present one-off concerts (not in a subscription series) knowing that capacity rulings can change depending on the direction of the pandemic. All concerts streamed and shared through the Isabel Digital Concert Hall and Facebook to maximize reach.
- Stream free concerts to seniors residences.
- DAN School of Drama and Music and community group access of the Isabel Digital Concert Hall and streaming capabilities.

ACTIONS 2022/23:

- The Isabel will renew the 2019/20 subscribers into the 2022/23 season. Multi-platform plans for 2022/23 will be examined in 2022.
- DAN School of Drama and Music and community group access of the Isabel Digital Concert Hall and streaming capabilities.

3. MULTI-PLATFORM WORLD: BUILD CAPACITY, COLLABORATIONS, CAPABILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MULTI-PLATFORM DELIVERY for a university, regional, national, and international online world without borders.

ACTION:

Skill Development in High-Fidelity Recording, Filming, and Streaming

The Isabel's technical team leapt into the multi-platform world enhancing and/or gaining tremendous expertise in:

- High-fidelity recording, multi-camera live filming, and streaming from the Isabel
- Remote streaming (from 7 cities in three countries with the Bader and Overton Canadian Cello Competition in collaboration with CBC)
- Creating high-fidelity recordings for CBC
- Collaborations in streaming with over 20 presenters throughout North America
- Lighting for filming and streaming
- Increasing capacity for multi-disciplinary works
- Expertise in recording, filming, and streaming hardware and software
- Graphics capabilities for streaming.

ACTION:

Production/Artistic Infrastructure and Capacity Building

Undertook new direction in live performance streaming to produce high-fidelity sound and high-definition visuals involving experimentation, knowledge development, and new hardware/software:

- Blackmagic Design ATEM Television Studio Pro 4K Switcher (multi-camera view capture that allows advanced in-performance and post-production film editing)
- Blackmagic UltraStudio Mini 4K capture box for syncing audio and video streaming
- Addition of high definition/pro studio quality microphones such as AEA R88a stereo active ribbon microphone and a matched pair of Sennheiser MKH8020 condenser microphones
- Panasonic Lumix ULTRA HD (4K) box cameras
- Custom built, windows based, tower computer designated specifically to maximize live streaming capabilities with advanced graphics cards, powerful CPU and RAM, processing power, 4K ULTRA HD SDI Video capture card
- Three 4K Lumix cameras and lenses.
- 3 pro quality 4k Ultra HD video cameras and lenses.
- DJI RS2 Gimbal PRO camera stabilizer for cinematic quality filming
- AVID Pro Tools industry standard multi tracking audio software
- Adobe Premier Pro video editing software.
- Professional recording studio quality 8 channel microphone preamp unit.
- 'Preamps' are what convert the microphone signal into the recording device. The DigiCo sound board is top of its game for a LIVE sound board but quality studio preamps will bring us into professional recording sound.
- Headphone amp/rack unit for up to 6 musicians that splits headphones for multiple musicians recording at the same time to hear themselves in a studio environment when stage monitors can't be used.
- 1 remote control 'kit' to convert a camera into a pan/tilt camera.

- 'Lighting Trees' - stand mounting hardware to give more lighting design options. Also easily transported to lobby or rehearsal hall for lighting design - we've been borrowing from DSDM for the last couple of years.
- LED strip lighting under the concert hall stage upstage shelf to light up the upstage back wall to eliminate the need for 'floor lights'.
- Apogee Element 88 - Audio In/Out interface for studio quality recording. 8 Microphone pre-amps built in with expandability.
- 2x Ribbon microphones
- Cannon RCI-100 remote control for PTZ camera - with joystick and touch screen. Capable of controlling up to 100 cameras
- 2x Cannon n300 PTZ (Pan, Tilt, Zoom for remote control) - ULTRA HD (4K) cameras
- Hardware/booms/stands for more light mounting options to diversify CH shows as well add flexibility for location lighting such as in the lobby and rehearsal hall.
- Upstage LED upgrade - strip lighting for upstage wall
 - o controller
 - o LED strip
 - o LED booster

ACTION:

Familiarize team with the use of extended reality equipment:

- 2x Oculus Virtual Reality Headsets
- Sennheiser Ambeo VR/360 microphone (360-degree microphone)
- INSTA 360 One R camera for (360-degree camera).

ACTION:

Built Online Audience Access to Live and Filmed Performances at the Isabel

- Video watching capabilities.



- **PROGRAMMING: Online high-fidelity access** of 90,000 local, national, and international audience members to 68 performances in:



- o **Ballytobin Online Summer Music Festival 2020** (free access on the Isabel Digital Concert Hall and Isabel Facebook page with festival curated by the Isabel and community members)
- o **Bader and Overton Canadian Cello Competition** (free access on CBC Music, Isabel Digital Concert Hall, Isabel Facebook page)
- o **Fall Festival 2020** (paid online access on Isabel Digital Concert Hall) – hybrid **IMAGINE Online Arts Festival 2021** (with artists' IMAGINE projects streamed)
- o CBC In Performance national broadcasts of Gryphon Trio, Chloe Kim, and Bryn Lutek
- o **Fall 2021 season** – hybrid live/virtual
- o **Winter/Spring 2022 season** (free access on Isabel Digital Concert Hall, Isabel Facebook page) – hybrid live/virtual

ACTION:

Build local, national, and international collaborations to ensure amplified reach of the Isabel and Queen's University around the world.

- Foster local, national, and international collaborations and streaming partners including many inspired by the Isabel's new Ensemble in Residence, the Gryphon Trio:

- **Local:** AGNES Etherington Art Centre, Kingston community programming committee for summer festival, Skeleton Park Arts Festival, DAN School of Drama and Music, Kingston Symphony, Electric Circuits Festival Electronic Music, Performance and Digital Art.
- **National:** CBC, Gryphon Trio (Toronto, ON), Ottawa Chamberfest, Music Toronto (Toronto, ON), Ottawa Chamberfest (Ottawa, ON), Tuckamore Festival (St. John's, NL), Northern Arts and Cultural Centre (Yellowknife, YT), Toronto Bach Festival (Toronto, ON), White Rock Concerts (White Rock, BC), Toronto Biennial (with the AGNES), Yukon Arts Centre & Whitehorse Concerts (Whitehorse, YT), and Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity (Banff, AB).
- **International:** Chamber Music Society of Detroit, Rhode Island Chamber Music, Grosse Pointe War Memorial, Chamber Music Houston (Houston, TX), Chamber Music Society of Salt Lake City (Salt Lake City, UT), Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival (Orcas Island, WA), Chamber Music Tulsa (Tulsa, OK), MKI Artists (Burlington, VT), and Candlelight Concerts (Columbia, MD).

ACTION:

Convert the Bader and Overton Cello Competition at the Isabel to an internationally streamed and webcast competition on CBC Music.

- The Bader and Overton Cello Competition involved remote streaming of eight cellists in seven cities and three countries during the pandemic and the international webcast of the streams through CBC Music, the Isabel Digital Concert Hall, and Isabel Facebook page.
 - **Venue collaborations:** Vancouver Academy of Music (Vancouver, BC), Karlsruhe Musikhochschule (Karlsruhe, Germany), Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre (Ottawa, ON), John Q. Walker Recital Hall (Raleigh, NC), Longy School of Music at Bard College and M. Steinert and Sons (Boston, MA), Tateuchi Hall at the Community School of Music and Arts (Mountain View, CA), and Amélie Fortin and Elyzabeth Burrowes Studio B, La Cenne (Montréal, QU).

4. DIVERSE PROGRAMMING IS DESTINY: INVEST IN STRONG DIVERSE PROGRAMMING FOR 2022/23 SEASON TO WHICH 2019/20 SUBSCRIBERS WILL BE RENEWED. Program one-off (non-subscription) concerts in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to provide flexibility with capacity rulings.

ACTIONS:

Multifaceted artistic and philosophical basis for programming.

- a. Diverse Artists and Arts:** Diverse artists in all fields, Global Series for culturally diverse art forms, Indigenous programming. Queen's students and the Kingston community members must see themselves reflected on our stage.
- b. Artistic Excellence:** Internationally acclaimed established artists and extraordinary emerging talent.
- c. Commitment to Next Generation:** Two new national competitions with renowned jury members across the country. Present and support top emerging artists.

- d. Indigenous Programming:** Ka'tarohkwi Festival of Indigenous Arts with Dylan Robinson, Curator and Canada's top Indigenous artists– triennial festival, presentation of Indigenous arts every season.
- e. Student Engagement:** Every Last Student campaign ticket underwriting, Queen's International Centre international student/Isabel collaboration, AMS/MyIsabel grant student programming, support of creative arts academic units, and implementation of the enhanced student engagement plan that includes student directed curation.
- f. Arts Incubation:** Support of the creation and performance of innovative new works.
- g. Arts and Society – Cross-Disciplinary Campus Collaborations:** Isabel Human Rights Arts Festival, Ka'tarohkwi Festival of Indigenous Arts, and exploration of creative placemaking for socially engaged arts.
- h. Isabel as Nexus for Community:** Student and faculty participation in Human Rights and Indigenous festivals.
- i. Platform for Local Artists:** Ballytobin Online Summer Music Festival, Fabulous Fall Festival, IMAGINE Project Creation @ the Isabel, Kingston Connection Series, Children's Series, YGK Emerging Musician Competition for Kingston, Queen's, and Kingston community collaborations (e.g., Skeleton Park Arts Festival, Electric Circuit Festival)

ACTION:

Boost 2022/23 programming to encourage the return of audiences and opening new doors for new audiences.

<2022/23 Season – to be announced>

5. CREATIVITY MATTERS: BROADEN ARTS INCUBATION AND ARTIST SUPPORT to foster creativity at Queen's University and support emerging and established artists and creators in these remarkable times.



Create the **IMAGINE arts incubator and the IMAGINE Online Arts Festival as a platform for these new creations, films, and recordings.**

We embrace the necessity of creativity. The IMAGINE arts incubator has been created and funded during the pandemic to foster creativity and create meaningful activity for Queen's, Kingston, Canadian, and international artists, students, creators, and educators.

The Isabel created the new IMAGINE program to support creation-based residencies, online arts education initiatives, and filming/recording. This large and imaginative initiative enables artists to connect with their audiences and presenters and sees that they emerge from the pandemic with excellent new artistic material and high-fidelity recordings and films to promote their most recent, dynamic work. This COVID-19 period has been an excellent time for artists to immerse themselves in artistic 'R & D' to explore new collaborations, styles, concepts, and performance practices and come out of the pandemic with new and enriched artistic voices.

Through the Isabel's new IMAGINE arts incubation initiative we have facilitated 26 new creations/films/recordings by:

- Gryphon Trio (Project Co-creator, performers), Alison Mackay (Project Co-creator, concert designer), Marion Newman (mezzo soprano), Diely Mori Tounkara (Malian kora), Rawdna Carita Eira (Sàmi poet and playwright), Nordic Voices, Renelita Arluk (Project Co-creator, Director of Indigenous Arts at the Banff Centre), Ry Moran (Co-creator, Founding Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and currently Associate University Librarian--Reconciliation at UVic Libraries), Andrew Balfour (composer), and Anne Beate Hovind (curator of Norway's Future Library)
- Moira Demorest
- Emilie Steele and the Deal
- Ted Evans / Shook Planet
- Kasador
- Kelli Trottier
- The Gertrudes
- Alex Mundy
- Michael Capon, Gord Love
- Movement Market Collective
- Inner Harbour Collective
- Bridge & Wolak
- Sadaf Amini, Kingston Chamber Choir and John Burge
- Melos Ensemble with Sadaf Amini
- Room Tone

- Chantal Thompson
- Suzanne Pasternak
- Sheng Cai
- Leonid Nediak
- Chloe Kim
- Bryn Lutek
- Julia Wedman and Brian Solomon
- Jan Le Clair.
- Yolanda Bruno
- Loose Tea Theatre Company
- Bryan Cheng
- 2022 Successful applicants tbc

6. BOOST MARKETING, AUDIENCE COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH DEDICATED STAFFING, NEW CRM BOX OFFICE SOFTWARE, AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

ACTION:

Boost marketing by creating a necessary and common position of Marketing Manager

The Isabel Director has handled the comprehensive strategies and tasks of the subscription, single ticket, and institutional marketing effort for the Isabel for seven years in addition to management, strategic planning, artistic programming and contracting, fundraising, community relations, collaborations, teaching and graduate program and course creation, and financial planning responsibilities.

Recognizing that all arts centers have a marketing function separately covered and the fact that the Isabel will need to boost its marketing in a post-pandemic world to attract the audience back to the Isabel, the Isabel will hire a 2-year contract Marketing Manager (paid out of its carry forward fund savings) with the vision of the University making this a permanent position (through increased budget load).

ACTION:

Increase CRM effectiveness.

The Isabel will increase its market intelligence through the replacement of its current University Tickets software with a strong CRM Box Office system to replace a relatively weak system. RFQs were sent to Tessitura, AV Pro, Spektrix, Tix, and AudienceView and software demonstrations took place. Although Tessitura was the top choice, its pricing was out of reach. The decision was to wait for Utix /AudienceView upgrade in 2022 to avoid the data migration step but further research will need to be undertaken. Any switch of CRM box office software will be done once the Marketing Manager is hired and the Box Office Coordinator returns.

ACTION:

Research best practices for student engagement in North America to deepen the Isabel's student engagement activities.

The Isabel, through arts intern and M.A. in Arts Leadership student Keara Higgins, undertook a study of college performing arts centers to determine best practices.

Top campus arts practices included:

- Texas Performing Arts, University of Texas at Austin
- Lied Center, University of Nebraska
- Fine Arts Programming, College of St. Benedict, Saint John University in Collegeville MN
- University Musical Society, University of Michigan
- Ayls Stephens Center, University of Alabama
- Cal Performances, University of California, Berkeley
- Stanford Live at Stanford University

The study focused on:

- Eight theories of engagement
- Fifteen campus-based arts centers
- Five independent arts centers with growth in the 18-24 aged audience.

Upon the hiring of the Marketing Manager, the Isabel will collaborate with faculty and students to create and implement an undergraduate and graduate student engagement plan including the following best practices:

- Student involvement
- Flat-rate pricing system (e.g. \$10)
- Multi-disciplinary partnerships within the university
- Targeted focus on first-year students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Student curated performers
- Academic curricular integration
- Social media fencing.

7. LEARNING: BUILDING OUR LEARNING-AGILE ENVIRONMENT as the Isabel team to open our minds to future possibilities and hone our expertise and collective capabilities.

As society and the nature of work continue to evolve, workplaces and career trajectories are becoming more dynamic and less predictable. The Isabel staff have recognized that beyond our formal education, we will need to keep our minds open, agile, and inspired in this rapidly changing environment and make lifelong learning a personal and professional priority.

ACTION:

Professional Development: Commitment to lifelong learning in a rapidly changing world.

The Isabel encourages lifelong learning with its staff team that opens and stimulates minds and expands the collective expertise of the group. It also links the Isabel into the Queen’s learning network around Queen’s learning priorities such as EDII.

The major areas of exploration are multi-platform delivery, extended reality (VR/AR), futurist perspectives, project management, inclusion and equity, health and safety, entrepreneurialism, fundraising, finance, Google analytics, and website creation. Staff members also honed their skills in time management and communications.

In addition to all the research and development around the multi-platform world accomplished by our excellent technical and production team, professional development courses taken by Isabel staff include:

- Accessibility and Accommodation in the Workplace
- Anti-Racism 101
- Administrative Professionals at Queen's Certificate

- Administrative Professionals at Queen's Masters Certificate Principles of Project Management
- Advanced Customer Service: Dealing with Difficult Situations
- Advanced Excel
- Asserting Yourself, an Empowered Choice
- Assertive Interpersonal Communication
- Be Entrepreneurial in Cultural Industries in a Digital Age
- Being an Effective Team Member
- Being Positive at Work
- Building Websites with Drupal 7
- Call It Out
- Campus Internationalization
- Certificate in Workplace Communications
- Communicating with Confidence
- Communication Foundations
- Communication: Styles & Stumbling Blocks
- Content Management
- Constructive Conflict Resolution
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural Competence
- Customer Service: Disney Quality Service
- Customer Service: Managing Customer Expectations
- Design Thinking
- Education Abroad: Opportunities and Experiences
- Effective Presentation Skills
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization
- Expanding the Circle: Including Indigenous Cultures in the Workplace
- Exploration of audio, video, streaming, and soon, VR technologies.
- Finance 101: Your Introduction to Queen's Financial Services
- Foundations of Project Management
- Futures Thinking: 5-part certificate
- Gaining Competence in an Intercultural Workplace
- Google Analytics Academy (Analytics for beginners, advanced analytics, analytics for power users, good analytics 360, Intro to Data Studio, Tag Manager Fundamentals)
- Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory
- Internal Controls
- International Education Stream
- Having Difficult Conversations
- Human Rights, Queen's and You
- International Education Stream
- It's About Time
- Joint Health and Safety Committee Ontario Certification
- Leading with Emotional Intelligence
- Life After COVID-19: Get Ready for our Post-Pandemic Future
- LinkedIn Learning - Top Digital Marketing Tools
- Literacy Teaching and Learning: Aims, Approaches and Pedagogies
- Major and Principal Gifts
- Managing Change
- Managing the Risks in International Education
- Mental Health Issues: International Students at Queen's and Queen's Students Abroad
- Organize Your Office So It Works for You
- PCI Compliance Training
- Purchasing in the Public Sector

- Report Writing Fundamentals
- Remote Work Foundations
- Sexual and Gender Diversity in the Workplace
- Social Work Practice: Advocating for Social Justice and Change
- Take a Minute! The Minute Taker's Workshop
- Teamwork Foundations
- The File Cabinet in Your Computer
- The International Student Experience
- Time Management: Working from Home
- Tips for Working Remotely
- Transitioning from Manager to Leader
- Volunteer Management: Course Overview and Planning for Volunteer Involvement, Recruitment and Screening, Relationship and Information Management, Setting Volunteers up for Success – Orientation and Training, Valuing Volunteer Contributions – Recognition and Evaluation, Five Steps to Volunteer Risk Management and Course Review
- Working Together
- Writing Customer Service Emails
- Writing in the Workplace

8. FUNDRAISING: BOOST MAJOR GIFT FUNDRAISING TO ENABLE DREAMS TO BE REALIZED.

ACTION:

Boost major gift potential at the Isabel to ensure investment in creativity and artistic and audience access.

The Isabel was required to pivot to create a *different financial model* rather than the traditional arts model based on earned revenue. Philanthropy has played a heightened role in ensuring that performing arts activities have continued during the pandemic.

- **Prospect Pipeline:** Expansion of the major gift prospect pipeline with comprehensive donor research of our audience members through iWave and Advancement capacity and affinity research processes
- **Cultivation:** Cultivation of major gift donors through personal meetings (via Zoom during COVID)
- **Planned Giving:** Continued follow-up with Isabel Planned Giving campaign prospects
- **Secure Major Gifts** in Indigenous arts, online delivery, programming, IMAGINE program, national piano competition, and virtuosi festival.

9. PRICING: ELIMINATE PRICE INCREASES FOR 2022/23 AND ENSURE \$10 STUDENT ACCESS.

ACTION:

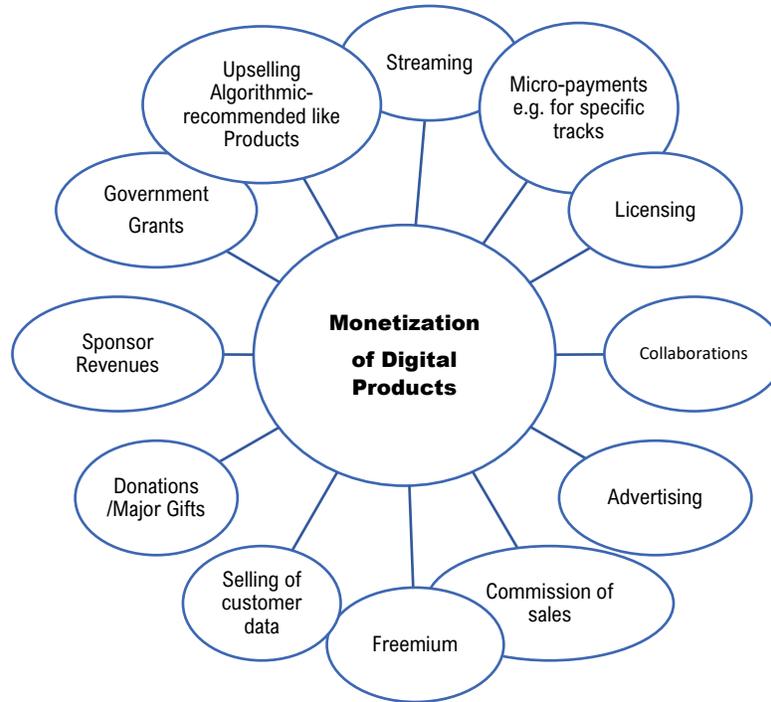
Focus on participation as the priority.

- Fall 2021 pricing was reduced to encourage participation.
- Winter/Spring pricing is at our 2020/21 planned pricing.
- 2022/23 subscriptions and single tickets will be at our 2020/21 planned pricing.

10. ONLINE MONETIZATION: EXPLORE MONETIZATION OF MULTI-PLATFORM ARTS DELIVERY

ACTION:

Explore different ways to monetize online performances with local, national, and international collaborations, paid access, and major gift fundraising, with many more to explore in the future.



11. NEW WAYS OF WORKING: SUPPORTING STAFF THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

ACTION:

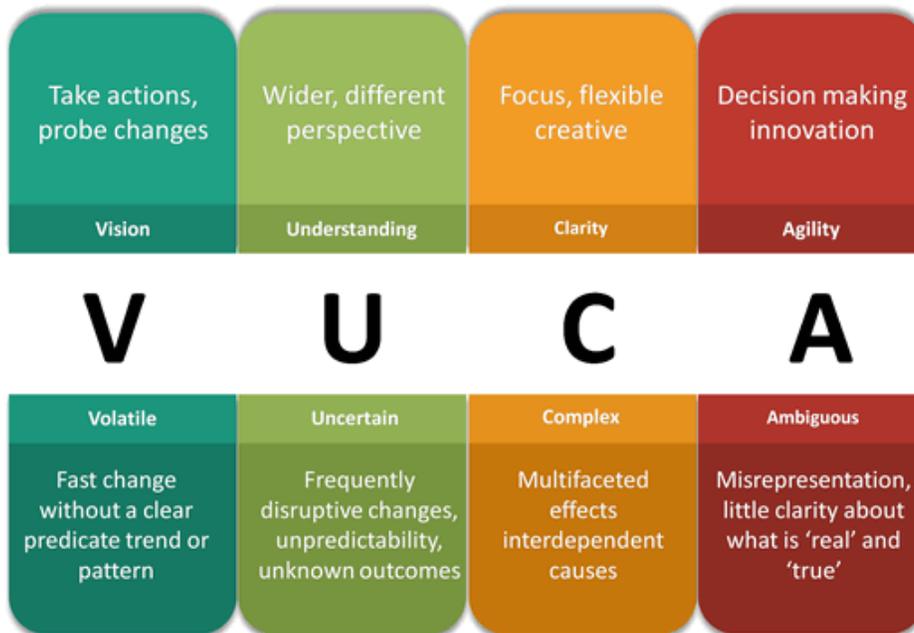
Implement the installation of venue management software.

The venue management software RFQ was sent to: Ungerboeck, ArtsVision, Event Guru, Event Pro, and Event Booking/Venue Ops, and software demonstrations were given. The decision was to go with ArtsVision software given its integration of casual staffing software integration and the value-added details that would enhance the venue rental quotation and settlement process.

12. EDUCATION:

ACTION: Train future leaders

Include challenges of COVID-19 in live case study for the Arts Marketing course in Queen's M.A. in Arts Leadership program, focusing students on solutions during a period of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).



13. THE ARTS AND THE COMMUNITY: Creating Change through Multi-Sector Dialogue including the participation in the Mayor's Economic Recovery Team (KERT) and the establishment of the new Principal's Advisory Committee on the Arts.

The Isabel was the cultural representative of the Kingston Economic Recovery Team, a multi-sector community working group that helped develop short and long-term strategies to respond to the economic impacts of COVID-19 in Kingston. Its objective was to generate recommendations to respond quickly to changing conditions from both public health and economic perspectives.

The KERT working groups noted the common themes for post-pandemic development running through several sectors, including the developmental needs for the arts, such as:

- Creating sustainable employment, reconfiguring the employer-job market relationship, updating the workforce and employer skill set through micro-credentialling through St. Lawrence College and Queen's University
- Ensuring structural change to achieve EDII in terms of funding and program access
- Re-framing issues to create paradigm shifts to update our sectors

- Cross-sectoral collaborations to create community wellness, cohesion, and resiliency including creative placemaking
- Cross-sectoral collaborations to deal with the wicked problems of our times including racism, poverty, and climate change.
- Creating structures for digital marketing and distribution of Kingston products, services, and arts
- Training for the brave new world in the contemporary context and environment of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, including micro-credential education.

Like the 'Boundless Creativity' joint research project recommendations by UK Research and Innovation's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Isabel put forward recommendations to modernize the city's arts community with the objectives as follows.

- Diversify, nurture, and support the **next generation** of top talent.
- Structurally ensure and support **sustainable livelihoods for independent artists**.
- Support **artist and arts worker employers/engagers** (e.g. arts organizations, museums, venues) to ensure the future of live performance and access to it.
- Support new **cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural, cross-sectoral collaborative R&D**, especially the collaboration between the arts, social service, and economic development sectors.
- Reach new local and global audiences by **broadening global digital access** for producers and online audiences in a multi-platform universe and build a strong, resilient, and diverse technical online arts delivery digital skills base for multi-platform delivery.
- Ensure the arts' integration into solutions for **equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenization**.
- Build the link between the **arts and the community** through increased **cultural access and community resiliency, cohesion, and well-being**.

The action steps recommended were as follows.

- **DEVELOP HUMAN POTENTIAL** to give diverse emerging and established artists **SKILLS FOR LIFE** through a transformative, holistic life journey in the brave new multi-platform world of the arts.
 - **Create Contemporary Professional Development Programs:** New training and micro-credentialing programs and modern equipment for the multi-platform world and a means to create a Kingston Digital Concert Hall where artists could stream their performances to access local, national, and international audiences.
 - **Support the Creation of New Flexible Platforms to Support Independent Artists:** Beyond the institutional model for incorporated arts organizations, funding could also be sought on behalf of independent artists for the **formation of shared and flexible shared platforms** to assist independent artists with marketing, fundraising, government funding, production, and multi-platform dissemination. This would help deal with the tremendous economic hardship faced by

independent artists while providing a resilient business model for the ongoing paid dissemination of their physical and digitally distributed works.

- **Modernize the Arts Leadership Paradigm (fostering the creative producer model instead of arts administrator as leader) through Micro-credentialling and Professional Development.** Instead of the artistic / administration divide, an old-fashioned arts organization structure, funding could be sought for the modernization of arts administrators as creative producers with the focus on outstanding content creation, collaborations, and dissemination. This exciting paradigm shift would also attract future leaders to the arts industry.
- **Create Resiliency in the Arts Community in the VUCA world through micro-credentials and professional development** as we nurture our arts makers to become leaders, change makers, and culture creators of our collective future in our world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity through professional development opportunities that focus on resilient planning and decision-making in the contemporary volatile context.
- **PRIORITIZE DIVERSITY AND INCUSION** as central drivers of artistic and community change as artists and arts organizations expand the age, cultural, and aesthetic multiplicity of engagement and champion solidarity with marginalized groups and explore the intersection of the arts and social justice.
 - **Ensure Equitable Access to Funding**
 - **BIPOC Artists:** Creating pathways for success through EDI initiatives for BIPOC artists and arts organizations who have faced systemic barriers accessing government arts funding. This would establish meaningful progress in EDI ensuring public funding is reflective of the diverse community and diverse community of artists.
 - **Independent Artists:** Creating access to funding by independent artists who have been one of the hardest-hit groups throughout COVID-19.
 - **Launch of Creative Placemaking Labs** to integrate a diversity of artists in the Kingston diverse community and to enable underserved communities to have a platform for communicating unique issues and solutions to meet their specific needs.
 - Advancing equity.
 - Integrating the arts and social service sectors to build stronger relationships and build social capital.
 - Supporting cross-sector collaborations and impact.
- **CHAMPION CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY as ARTS INCUBATOR** in Eastern Ontario where very few arts incubators exist for artists to create new works.
 - Independent artists state that lack of financial access to venues is an issue. Funding here could be expanded to venues around the city for increased access by artists.
 - *Note:* The Isabel's IMAGINE Arts Incubator and the Grand Theatre's arts incubation programs are in nascent stages.

- **LEVERAGE COMMUNITY, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION** and the Kingston cultural community strengths will create a dynamic and central future and elevate the profile of Kingston to support the City's efforts in:
 - **Tourism** (and the economic multiplier effect of that industry)
 - **Attracting businesses and future residents** to Kingston as a city of choice with an excellent quality of city life that will in turn boost employment and municipal tax base increases.
 - **Community Wellness and Cohesion in a Growing Diverse Community.**

III. CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has brought the future forward and required the invention of new paradigms, operating models, and sets of expertise. The Isabel has taken the opportunity to meet the future head on and has used the pandemic as its own R&D incubator for future practices.

The pandemic will ultimately stop impacting our daily life with such intensity.

The question remains, what thought processes and activities will we keep in the post pandemic world?

For the Isabel, it is:

- The recognition of the role of [the arts as a pillar in the sustainability of humanity](#) and social cohesion.
- [Interdisciplinary and cross-cultural collaborations](#) as the source of the [greatest creativity](#) in the 21st century.
- The commitment to unlock [diverse artistic creativity](#) and foster [multi-disciplinary creation](#) which will expand the University's definition of research to include artistic creation and community innovation and collaboration.
- The essential need to [broaden access to the arts](#) through [changing the arts economic model](#) to boost major gift fundraising to ensure accessibility for the greater community participation.
- The [training of the next generation of arts leaders](#) as [creative producers](#) rather than arts administrators.
- The [participation](#) in inspiring dialogue and solving humanity's greatest wicked issues of our time through socially engaged arts.
- The commitment to [diverse cultural expression](#) and [providing platforms for under-heard voices](#) in the university as well as locally, nationally, and internationally, which will enhance and add further meaning to the University's commitment to EDII and its global contribution.

- The commitment to [multi-platform delivery](#) with the future direction in extended reality (e.g. virtual reality, augmented reality).
- The committed development of our [diversely talented team](#) at the Isabel for a new world of arts creation and dissemination.
- A [revised financial model](#) focused on increased philanthropy through major gifts and planned giving to ensure [inclusive audience access](#).
- The [commitment to the community](#) as a [creative nexus and community placemaker](#) for the university and community at large to contribute to community cohesion, well being, and dialogue.

The brave new world of the arts.

Bring it on.