



## **\$50,000 Community Building Fund Grant Provides Operating Support to Theatre Collingwood**

**Collingwood, ON (12/8/21):** Theatre Collingwood Association Inc. will keep theatre alive and carry on its mission to enrich and entertain the community thanks to a \$50,000 Community Building Fund grant provided by the Government of Ontario and delivered by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The not-for-profit, professional theatre company will use the grant to continue delivering live entertainment experiences and programs for Ontarians of all ages.

“Theatre Collingwood has presented professional live theatre and music concerts for appreciative audiences in South Georgian Bay for nearly four decades,” said Simcoe-Grey MPP Jim Wilson. “As we emerge from two years of lockdowns and social distancing, opportunities for the community to come together and enjoy great entertainment are more important than ever to our well-being.”

In addition to supporting general operating expenses, the grant will enable Theatre Collingwood to hire new staff, develop programs and engagement opportunities, and enhance their website, which includes a ticketing portal that is also used by other community groups to sell event tickets.

“With the Community Building Fund grant, generously received from OTF, Theatre Collingwood will continue adapting to the impact of the pandemic while we explore new ways to offer high-quality theatre and drama education programs for residents and visitors of South Georgian Bay,” said Erica Angus, Executive Director. “We are excited to provide employment opportunities for arts workers and projects for local service providers that will also help strengthen our community.”

For performing arts companies across the province, this has been a devastating period. Evolving pandemic restrictions made it difficult to plan for in-person events and virtual performances presented a learning curve both for artists and audiences. In July 2021, Theatre Collingwood was eventually able to bring people together for a new outdoor entertainment series called The PORCHSIDE Festival. This initiative brought 14 unique and talented artists to Collingwood to perform for audiences of 25 people in the backyards of some of the town’s most historic homes. Response to the festival was immediately positive, with 26 performances selling out before the first show opened.

“After adapting and pivoting our way through the last 19 months, this OTF grant will have a very meaningful impact on our operations,” said Erica Angus. “To begin with, we are looking forward to expanding the PORCHSIDE Festival to hear more diverse voices and to see many cultures represented on stage. We are planning to bring back a Summer Theatre series in 2022. A new youth drama education program is also in development, as well as a storytelling program for seniors,” Angus added.

Theatre Collingwood is deeply invested in the communities that make up South Georgian Bay. It is working with the Collingwood Arts, Culture and Entertainment Group (CACE) to develop a plan to build a new Centre for the Arts, while also helping the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay create a Regional Arts Action Network. To learn more about Theatre Collingwood’s programs and events, please visit:

[www.theatrecollingwood.ca](http://www.theatrecollingwood.ca)

Theatre Collingwood Association Inc. is a registered, charitable organization that was founded in 1984 by members of the local community. Led by the late Barbara Weider, they were a passionate group who believed that a professional theatre company would enrich the community, both socially and economically. Theatre Collingwood remains dedicated to showcasing the finest talent in quality, live

theatre and music productions. The organization has fostered harmonious relationships with independent artists and other regional theatre companies, which allows them to create unique entertainment experiences around South Georgian Bay. Several volunteers assist their management team with everything from fundraising to greeting patrons at shows, to serving on their Board of Directors.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. Last year, nearly \$112M was invested into 1,384 community projects and partnerships to build healthy and vibrant communities and strengthen the impact of Ontario's non-profit sector. In 2020/21, OTF supported Ontario's economic recovery by helping non-profit organizations rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Visit [otf.ca](http://otf.ca) to learn more.

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**For more information or to schedule an interview:**

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