

Executive Director Remarks – Leighton Art Centre AGM

Thank you Jodi, and good evening.

I am a part of the transition that Jodi spoke of, and I would like to echo her thanks to our wonderful and dedicated staff and volunteers AND ALSO to our dedicated Board of Directors, led this past year by Ms. Jodi Currie.

It was funny to try to reflect on the past year, only having only been here for six weeks of it, but we asked the staff to provide their insights and those will be available to everyone in our digital annual report that will be available online soon.

To share a few thoughts...

The Leighton Art Centre exists at the crossroads of art and nature, the young and old, and the past and future. In 2024, now 50 years old, 2024 was a year of, yes – change, but also of many successes and one that began to lay the groundwork for the next half century of supporting, nurturing, and building our community.

So ‘Why is Leighton important’...or maybe more importantly, why should we value the arts? The Arts provide our society with some of our greatest tools for expressing our shared humanity and for helping us understand our relationship with nature and our connection within the natural world - one of the most pressing issues of our times.

At the Leighton Art Centre, understanding the relationship between art & nature is core to our purpose, our values, and to our programs – and as a not-for-profit art and nature organization, we do this important work for the benefit of all our communities-now, and for future generations on 80 acres of grassland here in the foothills overlooking the Rocky Mountains.

Last year the Leighton family said goodbye to some good friends and also made a number of new ones as we presented a variety of engaging exhibitions and embarked on several changes that will continue to guide the organization for years to come.

And for those who follow the numbers -- from a financial perspective, The Leighton Foundation had a much better year, turning the page on past challenges, with a view to building on this this success in the future.

On that note, we are pleased to announce that we will soon be launching a targeted fundraising campaign entitled 'Building on a Legacy'. This campaign is targeted towards providing resources to meet the current and growing needs of our educational programming and facilities. Ms. Currie will speak a bit more about this and we hope that you will all consider joining us in supporting this important initiative.

Finally, to echo my opening, it goes without saying that all this important, and hard, work is not the product of any one person, but rather of a team of dedicated staff, board, artists and volunteers – all here to support the legacy of A.C. and Barbara Leighton, their contemporaries and all of the artists and visitors who call The Leighton Art Centre home.

In closing, thank you all for your support and faith in the Leighton Art Centre for the past 50 years. The future is bright, and we look forward to what the next 50 years will hold.

Thank you.

Darryl Lindenbach
Executive Director