

IMPERIAL THEATRE

2022/2023 ANNUAL REPORT



IMPERIAL THEATRE INC. | 674-4100 | ADMIN@IMPERIALTHEATRE.CA |

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ABOUT IMPERIAL THEATRE

AND OUR MISSION

Imperial Theatre is an 842-seat historic building that has enriched our community through live performance and outreach programming for over 27-years since its restoration and reopening. A successful and independently run charitable organization, Imperial Theatre is our region's premier Performing Arts Centre. It is governed by a volunteer board of seventeen directors comprised of an appointed director from each of the four municipal councils of Grand Bay-Westfield, Rothesay, Quispamsis and Saint John with the rest being elected by the theatre's general membership.

Mission Statement

We enrich, engage, and inspire our community through the performing arts.

Mandate

- To enrich the community by providing a professional quality, multi-purpose facility;
- To engage audiences through world-class entertainment experiences;
- To encourage (inspire) the presentation of local productions and the development of the arts.

Value Statements

Imperial Theatre is dedicated to managing its business based on the following core values:

We value our building and as such are committed to preserving and promoting its history and beauty.

We value our community and as such we endeavour to provide a quality, inclusive entertainment experience to a wide-ranging audience.

We value our people and as such we strive to create an atmosphere of collaboration, teamwork, and excellence for our staff and stakeholders.

Safer Spaces - We strive to make Imperial Theatre a respectful, welcoming, fun, and caring space for patrons, performers, artists, agents, managers, employees, and volunteers alike. Imperial Theatre will not tolerate discrimination, aggressive speech, or violent acts. This includes but is not limited to: racism, white supremacy, sexism, heterosexism/homophobia, cissexism/transphobia, queerphobia, sizeism, ableist and ageist comments, and all acts of violence and harassment.

An Overview of the Year

ANGELA CAMPBELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & MEL NORTON, PRESIDENT
OF IMPERIAL THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Friends and Members,

We are pleased to present the Annual Report for Imperial Theatre, summarizing our activities and achievements over the past year. As the Executive Director and President of the Board of Directors of your Imperial Theatre, located in the heart of Uptown Saint John, it is our privilege to share with you the progress we have made in our post-COVID recovery journey.

Public Messaging Campaign to Reassure Public Safety: Our dedicated efforts to ensure the safety of our patrons throughout the pandemic have yielded positive feedback and results. We diligently provided public service announcements through various channels, including social media, our website, and e-newsletters. The trust we built during the challenging times of COVID-19 has encouraged increased attendance now that we are fully operational. We reopened to full capacity in March 2022, and the strong foundation laid during the recovery period has positively influenced audience participation and satisfaction.

Encouraging Entertainment and Cultural Experiences: Rebuilding our audience post-COVID has been a priority, and we embarked on a strategic market research and development project supported by a Federal Grant. Our marketing efforts focused on promoting the overall experience of visiting Imperial Theatre and emphasized the significance of performing arts in enhancing the cultural vibrancy and quality of life in our region. As a result, our audience attendance at the end of the 2022-2023 season reached an impressive 97.5% of the levels achieved in 2018-2019, and our total event revenue increased by 17%, surpassing our initial goals. We remain committed to positioning Imperial Theatre as an inclusive and essential part of our community.

Increasing Operational Efficiency: We have made substantial progress in enhancing our operational efficiency. An internal audit of our ticketing system confirmed that it aligns with our organizational needs, offering flexibility, strong internal controls, and minimal fees. Our staff's ongoing training on the Theatre Manager System has greatly improved data mining capabilities and effectiveness. However, we have recognized the need for a different system to serve our donors and sponsors, and we continue to explore options. Additionally, new financial procedures have been implemented, and we are preparing to migrate to a new Accounting System, which will further streamline our operations.

Sustainable Practices: We remain committed to environmental sustainability and have undertaken a Green Energy Audit. Upon its completion, we received recommendations for

a full retrofit of our HVAC system, aiming to reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 47.8% - the equivalent of taking 23 cars & trucks off the road for one year. With successful grant applications and ongoing progress, we are on track to implement these improvements between June 2024 and September 2024.

Inclusivity and Accessibility: As part of our ongoing commitment to inclusivity, we are working with CHROMA and Abilities NB to develop gender-neutral washrooms. We have identified the former women's washroom on the Balcony Level as the ideal space due to its layout. While we have encountered some concerns from patrons, the overall response has been positive, and we are working towards installing floor-to-ceiling stalls to provide a more private space. Our aim is to ensure that all individuals feel valued and comfortable during their visits to Imperial Theatre.

System Integration for Efficiency: To improve integration and streamline our operations, we have decided to replace our current accounting system with QuickBooks. This decision was made after careful consultation with our Finance Committee and staff. Anticipated outcomes include enhanced efficiency, reporting capabilities, and project management tools. We will engage a consultant to advise and build the system's functionalities, with a mid-year switch-over targeted for January 2024.

Diversification of Revenue Streams: Our commitment to diversified revenue from events has seen significant progress. With the support of a grant from Canadian Heritage, we conducted a market research study and developed a new strategic marketing plan. By focusing on the overall experience of attending our theatre and transitioning from a subscription model to a membership model, we have achieved remarkable results. We have seen an increase in capacity from 35% to 57% over three years, and our social media follower base has grown, with Facebook up by 16%, Twitter down by 9%, and Instagram up by 21%. Moreover, we have successfully enrolled 595 members attending an average of 4.13 Imperial Theatre shows per year.

These achievements are nothing short of remarkable, and we extend our deepest gratitude to all who have supported us along the way. Our unwavering commitment to artistic excellence, community engagement, and sustainable growth has shaped our success. We look forward to continuing this extraordinary journey and invite you to join us as we build an even brighter future for Imperial Theatre and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,

Angela Campbell

Executive Director

Mel Norton

President of the Board of Directors

BOARD MEMBERS

Imperial Theatre Board

President – Mel Norton
Vice President – Li Song
Treasurer -- Peter Gaulton
Secretary – Nick Doyle
Past President – Joanna Everitt
Director -- Eleanor Austin
Director -- Paula Copeland
Director – Dahlia Das
Director – Michele Flarow
Director – Richard Gradon
Director – Vittu Kumar
Director – Julie Estabrooks
Director – Benjamin O'Neill
Director – Chelsea Seale
Director – John Buckley
Director – Robert Young
Director – Peter Stoddart

Imperial Theatre Foundation

President -- Ian Stead
Vice President – Cindy Millett
Treasurer – Derrick Bishop
Secretary – Mary Brosnan
Director – Hilary Brock
Director – Rick Hancox
Director – David Laskey
Director – Dr. Wendy Stewart
Director – Michael Wennberg
Director – Robert Young

STAFF MEMBERS

Angela Campbell – Executive Director
Bethany Stout – Assistant Executive Director
Ruth McLeese – Director of Operations & Finance
Shelley Brown – Operations Manager
Heather White Brittain – Development Director
Scott McRae -- Technical Director
Liam Mathieson – Lighting Director
Bob McNulty – Head Carpenter
Sean Boyer – Head of Sound
Alec MacIntosh – Head of Video
Peter Walsh – Head Custodian
Kathleen McLeod – Marketing & Social Media Manager
Lindsay Jacquard – Box Office Manager
Lindsay Hazen – Asst Box Office Manager
Mallory Kelly -- Manager of Hospitality
Doreen Robichaud – Book Keeper

IMPERIAL THEATRE PRESENTS:

SEASON 29 – 2022-2023

LIVE PERFORMANCE

Saint Mary's Band

The Debussy String Quartet

Silver Wolf Band

Pearle Harbour

Old Man Luedecke, The Once, The Fortunate Ones Atlantic Ballet Theatre Co: "Pisuwin

TNB: Blue Birds

OKAN

The Ennis Sisters

God is a Scottish Drag Queen

Serena Ryder

TNB: Pemberley

Tomato/Tomato

The Original Wailers

Piaf! The Show

RUBBERBAND: Vic's Mix

Classic Albums Live

Lunasa

Classified

2B Theatre: Old Stock

Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland

Joce Reyome

Cirque Kalabante

Colin Mochrie

Erin Costelo

The Last Waltz

Social Tango Project

Classic Albums Live

A'Court, Spiegel, Vinnick

Shaun Boothe

Ballet Jorgen: Cinderella

Machine de Cirque

Bob Dylan Bash

Atlantic Ballet Theatre Co: "Pisuwin

SINGLE PRESENTATION

United Colors of Fashion

Girls Rock Camp Recital

Drums Across Canada

Jann Arden

Tim Baker and All Hands

High School Musical Awards

SCHOOL SHOWS

Theatre de l'Oeil

Theatre New Brunswick

Shaun Boothe x 2

Overlap: "Satelite Theatre"

RETRO FILM / TIFF

Inu-Oh / Harry Potter

You Are Not My Mother/Dracula & The Exorcist

All My Puny Sorrows / Gremlins

Neptune Frost / Rosie / Drunken Master

Mean Girls / Aftersun / Kung Fu Panda

Ghost in the Shell

Everything Everywhere All At Once

The King and I / The Banshees of Inisherin

The Whale / Unforgiven / Dirty Dancing

RENTAL CLIENT PRESENTS:

SEASON 29 – 2022-2023

COLIN JAMES	SAINT JOHN CHINESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
CONNECTION DANCE	NEW BRUNSWICK YOUTH ORCHESTRA
JASON MRIZ	GEORGE CANYON
SAINT JOHN ROCK CAMP	TUTTA MUSICA & NBYO
STEVE-O x 2	CAT & NAT
JAY WHITE	WAR ON THE CATWALK
ZACHARY STEVENSON	SAINT JOHN THEATRE COMPANY x 5
ALYSSA EDWARDS	BOYLESQUE
HOPE RESTORED x 2	MATT ANDERSEN & THE BIG BOTTLE OF JOY
SYMPHONY NB x 9	JAMES MULLINGER
DREAMER: SUPERTRAMP EXPERIENCE	KENNY VS SPENNY
ROBIN: THE ULTIMATE ROBIN WILLIAMS TRIBUTE EXPERIENCE	
HOTEL CALIFORNIA	QUEEN: IT'S A KINDA MAGIC
THE STAMPEDERS	DARRIN ROSE
THE AUSTRALIAN BEE GEES SHOW	THIS IS ELTON: MARITIME TOUR 2023
LEGENDS SHOW	STEP IN TIME x 2
DIRTY DANCING IN CONCERT	SAINT JOHN THEATRE COMPANY x 5
SHAUN MAJUMDER	DANCE ZONE DANCE STUDIO
MOTOWN SOUL	HELLS BELLS
DEREK EDWARDS	THE WILDFLOWERS
SAINT JOHN THEATRE COMPANY x 5	ROTHESAY BALLET SCHOOL
STADACONA BAND	KIDSING
GALA BALLET x 2	KIDSING
MIKE BIGGAR	FIRST CITY SCHOOL OF DANCE x 2
CHRISTMAS WITH THE COPS x 2	CLASSIC ROCK REVIVAL
DANCE ZONE DANCE STUDIO	
THANE DUNN	
Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour	

FACILITY & OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW

207

DAYS IN USE

Along with presenting an annual season, Imperial Theatre also acts as a rental facility for local and touring events.

69

IT PRESENTED EVENTS

Rental opportunities include our full auditorium, the stage, and the Upper and Main Lobbies.

94

OTHER EVENTS

We support our presented shows as well as rentals with full backstage amenities, rehearsal space, food & beverage, technical facilities, ticketing, and marketing & communications.

61,105

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

We show a **20,000+ increase in total attendance from the previous year** so we feel confident that we're moving back toward positive numbers and increased houses.

These statistics are based on Usage from July 1, 2022 until June 30, 2023



FACILITY & OPERATIONS

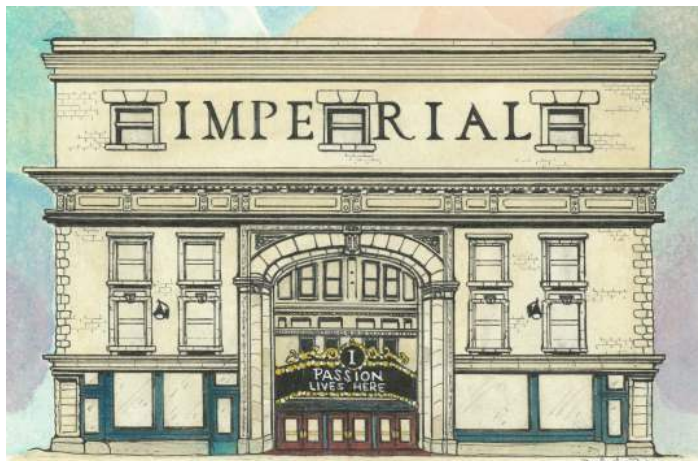
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

When you work in a building as historically significant as Imperial Theatre, maintenance is a full-time job. Our Facilities Manager, Shelley Brown, is constantly working to plan current maintenance as well as look towards future needs in our lobbies, our backstage, our stage, and everywhere in between.

Along with our general maintenance we have been all about HVAC and it has become a main focus until it is completed in Fall 2024.

Improvements:

- Approved funding for HVAC system overhaul 2.5 mil+
- Heritage approval to replace front exterior doors
- Backstage elevator retrofit completed and cylinder replaced
- Hepa filter units installed around the building
- UV-C lights installed into air handling units
- Ceiling tiles replaced in lower lobby washroom
- Installed water filling station in upper lobby
- Replaced some fluorescent lights throughout building with LED fixtures
- Entered into an agreement with CBCL to be our consultant for ongoing HVAC overhaul project



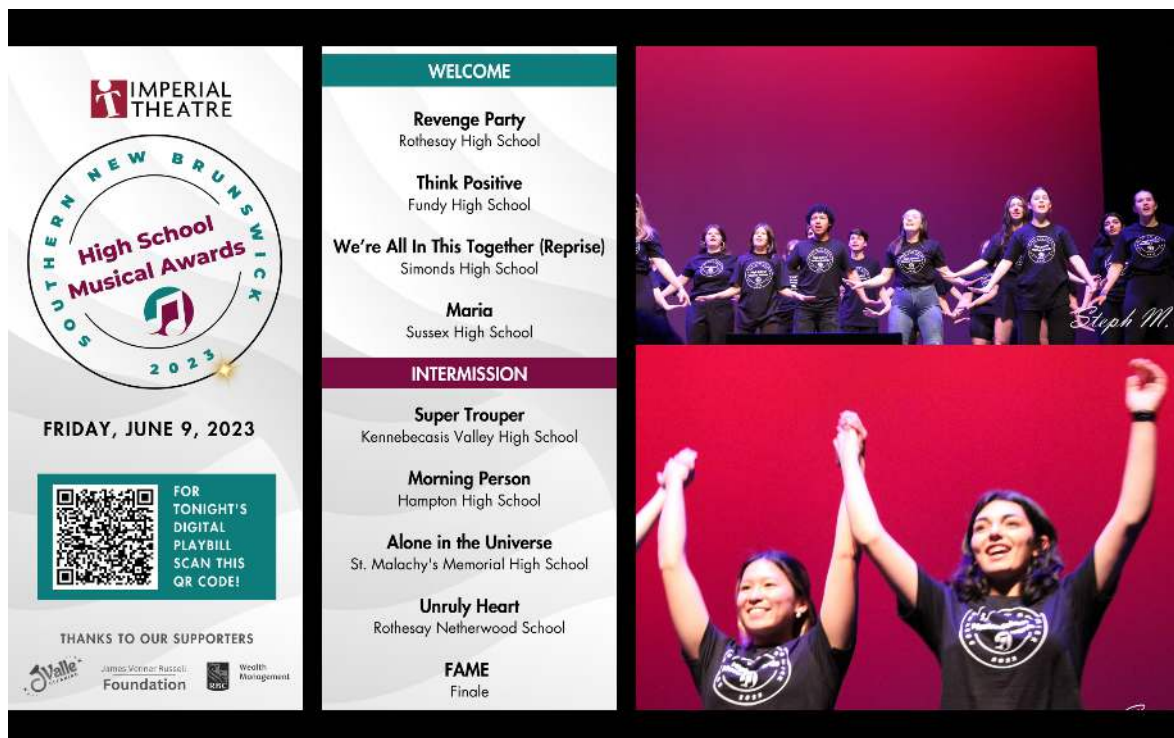
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

WORKSHOPS / SENIORS VISITS / KITCHEN PARTIES / HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL
AWARDS / SCHOOL PERFORMANCES

Outreach was able to bounce back some this season. We were able to send artists out to see our Seniors homes and to offer Workshops, Intergenerational events and post-show chats. We had workshops in Ballet, Salsa and Drum Making and visited Loch Lomond Villa and Carleton Kirk Lodge. We also managed to fit in a Whiskey and a Wine pre-show Tastings to increase our patron engagement. Our new Outreach Coordinator Emma, was a wonderful addition and we look forward to next year!



HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL AWARDS



The first Southern New Brunswick High School Musical Awards happened this past June 9th and **eight (8) schools from across the region took part.**

Fundy High / St. Malachy's / Simonds High / Rothesay High / RNS / Kennebecasis Valley High / Hampton High / Sussex High

We sent a group of theatre lovers to every performance from October to May and then they brought their comments and recommendations for special recognition awards for each school. There was an individual and a group award for every show.

We then brought them together to perform one chosen number and represent their school. It was an inspiring evening and the show finale brought even our most seasoned Imperial employees to tears.

It was so fun that we're going to do it again next year! HSMA!

SCHOOL SERIES



We were able to present 5 school shows this season! There is nothing like a theatre full of happy school kids. It was so great to have them back! Almost 2700+ local students enjoyed:

- Theatre de l'Oeil: Blue Marco – elementary school
- TNB presented Christmas at Pemberley – middle + high school
- Shaun Boothe x 2 – middle school + high
- Overlap Satellite Theatre – high school



FUND DEVELOPMENT

DONORS, FUNDERS, PARTNERS AND AMBASSADORS



These past few months have revealed tremendous opportunities to connect new Friends to Imperial Theatre. The support that we received from donors, private funders, corporate donors and government funders is heartfelt. The impact of this support plays such a big role in people's lives. From the youngest patron who attended the Free School Series Program to older adults in enhanced care; Imperial extended an opportunity to engage.

These connections were made possible through donor support. Emerging artists attended dance workshops; older adults with limited mobility were engaged and uplifted by visiting artists and performances. Imperial's Incubator Program continued with emerging artists expanding their growth on our very own stage. Indigenous learning and celebration continued with the magnificent dance performance, Pisuwin. This beautifully woven artistry celebrated Indigenous artistry and received possibly one of the longest standing ovations. Over 300 complimentary tickets were provided.

Far reaching is our sincere invitation to provide residents and communities with more opportunities to connect with Imperial Theatre. This past year, collective support made this possible.

- Over 1200 complimentary tickets were extended through the Ambassador Program where new residents connected to Imperial Theatre. Many thanks to RBC for their belief and support in this program.
- 3 Ambassador Receptions were held where newcomers and local residents were able to connect for the first time. Here's what one guest had to say: "Only thanks to you and your Ambassador Program we attended the A'Court, Spiegel & Vinnick Show. If you didn't send us an invitation, I would not know about this show or wouldn't have had the funds to attend."
- 14 Invited guests who believe in the value of the Ambassador Program officially became Imperial Friends.
- 2865 students received complimentary tickets through Imperial's free School Series Program. Our heartfelt gratitude to those who supported us this past year:

Sisters of Charity, The MacMurray Foundation, The McKean Foundation and Port Saint John.

- 2462 students across 56 buses received bus subsidies for students to attend these shows. We are so grateful to all these foundations and especially UCT for helping with bus subsidies.
- Two visiting artists, The Ennis Sisters and Erin Costelo performed in enhanced care homes.
- The Incubator Program supported Saint John writer, playwright, Leo LeFleur who presents a new work, The Errand Works on Imperial's stage in Season 30.
- On Truth and Reconciliation Day, Imperial presented Drums Across Canada with support from the Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Preceding this significant event, first time participants learned the art of drum making with Indigenous artist, Angela Beek on Imperial's stage.
- Amplifying Diverse Voices, a Series that received terrific support from TD Bank this past year, revealed diverse artistry that spoke to cultural inclusion, diversity and meaningful collaboration. Representatives from Black Lives Matters, Joint Economic Development Initiative, CHROMA and PRUDE Inc. support Imperial's vision and spoke at the top of shows in these Series with inclusive messages for all walks of life.
- The Free March Break Movie, supported by a generous Imperial Friend, Don Mitchener was a full house event! Children were delighted to attend with parents and caregivers and other friends where they were also treated to complimentary snacks.

These events are supported in many ways throughout the year. Imperial Friends have impacted the success of these programs in ways that go beyond a donation. The ripple impact of giving is felt in the hearts of many who share their moments of inspiration and happiness like the time when a young mom who arrived from Ukraine with her young son in the past year shared their personal joy: "We thank you for doing this for the people and the whole community. If everyone makes happiness with one person starting and sharing, everybody on the earth will be happy. But you make hundreds of families happy. Thank you so much for this."

In appreciation,



Heather White Brittain
Director of Development



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA, NEWSLETTERS, MEMBERSHIPS

This was a year of re-engagement and the marketing department stripped itself down and started from scratch with the help of an outside consultant and a new 5-year Marketing Strategic Plan. We were fortunate enough to get funding for this re-engagement and start planning for the future. This included a large consumer survey and a big public kick-off to the season. It enabled us to create a television commercial, wrap a city bus and run a big television and digital campaign.

Part of the new plan was launching our new Membership Program and it has been a huge success. We sold more than we targeted for and patron engagement was increased.

Here is a look at our current Socials, Newsletter, and Ticket Subscriber numbers:

595

members (target was 350)

12,635



followers (from 10,921)

6,789



followers (from 6875)

3,921



followers (from 2857)

12,889



subscribers (from 13,074)

(This is less but a cleaner list with a higher Open Rate)

BOX OFFICE

TICKETING



- 60% of ticket sales are online, but a total of 30,374 tickets were sold to patrons directly through the Box Office this season
- 8375 ticket orders sold by Box Office to Members
- 21999 ticket orders sold by Box Office to Non-Members

- Sold 595 Season 29 Memberships
- Expanded Box Office services to include a Member Services Associate available to Members on the night of the event

- Our second year presenting TIFF films: we saw an 80% increase in ticket sales from 2021-22!
- 9 Films from 6 different countries, in 6 different languages, from a wide variety of genres

- This year, we hired: one new Assistant Box Office Manager, and seven part-time Box Office Associates
- 85% of Box Office staff employed during 2022-23 have belonged to one or more marginalized groups, such as being queer or racialized!

VOLUNTEERS

OUR PROGRAM

75+ Volunteers



Imperial Theatre Volunteers are the heart and soul of our Theatre. They give their time freely and provide an essential service for our Patrons. While Imperial's product is entertainment, we are in the business of building relationships with our patrons. Our volunteers help to do this by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment by making patrons feel valued and part of the Imperial Family. Further to that, they provide essential support to the organization.

There are 5 main programs of volunteers at Imperial Theatre. Operational Volunteers, the Youth Corps (anyone under the age of 25), the IT Board, the Foundation Board, and the Newcomers Club that provides a safe and welcoming space for new residents to get involved in the community.

In this year we said so long to Pat, our former Volunteer coordinator and hello to Emma McEvoy who took over Volunteers as well as Front of House and Outreach responsibilities.

IMPERIAL FOUNDATION

THE ENDOWMENT

The Imperial Theatre Foundation, Inc. was incorporated under New Brunswick laws in 1984 as a non-profit organization in support of the arts in general and the operations of the Bi-Capitol Project, Inc. (since renamed Imperial Theatre) in particular once it was restored and renovated. Originally incorporated as the Bi-Capitol Foundation, its name was changed when the theatre's name was changed.

The Foundation is managed by a Board of Directors, including Chairperson, President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Foundation was brought into existence to raise an endowment fund, the investment income from which can be directed primarily to providing Saint John's performing arts centre with an assured base of financial support which when combined with ticket sales revenue, grants from the City of Saint John and surrounding municipalities, sponsorships, and other income would help to ensure the financial viability of the centre and prevent it from becoming a financial liability for the City of Saint John.

The endowment fund seeks to harness the power of investment return to provide a stable financial basis of operation for Imperial Theatre. Seeking in 1984 to provide for the future needs of Imperial Theatre even before it opened, the project broke new ground in arts funding.