

MEDIA RELEASE
November 21, 2019



CONTACT
Lenore Swenerton
Director of Donor Relations & Audience Development
604.981.1170 ext. 1003 or Lenore@kaymeek.com

THE KAY MEEK ARTS CENTRE RECEIVES \$20,000 FROM THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION & B.C. ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS PROGRAM

West Vancouver, B.C. – The Kay Meek Arts Centre is pleased to announce that the Rick Hansen Foundation has granted \$20,000 from the BC Accessibility Grants program toward Kay Meek’s capital campaign for accessibility improvements throughout their venue.

In 2017, the Kay Meek engaged the Rick Hansen Foundation to evaluate the accessibility of their venue. Kay Meek was aware of some obvious deficiencies, but the findings identified areas for improvement throughout the facility. The organization undertook a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) rating, a national system that rates the meaningful accessibility of sites, and a pre-requisite for funding from the BC Accessibility Grants program. The program grants up to \$20,000 to complete accessibility infrastructure improvements with financial support from the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction.

Based on the findings, Kay Meek Arts Centre prioritized significant infrastructure improvements including the addition of a full-sized commercial elevator connecting all three levels of the lobby.

In early October, the Kay Meek Arts Centre was pleased to learn that the application was successful.

“We are extremely grateful to the Rick Hansen Foundation who has been instrumental in helping to guide the process of making the Kay Meek Arts Centre accessible for all,” says Rob Gloor, Executive Director, “and it helps to reaffirm the importance of this project for the community.”

“We are thrilled to award Kay Meek Arts Centre with a BC Accessibility Grant”, said Doramy Ehling, CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation. “Their commitment to accessibility is clear and will enable people of all abilities to enjoy the arts. Their leadership will inspire others to open their doors to the growing number of potential customers and employees that can participate in and contribute to our communities.”

John Bannister is a West Vancouver retiree who lives with a spinal condition. He is personally excited about the accessibility improvements under way at the Kay Meek Arts Centre.

“With my scooter, I’m able to travel all over, but I have found attending the Kay Meek to be a unique challenge. To get from the main entrance to the Studio Theatre requires two separate trips in small, slow, key-operated lifts requiring an attendant. I’m separated from my wife because there’s not enough room, so she waits patiently in the lobby. And then I have to remember to plan ahead because there are no washrooms on the lower level! In the Main Theatre, the accessible seating area has limited space and it’s very awkward for a person who moves from a scooter into the seats. I am so pleased all these issues are being resolved - with a full-sized automated elevator to all levels, accessible washrooms on all levels, and more accessible seating. Will I be attending the Kay Meek Arts Centre more often? Absolutely!”

For more information on Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ or the BC Accessibility Grant Program visit www.RickHansen.com/RHFAC

About the Kay Meek Arts Centre

The Kay Meek Arts Centre is a professional arts venue offering world-class arts experiences and opportunities for the communities of the North Shore and is central to its vibrant cultural fabric. Presenting more than 300 performances to over 60,000 people every year, the venue provides a space for artistic excellence for professional artists, youth and community groups.

About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen's Man In Motion World Tour. For nearly 30 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities. Visit www.rickhansen.com to learn more.

RHF Media Contact:

Yulu Public Relations

Nora Eastwood

rhf@yulupr.com

604.558.1656