

— FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE —

**CELEBRATED INDIGENOUS ARTIST BRENDA CRABTREE
AND POLITICAL LEADER SHANE SIMPSON
JOIN ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

VANCOUVER, B.C. (June 14, 2021)—Today the Arts Club Theatre Company announced the addition of **Brenda Crabtree (Xyolholemo:t)** and **Shane Simpson** to its board of directors.

Brenda Crabtree (Xyolholemo:t) has both Nlaka'pamux and Sto:lo ancestry and belongs to the Spuzzum Band. Crabtree is the Director of Aboriginal Programs and Special Advisor to the President on Indigenous Initiatives at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. She is also an artist, curator, mentor, educator, community facilitator, and cultural advisor. She is recognized as an enduring champion for Indigenous artists and has been a key figure in developing ground-breaking programs. In her art practice, Crabtree fuses Northwest Coast First Nations materials and traditions with political texts to create a vehicle for political activism, bridging art, politics, and history.

Shane Simpson joins the board of directors after serving British Columbians as an elected member of the B.C. Legislature for 16 years, including as Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction in the B.C. Government from 2017 through 2020. Simpson has long been engaged in community service in Vancouver with a wide range of organizations, including Smart Growth BC, the Vancouver City Planning Commission, CUPE BC, the Worker Ownership Resource Centre, and the Ray-Cam Cooperative Association. In recognition of his efforts, in 1992, Simpson was awarded the Governor General's 125th Anniversary Commemorative Medal for Community Service and, in 2002, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for Community Service.

"The Arts Club is the remarkable product of the incredible people who make up this incredible organization," said **Bryan Mabee**, Chair of the Arts Club Theatre Company Board of Directors. "We are fortunate to have such creative, passionate, and knowledgeable people like Brenda and Shane join our board and bring their expertise, insights, and passions to our community."

Said Crabtree: "Volunteer board positions are an important part of the community fabric. The Arts Club is looking to Indigenize and de-colonize, not just the board, but all aspects of the theatre, and this has an impact more broadly on society. As an Indigenous woman and an educator, I feel I can contribute to this evolution. The Arts Club reflects a perfect blend of art, education, and culture, the combination of which is present in everything I do. The Arts Club's commitment to building capacity for the arts through education aligns with my view of community. I bring my heart and mind to this important organization."

Said Simpson: "The Arts Club is a dynamic, successful organization with a rich history of contributing so much to Vancouver's cultural fabric. I am no expert in arts and culture, but I know governance, policy, and decision-making. I am particularly eager to apply my knowledge to help support the youth programs that already provide transformative experiences to so many by broadening availability for those who haven't had the opportunity to explore the kinds of experiences the Arts Club offers. The Arts Club has the potential to do even more to advance arts and culture across B.C., and I am proud to do my part to help to enable more people to benefit from this important organization."

—MORE—



SUPPORT THE ARTS CLUB

The **Longhedge Foundation**, a longtime Arts Club supporter, has generously pledged **\$100,000 to match all gifts** made to the Arts Club **until July 31**. Tax-deductible donations can be made online at <https://artsclub.com/support/matching-campaign>, or by calling 604.687.5315, ext. 847. All proceeds from the campaign will support the re-opening of the Arts Club's three venues.

ABOUT THE ARTS CLUB

The Arts Club, one of the largest not-for-profit theatre companies in the country, is the principal gathering place for the theatrical arts in British Columbia. Comprising three unique venues across Vancouver, the Arts Club welcomes more than a quarter million guests annually, tours provincially and nationally, and engages students and artists alike through educational and professional programs.

Above all, the Arts Club is dedicated to the advancement of local artists telling stories from around the globe and, in particular, those of our region. From this, we believe that culture expands, an understanding of differences is nurtured, and art bursts forth. The Arts Club was founded in 1964 and is currently led by Artistic Director Ashlie Corcoran and Executive Director Peter Cathie White.

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