



powell street festival society

パウエル祭協会

2021

ANNUAL REPORT



(photo: Korey Masumori, 2021)



Powell Street Festival (photo: Hammer, 2018)

The Powell Street Festival first took place in 1977, and has since expanded to be one of the largest and longest-running community arts festivals in Canada.

The Powell Street Festival Society (PSFS) now functions as a non-profit registered charity arts organization based in Vancouver and the Paueru Gai Area - today known as the Downtown Eastside - located on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and xʷməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) Nations.

In addition to the Powell Street Festival, the Society offers year-round programs and collaborates with local, national, and international organizations, artists, and communities to advance equity and well-being for all.

Mission: To celebrate Japanese Canadian art and culture to connect communities.

Values:

- **Community:** We foster engagement, collaboration and accessibility.
- **Artistic Excellence:** We cultivate and support artists and cultural producers.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** We program events and activities that welcome a wide range of participants, striving towards barrier free experiences.
- **Heritage:** We honour the location of Paueru Gai and Japanese Canadian history. Through this, we acknowledge a larger narrative of displacement and colonization.
- **Resilience:** We protect and maintain the financial and operational viability of the organization.

YEAR IN BRIEF

96 programs & events

121 artists and cultural producers

- 81% of total funds went to local artists
- 95% of which are BIPOC

221 volunteers donating 4,804 hours

PSFS is proud to be an organization founded on volunteerism. We are grateful to our community of committed volunteers who continue to shape and advocate our mandate despite the challenges of the pandemic.

Increased investments in social enterprises

\$96,085 paid to peers and local organizations through our DTES Community Care Programs



Shion Skye Carter



Izumi Sakamoto



Shō Yamagushiku



Dumb Instrument Dance



T'uy't'tanat-Cease Wyss



Erica Hiroko Isomura



Kisyuu



Ken Lum



Jody Okabe



Vancouver Okinawa Taiko



Tetsuro Shigematsu



Ayumi Goto



John Endo Greenaway



Banana Bread

With every year, we aim to program events and activities that welcome a wide range of participants, striving towards more barrier free experiences. In 2021,

- All events and programs were free of charge, or sliding scale,
- ASL interpretation or closed captioning were incorporated into most of our programming, including live events (such as the *Festival Zoom Check-In* and *Miyō Powell Street Festival at the Rio*) and on-demand content,
- Our website included an automated Web Accessibility Solution for ADA & WCAG Compliance during the Festival season,
- The Festival printed program and website were available in both English and Japanese.

As PSFS continues to work to reduce barriers and grow community relationships, we welcome all feedback regarding the accessibility of our programming.

THE 45TH POWELL STREET FESTIVAL

2021 presented an opportunity to adapt and reimagine the Festival and community connection.

While there was no single large public event, this year's month-long Festival was a springboard for bubble-safe gatherings held both online and in-person. Throughout July, the Festival offered an array of on-demand creative works, on-location performances and community-building activities, including:

- Professional local and international artists,
- Festival-favourite performers (martial artists, folk singers, actors, poets, musicians and dancers) who hosted online or in-person programs,
- Community groups who created self-sufficient, accessible interactions and resources,
- Partnerships with arts and culture organizations, such as the Surrey Art Gallery and 360 Riot Walk.

The Festival culminated in the Paueru Gai-Oppenheimer Park neighbourhood with a final celebration featuring a Paueru Mashup Community Dance flash mob, durational taiko drumming and the Daruma Community Art Installation composed of over 4,000 daruma origami.



73 events & programs

7,300 attendees

45 professional artists
and community groups
paid

29 volunteers donating
239 hours

46 peers paid



"I feel that the Powell Street Festival is really exploring the possibilities of "how can we contribute to the society?" by using the Festival as a catalyst or device. The message was expressed in many forms including very contemporary to traditional format, strictly Japanese to non-Japanese, and young and old. I felt that the event was very inclusive to all." - Powell Street Festival 2021 attendee

"I have been coming to PSF for over 35 years, and each year holds its own special discoveries, performances, and experiences. I love the welcoming, diverse, conscious, and non-hierarchical structure..." - Powell Street Festival 2021 attendee

YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS

January 2021 marked the beginning of the **Paueru Gai Dialogues**, a PSFS series of 9 online events aimed to inspire civic engagement and community-building during the disruption of the pandemic. BIPOC artists and activists shared their perspectives on current social issues, and participants were invited to join discussion rooms to offer generative questions for further contemplation. View the entire series on our [Youtube](#) channel.

"I appreciate that the Paueru Gai Dialogues offer opportunities for folks to build relationships, discuss ideas and ask critical questions across time zones and borders." - Paueru Gai Dialogues attendee



(Photo: 360 Riot Walk)

In April 2021, PSFS announced the stewardship of **360 Riot Walk**, an interactive walking tour of Vancouver's 1907 Anti-Asian Riots, created by artist Henry Tsang. It uses 360 video technology to trace the history and route of the riots in what is today known as the Downtown Eastside. This unique project interweaves the narratives of racialized communities, reclaiming how and what histories are told.

View **Talking the Walk: Reflections on 360 Riot Walk**, a 3-part online series about the creation of the tour on our [Youtube](#) channel.

The **Paueru Mashup Community Dance** is a high-energy dance that is accessible to all ages and abilities. It was commissioned from Onibana Taiko and Company 605 in 2020. Join us for lessons online or follow along with our [Youtube](#) tutorials to prepare yourself for the flash mob at the next Festival!



YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS

Thanks to donors and supporters, the success of the Telethon fundraising event in 2020 became a catalyst for unprecedented growth of our **DTES Community Care Programs**, our grassroots efforts to enhance the community's well-being.

In 2021, we invested \$183,312.41 to support job creation, care packages, meal preparation and grocery delivery in the DTES.

- 59% of these funds created skills-building and low-barrier jobs for DTES residents
- 39% were spent on groceries and supplies for the safe distribution of healthy meals
- The remaining 8% covered peer salaries* for the implementation of our DTES Community Care Programs

*And as promised, 100% of donations from the Telethon went directly to members of the DTES community.



DTES SRO Collaborative-PSFS Chinatown Grocery Program



Advocacy and Outreach Committee cooking for Minori Harvest event

Our DTES Community Care Programs collaborate with:

- **WePress Community Kitchen**, which prepares 700-1,000 meals per week for the unhoused and precariously housed in the DTES.
- **Chinatown Grocery Program** and **DTES Indigenous Elders Grocery Program**, which altogether deliver groceries to 190 underserved elders and SRO tenants per week, thanks to **Bing Ho's** family and friends, and the **DTES SRO Collaborative**.
- **Community Impact Real Estate Society** and **EMBERS Eastside Works**, whose grants support low-barrier employment for people living on low incomes and fulfill key roles in our distribution of meals, care packages and groceries.
- PSFS' **Advocacy and Outreach Committee**, a team of dedicated volunteers who participate in DTES community-building efforts and organize annual events (see next page)

EVENTS

Our Advocacy and Outreach Committee hosted numerous events, including **Paueru Mashup at CRAB Park** (Feb 15), **Hanami Picnic** (April 21), **Asahi Tribute** (Sept 21) and **Minori Harvest** (Nov 28), providing capacity-building paid work opportunities, food and resources for DTES residents, and cultural activities which share Japanese Canadian history and culture. Special thanks to **WePress**, **Yakashiro Farm & Gardens**, **Vancouver Japanese Language School**, **Vancouver Second Mile Society** and **True North Kettle Corn** for their support of these events.



Paueru Mashup at CRAB Park

PSFS in partnership with DKAM, is the recipient of Canadian Heritage's Support for Workers in Live Arts and Music Sectors Fund. The grant supports the arts and cultural sectors as they weather the pandemic, and to create live and digital arts and cultural experiences within existing restrictions. The live events, which prioritize diverse artists, innovative collaborations, and traditional and alternative venues, will continue into 2022.



Miyō: Powell Street Festival at the Rio



Daruma Kuyō



Tatsuya Nakatani



The Unbroadcast Life of Mildred Bailey
(cancelled)



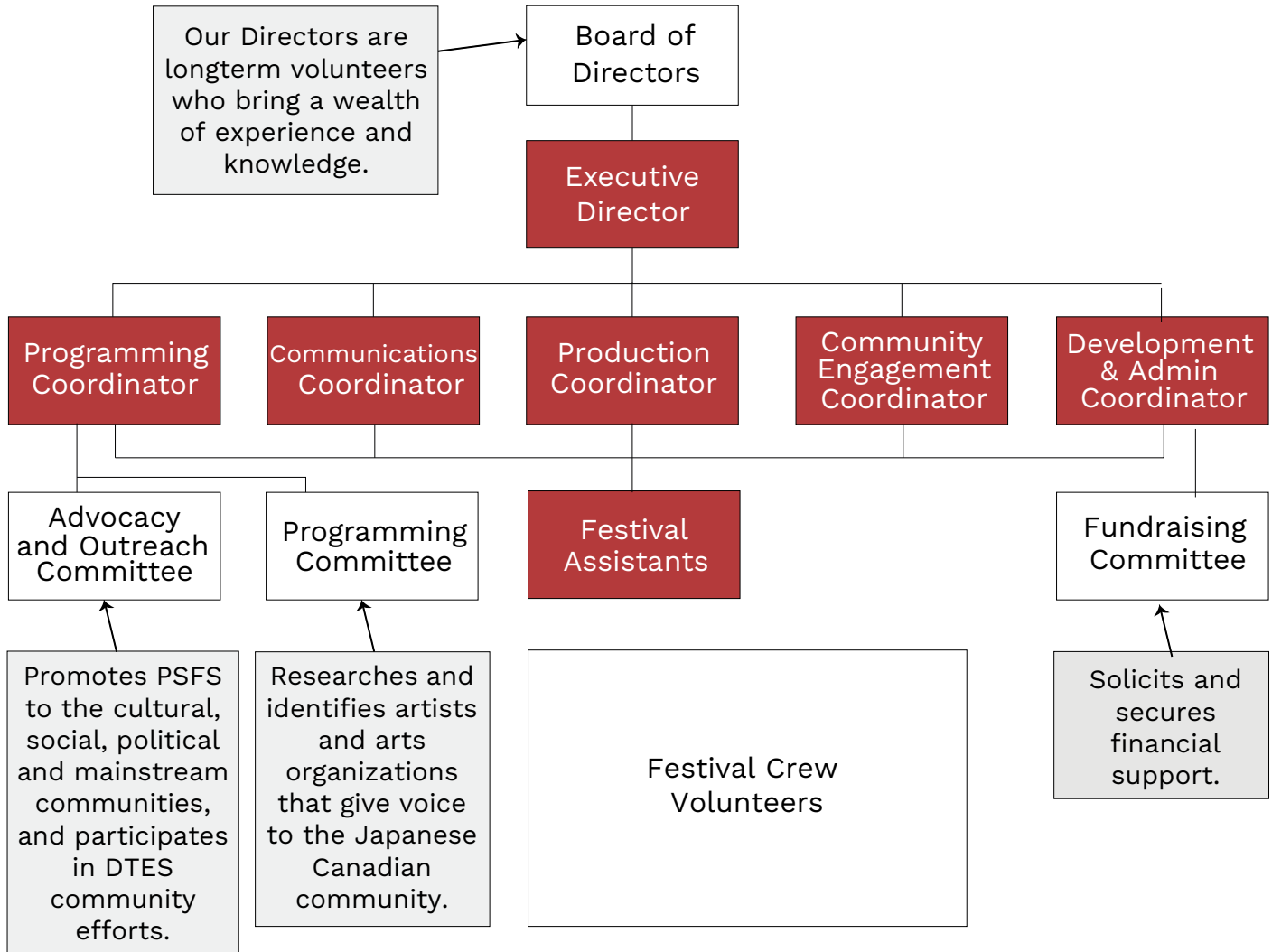
Made in Voyage



Love Letters to Divided Nations

How We Work

In 2021, the PSFS team grew to 6 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) staff and we continue to rely on our community of volunteers, who make up the Board of Directors, Committees and Festival Crew.



Volunteers and staff at the 45th Annual Powell Street Festival

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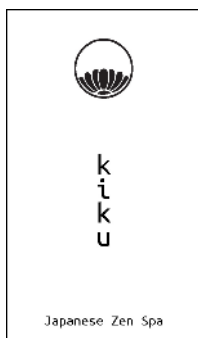
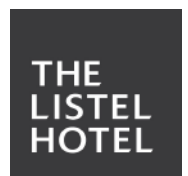
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Powell Street Festival (photo: Hammer, 2018)

Join us in anticipation of a full-build live Festival with a livestream component in 2022.

We look forward to engaging our community for another year of exciting programming. Whether you are a long-term festival-goer, previous volunteer, sponsor, or are new to PSFS, we want to celebrate with you in 2022.

powellstreetfestival.com
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