2025-26 AGM Director's Report

The Khyber turned 30 in 2025. In the past fiscal year, the centre directly supported more than a hundred artists through our programming. Thousands of people came through our doors to experience art, make art, share art, organize, and gather. We remain, unfortunately, the only artist-run centre in Halifax operating a public gallery space, and we take seriously our responsibility to provide space for artists, queer and trans communities, and the broader public. Alongside our own curatorial projects and presentations, the Khyber continued to host and partner with community groups, organizations, and arts collectives throughout the year. We were open to the public every month, with no closure longer than two weeks at the end of December. Highlights of our public programming are outlined below and include exhibitions, residencies, events, and artist books.

This year, the Nova Scotia provincial budget introduced significant cuts to arts and culture, community programming, initiatives supporting L'nu and African Nova Scotian communities, youth programs, mental health services, disability services, equity initiatives, cultural education pathways, and more. The Khyber actively participated in and collaborated on numerous advocacy efforts, protests, and campaigns opposing these cuts throughout the past and current fiscal years. We were part of the successful effort to have proposed municipal arts budget cuts in Halifax withdrawn. While the provincial government ultimately restored a small portion of its proposed reductions, most of the damaging cuts remain, and collective efforts to oppose these and show up for our communities must continue. Our initial public letter can be found here: www.khyber.ca/letter-to-khyber-community

We also remained actively involved in organizing to support the Turret Arts Society, working as part of the ad hoc Take Back the Turret to campaign through events, advocacy, letter writing, and community organizing. We continue to hope that the Turret Arts Society will remain the steward of the building and that our former home on Barrington Street can once again reopen as a space for artists, queer communities, and the public.

Protect trans rights. Black Lives Matter. Free Palestine. Listen to survivors. Support artists, support art. Care for our queer spaces. Say no to crooked austerity measures. Down with capitalism. Show up for Mi’kmaq and African Nova Scotian sovereignty. We are all treaty people.

Love to you all.

XOX,
Hannah.

Programming Highlights: April 2025-March 2026

- KREAM residency, *Self-Portrait* with local artist Miya Turnbull, which included an ever-evolving installation, two public origami self-portraiture workshops, and a window exhibition.
- Solo exhibition and KREAM residency, *Magic Mother* with Montreal-based Ahreum Lee, which included studio visits, a public reception, artist talk, and an immensely engaging and interactive installation.
- KREAM residency, *an internal chant of what happens in this calming face* with local artist Lucie Chan included a series of interviews visible via the window, opportunities for the public to visit during open studio hours, and an ever-evolving installation throughout the window and larger gallery spaces.
- Khyber continued to be a site for monthly Youth Project programming and has been circulating their new and beautiful publication series, *The Youth Politic*.
- I participated in *MAKING SPACE: A Halifax Story*, a new documentary by Gareth Wasylynko exploring the histories of several local arts spaces, including the Khyber. The film was screened at the Bus Stop Theatre, the Halifax Central Library, and at multiple events throughout the year.
- Partnering with LOVE NS and the Turret Arts Society, Khyber participated in a mentorship program connecting youth from LOVE NS with mentors Kayza De-Graff Ford and Brody Weaver. The program culminated in the group exhibition *Queers Gone Wild*, featuring work by youth artists Khalil Hirtle, Madisyn Seward, and Sidney Andrea at the Khyber.
- In collaboration with Mayworks, we presented a window exhibition with local artist Martha Mutale, *my inner child healing my immigrant identity (Rag Dolls 2.0)*, and a simultaneous duo exhibition, *NO DOMINION NO DOMAIN*, featuring work by local artist Curtis Botham and Vancouver-based artist Eva Grant. This included a public reception, artist talk, and corresponded with Nocturne.
- Out of Line 2 ran throughout the year, this time with monthly gatherings at Khyber facilitated by past participant Marley O'Brien. It included advising from Mo Glitch, guest artists Syrus Marcus Ware and Arielle Twist, and a new cohort of artists: Pax Romana, Zonghua "Zee" Ai, Jacey Byrne, JB Nelle, Marley O'Brien, Oliver "Oli" Oldfield, Fern Pellerin, drue ess, and Sam Smedley.
- KREAM residency, *Awas / Kiwe* with Vancouver-based painter Dana Justine Belcourt, which included studio visits with local Indigenous artists, a guided walk and hands-on collaborative painting session at the centre.
- Khyber hosted a duo exhibition with artists Moni Omubor and Carmilla Sumantry, winners of the 2024 Emerging Digital Artist Award presented by EQ Bank and in partnership with Centre for Art Tapes, who exhibited simultaneous shows featuring the other prize winners onsite at their centre and at Propellor Brewery.
- Out of Line's year-one cohort presented a group exhibition facilitated by program founder Mo Glitch. The exhibition included public and closed trans and GNC reception events, an interdisciplinary installation, and solo and collaborative works by Glitch, m black, Lou Campbell, Kit Holden-Ada, Marley O'Brien, Japhy Sullivan, Drew - Quon Duk Ping, Jules Wilson, and Brody Weaver.

- We hosted Eyelevel's artist-in-residence, Nailah Moon, for a pop-up group exhibition that they curated and an artist talk.
- I organized another year of EVERSTINKER, the for-children's component of Everyseeker, which was a daytime live concert and jam session with South Shore's BEAR MINIMUMS.
- The Khyber hosted two workshops for Everyseeker's 2025 festival: Thanya Iyer's *SONGWEAVER, From Seed to Sound* and Maria Chavez's *Abstract Turntablism*.
- We presented two events with iWant2BeOnTV. A livestream performance at Radstorm in collaboration with Lawnya Vawnya in St. John's NL, and a screening of Alex Apostalidis' *HOME TV I* at the Bus Stop Theatre, followed by an artist talk with Alex and collaborator Charvel Rappos, moderated by me.
- KREAM residency, *Hearing and Tracing Halifax* with New York-based artist Alek Green, which included a sound walk at Point Pleasant Park, an open studio event, and an interactive performance, as well as take-away unlimited sound sleeves we are still circulating at Khyber.
- KREAM residency, part one of *And So We Dance* with local artists I'thandi Munro and Kay Macdonald (they returned for part two of this residency in our current fiscal year). They had studio visits, two public performances, and a Q&A talkback.
- We produced and launched *We Come With Many Stories*, a publication created with Brody Weaver, documenting a performance that she organized at the Khyber in 2023 and featuring work and words by Chris Cochrane, Excel Garay, Bronwyn McGuinness, and Calendula Sack. We had a book launch and party to celebrate this artist book at the Khyber, and copies are still available to purchase online and at the centre.
- *Part of You*, the second year of an art auction and exhibition organized by previous Director Excel Garay featuring works by Alice Shirtliffe, Audrey Chan, Brody Weaver, Catriona Iozzo, Craig Leonard, Daze Jefferies, Jacob Irish, Jenny Hsueh, Jessica Winton, Joni Cheung, Jordan Johnson, Kit Holden-Ada, Lucie Chan, Luke Fair, Marley O'Brien, Mark Cruz & Lucy Marrion Pauker, Mathew Reichertz, Miya Turnbull, Nick Chapman, Nina-Simone Kellman, Rebecca Delle Monache, Sherry Lynn Jollymore, Sonali Menezes, Takashi Hilferink, Trevor Novak, Victoria D., and William Robinson. This was held online and in person and included a public reception at the Khyber.