



**MESSAGE FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
MICHAËLLE JEAN AND JEAN-DANIEL LAFOND**  
Co-Founders and Co-Chairs of the  
Michaëlle Jean Foundation

There are promising signs in early 2022 that the COVID-19 pandemic, having made life difficult for everyone since 2020, is beginning to wane — although not without leaving its mark on the personal, societal, and mental landscapes of Canada and the wider world.

Young people across Canada are desperate to rediscover their passions and their potential after having put so much on hold for so long. Even without a pandemic to cope with, teens and young adults often feel profoundly isolated and uncertain in everyday life; COVID-19 has made many more anxious than ever before about their future. They struggled to make their voices heard in a world that became locked down and inward-looking, even as they navigated social disruption, career quicksand and increasingly invasive peer pressures.

Members of the Black and Indigenous communities were harshly affected by the new disease, as were newcomers, who were already vulnerable. They all urgently require the restoration of security, stability, confidence, dignity, and hope: essential to true feelings of belonging and citizenship.

Our Foundation is determined to continue to expand its grassroots work with young people, responding in innovative ways to their circumstances, their needs, and their expectations. Over the past two years, we have stayed in touch with young people in the most underserved communities through social media, virtual sessions, and all-too-rare occasions to interact in person.

We have remained committed to convening the National Black Canadians Summit during the UN's International Decade of People of African Descent (2015–2024): Recognition, Justice and Development. It has been vitally important to maintain our momentum, mobilize in step with the Black Lives Matter movement, and consolidate our relationships within Black Canada. We have worked hard to encourage widespread reflection, awareness, and strategic mobilization in pursuit of the eradication of racial discrimination, and the harm that it causes.



Despite the many obstacles resulting from the various pandemic restrictions, the Foundation team was able to maintain its presence, its experience, its openness, and its attentiveness, along with its ability to carry out research, create partnerships, and build bridges. Working within an entirely virtual context for the first time ever, we developed a series of four virtual mini-summits, reflecting quality and inclusion in both official languages.

These sessions proved highly popular, attracting nearly 3,000 attendees from across the country, with additional registrants from abroad. Figures such as the Honourable Wanda Thomas Bernard, the Honourable Marie-Françoise Mégie, and the Honourable Jean Augustine, attended these events, as did judges and other figures from the fields of justice, education, the economy, and health. They were joined by decision makers as well as members of the Foundation's Board of Directors, and, of course, young people from diverse regions and communities. Their contributions were lively and generous, and included dialogue via questions from the audience. The success of these virtual summits was due, in no small part, to the keen sense of urgency felt by all, coupled with the relevance of the selected topics: "*Reimagining Justice*," "*Breaking Barriers in Education*," "*Redefining Entrepreneurship and Employment Through a Black Lens*," and "*Let's Talk Black Health*".

These sessions helped to expand our networks, strengthening the Foundation's position within diverse communities, while also consolidating our committees and working groups in the country, and developing a bank of young experts on various topics. In addition, we enhanced our partnerships with many other organizations who share similar views and objectives. These organizations follow us on social media, while also sharing our posts, messages, and events. As a result, we have seen a marked increase in reach and engagement on social media—a clear sign that our communications are making an impact.

One of the extraordinary things we are thrilled about has been the increasing involvement of large numbers of employees from businesses that provide financial support, demonstrating a willingness to engage with us, and lend a hand to create connections and change—in particular, teams from Economical Insurance, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CHMC), the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and the TD Bank Group.

We owe all this, if we dare admit, to what might be called the positive impact of a pandemic that has helped to reveal existing gaps and needs. Paradoxically, our programs will emerge from two years of enforced pandemic restrictions stronger and richer. We now have new ways of doing things and exciting new relationships to develop further. And rest assured, we have a lot planned! This report for the 2020–2021 fiscal year offers portents of what awaits us in 2022.

We are thrilled to have brought a talented and visionary new Executive Director on board, and under her leadership, our growing team is ready to guide us in achieving the goals we have set.

We thank you for your continued and committed support. We look forward to continuing our journey together.

The Right and Honourable Michaëlle Jean

Jean-Daniel Lafond



MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tara Lapointe

When I joined the dedicated team at the Michaëlle Jean Foundation in December 2020, we were already 9 months into the COVID-19 pandemic. And yet, despite having to press pause on some of our most exciting plans as a result of that global disruption, I am proud to report that 2020-21 proved to be a remarkable year of forward momentum for the Foundation.

Since joining the Foundation, my ambition has not been just to continue the work of our Co-Founders and Co-Chairs, but to amplify their vision on a national scale that the Foundation must not only work FOR young people facing marginalization and exclusion, but must also always work WITH and ALONGSIDE them.

To that end, we have recently taken many steps not only to empower and engage youth, but to make space for their voices to give shape to our work from within. For example, in 2021, we welcomed our first designated Youth Board Member. When we posted this newly created position, it brought a large pool of remarkably qualified and enthusiastic candidates forward. This reaffirmed to us not only that young people possess deep insights into the issues that affect them, but that they are committed to taking action towards a more just and equitable future. At the conclusion of our selection process, we warmly welcomed Dave D'Oyen, an alum of past FMJF programs—including the 4th Wall and the 2017 National Black Canadians Summit—as our inaugural Youth Board Member.

Meanwhile, we remain indebted to our youthful National Black Canadians Summit Co-Chairs, DeRico Symonds and Vanessa Fells, whose leadership, passion, and dedication will continue to guide us as we plan the third edition of the National Black Canadians Summit, and will ensure that youth perspectives are at the heart of our agenda. During the two virtual summit events in 2020-21, it was made abundantly clear to all attendees that successfully



addressing the needs of young people—particularly in the domains of education and employment—is critical to building a prosperous future for all.

This year, we also welcomed youth interns Aaliyah McCormack and Eric Steiner, who worked to advance our communications and program objectives, and connected us to many young creative entrepreneurs and youth-serving organizations. These new connections are vital to creating real change through transformative partnerships, grassroots action, and programming that reflects the needs of our youth.

**Our work is deeply rooted in collaboration.** Creating meaningful and lasting change is always our goal, and we know that this takes many of us working together. We are fortunate to work with so many community partners, donors, and supporters across Canada, who share our vision and help expand our reach and our impact.

New partnerships this year, like that of Ryerson University's DMZ and Dream Legacy Foundation, along with continuing partnerships, including Youth Ottawa and Concordia University's Project Someone, the Landscape of Hope, created new opportunities in areas such as youth entrepreneurship, youth leadership, and youth engagement. We were also honoured this past year to support the work of the Indigenous Arts Collective, who put together *Remember Me*, on September 30, 2021, in Ottawa, as part of the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

And yet, this is only a beginning. We recognize that youths are not just leaders of the future, but they are already blazing trails and serving as role models today through their commitment to their communities. In the coming year, the Foundation will continue to amplify these voices and to create opportunities for further engagement to help ensure that ALL youth can be heard and supported in their communities.

I am deeply grateful for the passion and energy of our Co-Founders, our Board of Directors, and our committed staff, who have all been so welcoming, and who are working to ensure that the Foundation continues to evolve to meet the needs of the young people we serve.

I am also pleased to introduce two new staff members who have joined our team this year:

With significant experience in economic development, entrepreneurship, education, and working with disadvantaged youth, our new Program Director, **Edward Matwawana**, is using his skills and expertise to bring together youth, the arts, and entrepreneurship to contribute to social change.

Meanwhile, **Jordan Banyan**, is now our Project Coordinator for the upcoming 2022 National Black Canadians Summit in Halifax. Jordan serves as a bridge between Summit teams in Ottawa and Halifax. His social skills and knowledge of the sector have made it possible to develop key business relationships in support of this event.

Last but not least, I want to emphasize just how inspired I have been by the young Canadians I have encountered since joining the Foundation. I cannot wait to see what we will all accomplish together in the years ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara Lapointe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tara Lapointe

# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

## The Michaëlle Jean Foundation: Celebrating 10 Years of Inspiration and Impact

Ten years ago, as her term as the 27th Governor General of Canada came to a close, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean and her husband, Jean-Daniel Lafond, established the Michaëlle Jean Foundation to work in partnership with engaged organizations and institutions across the country in addressing the pressing needs of socially disadvantaged young Canadians and their communities.

Ten years later, the Foundation is set to embark on its exciting and ambitious second decade. But before we look ahead, let us take a moment to review some of the key accomplishments of our first decade, for our future successes will surely grow from the knowledge, networks, and achievements of our past 10 years.

The vision of our Co-Founders, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, and Jean-Daniel Lafond, was to offer programs and platforms to underserved youth from coast to coast, providing them with opportunities for active participation in the development and implementation of concrete solutions within their communities. This we have done in many different ways, and in many different communities.

For example, since 2013, the Michaëlle Jean Foundation has presented 4 editions of the Power of the Arts National Forum, with each event bringing together hundreds of artists and arts organizations, activists and non-profits, politicians and policymakers, students and academics, and Canadians from all walks of life who believe in the power of the arts to be a catalyst for social change.

In 2017, we launched the first National Black Canadians Summit. Held in Toronto, it was attended by Black leaders from across Canada and became the launchpad for the Federation of Black Canadians, a national advocacy group that works with Black community organizations across the country. Subsequently, we held a 2nd Summit in Ottawa, in 2019, followed by a series of virtual events in 2020-21. We are thrilled to now be planning the 3rd edition of the Summit, to be held in-person in Halifax in July of 2022.

During the past decade, we have launched many other initiatives that have made a positive impact on the lives of young Canadians in particular. These include our *Design the Future Black Youth Initiative*, which helped the Department of Canadian Heritage better understand the barriers faced by Black youth and youth-serving organizations, as well as our *Repelling Hatred, Promoting Inclusion* project, which invited young Muslim Canadian filmmakers to create short films to combat Islamophobia.

Our flagship program, during our first decade, has been *The 4th Wall: Making the Invisible Visible*, which has given young creators a national platform by connecting them with major cultural institutions to showcase their work. Just as the imaginary fourth wall separates theatre actors from the audience, an imaginary wall excludes many young people from fully participating in society. Yet we believe their voices need to be heard. Our program gives young people who are disenfranchised and at risk, the chance to engage in a mentored artistic process, to create art with purpose, and to see their work showcased in some of Canada's most revered museums and galleries, including the *Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal*, the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), and the Canadian Human Rights Museum (Winnipeg).



Recently, we have also been busy developing a *Young Arts Entrepreneur program* to provide support, training, and mentorship to young Canadians creating businesses that use the arts as tools to create social change. This project will build on our previous bursaries for young activist artists, the *Michaëlle Jean Bursary* for Young Arts Entrepreneurs, and the *Jean-Daniel Lafond Bursary* for artists working to create social change with their art.

These are just a few of the many ways in which the Michaëlle Jean Foundation has worked in partnership with the public and private sectors, with civil society, and with communities across Canada to fulfill its vision and mission.

Since its launch ten years ago, the Michaëlle Jean Foundation has reached more than 1,000,000 youth through its programs, partnerships, and initiatives. And yet, we have a great deal more to do to empower diverse and disadvantaged young Canadians to achieve their dreams of a better Canada—and of a better world—for us all.



2010

04



2020

## Envisioning and Investing in Our Next 10 Years *Agility. Innovation. Inclusion.*

These are words that define a great deal of contemporary strategic thinking. They are certainly words that we use regularly—and believe in—here at the Michaëlle Jean Foundation.

They are all words that celebrate *change*, which is another vitally important word here at the Foundation. Not just change for change's sake, but change *for good*.

As we look ahead to our next 10 years at the Foundation, we understand that not only must we continue to be agents of change outside our walls, but that we must increasingly embrace change ourselves, in our practices, our processes,

and our plans. We must strive to become more agile, more innovative, and more inclusive.

COVID-19 did away with any lingering doubt about the need for organizational agility. The pandemic challenged us all to shift gears, to learn new skills, and to try new paths. Just as—to the surprise of many—it demonstrated once and for all our potential as a society to rapidly design and implement major structural changes. For in the past two years, we re-designed our economic models, our educational models, our workplace models, our social safety net models, and more.

### **We mustn't lose that momentum.**

Now is the time to build on our increased capacity—and appetite—for radical change as a society. That is why the Foundation is currently engaged in a deep strategic planning exercise, so that we can map out our goals and strategies to make the most of this extraordinary moment in history, and identify the most potent levers to effect societal change going forward.

There can be no doubt that this change must be driven by youth. For youth have both the most to gain and the most to lose. Yet, while we know—for we have met many of them—that there are enormous numbers of talented, aspiring, hard-working young people out there, looking to make a difference, we are also all too aware that they will require opportunities, resources, and support to achieve their potential.

It is impossible to know what the next 10 years will bring for any of us. But one thing we can say with certainty is that in the coming years, we will continue to work with and for young people. Together we will convene and mobilize cultural organizations, stakeholders, private and public-sector decision makers, community groups, and local associations. We will create new synergies, spark new actions, and develop new projects. In our second decade, as we did in our first, we will create opportunities for inclusive and constructive dialogue as we work to transform the lives of marginalized young people across the country.



New Headline for this section to come

## 01

### National Black Canadians Summit

Established and produced by the Michaëlle Jean Foundation, the National Black Canadians Summit is a unique meeting place for people of African descent living in Canada. It is a space where they can share their experiences, raise awareness of the major challenges they face, and encourage a national conversation on improving social cohesion, while promoting development that is inclusive, fair, and sustainable for all Canadians.



The 3rd National Black Canadians Summit, originally planned to take place in March 2020, was postponed due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, the Foundation has been determined to continue to proactively advance the dialogue on issues of social justice, equity, and racism, despite the lockdowns we have all lived through.

Thus, like everyone else, we turned to the Internet, and soon convened a series of important remote events that allowed us to stay relevant and connected with our stakeholders, and to unite isolated individuals and groups at a time of tremendous anxiety, opportunity, and emotion.

## 02

### Virtual National Black Canadians Summits

*Reimagining Justice* took place on April 20, 2021, the day that Derek Chauvin's guilty verdict was announced in the George Floyd case. Our online event attracted 1,200 highly engaged panelists and listeners, who seized this opportunity to discuss the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as the meaning and impact of the George Floyd case in Canada. This passionate, informed, and inspiring discussion candidly confronted the reality that Canadians of African descent face inequities rooted in racial discrimination and violence within the Canadian criminal justice system.

*Breaking Barriers in Education* took place on June 22, 2021. This online roundtable attracted more than 800 community members who tuned in for discussions and debates by Black educators and pioneers within the field of education. Their focus was on the need to effect major changes within the educational system to eliminate discriminatory obstacles that Black students face at various levels of school and university.

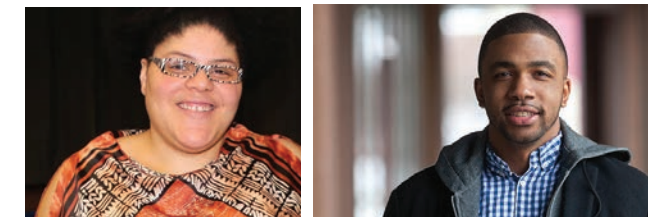
The Foundation followed up these two initial virtual summits in our 2020-21 fiscal year with two more virtual summits; the first, focused on *Breaking Barriers in Education*, and the latest edition, on *Redefining Entrepreneurship and Employment Through a Black Lens*.

## 03

### National Black Canadians Summit, Halifax 2022

As the pandemic's impact began to wane, we ramped up planning for our third in-person National Black Canadians Summit, which is now scheduled to take place in Halifax from July 29 to 31, 2022. This event will have a national focus, but will also give pride of place to the extraordinarily rich and resilient history of Black Nova Scotians, and their continuing struggles for equal opportunities and treatment.

Join us for this unique and exciting event. Register today at <https://www.blackcanadiansummit.ca/>



Vanessa Fells, Co-Chair of National Black Canadians Summit (NBCS), Halifax 2022, DeRico Symonds, Co-Chair of National Black Canadians Summit (NBCS) Halifax 2022

## 04

### Black Canadians Strong

In association with the National Black Canadians Summit, the Foundation also developed a podcast in collaboration with Jayde Tynes, who created and hosted the English-language podcast *Black Canadians Strong*. The podcast invites Black Canadians to share their stories through thought-provoking and stimulating conversations. In each episode of this limited series, guests engage in productive discussion around solutions aimed at raising up Black communities in Canada. To date, two episodes have been recorded and are available on digital platforms.



## Community Partnerships

### 01

#### Spirit of the Capital Awards by Youth Ottawa RBC

The RBC Spirit Awards are an annual event that celebrates the extraordinary accomplishments of youth who are making our community, and the world, a better place. In 2021, the Michaëlle Jean Foundation partnered with RBC to sponsor the Arts and Culture category of the RBC Spirit Awards, which recognizes a local young artist building community through the arts.

Two remarkable individuals received the RBC Spirit of the Capital Arts and Culture Awards in 2021:



> **Cailyn Degrandpre** is a gifted young musician who uses her platform as a musician to share her passion for her Inuit culture. She encourages cultural awareness and advocates for the plight of murdered and missing Indigenous women.



> **Yvonne Tan** is a visual and interdisciplinary artist whose artworks include everything from imaginative board games to art pieces that tackle social justice issues and engage marginalized communities.

The Arts and Culture Awards go to the very core of the mandate

of the Foundation by igniting creative change and celebrating civic responsibility among youth.

### 02

#### Ottawa Community Housing Corporation (reLINK)

ReLink provides youth in the Ottawa Community Housing Corporation (OCHC) with access to sports programs and camps at no cost to families. Thanks to an investment by the Michaëlle Jean Foundation in 2020, the program has been expanded to include arts programs. During the pandemic, the program was quickly adapted to provide at-home kits with art supplies or craft materials to encourage creativity and combat feelings of isolation during lockdowns. Kits were distributed in OCHC lobbies throughout the 2020–2021 fiscal year, reflecting our mission of encouraging youth expression through the arts.



### 03

#### Landscape of Hope

Among many other beneficiaries of the Foundation's activist philanthropy, the Foundation contributed financially to Landscape of Hope, a unique sample-based remixing program at Concordia University that amplifies youth narratives to promote resilience in the face of racism, discrimination, prejudice, and cyberbullying.

This youth-led digital arts initiative provided peers with the critical digital literacy and digital media production skills they need to create innovative multimedia shows and installations, reflecting their experiences of hate, discrimination, and cyberbullying. The goal of the Landscape of Hope team is to implement and evaluate a sustainable, multi-sector, and culturally relevant youth-led approach that makes it possible for youth to create multimedia narratives which accurately reflect the actual experiences of young people in fighting discrimination.

### 04

#### Remember Me—National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

On September 30, 2021, Canada made history with its first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. The Foundation is proud to have participated in this day by partnering with the Indigenous Arts Collective of Canada, who organized the Remember Me event on Parliament Hill. The Foundation was represented during official ceremonies, performances, and craft demonstrations at Confederation Park, and the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean shared a powerful and touching video on the Foundation's digital platforms.

The Foundation supports activities of commemoration and awareness, such as the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, to raise consciousness and awareness, and to unite hearts and minds.



### 05

#### St-Joseph Communications

Since 2012, we have been supported by St. Joseph Communications who provide advertising space in an array of print and digital media with the likes of Macleans, Chatelaine, and Canadian Business. SJC allows us to reach important decision-makers, policymakers, and invested and interested Canadians across the country, and spread awareness of what matters in our communities and in our world today.



## Nurturing Youth Entrepreneurship

With the world on pause, the Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to youth, because it is youth who have been most impacted by the pandemic, and youth who most need our support to build a better future. Youth not only provide us with unique insight into the Foundation’s vision and impact, but they must also help guide our future decisions.

During the months of July and August 2021, Erik Steiner, one of the Foundation’s summer students, set up a research project aimed at developing an understanding of the entrepreneurial ecosystem for Ottawa youth. The project was designed to identify the key obstacles, gaps, and limits preventing youth from accessing the support they need, while creating the framework for a new initiative to guide them.

Through more than 50 interviews, two discussion groups, and a roundtable with more than 30 participants, this project reinforced hypotheses and provided data on various challenges, as well as the types of support needed for the development of a new program. The report’s results will help in the evaluation of various possibilities as well as the feasibility of a new program that the Foundation might offer in the future.



Additionally, as part of this ongoing effort to empower young entrepreneurs, the Foundation has been engaged in discussions with new partners to develop a unique creative entrepreneurship program that offers training, as well as access to business networks and opportunities for young professional creatives of all stripes, including artists, content creators, game designers, graphic designers, and more.

The Foundation is excited to help young entrepreneurs flourish by listening to their voices and by supporting their creativity to effect social change.

## Celebrating the Black Canadian Experience

### Emancipation Day

The Foundation celebrated Canada’s first official Emancipation Day on August 1, 2021, a day marked since the mid-1800s by people of African descent in Canada, and by their allies. Canadian government and educational institutions have taken steps to recognize the importance of this day and its relationship to Canada’s troubled history, its history in relation to slavery, and anti-Black racism that persists to this day. In order to highlight this important event, the Foundation created a two-episode special-edition podcast called “Emancipation Day—What now is our past, present and future?” highlighting the strength and perseverance of Black communities in Canada.



Africville Museum

In Episode 1, listeners journey from the early enslavement and resistance experience of people of African descent, through the movements for liberty and justice, into the realities of the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, to arrive at the place of Black self-affirmation on August 1—Emancipation Day in Canada.

In Episode 2, listeners travel through the 19th to 21st centuries to witness the meanings and value of Emancipation Day for Black activism, advocacy, excellence, and futurism in Canada and beyond.

These episodes are available in Equity, the Foundation’s digital magazine.

To request a copy of the audited financial statements, please contact the Fondation Michaëlle Jean Foundation.

Thank you for donating to the Fondation Michaëlle Jean Foundation. In this past year, your contribution supported our creative Canadian youth. With your help, we will continue to expand artistic and entrepreneurship opportunities to underprivileged and historically excluded communities.





## Governance

During the year, the Foundation welcomed two new members to its Board of Directors:

- > Patricia Fourcand — Director
- > Dave D'Oyen — Youth Member



The Foundation would also like to thank Denis Beaudry, who left us following his two-year term on the Board of Directors. The contributions of Mr. Beaudry were greatly appreciated by all.

Our Foundation welcomed four new associate members during the year:

- > Evan Siddal
- > John Beck
- > Stephen Watson
- > Julie Segal

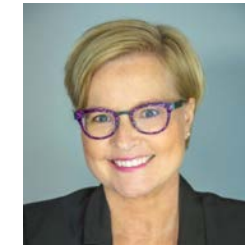
## 2020-2021 Board of Directors/Members



The Right Honourable  
Michaëlle Jean  
*Co-Founder and  
Co-President*



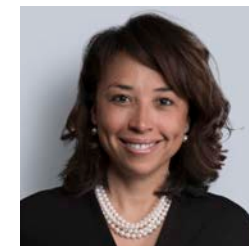
Jean-Daniel Lafond  
*Co-Founder and  
Co-President*



Michelle Douglas  
*Treasurer*



Denis Beaudry  
*Administrator*



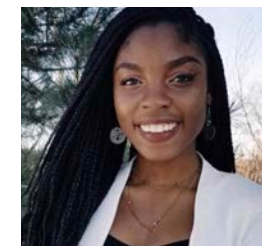
Patricia Fourcand  
*Administrator*



Brian Gallant  
*Administrator*



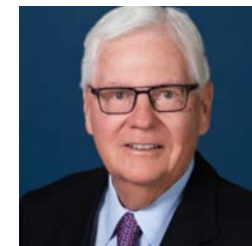
Malcom McKechnie  
*Administrator*



Zainab Muse  
*Administrator*



Robert William Peck  
*Administrator*



Arni C. Thorsteinson,  
CFA, LL.D  
*Administrator*



Peter Tielmann  
*Administrator*



Dave D'Oyen  
*Youth Member*

### *Associate Members*

John Beck  
Lance Carlson

Valerie Pike  
Julie Segal

Jean-Pascal Simard  
Evan Siddal

John Van Burek  
Stephen Watson



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## Contributing Artists

**Cover**  
**VISIONS, artist Felipe Bonilla**

VISIONS is a work rich in colours, textures and patterns with aprx 720 mementos collected and superimposed on a canvas. Felipe is a self-taught visual artist born in Cali, Columbia, now living in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Felipe's distinctive style awakens feelings of curiosity and express the social justice issues that affect our society today.

**Back Cover**  
**Artist Yvonne Tan (pen and ink drawing)**

The tree depicts the message of growth and optimism, of perseverance and flourishing, of the building of strong foundations rooted in the strength of our communities. The perspective chosen aims to draw the viewer's eye upwards, so that they are both literally and metaphorically looking up as their gaze traces the dynamism and movement of the branches.

## Our Team

Jean-Daniel Lafond, Co-Founder and Co-President  
 Paul Cormier, Strategic Advisor  
 Tara Lapointe, Director General  
 Edward Matwawana, Program Director  
 Jordan Banyan, Project Coordinator  
 Cléo Édouard, Communications Advisor (*until summer 2021*)  
 Alice Mutezintare, Assistant to the Director



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