

# POSITIVE FUTURISMS: PORTALS OF POSSIBILITY

EmberFest would not be possible without the generous support of our funders, sponsors, and community members.

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Graphic Design by Chris Pecora

**THANK YOU TO OUR CHAMPIONS!**  
KICKING HORSE MOUNTAIN RESORT • EWAN & MCKENZIE  
GOLDEN GOLF CLUB • GOLDEN OUTDOORS

**KICKINGHORSECULTURE**  
Golden and District Arts Council since 1970



# About Kicking Horse Culture

Kicking Horse Culture (KHC) serves Golden and Area A, a community of approximately 7,000 people. We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the unceded territory of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc Nations, and that this area is also home to the Métis Nation Columbia River and other Indigenous peoples.

Supported by the Town of Golden and CSRD Area A, KHC plays a leading role in shaping the cultural life of our region. Through partnerships, we deliver diverse programming, arts education, and community arts experiences for the town of Golden, area A and visitors to our beautiful community.

Since 2005, KHC has grown into a cornerstone arts organization, presenting year-round programming including Live Kicks, Summer Kicks, EmberFest, workshops, film, and community events. We also operate the Art Gallery of Golden & Studio Gift Shop, showcasing the work of over 150 regional artists.

KHC is dedicated to engage, enrich and energize the cultural life of Kicking Horse Country.

**EmberFest** is a grassroots, volunteer-led celebration of art, community and creativity!

This year's festival theme, Positive Futurisms: Portals of Possibility, invited us to imagine hopeful futures shaped by creativity and connection. Throughout the week, workshops, performances, and community art-making celebrated our community, culminating in a spectacular outdoor pageant in Spirit Square featuring puppets, skits, music, and stories created by hundreds of community members. Following the Pageant, 9 bands took to the stage for a music festival that kept the energy high into the morning!

Everyone was invited to step through the portal.



KICKING HORSE CULTURE \* GOLDEN BC

EMBER

FEST

FEBRUARY 14-21 2026 \* FESTIVAL FINALE: FEBRUARY 21

## **a note from our Executive and Artistic Director**

To our Incredible EmberFest volunteers and small but mighty staff team,

EmberFest is truly a community-led festival. The festival is joyful, full of chaos, it's tender and powerful, and it simply would not exist without our dedicated crew of creatives.

From investing time into Flicker Folk meetings, radio shows, costume making, youth wrangling, learning/ teaching choreography, working in collaboration, hauling gear, setting up scaffolding & lanterns, tending fires, supporting artists, selling tickets, holding space, troubleshooting in the cold, and showing up with open hearts, they carried this festival.

This year's theme, Positive Futurisms: Portals of Possibility, asked us to imagine what becomes possible when a community gathers with love and creativity. And we didn't just imagine it, we embodied it. The team transformed Spirit Square into a portal of possibility that in our wildest dreams couldn't have imagined. Our community helped us build something that was hopeful, joyful, and deeply connected to nurturing for generations to come.

This kind of magic-making doesn't happen by accident. It happens because people care enough to give their time, their energy, and their creative spirit.

On behalf of our board, artists, and the thousands of community members who attend throughout the week, thank you!

Logan Turner

# FlickerFolk

## EmberFest Creative Committee



*ever-shifting, ever-dreaming  
keeping the flames dancing*

**The flickerfolk are a committee of  
volunteers who create the EmberFest  
pageant. Join this low-tech, high-vibe team  
of locals who spark the magic at EmberFest.**

# The Imaginarium

The Imaginarium is a free space for artistic exploration and community connection. For 4 weekends, the Civic Centre is transformed into an open studio that is stocked with free art materials and curated project stations. Art stations are facilitated by local artists and volunteers. Community members of all ages are invited to create and play for free! Creations are integrated into the festival finale as public art, costumes and stage design.

The Imaginarium open from 1 – 8 pm

January 24th & 25th

January 31st & February 1st

February 7th & 8th

February 14th & 15th



“We came for an hour and stayed all afternoon. It felt like being part of something bigger.”

“I haven’t made art since I was a kid. This reminded me how good it feels to just play.”

# Stilt Walking Camp!



EmberFest was on the airwaves! Hosted by Rich Tenders on Golden Co-op Radio, the EmberFest Radio Show featured 5 episodes celebrating the heart of the festival. From music reviews and festival history to Flicker Folk, community planning, and imaginative futures, each episode was something special.

Huge thank you to Golden Co-Op Radio!

Participants spent two days rising (literally) into the world of stiltwalking with master artist Randall Fraser and John Denham. From first wobbly steps to full characters, they built confidence, balance, and supported one another at great heights! Participants performed their skills at the Festival Finale.

This camp was generously supported by the Golden & District Community Foundation



**EmberFest Radio Show  
with Rich Tenders!**

# Master class with the WONDERHEADS

Over three immersive days, participants trained with award winning physical theatre company WONDERHEADS to bring characters to life through movement, mask, and imagination. Focusing on the body as a storytelling tool, the workshop explored how to create vivid, fully realized characters without words. Designed for artists and the creatively curious alike, it invited participants to stretch their expression and step into the world of physical storytelling.



**“This was an incredible opportunity to learn from masters of their craft. The workshop unlocked something completely unexpected in me as a performer.”**

Masterclasses was made possible by CBT funding

Photos: Dave Best



# Opening Event EmberFest Grand Ole Opry

EmberFest kicked off in Honky -Tonk style with the Grand Ole Opry, featuring 15 local musicians sharing the stage in a celebration of homegrown talent. The room was absolutely electric, with a packed house excited to see their friends, neighbours, and local stars shine. There was line dancing, and the bar ran out of beer... Twice!

Photos: Dave Best

“That was one of the best shows  
I’ve ever seen at the Civic Centre”



Saturday, Feb 14 2026

# EmberFest Community Futures

“If Golden were a place where future generations truly thrive, what would our community look and feel like?”

Community Futures Day brought residents, artists, youth, and local leaders together for a community dreaming exercise. This event served as a kick-off for the consultants for Golden’s Official Community Plan. 56 participants discussed what a healthy and vibrant future of Golden could look like. Ideas were shared and discussed as a large group. Community Futures Day was an incredible exercise in community collaboration and collective dreaming through the arts.

The early years play area was a hit!

Our Artistic Director dressed up as a time traveller and took us on a time travel guided meditation.



“We imagined Golden was a place where you know your neighbours, help each other out, and feel like you have everything you need”



“We dreamed of food forests, community composting, and using what we already have more wisely.”

# Story Night

Mon Feb 16 | Four Points Books | 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Four Points Books is a beloved bookstore in the heart of Golden. It just made sense to host an intimate evening of storytelling and community. The room was packed with listeners and storytellers who shared excerpts from their favourite book, original poems, or stories about the heroic acts of volunteerism in Golden. There is nothing that sparks the imagination more than hearing someone recite a story. Everyone who joined us that evening walked away with the gentle reminder that a bedtime story is precious and the act of storytelling is an ancient practice that we can honour.

Our Artistic Director dressed up as a time traveller and took us on a time travel guided meditation.



Grand Ole Opry



Photo by Dave Best



# Kitchen Party

23 Musicians, 123 singers

Tue Feb 17 | The Rockwater | 7:00 - 9:00 PM

EmberFest Kitchen Party was an amazing intergenerational participatory jam session led by beloved local musician Evan Peters. The Rockwater was packed with community members and visitors coming in to sing, play an instrument or dance to the familiar repertoire of East Coast tunes. Chords and Lyrics were provided. We had 23 musicians and a total of 120 people joining in. It was collaborative, wild like the sea and fueled by Guinness.



EmberFest Choir was guided by local musician Leah Gardner. We learned three-part harmony and sang *Lean on Me* by Bill Withers. At the festival Finale, the choir of 40 singers sang in harmony, and the audience joined in. It was magical!

## CHOIR CHOIR CHOIR

Wed Feb 18 | AGOG | 7:00 -9:00 PM

# Futuristic Life Drawing

Thu Feb 19 | Whitetooth Brewery | 7:00 - 9:00 PM



Whitetooth Brewery was taken over by artists, sketchbooks and a futuristic model. Most artist brought their own material, but we also provided free materials to visitors who didnt travel with their sketchbook! We had over 20 artists drawing, and many participants asked for the event to be a regular occurrence. Whitetooth Brewery also created a divine EmberFest Dark Lager for the festival.



Our workshop series came to a close with Chelsea Friedman, who boldly took us on an adults-only journey of self-empowerment and expression. Dancers of all abilities, genders and ages spent 2 hours learning a routine and connecting with their bodies through movement. The Civic Centre has never been so sexy!

# Sexy Sneakers

Fri Feb 20 | GCC | 7:00 - 9:00 PM



# EmberFest 2026

## Community Pageant

Positive Futurisms | Portals of Possibility

- 10 Flicker Folk Volunteer meetings
- 8 days of costume & prop creation
- 1 dress rehearsal
- Hundreds of volunteer hours
- 2 core staff
- 1 Extraordinary Community Pageant

On February 21 around 7:00 pm, more than 1000 Goldenites and visitors gathered in Spirit Square to celebrate the power of imagination. For 90 magical minutes, community skits emerged through a portal opened by a mythical bear, transporting us through solarpunk joy, Star Wars rebellions, tech youth finding their motherboard, and humans being re-sensed to the natural world. Winter and Spring even came down from the mountain to celebrate with us, though they may be due for a remake next year. This year's theme was Positive Futurisms: Portals of Possibility. The theme asked us to reflect on how we will continue to show up for each other and the natural world in the years to come.



Our community would not be nearly as lively without Amuse Troop. They volunteer their time to bring circus into schools, they play with fire, and they are truly the heart-spark of the pageant.

Marcel is our master puppeteer, and this year, a beautiful creative friendship emerged with Gerritt, the electrician. Together, they combined incredible craftsmanship with electrical imagination.

Jen recorded an entire school, with each classroom reciting a page from *How to Be a Good Ancestor*, reminding us that our love for each other and the land sends ripples through time.

The Equestrians dazzled us with their dance and incredible costumes, and it has officially been decided that they should always be visible during the pageant.

Kathryn spent hundreds of hours crafting stunning costumes and brought a cast of unlikely creatures together in harmony.

Charlotte and the aerialists were magnificent. The alien spacecraft perched on top of the rig was truly out of this world, and the final dance featuring an inflatable alien was one of the funniest things we've ever seen.

Mike literally built a portal.

Quinn was the most empowered toad to ever roam the streets of Golden.

Dave created an animated masterpiece recapping the festival into a 30-minute short film.

And to the many, many, many more volunteers who gave their time, talent, heart, and wonderfulness to this event: thank you. EmberFest is what it is because of you.

Find the full list of volunteers on page 18.



# EmberFest Music!

9 Bands | 4 Venues



On February 21, EmberFest carried into the night with live music taking over downtown Golden. 9 bands across four venues filled rooms on a historically slow shoulder-season evening, boosting local businesses and creating a vibrant downtown atmosphere. Each stage, designed by a local artist, brought the creativity of the pageant indoors. Venues were happy, audiences were stoked, and artists felt the love.

With ticket sales up from last year, we'll continue working with local businesses to refine a model that supports everyone and will plan on keeping the festival in the downtown core.



# MUSIC

# WORKSHOPS /EVENTS

## SATURDAY \* FEBRUARY 14

7:00 PM Grand Ole Opry

## SATURDAY \* FEBRUARY 21

### GOLDEN CIVIC CENTRE ALL AGES

9:30 PM Ricky Diamonds  
10:30 PM Kayla and the Yacht Daddies

### THE ROCKWATER

9:45 PM Amy Nelson  
10:45 PM The Denim Daddies  
12:00 AM Kitty and the Rooster

### THE BAR

10:00 PM Tea Fannie  
11:00 PM Brain Bent  
12:15 AM K-Riz and the Family

### WHITETOOTH BREWERY

8:45 PM Oh November  
9:45 PM Colin Shields

FEBRUARY 16 \* COMMUNITY FUTURES DAY  
GOLDEN CIVIC CENTRE

FEBRUARY 16 \* STORY NIGHT  
FOUR POINTS BOOKS

FEBRUARY 17 \* EAST COAST KITCHEN PARTY  
THE ROCKWATER BAR AND GRILL

FEBRUARY 18 \* CHOIR WORKSHOP  
ART GALLERY OF GOLDEN

FEBRUARY 19 \* FUTURISTIC LIFE DRAWING  
WHITETOOTH BREWERY

FEBRUARY 20 \* SEXY SNEAKERS DANCE  
GOLDEN CIVIC CENTRE

FEBRUARY 21 \* FESTIVAL FINALE  
SPIRIT SQUARE



# EmberFest 2026 Volunteers



Aaron Burton	Jacinta Pecora	Phoebe Rayner
Adeline Dufour	Jamie Rieve	Quinn Howard
Alysha Saville	Jay Leslie	Rachel Gamble
Barry Johnson	Jeff Bracken	Richard Hamre
Becca Palmer	Jennifer Cox	Robin Halifax
Ben Kwiatkowski	Jocelyn Wilson	Robyn Bowers
Calvin Beauchesne	John Denham	Ryan Jordan
Carson Pecora	John Manual	Sanne Van der Ros
Charlotte Guavara	Jonah Obrien	Sarah Weglin
Chelsea Friedman	Julian England	Sheelagh England
Chris Hambruch	Karen Cathcart	Sierra Hamamoto
Chris Pecora	Kevin Morphy	SJ
Chris Thompson	Kiah Davidson	Tannis Dakin
Christina Heyes	Kristi Cooper	Tess Davies
Courtney	Lauire Morphy	Tessa Whittle
Dan Grisdale	Leah Gardner	Tige Lussier
Darlene Whiting	Lenore Torrie	Todd Torrie
Dave Best	Linley Mclean	Wesley Routley
Diana Taufer	Lyuba Kirkova	
Doug Whiting	Mackenzie Hillary	
Emily Brunetti	Marcel Cholo	
Emily Sasges	Mariela Encina Lanus	
Emma Palomares	Marilyn McArthur	
Evan Peters	Marion Berard	
Frank Pecora	Matt Clifford	
Gail Laing	Matt Fellows	
George Hill	Meg Langley	
Gerritt Shumyk	Mike Garner	
Graeme Torrie	Mike Pecora	
Gray	Miranda Kirker	
Hanna Murray	Nicole Lussier	
Helen Barry	Phil Armstrong	
Infinity Solstice	Phillip England	



## Thanks,

EmberFest thrives thanks to the incredible community that supports it. Our heartfelt thanks go to our partners, volunteers and supporters, both local and beyond, for their vision and enthusiasm.

We are deeply grateful to our core funders, sponsors, friends, and patrons for their essential and unwavering commitment to the festival.

A special thank you to our dedicated board, staff, crew, and volunteers, whose hard work brings the festival to life each year.

We also express our gratitude to the courageous and inspiring artists whose exceptional work we're proud to showcase in this festival.

Finally, a huge thank you to our amazing audiences, whose adventurous spirit makes the festival possible. You are the heartbeat of the art.

## The Team

EmberFest is brought to life by a dedicated team of staff, contractors, artists, and volunteers, with support from the broader Kicking Horse Culture board and staff.

### **Core Team**

Program Coordinator | Frances Morphy  
Artistic & Executive Director | Logan Turner

### **Production & Technical Team**

Aaron Burton  
John Jenkins  
Mike Pecora  
Mike Garner  
Tod Menzies  
Nathan Turner

### **Graphic Design**

Chris Pecora