

Message from the Board of Directors

For the second year in a row the Edmonton Folk Music Festival and its staff have had to adjust and find a meaningful way to share the celebration of Folk Music and community outside of our usual haunt of Gallagher Park. The Hill at Home 2021 Celebration endeavours to bring the music and feeling of community to your homes, either through a community concert or through your televisions and computer screens with our online programming.

The Hill at Home events taking place this year couldn't have even been dreamed up if we weren't fuelled by the passion and hunger for live music, provided by our patrons. Thank you for sticking by our side and riding out the past many months with us. Your dedication to the festival is admirable and is truly impactful for everyone working behind the scenes in volunteer or staff capacity.

I know we all would rather be on our tarps and eating our kettle corn, or waiting in line for the notorious beer gardens, or burning our mouth on a green onion cake, but the path back to there is hopeful and optimistic. The staff of the Edmonton Folk Music Festival have worked tirelessly for the better part of two years to ensure we had the momentum as an organization to make it back and intact for 2022, they all deserve to be applauded for their efforts.

As we endure one more less than normal summer, we also must take the time to reflect in a meaningful way about our community as a whole and reflect upon our own actions and impacts both positive and negative. The Edmonton Folk Music Festival is a place where we truly believe that everyone is welcome and belongs, where we pride ourselves on kindness, openness, and acceptance. Belief in these attributes is no longer enough. The Board of the Edmonton Folk Music Festival Society is committed to being vocal about our solidarity, continuing to educate ourselves, and ensuring the policy and governance of the festival keeps us positioned to do the work needed to be better. We understand our role in a colonial history and we acknowledge that there is much we do not know and commit ourselves to the ongoing work and learning that is required.

Over the next several weeks, I hope you have the opportunity to reflect on festivals of past, dust off some old EFMF shirts to wear around town, and most importantly have the opportunity to enjoy some of the offerings we have this year. The public response to the programming efforts has been truly remarkable and has proved that our spirit is very strong. Take care of yourselves, be kind to each other, and when we meet again in Gallagher Park (in the words of the late great John Prine) "there won't be nothin' but big old hearts, a'dancin' in our eyes".

Andrew Currie

Chair - Board of Directors, Edmonton Folk Music Festival Society