

THE ANNUAL

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022





**FUTURE
NOW**

VIRTUAL SNEAKERS
TO CUTTING-EDGE KICKS

HOW ON VIEW

THE
iMUSEUM



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Last year was an important year of rebuilding and reconnecting for the Bata Shoe Museum. We opened two new exhibitions, resumed in-person programming, and welcomed thousands of enthusiastic visitors, both local and international. Our popular virtual channels and growing social communities also continued to provide dynamic experiences and strengthen our relationships with a much broader global audience.

The spring opening of *Future Now: Virtual Sneakers to Cutting Edge Kicks* was a tremendous moment for the Museum. The exhibition looks at state-of-the-art technologies, ground-breaking materials, and new and innovative approaches to shoemaking that are enabling forward-thinking creatives to push the boundaries of footwear design. The opening also celebrated the launch of our latest Rizzoli publication titled after the exhibition.

In the fall we opened *Obsessed: How Shoes Became Objects of Desire* to explore how industrialization drove mass consumption and effectively transformed footwear designers into celebrities and shoes into high value collectibles. Reinforcing our mission to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of footwear as a

reflection of our social and cultural life, this exhibition facilitates relevant dialogue about the impact of ever-increasing production and consumption and the cultural value of shoes.

Our work towards the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion this past year began to shift from intention to action. Most notably, we crafted a new three-year strategic plan for 2023 to 2025 that will center community and ensure that everyone feels valued and respected. The culture sector is experiencing much-needed change as we reflect on and examine our relationships to the world and each other. We look forward to embracing the new opportunities represented by this change.

To everyone who endeavored to make the Museum the best it could be in 2022, I thank you.

Elizabeth Semmelhack
Director & Senior Curator



2022 EXHIBITIONS

OBSESSED: HOW SHOES BECAME OBJECTS OF DESIRE

October 2022 – April 2024

Exploring the story of how society became obsessed with shoes, this exhibition features highly coveted shoes from the permanent collection. Learn about how industrialization drove consumption to effectively transform footwear designers into celebrities and shoes into high value collectibles.

[View Sizzle video](#)

FUTURE NOW: VIRTUAL SNEAKERS TO CUTTING EDGE KICKS

May 2022 – October 2023

Discover over fifty futuristic footwear designs from the auto-lacing Nike MAG to the virtual RTFKT x Staple Meta-Pigeon. *Future Now* considers how cutting-edge technologies, unexpected materials, and new ideas are transforming footwear today. Learn about digitally designed and 3D printed shoes, sneakers made from mushroom leather and reclaimed ocean plastics, as well as footwear created for the metaverse. Featured designers and brands include: Salehe Bembury, Steven Smith, RTFKT, Mr. Bailey, Zaha Hadid, D’Wayne Edwards, Nike ISPA, Safa Şahin, Tom Sachs, EKTO VR, Saysh, Benoît Méléard, and SCRY.

[View Sizzle video](#)



century, shoemaking in the West was transformed
into an industry driven by the invention of new
materials. The mass production of footwear made a
style possible and affordable to more people, and
consumption began to rise.

Mass production also introduced new limitations. Feet
were made to predetermined sizes, and consumer choice
in styles and colors determined by manufacturers.
Mass production was ever-increasing levels of
efficiency as both production and consumption grew.

Designers and companies are grappling with this
shift. It remains at the forefront of the industry, but the
shift.

With new technologies, groundbreaking materials, and
new approaches, forward-thinking creatives are pushing
footwear design. From 3-D printed concept shoes to
these cutting-edge innovations are shaping the
way we wear well into the future.



FUTURE NOW

**VIRTUAL SNEAKERS
TO CUTTING-EDGE KICKS**

ALL DOLLED UP: FASHIONING CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

September 2021 – October 2022

Dolls have historically promoted complex cultural ideas about gender, body image and social status and fashion consumption. Today, doll manufacturers in the West are making efforts to be more inclusive, featuring dolls with disabilities, gender fluid dolls and dolls that promote equality. *All Dolled Up* is a fascinating look at how the world of dolls and their miniature shoes reflect the larger world.



THE GREAT DIVIDE: FOOTWEAR IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

August 2020 – March 2023

Featuring extraordinary 18th century artifacts from the permanent collection, *The Great Divide* explores several timely issues from gender and race to imperialism and colonization. The themes highlight complex stories about privilege, oppression, danger, desire, revolution and resistance that are as relevant today as they were 300 years ago.



ART & INNOVATION: TRADITIONAL ARCTIC FOOTWEAR FROM THE BSM COLLECTION

February 2016 – May 2022

Drawing from the Bata Shoe Museum's extensive circumpolar holdings and building upon information gathered during the museum-sponsored field research trips to all Arctic nations, *Art and Innovation* showcases a vast variety of footwear, garments and tools, highlighting the beautiful and innovative artistry and ingenuity of the makers, and revealing diverse cultural identities, crafting techniques and spiritual meanings.

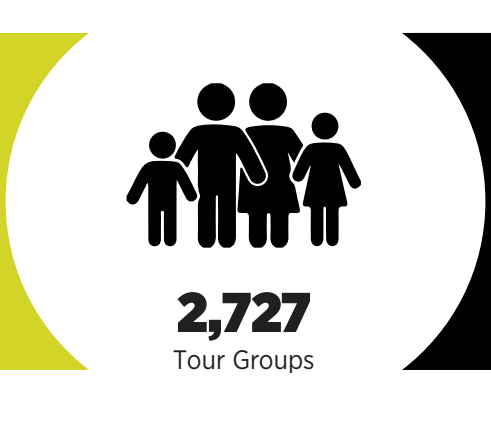
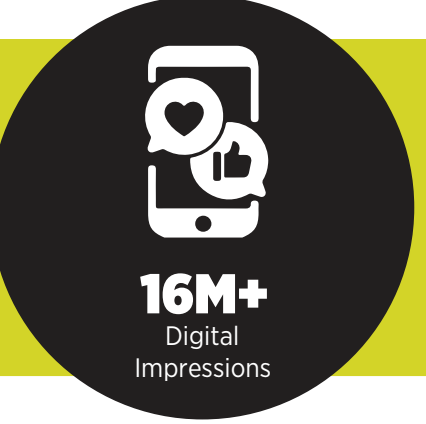
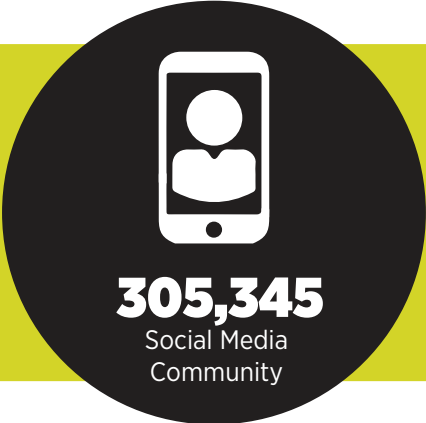


ALL ABOUT SHOES: FOOTWEAR THROUGH THE AGES

Permanent

As the museum's flagship exhibition, *All About Shoes* takes visitors on a global voyage through 4500 years of footwear, focusing on the important role that footwear plays in our lives and imaginations. Included in the showcase is *Behind the Scenes: A Glimpse into Artifact Storage*. With only four percent of the collection typically on view at any given time, this area gives visitors a glimpse into the museum's two storage vaults by offering a rotation of artifacts from the permanent collection.







ACCESS FOR ALL

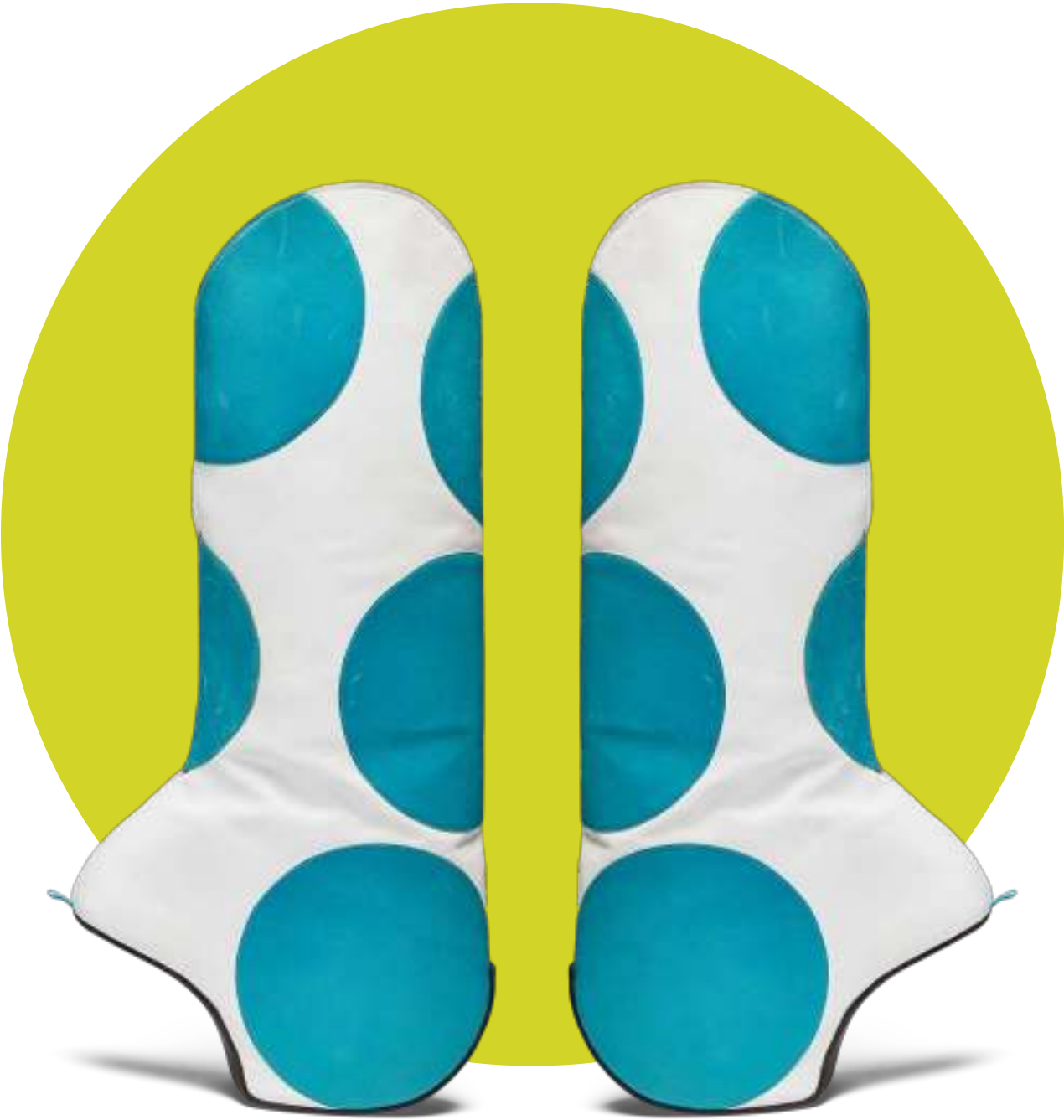
Thanks to our generous partner KPMG, we continued to host **Free Sundays** to create accessible opportunities for everyone to experience our exhibitions. We also participated in the **Toronto's Doors Open** free access weekend which welcomed over 5,000 visitors and families. As part of our **Free Community Weekend**, held in tandem with the opening of *Future Now*, we teamed up with **Kickback Connect**, a youth-led organization aimed to empower underserved youth, to host a sneaker drive. Every person who donated sneakers to the cause received a \$25 Annual Pass to the BSM. Our commitment to provide equitable access continued with our **PRESTO Perks** partnership. From June to August we offered a 20% discount off our Family level Friends of the BSM Pass for all PRESTO cardholders. Free admission was also shared with all library card holders as part of the **Toronto Public Library Museum + Arts Pass**. Over 4500 individuals received free access through this program. Finally, in partnership with the **Institute for Canadian Citizenship**, we were pleased to offer free access to over 500 new Canadians as part of **Canoo**, formerly known as Cultural Access Pass.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Building on the momentum of our longstanding commitment to document, conserve, collect, exhibit and forefront Indigenous identities, traditions and footwear, we continued to host our popular **Manitobah Mukluk’s Storyboot School**. Held as a series of moccasin making classes, the initiative teaches the heritage art of mukluk-making.

“ This is a way for visitors to make contact with a real life practitioner of a living art rather than just reading about it on a museum wall. ”

- Tara Barnes, Manitobah Mukluks



In partnership with **VIBE Arts**, a Toronto-based charity providing free arts education and mentorship for children and youth aged 3-29, we showcased a unique exhibit of shoes created by emerging artists from underserved communities as part of the annual all-night celebration of art, **Nuit Blanche**. Nearly 2000 visitors attended. Seeking to encourage equity, wellness and a sense of belonging, each shoe told a unique story of how overcoming barriers and challenges can lead to a shared commonality of resilience. This project was also part of **ArtworxTO**: Toronto’s Year of Public Art 2021-2022.

Fostering opportunities for young people to engage with the cultural relevance of footwear through hands-on experiences, we partnered with the **Canadian Children’s Art Foundation** and the **Canadian Contemporary School of Art** to host their annual **Shoo-In National Competition**. Students aged 4-17 from across Canada created 3-D shoe designs to be reviewed by a panel. The top finalists were rewarded by having their creations professionally displayed at the Museum.



COLLECTIVE VOICES

Travel and tourism experts predict it could take up to five years for visitor levels to rebound from the pandemic. Working together with local organizations was more important than ever in 2022 to help encourage Torontonians to rediscover cultural spaces.

We supported the **#NeverHaveIEver** social media campaign launched by **Destination Toronto** which invited the public to share their hope and stories. As part of **Museum Week**, a worldwide virtual cultural campaign including over 60,000 participants from 100+ countries, we connected with our communities through daily stories and themed content on our social media platforms. Furthermore, as one of the founding institutions of the **Bloor Street Culture Corridor**, we continued to spotlight our culturally enriched neighbourhood spanning from Yonge Street to Bathurst Street through monthly newsletters, networking, idea-sharing sessions, and collaborative promotional initiatives.

GLOBAL CONVERSATIONS

Recognizing the importance of idea sharing and knowledge building, our curatorial team continued to engage with international projects and presentations. This year, Director & Senior Curator Elizabeth Semmelhack became a member of the **Footwear Research Network** to support the ongoing development of academic inquiries into footwear and to connect with colleagues across the globe. In the fall, she presented “The World at Your Feet: Exploring the Bata Shoe Museum Collection” at **Tufts University**, a world-class private research university in Greater Boston, and spoke about the History of Shoemaking at the opening of *Captive Labour: Exploring Shoemaking in Canadian Penitentiaries*

at **Toronto Metropolitan University**. Elizabeth was also a guest speaker for three podcasts including **BBC Business Daily** for “The Women kicking off their heels at work”, **Soleful: Sneaker Stories**, and **CNN Downside Up** for “What if we lived in a world without sneakers?”.

Suzanne Petersen, Collections Manager & Registrar received a grant from the **Digital Museum of Canada** to produce *Boots & Blades: The Story of Canadian Figure Skating*, an online exhibition that allowed the Museum to share stories and experiences about iconic Canadian sport with people everywhere.



EDUCATION & PROGRAMS

For much of the year, the Museum was filled with sneaker-themed activities, crafts, and animated moments for kids and families to enjoy. Our annual **Family Day** celebration included the launch of *Boots & Blades: The Story of Canadian Figure Skating*, a featured online exhibition that maps the history of one of Canada’s most beloved sports. During **March Break**, our first major in-person events of the year, we focused on footwear and sports with the theme *Ready, Set, Go Sporty at the BSM*. Our **Summer Programming** included a series of workshops and *Tippy Toes Time Travelling*, a weekly drop-in program organized by a new exhibition-inspired theme each week including: *How We Shape Shoes and How They Shape Us*, *A Sustainable Future*, and *The Future of Gender*.

In the fall, we were pleased to host our first in-person **Founder’s Lecture** since 2019. An annual occasion held in honour of our founder Sonja Bata’s birthday, this signature event invited famed British fashion historian and curator **Amber Butchart** to speak about her work in forensic garment analysis in a talk titled *Forensic Fashion: Investigating Old Clothes from the Rag Trade to the Lab*. Within days of it’s announcement, the event was sold out.

Our newest program **Uplifted: Art of Crochet with Legin Knits** was an absolute favourite. Folks of all ages learned how to crochet their shoes with artist and creator Nigel “Legin” John who learned his craft from a Rasta in San

Fernando, Trinidad. Exploring the fundamentals of crochet, each workshop aimed to build personal resilience, exercise patience and wellness, as well as foster a deeper connection with the planet.

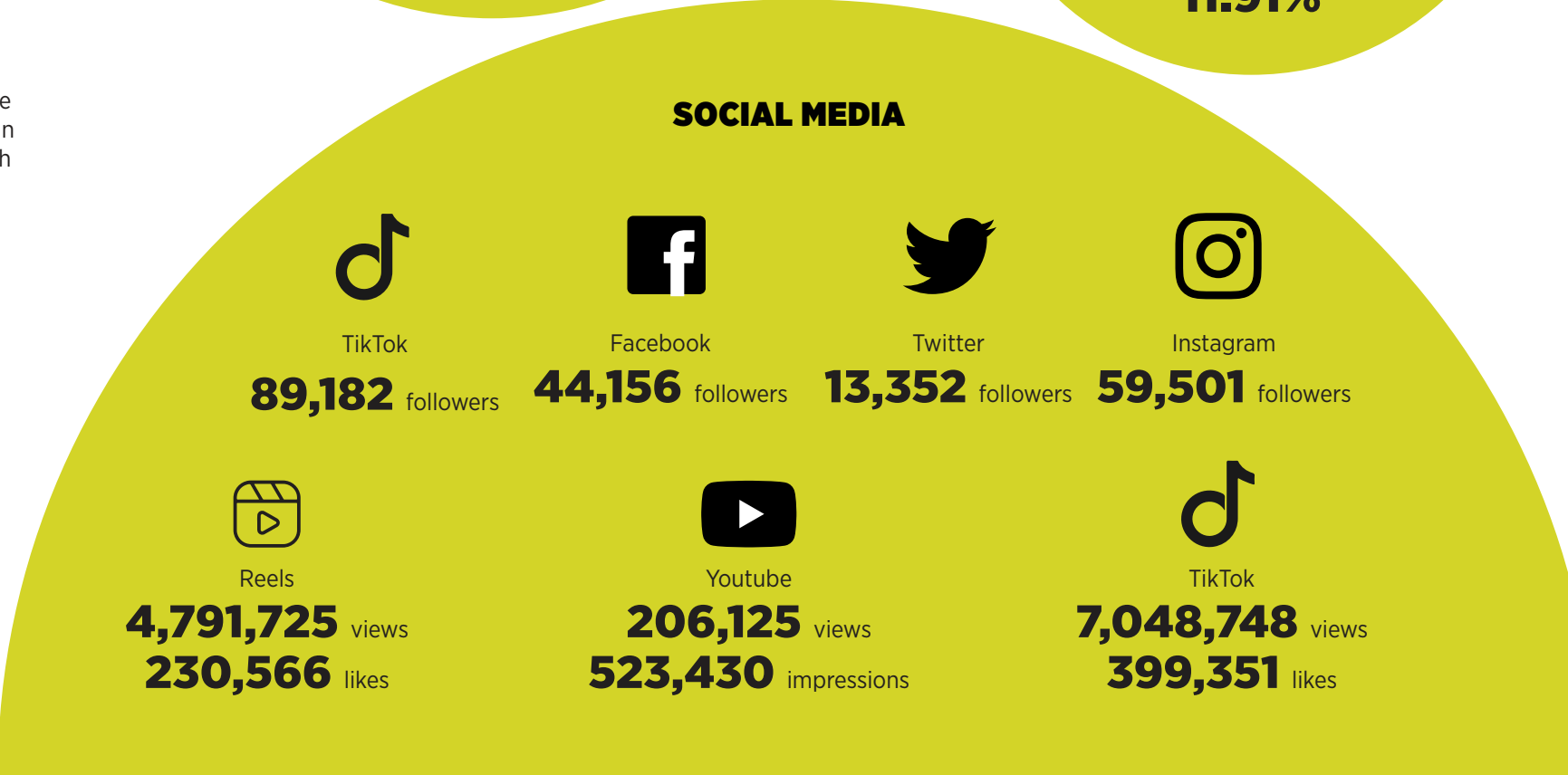
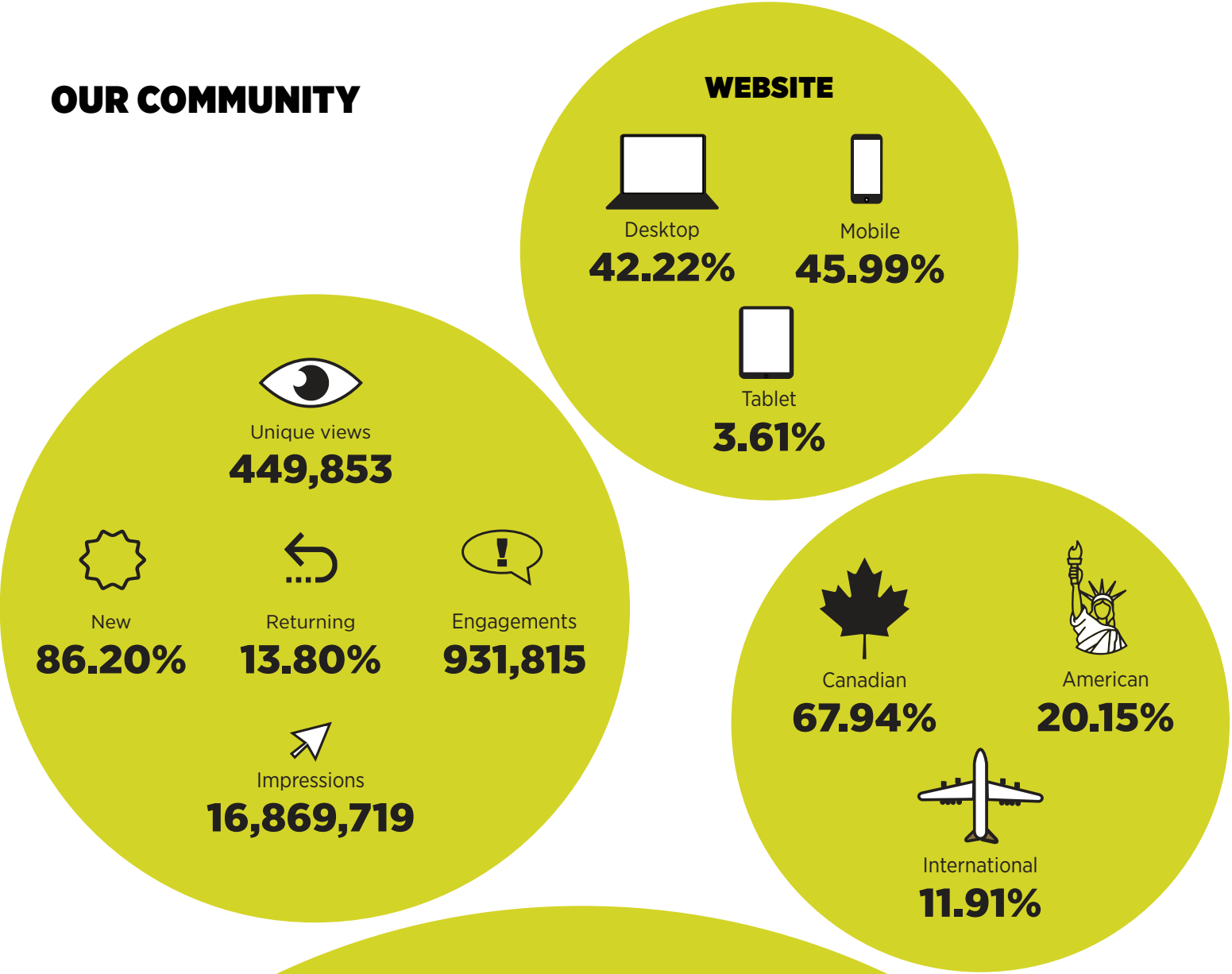
The BSM continued to create an accessible environment for curiosity, creativity and exploration to thrive. Our **Step Ahead** program, which aims to remove financial barriers for school children in underserved regions, is a demonstration of this work. Backed by **RBC Insurance** and the **Williams Wilson Sherport Family Foundation**, Step Ahead subsidizes curriculum-based museum education programs for underserved communities. In 2022, we were honoured to welcome over 250 students as part of this important partner initiative.

Our Education department also provided opportunities to learners from across Toronto including: Experiential Learning Placement for OCAD students, practical field experience for University of Toronto Masters of Museum Studies students, and co-op placement opportunities for high school students.

Connecting voices and knowledge to a broader audience, our popular online **Salon Series** continued with several engaging conversations throughout the year. In the spring we welcomed **Lauren Stowell**, founder of American Duchess Historical Footwear, creative visionary **Jeff Staple**, renowned sneaker designer **Daniel Bailey** (aka Mr. Bailey), and founder of Cnstnt:Dvlpmnt LLC **Chris Dixon**. The fall series kicked off with a presentation by **Dr. Chika Oriuwa** who was selected by Mattel to have a Barbie made in her image in appreciation of her work as a front-line worker. We were excited to also have French shoe designer **Benoît Méléard** and **Dr. Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell**, who spoke about the myths and realities of Marie Antoinette’s shoe wardrobe, join us. Each Salon attracted viewers from across the globe with up to 500 registrants per event.



OUR COMMUNITY





NEW ACQUISITIONS AND LOANS

New acquisitions continued to be added to the Museum’s holdings this year, expanding the collection in very exciting ways. Several are highlighted here.



Pyer Moss “The Sculpt” sneakers, c. 2020



Nikecraft General Purpose Shoe (GPS) by Tom Sachs, 2022

- Air Jordan 1 sneakers, customized by artist Vicky Vuong, c.2021
- Pyer Moss “The Sculpt” sneakers, c. 2020
- Nike ZoomX Vaporfly Next%2 sneakers, 2022
- Nat-2 Fungi mushroom leather sneakers, 2022
- Y-3 Kaiwa model, adidas x Yamamoto collaboration sneakers, 2018
- ‘Saysh One’ model Saysh sneakers, 2022
- Zvezdocha model sneakers by Marc Newson, 2005
- Pair of embroidered jutti, c. 2022
- Adilette Pride Slides, part of the 2022 adidas X Kris Andrew Small Pride Collection
- Pair of shoe cleats, ‘Wes-Mor Sure Grip’ model, c. 1930s
- Ultra Boost Uncaged Parley For The Oceans sneakers
- Boudoir slippers by Daniel Green, c. 1944
- Shoe car toy, handmade, c. 1944
- Pop art pumps by Susan Bennis/Warren Edwards, c. 1984
- Gunboat dress shoes with storm welt by John McHale, c. 1980s

- Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP], Musical Ride riding boots with spurs, c. 2000s
- Nova Silver chrome shoes by Zaha Hadid and United Nude
- Float 3D printed mules by Rem D Koolhaas and United Nude
- Undercurrent boots by Xixiong Wei and Scry Lab, 2022
- High-heel sandals by André Perugia for Enzel, C. 1920s
- Strap dance shoes by André Perugia, c. 1928
- Devoré velvet pumps by André Perugia, c. 1930s
- Wedding pumps by Julien Mayer, c. 1880
- Stiletto pumps, ‘Hangisi’ model by Manolo Blahnik, c. 2022
- Stiletto pumps, “Decoltissimo 100” model by Christian Louboutin, c. 2007
- Pumps, stiletto, “Vernice Basic” by Prada, c. 2012
- Shoemaker’s accounts ledger, Jesse Thomas Tucker, 1877 to 1888
- High top sneakers, George Sully X ebay collaboration, c. 2022
- Colour-block pumps by Au Louvre Paris, c. 1920s
- Nikecraft General Purpose Shoe (GPS) by Tom Sachs, 2022
- and others

LOANS OUT

To the National Gallery of Canada for the exhibition *Canadian and Indigenous Galleries*, a continuing series of rotations, each on display for 9 months (right), the Gardiner Museum for *Global Luxury in Renaissance Venice*, the Santa Fe Museum of International Folk Art for *Dressing with Purpose: Belonging and Resistance in Scandinavia*, to the Art Gallery of Ontario for *I Am Here: Home Movies and Everyday Masterpieces*, and to the Schoenenmuseum (Dutch Shoe Museum), Waalwijk, Netherlands for *Put On Your Red Shoes* (below).



LOANS IN

For *The Great Divide*, we borrowed from the Gardiner Museum, Toronto and Cora Ginsburg LLC, New York. For *Future Now: Virtual Sneakers to Cutting Edge Kicks*, we borrowed from **Concept Kicks** (Mr. Bailey, right), **Ekto VR** (Brad Factor), Nike (below), Chad Jones, and **Safa Şahin** (Balmain).



GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

The Bata Shoe Museum is grateful to the many individuals, corporations, foundations, friends, and all levels of government that support our work. Your generous contributions allowed us to continue our research and create valuable experiences for our audiences.

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Sustaining Level and above

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- Government of Canada – Canadian Heritage
- Museums Assistance Program
Digital Access to Heritage Component
- Museums Assistance Program
Collections Management Component
- Government of Canada
Canadian Museum of History
- Digital Museums Canada
- Government of Ontario
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
- Community Museums Operating Grant
- Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund
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Interim Director of Administration (beginning February 2022)	Linda Chow
Conservator (until June 2022)	Ada Hopkins
Conservator (beginning August 2022)	Laura Cunningham
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Manager of Exhibitions & Assistant Curator	Nishi Bassi
Head of Education	Yvette Brown
Education Assistant (beginning May 2022)	Angie Ma
Head of Communications (until May 2022)	Rosmarie Gadzovski
Marketing & Social Media Manager	Adrienne Naval
Website & Graphics Designer	Gus Aguirre
Head of Facility and Visitor Services	Christopher Mitandis
Development Manager	Anne Cobban
Friends Program Coordinator (until August 2022)	Samantha Payne
Office Administrator	Anupsingh Verma
Auditor	Ernst & Young

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**BATA SHOE
MUSEUM**



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