

# VERNON MORNING STAR

## Support for Salmon Arm's Pride Project Festival delights organizers



[Martha Wickett](#)

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*Kate Fagervik, artistic director of the Salmon Arm Pride Project, and organizer Althea Mongerson stand in the Pride Palace across Hudson Avenue from the art gallery on Monday, Oct. 18, the beginning of the Salmon Arm Pride Project Arts & Awareness Festival, continuing to Oct. 24. (Martha Wickett - Salmon Arm Observer)*

The 2021 Pride Project Festival in Salmon Arm is feeling the love.

“Last year I kind of felt like I was breaking icebergs, forging the path. This year you can tell that people were ready for it, the community support has been enormous, the festival has sort of evolved based on people’s ideas,” said an enthusiastic Kate Fagervik, artistic director of the Salmon Arm Pride Project Arts + Awareness Festival.

"So when I was art-directing last year I tried to be a good listener and then program things based on people's desires. Like tonight we have a shopping hour at Hudson Thrift, because trans people told me they want to save space to come in, try different types of clothing on and be creative," she said Monday, Oct. 18.

"I spoke with Hudson Thrift, so they've created this event with us and Essie's Place – that's sort of how the whole festival has gone. By listening, and responding, and then seeing how creative we can be in Salmon Arm."

The festival runs through Saturday, Oct. 24, with events daily.

Throughout the week, the Breaking the Binary exhibition continues at the arts centre to Dec. 11, and the Pride Palace – across Hudson from the art gallery, is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. A play reading called The Explanation is at Shuswap Theatre Wednesday, Oct. 20, with a matinee at 2:30 p.m. followed by an evening performance at 7 with a talk-back afterwards.

The Pride Palace is open daily from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., where there's a variety of crafts and creations.

"Everything in here is made by queer people in the Shuswap or their allies. We are staffed by queer staff. At least 25 per cent of the proceeds go back to the project – some vendors are giving back 100 per cent so it's very generous. Everyone's been so generous," Fagervik said.

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On Friday a digital film festival runs at the Salmar Classic from 4 to 5:30, followed by the Rocky Horror Picture Show, "so 'let's do the time warp again' on Friday night at 7:30," smiles Fagervik.

"Saturday, there are so many different events I would definitely check the online schedule to see everything, but it ends with the Pride Pumpkin Party and Drag Show at Harpur Farms. That's sold out, but there are a few more tickets going online on Friday. So if you want a ticket, check the Harpur Farm website Friday night."

For more details on events, go to the Salmon Arm Pride Project website and look for the [2021 Pride Project Festival](#).

Fagervik emphasized that support from the community has been huge.


"In terms of buy-in, the window displays are a great way to see that visually in town. So when you walk around, it's bedazzled with rainbows."

She said when the Breaking the Binary exhibition opened on Oct. 16, a lot of people from Kelowna attended.

"They were gob-smacked by the pride in town. People who have never been here think this is normal for us, and people who have been here for a long time know this is not normal for us. We're making a mark."

Fagervik said the goal of the Pride Project is to spread awareness, education and visibility for 2SLGBTQ people in the community.

"We do that using art. So whether it's dance or music or theatre or visual art or crafts, we're using all the mediums to spread awareness. Thank you to everyone who has participated; we're thrilled by the response and happy to be here."



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**About the Author: Martha Wickett**

came to Salmon Arm in May of 2004 to work at the Observer. I was looking for a change from the hustle and bustle of the Lower Mainland, where I had spent more than a decade working in community newspapers.

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