

# Rosebud Theatre & School of the Arts – Facts and Stats

## The Hamlet of Rosebud

Nestled in a serene river valley, Rosebud is the bridge between cultures – between old and new, urban and rural – a vibrant arts community visited by over thirty-five thousand people every year.

The Blackfoot people called the area Akokiniskway, meaning “valley of many roses;” the valley is approximately 70 km north of the historically important Blackfoot Crossing. European settlers began homesteading here in 1883, laying the foundation for a strong farming and ranching community. The town peaked in the 1920s, but by the early 1970s, the population had dropped to less than thirty, and abandoned buildings awaited demolition.

## History of Rosebud School of the Arts

In 1973, LaVerne Erickson, a teacher of music and visual arts, started Rosebud Camp of the Arts as a summer outreach program for Calgary youth. The summer programs soon expanded into weekend vacations throughout the school year, refurbishing old buildings into new dorms and a retreat centre. In 1977, the camp was developed into Rosebud Fine Arts High School, combining academics, arts and work experience. Five students attended the first year. Tim Erickson joined his brother LaVerne in managing the new school.

## Creation of Rosebud Theatre

The summer of 1983 brought about a seemingly innocent change that significantly impacted the direction of the school. As part of Rosebud's centennial, the School's drama department, led by Allen DesNoyers, launched the Rosebud Historical Music Theatre. Allen's play, *Commedia Del' Arte*, was presented on an outdoor stage, along with a country-style buffet and musical entertainment. In the following years, staff and students continued to produce shows until eventually they were offering a full season of plays in 1988.

Since its early experiments, Rosebud Theatre's popularity grew exponentially to attract 10,000 patrons in 1987, 20,000 in 1993, and 30,000 in 1996.

Currently, Rosebud Theatre presents five professionally produced shows per year on two stages, in addition to summer concerts on an open-air stage, special presentations, and *Engage* events. Rosebud Theatre shows are performed and produced by a resident company of artists and guest artists and provide apprenticeship opportunities for students of Rosebud School of the Arts, now a post-secondary theatre training school.

### **Mission and Mandate**

The core of Rosebud's mission is to enrich lives, reflecting hope, joy, forgiveness and love through the arts.	The mandate of Rosebud Theatre is to produce professional live theatre that illustrates the beauty and complexity of life through an inclusive and grace-filled perspective while mentoring the next generation of theatre artists.	The mandate of Rosebud Mercantile is to provide generous hospitality to our patrons, employment for our students and community, and support for the rest of Rosebud Theatre and School of the Arts endeavors.
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### **Old Buildings Given New Life**

<b>The Opera House</b> was once a grain storage building. Original seating for the Theatre were old church pews.	<b>The Mercantile Restaurant</b> , the old general store, now serves Rosebud's famous buffet dinners.	<b>Akokiniskway Gallery</b> , which currently hosts art galleries and events, used to be the old United Church.
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### **Expanding the Vision**

Rosebud's Commitment to grass-roots development is evident in the creation of theatre venues in other communities that now thrive as independent organizations:	2011 – Canadian Badlands Tourism Region 2005 – 15-Minutes-of-Fame Music Festival 1998 – the Canadian Badlands Performing Arts Summer School 1994 – the Canadian Badlands Passion Play 1993 – the Chemainus Theatre Festival on Vancouver Island
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### **Awards**

<b>2016</b>	Certificate of Excellence	<b>TripAdvisor</b>
<b>2014</b>	Hero of the Flood	<b>Alberta Government</b>
<b>2009</b>	Finalist – Employer of Youth Award of Distinction	<b>The Alberta Business Awards of Distinction</b>
<b>2008</b>	Rural Tourism Champion	<b>Growing Rural Tourism</b>
	Finalist – Air Canada Business of the Year Award – Single Unit	<b>TIAC National Awards for Tourism Excellence</b>
<b>2007</b>	Certificate of Recognition	<b>Rural Alberta's Development Fund</b>
<b>2006</b>	Winner – Alberta Pride; The Essence of the Alberta Experience	<b>Alberta Tourism Awards</b>