

** VOCALEYE ONLINE ZOOM BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2023

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** 1) SEASON 4 TAKES OFF!

As we introduce a spectacular new season of accessible online arts adventures, we have to first off thank all of you for joining us in the virtual space and making the Almost Live experience so engaging! We're excited to launch our 4th season and want to kick it off with a couple of announcements:

1. VocalEye has a new and improved website! We've been working hard behind the scenes to give our website a fresh

makeover to improve your experience and make checking out all of VocalEye's [Online Zoom](#), [In-Person](#) and [Pro D](#) events as accessible as possible. This is a work in progress and we value your feedback, so please let us know what you think as we make adjustments and roll out some additional features. You can explore the updates by visiting www.vocaleyeye.ca and contact lindsey@vocaleyeye.ca with any feedback, comments or suggestions.

2. We're switching from a weekly to a monthly newsletter!

VocalEye's Online Zoom Bulletin is now scheduled to arrive in your inbox on the first Monday of the month and will contain the full month's worth of Almost Live events. Reminders and Zoom links will continue to go out as always, on the day of the event. We encourage you to add info@vocaleyeye.ca to your contacts so we don't end up in your junk folder!

We also want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the incredible artists, performers, and presenters who illuminated our screens with their talents during our previous season. As a fun roundup, here are the top three, highest attended Almost Live episodes from last season:

1) [Episode 103 - Accessing Art and Architecture](#)

2) Episode 108 - Your Eyes, My Vision

3) Episode 122 - Crawlspace

What were your top 3?

To old friends and new, we extend our deepest gratitude for joining us online, sharing your stories, and fostering connections that transcend the digital realm. Your presence and engagement have been the driving force behind our mission, encouraging the continuation of VocalEye's hybrid (online and in-person) programming!

Keep reading to find out about October's Almost Live Events!

Almost Live events are designed to be accessible for people who are blind and partially sighted. If you've never attended a VocalEye Almost Live Zoom event before, you can register for a single event or sign up for the full season. A Zoom link and reminder will be sent to you on the day of the event. Everyone is welcome!

[Register here](#) or call 604-364-5949

[Time Zone Converter](#)

The VocalEye virtual lobby opens at 6:30 pm Pacific Time for socializing and community updates with host Amy Amantea. The pre-show introduction begins at 6:45 pm with Amy and guests. The featured presentation begins at 7 pm, followed by conversation, Q and A and a community prize draw.

For schedule updates, visit the [VocalEye website](#)

Watch past events on [VocalEye's YouTube Channel](#)

** 2) ALMOST LIVE ZOOM - OCTOBER

** 3) LAY DOWN YOUR HEART

Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 6:30 pm Pacific Time

Almost Live Episode #130

Meet Niall McNeil, an artist and performer with Down syndrome, and his remarkable chosen family.

We are thrilled to announce a new collaboration with the [National Film Board of Canada \(NFB\)](#)! **Lay Down Your Heart** will be one

of three NFB films we share on Almost Live, with audio description!

An accomplished artist, a lifelong performer and a person with Down syndrome, Niall McNeil has built a unique family tree of blood and chosen relations made up of his closest friends and collaborators. In **Lay Down Your Heart**, Niall introduces his “family members,” his multiple “children” (some twice his age!), his renowned “ex-wife” and director of the film Marie Clements, and more. Bonded together by shared creative passion and their relationships with Niall, his family includes some of Canada’s most outstanding theatrical and artistic talent. By exploring his unconventional family histories—sometimes factual, sometimes infused with fantasy, but always deeply felt—Niall’s limitless imagination drives him toward the heart of human connection.

This documentary film is presented with audio description, courtesy of the NFB.

Host Amy Amantea will be joined by special guests Niall McNeil and Joan McNeil for conversation and community Q and A.

** 4) FLYING BLIND

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 6:30 pm Pacific Time

Almost Live Episode #131

Flying Blind originated as an audio play, created and performed by a collective of blind and partially sighted artists in Seattle. The audio play was transformed to a stage production and we'll be sharing a recording of the staged performance with audio description.

In the piece, the following topics are explored:

- What is it like to lose your first guide dog?
 - How do you tell a sighted person that it's not helpful when they grab your arm without asking you first?
 - Imagine Louis Braille discovering the I-Phone!
 - Discover the thrill of skiing while BVI!
 - What it's like to fight fiercely for your right to be independent when the world is not set up for you?

Host Amy Amantea will be joined by special guests from the creative team.

**** 5) BUG, A LIVE READING**

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:30 pm Pacific Time

Almost Live Episode #132

Anishinaabe playwright and performer, [Yolanda Bonnell](#), reads from her recently published book.

The Girl traces her life from surviving the foster care system to her struggles with addictions. She fights, hoping to break the cycle in order to give her daughter a different life than the one she had. The Mother sits in Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, recounting memories of the daughter that was taken from her, and the struggles of living on the streets in Northern Ontario. They are both followed by Manidoons, a physical manifestation of the trauma and addictions that crawl across generations.

bug originated as a solo performance and artistic ceremony that highlights the ongoing effects of colonialism and intergenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous women, as well as a testimony to the women's resilience and strength.

Content warning: talk of drug and substance use and addiction, self-harm, violence: physical and sexual, intergenerational trauma and healing, scooped children, racism.

The term “scooped” refers to the government practice where Indigenous children were (and continue to be) forcefully taken from their families.

** 6) DIA DE LOS MUERTOS (DAY OF THE DEAD)

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 6:30 pm Pacific Time

Almost Live Episode #133

Live Stream description from Mexico.

Describer JJ Hunt will be Zooming in from Mexico to give us a close-up look at the distinctive visual elements of the rituals, ceremonies and celebrations that mark this festive annual event.

[The Day of the Dead](#) (el Día de los Muertos), is a Mexican holiday where families welcome back the souls of their deceased

relatives for a brief reunion that includes food, drink and celebration.

A blend of Mesoamerican ritual, European religion and Spanish culture, the holiday is celebrated each year from October 31- November 2. While October 31 is Halloween, November 2 is All Souls Day or the Day of the Dead.

**** 7) MUSIC BINGO FUNDRAISER (in-person)**

Saturday, November 4 from 6 to 10 pm Pacific Time

In person event at Moose's Down Under, 830 West Pender Street (Downstairs)

Get your Early Bird tickets for \$30 until October 4!

[Purchase tickets](#)

Dab that tune to win fun prizes and support VocalEye!

Admission includes an assortment of yummy appetizers, a door prize entry, game cards and more! Free Braille game card available with ticket purchase.

[Early Bird Tickets are \\$30](#)

Regular price \$40 (October 5 to November 4)

All proceeds from this event go toward VocalEye programs that make arts and culture more accessible for people who are blind and partially sighted.

If you can't attend the fundraiser, [Buy Me a Coffee](#) is a great way to let us know you care about our java levels and perfect for smaller donations that don't need a tax receipt.

Your support, participation and encouragement are what keep us going! Other donations are welcome through [Canada Helps](#).

Thank you 🙏

**** 8) COMMUNITY: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
WORKSHOPS**

**Register for AEBC's Emergency Preparedness Workshops
for the Blind, Deafblind, and Partially Sighted in BC**

AEBC would like to thank everyone who participated in our survey about Emergency Preparedness for the blind, deafblind and partially sighted in BC back in the Spring.

The feedback received from those who completed the survey, as well as input from focus group participants was most valuable and helped tremendously to inform the research needed to move forward with our project in delivering workshops and providing online resources which will go up on our website later in the year.

AEBC will be holding upcoming virtual workshops in October and November.

October Workshop

Register for one of our October workshop sessions below. Both will cover the same topics.

Evening option: Tuesday October 24, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

[Register for the evening option](#)

Daytime option: Thursday October 26, 1pm to 3pm

[Register for the daytime option](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

If you would like assistance with registering for the October workshops, please call the AEBC BC Affiliate President, Chantal Oakes, 1.250.863.6341

Some topics covered during this workshop include:

- How to prepare and respond during and after an earthquake
- Earthquake Early Warning system (EEW) launching in 2024
- General household readiness and safety tips
- Wildfires, what to expect and how to prepare for an evacuation
- Participants will also learn how to create their Personal Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Guest Speakers:

- Alison Bird, Seismologist; Liaison & Outreach Officer for Natural Resources Canada
- Vicki Swan, the Public Education and Online Communications Officer for the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

**35 participants in total from both October workshops will have the opportunity to receive a \$100-value emergency supplies kit. Criteria for eligibility will be provided during the October workshops.

Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers during the presentation as well as during a question-and-answer period at the end of each workshop.

November Workshop

More information about how to register for our November workshop (part 2 of our series) will be released closer to its session dates. The guest speakers for our November workshop, will present on different topics beyond those covered in October. Please remember to save another date:

Daytime option: Tuesday November 21, 10am to 12pm

Evening option: Tuesday November 28, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Topics covered:

- What should be in your emergency supplies kit and your grab-and-go bag
- How to prepare for heat domes and winter storms
- The provincially funded BC Hydro portable air conditioner program

Guest Speakers:

- Katia Tynan, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction Strategist from the City of Vancouver

- Leila Darwish, Emergency Management, Disaster Resilience, & Community Engagement Professional from the City of Vancouver

** A portion of Workshop 2 will help familiarize participants with the contents of the emergency kits that some receive prior to attending the second session.

For questions about the project, please feel free to contact Laura Mackenrot, AEBC PREP Project Manager, at this email (PREP@BlindCanadians.ca)

Special thanks to the generous funders, donors and supporters who help us make the arts more accessible for people who are blind and partially sighted.

Canada Council for the Arts
Province of British Columbia - Gaming
British Columbia Arts Council
City of Vancouver Cultural Services

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info@vocaleyeye.ca

We occupy the unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and
Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

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