

A Conversation of Consequence

SOME STORIES MUST BE HEARD.

famou5

FOUNDATION

THE BACKGROUND

Pink Tea and Equality

Before 1929, women in Canada were not legally considered “persons.” They were eligible for pains and penalties, but not rights and privileges. A group of five courageous and determined women, known as the Famous Five, changed the course of Canadian history when they worked together and petitioned the federal government for equal standing.

The path was long and fraught with struggle. After their petition to the federal government and the Supreme Court of Canada failed, they brought their case to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council – their last resort. This case came to be known as the “Persons” Case and was ultimately successful.

Their work was controversial and often done in secret. In fact, almost all of the planning and discussion that led up to the “Persons” Case was disguised to appear like dainty, inconsequential tea parties, known as “Pink Teas.” Statues depicting these now-famous meetings stand both in Calgary, Alberta and the nation’s capital, Ottawa.



Nellie McClung



Emily Murphy



Henrietta Muir Edwards



Irene Parlby



Louise McKinney



THE CHALLENGE

Connecting the Past with the Future

In a world increasingly obsessed with the here and now, something that happened 86 years ago might as well have happened 1,000 years ago, regardless of how important it is. For many, the past isn't something they can relate to; it has become more distant and disconnected than ever.

At the same time, gender inequality in Canada has not become a thing of the past. Instead, it's simply become less explicit than it was at the time of the Famous Five. While the laws aren't obviously exclusionary, women face other inequalities, such as earning much less than men for the same work. The message of the Famous Five is clearly as important today as it was in 1929. Our challenge was to make the events of the past relevant and inspiring to today's women and girls.

THE BINAURAL EXPERIENCE

At the centre of the conversation

Whether it's a famous speech, music festival, or a turning point in history, there's nothing quite like being there. It's one thing to know of an event, but it's quite another to experience it; to be surrounded by the sights, sounds, and smells. The moment becomes intensely personal, rousing and unforgettable.

With this in mind, we began thinking about the Famous Five, Pink Tea parties and the monuments that stand in their honour in both Calgary and Ottawa. We stood in the middle of the statues, looked around and took it in. We closed our eyes and we could almost hear the meeting going on around us.

That's when we knew what we were going to do. We were going to recreate a Pink Tea with 3D audio. We would literally put the listeners at the centre of the conversation depicted by the statues. They would be immersed and completely part of the event. For a few minutes, the meeting would feel real, relevant, contemporary.



We worked with an established playwright and developed a script that brought an imagining of how the decision to petition the government may have happened. Then, we utilized binaural audio technology and recorded a performance of the piece live with a specialized 360-degree microphone.

At its most basic level, binaural audio is a technology that records sound in the same

way the human ear hears it. By using multiple microphones, often set up in the actual ears of a dummy head, binaural audio captures sound, and then translates it into a playback that the human ear and brain understand to be three-dimensional. Where conventional audio recordings provide a passive experience, binaural actively engages the listener's brain by situating them in the space through audio. The listener doesn't just hear, they feel.

With our audio piece complete, we turned our attention to where it would live, and how it would look. We developed a corresponding video component that used a small shape in a subtle way to suggest where the sound was coming from. We wanted the user to pay less attention to the visual and more to the audio, so we ensured the visual element was complementary and not distracting.



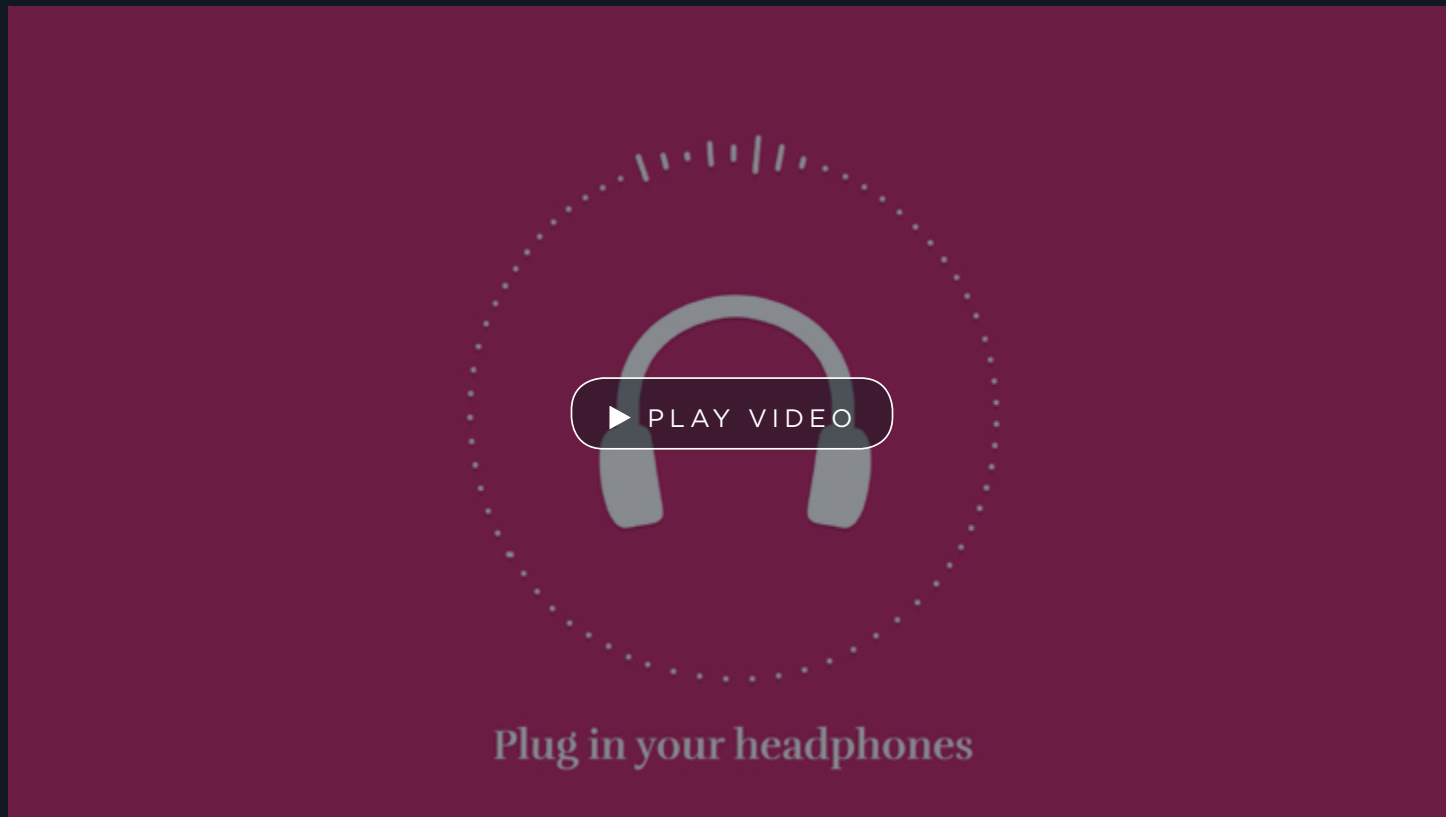


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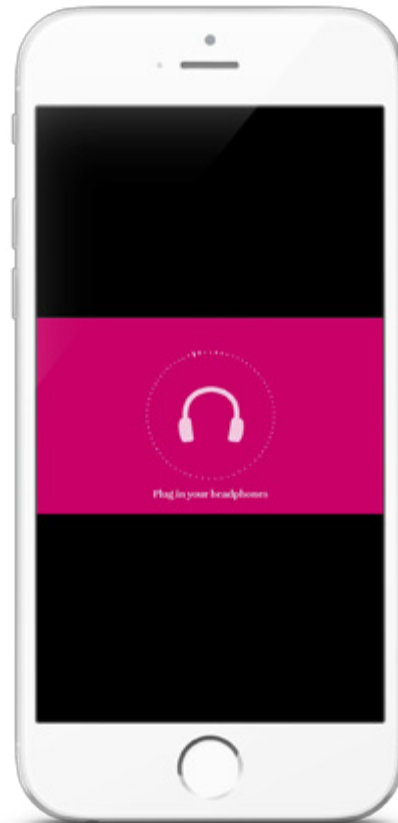
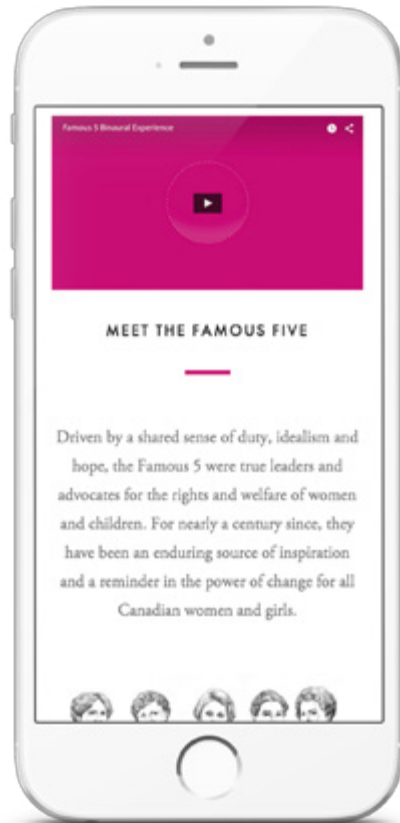
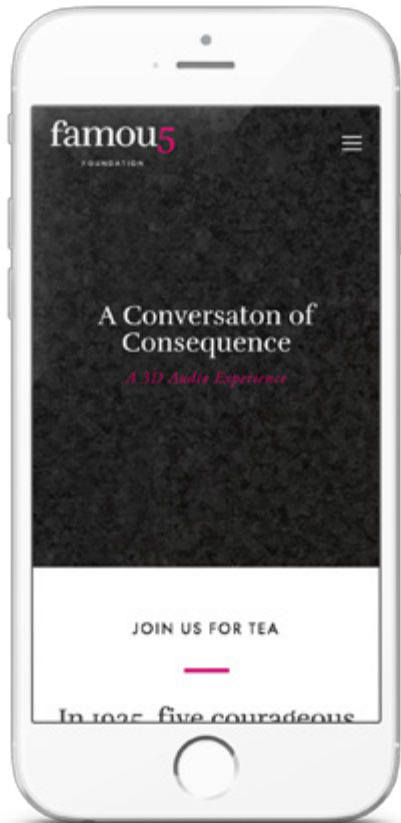


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[Vimeo.com/142315981](https://vimeo.com/142315981)



Thank you

For questions and inquiries
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