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A CITY CREATIVE TO ITS BONES
Envisioning Neighbourhood Arts Hubs

A Discussion Paper

Prepared for:
Toronto Arts Council Foundation
by Resonance Creative Consulting Partners
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Addendum by Claire Hopkinson
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Toronto Arts Council Foundation, through its sister organization Toronto Arts Council, has a unique vantage point with regard to the impact of art on community life, on neighbourhood revitalization and on city building. Through its adjudication process TAC annually reviews the ambitions, the successes and the challenges of over 600 creative arts organizations and projects, both large and small. We understand the passion and the commitment that goes into each application for funding. Through this process we have garnered specific and anecdotal evidence of how arts programs – and particularly community engaged arts programs – have made lasting impacts on neighbourhoods and on the people who live in them. We know that we are witness to a great force for good – a force that is under resourced, underdeveloped, and insufficiently connected with other local, provincial and federal institutions, programs and services that share similar goals.

Our Foundation initiative, Creative City: Block by Block, was born out of this observation and a desire to connect more of Toronto's neighbourhoods with the transformational value of arts activity. We have a duty to foster connections and find resources to help this great force for good realise its potential. One of the ways we can do this is to collect the evidence and share it with others beyond the arts community and the specific communities they are involved with.

This discussion paper both distils the discussion captured at the Art in the Hub symposium in March 2008, and serves to articulate the first steps in developing a Neighbourhood Arts Hub. Neighbourhood Arts Hubs are envisioned to be a series of art portals in neighbourhoods throughout Toronto - vehicles which will study the impact of community engaged art making, share best practices, deepen our knowledge, link resources and programs, and act as a catalyst for better delivery of services and increased participation.

It is clear that there is a need to link the work that is being done in the community with organizations and policy makers who are looking for programs and solutions. This discussion paper is intended to jump start the conversation with potential partners. We hope you will see this document as a call to action to join us in building stronger communities across Toronto.

I would like to extend our thanks to the wonderful artists and participants who attended Art at the Hub, our collaborators at Arts Starts, and to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Great West Life and other sponsors for their valuable financial support.

Claire Hopkinson
Executive Director
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A truly artistic city - a truly creative city - is artistic in its bones. . . . We should be fostering creativity in everyday life – the whole city is a stage and we are all players upon it. . . . A creative city provides social harmony, public services, functional infrastructure, socio-economic success and, I think, increasingly this is an artistic endeavour.

(Joe Berridge, City Planner, Keynote Speaker at Art at the Hub Symposium)

INTRODUCTION

A City Creative to Its Bones

Toronto has embraced culture as one of its strongest assets and like many other cities has created strategies to foster cultural industries and districts, commercial and not-for-profit arts organizations, and community-engaged art practices. The explosion of arts offerings, from large international festivals to cutting edge alternative work, reflects the cultural diversity, depth and sophistication of arts practices present in the city. This cultural wealth makes Toronto an exciting place to live, work and visit.

The Toronto Arts Council Foundation (TACF) believes that community-engaged art is a vital element in creative city building and in the development of successful, healthy, safe neighbourhoods and should be recognized as such by city planners and community developers.

Community Art is a growing field. The amount of work being done under this rubric is increasing along with an awareness of the transformational potential of engaging communities in art-making. As these practices grow, practitioners and other stakeholders are looking to strengthen the work through building partnerships, pooling resources and creating cultural hubs.

Current discourse within the Community Art field reveals that cultural engagement plays an important role in the making of place – a key feature in the development of successful neighbourhood hubs. Community artists are natural place-makers; they come to know communities well, build bridges across differences, tap into the creative forces of the local populace, cultivate partnerships, spur collaborations, transform spaces, and facilitate the creation of art in unlikely places. Their projects generate gathering spaces, hubs of activity and places that inspire communities to grow roots and create change. Many neighbourhoods in Toronto have experienced the transformational potential of community art activities.

In addition to work done by Community Art groups, over 80% of Toronto Arts Council clients have outreach components to their programming that include taking professional arts experiences into neighbourhoods throughout the city, including those outside of the downtown area. All this adds up to more accessible art, breaking through the image of culture as an elitist pastime.

TACF's Creative City: Block by Block program will build on existing work and act as a catalyst for new ideas. It will strengthen and enhance art at a neighbourhood level by building on the following principles borrowed from community art practice, community cultural development and Creative City planning:

- Building relationships
- Being relevant to the local ecology
- Respecting cultures, traditions and history
- Being responsive to local needs
- Embracing an open-ended planning style
- Valuing a diversity of art forms and practices

TACF envisions the creation of art portals in neighbourhoods throughout the city. These centres would be easily identifiable spaces accessible to community residents and agencies, and artists and arts groups from outside or within the community. Neighbourhood Arts Hubs could act as a catalyst for projects, link artists and residents, offer meeting and network spaces, and generally promote cultural activities in the neighbourhood. NAHs will help to address the need for a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for community engaged arts activity at a neighbourhood level.

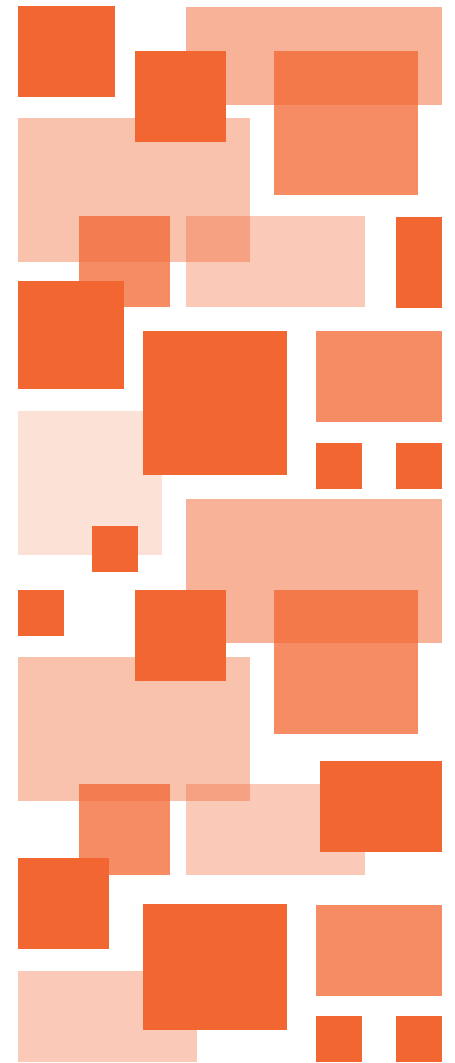
NAHs are not intended to replace or compete with community-engaged arts work already happening in the area but can act as a resource and support a spectrum of arts activity. They will not focus on specific issues, cultural groups or arts organizations, but will strive to find multiple ways of meeting the needs and interests of residents while supporting the development of creative opportunities in particular neighbourhoods. NAHs can cooperate with and complement the work of other hubs, including libraries, health centres, schools and drop-in centres, by finding ways to strengthen their work or by introducing arts activities to their programs.

Report Objectives

This report will examine the possibilities for NAHs and how they might fit into the vision of Toronto as a Creative City. It acknowledges the partnering and resources needed to launch this concept and that these resources have not yet been directed towards this goal. It is hoped that this report will help identify potential opportunities and challenges and will act as a first step in articulating the potential for NAHs.

This report will:

1. Outline discussions from the *Art at the Hub* symposium presented by Toronto Arts Council Foundation and Art Starts Neighbourhood Cultural Centre
2. Describe Neighbourhood Arts Hubs and the values on which they will be built
3. Highlight the benefits and challenges in moving forward with Neighbourhood Arts Hubs



Creativity can help reclaim and revitalize neighbourhoods, stimulate and enable more innovative community problem solving and provide opportunities for economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods and social groups.

(Creative City Planning Framework)



ACTING AS A CATALYST

The role of Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council Foundation

Toronto Arts Council Foundation (TACF) believes that a great city demands great art, and by supporting, celebrating, financing and advocating for Toronto's local artists, we can improve the quality of life of all Torontonians. The Foundation, as a non-profit charitable organization, enables the opportunity for individuals, private and public foundations, government agencies and corporate donors to support all the various disciplines of art, from independent visual artists to theatre companies, choirs and film festivals, which enhance and enliven our city (see Appendix One for more information about TACF).

This commitment to Toronto's artists is accomplished two ways; through the development of special projects and initiatives, and by increasing resources available through granting programs of the Toronto Arts Council. Although separate entities, the Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council Foundation benefit by being run as sister organizations, ensuring the Foundation's awareness of as well as the ability to respond to the needs of the arts sector in Toronto.

The Toronto Arts Council is the City of Toronto's funding body for artists and arts organizations, supporting all disciplines including music, visual arts, poetry, dance, theatre, storytelling, film, and carnival arts. Through the reporting and application process, TAC has acquired extensive knowledge of the outreach, animation work, and community-engaged art practices of artists and arts organizations throughout the city.

Together, the Toronto Arts Council Foundation and the Toronto Arts Council understand the breadth, depth and scope of art-making in Toronto.

Creative City: Block by Block Program

TACF is committed to the principle that recognition and celebration of our individual and collective creativity is the key to building a great city, block by block, neighbourhood by neighbourhood.

In 2006, TACF launched the *Creative City: Block by Block* initiative. This program seeks to connect all of Toronto's neighbourhoods with the transformational value of artistic activity by supporting community-engaged art-making and building sustainability for community-engaged art projects and programs (see Appendix Two for more information about *Creative City: Block by Block* program goals and projects).

In March 2008, as part of the Block by Block Program, TACF and Art Starts Neighbourhood Cultural Centre, with support from Ontario Trillium Foundation and other partners, presented a symposium to examine the idea of art-making at a neighbourhood level and how art creates hubs. This event was called *Art at the Hub: A symposium on making art locally*.

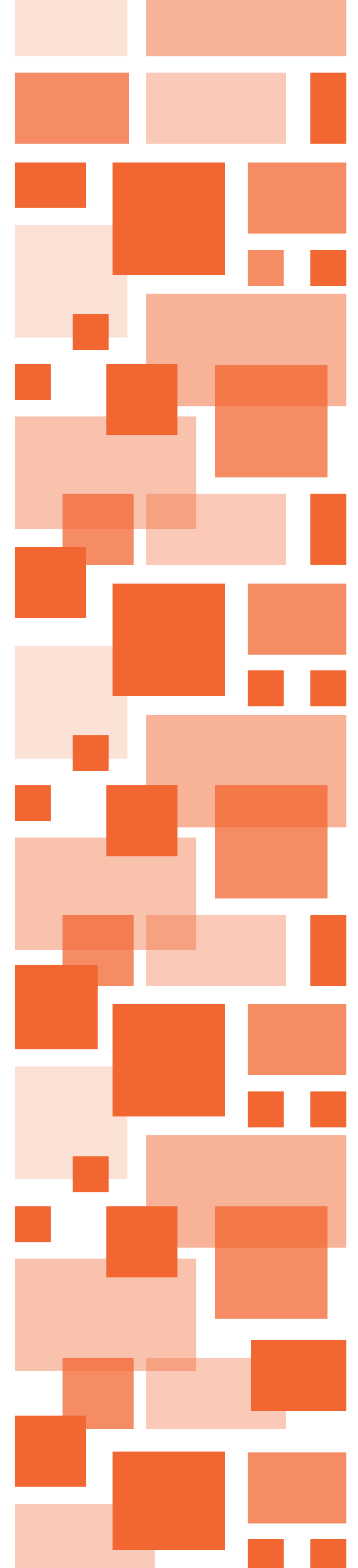
The event planners posed several questions about the relationship between art-making and communities, including:

- ✓ What role do artists and arts organizations have in shaping community development and revitalization?
 - ✓ How can more Toronto neighbourhoods have access to cultural experiences at a local level?
-

- √ How can access to cultural opportunities at a local level change the way citizens view the arts?
- √ What potential allies and resources exist to support community-engaged arts practices?
- √ What skills and strengths do artists have to offer community developers? And vice versa?

Lily Yeh, founder of Philadelphia's Village of Arts and Humanities, launched the symposium with an inspiring and moving presentation about the transformation of inner-city neighbourhoods through the creation of murals, gardens and installations. Yeh's story was echoed by panel members, resource people and participants throughout the day. The symposium culminated with an invitation to envision a Community Art hub, what such a place would feel and look like, and the kind of activities that could happen there (see Appendix Three for an overview of the Art at the Hub Symposium).

Symposium discussions about nurturing relationships with communities and creating work that is relevant and responsive to specific neighbourhoods is outlined in the report section entitled The Fundamentals of Hub-Building.





REVITALIZING NEIGHBOURHOODS THROUGH THE ARTS

In 2000, Toronto City Council directed the Culture Division to draft a plan to guide Toronto's cultural development over the next 10 years. The document and subsequent reports illustrate the role culture plays in the revitalization and development of our city and calls for increased participation in cultural events by residents in all parts of the city⁹. Culture is now commonly referred to as the fourth pillar upon which cities can move forward in the 21st century, the others being the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of a city's life. The City of Toronto has embraced culture as one of its strongest assets and The Creative City Planning Framework calls for action to capitalize on this strength and to develop policies to ensure that the city's potential is not squandered. In short, there is a call for a "radical new process vision" to make Toronto a Creative City.¹⁰

A process vision uses connectivity, risk-taking and open-ended thinking in order to create responsive solutions rather than formulaic agendas. Nowhere is this approach more critical than when working at a neighbourhood level. Neighbourhoods have their own unique challenges and charm; what happens in a neighbourhood affects the quality of day-to-day life. Many Toronto neighbourhoods struggle with problems such as youth violence, unemployment and alienation. People call for change but more often than not top-down, downtown answers are out of touch with local needs and concerns.

Established ideas about community development are giving way to neighbourhood-centred approaches to urban renewal. This is not just a new set of programs but a change of mindset that replaces "service to and for" with the idea of "working with and together." Urban planners have begun to rethink cities as a cluster of villages, each with its distinct character, rather than a homogenous entity.

In the past, the social fabric of a community grew slowly. But our urban neighbourhoods are fast-changing, diverse places composed of people from all over the world. The positive result is a rich social and cultural fabric; the negative result is a patchwork of solitudes with neighbours not relating to neighbours, and people feeling overwhelmed and disconnected. Community development initiatives attempt to orchestrate a sense of place and belonging, something that might have happened naturally in the past. Cultural planning narrows the focus to people's relationship to their community and how creative activities enhance, consolidate and express attachments to specific spaces and places.

Culture-led regeneration at a neighbourhood level attempts to revitalize and re-village urban communities and regards creative activities as a basic right:

One way to look at the goals of community cultural development is to see them as making a human right of what was once considered a privilege. . . . Realization of this aim would require providing the means of community cultural development in every community – facilities, skilled practitioners, materials and equipment and so on – making such programs as common place as public libraries.¹¹

9 City of Toronto (2003) Culture Plan. www.toronto.ca/culture/cultureplan.htm

10 City of Toronto. (2008). Creative City Planning Framework: A Supporting Document to the Agenda for Prosperity: Prospectus for a Great City. www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/creative-city-planning-framework-feb08.pdf, p.5.

11 Adams, Don and Arlene Goldbard. (2001). Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development. Rockefeller Foundation, p. 88

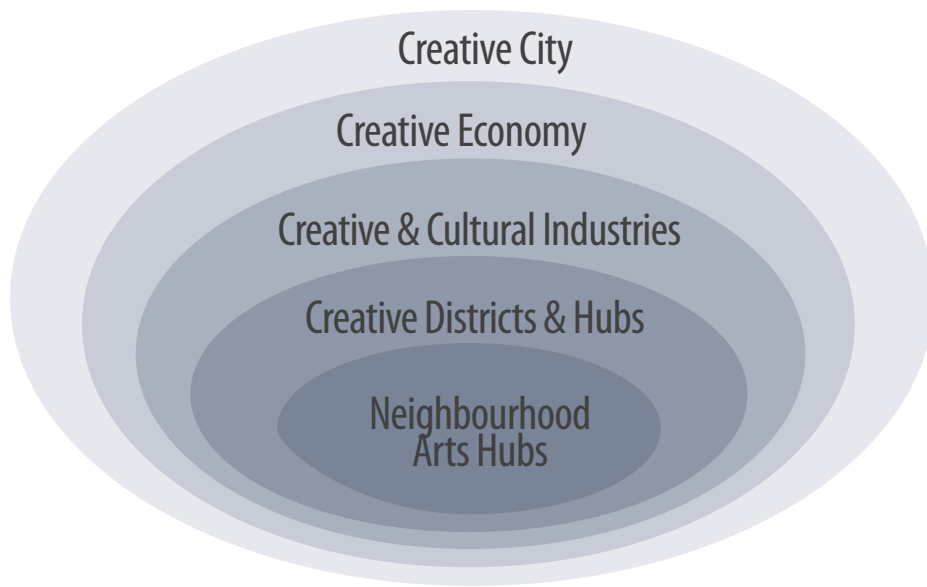


Figure 1 Based on *Creative Cities Planning Framework Scales of Creativity*

“A creative city demonstrates the characteristics essential to nurture human creativity.”¹²
 The Creative City Planning Framework describes Scales of Creativity that radiate from smaller to larger degrees of impact. A Neighbourhood Arts Hub is a form of creative hub that connects at a local level but is connected to other scales of creativity with the “opportunity for the transfer of ideas, principles and learning across these scales.”¹³

12 City of Toronto (2008) p.23.

13 Ibid, p.23.





THE FUNDAMENTALS OF HUB-BUILDING

Discussions from the Art at the Hub Symposium, March 2008

For the *Art at the Hub Symposium*, the planners brought together an international group of presenters and participants whose work relates to community-engaged art practices and associated issues of cultural development. At the symposium, presenters and participants reflected on their work as community artists, place-makers and hub-builders. Their experiences shed light on some of the fundamental principles and practices to consider in building Neighbourhood Arts Hubs. The following section has been divided into three parts to represent the tenets of community-engaged art projects that emerged in symposium discussions and presentations:

- Relationships with Communities
- Relevance to Neighbourhoods
- Responsiveness to People and Places

Relationships with Communities

Of the themes that emerged over the course of the symposium, building relationships with community members and partners was at the heart of discussions about what drives engaged art practices. As a relational, process-driven and context-specific practice, community-engaged art involves “interactive collaboration,” a quality of relationship that occurs when “artists are giving and taking with the community.”⁹

Lily Yeh’s poignant morning keynote presentation captured the centrality of relationship building and collaboration in community arts practices. Yeh’s initial, simple project, which blossomed into the Village of Art and Humanities in North Philadelphia, played a crucial role in transforming a community that had become destitute and desolate. In 1986, she started to build a garden in an abandoned lot where 10 dilapidated houses had been leveled. In the beginning, Yeh and the local children who had gathered there with her had no idea where the project would lead; however, she believes “we knew in our heart.”

Building strong, lasting relationships is what anchors cultural projects in neighbourhoods. Relationship building is so integral to the work that many community artists have come to regard this as an on-going part of the process as well as the product of art-making. Recently Jumblies Theatre, a pioneer of large scale community projects, looked at the following model of development:

Research & Development ▶ *Creative process* ▶ *Product/Outcome* ▶ *Legacy/Sustainability*

and concluded that,

All of the stages are the process. The product/outcome is the effect the work has on community relationships, memory and transformation. Together these things are ART. How lasting the effects are on communities relates to the quality of relationships that have been built in the community. If one physically transforms a space, it won't last if momentum is lost and community relations are weak. Projects aren't ever over as long as the relationships that were built continue.

(Ruth Howard, Jumblies Theatre)

⁹ McGauley, L., *Imagine: An External Review of Canada Council for the Artist and Community Collaboration Fund*: Canada Council for the Arts, 2006. p.8

Yeh's philosophy of relationship building and community development is rooted in her belief in integrating art and life and "community revitalization through reconnection." In her view, not only do people reconnect with each other through the relationships, collaborations and partnerships that are born of community arts projects, they also reconnect with their own creativity. In the process of making art together, artists and communities build creative, inclusive and democratic spaces.

The seven small group discussions that followed Yeh's presentation touched on the importance of relationship building, providing local examples and personal testaments about how the quality of the relationships formed with community members is directly linked to the success and transformative capacity of projects.

Lorne Brown of Four in Hand, a storytelling initiative, spoke about a seniors' life story project that took place in Rexdale Women's Centre. Initially, he expected about twelve participants but the numbers grew to thirty people speaking several languages, all of which were incorporated into a welcoming ritual. Over time, the group branched out to form separate Punjabi men's and women's groups. The program ended with a feast and large community celebration.

Catherine Campbell talked about her experience working with Arts Access through the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) and how difficult it was initially to attend to relationship building when the AGO was expecting results:

[The artists] realized that we needed to get out there into the community. Process is important and we only felt success when organizations in the community approached us and said, "We've heard about you, can you work with us?" What (the AGO) thought was wrong at first was actually us laying the groundwork.

(Catherine Campbell, AGO)


Time plays a key role in relational art-making. Participants emphasized the importance of allowing adequate time for projects to become deeply rooted in communities. It is important not to rush; listening to the community helps identify future directions and neighbourhood priorities. As such, community art is sometimes referred to as the 'slow art' movement. "Community art is very slow," said Lily Yeh who attributes much of the success of her project to the length of time it took for her to find community members to help get the project off the ground. It progressed at a pace that resulted in the development of meaningful and lasting relationships.

Projects can't be rushed if you want to get to the core of what this work is all about. It takes time to teach technique but also to let participants explore their own visions and ideas.

(Participant, Group 1)

In her opening address, Yeh reminded the audience that finding support for projects is about more than pragmatics. She stressed that connecting with participants, communities and supporters is a way of finding our shared humanity. Having an ear to the ground before projects begin – in the research and development phase – can help to identify individuals and local businesses and organizations who can become strong advocates for the work. Once a project is underway, these relationships can help in unforeseen ways.





In a diverse city like Toronto, communities and social structures are never homogenous and rarely is there consensus about their development. As such, creating community-based projects is a complex matter that calls for sometimes extensive negotiation and collaboration with multiple partners and interests in order for projects to move forward. This is particularly the case where projects involve altering public space. An example is the former Toronto Transit Committee lot at St. Clair and Christie currently being developed into the Green Arts Barns. City Councillor for that area, Joe Mihevc, spoke about the importance of “stone soup development” and the role community-engaged projects play in catalyzing community input and investment into projects:

It was a sometimes acrimonious process. We knew we had to bring in other partners. ArtScape became engaged, local community residents became engaged and formed their own organization, and some of the businesses along St. Clair became engaged. There was good lively public debate. We should never fear good lively public debate and conflict because that project was birthed. Without that pain, I don't think we would have as good a child as we have. Out of each group's scarcity, together, they were able to find plenty.

Current discourse about Creative Cities and re-envisioning public space has drawn interest from many sectors that are invested in community development. Mihevc urged community artists to think creatively about who might be interested in their work. Innovative and fruitful partnerships can emerge if we break down sectoral silos and tap into new sources of support. Project Random is a case in point:

Project Random is a partnership between West Hill Community Services, Toronto Culture and Toronto Community Housing. That's really significant, it's the Holy Trinity! We have the city who is convinced; we have the landlords who are our space; we also have the tenants' council who are on board. We've been running the project for a year. We use festival arts as our genre. We chose this because it equalizes people's contribution to the project.

(Janet Fitzsimmons, Project Random)

As a relational practice, Community Art is dependent on artists and communities working closely together to realize beauty in its many forms. Community artists invite local participation in projects by creating openings for people to become place-makers, cultural creators, and community developers through involvement in art-making. In the course of their work community artists witness the sometimes subtle but often dramatic changes that take place as people are drawn into projects that affirm who they are and what they can offer to their communities.

Relevance to Neighbourhoods

ArtStarts regards sites as situations; every site is unique in terms of its culture, history, tensions and experiences. The art that is created directly relates to the space.

(Katherine Earl, Art Starts Neighbourhood Cultural Centre)

In Vancouver I'm in this new community and we're all from different places so the work that I do is to find a way to talk about who we are together in this place. We create new traditions together.

(Paula Jardine, Mountainview Cemetery)

The strength of community-engaged approaches to community development is that they begin with local residents working with artists to realize changes that enhance their daily lives on numerous levels. Community artists use their skills, experience and knowledge to ensure that what is created emerges organically, reflecting the local ecology and building on the existing strengths within the community to develop projects that have a lasting impact.

When Lily Yeh began working with a group of local children in an abandoned lot to create a park, she started with a circle because, in her words, “to turn a chaotic space into a sense of place, one needs to establish a centre.” So she drew a circle with a stick and said to them, “this is where we begin to dig.”

Place-making describes the process of creating spaces rooted in the local ecology of neighbourhoods – the existing demographic and physical landscape – in hopes of harnessing these assets to generate a greater sense of identity, stability and belonging among local residents. Place-making plants the seeds for increased local participation in the development of neighbourhoods. In the process of art-making, community-engaged projects revitalize urban spaces including parks, community centres, libraries, recreational facilities and housing complexes as well as other less likely venues. They catalyze community cohesiveness and social change while creating beauty and opportunities for celebration.



Like many community artists, Lily Yeh discovered her passion for creating art in distressed neighbourhoods and unlikely places:

I realized that this is my canvas, not only in public spaces but in broken down, traumatized and abandoned spaces. My colour is working with people, they are my medium. In North Philadelphia, in those broken communities, it gave me a space to recreate that sense of place. We transform the physical space into a spiritual space, an emotional space.

Paula Jardine’s residency in Mountainview Cemetery in Vancouver is a unique example of how place-making and transformation can take root in unlikely spaces. Her work with the cemetery was fueled by her personal interest in death rituals and supported by city officials who were able to see the potential in an unlikely partnership:

I was hired by the city to be an artist at the cemetery. The city launched a public process to develop a master plan to create a future for the cemetery; they are creating a gallery and discussion groups around death and dying. There was one sentence that said community arts would be a part of it – that’s what got us in!

(Paula Jardine)

I view community arts as living culture. I think that celebration is a basic human impulse. We like to do things together. We like to sing and dance together and create beauty together. It’s a way of reconnecting with the land we live on, the food we eat, the great mystery and with each other.

(Paula Jardine, Artist in Residence, Mountainview Cemetery)

I feel we are all connected – we are all made of the stuff of stars – but we forgot that. More importantly we need to reconnect with that creativity and our guiding light inside of us and in there I believe we are all equal. This substance is like a piece of sunlight, its quality is the same, and so through art we truly create a democratic space that we can enter equally.

(Lily Yeh)



Community Art projects are partnering with an increasing diversity of interests to build projects in a variety of spaces. While some communities lack space to come together, others have spaces that are under used or not accessible to the community. In Toronto, a combination of rising property values and an increasing demand for affordable spaces makes it very difficult for projects to find a home base – an essential part of hub-building. Projects take place in a range of settings that they adapt to while, at the same time, available spaces are adapted to the needs of projects and communities.

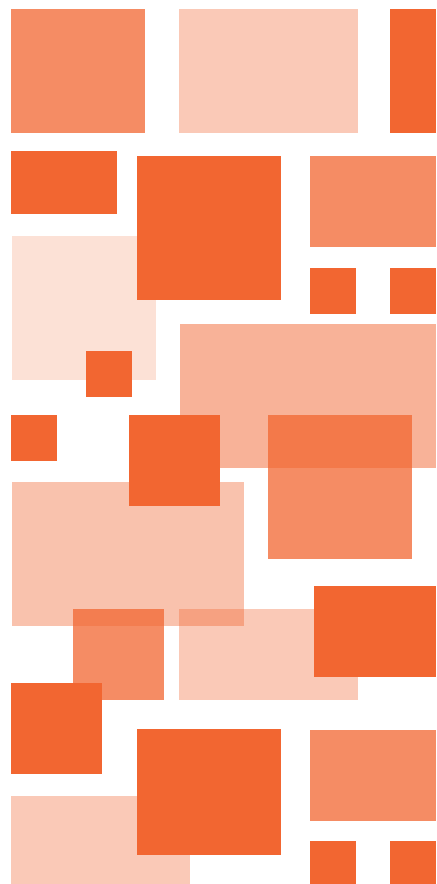
Because the neighbourhood was changing so quickly, we couldn't secure an affordable storefront space so we got a bike trailer and took it around the neighborhood. The key to our magnetism was that we let people come to us. We started getting to know storeowners in the neighbourhood; we ate from the local shops and held small feasts on the sidewalk. Slowly people started to accept us and get involved in our activities. Eventually we found a shared storefront and are now making plans for another phase of the project.

(Loree Lawrence, The Gathering Space)

In the small group discussion *Art Makes a New Commons*, participants talked about how animating space with arts activities creates “commons”. Originally, commons referred to tracts of land in villages that everyone had access to for grazing their cattle. The term still refers to places and spaces that the community has rights or access to, but now its public spaces like community centres, public housing or parks. In the course of the discussion commons was used to describe spaces occupied for the duration of Community Art projects. These are temporary hubs animated by the people and the programming that fill them.

Commons are where people are coming together for some reason – commons can be in a basement, a shipping container, a room, a park – makeshift or not. Keeping the idea of ‘commons’ in one’s mind - that it’s something fluid and transient; commons exist as long as the community is still there to animate a space.

(Ruth Howard, Jumblies Theatre)



Commons is evocative; it conjures up lovely public spaces that perhaps don't really exist today for us. But the little room in the Rexdale Women's Centre, with one tiny window, that was very crowded, was definitely a commons. A commons can also be transient because it can exist for the duration of the storytelling project but isn't a commons when it's empty.

(Lorne Brown, Four in Hand)

Many cultural organizations and institutions that own space are becoming more attentive to their surroundings and the privilege they have within their communities. Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People (LKTYP), Canada's largest theatre for young people, has been located in a downtown, mixed income area for 42 years. They are now rethinking their relationship to their neighbourhood and changing their ideas about outreach beyond audience development to see what they can offer the surrounding community.

A childcare centre down the street had no idea that we were around. We invited them and 100 people showed up. Then we talked to the parents and now we have a community to work with. It's very important that we work with people that have a deep engagement with that community.

(Thom Vernon, LKTYP)

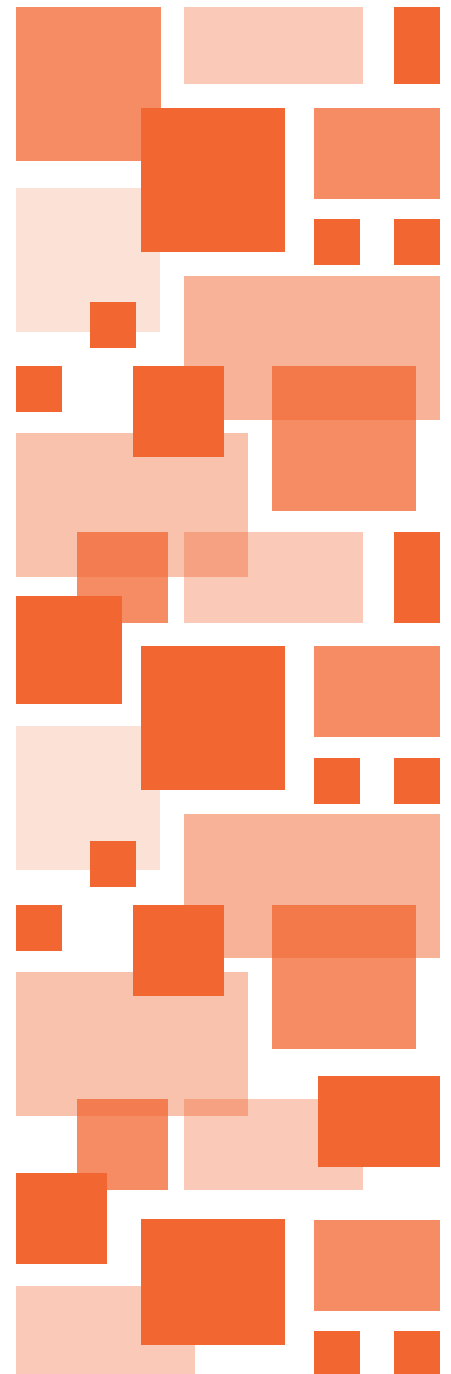


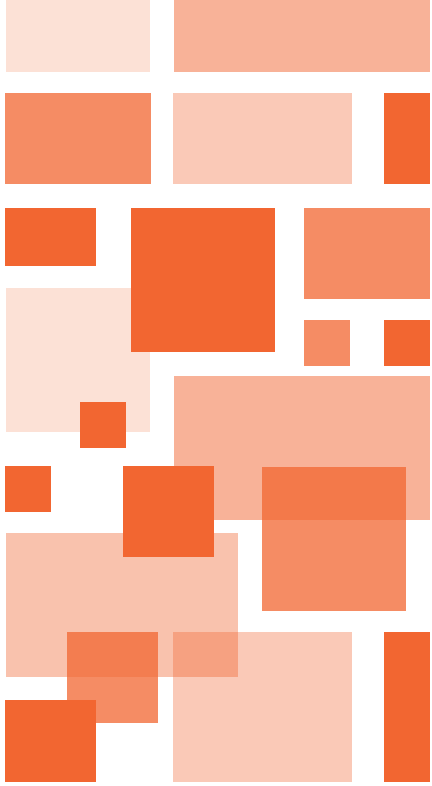
Place-making activities can link a variety of interests in partnerships that benefit the whole community. Keith McNair, Executive Director of Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Centre (DPNC) – a model for a neighbourhood hub with multi-funded services for people who experience barriers to participation – acknowledged the role of Jumblies Theatre in bringing arts programming to the centre. According to McNair, Jumblies has achieved that with activities that capture “the story of the community”:

Ruth [Howard] and Jumblies bring in artists to work with the community. The community benefits from getting to work with a range of fantastic people. I want this to be there forever. How do I justify that? By letting our community hub become, in itself, a hub for artists to work. We want to provide that space and opportunity for the on-going development of the work, for the benefit of our community and beauty.

Community art is more about transformative process, not the product. It's not about delivering service, it's about the experience.

(Marjolein Winterink, Councilor Adam Giambrone's Office)





You need to empower community, to make people feel they have the power to create. If you don't reach certain beauty it doesn't transform, it doesn't have the power. My success is that you don't see me but without the artist making it happen you don't have the compelling voice and that passion and that truth that transforms community.

(Lily Yeh)

Toronto Public Libraries are also resources for space and can partner in generating cultural hubs. The Oakwood Village Library is a case in point:

There are ninety-nine libraries around the city that are open to partnerships. The Oakwood Village Library and Arts Centre opened 10 years ago. The community wanted it to be an arts centre. It was a great time to build partnerships, there was so much energy coming from the community.

(Dawna Rowison, Toronto Public Libraries)

Community Art projects that are relevant to communities build on what is available – the existing resources within communities. These resources combined with artists' inclinations, skills, experience and knowledge create temporary spaces and long-lasting places – hubs of activity – that reflect local ecologies and enhance the lives of local residents.

Responsiveness to People and Places

Where do community-engaged art projects originate? Ideas for projects either emerge out of the artistic inclinations of practitioners or the interests and imaginations of community leaders. Community artists initiate these projects themselves or are invited to work with communities by local leaders who see the potential for cultural projects as tools for community development and revitalization. The next steps involve research and development in and with communities to secure funding, local interest and participation. Once underway, projects are shaped by the local ecology; they shift and change in response to a myriad of factors in creative dialogue with communities.

Urban Community Art initiatives often focus their activities in neighbourhoods where there is an identified need for a range of programming and services. Community Art practices are rooted in principles related to cultural democracy which seeks to democratize the means of cultural production, from creation to realization. In the process of the exchange, artists pass their knowledge, skills and experience on to communities living on the margins of mainstream culture in an effort to ensure that their voices and perspectives are included in the public sphere.¹⁰

The eventual goal is to cultivate resources within these communities to the extent that they become self-determining producers of culture and change.

It's been my experience that artists play a key role as advocates on behalf of low-income, under-privileged communities. While academics, service providers and political leaders communicate what can be very complicated concepts of social injustice with each other in very inaccessible formats, artists make these concepts accessible and relatable. This is an invaluable contribution to community development and activism.¹¹

Being responsive to communities involves:

- Consulting
- Listening
- Collaborating
- Learning
- Acting

10 McGauley, L. (2006)

11 Ruth Wilson, Arts Access: comment at TAC/TACF Planning Consultation session, June 2008

We go into the community and create a physical presence. [We hold] arts drop-ins as a way to learn about the community and community walks to learn where people feel safe and what they want to improve. Now there's a focus on sustainable programming. We hire within the community so the community takes ownership of their own programs. It's a shared investment.

(Katherine Earl, Art Starts)

The Container Project led by Mervin Jarman in Jamaica came about because he wanted to affect 'real change' in the lives of youth by "repatriating technology". According to Jarman, the cargo container that housed the project "is a divine space created by the community."

Computers changed my life but I could have used mosaics. It's that idea about how you interact, how you integrate what you're doing with the community, how you get them to participate fully as opposed to you taking this thing to them and saying 'This is what you should be doing.' It is really, 'Here's an idea, how can we develop this idea and make it into a more fruitful, fertile thing for the benefit of the community?'

Andy Moro, who runs Red Pepper Spectacle Arts with partner Gabriella Caruso, echoed Jarman's commitment to working with under-served and under-appreciated communities to give creative expression to local stories and concerns:

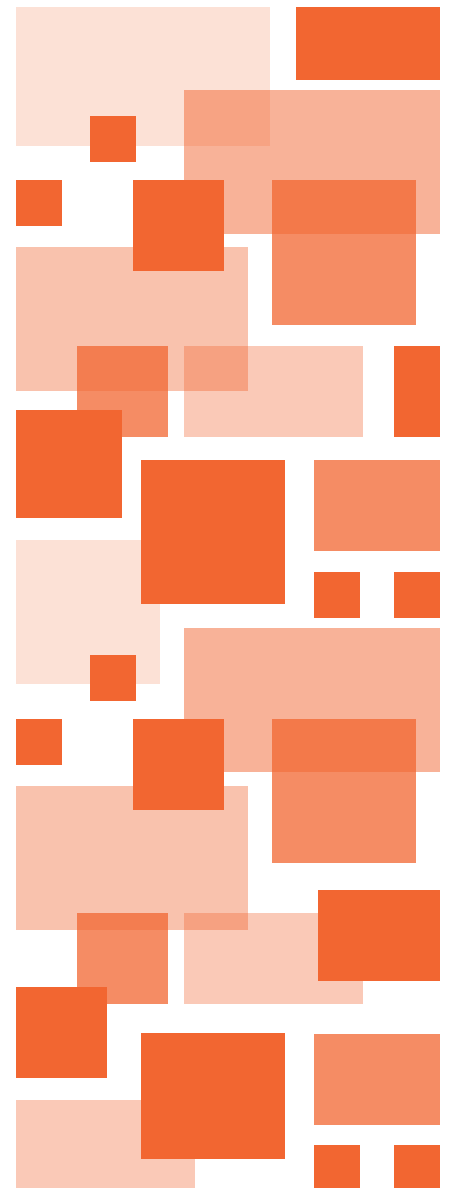
We can take these tools and resources and bring them to the community and share them. And that's really what our art is. It about having the tools and the resources and the love to be able to sit down and be in a community and meet people and learn about them – to be there for people who have come and are willing to share with us and put trust in us.

Community Art projects oftentimes lay the groundwork for other local initiatives. Yeh spoke of her work as an artist as being a "fire-starter." Since its inception, the Village of Art and Humanities has transformed over 120 abandoned spaces into gardens built around mosaics, sculpted trees, animals and walls. Participants have renovated empty houses and created educational programs, arts workshops, a theatre project and local celebrations.

This little flame that lights up the community spread to a 100 block area and then to a 260 inner city block area and then we got the university working together and the city working together to create The Shared Prosperity Plan.

Katherine Earl of Art Starts talked about the importance of place-making activities in helping to create community cohesion and kick-start other activities. The Mosaic Project at Glendower is an extension of ArtStarts' mandate to build healthy communities in action. The project involved creating a mosaic around a basketball court where there was a history of turf tension. Creating the mosaic has been a catalyst for a range of spin-off activities:

The youth ran a basketball tournament and the community raised money to replace the nets and paint the backboards. One resident volunteered to facilitate workshops over the winter because he didn't want to let the momentum die. A local fresh food market will be setting up in front of the mosaic.





The *Art in The Parks* group talked about needs-based community interventions and the role of artists as creating sustainable opportunities for the communities involved. Artists and agencies are often able to serve as mediators, connecting communities with other resources that may be useful to them now and in the future.

Noah Kenneally, an artist with Jumblies Theatre, which has run arts activities, performances and special events in the Mabelle/Islington Village community since 2005, spoke about putting down “roots” in the community that have thrived and grown into a long-term multifaceted relationship with local residents and community partners. For some project participants, their involvement with Jumblies has spawned income generating opportunities. For instance, a group of people are sewing bags to hold Somali tea, another group is catering events, and a book of Somali poetry has been produced.

Community artists also play an important role in helping to catalyze cultural development in urban neighbourhoods and this work has an impact on the city. Yet the grass-roots orientation of community-engaged initiatives seems out of sync with the Creative City movement’s big picture plans to overhaul public services and institutions to give the city a competitive advantage. The afternoon keynote speaker, Joe Berridge, presented his ideas about the direction of the creative city in the 21st century and the role of artists in this venture. While Berridge applauds the beauty of art, he cautions, “When you talk about the arts community it can be a bit of trap – a truly artistic city, a truly creative city is artistic in the way it does everything.” His ideas about the singular vision of creative innovators stirred discussion about the role of the artist in engaged practices.

In the panel discussion that followed Berridge’s address, panelists and participants wrestled with the disconnections between the Creative City approach and the community-engaged approach to building a better city. Tim Jones, CEO of Artscape and panelist at the symposium, expressed concern that the concept of the ‘creative city’ intuitively sounds like a wonderful thing but is in danger of losing its meaning:

One of the failings of the movement is the failure to engage the artists, designers, creative entrepreneurs – the creative people – in the design and execution of the creative city.

(Tim Jones, Artscape)

How does a government become artistic? How does the city become a partner in creative projects, in developing creativity and disseminating it throughout the city? To become flexible, listen and react.

(Elizabeth Cinello, Art Starts)

To ignite cultural development at a community level, artists need to insert themselves into the bigger dialogue of city building and make a case for the transformational power of the arts. According to Jones the challenge is for community artists to see themselves as part of the Creative City agenda:

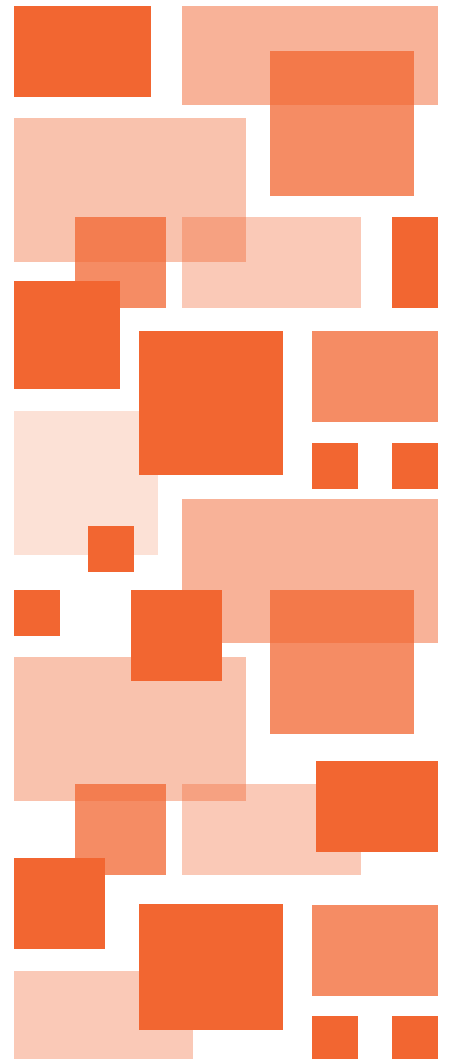
We need to see ourselves at the centre of that agenda as opposed to seeing it as someone else’s agenda that isn’t serving our needs or the larger community’s needs. We need to get much more sophisticated about the way we understand creativity. I like the idea of the broad notion of creativity but I also think we need to understand the role of the artist, the role of the cultural industry, the role of creative services, and different layers of creativity, how they relate to each other and how they relate to place.

Community artists need to build the case for artists as hub-builders and important players in affecting the cultural landscape of the heterogeneous city. If we can develop a more comprehensive view of how grass-roots cultural activity strengthens neighbourhoods and cities we may be able to stimulate more integrated and effective action in the development of under-served and under-appreciated communities.



Low income areas are possibly the most receptive to projects that engage their communities. I have experienced lower income communities that are generally more involved as stakeholders who want to see their community developed further.

(Tafewa Turner, Six Ah Wi Visual Art Collective)



ENVISIONING NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS HUBS

A hub is a centre from which things radiate, a place full of people and energy. The word conjures up an image of a vibrant space; it is impossible to think of a hub as a dull and inactive spot. Hubs fulfill the basic human need for interaction and socializing. Some hubs are born out of necessity; a shopping centre or a corner of a park might become a meeting ground because nowhere else exists, or because people who gather there like the location. Word spreads and more people come to chat, to hang out, and to drink coffee – a hub develops. An accidental hub like the one above, can be well-known but limited in scope. Those who gather have little input or control over the space; it simply works for them in the moment. Accidental and ephemeral hubs emerge organically but hubs can also be created to respond to community needs and interests.

Community Art organizations act as hubs at a neighbourhood level either through the on-going presence of a studio or storefront, or through the creation of specific projects such as performances within parks or the creation of murals or mosaics in public space. At the *Art at the Hub symposium*, this work was referred to as “creating a commons.” Short-term projects animate space and create temporary hubs but an permanent Neighbourhood Arts Hub can anchor the work to become an on-going community resource.

Benefits

The benefits of Neighbourhood Arts Hubs include:

1. Strengthening and enhancing the work of artists and arts organizations working in communities by providing services, connections and support
2. Increasing the level of arts opportunities at a local level – as entertainment, engagement or education
3. Involving residents in revitalizing their neighbourhood; increasing pride and participation
4. Encouraging support for community-engaged work from diverse stakeholders and partners including funding programs
5. Acting as a repository for the history of cultural activity at a neighbourhood level and adding to the knowledge base of community-engaged work
6. Linking neighbourhood revitalization through the arts to on-going Creative City discourse

We spent a year doing community consultation. We listened, we really listened. We didn't have an agenda; we tried to listen to what was really being said. It took a year to write our first grant; we consulted with various groups; we did focus groups with youth. We did stuff with tenant's councils, parent groups, seniors groups.

(Participant, Group 4)



Objectives and Services

NAHs could be located in an existing space such as a community centre or library, or developed in a storefront location or under-used city owned facility. The right space will present itself depending on the community's resources and on support from public and private funding sources. The number of partners involved and the interests of the community will determine the size and scope of the NAH. Community input, through a mapping process, will take stock of local resources and assets, including residents who can provide guidance and leadership and help ensure the NAH reflects local concerns and needs.

Potential services offered may include one or more of the following:

Information and Research Centre

- Provides information to residents on cultural activities happening in the neighbourhood by having information in-house, dropping pamphlets in the area, or on-line
- Provides information about the community (demographics, history of community arts projects, etc.)
- Engages in on-going community cultural mapping
- Liaises with universities to arrange research projects on community and cultural development projects
- Creates and keeps archives of community cultural activities

Support Centre for Arts Groups

- Assists arts groups to access information about grants, permits, etc.
- Provides community arts groups with administrative support (fee for service basis) and access to equipment

Planning and Training Centre

- Provides space for community members and community arts practitioners to plan projects
- Sponsors training workshops for senior artists to train emerging community artists in the principles and practices of community-engaged art-making
- Hosts visiting community art practitioners from outside the neighbourhood (city, province, nationally or internationally) to make presentations about their work

Community Space

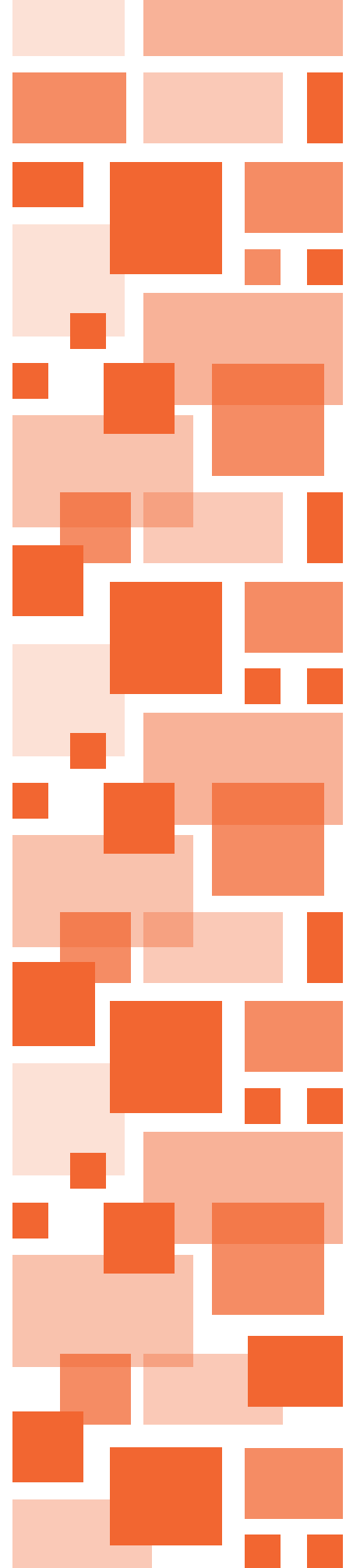
- Provides studio or rehearsal space for use by multiple projects
- Sets up a café or lounge area for meetings
- Provides space for community art practitioners to network

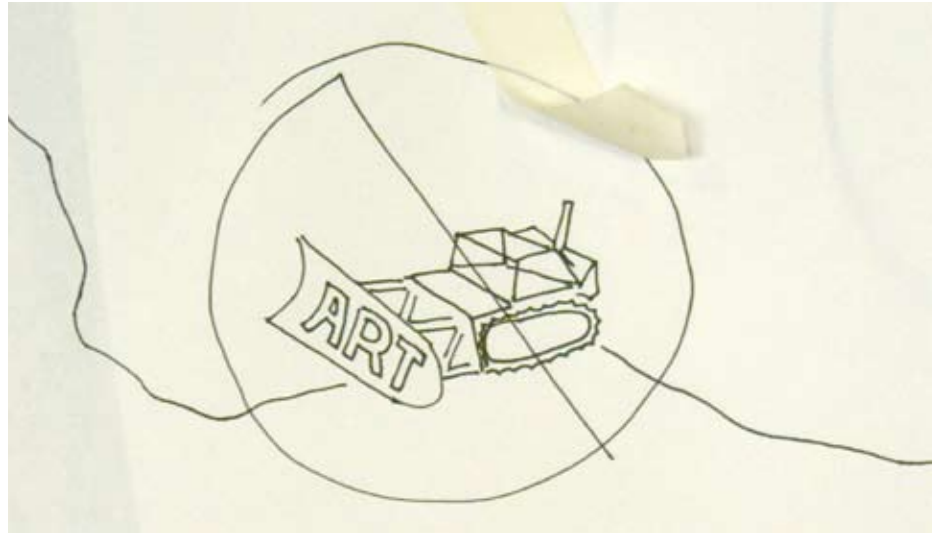
Gallery Space

- Creates space for presentation of work created in the neighbourhood

Community Programming

- Books neighbourhood showings of professional theatre, music, dance or film, and visual media/sound art exhibitions by local or outside professional artists
- Arranges Q&A sessions or workshops in conjunction with art projects
- Arranges for neighbourhood residents to attend performances and exhibitions in other parts of the city; negotiates with companies to provide tickets at reduced prices





Groups Served

The services and facilities of the Neighbourhood Arts Hubs will help strengthen the efforts of artists working in a variety of media, professional and non-professional, neighbourhood-based and from outside of the community. These include:

Community Art Projects

Professional artists working with community members to explore creative expressions related to residents' interests, concerns or heritage. These projects vary from short-term (a few months) to long term (several years). Some projects focus on specific demographics such as youth or seniors. The work is usually shared with local residents through performances or becomes part of public space (murals, mosaics, installations, etc.)

Arts Education

Accessible and affordable classes in various arts media held in the neighbourhood; workshops and Q&A sessions following presentations

Visual and Media Arts

Gallery openings and film showings in the neighbourhood

Performing Arts

Presentations in the community by professional and non-professional neighbourhood-based performance groups

Outreach projects

Professional arts organizations from out of the neighbourhood offer opportunities for local residents to attend productions in locations within or outside of the community

Existing Cultural Hubs

The idea of spaces that foster art at a local level is not new. Potential models include:

Multi-funded Multi-functional Social Service Hub

This space houses a variety of services that can be accessed by community members including employment, health and culture, and provides multi-generational support for early years, children, youth, adults and seniors. These kinds of centres already exist in some areas. An

example is the **Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre**, a multi-funded space serving people who face barriers to participation but also bringing the whole community together. The centre helps artists and arts organizations partner with community members and has supported numerous arts projects.

Community Art-Driven Hub

Community Art organizations frequently partner with many groups and bridge many divides by bringing people together to share and create work. In creating an art project they create a hub by acting as connectors and catalysts. Some examples of Community Art groups with long term commitment to neighbourhoods include **Jumblies Theatre**, **Art Starts** and **Regent Park Focus**.

Cultural Centres

Cultural centres bring professional arts activities (programs and presentations) into specific neighbourhoods to provide arts experiences for residents. An example of this is Montreal's network of **Maisons de la Culture**, located in neighbourhoods throughout the city to ensure that citizens have access to cultural events. These centres are funded by the city to help improve the quality of life and broaden cultural horizons. Each Maison seeks ways to connect with the surrounding community and to foster art that is free and relevant.

Multi-faceted Community Centre with An Arts Focus

This kind of centre recognizes the economic potential of art activities and includes the not-for-profit sector and commercial arts ventures. An example is ArtScape's **Green Arts Barns** currently being built at the site of the historic Wychwood TTC streetcar barns located in the St. Clair and Bathurst neighbourhood. Arts and culture will share the space with groups concerned about the environment, heritage preservation, urban agriculture and affordable housing.

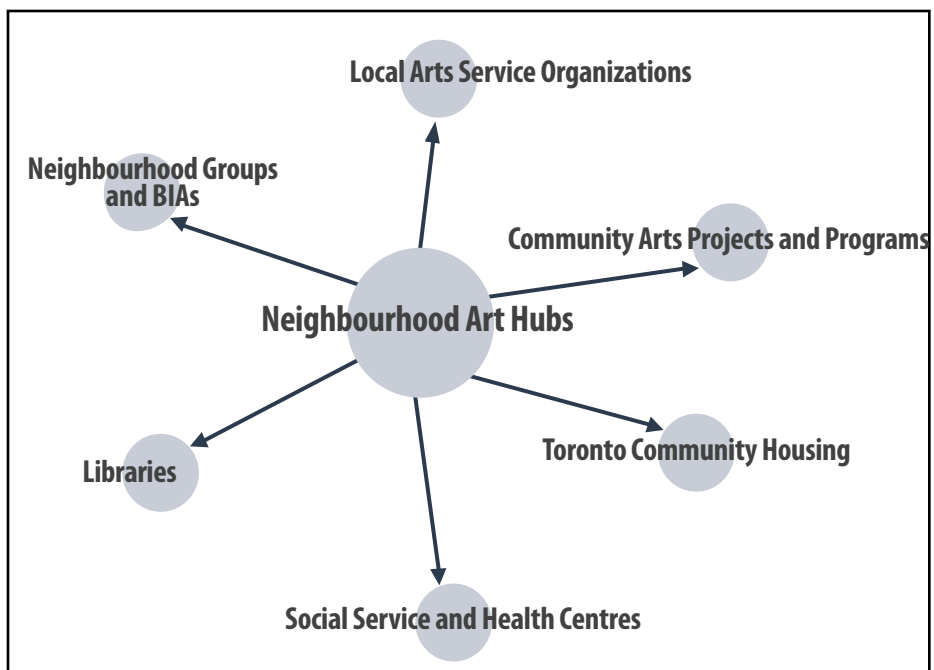
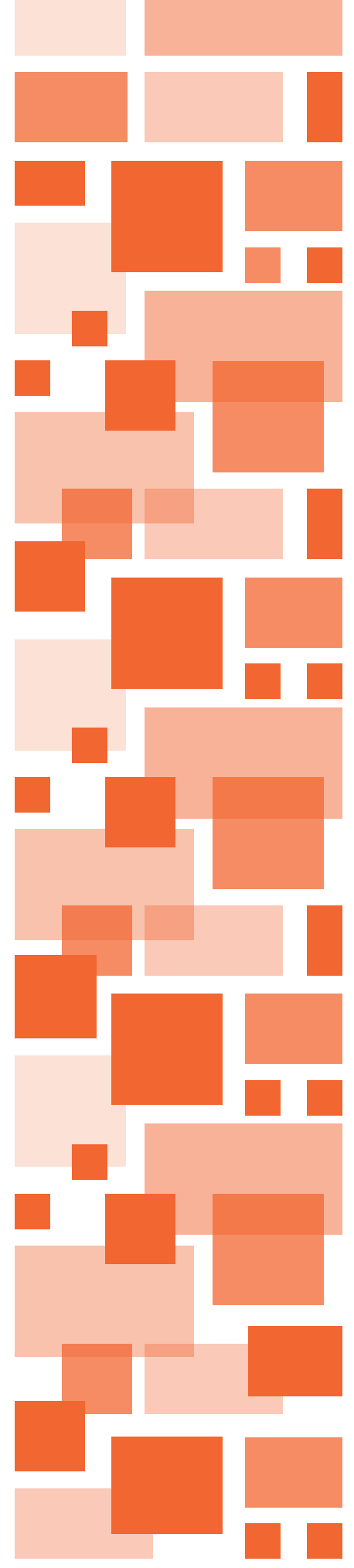
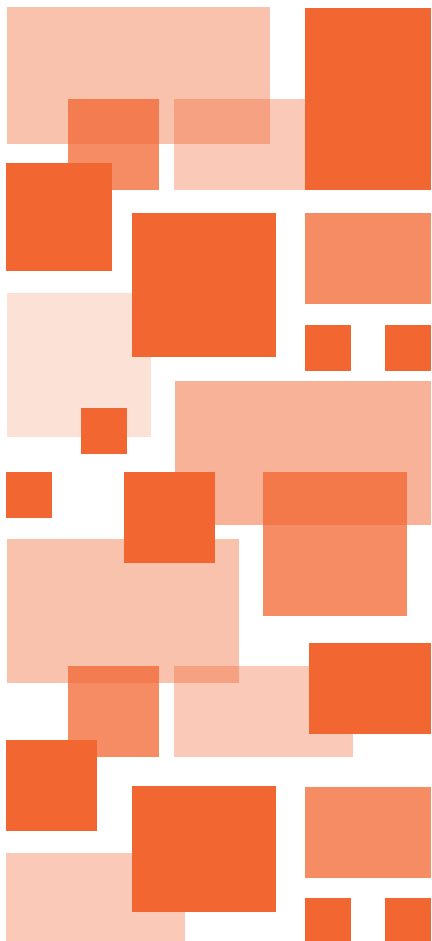


Figure 2: Potential Neighbourhood Arts Hub Connections



Artists are pushed to the margins, disconnected from each other and the marketplace. The very thing that is generating the value is threatened. . . . There is a way to capture the value that artists bring to communities for the community's benefit. . . we need to marshal energy to capture value – not to protect areas.

(Tim Jones, Artscape)



MOVING FORWARD

Neighbourhood Arts Hubs support locally relevant cultural development while addressing the need of a growing and diverse community arts field.

Outcomes of Neighbourhood Arts Hubs

- Increasing resources for community artists and arts organization
- Increasing awareness of local arts activities
- Increasing participation in local arts activities
- Engaging citizens in healthier neighbourhoods
- Linking professional artists and arts organizations to neighbourhoods
- Informing cultural policies for the City of Toronto
- Strengthening the importance of community-engaged art practices

Steps to create Neighbourhood Arts Hubs

- Identify potential funding and planning partners
- Identify other hubs and supports within communities
- Plan and implement neighbourhood mapping, working with local resource persons
- Identify local partners
- Identify and select potential space within the community
- Design and implement an evaluation plan
- Secure funding and other resources
- Create a working plan with partners
- Design and implement programs relevant to the community
- Evaluate and report on the successes and challenges
- Develop guidelines for continued operation of NAH

Challenges and Cautions

Citizen engagement is not as easy as it sounds. There are many reasons people become involved and many reasons they feel disconnected. City planners L.C. Manzo and D.D. Perkins, in their article “Finding Common Ground: The importance of place attachment to community participation and planning,”⁹ point out that people intersect with their community on three spheres:

- Cognitive place, community, identity
- Affective emotional relationship to neighbourhood and places within it
- Behavioural participation in community planning and neighbourhood events

Residents’ attachment and interaction with their neighbourhood is complex, fluid and not easy to classify. Community-engaged art is an evolving practice that has come to recognize the psychological, environmental, social and cultural aspects of community engagement and connectivity. Neighbourhood revitalization frequently focuses on the building of spaces in order to deliver services and programs, and often identifies neighbourhoods as impoverished or “at risk” which further stigmatizes them and fails to see the resources that exist. However, the Neighbourhood Arts Hub acknowledges the ephemeral aspects of art-making that contribute to the spirit of a place and the people who reside there.

⁹ Manzo, L.C & Perkins, D.D. (2006) “Finding Common ground: The importance of place attachment to community participation and planning”. *Journal of Planning Literature*. 20 (4), pp.335-350.

Asset-based and resident-led initiatives are proving to be successful ways of getting under the surface of community problems. This is not a cookie cutter, one-size fits all development model; a place-based approach to renewal work acknowledges each community's challenges and assets. On-going reporting and evaluation will be important to identify shared and unique challenges.

Developing holistic solutions will be challenging in the current municipal environment that is largely fragmented, with various departments operating as silos. For Neighbourhood Arts Hubs to operate at maximum potential and navigate City departments they will need support from city councilors and municipal staff.

On a cautionary note: over time the Creative Cities agenda has veered into a kind of boosterism, linked more to tourism and concepts of good design than committed to community renewal. Artists and arts groups working on the ground should not be regarded as shock troops sent in to make the neighbourhood a kinder, gentler, more beautiful space in order to raise property values, ultimately to be ousted because there is no more affordable space for them or the community-engaged work they conduct.

Motherhood statements about culture being good for a community are not enough. Hubs need to be built out of strong partnerships, recognizing the principles and merits of sound community development initiatives.¹⁰

Strategies

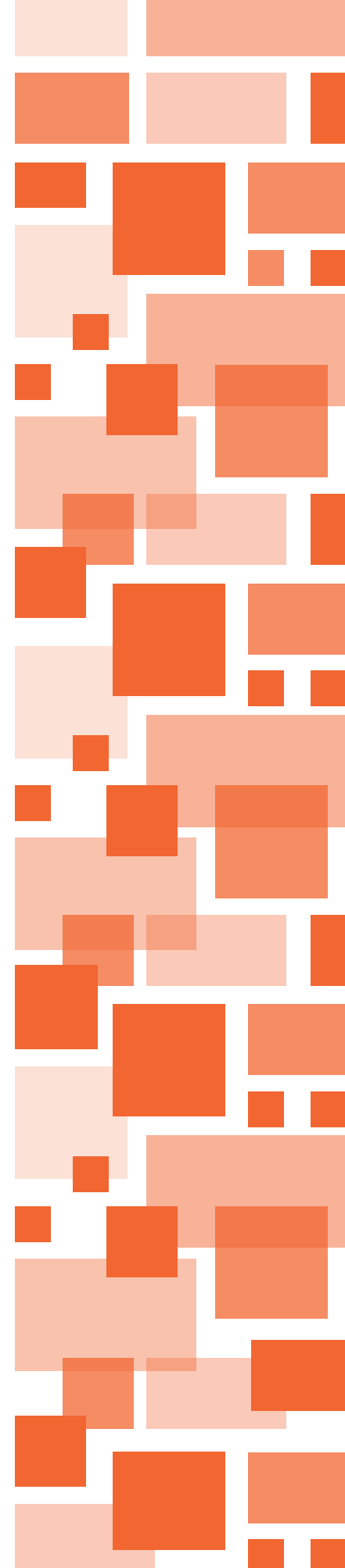
Neighbourhood Arts Hubs are part of a larger strategy to find sustainable solutions to urban development. A key component in moving forward with is to make sure that Hubs are solidly planted in the community with strong local support and follow up participatory evaluation. A through mapping and asset identification process is needed in order to identify areas that have the best chances of success and poised to take advantage of the opportunity. These approaches will help ensure responsive programming in touch with local needs and strengths.


With longevity also comes the question of governance and mission statements; other kinds of hubs are managed by non-profit boards of directors with strong representation from community residents, this model could also be used for the NAHs.

Space selected for NAHs is a key factor in success of any project. In some neighbourhoods the best spot might be within another hub such as a social service agency or health centre. In other cases, a stand-alone facility may be more appropriate, such as a renovated storefront or other new space designed with arts activities in mind. The Hub might be as simple as an information kiosk at a local library or may encompass a more grand vision extending to multiple spaces for archives, galleries and shared office, meeting and workshop space for community art groups.

Urban planning guru Jane Jacobs believes that improvisation, risk-taking, inventiveness and creativity in problem solving are key factors in strengthening civil society and that residents

10. In Toronto, the United Way of Canada's Action for Neighbourhood Change program conducted a two year study in Scarborough Village where they explored and assessed approaches to locally driven neighbourhood revitalization that enhanced the capacity for individuals and families to build and sustain strong, healthy communities. They employed an action research method that "learned from doing" and created a cycle of informed feedback, emphasizing place-based learning that is unique to each community with high levels of community engagement. www.anccommunity.ca





involved at a neighbourhood level are needed to improve life in cities.¹¹ The Hub idea calls for an open-ended planning style with an appreciation for process-driven, participatory approaches to delivery and evaluation in order to encourage local people, businesses and arts groups to have input. Running workshops in areas like board development can provide skills needed for local people to take leadership roles.

Partnering

Many groups agree that culture enhances quality of life but in order to move beyond the identification of these benefits to the embodiment of art in the community, Neighbourhood Arts Hubs will need to work with a variety of stakeholders.

Potential partners include:

Neighbourhood Partners

- Local residents and groups representing local interests
- Social service agencies
- Artists and community arts organizations
- Historical societies
- Neighbourhood community centres
- Libraries
- Schools
- Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs)
- Elected Officials and their Constituency Office staff
- Small businesses and BIAs

Community Partners

- Artists and arts organizations
- Universities
- Large cultural institutions
- Municipal, provincial and federal funders and departments
- Corporations
- Foundations
- Social Service Umbrella Groups e.g.: Toronto Community Housing and United Way

The Benefits of Partnering

- Networking and bringing more participants to the project
- Providing in-kind assistance
- Providing financial support through donations and grants
- Identifying volunteer labour
- Establishing links with other community groups
- Establishing links with government departments
- Promoting the project
- Introducing new ideas and perspectives
- Linking artists and arts groups to supporters
- Demystifying systems, rules and regulations

11 Jacobs, J. (1984). *Cities and the wealth of nations: Principles of economic life*. New York: Random House. p.145.

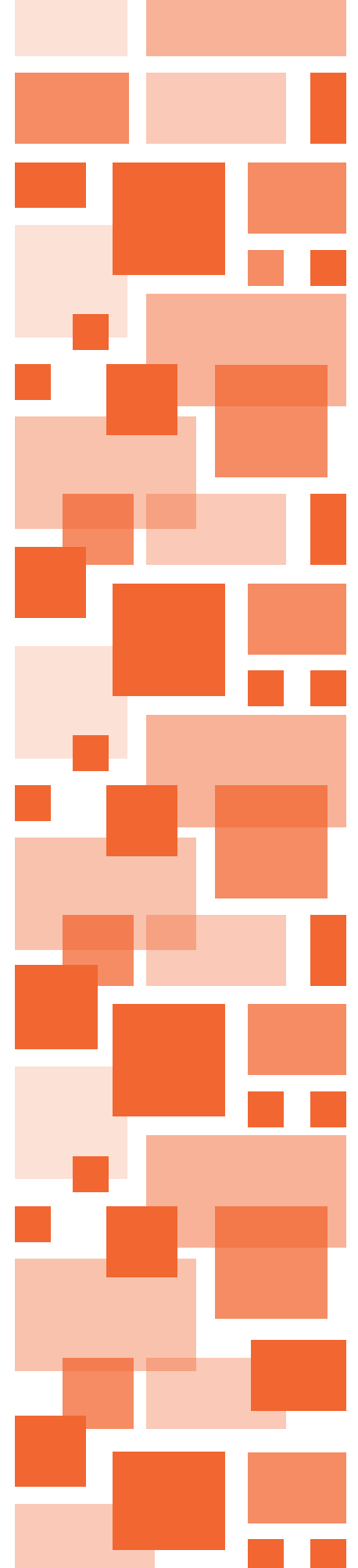
CONCLUSION

Neighbourhood Arts Hubs will bring the Creative City vision to the local level by stimulating arts activities and helping foster connections between neighbourhoods and artists and arts organizations. NAHs bring the Creative City agenda out of boardrooms, broadening the discussion beyond design, economics and industry to include artists and residents in the conversation.

The regeneration of urban neighbourhoods can be assisted by nimble, responsive NAHs that draw on local resources. Borrowing from community art practice, community cultural development and creative city planning, the values supporting the work of the NAHs include relationship building, relevancy to the local ecology, respect for local cultures, traditions and history, responsiveness to local needs, open-ended planning style to allow local involvement, and support for diversity of art forms and practices.

Partnerships with government funders, private foundations, community developers and social service agencies are necessary to ensure the on-going availability of resources for maintaining Neighbourhood Arts Hubs and their programs.

Neighbourhood Arts Hubs may be small in scale but big on dreaming. When residents in all parts of the city have better access to arts and culture, when groups are engaged in meaningful creative projects in their own neighbourhoods, when professional artists can find ways to bring their work to more community settings, when community artists are better supported – then neighbourhoods throughout the city will be transformed making the city truly creative to its bones.





ADDENDUM

A City Creative to Its Bones: Envisioning Neighbourhood Arts Hubs was completed in June 2008 as a working document. Since that time we have solicited feedback, reviewed the feasibility of what might be accomplished in the short and long term, and further developed ideas arising from our research.

A few observations:

There is a great deal of arts activity occurring on the neighbourhood level – much of it artist driven. Certain projects, such as The East Scarborough Storefront, are used as models for hub development in priority neighbourhoods. Although valuable for communities, residents and artists, these individual projects have not yet propelled a sea change in the understanding of the value of arts at the local level.

- Arts organizations that engage in community-oriented art making and /or outreach rarely have the means to develop capital projects. Arts funders such as the Toronto Arts Council concentrate on supporting programs as opposed to bricks and mortar. There is much to suggest that lack of access to capital funds (private and government) hampers the ability of arts organizations to shape the development of neighbourhood hubs in the design phase. Not participating in early stage of development can often mean that there is insufficient or inappropriate space for arts programs.
- In priority neighbourhoods, lack of accessibility to arts experiences at a local or city wide level can deprive residents of important experiences and opportunities to deepen their appreciation of the arts.
- Although in recent years there has been an increase in understanding of the importance of arts and culture in city planning, much work still needs to be done so that the arts will not be relegated to the status of a frill or an after thought.

At Toronto Arts Council Foundation, with partner organization Toronto Arts Council, we have reflected on potential roles we can play, as a catalyst, as a convener, and as a funder to help advance the neighbourhood arts hub initiative. Two strong possibilities present themselves:

1. **Incubate and develop a city-wide network of local arts centres which are currently funded by TAC and City of Toronto.** TAC funds over 450 projects and organizations annually, many of which are involved in community outreach. Over 80 of these are specifically devoted to community arts. In its most basic form, this initiative would re-imagine and re-brand existing hubs and facilities that host ongoing arts activities in local neighbourhoods. Individual projects and organizations would be highlighted in reports that also focus on the city-wide impact of local arts activity. Each hub would be linked to the wider network and enable local program participants to connect with other programs in other parts of the city (i.e. discount tickets for youth at downtown theatres) The network would facilitate easier access for major arts institutions to “plug in” outreach programs across different parts of the city. Communication bulletins would provide municipal politicians, city builders, and donors with on-the-ground evidence of impact.

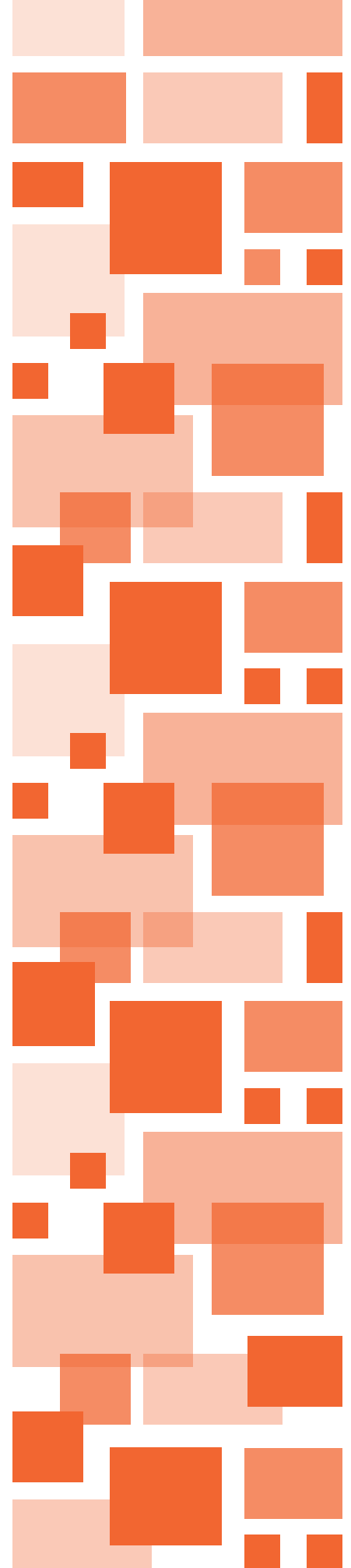
The network would also serve to facilitate a shared vision and language around the place of arts in community development and support the work of community arts practitioners. Stronger connections between the arts and social service sectors would be forged. Incentive funding programs could augment resources for the sector.

To implement the network, consultation will be undertaken and additional resources found for communication and coordination.

2. **Participate in any number of ways in the development of new neighbourhood hubs through a collaborative process.** With its unique vantage point of the entire spectrum of arts activity, TACF can provide information, link programs and players, advocate for funding and policy and serve as a trustee for funds. Involvement may include partnering with university research programs as we document the challenges and successes of developing new hubs over a number of years. We are currently in conversation with three nascent arts hubs and have started to collect the research at an early stage.

As we learn and widen our understanding of the different collaborative platforms possible, TAC and TACF's role in advancing Neighbourhood Arts Hubs will continue to evolve.

Claire Hopkinson
November 17, 2008





Appendix One

Overview of Toronto Arts Council Foundation

Incorporated in 1995 as a non-profit charitable organization, the Toronto Arts Council Foundation exists to provide the opportunity for individuals, private and public foundations, government agencies and corporate donors to join us in supporting all the various disciplines of art, from independent visual artists to theatre companies, choirs and film festivals, which enhance and enliven our city.

This commitment to Toronto's artists is accomplished two ways; through the development of special projects and initiatives, and by increasing resources available through granting programs of the Toronto Arts Council. Although separate entities, the Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council Foundation benefit by being run as sister organizations, ensuring close contact with the arts sector in Toronto and the continuous awareness of needs across the community.

Investment opportunities include in a broad spectrum of initiatives such as legacies and endowments. Types of gifts received include monetary, stocks, insurance and property. Investments are maximized through the Foundation's innovative programs and by utilizing, where appropriate, Toronto Arts Council's highly regarded, independent adjudication system. As well as administering donations for distribution to specific programs and projects, we manage several donor designated funds which are used to support individual awards such as the *William Kilbourn Award for the Celebration of Toronto's Cultural Life*. Established through donations from a group of individuals to honour one of Toronto's pre-eminent citizens, this \$5,000 award is one of five presented biannually at the Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch.

We encourage new and innovative partnerships designed to achieve mutual program goals. Established partners include the United Way of Greater Toronto, Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Great-West Life and RBC Foundation.

City-wide initiatives designed to build awareness and support include:

Creative City Block by Block: This ambitious program, designed to connect even the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods to the arts, includes symposiums, programming grants and a multi-year research project which will illuminate the value of artistic activity in neighbourhood revitalization.

Toronto Arts Coalition: This internet-based coalition of arts supporters is dedicated to advocating for Toronto's artists and arts organizations.

Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards: Awards with a total value of \$40,000 are distributed annually to Toronto's artistic leaders and champions celebrating major achievements and milestones.

Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch: This annual celebration of the Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards is hosted by Mayor David Miller, and attended by a diverse group of the city's artists, philanthropists, and political, civic and corporate leaders.

The Toronto Art Holiday Shopping Guide, the Summer Festival Guide and TACF Newsletter: These electronic and print publications provide information on a wide

variety of ideas and arts activities, encouraging participation with Toronto's artists and arts organizations.

Arts Volunteer Network: An electronic tool which connects willing and committed volunteers to Toronto arts organizations.

The Toronto Arts Council Foundation is governed by a Board of fourteen Directors and managed by Executive Director Claire Hopkinson.





Appendix Two

Toronto Arts Council Foundation: Creative City: Block by Block Goals

- **Education and Networking:** creation of symposiums, workshops and resource tools;
- **Financial Support:** seeking additional funding for peer-based adjudicated Community Arts Grants Program of the Toronto Arts Council; and
- **Increased awareness:** articulating the value of community-engaged arts to the greater community and seeking partners to support the work.

Previous Projects of Creative City: Block by Block

1. Creators and Communities: An artist-led symposium on imagining neighbourhood change

The symposium sought to explore community arts from the perspective of those working in the field. The organizers invited seventeen artists and community animators to sit on panels or lead small group discussions.

The sessions were designed to help participants speak about their challenges and explore hopes for their own work and the field in general. The overall goals of the symposium were to:

- ✓ imagine and share strategies for neighbourhood transformation through the arts;
- ✓ pose key questions and discuss best practices in community-based art;
- ✓ exchange information about resources and funds;
- ✓ network and forge new partnerships.

The symposium was subtitled “An artist-led symposium on imagining neighbourhood change” to reflect the organizers’ intention to bring artists and community arts programmers from across the city together to meet, talk about their work, and put forward their ideas about developing the field. The event was held at Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Centre in October 2006 and attracted 200 registrants.

2. Moving Forward: A Report on Creators and Communities Symposium

The report, authored by Resonance Creative Consulting Partners, provides an overview of the current challenges facing the field of community arts and can be viewed as a slice of the existing discourse around community arts practice in Canada. Symposium sessions were recorded and transcribed, and quotes from the sessions, evaluation forms and follow-up interviews are used throughout this report to illustrate key points. The symposium was structured as a networking and information-sharing event. Recommendations were not formally requested; however, ideas for development of the community arts field emerged during the event and are outlined in the report. The report is available at http://www.torontoarts.org/ccsymposium/symp_report.pdf

3. Presentations and Discussions with Community-Engaged Artists

These sessions provided an opportunity for a small group of Toronto-based artists to engage in discussion with visiting artists who are considered pioneers or leaders in their field.

- Liz Lerman discussed creating dance pieces in partnership with educators and scientists.
- Marvin Jarman discussed his digital media work in Jamaica

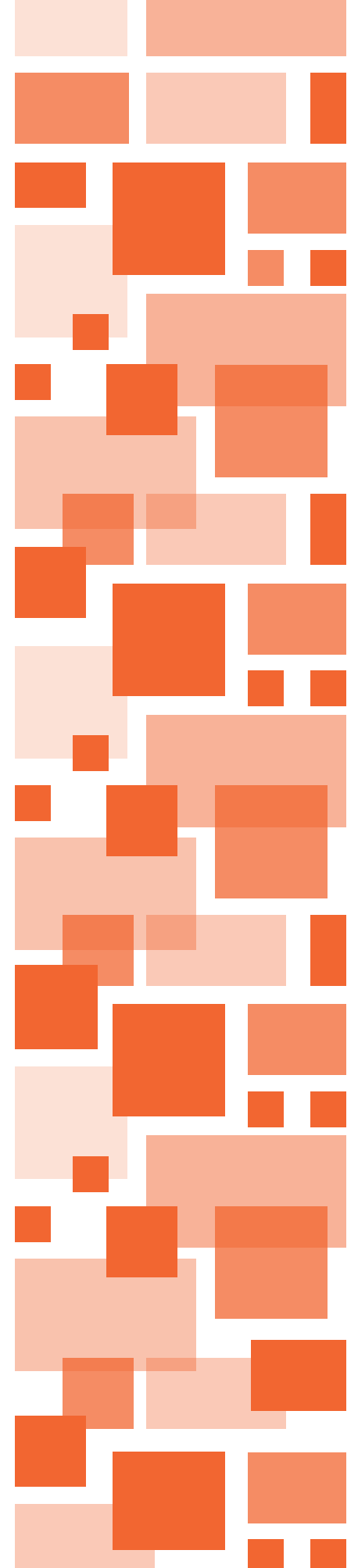
- Paula Jardine discussed her work as an artist in residence in Mountainview Cemetery in Vancouver

4. Funding Partnerships

The Toronto Arts Council Foundation spearheaded innovative funding partnerships with the Department of Canadian Heritage and the United Way of Greater Toronto, resulting in increased funding for artists and access to art for Torontonians.

The United Way provided a total of \$120,000 to 30 projects which brought together professional artists with young people. By partnering with the Foundation, the United Way benefited from the wealth of knowledge of the Toronto Arts Council's committee members who assessed the artistic merits of the projects.

Over 115,000 people attended events in 2007 celebrating National Aboriginal Day, Canadian Multiculturalism Day and Canada Day created to increase the sense of pride, belonging, and shared citizenship through participation in the arts. Through the Foundation's funding partnership with the Heritage Canada, \$73,000 was distributed to 20 organizations whose projects were assessed by the Toronto Arts Council.





Appendix Three

Overview of Art at the Hub Symposium

Art at the Hub Symposium was held in March 2008 at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. The event was attended by Community Art practitioners and community-engaged artists; representatives of arts organizations and social service agencies; community planners and developers; philanthropists, corporations and funders. 150 registrants and presenters and resource persons attended.

Lily Yeh, founder of Philadelphia's Village of Arts and Humanities, started the symposium with an inspiring presentation about transforming an inner-city neighbourhood through the creation of murals, gardens and installations.

Yeh's story was echoed by panel members who tackled the question of how to animate art in unlikely places. Moderated by Jumblies Artistic Director **Ruth Howard**, the panel members discussed partnerships that helped creative projects emerge in a variety of settings. **Mervin Jarman**, **Andy Moro** and **Paula Jardine** talked about their work in Jamaica, on aboriginal reserves in Canada, in Kensington Market in the heart of Toronto, and in a cemetery in Vancouver.

The discussion then moved into small groups led by community-engaged artists, arts organizations and representatives from social service groups. The topics were:

Building the Community Tile by Tile

Andy Moro and **Gabriella Caruso** of Red Pepper Spectacle
Eileen Shannon of St. Stephen's House

Art in the Parks

Kristen Fahrig discussing work at McGregor Park Art Club
Sandra Rechico of Wade Collective

Art Makes a New Commons

Ruth Howard of Jumblies Theatre
Sayruq Farah of Mabelle Place (Toronto Community Housing)
Lorne Brown of Four in Hand

Ceremony and Celebration for Community

Paula Jardine Artist in Residence at Mountview Cemetery in Vancouver
Janet Fitzsimmons of West Hill Community Services

New Media in the Village

Mervin Jarman a community activist from Jamaica and member of Mongrel Collective
Camille Turner and **Jennifer Lafontaine** of Central Neighbourhood House

Art with an Open Door

Katherine Earl of Art Starts
Loree Lawrence of Gathering Space
Dawna Rowson of Oakwood Public Library

Art That Reaches Out

Catherine Campbell of Art Gallery of Ontario

Laura Reisborough of Art Gallery at York University

Thom Vernon of Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People

The small group presentations and discussions provided participants with insights into the challenges of work in a variety of settings and how to find and negotiate the kinds of partnering opportunities that can aid their work.

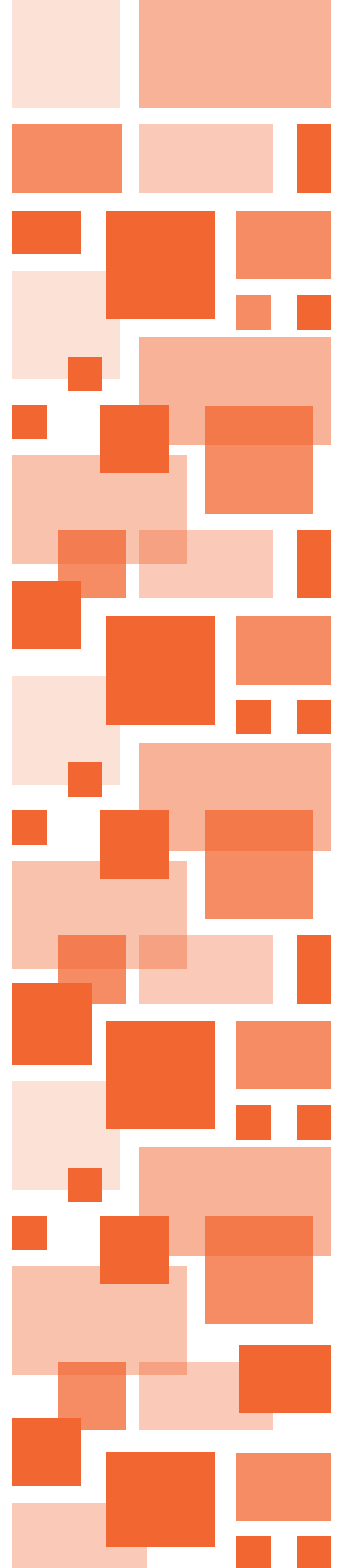
The afternoon changed the focus from particular community-engaged projects to how creative work helps shape, change and humanize a city. City planner, **Joe Berridge** discussed the machinations of urban regeneration, the importance of risk taking in public/private partnerships, and how creativity in problem solving will help build the kind of city we need in the 21st Century.

Melanie Fernandez of Harbourfront Centre moderated a panel following Berridge's presentation. The panelists, **Tim Jones** of Artscape, **Elizabeth Cinello** of ArtStarts, **Keith McNair** of Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre, and City Councilor **Joe Mihevc**, continued the discussion emphasizing that creative approaches demand a change in mindset.

The day concluded with a large group discussion led by **Public Interest**, a group that works with public, not-for-profit, and labour organizations to support social change, improve the environment, facilitate community development and promote progressive public policy. The facilitators invited the participants to envision a hub for community art, what such a place would feel and look like, and the kind of activities that could happen there.

An exhibit of photos was displayed during the symposium of children, youth and adults of all ages engaged in art projects developed by professional artists and arts organizations and supported by the Toronto Arts Council.

The information folders distributed at the event, which were individually created by the young artists working with Sketch, included a document entitled *Community Arts, A Snapshot of the Moment*. This document described a number of community arts organizations, their programs, and the partners they require to make their community-engaged projects a success.



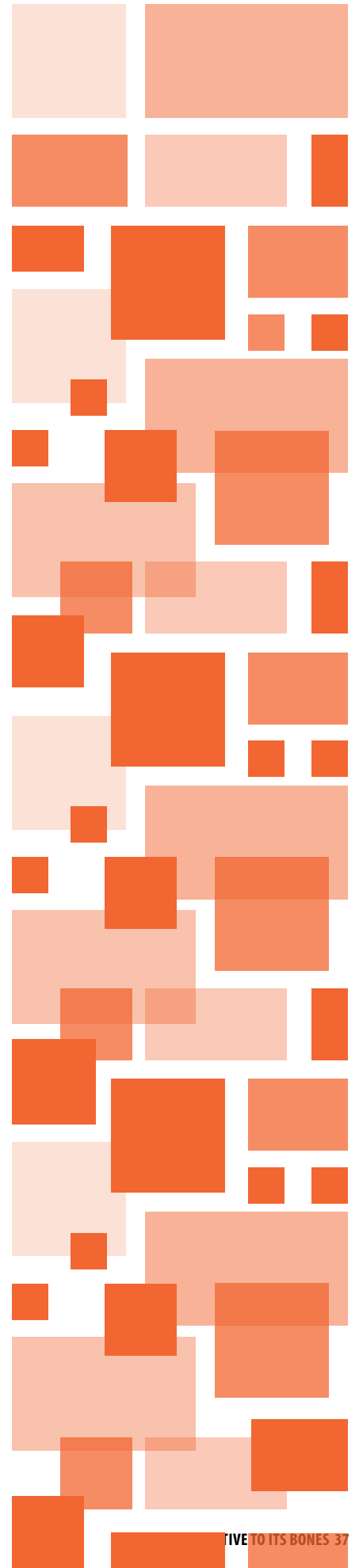


Symposium Participants

Individual artists and representatives of the following organizations, businesses, corporations, government departments and educational institutions registered for the symposium as presenters or participants:

Alternative Youth Employment Centre/Centennial College
Arab Community Centre of Toronto
Art Gallery of Ontario
Art Starts
Art@Liberty, Side Space Gallery
ArtHeart Community Art Centre
Arts Advocate
Arts Etobicoke
Arts for All
Arts for Children of Toronto
Artscape
ArtWalk, St. Clair Arts Festival & Studio Tour
Barefoot Artists
Canadian Music Centre
Cascade theatre
Cedar Ridge Studio Gallery
Central Neighbourhood House
Centre for Local Research into Public Space [CELOS]
Children's Peace Theatre
City of St. Catharines - Recreation and Community Services Department
City of Toronto
City of Toronto, Parks, Forestry & Recreation
City of Toronto, Toronto Culture
City of Toronto, Arts Services
Clay & Paper Theatre
Community Arts Ontario
Concordia University
Creative Works Studio
Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre
Drum Artz Community Centre
East Scarborough Store Front
Flemo City Media
Fort Erie Arts Council
Four in the Hand
Friendly Spike Theatre Band
Fxt Point Theatre
Great-West Life
Canada Life
Harbourfront Centre
IMPACT - Indian Martial & Performance Art Collective of Toronto
Inner City Angels
Jane/Finch Community & Family Centre - The Spot
Jumblies Theatre
Laidlaw Foundation

Lakeshore Arts
LEAF (Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests)
Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People
Mabelle Place
MacGregor Park Art Club
Manifesto Community Projects
Mariposa In the Schools
Mayworks Festival
Meow Films
Metcalf Foundation
Mongrel Media / The Container Project
Night at the Indies Collective
Nelson Wong Architect Inc.
OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education)
Ontario Arts Council
Ontario College of Art & Design
Public Dreams
Public Interest
Ralph Thornton Centre
Red Pepper Spectacle Arts
Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Center
Resonance Creative Consulting Partners
Royal Conservatory of Music - Active Ecology Program
Six Ah Wi Visual Art Collective
SKETCH Working Arts for Street-Involved and Homeless Youth
Soulpepper Theatre Company
St. Stephen's Community House
St. Clair Arts Festival and Studio Tour
The Gathering Space
Theatre Passe Muraille
Threshold Theatre Group
Toronto Arts Council
Toronto Arts Council Foundation
Toronto Community Housing Corporation
Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition
Toronto Public Library
Torontoist Arts and Culture Editor
United Way
University of Toronto
Urban Noise
Urban Strategies
Wade Collective
Waterfront Trail Artists
West Hill Community Centre
Word On The Street
York University, Community Arts Practice Program
York University, Environmental Studies
York University, Faculty of Fine Arts,
Youth Challenge Fund



Symposium Planning Committee Members:

Elizabeth Cinello, Program Director, Art Starts
Leslie Francombe, Community Investment Manager, Toronto Arts Council Foundation
Claire Hopkinson, Executive Director, Toronto Arts Council / Foundation
Tamara Steinberg, Managing Director, Art Starts
Dan Yashinsky, Community Arts Officer, Toronto Arts Council

Symposium Recording

Coordinators Resonance Creative Consulting Partners – Margo Charlton and Loree Lawrence

Recorders: Joe Banh
 Shelly Hering
 Sean Frey
 Bob Isenberger
 Noah Kenneally
 Christina Starr
 Mindy Strike

Photography: Jiha Hakim
 Seong-Kyun Kim

Photos in the report were taken at Art at the Hub Symposium; images in the report were created by participants as part of workshops at Art at the Hub Symposium

Symposium Sponsors:

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Harbourfront centre

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Resonance Creative Consulting Partners

Resonance Creative Consulting is a collaboration between Margo Charlton and Loree Lawrence. Together, Margo and Loree have over forty years of experience working in the community art field as artists, animators and program coordinators. In 2006, both Margo and Loree received post-graduate degrees focusing on evaluating community art projects. They have worked with diverse communities in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario, taught workshops on community art and presented at national and international gatherings including events in the United States, Greece, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba and Brazil.

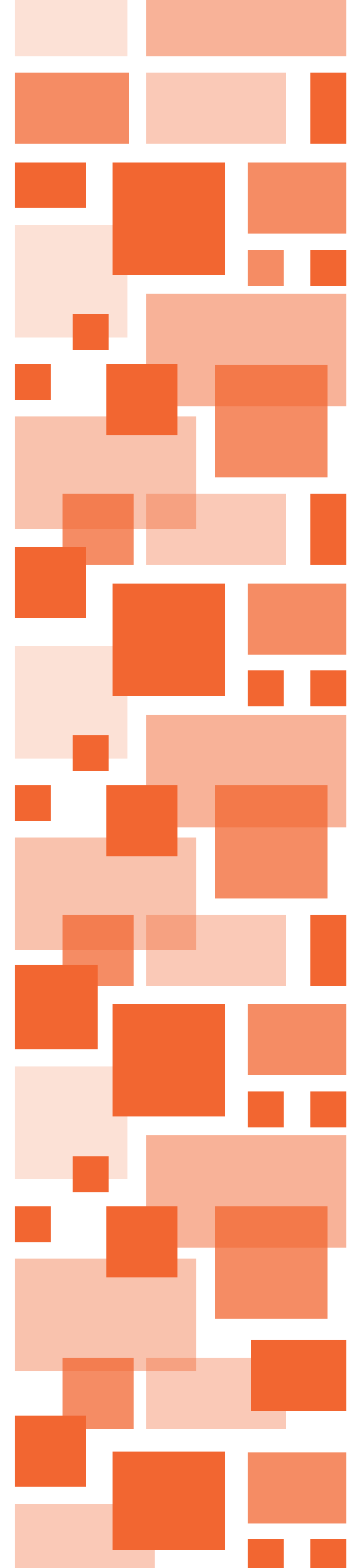
Founded in 2006, Resonance combines practical experience with theoretical research to illuminate and interrogate current issues in the field of community-engaged art. Resonance is a resource for practitioners, planners, funders and advocates interested in the intersection of art and communities.

Resonance offers:

- assistance in program planning, evaluation and strategic planning;
- skills development workshops for community arts practitioners;
- presentations at conferences; and
- research and report writing

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