FRAMING COMMUNITY

A COMMUNITY ENGAGED ART WORKBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This is a workbook for artists, communities, organizers and cultural institutions. It has been designed as an introduction to community-engaged art for anyone who wants to become involved in or learn more about this field. It provides hands-on tools, advice, frameworks and techniques to help artists, community members and organizers plan, begin, complete and evaluate a community-engaged art project. It also provides examples of contemporary community-engaged art practices in Ontario and further resources for those who want to learn more about this field.

Framing Community: A Community-Engaged Art Workbook is a revised edition of the Ontario Arts Council's (OAC) original *Vital Links: Community Arts Workbook*, which was published in 1998. The original workbook provides a number of inspiring examples of community-engaged art projects from that time. While most of the examples in the original workbook are Canadian, there are also write-ups on projects from the United States, Great Britain and Australia. In contrast, the examples of community-engaged art projects in this revised version are all Ontario-based, reflecting how much the field has grown since the late 90s. There were dozens of Ontario-based community-engaged art projects to choose from while creating this revised workbook. The ones we offer here are just a small sample of the richness and diversity of community-engaged art practices today.

You will note a change in terms between the workbooks, from "community arts" to "community-engaged art." As we will discuss further, practices in this field have gone by a number of different names over the years. For the purposes of this workbook we have used the term "community-engaged art," but our choice of term is less relevant than the principles and practices we outline here. Contemporary work in this field still goes by many different names, and the terms we use to describe these practices will likely continue to shift.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

01: WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART

Part One of this workbook provides some background on community-engaged art: What is community-engaged art? How is it different from other art forms or practices? How has it evolved over time? Part One also offers some key principles of community-engaged art and some reflections on when and how community-engaged art projects can be effective. Finally, this section outlines a number of important steps in the process of initiating, facilitating and completing a community-engaged art project.

02: SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART PROJECTS

Part Two of this workbook presents several recent Ontario-based community-engaged art projects. This section illustrates how the principles of community-engaged art can be applied in different contexts and provides diverse examples of art practices in the field. They are intended to encourage ideas for new projects rather than act as models for creation or examples to be replicated. We hope that readers of this workbook will be inspired by these powerful projects.

03: OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Part Three of the workbook offers information about institutional support for community-engaged art. In this section you can learn about training and mentorship programs in this field, the relationship between cultural institutions and community-engaged art, and funding sources for community-engaged art projects. This section also includes useful online resources and references for further reading.

01

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART

> While there is no one model of community-engaged art, its practices can be broadly defined as collaborative creative processes that involve both professional artists and social institutions, grassroots groups or individuals.

Community-engaged art practices are forms of collective artistic expression. In this field, individuals who aren't professional artists actively participate in the artistic process, and the artistic process is considered as important as the final artistic product. Both the social and artistic outcomes of community-engaged art have value.

Community-engaged art projects are often initiated by artists but may also be initiated by community members or organizations. These projects are undertaken for a variety of reasons. They may aim to strengthen social relationships, to mobilize social action, to reclaim or reinvigorate specific cultural traditions, to share artistic practices, to create new intercultural artistic forms, to tell important stories or to start a dialogue about a particular issue. Sometimes they are undertaken for the pure pleasure of making art and culture communally. Whatever the intentions of a particular project, community-engaged art practices always strive to be relevant to social life and the specific context or community in which they are created. Community-engaged art reclaims the relationship between art and social functions, a relationship that has been undervalued and even disparaged.

In modern Western societies, artists have been seen as specialists who are separate from and not accountable to their communities. In Canada, the separation of art and social function was forcibly imposed on Indigenous peoples through colonialism. Indigenous cultures have always understood that artists can make important contributions to public life as visionaries, healers and educators. Today, Indigenous artists are leading the way in making art that is relevant and accountable to their communities and to public life. The relationship between art and community is slowly coming back into focus.

In community-engaged art, everyday people, places and cultural forms are valued. The stories told in community-engaged art projects tend to reflect lived experiences, oral histories and community members' visions for the future. Final artistic outcomes are usually made, performed or exhibited in public or semi-public spaces, such as streets, parks and community centres. And, even as work in this field has creatively incorporated new technologies, the aesthetics of community-engaged art are often based on cultural forms that have been passed from generation to generation outside of formal art institutions. These forms include (but are not limited to) storytelling, spoken word, mural arts, culturally rooted music and dance traditions, feasts and festivals. Other forms in this field include dance parties, minimalist text, counter-monuments and public gestures that challenge the norms of social interaction between strangers. Whatever form they take, community-engaged art practices challenge restrictive definitions of "art." They strive to move away from elite perspectives, forms and institutions toward inclusivity, participation, equity and social change.

While many of community-engaged art's key premises are evident in work by mainstream artists these days (particularly the emphasis on collaboration), it is ultimately a commitment to an *open-ended process of co-creation* that distinguishes community-engaged art from other art practices. Community-engaged art is not just art that is made collaboratively, it is art that honours the perspectives, knowledge, stories, skills and cultural practices of community members. No individual can fully imagine the final artistic outcome of a community-engaged art project alone, as it evolves through a co-creative process. The final outcome is both co-authored and co-owned.

> Over the years I've seen the changes in terms of what we now call community arts. For a while it was "popular theatre" - I used to say, "but we want to be unpopular!" In the end, whatever we call it, I'm really thankful that it's recognized as a legitimate thing.

David Anderson
Artistic director, Clay and Paper Theatre

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART: AN EVOLVING PRACTICE

Community-engaged art is an evolving practice that has gone by many different names over the years. It is also known as community art, community arts, community arts practice, community-based art, socially engaged art, "animation socio-culturelle," popular theatre, community cultural development and activist art. The relatively new term "social practice" is used in the visual arts sector to refer to collaborative and participatory art practices.

Whatever term we use, it is important to acknowledge the very long history of community-engaged art practices. While the relationship between art and community life became devalued in Western European societies and colonial settler nations like Canada after the Industrial Revolution, artists have been integral to public life since the earliest societies, helping communities to celebrate, grieve, remember, reflect and grow.

Over the past 40 years, the field of community-engaged art in Canada has been shaped by a number of intertwined impulses and political commitments. Historically marginalized artists, including those who identify as Indigenous, feminist, queer, Marxist, black, artists of colour, artists with disabilities and artists who are homeless, have created new spaces for their own voices, concerns, aesthetics and audiences, often ones that value community engagement and mentorship. At the same time, educators, activists and artists committed to social justice and the principles associated with popular education have integrated the arts into their efforts to engage, educate and challenge mainstream perspectives. And community organizers and organizations have increasingly understood the arts as powerful vehicles for expression, dialogue and

relationship building. The common thread between all of these movements has been a commitment to "radical inclusion," rather than exclusionary practices and institutions, and an understanding that art and social life are intertwined. Over the past few decades, governments, funders, cultural institutions and postsecondary institutions have come to recognize community-engaged art as a formidable movement that deserves a respected place within the Canadian arts ecology.

In Ontario specifically, the field of community-engaged art has grown thanks to the creativity and dedication of a web of individual artists, artist collectives and organizations. Long-time community-engaged art companies that still exist today include:

- Art Starts (Toronto)
- Arts for Children and Youth (Toronto)
- Clay and Paper Theatre (Toronto)
- Community Arts & Heritage Education Project (Thunder Bay)
- De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group (Manitoulin Island)
- Everybody's Theatre Company (Eden Mills)
- Jumblies Theatre (Toronto)
- Myths and Mirrors Community Arts (Sudbury)
- Salamander Theatre (Ottawa)
- Shadowland Theatre Company (Toronto)
- Sheatre (Owen Sound)
- Sketch (Toronto)
- Red Pepper Spectacle Arts (Toronto)

The founders and artistic directors of these companies continue to play a key role in training and mentoring younger and emerging artists in this field. Many other Ontario-based artists, arts companies and organizations that helped to nurture the field no longer exist due to funding shortages and other challenges. Part of the trouble of sketching a specific history of community-engaged art in any region is that it is often only the least marginalized companies and artists that manage to weather the storms of inconsistent or inadequate funding. Community-engaged art is a field of many unsung heroes.

Rather than try to provide a definitive history of community-engaged art, we asked the artists we interviewed for the ten case studies included in this workbook to tell us about their mentors and artistic influences (see Part Two of this workbook). Their answers reflect the diversity of historical influences on today's community-engaged art practices. Co-artistic director of Aanmitaagzi, Penny Couchie, for example, cites her own parents and the workshops they offered in caribou-hair tufting, tanning, drum making and other arts as an inspiration. This reflects community-engaged art's reclamation (and sometimes reinvention) of age-old and once denigrated artistic practices.
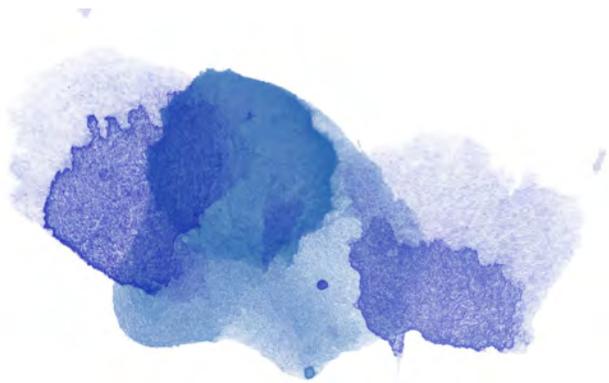
The giant puppets and pageantry that David Anderson, founder of Clay and Paper Theatre, creates have links to the spectacle theatre of Bread and Puppet Theatre, an American community theatre company that was founded in the early 1960s. This reflects both an activist lineage in this field and the cross-pollination of folk traditions across borders. Artists Althea Balmes and Jo Alcampo's community-based comic book, *Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love*, has been inspired both by the Filipino "komiks" tradition and by local community-engaged cultural institutions such as Kapisanan Phillipine Centre for Arts and Culture. This project reflects both the range of aesthetics in this field and the strong role that the mentorship of young artists plays in shaping community-engaged art.

We also encourage you to delve further into the history of community-engaged art by reading the books and essays listed in our bibliography.

Musician Lorrina Belluz, elder Amanda Perreault and art teacher Tine Schrijvers in the final performance of Jumblies Theatre's *Four Lands* touring project in collaboration with Thunder Bay's Community Arts Heritage Education Project (CAHEP).
Photo: Alana Forslund

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART

Just as there are principles that guide us in how we live, work and relate to each other, there are principles that help define community-engaged art activities. It is important to keep these principles in mind when you are starting a project or participating in one. As you will see in the examples in Part Two of this workbook, community-engaged artists find different ways to honour these principles in their projects. Below are five core principles of community-engaged art.

1. MUTUAL RESPECT

Mutual respect is a fundamental principle in community-engaged art. It is the consideration that participants give to and receive from each other while working on a project. Participants in a community-engaged art process should actively listen to others and take time to consider each other's perspectives even when they differ from their own. Part of engaging respectfully is valuing the skills, knowledge, aesthetics and labour of everyone involved in a project. Engaging respectfully also means putting yourself fully into a process by sharing your skills and investing time and energy into the project. In the best community-engaged art projects, all participants are invested in the outcome. Engaging respectfully takes time and can require a lot of patience. Sometimes it is necessary for participants to ask each other questions like the following: Are there ways that I could make this process better for you? How could we better honour your ideas and skills in this project?

2. CO-CREATION

By definition, community-engaged art projects involve co-creation. Co-creation is not just collaboration but is an open-ended artistic process. This doesn't mean that "anything goes" or that a project has to start without a plan. It does mean that the artistic process evolves as participants engage with one another and build off of each other's ideas and creations. Most community-engaged art projects start with an initial premise or vision but then truly take shape once people are working together. Some community-engaged art projects strive to be fully democratic, making every decision by consensus. Others are guided by an artistic director or a few "lead artists." Whatever the leadership structure and whether or not full agreement is reached on every artistic detail, community-engaged art must evolve out of collaboration, drawing on the stories, skills and perspectives of the group.

3. INCLUSIVITY

While many community-engaged art projects explicitly seek to work with one particular group or community (seniors, for example, or youth from a specific neighbourhood), inclusivity within a self-defined community is a key principle in community-engaged art. Inclusivity means both making sure that a range of people can physically participate in the project and that their perspectives, knowledge and aesthetics are represented in the project. Inclusivity is best thought of as a goal and a process rather than a final outcome, as it is always difficult to be fully inclusive.

To make a project as inclusive as possible, the people initiating it need to think about questions like accessibility; whether participants will have to pay to participate and, if so, how much; what kind of space they choose to work in; what time of day events are held; whether child care is provided; transportation; translation; the kinds of food that are served, etc. They also need to think about which cultural forms are prioritized and who is drawn to those forms. A truly inclusive process allows everyone within the self-defined community of participants to contribute meaningfully and without stress. Striving for inclusivity

entails consideration of different abilities, cultural backgrounds, income levels, education levels, genders, religions and sexualities. Like mutual respect it can necessitate asking each other questions and listening carefully to the answers. In some cases it may be necessary to actively seek out people who are not yet participating in a project.

4. APPRECIATION OF DIFFERENCE

The word community can prompt us to think about what we have in common. But even when people gather because they share a workplace, a neighbourhood or an aspect of their identity, they also have countless differences. In community-engaged art, difference is viewed as a strength. Finding ways to honour different world views, combine different aesthetics and create dialogue between different perspectives is what makes work in this field exciting. While working across differences can be extremely challenging, both the artistic process and artistic outcomes are made richer when difference is seen as a strength to be engaged rather than as an obstacle to be overcome.

5. GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT

Generosity of spirit is hard to define but pivotal to community-engaged art practices. Generosity of spirit is a willingness to trust in and contribute meaningfully to the collective artistic process. It can manifest itself in many different ways: listening patiently to others or sharing a new idea, performance or something you've made, even if it feels vulnerable to do so. Generosity of spirit is often expressed in seemingly small but very meaningful gestures. Participants might get together and make a special food or treat for the group at a particularly hard point in the artistic process. A lead artist might put extra time and care into making an artistic outcome "just right." One participant might go home and think about a challenge the group is facing, returning with fresh ideas the next week. Participants might share resources with one another outside of the project. While adequate funding for community-engaged artistic practices is key, generosity of spirit is, in the end, what sustains many projects.
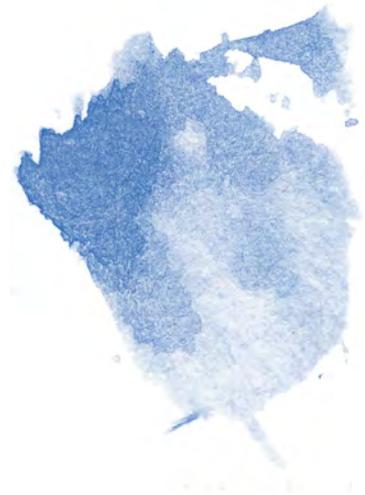
CHOOSING COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART

WHY COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART?

Community-engaged art is not for every artist or every project. Engaging in a co-creative artistic process requires time, energy and a true desire to work with and learn from other people. Before initiating a community-engaged art project, it is worthwhile to carefully consider questions like:

- What is my personal interest and motivation for wanting to work on this project?
- Do I have the time and energy to see this process through?
- Do I have the necessary skills (both artistic and otherwise)?
- What do I bring to this project? What will I need help with?
- What will the community I work with get out of this?
- Why art? What will working through the arts bring to this community at this time?
- What kind of artistic expression will be most effective or appropriate in this context?

You will not likely know the full answers to these questions, but considering them can help you to develop a well-conceived project.

WHEN IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART EFFECTIVE?

As a co-creative process, community-engaged art can be effective in many different ways. Working co-creatively can be particularly effective as a process through which to:

- Mark, celebrate or grieve an important moment in time or a community milestone;
- Facilitate self-expression within a socially marginalized community;
- Challenge stereotypes and stigmas;
- Strengthen community bonds;
- Dialogue across differences;
- Reclaim a public space;
- Gather or tell untold stories;
- Pass on or reinvent cultural traditions;
- Enhance public life and promote active citizenship;
- Inspire or mobilize social action on a specific issue.

Many community-engaged art projects play more than one of these important social roles.

NECESSARY SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF A COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ARTIST

Some very talented artists may not have the right skill sets to work as community-engaged artists, and some talented community organizers may not have the necessary artistic vision or ability to produce strong artistic outcomes. The skills and characteristics of strong community-engaged artists include:

· Artistic vision;

· Artistic skills;

· Eagerness to work with other people;

· Patience, flexibility and adaptability;

· The ability both to communicate their own ideas clearly and to listen attentively to others;

· The ability both to share their own artistic talents and to draw out the talents of others;

· Team-building and motivational skills;

· Facilitation skills;

· Ability to deal with conflict;

· Strong organizational skills;

· Attention to detail (both social details and aesthetic details);

· Faith in the power of art;

· The desire and ability to create strong artistic outcomes;

· Willingness to do menial chores and domestic labour.

Those who think they have the desire and aptitude to work in community-engaged art may want to explore the field further by participating in a project that is already under way, speaking with community-engaged artists about their work experiences, mentoring with an established community-engaged artist or taking a training course (see Part Three of this workbook).

> Night of Dread is an invitation to the community to express their private and collective fears. It's important that it begins as an invitation, not a production.

David Anderson
Artistic director, Clay and Paper Theatre

KEY INGREDIENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART PROJECT

While contemporary community-engaged art projects can look and feel very different from one another, successful community-engaged artistic processes do share some key ingredients. These key ingredients are:

- Adequate time for the project;
- Respect for the skills, time and expertise of artists;
- Respect for the skills, time and lived experiences of all participants;
- Respect for the rights of participants to determine whether and how their personal stories are shared;
- Holistic engagement of everyone involved; this includes care for participants' bodies, minds and spirits—and usually involves sharing food!
- One or two people with strong organizational skills, who can manage the project as it evolves;
- Ability as a team to produce strong artistic outcomes.

> The hardest part of a community art project is outreach. You can't fake it. You have to put in face-to-face time. People don't trust you at first. You can't just do it for art. You have to be into building community.

Sarah Febbraro
Artist, *Kitchen in the Basement: Lessons from Italian Canadians*

MAKING IT WORK: COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART IN PRACTICE

FIRST STEPS: INITIATING A PROJECT

As you will see in Part Two of this workbook, community-engaged art projects come about in many different ways. Here are some important steps to follow when one is initiating a project from scratch, though it may not always make sense to follow these steps in the precise order listed here.

1. IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY

This is an important step when starting a project, yet it is often overlooked. Communities can be geographically based (people who live in the same neighbourhood or region). They can be based on shared interests or a shared workplace. They can be based on a shared culture or a shared aspect of identity. But identifying a community is not as simple as determining its makeup. When initiating a community-engaged art project it is important to consider the world view and common practices of the community or communities involved. This entails asking questions like:

· How does this community see itself?

· How do others see this community?

· Whose definition of this community has been given the most airtime in the past?

· Has this community been stereotyped? Who has perpetuated the stereotypes and how?

· How is this community internally diverse? Are there community members who do not feel that they fully belong? Why?

· Are there rifts or tensions within the community?

Learning the answers to these questions, if you don't know them already, is crucial. You might find answers to these questions by:

· Reading about the community (online, in books and in news articles);

· Researching past activities and projects undertaken by the community;

· Attending community events and networking with members;

· Inviting community members to your own events;

· Arranging casual meetings with community members;

· Discussing your initial project ideas with community members and listening to their feedback.

2. IDENTIFY THE ROLE OF ART AND ARTISTS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

When initiating a community-engaged art project, it is also crucial to think about the role of art and artists within the community. Consider questions like:

· Is this a community that expresses itself through art? How?

· Which cultural forms are members of the community most comfortable with?

· Who are the artists within the community (professional and non-professional)?

3. IDENTIFY YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY

To identify your own relationship with the community you would like to work with, it is important to ask:

- Do you consider yourself a member of the community?

- Do others see you as a member of the community?

- Are you and other community members familiar or comfortable with the same artistic mediums and cultural forms?

- Which community members will likely trust you at the start of the project?

- Who will you need to build relationships with?

- Are there people who are likely to be wary of you or the project at first because of the institution or social group you represent?

All of these tricky questions are important to consider before beginning a community-engaged art project. There are no right answers to these questions. Sometimes artists work with their own communities, and sometimes they begin as strangers to the community they are working with, but knowing the answers to these questions will help you to be self-aware as you build your own relationships with community members. Answering these questions may also help you figure out which other artists or community partners to bring on board in a leadership role. If you only know part of your community, it might be wise to find a partner or guest artist who has connections with or would work well with other groups in the community.

4. ESTABLISH A PURPOSE

What is the purpose of your project? What do you hope to achieve or make? Often community-engaged artists have both artistic and social goals. It is important to be able to articulate these goals to other potential participants, even as we recognize that each project will have unexpected outcomes and

that new purposes or goals will emerge mid-process. Establishing an initial purpose can sometimes be as simple as stating that you want to host a celebratory parade on a certain date.

5. MAKE CONTACT

This step of the process can take a lot of time. You have likely already begun to make contact with community members and potential partners if you have followed steps 2 and 3, but you also need to make contact specifically about your project. To do this you might:

- Make your interest in working with the community known through flyers, posters, websites and social media like Twitter and Facebook;

- Get in touch with key organizations or community members by phone, email and social media , etc.;

- Meet with key organizations and groups in the community to formally present your project idea and seek their feedback;

- Contact other arts organizations and see if they would like to partner with your project in any way;

- Visit groups and programs that already exist in the community to see if there is interest in your project idea.

Eventually, you will want to establish a clear understanding of your project with community groups and form secure partnerships. In a community-engaged artistic process, however, it is important to continuously make contact as the project evolves.

6. MAKE SURE THE COMMUNITY IS INTERESTED IN YOUR PROJECT

Whether you are an artist or a community member, you need to make sure that there is enough interest in the project to begin. This does not mean that every community member must be excited or inspired from the get-go, but it does mean that at least some community members must see the project as relevant and worthwhile. You will rely on these people

to help you move the project forward and to draw other participants into the process. If nobody seems interested, maybe your project isn't right for the community at this time.

7. BRAINSTORM AND PLAN

Once you are clear on the purpose of your project and sure that community members are interested in it, you can begin a more intensive brainstorming process. What might the artistic process look like? Where will you work? How will you work? Who else could you involve? This brainstorming may be done primarily by you or in collaboration with key project partners. In some cases it might make sense or feel ethical to open the brainstorming up to a large group. Community-engaged artistic processes vary widely in this regard. After significant brainstorming you will need to come up with a plan for your project. A good plan includes some vision of what the artistic process will look like, a clear and realistic timeline for project activities, a list of key participants (who can at least get things started) and a project budget.

8. SEEK FUNDING AND/OR NECESSARY RESOURCES

This is also a crucial step in the process and requires skill and patience. If you intend to apply for public funding, remember that writing grant applications can be very time-consuming, and it is wise to start well ahead. Once you have applied for money from an arts council, it will usually take at least four months to find out if your application was successful. If you are seeking only small funds or in-kind resources from community groups or local organizations, you may be able to secure what you need for the project in less time. Even so, most community-engaged art projects are conceived at least a year before the artistic process moves into full swing because it takes that long to find adequate money and resources. When seeking funding and resources, remember to consider all of your participants' needs, including issues of physical access and accessibility, transportation, food, space, etc. You will also have to decide how much the lead artists will be paid and whether participants will be paid, receive honoraria or volunteer their time. See the section on funding in Part Three of this workbook for more information on securing funds.

IN THE MIDDLE: THE ARTISTIC PROCESS

Once you have established a project purpose, identified project partners and secured the necessary funding and resources, you are ready to begin the artistic process in earnest. Some community-engaged artists begin with arts activities themselves and let the group grow from there. Others begin by inviting people to small events or presentations. Others begin with meetings and casual social interactions with potential participants. However you start, here are some steps to keep in mind. They may not necessarily flow in the order they're written here, but each is important to keep in mind.

1. BE CLEAR AND MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Be clear from the beginning about project expectations. Don't promise people the world if you know that you only have time and money for six workshops. Clearly articulate your artistic vision and intended audience for the work when you meet new people and introduce them to the process. Ideally everyone will enter a project knowing what it is they are contributing to. Being clear at first doesn't mean that you can't refine the process or even alter your goals as you work together. In fact, clarity and clear communication are necessary throughout the process.

> Out of respect, I had to spend a lot of time hanging out before I shot video of the women cooking - to build trust and make sure they understood the project. We would have coffee, they would bring out their baking and we'd talk for at least an hour and a half. And then we'd have lunch!

Sarah Febbraro
Artist, *Kitchen in the Basement: Lessons from Italian Canadians*

2. COLLABORATE AND REFINE THE PROCESS

While it's important to be clear about the purpose of the project from the beginning, it is equally important to refine the process as you go. As more and more people become invested in a project, it will inevitably come into focus and shift. While you've initiated the artistic process, some avenues of exploration and artistic forms will likely prove more interesting to the group than others. Unexpected barriers to participation and misunderstandings may also arise. The artistic process and the vision for final artistic outcomes should be altered accordingly. Community-engaged art processes must respond to the needs, interests and desires that emerge from a collective process rather than those of one individual.

3. PUT IN THE TIME

Outreach and relationship building aren't one-time tasks. Successful community-engaged art projects require face time, and lots of it. If you want to engage a community in a project, you and your project partners need to get to know people and community spaces well. Some days you might not even run a workshop, host a meeting, teach a skill or get anything measurable accomplished. You might instead just chat with a new person or two or help a community member out with a task that isn't directly related to your project. This is part of being in a community. If you are too focused on outcomes, the depth of your relationships will suffer and the risks people are willing to take when making art with you and each other will suffer. Putting as much time as you can into getting to know people will make the project much deeper. You also need to find ways to help other participants spend time with each other. Sharing meals is a particularly good way to build community. So, of course, is art-making itself, particularly when people don't feel pressured to produce something of high quality immediately.

4. ESTABLISH ROLES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

In a community-engaged art project, roles and decision-making processes may be clearly outlined from the beginning or may evolve organically. At some point, however, it will likely be necessary to clarify individual responsibilities and be clear about how decisions are made. Some community-engaged art projects work by consensus, and others have artistic directors who guide the project and ultimately make the significant artistic decisions. Whatever the roles and decision-making process, transparency is important. It is particularly important to be transparent about issues like ownership of the final product and copyright. Two significant and sometimes overlooked roles that will need to be filled in any project are publicity and managing project finances.

5. CO-CREATE

Co-creation is what distinguishes community-engaged art from other artistic disciplines. In a process of co-creation, all parties must be willing to relinquish some aspect of their expectations for the good of the process, product or outcome. But co-creation isn't only about relinquishing one's own vision, it's also about building on each others' visions, ideas and art. This is why community-engaged art processes aren't only challenging but are also exciting. New themes, knowledge, cultural forms and stories emerge when we work collectively. Community-engaged artists understand that the whole of an artistic collaboration is greater than the sum of its parts.

6. NEGOTIATE DIFFERENCES

Disagreements are inevitable when working in a group. Part of the challenge (and, ultimately, the reward) of any community-engaged art process is negotiating differences. How can different perspectives and aesthetics be brought together? How can participants arrive at new understandings and new cultural forms through the process of making art together? Throughout the artistic process, all participants, especially project facilitators or lead artists, will have to negotiate differences. Sometimes differences in perspective or aesthetics will come to the fore, and project facilitators will have to find ways to steer the group through negotiating conflicts over

these differences. At other times, different perspectives or desires may go underground. To draw out different perspectives, you might devise a system for anonymous feedback and find ways to critically evaluate the artistic process with the group on an ongoing basis. Community-based choreographer Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process is an interesting tool for eliciting feedback on artistic creations.

7. CHALLENGE SYSTEMIC OPPRESSIONS

Community-engaged art projects do not function in a vacuum. It is inevitable in every project that some participants will have more systemic power than others. Systemic power includes access to resources; the ability to influence decision makers to get what one wants or needs; the ability to define one's own identity; social recognition of and respect for one's self-defined identity, world view and sense of reality; and control over the life, safety and well-being of oneself and one's community.

Historically some groups have had power over others based on their gender, sexual identity, ethnicity, skin colour, class, ability, religion or other socially constructed categories. These systemic oppressions continue today, though they may not always be overt. Systemic oppressions occur through social systems like our governments, schools, police and media. They are also maintained by cultural practices.

Sometimes you have to see the product to understand the process. That's why people were so excited in the second year of the project. In the second year we had a real committee and more support from the health centre.

Emmy Pantin
Community media artist, *Journeys to Health*

They sometimes become apparent in community-engaged art projects. For example, in a group process, some participants may contribute more at first because they are accustomed to having their perspectives validated and respected while others have come to expect to be ignored or ridiculed. Some participants may have access to resources that allow them to fully participate in the project, while others may not. Some participants may have a sense of personal safety and security when working in a public space, while others may not. Systemic oppressions need to be actively recognized and challenged in a collective process, particularly when working in a diverse group. If they are not actively challenged they will be replicated in the project. Some useful resources that can help you to challenge systemic oppressions in your project can be found online. The Neighbourhood Arts Network's Arts and Equity Toolkit is a particularly useful resource for community-engaged artists.

8. MAKE SOMETHING POWERFUL AND SHARE IT

There is a risk that with all of the focus on process in community-engaged art that we might forget about the importance of strong artistic outcomes. But a strong outcome is not only gratifying, it is the ultimate form of respect for the collective process. Make something that resonates with the community, that you can all be proud of for years to come and that will move, inspire or provoke a broader audience. The best community-engaged art projects result in an artistic outcome that has a transformative effect.

Remember, as well, that strong artistic outcomes can galvanize future processes by showing participants why the project is meaningful. Sometimes it can be useful to work toward a mid-process exhibition, screening or performance so that people don't lose sight of what it is they're creating together. Seeing, hearing or participating in the art the group has made together can be a real "aha" moment, in which participants finally truly understand the relevance of the project.

9. DOCUMENT THE PROJECT

Because community-engaged art projects are so process-oriented, it can be helpful to document an artistic process as it unfolds. Good documentation both allows participants to reflect on their experiences in the project and helps when explaining the project to others or seeking more funding. In community-engaged art, documentation of the artistic process often becomes part of a final exhibition or show. Documenting your process does not require recording everything that happens. An experienced documenter will look/listen for key moments in the process and document these. Skilled documenters are also careful to respect the personal boundaries of all participants in a process, asking permission as they go and documenting unobtrusively so as not to disrupt the artistic process. If you want to learn more about documenting community-engaged art processes, a particularly useful online resource is "Tips for Documenting Community Art" by Pohana Pyne Feinberg and the Centre des Arts Actuels Skol (Montreal).

A participant in a photography workshop at the Four Villages Community Health Centre.
Photo: Jennifer LaFontaine

FINAL STAGES: WRAPPING UP

Community-engaged art projects never truly end. Even after the funding runs out, artistic outcomes have been shown to an audience and the closing celebration has been held, the social relationships that were built during the project continue and the community continues to shift and grow. Toronto-based Jumblies Theatre calls the social relationships that extend beyond the life of a project "ripple effects." Sometimes these ripple effects are the most powerful outcome of all. Nonetheless, it is important to officially wrap up each community-engaged project. Here are some of the crucial stages of wrapping up.

1. EVALUATE THE PROJECT

Evaluating the project will allow everyone to learn from the experience and strengthen future projects. There are many different ways to evaluate a community-engaged art project. Evaluation is ideally done throughout the artistic process, but it is useful to do a final evaluation at the end of the project. It is helpful to incorporate both individual evaluations and a collective evaluation, as different reflections will emerge in each case. Evaluation can be done verbally or in writing through arts-based activities. "Art-based Evaluation 101" by Margo Charlton is an excellent resource.

2. ESTABLISH LEGACY PROGRAMS

This is an optional step when wrapping up and can require significant resources and energy. Sometimes a community is hungry to continue working together after the project. There may be a program or drop-in group that you help to establish so that the work begun in the project can continue in a new form. Jumblies Theatre have become experts in creating these legacy programs, leaving a new community-engaged art company in each neighbourhood they've worked with.

3. SAY GOODBYE AND THANK YOU

Saying goodbye and thanking everyone for their hard work is important. Community-engaged artists often return to participants after the final show or event with small gifts from the process, printed photos gleaned from project documentation or other keepsakes.

02
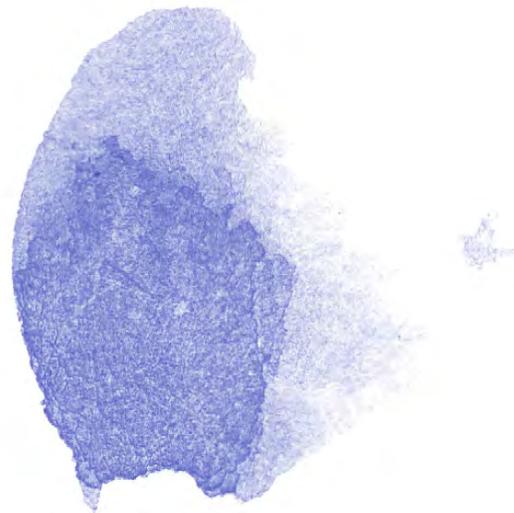
SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART PROJECTS

In this second part of the workbook, you can read about ten different Ontario-based community-engaged art projects.

Each project is different, but you will see that all of them honour the core principles of community-engaged art (outlined in Part One). These projects illustrate the diversity of community-engaged art in Ontario today. They draw on a wide range of artistic forms (from dance to puppetry to cooking to song) and show a range of ways in which artists and community members can collaborate to make something meaningful or beautiful together.

Each project description that follows gives some background on why the project was started and by whom, outlines the basic details of the artistic process, describes the outcomes of the project and discusses the project's key influences and mentors. You can follow the hyperlinks in these project descriptions to learn more about each project and the artists and communities behind them.

THE LANDSCAPE OF FORGETTING
WINDSOR

THE PROJECT

Benjamin Lesperance reads aloud the verdict of a young enslaved man to other audience members. Photo: Brigham Bartol

In this project, artists Camille Turner and Alana Bartol collaborated with members of the public to bring stories of slavery in the Windsor area to life. Turner, a Toronto-based artist, worked on the project thanks to a residency with Neighbourhood Spaces, Windsor and Region Artist in Residence Program, an artist-in-residence program initiated by "The Collaborative": Arts Council Windsor and Region (AWCR), the City of Windsor and Broken City Lab. Supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Neighbourhood Spaces allowed artists to pursue research and/or create works that engaged, explored or connected with communities. Over the course of several weeks spread out over a year, Turner and Bartol drew on research by historians such as Afua Cooper and Marcel Trudel, oral histories, ads in old newspapers and other archival documents to create a walking tour focused on the contributions enslaved people made to the building of Windsor. On the project's walk, which took place on November 15, 2014, Turner and Bartol engaged participants in helping to tell the stories that the project had recovered. Walk participants reflected together on the legacy of slavery in the Windsor region.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of *The Landscape of Forgetting* was to bring the names and stories of enslaved people into Windsor's public spaces and to consider how the history of slavery continues to shape the present. On a visit to Windsor in 2013, Camille Turner happened to walk past the François Bâby house, the former home of Windsor businessman François Bâby (1768-1852) and the current site of Windsor's Community Museum. As an artist who was already working to bring Canada's history of slavery into the public eye, Turner knew that the Bâby family had owned slaves, but the commemorative plaque in front of the Bâby house did not mention this. This omission prompted Turner to apply for a residency through which she could recover the history of slavery in the area and insert it into the official record. Alana Bartol came on board as the coordinator of Neighbourhood Spaces.

A written introduction to *The Landscape of Forgetting* reads:

> Researchers have uncovered ample evidence to show that Canada's early history includes the practice of slavery, an institution that was governed by laws for over 200 years. Marcel Trudel chronicles the presence of 4200 Black and Indigenous slaves in French territories that later became Canada... Slavery is a part of our story that, according to Katherine McKittrick, has been carefully landscaped out of Canadian history.

Ultimately, Turner and Bartol "wanted to change the way that the story of Canada is told. These people are just erased."

ARTISTIC PROCESS

When they began *The Landscape of Forgetting*, Turner and Bartol met with a range of responses, including confusion, shock and surprise. Many people had never known that Windsor had a history of slavery. Others expressed shame or seemed uncomfortable discussing it. But some people were very excited about the project and wanted to help. "Do you know how long we've been waiting for you?!" asked one community historian. The artists met with history professors, archivists and local genealogists to gather stories and evidence of slaves who had lived and worked in Windsor. Local community members began to invite them to relevant events, brought them information and told them stories of their own family histories with regard to slavery. One man brought them a bill of sale for an Indigenous slave, which had been passed down through his family. After a national CBC broadcast featured the project in February 2014, people from across the country got in touch to contribute information to the project.

The artistic process also had its challenges. The research was slow and painstaking. Les Amis Duff-Bâby, a group of museum supporters, wrote a letter stating concern that the Bâby name would be sullied by the project. Building strong relationships with local artists took time.

Turner and Bartol conducted archival research at Windsor's libraries and met with historians, academics and community members. A significant book was *Canada's Forgotten Slaves: Two Hundred Years of Bondage* by Marcel Trudel which chronicles the presence of 4,200 slaves in the French territories that later became Canada.
Photo: Brigham Bartol
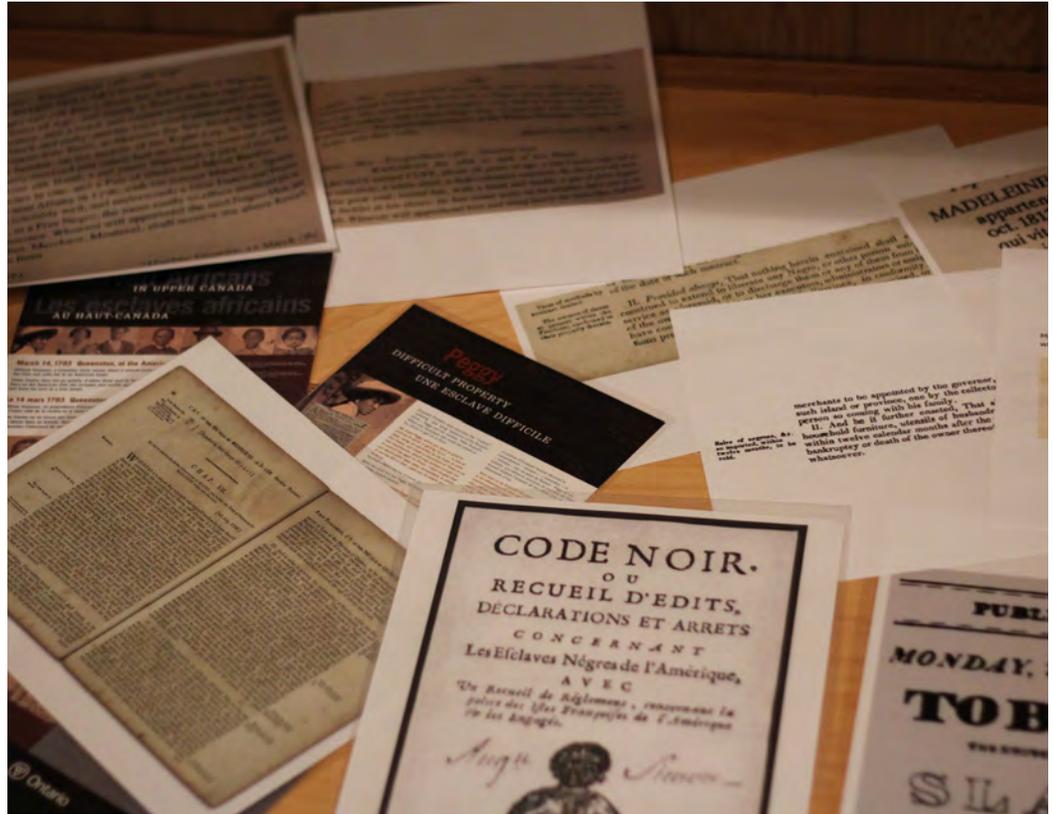
OUTCOMES

The Landscape of Forgetting culminated in a walk led by Turner and Bartol on November 15, 2014. The walk was part of the Neighbourhood Spaces Symposium, an event that drew artists from other regions to Windsor. The audience included both local residents and symposium participants. Participants were asked to read archival documents aloud throughout the walk. Turner and Bartol posed challenging questions along the way, initiating critical conversations as the group moved from site to site.

The project also kick-started a larger public discussion about slavery in Windsor and more broadly in Canada. The Windsor Community Museum now intends to change its programming to include the stories unearthed by the project. According to Turner and Bartol, "The museum realized that people were interested in these hidden stories."

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

More and more artists are creating alternative and radical archives to redress omissions in official archives. Turner and Bartol were inspired by this tradition of radical archives. *The Landscape of Forgetting* also drew on a long tradition of public walks by artists. In collaboration with community members, many artists today are deepening a sense of place by remapping their neighbourhoods, creating audio tours and performing in public spaces.

Finally, *The Landscape of Forgetting* is part of an emerging tradition of "social practice art," which is a branch of community-engaged art. Social practice tends to focus more on live dialogue and interactions between people than on making art objects. Turner says that in social practice, "the *thing* happens when people come together to create it together."

> Community-engaged art can be too focused on making and the object. There is something simpler that can happen when people come together and they are the art, the interaction, the conversation.

Camille Turner
Artist, *Landscape of Forgetting*

–
Learn more about this project at:
http://camilleturner.com/?project=the-landscape-of-forgetting

JOURNEYS TO HEALTH
TORONTO

THE PROJECT

The knitted story map where participants placed their digital stories in house-shaped pockets. Photo: Michelle Nichols

Journeys to Health was a collaboration between the Four Villages Community Health Centre, a not-for-profit health centre in the west end of Toronto, and community media artists Jennifer LaFontaine and Emmy Pantin, who together run Community Story Strategies. The project ran from 2010 to 2012 in two phases. Through the project, participants explored the meanings of health and wellness in their own lives using audio, photography, visual and media arts. Final artistic outcomes included a visual art installation, dozens of digital stories (short videos in which individuals share their life stories using voice, images and music) and a large knitted "story map." The project's theme, "journeys to health," was chosen in order to emphasize health as a process rather than a goal.

BACKGROUND

While artists often initiate community-engaged art projects, *Journeys to Health* began through the Ontario Arts Council's (OAC) Artists in Residence (Health) pilot program. The OAC partnered first with Four Villages Community Health Centre and then put out a call for artists. LaFontaine and Pantin responded to the call and received the contract to become artists in residence at Four Villages. They saw the project as an opportunity to work long-term with one community: building deep relationships, getting to know the geography of the area, learning about issues faced by community members and finding artistic ways to address them. The management of Four Villages came to see the project as a powerful vehicle through which to bring the social determinants of health faced by their clients into focus. As in most parts of Toronto, many residents in the catchment area for Four Villages have experienced poverty, immigration and accessibility issues, all of which impact their health.

Artists and Four Villages staff at the launch of the project's second phase.
Back row (left to right): Michelle Nichols, Jennifer LaFontaine and Emmy Pantin.
Front row (left to right): Rupita Chandra, Sandra Almeida, Chantal Bombardier and Jennifer Shin.
Photo: Community Story Collective

ARTISTIC PROCESS

In the first year of *Journeys to Health*, LaFontaine and Pantin had to build relationships with Four Villages staff and clients, many of whom were not yet convinced that engaging in the project would prove valuable. LaFontaine and Pantin got to know community members by working with groups and programs that already existed at the health centre. With help from guest artists, they led workshops that explored the theme of health through different mediums, including audio, photography and visual art. As they worked, they found that "the story of health became bigger and bigger." Because most of the clients of the health centre experience marginalization, the project increasingly explored relationships between health and day-to-day life, poverty and violence.

At the end of the first year, LaFontaine and Pantin organized an exhibition and community celebration, which brought together staff, clients and arts funders. This, they say, is when participants really bought into the process. Everyone could see that what they had made together was powerful and beautiful. Participants felt proud of their accomplishments. The second year of the project flowed well as a result of the exhibition, becoming even more of a co-creation between the health centre and the artists. For example, LaFontaine and Pantin's interest in creating a story map merged with a social worker's interest in starting a therapeutic knitting group. The group knit a 7-by-5-foot map with pockets shaped as houses in which participants placed their digital stories. The map is still on display at the centre today, and the knitting group continues to meet.

OUTCOMES

Participants in *Journeys to Health* had a chance to consider the project's outcomes after the fact. Many commented on how the project reduced personal feelings of isolation, strengthened relationships, improved self-esteem and increased their senses of agency. Four Villages staff noted that the project would help them better advocate for and serve their clients in the future, as they had learned about community members' needs and experiences in detail. The project had also reduced stress for many participants, including both staff and clients.

Three years after *Journeys to Health,* much of the art that was made is still up in the health centre, including the knitted story map, photographs and paper mandalas, which were made by community members in collaboration with guest artist Julie Jarvis. Social workers at the centre still show clients the digital stories created during the project in order to open up conversations about relationship abuse, eating disorders and other health issues. Another important outcome of the project is a set of clear recommendations for future collaborations between artists and health-care workers. These recommendations are, in fact, relevant to any collaboration between artists and an institution.

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Both LaFontaine and Pantin trained with Joe Lambert, the executive director of the Centre for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley, California. Thanks to Lambert's work, digital storytelling has become a global phenomenon through which people can share first-person stories and thereby advocate for social change. Other mentors and inspirations for LaFontaine and Pantin include author, research and educator Zainab Amadahy; artist Camille Turner; the late artist and popular educator dian marino; and educator, researcher and artist Deborah Barndt. The commonality between all of these mentors, say LaFontaine and Pantin, is their view of art and transformative social change as inextricably linked.

–
Learn more about this project at:
https://digitaljourneys.wordpress.com/

THE TALK TO YOUTH LATELY – MENTAL HEALTH SOCIAL CIRCUS PROGRAM

TORONTO

THE PROJECT

Flaminia Fucci demonstrates juggling skills in *Circus Berserkus*. Photo: Dawn Barrett

The Talk to Youth Lately (TTYL) – Mental Health Social Circus Program is an ongoing project by Lookup Theatre, a not-for-profit aerial arts, circus and theatre company that works in both urban and rural Ontario. *TTYL* is a troupe of young people (ages 16-30) who have either experienced mental health issues themselves or are close friends or family members of people with mental health issues. Since the troupe began in 2008, *TTYL* has produced two major shows, *Minds Matter* and *Circus Berserkus*. The troupe has toured these shows to dozens of schools and public forums, educating more than 15,000 young people and community stakeholders about mental health recovery, anti-discrimination and other relevant ideas.

BACKGROUND

TTYL grew out of conversations between Angola Murdoch, the artistic director of Lookup Theatre, and Emily Collette, a social worker who was training at Murdoch's studio. Murdoch and Collette agreed that circus arts would be an excellent form of self-expression and team building for people with mental health experiences. They also saw many metaphors in circus arts for the challenges and stigmas people with mental health experiences face. Circus seemed like the perfect artistic form through which to consider mental health, as it too involves ups and downs, obstacles, juggling, balancing, trust and strength. Collette pitched the idea of creating a show in collaboration with people with mental health experiences to her workplace, Family Outreach and Response (an agency that supports families of people in the mental health system) and the agency was enthusiastic. Murdoch spent a year researching social circus projects focused on mental health and funding options. *TTYL* began after she secured a Community Arts project grant from the Toronto Arts Council.

Hayley Landry and Corey Funt on an aerial apparatus representing a hospital gurney, made by the youth of *TTYL*.
Photo: Dawn Barrett

ARTISTIC PROCESS

TTYL's artistic process always begins with skill building. New participants are encouraged to try every circus art (tight-wire, juggling, trapeze, hand balancing etc.) before choosing a skill that they'd like to focus on. In the first year of *TTYL*, Murdoch and Collette began skill building with a group that already existed through Family Outreach and Response. They also began to gather new participants. The second stage of *TTYL's* work is youth-engaged creation of a show. Participants brainstorm themes and stories through circus activities, making links between these stories and the circus forms (e.g. balancing mood swings). For *Circus Berserkus*, *TTYL's* most recent show,

the troupe began with an improv workshop and then jammed on 35 circus metaphors for mental health experiences. They then wrote their own true-story monologues, under the guidance of circus artist and dramaturge Zita Nyarady. Finally, scenes were collaboratively blocked using circus forms and group ideas. Murdoch and Nyarady created a narrative arc for the show out of the separate scenes. The final stages of *TTYL's* process involve rehearsals and the performances themselves. While professional artists guide each stage, the shows emerge out of the skills and stories of the youth. Youth are also involved in the production and administration of the shows.

Over the years, *TTYL* has grown and changed. Participants have left as they've aged and now some long-time participants are beginning to take on leadership roles in the project. Funding for the project has also changed as time has gone on. The project has been supported by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Promotion, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto District School Board and various foundations.

OUTCOMES

The artistic outcomes of *TTYL* have included two major circus theatre shows, *Minds Matter* and *Circus Berserkus*. Both of these shows are high-quality educational shows, one for high school students and another for more mature audiences. Admission for *Circus Berserkus* was free for all students and students from all of Toronto's major colleges and universities attended. Another project outcome has been the training of professional artists. Many long-time participants in the project are now professional circus artists, who are ready to teach skills, run rehearsals and apply for funding. Murdoch is beginning to pass the reigns of *TTYL* over to these youth, under her mentorship. Finally, one of the most important outcomes of *TTYL's* work is the community that has formed. Participants have become close friends and often refer to themselves as a family. Immense trust has grown out of the vulnerability of learning new skills and sharing stories with one another.

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Learn more about this project at:
www.lookuptheatre.com/#!talk-to-youth-lately-/c1w25

TTYL is part of a growing social circus movement. Cirque du Monde (an offshoot of Cirque du Soleil) is credited with inventing social circus in the mid-90s. Social circus can be broadly defined as the use of circus arts to further personal change and social justice. It is circus for people of all abilities and body types. There is a particular focus on working with marginalized youth through social circus. We are likely to see more and more social circus work in Ontario in the coming years, due to the efforts of Lookup Theatre and Social Circus Circle, a growing social circus organization based in Toronto. Murdoch also says that her involvement in community theatre as a teenager inspired her to start Lookup Theatre. "I loved putting on the shows," she says. "As a gymnast, I would have definitely done social circus if it had existed then."

WOMEN'S STORIES OF AGING, DISABILITY AND HOMELESSNESS

TORONTO

THE PROJECT

Women's Stories of Aging, Disability, and Homelessness is a photo-documentary project by the Red Wagon Collective, a loosely knit group of women living in and around the Junction neighbourhood in west Toronto. The purpose of the project is to generate knowledge about the realities of poverty through stories and photographs. Over a period of ten weeks in 2013, a core group of 12 women gathered weekly to talk, write, share photographs they'd taken and collaboratively create images and text. Together, they reflected on their own experiences of homelessness, disability and aging. Drawing on transcripts of their discussions, the photographs they had taken and collective arts-based activities, the group produced 30 large-scale banner designs. The banner designs consist of both images and text and will ideally be printed on fabric. These designs have been widely presented at conferences, exhibited online and shared through an open-access monograph, *We Have a Message.*

A page from the open-access monograph, *We Have a Message*.
Image on the left:
Text by J. and photo by Ann.
Image on the right:
Text and photo by M.
Layout: Red Wagon Collective
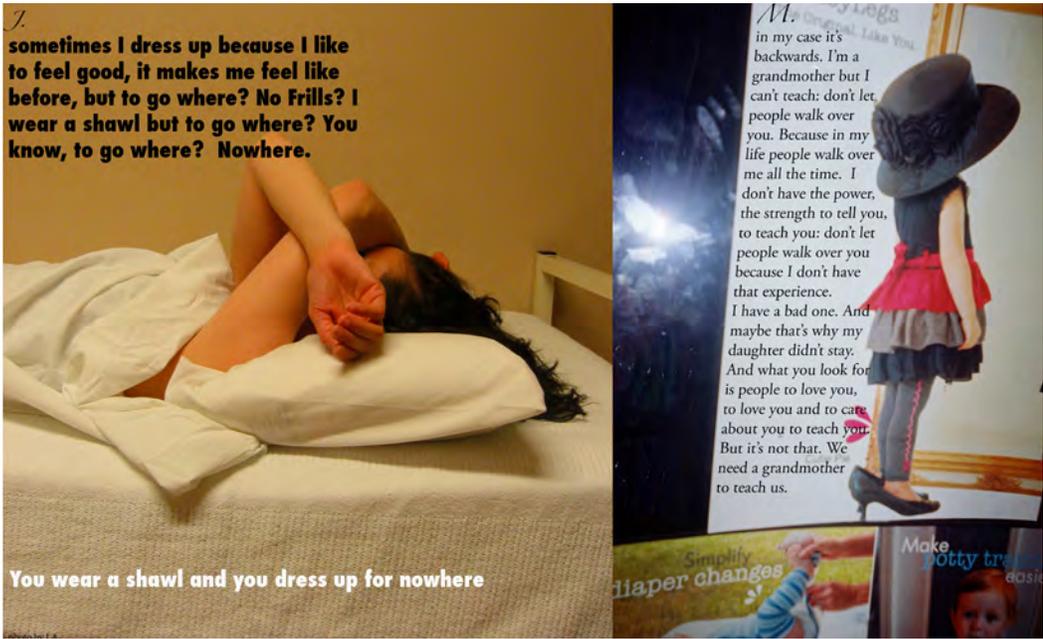
BACKGROUND

This project emerged out of long-term and ongoing relationships. Red Wagon Collective was founded in 2007 and meets weekly for their Monday Art Group at Evangeline Women's Residence, a shelter in the Junction neighbourhood. The Monday Art Group is an open studio space in which women can work on their own projects, share skills and knowledge, make gifts and practical items, and spend time together. The collective describes Monday Art Group as "a performative space where we push the boundaries of neighbourliness, of social arts, dialogue and resistance." Kim Jackson and nancy halifax, two artists who live in the neighbourhood and do much of the labour to keep the group going, explain that Monday Art Group is an "anchoring ritual" for all participants, particularly as many of them experience the precariousness that results from living in poverty and being homeless. Even as women lose their homes, move and experience violence they continue to return to Monday Art Group.

ARTISTIC PROCESS

Women's Stories of Aging, Disability, and Homelessness was made possible thanks to grants from the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies and the Faculty of Health, York University. While the Monday Art Group is often an unfunded open studio, the grant provided Red Wagon Collective with an opportunity to focus on particular themes in a smaller group and to work outside of Evangeline Residence, in a less disciplinary social space. An invited group of women met each week at Cool Hand of A Girl Café, a wheelchair accessible space close to Evangeline Residence. Each session began with food, casual time together and an opening creative exercise. Then Jackson and halifax would engage the group in arts-based discussions about aging and disability and their intersections with the cycle of poverty and homelessness. They recorded the group's discussions each week, returning the following week with transcripts of the conversations. All participants worked creatively with the weekly transcripts between sessions, highlighting parts they found particularly meaningful or evocative. Each week they brought their marked-up transcripts, as well as original poetry, journal entries and new ideas, back to the group. Participants also took photographs of their everyday experiences using disposable cameras. These were projected and discussed at the weekly meetings. Eventually, the group began to collaboratively create and edit digital compositions.

For Jackson and halifax, a core principle of community-engaged art-making is working democratically and horizontally. They see community-engaged art as a way to collaboratively generate new and different forms of knowledge in order to push for social justice. While Jackson and halifax coordinated the project, they do not see themselves as leaders but as participants along with the rest of the women in the group. They value the unpredictability of group

conversations and try not to rein in discussions or artistic processes. Nor do Jackson and halifax think of community-engaged art as project based. For them, this work is ongoing and premised on a long-term commitment to their neighbours, neighbourhood and politics.

OUTCOMES

The cover of the monograph drawn by A. – the project's co-researcher.
Layout: Red Wagon Collective
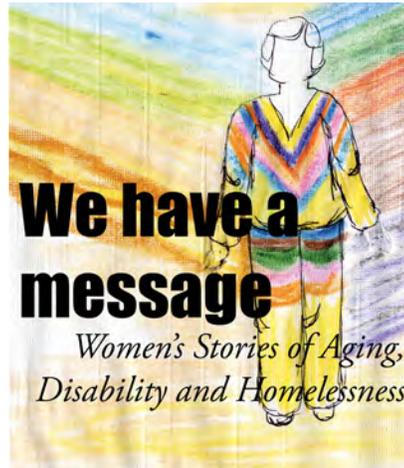
The artistic outcome of this project so far is a set of digital designs for 30 banners, but the Red Wagon Collective sees the project as unfinished and hopes to find money to print the banners on fabric and exhibit them. Jackson and halifax think the printed banners could act as catalysts for future conversations about poverty and homelessness and envision drawing on them to create a form of "kitchen table theatre" in which women could share their testimonials with a wider audience. They note, however, the challenges of seeing this project to fruition given the lack of long-term funding for their work, a dearth of affordable and accessible space in Toronto for such projects and the constant upheavals that Red Wagon Collective members face as a result of deep poverty. In the meantime, though, the positive cultural, political and social effects of Monday Art Group and this project are evident on a local scale. There is an ameliorative connection among women who are amenable and attend to each other in the community. The Monday Art Group challenges the Junction neighbourhood to be a hospitable space and recognize the belonging of women who experience homelessness.

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Jackson and halifax say that this project was inspired by the relationships they already had in the neighbourhood and their sense of responsibility to their neighbours and each other. They also drew inspiration from the unruliness of collaborative artistic processes and see community-engaged art-making as a way to deeply challenge social taboos, experiment with new ways of relating to each other and democratize social relations. Jackson and Halifax are grateful to the founders of Red Wagon Collective: Loree Lawrence, Amy Kazymerchuk and Noah Kenneally.

–
Learn more about this project at:
gatheringspace.wordpress.com/projects/
womens-stories-aging-disability-and-
homelessness/

KITCHEN IN THE BASEMENT: LESSONS FROM ITALIAN CANADIANS

SAULT STE. MARIE

THE PROJECT

Kitchen in the Basement: Lessons from Italian Canadians was a collaboration between artist Sarah Febbraro, members of Sault Ste. Marie's Italian-Canadian community, the Art Gallery of Algoma and the Marconi Club (an Italian-Canadian social club in Sault Ste. Marie). The project focused on sharing and celebrating local Italian cultural practices, particularly cooking. Between July 2014 and February 2015, Febbraro spent time with five first-generation Italian Canadians, learning from them how to make traditional foods, including homemade pasta, sausage, giardiniera (Italian pickled vegetables), bread, pitticelle (Italian fritters) and roasted red peppers. The project also offered three public programs in which Italian Canadians taught members of the broader Sault Ste. Marie community how to cook traditional Italian foods. Artistic outcomes from the project, including some of the food that was made and video footage of Febbraro's cooking lessons and conversations, was exhibited at the Art Gallery of Algoma in July 2015.

Sarah Febbraro (centre) learns how to make giardiniera from (left to right) Ida Trinca, Frances Messore and Emma Febbraro. Video still: Cathy Bouchard

BACKGROUND

Toronto-based artist Sarah Febbraro grew up in Sault Ste. Marie and still goes back there regularly to spend time with her family. Febbraro saw this project as a chance to further connect with her extended family and community of origin. She wanted to see Sault Ste. Marie's Italian-Canadian community and their cultural practices represented in an art context. Febbraro explains

that there is still a big class and cultural divide between the Italian-Canadian community and the rest of Sault Ste. Marie residents. To her knowledge, the Art Gallery of Algoma had never featured a show specifically about the Italian-Canadian community. *Kitchen in the Basement* was a chance to formally honour the community's knowledge, stories and cultural practices and to share them with a broader public.

Joe Desimone teaches Sarah Febbraro how to make and dry pasta in his apartment.
Video still: Cathy Bouchard

ARTISTIC PROCESS

Febbraro began research for this project while visiting her family in the summer of 2013 and then approached the Art Gallery of Algoma with her idea. After the gallery offered her a show on the spot, she successfully applied for an Artists in the Community/Workplace project grant from OAC. In July 2014, Febbraro began to work with community members face-to-face, visiting their homes and getting to know them. In Febbraro's opinion, partnering with a local organization and drawing on her own personal connections was vital. Febbraro's 80-year-old aunt acted as a project coordinator, introducing her to many community members. Even with this help, Febbraro had to work hard to build relationships and trust. She discovered that the people she wanted to learn from were uncomfortable teaching her to cook in front of an audience in their homes, so she had to use kitchens in the gallery and the club for public workshops. She also had to spend a lot of time with people before they would allow her to shoot video of them. It wasn't until Febbraro made it very clear that the project would celebrate Italian culture that people really opened their doors to her. From that point excitement grew and the project flowed well.

Most of Febbraro's cooking lessons took between two and three days. As they taught Febbraro to cook traditional food, people would share details of their lives, tell immigration stories, remember work experiences at the steel plant or in restaurants, and reminisce about Sault Ste. Marie's old Italian-Canadian neighbourhood, which no longer exists. These oral histories became an important part of the knowledge that was passed on through the project. Febbraro shot video during these lessons. She says the video footage shows that the project is as much about her relationships with these elders as it is about them and the cooking. The public programs Febbraro ran, in which members of the public were taught how to make Italian foods, also strengthened relationships and built community. It was important to Febbraro that they were hands-on, offering non-Italians a chance to learn in a way that only those with Italian family members would.

OUTCOMES

The public programs at the Art Gallery of Algoma and the Marconi Club were key artistic outcomes in this project. Through the cooking programs, non-Italian Canadians were able to have hands-on experiences with Italian cultural practices. The workshops also excited younger Italian Canadians who didn't necessarily fully participate but spent time around the project and came to see the senior members of their community in a new light. Other artistic outcomes include a video installation of the cooking lessons and cured meats, pickled vegetables and wine made during the project. In Febbraro's opinion the most important outcomes of the project are that Sault Ste. Marie's Italian-Canadian community has been represented and honoured in the art gallery and that some of the domestic knowledge of first-generation Italians has been documented, archived, recognized in an institutional setting and shared. Febbraro would love to see the show tour around northern Ontario, to other towns where there is a significant Italian-Canadian population. A final outcome of the project was the exhibition opening, which offered an opportunity for the Italian-Canadian community to come to the art gallery to eat and celebrate the project with family and friends. Febbraro says that this is where "true cultural exchange happens."

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

–
Learn more about this project at:
sarahfebbraro.com/section/425883-Kitchen-in-the-Basement-Lessons-from-Italian-Canadians.html

Febbraro's artistic influences include artist/curator Pablo Helguera, artist Douglas Paulson, artist Diane Borsato and the company, Mammalian Diving Reflex. The biggest influence on this project, however, was her previous work as a community-engaged art programmer at the Oakville Galleries. It was that experience, she says, that taught her how to partner well with organizations.

KWENTONG BAYAN: LABOUR OF LOVE
TORONTO

THE PROJECT

Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love is a community-based comic book by illustrator Althea Balmes and writer Jo SiMalaya Alcampo, in collaboration with Filipina migrant workers in Canada and their allies. The comic book tells real-life stories of workers who have come to Canada through the Live-in-Caregiver program (now called the Caregiver program). These stories are about the realities faced by caregivers and also about the friendships they've made while here, their self-determination and resilience. *Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love* began in 2012. Balmes and Alcampo have gathered many of the stories that will go in the comic book, they have presented their work at the Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts and have shared excerpts of the comics online and in a number of magazines. A mini-comic entirely funded by Balmes and Alcampo themselves will be published in 2016.

An excerpt from the first chapter of *Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love*, illustrated by Althea Balmes and written by Jo SiMalaya Alcampo, recounts how the project began.

BACKGROUND

While *Kwentong Bayan* officially began in 2012, Balmes and Alcampo grew up in the Filipino diaspora in Toronto and have been interested in and aware of caregivers' stories for a long time. "It's part of our history. We're here in Canada for a reason," Alcampo says. Balmes and Alcampo are motivated to tell the caregivers' stories in order to expose exploitation in Canada, explore the history of forced migration from the Philippines, archive the social histories of elders in their community and create a kind of "accessible archive" that can serve as a resource for the community. They also see this project as a form of de-colonial aesthetics, in that it unearths stories of migration, settlement and exploitation and highlights Canada's colonial context. Finally, they explain that their choice of artistic form for *Kwentong Bayan* is based on the long social history of comic books in the Philippines. Comic books have been a popular cultural form for communication with large groups of people and maintain a sense of Filipino nationalism.

ARTISTIC PROCESS

The creation of *Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love* is collaborative through and through. Balmes and Alcampo begin by meeting with caregivers and listening to their stories. They travel to meet with people whenever and wherever they are available. "Caregivers work a lot!" they say. "They often only have one day off a week. So, if they can give us a Sunday afternoon, we really appreciate that." After hearing the stories, Balmes and Alcampo get together to figure out how to represent them, swapping ideas and trying out different approaches (Balmes illustrates and Alcampo writes). Finally, they take what they've made back to the caregivers and other community members for feedback. "It's a real back and forth," Alcampo says. "People are really excited when they recognize themselves in the illustrations and see their stories represented."

Early in their process, Balmes and Alcampo attended a 12-week self-advocacy and leadership training program created by caregivers for caregivers. They also started with a literature review, reading studies and stories about victimization and abuse of Filipina migrant workers. This review made them realize that the resiliency of caregivers is under-represented, both in the media and in academic studies. Another pivotal experience was meeting a caregiver who was writing a master's thesis about her own experiences. She taught Balmes and Alcampo a core principle from the Disabilities movement: "Nothing about us without us is for us." Balmes and Alcampo have applied this principle throughout their artistic process. "We don't want to be artists who go into communities and take stories and information and are not somehow connected or in a relationship with the community," says Balmes. "It doesn't make sense for us to talk about caregivers' issues intimately without their voices. This is why we go back and forth to make sure they have a say in how the stories are represented."

OUTCOMES

The long-term outcome of *Kwentong Bayan* will be a full-length comic book, which will be available online. Alcampo and Balmes have talked about the possibility of getting the community members they work with to illustrate some parts of the book. One thing they know for sure is that they will be representing their own journey within the comic book. "As a form of accountability," Alcampo says, "we'll be putting ourselves into the comic book. Our arguments with each other, our mistakes along the way, our heartbreak as we have learned these stories. The comic is partly about how we are absorbing this information."

Jo SiMalaya Alcampo and Althea Balmes present their work in progress at the Mayworks Festival of Working People and the Arts, to an audience of caregivers, advocates, artists, workers, students, academics, and other community members.
Photo: Amee Lê

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Both Balmes and Alcampo arrived at this kind of community-engaged artistic practice through contact with Filipino arts organizations in Toronto and community leaders who saw culture-making and politics as intertwined. Kapisanan Philippine Centre for Arts and Culture and Carlos Bulosan Theatre have both been key influences. For Alcampo, Filipino-Canadian community leader Martha Ocampo has been a long-time mentor. Ocampo helped to found a number of organizations, including Kababayan Community Centre, Silayan Community Centre, Kapisanan and Carlos Bulosan Theatre. Balmes cites Filipino "komiks" as a key influence. These komiks include *Pugad Baboy* by Pol J. Medina and the work of Francisco Coching. Artists Joe Sacco and Sarah Glidden have also influenced her work.

–
Learn more about this project at:
www.lcpcomicbook.com/

DANCES OF RESISTANCE

NIPISSING FIRST NATION

THE PROJECT

Cristina Lella and Sid Bobb perform a scene from *Dances of Resistance* with the dance ensemble.
Photo: Liz Lott

Dances of Resistance was a watershed project for both the region surrounding Nipissing First Nation and Aanmitaagzi, an Indigenous inter-arts company. Co-artistic directors and co-founders of Aanmitaagzi, Penny Couchie and Sid Bobb, began the project shortly after moving to Nipissing First Nation, where Couchie is from. While working on this project, Couchie and Bobb built the dance studio Big Medicine Studio, which is also Aanmitaagzi's primary home. Over four years, *Dances of Resistance* engaged over eight arts organizational partners, 10 youth interns, 25 professional artists, 500 participants and 2,000 audience members. The project culminated in a large-scale final production, involving dance, music, theatre and puppetry, in August 2014.

BACKGROUND

Dances of Resistance was a powerful response to the legacy of cultural genocide in Canada. In particular, the project responded to the Government of Canada's long-time legislation prohibiting Indigenous people in Canada from engaging in their own cultural and artistic practices. Not only did community members share stories of resistance throughout the project, but the project itself, Couchie says, was "an assertion of our right to sing, dance, gather, make art, be creative and imagine. With every workshop and every bit of art we made, we were declaring our right to be who we are." Some of the questions that Aanmitaagzi explored in collaboration with community members were: Who are we? What is important to us? What would we stand up for, sit down for or gather for? What would we stand up against? Where are we now in terms of our sense of activism? And what are we reaching for? For Couchie, the project represented a reclamation of the past and present in order to look to the future.

ARTISTIC PROCESS

When they began *Dances of Resistance*, Couchie and Bobb had just moved to Nipissing First Nation after working with Jumblies Theatre on its long-term community-based project *Bridge of One Hair*. Inspired to create a similar kind of community-based production, Couchie and Bobb began by hosting elder luncheons, in which they invited elders to come speak about what was important to them and to discuss the idea of creating a community-engaged production in the area. The theme of resistance emerged from these gatherings, and they developed a working title, "Dances of Resistance." From that point on, Aanmitaagzi developed the project carefully, building the infrastructure to do their work bit by bit. They built a studio to run classes out of, found people to help with outreach and slowly formed partnerships.

Over the course of the next three years, Aanmitaagzi offered weekly workshops to people of all ages in many different disciplines. The company began by offering dance workshops (Couchie is a choreographer), branching out later into theatre, drumming, singing and visual arts workshops. At the end of each year, Aanmitaagzi would show community members a work in progress and then ask them where the work needed to go next. Couchie explains that it was very important to "keep the doors open to new ideas. We reminded people that we didn't yet know what the final production would look like, sound like, move like or feel like." The project's themes were ultimately drawn from a number of sources of inspiration, reflecting an ongoing dialogue between artists, community and broader national movements. In the project's "legacy year" (2015), both *Dances of Resistance* and Aanmitaagzi engaged in and travelled with Jumblies Theatre's monumental national project *Train of Thought* from the west coast to the east coast.

OUTCOMES

Dances of Resistance had many layered and intersecting components: community engaged workshops, youth training and mentorship components, capacity building, professional development and cultural reclamation initiatives as well as presentations at numerous special events and festivals. The three main components included a 30-minute performance on the ice of Lake Nipissing at Ice Follies 2014, a 45-minute performance at North Bay's Capitol Centre and the final production on Nipissing First Nation.

In the final scene of *Dances of Resistance*, participating children wave flags.
Photo: Liz Lott

The final production of *Dances of Resistance* included dance, an original score, theatre and puppetry. While the choreography for the production was created first, two old stories from the area, which had been told to Aanmitaagzi artists by local storytellers, created a through line for the piece. Couchie says that the two stories worked well together because "one was about corruption, something that changed the nature of who we are," while the other was "about hope, fighting for a good life and mobilizing on behalf of the greater good." Aanmitaagzi used the two stories to anchor both the dance and all of the other community stories that had emerged through the project. The central narrative was about a young girl's transformation as she listens to stories of resistance, begins to recognize her own lineage as a "warrior" and comes to understand her role and purpose. Telling this story, Couchie says, was "a way to reaffirm our deep love of and commitment to an artful way of life. It was a chance to invite people into our art practice, to facilitate an opportunity for people to see each other as artists and to see the kind of art that we can make together." Couchie hopes that many years of powerful community-engaged art-making will result from the excitement

the project generated. In the legacy year of the project, Aanmitaagzi worked on a co-production with Spiderwoman Theatre of New York and mapped out further avenues of exploration.

> At Aanmitaagzi, we really value the unknown. We try to keep the doors open for people and for thoughts, ideas and stories until the very last moment, when the show is about to start and we're about to go on stage. That's really important when working with community. Not everyone arrives at creative input in the same way or at the same time. People are very diverse in the way that they collaborate. When your process leaves the doors open, it gives people more room to come in.

Penny Couchie
Co-founder and co-artistic director, Aanmitaagzi

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Couchie's primary artistic mentors are her own parents, who have always offered art-making workshops to community members, including caribou-hair tufting, moose-hair tufting, tanning hides, making birchbark canoes, drum making and teepee making. While Couchie's formal training in dance delineated between "serious art-making" and "hobby art-making," her mentors in the Indigenous arts community, including Muriel Miguel and others involved in the Indigenous Arts program at the Banff Centre for the Arts, encouraged her to see art and community as intertwined. Meeting and working with Ruth Howard of Jumblies Theatre has also helped Couchie to reaffirm her own art practice as "a form of moving toward an artful way of life, which involves family, community, and people of all ages and abilities."

—

Learn more about this project at:
aanmitaagzi.net/dances-of-resistance/

NIGHT OF DREAD
TORONTO

THE PROJECT

David Anderson (centre) walks in the parade behind two leaders wearing costumes inspired by northern Portuguese festival traditions.
Photo: Tamara Romanchuk

Night of Dread is an annual community parade that takes place every October on the Saturday before Halloween in the Dufferin Grove neighbourhood of Toronto. It is produced by Clay and Paper Theatre and offers the local community a chance to express and parade their private and collective fears through pageantry, puppetry, music and masquerade. After an evening procession through the streets, participants are welcomed into a series of ceremonial festivities in Dufferin Grove Park that "call on, mock and banish the fears that unite and divide us in these times."

BACKGROUND

Clay and Paper Theatre's founder and Artistic Director, David Anderson, has been making activist theatre and "insurgent puppetry" in public spaces since 1969. He founded Clay and Paper Theatre in 1994 and began *Night of Dread* in 1999. The event began quite organically. Anderson says, "I had a whole bunch of big puppets. We divided the number by three and took one third of the puppets to Wallace Emerson Park. Some other puppets started in another park south of Dufferin Grove. We decided to parade around and have them all meet. At that time we had good relations with the Dufferin Mall and marched through [the] mall. Clay and Paper had only a small amount of money. The bands were free. Everything was volunteer-based. What gave me courage to pull it off was that I knew how to organize a parade."

The event was a hit, and Anderson and his friends decided to do it again the next year. Over the years, Anderson says, *Night of Dread* has "developed its own format. When you give an idea like that a head, and allow people to riff on it all kinds of wonderful things can happen. It becomes richer with time." For Anderson, the reclamation of public space through art and performance is paramount. Clay and Paper Theatre has a tradition of building, making, rehearsing and performing in public spaces like Dufferin Grove Park. Making art accessible to "the whole public" is at the core of Clay and Paper Theatre's philosophy.

ARTISTIC PROCESS

Each year Clay and Paper Theatre invites the community to make a new "giant fear" puppet with them for *Night of Dread*. To do this, the company holds puppet-making workshops in Dufferin Grove Park in the months leading up to the parade. Past giant fears have included: Fear of War, Fear of Snakes, Fear of Drones and Fear of Authority. Community members are also encouraged to make shrines for individuals or ideas whose loss they are grieving and to write their own private fears on cardboard placards that will be burned in a bonfire on the evening of the parade. The parade and ceremonies on the night itself are participatory. Over the years, Clay and Paper artists have taught many residents to carry and wear giant puppets and to stilt walk. Those with less experience are invited to borrow a mask or costume to wear in the parade. After the parade, in the park, participants are invited to collectively "laugh at death, waltz with death and eat the bread of the dead."

Night of Dread has grown to be such a well-loved local event that Anderson says Clay and Paper will have trouble accommodating any more people in future years. Residents know to show up early wearing only black and white, and many come in their own homemade costumes and masks. Clay and Paper does little advertising for the event. It is better thought of as an "invitation [than as a] production," says Anderson. While it's very hard to pinpoint precise social outcomes of *Night of Dread*, Clay and Paper has contributed to making Dufferin Grove Park a vibrant social space, and this annual event remains a rare opportunity to gather and celebrate in a truly public way. While Clay and Paper collects pay-what-you-can donations, the event is accessible to everyone, held in a public space for ease of participation. Anderson says that the "the role of theatre is to give the community an image of itself. I think of our task is 'thinking in public,' and thinking in public works most effectively when the whole public is really there."

A volunteer pulling a trailer with a puppet.
Photo: Tamara Romanchuk

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Night of Dread draws on folk and theatre traditions from around the world. In particular, it references festivals of death and remembrance such as "Dia de los Muertos" (the Mexican Day of the Dead). The papier mâché puppets in the parade draw on traditional statuesque giant puppet traditions in Europe, i.e, the "big heads" (cabeçudos and gigantones) puppet traditions from Portugal and Spain, and older traditions that are believed to have originated in India and are still alive today. Anderson himself learned to create outdoor theatre with the Vancouver Street Theatre, a uniquely Canadian commedia dell'arte troupe, and was introduced to large-scale spectacle theatre through his work with Breadbaker's Puppet Theatre, which was founded by a draft-dodging American/Dutch couple who had worked with Vermont-based Bread and Puppet Theatre.

–
Learn more about this project at:
clayandpapertheatre.org/2014/07/22/
night-of-dread-2014/

A PARK OF MANY PATHS
TORONTO

THE PROJECT

A Park of Many Paths is a long-term project in which artists and community members are collaboratively transforming a once-abandoned public space into a vibrant park. Undertaken by MABELLEarts, a community-engaged art organization based in the Mabelle neighbourhood of central Etobicoke, this project has incorporated a number of artistic forms over eight years, including landscape design, carpentry, cooking, gardening, mosaic work, visual art, storytelling, performance and pageantry. The physical transformation of urban public space and the social transformation in Mabelle, a culturally diverse high-density urban neighbourhood, are the result of *A Park of Many Paths.*

A screening of *Tiny Time Travellers*, a film made in collaboration with community youth and artists Shifra Cooper, Maggie Flynn, Leah Houston and Sonja Rainey. Photo: Tamara Romanchuk

BACKGROUND

MABELLEarts grew out of a four-year residency in the Mabelle neighbourhood by Jumblies Theatre. In 2007, near the end of the Jumblies residency, artists Leah Houston and Noah Kenneally formed a collective and began exploring what could be done in the largely abandoned park in the centre of Mabelle. They collaborated with neighbourhood children to produce *Lantern Garden*, a summer project in the park that culminated in a small lantern festival. The *Lantern Garden* project inspired the collective to become a full-fledged community-engaged art organization, MABELLEarts. Houston says it also

served as "a lab through which we could see what the park needed. Tree branches were falling. It was dusty and grimy. We had to bring our art supplies to the space in shopping carts." Houston, Kenneally and *Lantern Garden* participants began to respond to "the needs of the park" by cleaning up the site, building a structure with a roof for art supplies and planting gardens. These activities allowed them to further envision the park as a vibrant cultural hub. *A Park of Many Paths* emerged as an exciting long-term project. As Houston puts it, "We went from two artists who wanted to make art in a park to an arts company that makes parks."

ARTISTIC PROCESS

The artistic process in *A Park of Many Paths* can be seen as a series of experiments and subsequent responses to the outcomes of those experiments. MABELLEarts has always focused on "doing rather than talking." "We've tried many things and everything we've tried has had a series of outcomes," Houston says. "We started gardening and people really liked that so we did more of it. Cooking in the park became integral because we tried it and found that the desire for it was intense. While we built a bake oven, what really took off was cooking over an open fire, because residents already had experience doing that."

MABELLEarts also relies on "doing" to draw participants to the project. Rather than recruit community members, the organization continuously makes art in the park, welcoming whomever is drawn to the activities. The project has been particularly popular with children in the neighbourhood, who have become "the real drivers of the project." Over the years, children have brought their families (particularly mothers and aunts) into the project. MABELLEarts also runs a seniors group, which contributes to the park through specific projects. While Houston believes that artists must bring strong visions and skills to community-engaged art practices, she says that, eight years into the project, "the relationships between artists and participants have become so cyclical and circular that you can't really pick apart who is influencing whom and how."

OUTCOMES

Since 2008, MABELLEarts has worked with over 2,000 community members and 65 professional artists, architects, gardeners and others to transform and animate the park. To date, *A Park of Many Paths* has included the collaborative creation of new park furniture, an outdoor kitchen, a community garden and countless performances, ceremonies and community dinners. The most tangible outcome, Houston says, is that "there is a park now. A real park. It's still not finished but it's beautiful. And people can see their lives embedded in that public space. You can walk down to Mabelle Park for

instance, see a small structure that was built by one of the children when he was nine years old." *A Park of Many Paths* has also had important social outcomes. The project has helped to alleviate a feeling of social isolation for many residents in the neighbourhood, though Houston emphasizes that this has taken many years. People who would never have met otherwise now have close friendships that have grown out of their time together in the park. Community members also now share memories of celebrations and events in the park, and an emerging sense of ownership.

Mr. Dudley tells a story at the annual Iftar party in Mabelle Park. Each year artists and residents work together to create intercultural celebrations for the month of Ramadan.
Photo: Katherine Fleitas

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

Influences for this project include Spiral Garden, which is an outdoor art, garden and play program at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. Houston and Kenneally both worked at Spiral Garden before their time in Mabelle. "What really struck me about Spiral Garden," Houston says, "was that a relationship with the land was being cultivated. Community-engaged art is so much about building relationships, and I realized that you could also build relationships with the land. And then to imagine that you could build relationships with the land in an inner-city, high-density, high-rise complex really seemed like an exciting experiment." Houston also cites Clay and Paper Theatre as an artistic influence. Houston learned from Clay and Paper about "creating art in full public view... It's true that we want to engage people. Sometimes people don't want to participate but it can still be an excellent experience to watch an artist make their work." The most significant artistic influence for MABELLEarts has been Jumblies Theatre, from which the company has adopted its emphasis on making powerful artistic outcomes and "the impulse to welcome people, whoever they are," says Ruth Howard, artistic director of Jumblies Theatre.

—
Learn more about this project at:
mabellearts.ca/projects/

WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS ACROSS CANADA

THE PROJECT

Why the Caged Bird Sings is a songwriting, singing and recording project by multidisciplinary artist and singer/songwriter Cheryl L'Hirondelle in collaboration with incarcerated women, men and youth in prisons, youth detention centres and other correctional facilities across Canada, including in Ontario. Since 2008, L'Hirondelle has hosted six five-day songwriting workshops with women inmates and detained youth, each in a different correctional facility. In each workshop a group of approximately ten participants have collectively written and professionally recorded an original song. *Why the Caged Bird Sings* has expanded in scope to become a national project and now also includes incarcerated men.

Cheryl L'Hirondelle (centre) leads a recording session for *Come My Sisters, Come*, a song from *Why the Caged Bird Sings.*
Photo: Carla Johnson

BACKGROUND

While the idea for *Why the Caged Bird Sings* had been gestating for L'Hirondelle since 1999, the project began officially in 2008, when L'Hirondelle was invited by Common Weal Community Arts to spend a week with a group of women and their literacy teacher at Pine Grove Correctional Centre, a female provincial correctional centre in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. According to statistics from Correctional Services Canada, 33 per cent of the prison population in Canada is Indigenous and the rate of Indigenous

incarceration in Saskatchewan is particularly high. L'Hirondelle, who is Métis/Cree, sees the songs she is co-creating with inmates as an expression of "survivance", an idea she has gleaned from French philosopher Jacques Derrida and Gerald Wisner, an Anishnaabe writer and theorist. "It doesn't matter that we're singing in English or using these popular contemporary song forms. It doesn't matter that we're mixed blood. It doesn't matter that we're in jail. We're still here! We're still expressing ourselves. We're still saying 'this is who we are.'"

Not only are the songs participants co-write in the workshops an assertion of presence, they are also "life-affirming," and this is important to L'Hirondelle. "The 'modus operandi' of a Cree worldview is life. In our language we say 'pimâtisiwin.' It means 'life.' If we continue to sing sad songs that's what life is going to be. In this project I'm asking how we can turn our experiences around, not denying them, not belittling them, but turn that depth and that breadth of all that we have experienced around, or on its side, and express ourselves differently so that we make a new song."

ARTISTIC PROCESS

L'Hirondelle starts her workshops with introductions and quickly gets participants writing. Participants have usually been given advanced notice of the workshop and have opted to participate in it as a program option. L'Hirondelle also begins by singing for participants without a backing band so they can see that she's "the real deal" and free-writing along with participants so they know that she's fully engaged in the process with them. She is careful to break up the creative activities as much as possible and pays close attention to the energy in the room. "I don't want participants to get bored, or feel anxiety. I want always to be taking them by surprise. That's what creativity is to me."

When the collective song finally arrives, says L'Hirondelle, "we're all just ecstatic." The participants contribute lyrics, and L'Hirondelle usually writes the melody based on the cadence of the assembled and workshopped lyrics. L'Hirondelle sees *Why the Caged Bird Sings* as an exploration in what she calls "radical inclusivity," another idea that comes from within the Cree language. "There is a way in Cree to say 'all of us together,'" L'Hirondelle says, "It doesn't just mean those of us in the room who are Native, or even those of us who are human. It's also animals, and objects that are in the room which, from within our animate worldview, have a soul." L'Hirondelle has come to see everyone involved in the prison system, including guards and program staff, as a part of the project. "The songs belong to anyone in the room who is willing to be a part of the process."

OUTCOMES

Artist Cheryl L'Hirondelle in front of a participating correctional facility in Saskatchewan.
Photo: Gregory Hoskins
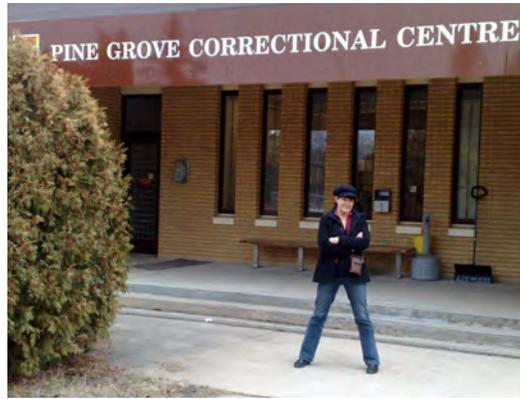
To date, the artistic outcomes of *Why the Caged Bird Sings* have included a final song from each workshop, and the songs have already been licensed for TV and exhibition. The songs are distributed on CDs to every participant shortly after each workshop. They have also been mastered to play as singles on radio stations. Each participant receives royalties for their co-written song twice a year, and L'Hirondelle has created a social enterprise/music publishing entity to manage the songs. L'Hirondelle says that the project continues to transform her, and she hopes that it will also have a transformative effect for participants. She remembers the transformation of her school gymnasium by a theatre group when she was in grade school: "What had always been an oppressive space became magical. The lights were down and people were telling us a story. It left an indelible impression on me. I hope this project plants a seed in the same way and lets participants know that they have amazing skills, options and choices. The proof of that is that they wrote a beautiful song, which can't be taken away."

INFLUENCES AND MENTORS

In the 1980s, L'Hirondelle became part of Minquon Panchayat, a national movement of Indigenous artists and artists of colour committed to challenging the homogeneity and exclusionary practices of artist-run centres in Canada, which were at that time largely white and male. In Minquon Panchayat, L'Hirondelle worked with Maliseet artist Shirley Bear, who told her, "Whatever you do, do it for the healing of Mother Earth and all her beings." This had a profound influence on L'Hirondelle's artistic practice. Another elder in Minquon Panchayat was dub poet Lillian Allen, who told L'Hirondelle that while "everyone can see that there's a problem, it takes a creative person to come up with at least two solutions." Another influence for L'Hirondelle is folk singer Pete Seeger, who always encouraged his audience to join in the singing, creating a collective and moving voice.

_
Learn more about this project at:
cheryllhirondelle.com/
whythecagedbirdsings/

03

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Many experienced community-engaged artists provide unofficial training to younger artists through mentoring. As community-engaged art becomes institutionally recognized as an artistic discipline in its own right, more training and development programs become available. Here are some of the training and development programs in Ontario:

ARTFARE ESSENTIALS
JUMBLIES THEATRE, VARYING LOCATIONS

Jumblies Theatre regularly offers this intensive six-day workshop in different cities across Canada. The workshop is open to artists from all artistic forms. Participants are introduced to the principles and practices of community arts and build skills toward launching their own community-engaged art projects. Topics include project start-up and basics,

partnerships, arts-based oral history research, budgets and grants, facilitation, cross-cultural collaboration and more. Jumblies Theatre has adapted this workshop for different communities and contexts. To find out when and where the next Artfare Essentials will be held or to invite Jumblies to your community for a workshop, contact: info@jumbliestheatre.org.

COMMUNITY ARTS PRACTICE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
YORK UNIVERSITY, TORONTO

This certificate program consists of three core undergraduate courses, a number of elective courses and a placement with a local cultural agency or community organization. Students can also apply for international internships through this program. The program focuses on how artists can contribute to

expressions of diverse identities, develop community awareness about environmental issues and take action for social change. It is usually undertaken over a period of at least one year and is open to all York students. It can also be completed part-time by community-engaged artists with relevant experience and/or training (a university degree is not necessary).

NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS NETWORK
TORONTO

The Neighbourhood Arts Network (NAN) is a project of the Toronto Arts Foundation. NAN provides online resources, strategic partnerships and professional development events in support of community-engaged artists and organizations in their efforts transform Toronto into a more vibrant and liveable city. Past workshops have focused on topics such as grant writing, connecting to arts leaders, business strategies and equity in the arts.

THE SKETCH COMMUNITY ARTIST PROGRAM
TORONTO

This program is for young artists (ages 16-29) living on the margins and currently receiving Ontario Works. It is a paid year-long position and offers intensive training in community-engaged art. Contact info@sketch.ca to learn more.

THE WATAH THEATRE
TORONTO

Operating out of The Watah Theatre, dub artist and arts educator d'bi.young anitafrika offers a transformational anti-oppressive leadership training to individuals and groups in artistic, educational and for/not for profit organizations, using the unique Sorplusi Method. To learn more, contact The Watah Theatre.

Participants in the *Composing Community* workshop at the Canadian Music Centre with Musica Reflecta and Aanmitaagzi. Photo: Liam Coo

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ART IN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Cultural institutions like museums and galleries are increasingly focusing on community engagement, and some are beginning to integrate the principles of community-engaged art into their programming. In some cases these institutions are hiring experienced community-engaged artists as staff members. More often they are developing funds for one-time community projects that engage with their collections or themes. Community-engaged artist and educator Catherine Campbell has been part of a number of different community-engagement initiatives within cultural institutions including the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Conservatory, University Settlement House and Montgomery's Inn (a City of Toronto community museum). Here are some of her tips for community-engaged artists looking to partner with or work within a cultural institution:

- Be sure to get all staff and upper management on board with the key principles of community engagement. Explain that deep engagement takes a long time and show them examples of inspiring community-engaged work.

- Learn how the institution functions (its timetables, finances, etc.). While artists are often used to working spontaneously and finding the rhythms of a project, many institutions have strict protocols and limited hours for engagement. It's best to address these potential differences in approach from the beginning.

- Emphasize the importance of process as well as the resulting end product and be sure to agree on how you will evaluate the success of the project.

- Involve the staff in your artistic process. If they are participating they will have a better understanding of what you are doing and will help to build institutional support for your work.

For further reading on community-engaged art within cultural institutions, check out the Art Gallery of Ontario's Community Arts and the Museum: A Handbook for Institutions Interested in Community Arts. This is both an excellent resource for institutions that are considering integrating community-engaged art into their programming and useful reading for artists working within institutions.

Our desire as artists is to go deep. We like to really get to know a community, figure out what the issues are and how to use art to address them. The funding for this project bought us the time to spend an entire year with a community.

Emmy Pantin
Community media artist, *Journeys to Health*

FUNDING

As already noted in Part One of this workbook, securing funding for a community-engaged art project can take a long time and a lot of energy. It can be very helpful to speak with a community-engaged art granting officer at an arts council. Many of the training programs in community-engaged art also focus on grant writing and other funding options.

Artists and community participants, including Aanmitaagzi's co-artistic director, Penny Couchie (left), perform in *Dances of Resistance*.
Photo: Liz Lott

PUBLIC FUNDING

Public funding greatly shapes and influences the development of the arts, as well as the fabric of our society and individual communities. Generally speaking, where there is money, there is development and growth. Funding for community-engaged art has grown significantly in recent years. In some Ontario communities, artists can access support from funding bodies associated with all three levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal). Here is some information about funding for community art from public granting agencies.

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) offers a wide range of funding opportunities for Ontario-based artists and arts organizations, with funds from the Ontario government. The OAC has been a leader in supporting community-engaged art since the early 1970s, contributing to its development and growth in all regions of the province. Since that time, OAC has developed programs to support community-engaged art organizations, residencies and projects between artists and communities, as well as a variety of community-based festivals. Specifically, OAC funds community art projects and community arts development, research and production through several programs. The OAC also supports long-term community-engaged art organizations through operating grants.

CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

While the Canada Council for the Arts does not have a specific community-engaged art office, it does fund community-engaged art projects through its Artists and Community Collaboration Program. These grants are discipline-specific and have rolling deadlines. Many community-engaged art projects and organizations have also been funded by Canada Council's Interarts Office.

MUNICIPAL ARTS COUNCILS

Some municipal arts councils have been long-time supporters of community-engaged art. The Toronto Arts Council (TAC), for example, supports work in this field through its Community Arts program. The TAC's leadership in the field of community-engaged art is reflected by the number and strength of projects in the city.

PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING AND OTHER DONATIONS

Community-engaged art projects may also be funded by the private sector or other non-profit organizations, including labour unions, foundations and community centres. More and more projects are also turning to online crowdfunding through sites like Indiegogo and Kickstarter. Many projects also receive "in-kind" donations from project partners. In-kind donations are donations of resources rather than money (e.g. space rentals, materials, staff time).

OTHER RESOURCES

As the field of community-engaged art continues to grow, there are more and more resources available for prospective community-engaged artists. This workbook offers just a few. They are divided into general online resources (these are websites with lots of interesting relevant material) and a bibliography (this is a list of printed publications).

ARCHIVE OF THE COMMUNITY ARTS NETWORK (CAN) READING ROOM

The Community Arts Network (CAN) was active from July 1999 through April 2010. The CAN Reading Room featured hundreds of stories and articles by and about artists and the communities they serve. It has been archived online by Indiana University and is still an excellent resource.

ARTBRIDGES

Artbridges describes itself as "a hub and forum for connection for anyone interested in or active in community-engaged arts and arts for social change in Canada." This website has information about training, professional development workshops and work opportunities in the field of community-engaged art.

ARTREACH TORONTO

ArtReach Toronto is a program designed to support arts initiatives that engage youth who have experienced exclusion in under-served areas of Toronto. This site provides lots of useful how-to tool kits on grant writing, fundraising, event planning and other topics.

BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE

"Beautiful Trouble is a book, web toolbox and international network of artist-activist trainers whose mission is to make grassroots movements more creative and more effective." This American website is a great resource for anyone interested in art and social change. It includes discussions of principles and tactics of creative action, as well as a number of inspiring case studies of creative actions for social justice.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE (ICASC)

"ICASC is a global centre for networking, training, professional development, research and community outreach in the burgeoning field of art for social change." ICASC is a partnership between Judith Marcuse Projects and Simon Fraser University. The "links directory" on this website provides an extensive list of community-engaged art projects and organizations.

LIVE IN PUBLIC: THE ART OF ENGAGEMENT

This website emerged out a conference hosted by grunt gallery in Vancouver in 2008. The essays section is particularly useful for those who want to learn more about community-engaged art in the Canadian context.

MYTHS AND MIRRORS COMMUNITY ARTS: THEORY AND PRACTICE RESOURCE LIBRARY

Myths and Mirrors Community Arts is a not-for-profit community-engaged art organization based in Sudbury, Ontario. Their resource library has a great reading list, including a thesis on community arts written by Myths and Mirrors founder and long-time community artist Laurie McGauley.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS NETWORK

The Neighbourhood Arts Network (NAN) is an initiative of the Toronto Arts Foundation. NAN celebrates and supports community-engaged artists and organizations through professional development, online resources and awards. Their website has lots of useful resources, including a reading room with how-to videos, reports, tool kits, lesson plans and more.

SOCIAL PRACTICES ART NETWORK (SPAN)

This blog "covers a variety of social art practices including: urban interventions, utopian proposals, guerrilla architecture, new genre, public art, social sculpture, project-based community practice, interactive media, service dispersals, service design, activism and street performance." It is curated by Jules Rochielle.

Tamil seniors from Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities rehearsing puppetry for *Like An Old Tale* at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre.
Photo: Katherine Fleitas

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Art Gallery of Ontario. *Community Arts and the Museum: A Handbook for Institutions Interested in Community Arts.* Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, Fall 2010. http://artmatters.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/AGO-ArtsAccess.pdf

Atlas, Caron, and Pam Korza (eds). *Critical Perspectives: Writings on Art and Civic Dialogue.* Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts, 2005.

Baca, Judith F. "Whose Monument Where? Public Art in a Many-Cultured Society." In *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art,* edited by Suzanne Lacy, 131-138. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.

Bacon, Barbara Schaffer, Cheryl L. Yuen, and Pam Korza. *Animating Democracy: The Artistic Imagination as a Force in Civic Dialogue.* Washington, DC: Americans for the Arts, 1999.

Barndt, Deborah, ed. *VIVA! Community Arts and Popular Education in the Americas.* Toronto: Between the Lines, 2011.

Barndt, Deborah, ed. *Wild Fire: Art as Activism.* Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006.

Barndt, Deborah. "By Whom and for Whom? Intersections of Participatory Research and Community Art." In Provoked by *Art: Theorizing Art-Based Inquiry,* edited by Ardra L. Cole, Lorri Neilsen, J. Gary Knowles, and Teresa Luciani, 1-8. Toronto: Backalong Books, 2004.

Beveridge, Karl, and Jude Johnston. *Making Our Mark: Labour Arts and Heritage in Ontario.* Toronto: Between the Lines, 1999.

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. "An Introduction to Community Art and Activism." Originally published on the Community Arts Network Reading Room, February 2002. Accessed October 22, 2014. https://library.upei.ca/sites/default/files/an_introduction_to_community_art_and_activism_cohen_cruz.pdf

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. *Local Acts: Community Based Performance in the United States.* Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005.

Cronin, J. Keri, and Kirsty Robertson, eds. *Imagining Resistance: Visual Culture and Activism in Canada.* Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011.

Doss, Erika. *Spirit Poles and Flying Pigs: Public Art and Cultural Democracy in American Communities.* Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995.

Felshin, Nina, ed. *But Is It Art?: The Spirit of Art as Activism.* Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.

Fernandez, Melanie. "Community and Art: A Runaway History: Existing and Emerging Work in Canadian Community Arts." Paper presented at the Live in Public: The Art of Engagement Conference, Vancouver, 2008. Accessed March 15, 2016. http://artofengagement.gruntarchives.org/essay-melanie-fernandez-community-and-art-a-runaway-history.html

Finkelpearl, Tom. *What We Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

Ford-Smith, Honor. "Whose Community? Whose Art? The Politics of Reformulating Community Art in Canada." In No *Frame Around It: Process and Outcome of the A Space Community Art Biennale,* edited by Melanie Fernandez, 11-27. Toronto: A Space Gallery, 2001.

Gagnon, Monika Kin. *Other Conundrums: Race, Culture and Canadian Art.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000.

Goldbard, Arlene. *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development.* Oakland, California: New Village Press, 2006.

Hand, Brian. "A struggle at the roots of the mind: service and solidarity in dialogical, relational and collaborative perspectives within contemporary art." *In What Is Participatory and Relational Art?* by the Irish Museum of Modern Art. Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art. Accessed March 15, 2016.
http://www.imma.ie/en/page_212537.htm

Helguera, Pablo. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook.* New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011.

Howard, Ruth. "The Cultural Equivalent of Daycare Workers? Reflections on Transcripts and Conversations from the Arts for All Project at Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre (DPNC), Toronto, 2003 to 2004." Toronto: Jumblies Theatre, 2004.

Howard, Ruth. "Is Anyone Political Anymore?" *Canadian Theatre Review* 148 (Fall 2011): 5-9. doi: 10.3138/ctr.148.5.

Hutcheson, Maggie. "Demechanizing Our Politics: Street Performance and Making Change." In *Wild Fire: Art as Activism*, edited by Deborah Barndt, 79-87. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006.

Hutcheson, Maggie. "The Community Artist in the Creative City: Engaged Citizen or Regeneration Bulldozer?" In Out of Place: *Dispatches from Artists on the Loose, Issue 1*, edited by Ruth Howard, 31-37. Toronto: Jumblies Press, 2010. http://www.jumbliestheatre.org/pdf/outOfPlace_June4_Web.pdf

Jickling, Hannah, and Helen Reed. "Doing Horizontal Work in Vertical Structures." *The Pedagogical Impulse.* Accessed March 15, 2016. http://thepedagogicalimpulse.com/doing-horizontal-work-in-vertical-structures/

Kester, Grant H. *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Kester, Grant H. *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Knight, Keith, and Mat Schwarzman. *Beginner's Guide to Community-Based Arts.* Oakland, California: New Village Press, 2005.

Kwon, Miwon. *One Place After Another Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002.

Lacy, Suzanne. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art.* Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.

Lerman, Liz. "Feeding the Artist, Feeding the Art." *In Community, Culture and Globalization*, edited by Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard. New York: Rockefeller Foundation, Creativity & Culture Division, 2002.

Lerman, Lerman, and J. Borstel. Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process: A Method for Getting Useful Feedback on Anything You Make, From Dance to Dessert. Takoma Park: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, 2003.

L'Hirondelle Hill, Gabrielle, and Sophie McCall, eds. *The Land We Are.* Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2015.

Mackey, Clarke. *Random Acts of Culture: Reclaiming Art and Community in the 21st Century.* Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010.

McGauley, Laurie. *Imagine: An External Review of the Canada Council for the Arts' Artists and Community Collaboration Fund.* Ottawa: Canada Council for the Arts, 2006. Accessed March 15, 2016. http://canadacouncil.ca/~/media/files/research%20-%20en/an%20external%20review%20of%20the%20canada%20council%20for%20the%20arts%20artists%20and%20community%20collaboration%20fund/accf_review%20(1).pdf

McGauley, Laurie. *Utopian Longings: Romanticism, Subversion and Democracy in Community Arts.* Accessed March 15, 2016. https://mythsandmirrors.wordpress.com/theory-practice-resource-library/

Naidus, Beverly. *Arts for Change: Teaching Outside the Frame.* Oakland, California: New Village Press, 2009.

Neal, Lucy. *Playing for Time: Making Art As If the World Mattered.* London: Oberon Books, 2015.

O'Donnell, Darren. *Social Acupuncture: A Guide to Suicide, Performance and Utopia.* Toronto: Coach House Books, 2006.

Papastergiadis, Nicos. "Collaboration in Art and Society: A Global Pursuit of Democratic Dialogue." *Public Journal* (Spring 2009): 33-51.

Robertson, Clive. *Policy Matters: Administrations of Art and Culture.* Toronto: YYZ Books, 2006.

Salverson, Julie, and Kim Renders, eds. "Artists and Communities." *Canadian Theatre Review* 148 (2011): 3-4.

Thompson, Nato, ed. *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011.* New York: Creative Time, 2012.

Tuer, Dot. "Parables of Community and Culture for a New World Order." *In Mining the Media Archive: Essays on Art, Technology, and Cultural Resistance,* 143-158. Toronto: YYZ Books, 2005.

CREDITS

WRITING
Maggie Hutcheson

Maggie Hutcheson is a community-engaged artist, educator and consultant. Over the past 15 years she has collaborated with other artists and Toronto residents to animate oral histories of gentrification, homelessness, migration and community organizing. Maggie has worked with a range of arts and non-arts organizations, including the CBC, Jumblies Theatre, MABELLEarts, Homes First Society and The VIVA! Project. In 2011, she co-founded the award-winning Department of Public Memory, an arts collective dedicated to remembering overlooked public institutions in Toronto.

Maggie teaches at York University in the Community Arts Practice program and has a PhD in Environmental Studies.

EDITING
Kirsten Gunter, Director of Communications
Loree Lawrence, Multi-Inter and Community-Engaged
    Arts Officer
Bushra Junaid, Outreach and Development Manager

COPYEDITING
Nancy Foran

COORDINATION AND EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Angela Loh

DESIGN
Co-Effect Creative Inc.

🐦 @ONArtsCouncil   f Follow us

Ontario

The Ontario Arts Council is an agency of the Government of Ontario.