
XOXO DOWNSVIEW

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2022



Overview

XOXO Downsview is a local arts and culture initiative of Northcrest and Canada Lands that was launched in September 2021, in coordination with ArtworxTO's Year of Public Art. Since that time, it has engaged hundreds of community members as makers of creative work and drawn thousands of people to experience projects that celebrate the spirit of Downsview and Toronto's Northwest quadrant. It has developed a unique audience and brought people together from all over the city, not only to see the XOXO projects, but to learn about Downsview and the changes that will come in the future.

XOXO Downsview developed in response to calls made during the id8 Downsview engagement process; participants insisted that arts and culture programming and placemaking be a priority on the Downsview lands. The landowners — Northcrest and Canada Lands — agree that arts and culture are critical for the area, now and in the decades ahead. XOXO has been a way to test creative ideas for the future and to animate these lands, and the lands of adjacent Downsview Park, while planning is underway. XOXO projects “show” rather than “tell”; they have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the local community and to amplifying local arts and culture. The initiative makes explicit that, in Downsview, there's a lot to love.

This report outlines the projects that took place over the first year of XOXO Downsview, demonstrates how the projects have involved the community as makers and decision-makers, and assesses them in relation to the guiding principles of the XOXO Workplan. Indeed, this report and evaluation are mandated by the Workplan to ensure that projects continue to support community-identified goals.

While the City's Year of Public Art has come to a close, XOXO Downsview continues. This document captures a moment in time, with many projects ongoing and in mid-production at the time of publishing. XOXO is hitting its stride and building on the momentum.

The Projects & Events

In its first year, XOXO Downsview projects celebrated local art, culture, and heritage through dynamic installations, murals, multimedia works, community-engaged outreach, and walking tours (both audio and in-person) on the Downsview Lands and in Downsview Park. In their own way, each project highlighted local artists, aimed to bring people together, and highlighted the history and potential of Downsview as a destination and generator of cultural works.

Here is an overview of the projects and events initiated in XOXO's first year:

THE PAINTED PATH

The painted path was created to foster a sense of discovery and exploration on and around the Downsview Lands, and to animate long stretches of pavement. From Downsview Park subway station, people are taken on a journey through Downsview Park along a path punctuated with unexpected lines, local art, and audio tour stops that highlight Downsview's rich arts and culture scene, past and present. The painted path begins just south of the station's east exit and continues with a colourful sequence of runway-inspired graphic lines that run for 1.2 kilometres through Downsview Park.

In 2021, these playful lines became canvases for six local artists. First, viewers encounter Jieun June Kim's tiger—or "horangi." The North York-based artist painted it to bring good energy and symbolize courage and power, drawing from Korean folklore and myth. Murals on the painted path also include: a painting of kids at play by Moises Frank (a.k.a. Luvs); Afro-Indigenous artist Kaya Joan's work of the "Three Sisters" — corn, squash, and beans; Gosia Komorski's vignette reflecting on the military history with birds and aircraft; Phillip Saunders' set of ASL hand signs spelling "love"; and Curtia Wright's painting of local icon, Michie Mee.

Apart from June Kim, the diverse artists were brought to the project by Just BGRAPHIC, a deeply-rooted local arts advocacy organization, led by Kayode Brown. Just BGRAPHIC also used the project as an opportunity for mentorship by bringing young artists Gabriela Gonzalez and Josiah Grant as the creative support team.



"This project was a blast! Thank you for the opportunity! We're excited to build on this project and relationship."

– XOXO painted path artist, fall 2021



AUDIO TOUR

Over seven parts, the XOXO Downsview audio tour weaves together the rich history and heritage of design, performance, architecture, music, and culture of the local area. It was launched on ArtworxTO's Driftscape app as part of the Year of Public Art, but is most often accessed through the XOXO Downsview website. QR codes along the painted path bring visitors to site-specific episodes that animate the experience of this place.

Hosted by former CBC broadcaster Jane Farrow, and developed with radio-quality production values, the tour of the XOXO Downsview installations highlights the bold, vital spirit of Downsview. Listeners learn about the compelling and surprising history of music, art, heritage architecture, aviation, performance, and visual arts and how it all connects with the present day and plans for the future. The episodes, which feature the voices of the id8 team and many XOXO artists, include:

- **Welcome to Downsview:** An introduction to the lands, XOXO, and the ArtworxTO collaboration
- **Painted Path:** An overview of the path collaborations and the journey through Downsview's arts and culture highlights, past and present
- **The Hangars:** An introduction to the area's aviation history and an overview of site's role in the future of Canadian aviation
- **The Supply Depot:** An invitation to learn about the structure's history and how it will evolve and adapt in the future
- **ALLSTYLES mural:** An introduction to the massive BIPOC mural curated by Danilo Deluxo, as part of the Year of Public Art
- **Ulysses Curtis Mural:** A presentation of Danilo Deluxo's work and the important role played by Ulysses — the first full-time Black player for the Toronto Argonauts and local teacher, coach, and guidance counsellor
- **The Wind Rose:** An overview of the installation, local Indigenous history, and the installation by Born in the North artists Chris and Greg Mitchell



The tour takes about 2 hours on foot or 1 hour by bike. It has equally been listened to by people who are not on the site. Since its launch, the tour has been listened to 634 times, with 3,296 minutes of listening time.

“Check out these how @id8Downsview is integrating arts and culture into the future of the neighbourhood with these installations right next to @ParCKDownsview!”

— Downsview Advocate, Oct 2021

ULYSSES CURTIS MURAL

In September 2021, Danilo Deluxo unveiled a mural he painted of Ulysses “Crazy Legs” Curtis on the former Downsview Fire Station. Deluxo was inspired by the story of Curtis, which he discovered on the id8 Downsview Stories page. His work celebrates the impact and achievements of this admirable man who lived and worked in Downsview.

Curtis was a trailblazing Toronto Argonaut running back, much-loved educator, and local hero who hailed originally from Florida. He joined the Argos in 1950, becoming their first full-time Black player. Even 70 years later, he remains the greatest Argo running back of all time. He helped win two Grey Cups in his five seasons with the Argos and stood up to considerable racial animosity.

Upon his retirement from football in 1954, Curtis started a new career, working with young people in the Downsview community. He became one of the first Black teachers at the North York Board of Education and spent thirty years teaching physical education, geography, and history at various North York high schools, including Downsview Secondary School, where he also worked as a guidance counsellor and football coach.

Ulysses Curtis died in Toronto in 2013 at the age of 87 but his legacy lives on in Downsview and with this mural. The work was unveiled at an intimate and emotional event in the presence of members of the Curtis family, Toronto’s Mayor, and the Argo’s General Manager, Michael “Pinball” Clemons. It has since become a site of remembering and commemoration, and flowers have been found under the mural, even a year after it was unveiled.





"Today, I joined Pinball Clemons, @YaaraSaks, @PasternakTO and others to launch the #ArtworxTO Hub NORTH at Downsview Common. Great to meet the local artists behind the exhibitions at this hub - one of four that are fostering spaces for diverse artists to showcase their work."

- John Tory, Sept 2021



PLAY ON THE RUNWAY

On Sunday, June 26th, the gates to the Downsview runway swung open for a unique opportunity. It was the first time in decades the public could stand, ride, run, jump, dance, and soak up the open tarmac.

The promise of free ice cream and two kilometres of empty airport runway drew around 2,000 people, most of them from the adjacent neighbourhoods in and around North York. Over 3,350 people registered and the id8 newsletter subscribers increased by 57% because of the event. It also generated great social media buzz and increased views and shares through both paid and organic posts. There were over 60,000 impressions during the promotion period.

During an afternoon of free play in celebration of North York's 100th birthday, the runway was temporarily repurposed as a spontaneous celebration of human-powered propulsion. From newborns to seniors, there were people in strollers, on skateboards, on bikes, on scooters, and on trikes. There were roller bladers, roller skaters and roller dancers – bopping along to an irresistible soundtrack of funk, hip hop, and soul provided by DJ Jason.

The event captured the spirit of Downsview – people of all ages and backgrounds revelling in the outdoors, sharing spontaneous fun, with no limit to the imaginative ways they could play and move around. The event was a pilot for the activities that will be coming to the runway in the future and a successful one at that.



"Awesome! Yay! My son is over the moon excited!"

- @laurenishome, June 2022

"I am nothing but grateful for the opportunities that I've been given to spread my joy."

- @jar0uge, June 2022

"Roller skating on the #Downsview airport runway! What a unique experience in #Toronto. Such an amazing event @id8Downsview #PlayOnTheRunway #Happy100thBdayNorthYork"

- @only1phoenixx, June 2022

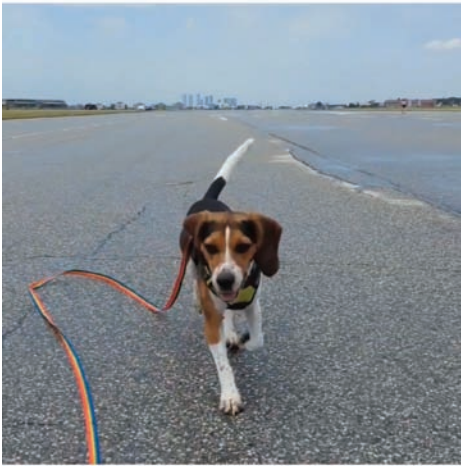
"Wonderful sunny afternoon on the runway at YZD! Great community-engaging idea and nice chatting with @MPPKerzner ! Looking forward to having shovels in the ground!"

@NorthcrestDev @id8Downsview @Bombardier @PasternakT0 #Happy100thBdayNorthYork"

- @PitinoMichael, June 2022



bageltheeverythingbeagle
Downsview Airport



Liked by jindomochi and others

bageltheeverythingbeagle Dog on the loose on the runway! #playontherunway

ndamario
@id8downsview
@nadiadxo @damars_xo



A very fun day at
#playontherunway



rollerouge and sk8.tingz
Harry Styles - As It Was

Would you skate on
an airport runway?



Heart, Comment, Share, Bookmark icons

only1phoenixx

Guess where 📍
Type something



HINT: @ID8DOWNSVIEW
@BOMBARDIERJETS
@SHIMSHIMMAA

_yshyshysh



_yshyshysh Nope we're not your #ProjectRunway contestants. Had fun under the sun Saturday with @ridesco...



@damars xo and i made
the cut in the
#playontherunway
recap! Cute!



rollerouge and sk8.tingz
Harry Styles - As It Was



XOXO PILSNER

In 2022, Northcrest and XOXO launched a limited-edition XOXO Downsview Pilsner. The idea came from seeing hops grow on the Downsview lands and from much theoretical discussion of the distinctive local flavour of Downsview, and what it would taste like if that “wild yeast and terroir” was put in a can.

The resulting brew is a collaboration with Ren Navarro from Beer Diversity, who spent some time growing up in the Downsview area. It was produced by Indigenous co-owned Red Tape Brewery. The beer is rooted in this place and speaks to both where Downsview has been and where it's going.

Like Downsview, beer is a story of slow migration, change, and infinite possibility. The idea was to create a truly local beer that blends old and new and points to the future. Starting with an Italian Pilsner, we added the new world hops that have been grown successfully on the Downsview lands. This beer looks forward by featuring artwork by Adeymi Adegbesan. The work is drawn from his “Agents of Change” mural, part of the ArtworxTO ALL STYLES BIPOC mural curated by Danilo Deluxo on The Downsview Depot.

The beer was formally launched at a public event on September 8th at the Fresh City Farms Barn. At the event, Ren discussed the creation of the beer and her quest to increase diversity in the Canadian beer industry.



FENCE ART PROJECT

A project to transform some of Downsview's fencing into canvases for local art is currently underway. The project responds to the calls from the local community to animate the many kilometres of fences and incorporates ideas gathered from the XOXO Advisory Committee and jury pool members following a site walk in summer 2022.

In early 2023, 25 works of art will be printed on lexan boards, shaped as Xs and Os. These works will be hung on fencing in areas surrounding the Downsview lands, specifically around Bay 12. Works will be printed in multiple and will stay on the fences for approximately a year. As of the time of publication, artists have been identified and the selection of artistic works is in progress.

To select the artists, a number of North York community arts organizations and partners were identified by the XOXO Team and provided with a specific number of canvases. Organizations include: North York Arts, Sketch, ArtStarts, Just BGRAPHIC, MuseArts, Cinemascope, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

These organizations identified artists for the project, using the XOXO Workplan as their guide for selection. This included considerations for: artists from the North York area or those who address local themes; BIPOC artists; providing opportunities for emerging and marginalized artists and cultural producers; celebrating a diversity of artforms; and artists whose work will delight, challenge, entice, and animate these lands.

Artists will be paid and organizations are being provided with an honorarium for their support. The selection process was shared with the XOXO Advisory Committee and revised based on their feedback.



THE WIND ROSE

Over the last year, the Downsview Wind Rose has become the jewel of XOXO Downsview. The structure, on top of the highest mound in Downsview Park, has become a destination and a host for a series of dynamic installations.

Created by Future Simple Studio and the Dept of Words & Deeds, the Downsview Wind Rose is a radial network of 16 square arches arranged in a compass-like formation. It was inspired by the wind rose for the Downsview airport. A wind rose is a time-honoured tool invented by meteorologists that maps the direction, speed, and frequency of the wind in a specific location. The wind rose for Downsview shows the area's prevailing northwest winds and has provided inspiration for the installations that have been developed here.

Since fall 2021, the installations have celebrated the wind, local history, stories of making home, and the Indigenous connections to this place.

The Turtle & the Traveller

The first installation included 32 blue flags that referenced the sky and showed the powerful winds in this place. Shortly after their installation, the flags at the northwest corner were replaced by a set of flags designed by Chris and Greg Mitchell, Mi'kmaq artists who lead the design studio Born in the North. The artists were identified through 7th Generation Image Makers, a program of the Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, which has an office not far from the Downsview Lands.

The Mitchell brothers' work, called "The Turtle and the Traveller," was based on the history of these lands and the local area. Because the flags were positioned at the installation's northwest, one was white, representing north on the medicine wheel, and one was the black, representing the west.

The white flag depicted a traveller to honour Indigenous people's historic use of this place as an important route for trade and travel. The turtle on the black flag represented the land – Turtle Island – as well as the local wildlife. Its shell referenced a medicine wheel to highlight traditional teachings. The style is reminiscent of petroglyphs from the Eastern Woodlands people.

The Wind Rose featuring the Turtle and Traveller was highlighted in: The Globe & Mail; WabiSabi; InHabitat; LiveGreen Blog; World Landscape Architect; Floornature, Architecture & Surfaces; New York Metropolitan Magazine; and ArchiEcho.

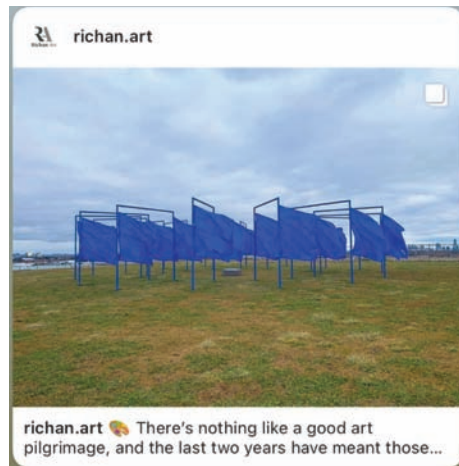
"We climbed one of the Downsview mountains to see an #ArtworxTO piece called The Turtle & the Traveller by Mi'kmaq artists Chris and Greg Mitchell. Very dramatic in today's wind. Kinda Christo."

– Shawn Micallef, Oct 2021

"The story of Downsview is written in the wind "The Turtle and the Traveller" - v cool public art that honours the indigenous history of the land! @parcdownsviewpark"

– @lennoxhuang, 2021





Fabric of Community

In August 2022, Fabric of Community was installed on the Downsview Wind Rose. This beautiful textile-art-based engagement project and public art installation wove together hundreds of community voices to tell a story of North York's complex patterns of journey, arrival, and legacy.

The project was developed in collaboration with Paola Gomez, Community Arts Facilitator, trained human rights lawyer, community organizer, public speaker, writer, refugee, and self-described dreamer. The project was co-presented by North York Arts and co-facilitated by Daniela Arango. The project responded to calls from the XOXO Advisory Committee to engage older residents of the area as makers and to find ways to share immigrant experience through artistic practice.

In the installation, experiences of eight Latina women living in North York are entwined through 136 vibrant crocheted mandalas. Their intimate practices of craftwork were transformed into public art through Paola's guidance. The talented crocheters, or "tejedoras," were: Gladys Agudelo, Margarita Andrade, Daniela Arango, Sandra Cordero, Enny Johana Giraldo, Paola Gomez, Vilma E. Requena, and Blanca Restrepo.

Fabric of Community also amplifies local voices on over 500 ribbons. At North York events over the summer months, Paola invited community members to reflect on their experiences of making a home here by drawing and writing on colourful ribbons that are now tied to the fence. Together they make the phrase "I am right here," reflecting their individual journey and arrival narratives as part of the collective story of North York.

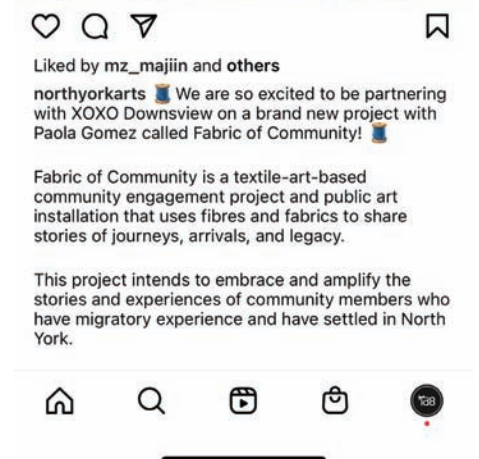
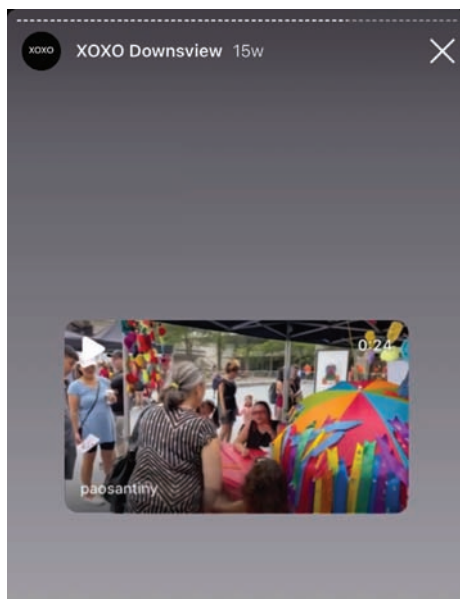
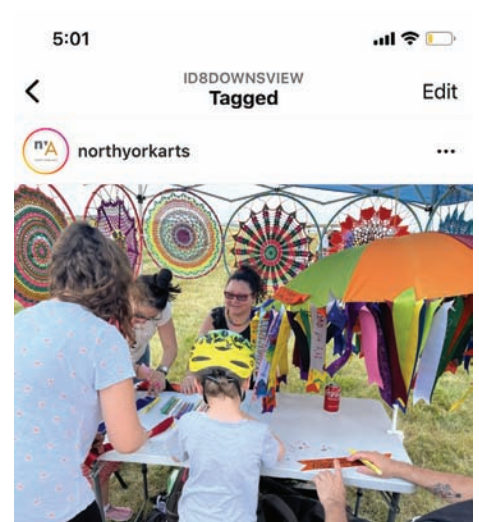
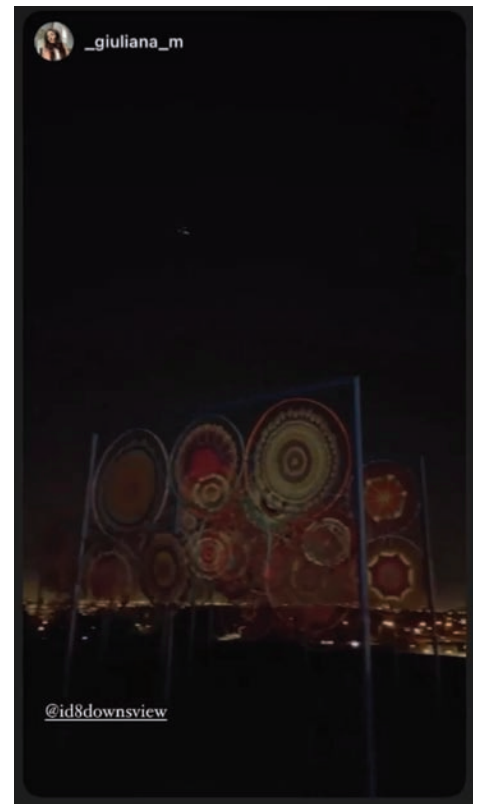
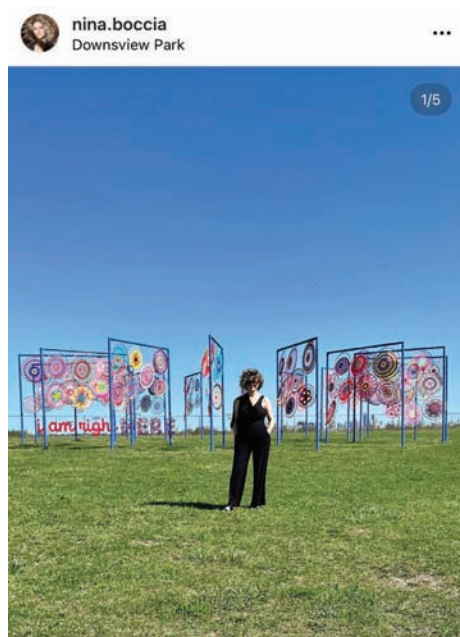
This community-initiated project and the work of the talented local crocheters was honoured at a ceremony on top of the Mound. At the event, the participants were given a certificate. Their pride was palpable.

"Crocheting is part of me, of my family and cultural heritage, it is creating, it is art and it is one of the many things that I learned from my mother. I greatly appreciate being able to carry out this work in North York, thanks to Paola and the valuable projects that she develops with the community."

- A Fabric of Community tejedora









The Downsview Stories Banners

The XOXO Downsview team developed banners for the Wind Rose that highlight Downsview's diverse history. They are drawn from the Downsview Stories on the id8 Downsview website, and will be used as an interim installation between others. They will first be installed at the end of October 2022 when the Fabric of Community installation comes down.

The Wind Rose Design Competition

In early fall 2022, the XOXO team issued a public call to students and emerging professionals across the GTA to propose new temporary installations on the Wind Rose. Designers were invited from all creative fields, including graphic, urban, and industrial design, architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, fine arts, and more. Applications were encouraged from all ages and all ranges of experience.

The competition was originally planned for spring 2022, but was delayed following calls from the XOXO Advisory Committee for more lead time for promotion and the development of more support for participants.

Twenty-one teams registered for the competition. In response to suggestions from the XOXO Advisory Committee, interested teams were paired with a mentor and also met with the Future Simple Studio team for help identifying materials and refining budgets.

Following the guiding principles of the XOXO Workplan, a diverse panel of local and city-wide experts has been formed to judge the proposals. They include:

- **David Anselmi**, Senior Director of Real Estate at Canada Lands and a landscape architect who long served as the President of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects and the Chair of Toronto's Public Art Commission;
- **Elham Fatapour**, a visual artist and York University MFA whose practice includes explorations of our relationship with the land;
- **Patrizia Libralato**, Founder of the Toronto Biennial of Art, born and raised in Downsview;
- **Mitchell Marcus**, Executive Director of Site Activation and Programming at Northcrest Developments, previously the founder and CEO of The Musical Stage Company and Associate Producer for Luminato;
- **Tracey Prehay**, a cultural producer, artist, and curator, who grew up in North York and worked locally with ArtworxTO for the year of public art;
- **Henrick Sales**, North-York based public and performance artist who works with Ward Museum and focuses on immigrant experience and story-telling;
- **Michael Vickers**, Senior Program Lead at Brampton Arts, and previous Co-Director of AKIN; and
- **Collin Zipp**, multidisciplinary artist and Public Art Manager from STEPS Public Art.

"We are so excited to be involved in this opportunity. Even if we don't win, it's a great way to get us to know how the industry works."

- Wind Rose competition participant

"I appreciated all the ideas yesterday! I found them really helpful in thinking about components I had not yet considered—and for giving me some inspiration to how I plan to create a simple yet meaningful piece :) Excited to share what I come up with!"

- Wind Rose competition participant reflecting on a mentorship meeting

Three proposals will be selected and installed, each for 10 weeks of public display, with the support of the XOXO Downsview installation team. The budget for each successful installation is \$6,000 inclusive. Each winning team will also receive an honorarium of \$2,000.

The competition has brought new creative people to Downsview, many for the first time, and highlighted these lands as the site of city-wide creativity. Social media attention has been great and is expected to grow following the announcement of the winning teams and the installation of the new concepts.

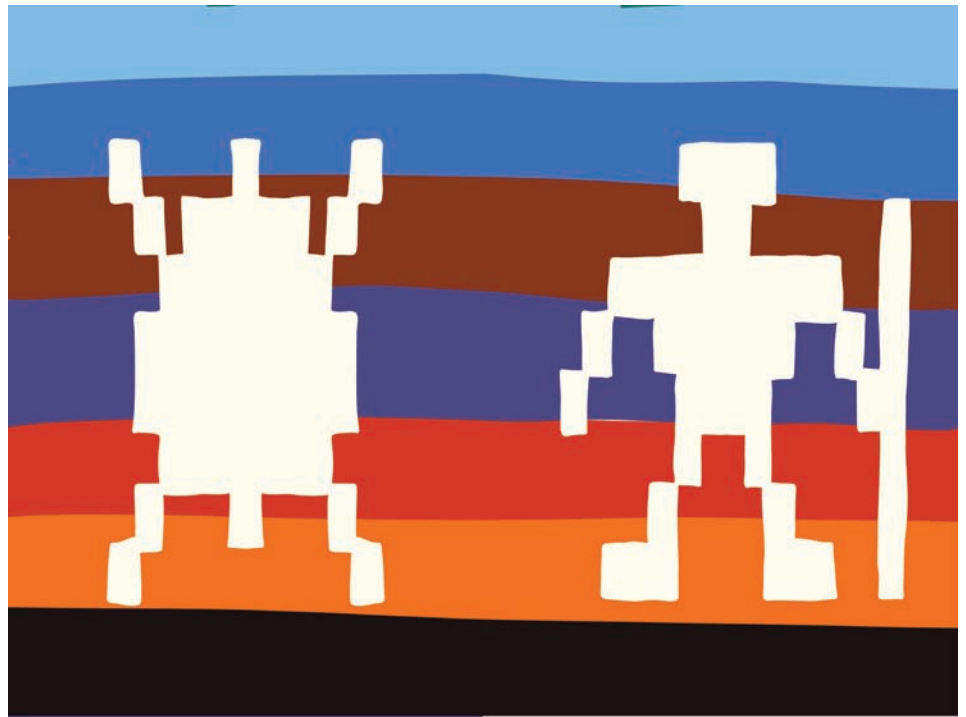
At the time of publication, the teams have yet to submit their proposals.



THE TURTLE AND THE TRAVELLER MURAL

Following the success of the Turtle and the Traveller flags on the Wind Rose, Greg and Chris Mitchell were engaged by the XOXO Downsview team in a commission to produce a piece of fence art. The project was explored in a number of different ways, including bringing in more Indigenous artists and using fence art or fencing weaving as an avenue for mentorship. When their proposed collaborations with other artists fell through, the Mitchell brothers worked on their own piece, and adapted the Turtle and the Traveller to the diamond composition of the chain link fence in an array of bold colours.

The repetition of the figures was explored, as was having them in positive and negative space. Ultimately, in collaboration with the landowners, it was decided that the piece would be better suited to, and honoured in, a mural on a wall. The exploration of a surface for this piece is ongoing.



PUBLIC SITE WALKS

The XOXO Downsview site walks mirrored the content of the XOXO Downsview audio tours in a live format. Like the audio tour, they highlighted the bold, vital spirit of Downsview and invited participants to learn about the compelling and surprising history of local music, art, heritage architecture, aviation, and performance — and how it all connects with the present day and plans for the future.

Hosted by Jane Farrow with special guests and local experts with direct connections to the site, the tours showcased XOXO Downsview murals, audio tour, and installations, as well as ArtworxTO highlights. Tours successfully ran as part of Doors Open and Jane's Walk. Additional monthly public site walks were offered for a few months, and can be activated again as needed.

“Thank you again for taking the time to speak with us and show us around Downsview. Lots of big changes are coming, and I am excited to live in the community and actively be a part of the changes.”

- XOXO site walk participant

“Thank you for the tour – very insightful! The space is overwhelming – just in its sheer size. BUT also exciting. I think this project is great and would love to be more involved as opportunities for involvement arise.”

- XOXO site walk participant



THE XOXO-AC & JURY POOL SITE WALK

On June 13th, 2022, 30 members of the XOXO Downsview Advisory Committee and Jury Pool gathered in Downsview for a tour of existing arts installations and to imagine projects and possibilities for the future. Participants told us they were excited to be on the site and many followed up to say that the visit was insightful and exciting, if not overwhelming in the sheer size of the site and its potential.

In addition to informal feedback, following the meeting, we asked participants two questions over email regarding future opportunities, particularly around supporting local arts and animating fences. The feedback helped to shape plans for the next phase of XOXO Downsview. It will also support landowners Northcrest and Canada Lands as they make decisions about the arts and culture projects and programs that will take place on their respective lands in the decades to come. In both cases, this local input is essential to ensure projects are meaningful and contribute to Downsview communities.

MISSISSAUGAS OF THE CREDIT FIRST NATION SITE WALK

With the support of Indigenous engagement advisor, Bob Goulais, the XOXO Downsview team worked to organize a site walk with members of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This followed a meeting with members of MCFN's The Culture and Design Committee and expressions of interest for such a walk.

The afternoon of food, walks, and conversation about the possibilities for creative collaborations on the Downsview lands was first planned for May and then rescheduled for September. The event was advertised to community artists of all ages and mediums through the MCFN. It was presented as an opportunity to listen and explore ways to use these lands for projects that reflect the cultural expression of the MCFN. The walk was rescheduled and ultimately cancelled due to low enrollment. The artists that did express interest were invited for individual conversations with the team and landowners.

Collaborations

Over the last year, the XOXO Downsview team, led by the Dept of Words and Deeds, has brought people together to ensure artistic work supports the guiding principles of the Workplan and that decision-making is supported by the community. The team has worked with a wide range of local arts organizations, individual artists, XOXO Advisory Committee members, and jury pool members. They are highlighted here.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

7th Generation Image Makers is a dynamic, youth-led Aboriginal community arts program operating within Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, which has an office by Downsview. Since 1995 it has provided quality and accessible art and media-based programming in a culturally supportive and safe environment to Toronto-based youth and youth at-risk. They work to create opportunities for professional arts training including ongoing accessible and quality fine art instruction taught by professional contemporary Native artists, mentors, and Elders. The program connected us with Born in the North's Greg and Chris Mitchell. www.7thgenimagemakers.weebly.com

ArtworxTO is an agency of the City and the coordinator of Toronto's Year of Public Art 2021–2022. The initiative supports artists and new artwork that reflects Toronto's diversity and creates opportunities for people to engage with art in their everyday lives, across the whole city. Working closely with artists and Toronto's arts institutions, ArtworxTO delivered major public art projects and commissions from fall 2021 to fall 2022. Downsview Park was identified as the ArtworxTO northwest hub and has been a key partner in XOXO Downsview in its first year. www.artworxto.ca

Cinemascope is an award-winning film and digital media company based in northwest Toronto that has been commissioned to capture the XOXO Downsview process and installations, and provide artists for the fence art project. The young company is a collaboration between filmmaker Simeon Taole and producer Danielle Ungara. www.cinemascope.com

Just BGRAPHIC is a local organization on a bold mission to revolutionize arts education in Toronto. Based in northwest Toronto, and founded by Kayode Brown, the organization creates opportunities for young people in collaboration with progressive artists and

"I just wanted to take the time to say thank you to your team for giving 7th gen the opportunity to pass this project on to two amazing artists. The flags look amazing now that their installed! I hope to take some time to travel there near future as I would love to bring some of our younger youth participants to the view site as well. "

*– Program Coordinator,
7th Generation Image Makers*

experienced educators. Just BGRAPHIC's Curtia Wright, Moises Frank, Kaya Joan, Gosia Komorski, and Phillip Saunders led on five sections of XOXO Downsview's painted path and mentor high school students through the process. The organization is also proposing fence artists. www.justbgraphic.org

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation's Culture and Design Committee provides meaningful Mississauga design and cultural advice to proponents who are responsible for projects occurring within MCFN territory. The committee's core objective is to assist the Major Projects Unit in ensuring the truthful, accurate, and appropriate reflection of MCFN in project design and cultural programming – including history, culture, language, values, etc. The committee also provides guidance and advice on cultural learning and cultural protocols as well as identifying approaches and tactics for interconnecting Indigenous ways of knowing and being throughout project design and programming. The XOXO Downsview team met with the Committee, planned a site walk with them, holds a seat on the XOXO-AC for a member, and is working to connect with the committee for recommendations for artists for the fence art project. www.mncfn.ca

"We were very fortunate to work and partner with XOXO Downsview during the year of public art/ArtworxTO at Downsview Park. We had one of our main cultural community hubs there and working with XOXO helped to activate the space in a truly fulsome and incredibly creative way. It gave the local and visiting communities more art and important and meaningful narratives to connect and interact with."

*– Program Lead,
ArtworxTO, Hubs & Programs*

"We had a wonderful time capturing the event yesterday! Thank you so much for including us!"

– Cinemascope

"Fabric of Community speaks of the hearts of the diverse communities living in North York. It celebrates journeys and experiences. All this was possible thanks to the XOXO program. Through it, we see the recognition of the crucial role of the arts in engaging communities in meaningful process to motivate community pride and a sense of belonging."

– Muse Arts

"We are so excited to be partnering with XOXO Downsview on a brand new project with Paola Gomez called Fabric of Community!"

– @northyorkarts

MUSE Arts is an artist-run, community arts organization focused on creating spaces and engaging communities meaningfully and actively in hands-on, high-quality arts education integrated to issues of social justice. The organization also supports emerging artists from equity-seeking groups to showcase their work and access opportunities for professional development. It was founded in October 2012, and was created, and is run by, refugee, immigrant, and newcomer artists. Paola Gomez from MUSE created the Fabric of Community. The organization has also proposed artists for the fence art project. www.musearts.ca

North York Arts is one of six Local Arts Service Organizations in Toronto whose purpose is to deliver on the City's social, economic, and cultural goals outside of the downtown core. The non-profit was created to specifically address the needs and interests of artists, arts organizations, and residents based in North York. North York Arts has an incredible knowledge of the arts scene in northwest Toronto and has been helping us connect with artists and organizations. They partnered with us on the Fabric of Community event and have a standing seat on the XOXO Advisory Committee. www.northyorkarts.org

Red Tape Brewery is an Indigenous co-owned craft brewery located in Toronto. Along with their own craft beers, they work with clients to design and brew bespoke beers. Red Tape brewed the XOXO Downsview Pilsner under the creative direction of Ren Navarro. www.redtapebrewery.com

SKETCH Working Arts is a non-profit arts initiative that's been engaging marginalized young people through the arts for 25 years. Their programs have been recognized locally, provincially, and nationally. They see a movement where young people are celebrated and engaged as culture makers, perception changers, and collaborators in building creative communities. SKETCH has been involved on the XOXO Advisory Committee and in identifying artists for the fence art project. www.sketch.ca

STEPS Public Art fosters dynamic and inclusive communities through public art and creative placemaking. They transform urban spaces into vibrant places through cultural planning, community arts and artist capacity building programs. STEPS creates one-of-a-kind public art plans, installations and engagement strategies that: meet public art and placemaking needs; transform spaces into cultural destinations; foster stronger relationships with communities; and showcase the talent of diverse Canadian artists. STEPS has been involved on the XOXO Advisory Committee and in identifying artists for the fence art project. www.stepspublicart.org

INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS & MAKERS

In addition to the artists here, 25 more artists with direct connections to the area will be joining XOXO Downsview before the end of 2022 as participants in the fence art project.

Danilo Deluxo McCallum is an award-winning Toronto-based multidisciplinary artist, graphic designer, muralist, and cultural curator. His creative practice explores the multiplicities of Black identity through the lens of Afrofuturism. He has been working collaboratively with arts organizations, artists, and communities in Toronto for more than 15 years and is probably best known for “Patterns of the People,” part of the iconic “Toronto” sign in Nathan Phillips Square. Danilo is the curator of ArtworxTO’s northwest hub of the Year of Public Art. As well as curating a massive BIPOC mural on the Downsview Supply Depot, Danilo painted the XOXO Downsview Ulysses Curtis mural on the former Downsview Fire Station. www.danilodeluxo.com

Moises Frank, also known as Luvs, is a Toronto based artist, educator and young creative. As a millennial in hip-hop he finds himself as a bridge between classical graffiti writing and “graffuturist” mural styles. From a young age he has studied graffiti and muralism in back alleys, abandoned buildings, on trains, and in books. His discipline in the art has been developing over the past decade professionally and has successfully collaborated, designed, and executed murals/artworks all around Toronto and internationally in such places as New York, Los Angeles, Baltimore, and Columbia, South America. His work in Downsview captures how public space and sidewalks become communal playgrounds for sharing moments and memories epitomized in how children play hopscotch. @_____moises

Paola Gomez is a Community Arts Facilitator, a trained human rights lawyer, community organizer, public speaker, writer, and dreamer. A member of PEN Canada’s Writers in Exile and an advocate, Paola is involved in causes such as ending violence against women and forced migration. Paola is the co-founder and Director of Muse Arts. Her work with refugee and newcomer communities have been greatly recognized in Canada, where she arrived as a refugee. Paola is the recipient of 2008 Amina Malko Award from the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, 2009 Vital People from Toronto Foundation for her community building initiatives, the 2016 Constance E Hamilton, Human Rights Award from the City of Toronto and the 2018 Champions of Change Award; excellence in the Arts from the Skills for Change.

Gabriela Gonzalez is currently in her final year of Children, Childhood, and Youth Studies at York University. She’s looking forward to enrolling in Teachers College next to further her love of educating and inspiring young people. She was involved as a mentee on the painted path project.

Josiah Grant, also known as King Jay, is an artist based in North York. He fell in love with the arts at an early age and was always sketching and writing poems. The creative aspects of life keep him chasing his dreams and keeping up with commissions for painting, tattoo designs, and poetry. He was involved as a mentee on the painted path project.

Javid Jah is a member of XYZ Collective and an interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto. His studio projects migrate between public art murals and contemporary architecture. Javid supported Danilo Deluxo on the Supply Depot mural and the Ulysses Curtis mural on the former Downsview Fire Station. www.javidjah.xyz

Kaya Joan is a multi-disciplinary Afro-Indigenous artist living in T'karonto (Dish with One Spoon treaty territory). Kaya's work focuses on placemaking, non-linear temporality, and blood memory. Afro and Indigenous futurity and pedagogy are also centred in Kaya's practice-working through buried truths to explore how creation can heal seven generations into the past and future. Kaya has been working in community arts for six years as a facilitator and artist. Kaya's painting focuses on Downsview heritage, as told through the "3 Sisters" of corn, squash, and beans, the agricultural triad that has historically nourished Indigenous cultures across North America. www.kayaioan.com

Jieun June Kim is a painter, muralist, and illustrator and northwest Toronto local. She is an artist-in-residence of STEPS' CreateSpace BIPOC Public Art Residency. June was the first artist to contribute to the XOXO Downsview painted path. She painted a tiger because tigers are revered as guardians and divine spirits and symbolize courage and power in Korean folklore and myth. Our tiger is meant to bring good energy to the park. www.jieunjunekim.com

Gosia Komorski is a Polish-Canadian artist with a passion for visual storytelling. Whether designing for a big public wall, or working on a small piece in the studio, Gosia is inspired by ornate symbols and patterns of identity. Through mixing patterns and using bold complimentary colours, she builds a visual language that is inclusive and relatable. Since her first public mural in 2015, Gosia has painted numerous public and private murals throughout the GTA and Mexico. Currently exploring a new series, Gosia is visually retelling life stories of inspiring women through patterns of their past, present and future identities. In Downsview Gosia creates a vignette reflecting on the military history that mixes the flight of birds and aircraft. www.gosiakomorski.com

Chris and Greg Mitchell are artists and graphic designers whose work focuses on the relationship between humans and nature. It is inspired by their Mi'kmaq heritage, music exploration, and Canadian upbringing. The twin brothers studied design in Brooklyn and, after moving to Toronto in 2019, launched Born in the North, a streetwear line that mixes Indigenous imagery and themes with their day-to-day experiences. They also have an association with 7th Generation Image Makers, a program of the Native Child and Family Services, which has a branch in the Downsview area. The Mitchell brothers produced the signature flags "The Turtle and Traveller" for the Wind Rose installation on top of the Mound. www.borninthenorth.com

Ren Navarro has nearly a decade of experience in the alcohol industry, a passion for encouraging personal and professional growth, and trademark wit, she is here to educate, enlighten, and engage. Since launching Beer Diversity in 2018, Ren has become a known name at breweries, wineries, distilleries, and beyond. She has given talks on diversity and inclusion at several colleges and countless festivals, panels, radio shows, and podcasts throughout North America. In addition to being a diversity educator, she is a craft beer consultant for bars and restaurants in Ontario and an educator for countless businesses throughout the country. Ren was the creative director of the XOXO Downsview Pilsner, brewed by Red Tape Brewery. www.beer-diversity.com

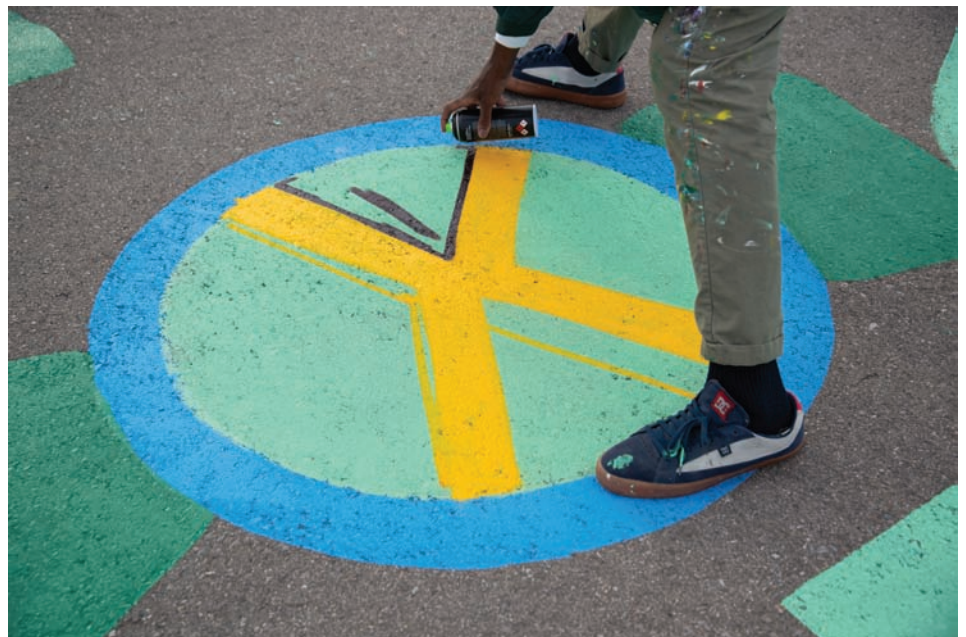
Rollerouge (a.k.a. Jared Kerr) and the Roller Dancers. Rollerouge is a self-described SK8er, inspirer, creator, and artist. He brought the party at the Play on the Runway event in June and wowed the crowd with his roller moves. He was joined by the talented Keegan Shim, Nikki Samuel, Josh Harper, and Brittany Kerr. @rollerouge @shimshimmaa @rosedegoddess @aceofsk8 @thefrontporchskater

Phillip Saunders is a multidisciplinary artist based in Toronto, Ontario. His practice includes oil painting, charcoal and graphite drawings, and street art murals. Phillip's work uses the human face as a means to communicate, relate, and connect to his audience. He uses colour and abstract patterns to further connect with the viewer's emotions; the goal of his work is to instill a positive mood, reminding the viewer of the beauty of their own humanness. Phillip's larger than life portrait murals take on a life of their own as they are painted intricately using aerosol paint and possess a mosaic-like aesthetic appeal. In his XOXO painted path work, Phillip reflects on the diversity of Downsview with a set of ASL hand signs signifying "love." www.phillipasaunders.com

Jason Stewart is a DJ who is much loved by the skater community. A skater himself, DJ Jason plays a mix of rare groove, funk, classic disco, old school house, hip hop as well as new school R&B, dance, techno, and rap. He provided the irresistible beats for the Play on the Runway event and the track for the Play on the Runway video.

The Tejadoras are eight Latina women living in North York who worked together to crochet 136 mandalas for the Fabric of Community installation. They include: Gladys Agudelo, Margarita Andrade, Daniela Arango, Sandra Cordero, Enny Johana Giraldo, Paola Gomez, Vilma E. Requena, and Blanca Restrepo. They worked on the project with facilitator Paola Gomez and co-facilitator, Daniela Arango.

Curtia Wright is a multi-disciplinary artist, muralist, and educator born in Scarborough. She received her BFA at OCAD in the Drawing and Painting program in 2015. Her artwork re-imagines reality using elements of fantasy and surrealism. She uses warm, energetic and bold colour to brighten environments. Her narratives focus on telling stories of Black peoples of the African diaspora, primarily speaking about her own heritage as a Jamaican-Canadian. Wright's work is often autobiographical and inspired by pop-culture, Caribbean mythology & folklore. In her piece for the painted path, Curtia honours Michie Mee, a local icon and pioneer of what the world has come to love and cherish: Toronto Hip Hop. @curtia





THE XOXO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The XOXO Advisory Committee (XOXO-AC) is made up of members of diverse local and city-wide arts communities and landowner representatives. Members applied following a public call for expressions of interest. They were selected based on the guiding principles of the XOXO Workplan and on their expertise in a range of artistic disciplines and in the local area.

Members work in collaboration to ensure projects meet XOXO Downsview's guiding principles and are of high artistic merit. The Committee provides feedback on proposed projects and programming and makes recommendations for additional projects.

Over the last year, the XOXO-AC met twice. Their input particularly shaped how the Wind Rose and the fence art projects have developed. The members also provided feedback that shaped changes to the XOXO Workplan. In addition, the members have acted as mentors for the Wind Rose design competition, connected us with local organizations, provided artists for the fence art project, and joined on a site walk which resulted in key recommendations for future projects.

The XOXO-AC currently includes the following members:

- **Ashley Beerdat** is a visual artist and community arts facilitator who has experience working on public art activations for the cities of Brampton, Mississauga, and Toronto. She has roots in North York and is passionate about delivering accessible arts programming in the community.
- **Kayode Brown** is the founder of Just BGRAPHIC, an arts education organization that has been based in the Blackcreek community for over 10 years. His organization brings the professional arts sector into local schools, including through a central partnership with the TDSB. As a local to the area, Kayode is invested in it and in possibilities for bringing diverse young people into local arts.
- **Paola Gomez** is a Community Arts Facilitator, a trained human rights lawyer, community organizer, public speaker, writer, and dreamer. She is also the co-founder and Director of MUSE Arts. Paola's work with refugee and newcomer communities has been award-winning and recognized many times in Canada, where she arrived herself as a refugee.
- **Lydia Hernandez** is a local who has been involved in youth-focused community arts programs for 10 years, including arts-based harm-reduction, digital storytelling, capacity-building, and skill development. Currently at SKETCH Working Arts, Lydia is committed to helping young people enter the arts and culture sector and make Toronto's art scene more vibrant in the process. (Lydia shares a seat with Phyllis, who is also from SKETCH)
- **Patrizia Libralato** is an original founder of the Toronto Biennial of Art and has served as its Executive Director since February 2017. Her 25-year career spans the national and international commercial and public art world, though, having been born and raised in Downsview, Patrizia remains a community and city-builder at heart.
- **Phyllis Novak** is a social-practice artist, curator, and PhD candidate at YorkU in Environmental and Urban Change, and was the Founding Artistic Director of SKETCH Working Arts, which engages young artists in arts for social change. Phyllis uses community-engaged design justice to curate strategic projects about space and place, centering leadership from the margins. (Phyllis shares a seat with Lydia, who is also from SKETCH)

- **Tracey Prehay** is a cultural producer, artist, and curator who grew up in North York. As a visual artist, Tracey explores personal/cultural memory through publicly-engaged projects and workshops. As an art professional with Toronto's ArtworxTO, she works to support the visibility of arts and culture and make the North Hub shine for Toronto's Year of Public Art.
- **Adriana Salazar** is a Colombian mestiza woman, singer, visual designer, artisan, master's student, and a passionate creator of innovative, community-based collective art projects that promote social justice and inclusiveness. A Downsview local, Adriana brings extensive hands-on experience working with immigrant/refugee communities.
- **Michael Vickers** is a community activator, cultural worker and practicing artist focused on providing meaningful advocacy, support and growth for the arts sector at the local level and across Canada. Previously Co-Director of the Toronto-based arts organization Akin, he currently works as the Senior Program Lead for the new Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Development Agency in Brampton.

Currently, Mitchell Marcus from Northcrest and David Anselmi from Canada Lands sit on the XOXO-AC as landowner representatives. Both have strong arts backgrounds. The XOXO team wants to thank Renee Castonguay for her participation on the committee over the last year as well.

In addition to the regular members of the XOXO-AC, there are six alternate members who fill in for regular members when they are unable to attend. These alternates are also member of the jury pool.

"Thank you for your super generous words. I am excited to support this. As you know it is all very meaningful to me. Thanks again - go Downsview!"

- Patrizia Libralato, XOXO-AC member

"Wow- I am thrilled! Thank you so much for this very thoughtful note and I can confirm my attendance on March 11. I feel very lucky to be part of this program."

- Michael Vickers, XOXO-AC member

"It's my pleasure to be part of this. We just had a baby boy, and we live in the neighbourhood. I want to be part of community art development for my son's future. Call on me as you wish!"

- Maziar Ghaderi, XOXO-AC Alternate and jury pool member

"This is really exciting! Really grateful for the opportunity to be part of such an amazing project. I can confirm my availability to participate as an XOXO-AC alternate and Jury Pool member."

- Marta Keller-Hernandez, XOXO-AC Alternate and jury pool member



THE XOXO JURY POOL

The XOXO jury pool currently has 28 members. Each applied for the position following a call for expressions of interest. They are impressively diverse in their backgrounds, disciplines, ages, and experience. Many are internationally recognized and most are from the Downsview area. Juries are assembled, as needed, from this pool of qualified local and city-wide arts and culture community members.

One jury of eight members was assembled in XOXO Downsview's first year, as described above. It brings together emerging artists and those with decades of experience, individuals with strong local knowledge, and those with diverse backgrounds. The members were also identified because of their expertise in public art. Like all juries, this group will review, rank, discuss, and recommend winning proposals. Their recommendations will be based on the design brief and on criteria developed from the XOXO guiding principles.

Besides participation on juries, many pool members participated as mentors for the Wind Rose Design Competition and joined the XOXO site walk, where they provided feedback on fence art and ways to support local arts.

"My sincere thanks for this opportunity. I confirm and accept my role as a member of the XOXO Jury Pool. I am looking forward to working with all of you and fellow jury members to advance and amplify voices and ideas for the benefit of our community."
- Susana Meza, jury pool member

"I am very glad and happy you have gotten many high-calibre applications. I would love to participate in the pool for sure! Thank you for gardening the social fabric of the Downsview neighborhood and providing opportunities to so many local people!"
- Julián Carvajal, jury pool member and jury

"This is wonderful! Thank you so much for selecting me. I am humbled and excited to participate in the Jury Pool."
- Kalina Nedelcheva, jury pool member



The Workplan & Evaluation

Landowners Northcrest and Canada Lands are committed to amplifying the rich local arts scene and exploring how equity and diversity will guide opportunities here over decades to come. One way of ensuring this is by following the XOXO Workplan, which was developed from community-stated goals. Through our engagement process, the XOXO Downsview team learned how important a community-focused, transparent, and defensible approach to arts and culture is to all parties. In collaboration with local and city-wide arts communities, we developed the Workplan and its set of principles to guide arts and culture on these lands and ensure that diverse communities are an active and meaningful part of what happens here.

The XOXO Workplan is a living document. It is open to change as we learn how to best support local arts and culture communities. The document was revised two times over the first year. The first time saw the added representation of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and North York Arts as standing seats on the XOXO-AC. The second round of changes were made to more clearly lay out how the guiding principles will not only shape Northcrest and Canada Lands' shared XOXO projects, but also guide independently-executed projects on their respective lands.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Through the last year, the XOXO team has turned to the Workplan's principles to guide all XOXO Downsview projects – from imagining new projects, to identifying Advisory Committee and jury pool members, to selecting creative partners and projects. One year on, it is time for self-reflection. Here, the principles are stated along with a self-assessment of how well the last year has measured up.



Projects will prioritize and support community. This includes the arts and culture community of Downsview and beyond and other members of the local community, like small businesses, for example. The projects will involve the community variously as participants, makers, artists, suppliers, Advisory Committee members, jury members, and more. XOXO will build on and support what's already here.

Assessment: Over the last year, XOXO projects have involved the local community as creative makers, decision-makers, and participants. The majority of artists were from northwest Toronto. Advisory Committee members and jury pool members are also overwhelmingly from the area or have local links. The support for the local area has fallen short only in the use of local suppliers and support of local businesses for the production of the installations. Future projects could better explore “supporting local” in this way.

Equity and inclusion will be emphasized in all projects. The projects will represent and invite the diversity of the local area and Toronto as a whole. The projects will specifically make space for BIPOC creators and themes. Furthermore, we will ensure that final projects are inclusive to all viewers/ participants on the ground and that everyone guiding the projects and programs is prompted to examine issues of privilege, representation, and allyship.

Assessment: BIPOC individuals constituted the vast majority of the XOXO makers over the last year. Women artists and makers are also strongly represented in the Fabric of Community and fence art projects. The success of this is related in part to our partnerships with diverse local arts organizations who were encouraged to follow the Workplan. The themes of the work were equally diverse, not because particular themes were mandated, but because they were identified by the diverse artists

themselves. While the creative producers represented the diversity of the local area, it's not clear if the viewers were also as diverse. This could be better tracked in the future.

Projects will include a mentorship component wherever possible. We will look for opportunities to connect young and emerging artists with experienced mentors to facilitate skills development, training, relationship building, and leadership opportunities in the long-term.

Assessment: Mentorship components were successfully included in the painted path murals and the Wind Rose, especially in the Fabric of Community and design competition. We have also encouraged participating artists and organizations to incorporate mentorship in their projects. In addition to formal mentoring, the XOXO team has been quietly and consistently building capacity in the local workforce by hiring and training young people and students to staff the XOXO events such as the walking tours, Play on the Runway and the Fieldnotes intercept surveys. The roster of local youth and students has been passed on to the landowners who are continuing to find ways to hire and develop this local workforce.

"We would like to thank all the mentors that spoke with us, for taking the time to provide us with their valuable insight and expertise for this design proposal which, we are excited to share our final idea. Regardless of the outcome of this competition we are grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate and create a design that our team is very proud of."

- Wind Rose competition participant

"It's been great working with you and the team. I want to say thank you, specifically as an artist, for the prompt and smooth payments. It shows you understand and respect the plight of the creatives."

- XOXO artist

Partners will be paid fairly and promptly. The contributions of artists, jury members, Advisory Committee members, and other creative partners will be compensated. They will be paid CARFAC rates and paid within seven days of participation or in instalments as work is being created.

Assessment: The XOXO Downsview team has taken particular pride in achieving this principle. All XOXO-AC members have been paid CARFAC rates and paid within two days of the meetings. This is consistent with our quick turnaround time for paying artists, who have expressed great appreciation for the prompt compensation timelines. Following XOXO-AC feedback, organizations providing artist recommendations for the fence project also received a payment for each artist to offset administrative costs. Mentors were not compensated for a one-hour meeting with design competition teams. In the future, if budgets allow, paying mentors for their time may be considered, as it dissuaded one mentor from participating.



The environmental impact of projects will be considered and mitigated. Projects will tread lightly on these lands. They will protect the natural environment and enhance the natural setting.

Assessment: The XOXO team was at times caught between longevity of a project and environmental sustainability. Sometimes, it was believed that a more durable material was the most environmentally-friendly because it would not necessitate replacement. Many conversations were had about plastics, glue, recyclability, and replacement costs. Overall, the team believes it struck the right balance. In terms of enhancing the appreciation of the natural landscape, we believe XOXO projects succeeded. They celebrated the views, the wind, birds, and the natural landscape.

Projects will seek opportunities for reconciliation. We will work with Indigenous leaders and communities on projects that honour Indigenous cultures, living history, and ways of knowing.

Assessment: The 2021-22 installations included the “Turtle and the Traveller” by the Mitchell brothers and a painted path mural by a local Afro-Indigenous artist. We also had participation from the MCFN on the XOXO-AC. While the XOXO team worked diligently to engage a Two-spirit youth group for a section of the painted path and with the MCFN on a site walk to identify potential collaborations with the rights holders, unfortunately these projects did not come to fruition. It proved challenging to secure these partnerships because of timing, and perhaps, in some cases, because of challenges related to colonial legacies of trust. During the process, we realized that bringing Indigenous partners to the process may be best achieved through the id8 Downsview Indigenous engagement specialist. As such, we will continue to work closely with Bob Goulais on future projects to act as a liaison.

*“Thank you for your patience, your guidance,
and for setting up the competition. It was a
great experience for the both of us.”
– Wind Rose competition participant*



Processes will be inclusive, accessible, accountable, and transparent. We will be clear about how our process works, how decisions are made, and use unambiguous criteria and plain language in all our communications. Advisory Committee meeting summaries will be posted online. We will also produce an annual summary of activities and an evaluation of the XOXO program in relation to these principles.

Assessment: Overall, the 2021-22 projects achieved this objective. We used the id8 website, the XOXO website, and social media to clearly share what we were doing and how decisions were made. Meeting summaries have been reviewed by participants and posted online. And this annual report is part of our commitment to transparency.

The installations have been physically accessible overall, however the team recognizes that the climb to the Wind Rose is not something that everyone can do and that the walks have often traversed tricky terrain. A more accessible walk was offered to some participants, but we were not taken up on that offer. One meeting included ASL translation on request. In the Wind Rose competition brief, teams were invited to propose alternate forms of submission to suit their accessibility needs. This sort of offer could be made in other projects in the future.

Projects will celebrate a diversity of art forms. Projects will draw from and support a range of arts, including: installation, mural-making, sculpture, music, dance, theatre, circus, writing, story-telling, painting, drawing, photography, fine craft, digital art, film-making, audio, urban design, landscape architecture, architecture, and more.

"I really appreciate the fast response. I feel cared-for."

- XOXO artist

"Thank you so much for your support, it was a tough week but your kind words have helped me."

- Wind Rose competition participant

Assessment: The XOXO team recognizes that the 2021-22 projects have tended towards arts that are visual and/or sculptural in nature. The audio tour included storytelling, and the installations have been captured in film, though this production was largely executed by the XOXO team. The Play on the Runway event incorporated music, DJing, and roller-dance for one afternoon, and the space shows great potential for a broad spectrum of performance. In the future, projects may make more space for dance, theatre, music, circus arts, and so on.



Projects will create opportunities and spaces for local, emerging, and marginalized artists and cultural producers. We will consider affordability, flexibility, and accessibility for these creative partners to reduce barriers and encourage participation.

Assessment: Significant efforts were made to create these sorts of opportunities. Young, emerging, and local artists have been included in the XOXO-AC and Wind Rose jury and in all installations. The process around the fence art project was specifically designed to ensure a low-barrier process that would give emerging and marginalized artists an opportunity to show their work. The Wind Rose design competition intentionally targeted “emerging” designers, instead of “young” designers, to encourage participation across an age spectrum. That process also emphasizes that a lack of technical skill or expertise will not be held against a team if the proposal is conceptually strong, and the jury has been briefed accordingly. In addition, we ensured that local youth and students were hired to staff the Play on the Runway event and walking tours.

“Thank you for the opportunity, it was very important for us to use this project to amplify the lost voices of a generation.”

– Wind Rose competition participant

“I look forward to the possible opportunity to work with you all, and feel fortunate to have had this chance to compete. I truly believe in the cause this competition is pursuing so I wanted to submit in the hopes that the idea I've had can make a true difference in the community.”

– Wind Rose competition participant

Projects will create a destination. They will delight, challenge, entice, and animate these lands, and do so through all seasons of the year.

Assessment: The 2021-22 projects have turned Downsview into a destination like never before, building on the activities that have long been in Downsview Park. They have drawn people from the local area and from across the city, and provided a taste of what is to come. In tandem with digital promotion online and on social media, the projects have generated excitement about what's next and created “Instagrammable” moments. As well as the “wow-factor” of the projects, great efforts have been put into communicating just how much these projects are of the community and of Downsview. This, in particular, has been very well-received and created a more meaningful experience for visitors.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR

XOXO Downsview is greeting its second year with great momentum. In this next year it will both respond to the learnings of the first year and to evolving landowner values. Some potential foci for 2022-23 may include:

- Expanding XOXO projects beyond the Downsview Park lands.
- Exploring new ways to use the talent in our XOXO jury pool, including, but not limited to, more juried processes. In particular, there is significant photographic expertise in the pool.
- Strengthening relationships and collaborations with our partner organizations.
- Identifying low-barrier ways to involve MCFN and other Indigenous artists in collaboration with the id8 Downsview Indigenous engagement specialist, Bob Goulais.
- Maintaining what's been done already, including the possibility of reapplying the QR codes on the painted path, touching up the painted path, adding more murals to the path, and making small updates to the audio tour to keep it relevant.
- More strategies to be discussed with the land owners in the near future.

