

# Arts & Culture

## Why is this important?

A thriving arts and cultural community is a sign of a city's ability to innovate, to solve problems, to attract visitors, and to entice talented new residents from around the world.

Toronto's burgeoning arts environment helps to welcome and integrate newcomers, celebrate our heritage and imagine a better city.

### What are the trends?

The City increased its cultural spending by 1.1% in the 2014 budget, bringing the per capita municipal investment in culture to slightly over \$22 (the goal was \$25 per capita in direct arts funding by 2016).<sup>440</sup> Professional employment in arts and culture is rising (increasing more than 16% since 2011), and film, television and other screen-based media production spending exceeded \$1B for the third year in a row.

### What's new?

In addition to the celebrated Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), which attracted 1.8 million people and injected \$189M into the local economy in 2013, Toronto now plays host to more than 80 film festivals each year, including Hot Docs, the largest documentary film festival in North America. Torontonians also have access to one of the world's largest urban library systems. New research indicates that every \$1 invested in the library generates an almost six-fold return in direct and indirect benefits to the city.

Some Key Arts and Culture Trends	2011	2012	2013
<i>Data refer to the city of Toronto unless otherwise noted.</i> <sup>441</sup>			
1. City budget for culture	\$48,790,000 (2012)	\$54,790,000 (2013)	\$55,420,000 (2014)
2. Per capita municipal cultural investment	\$19.00 (2012)	\$19.62 (2013)	\$22.07 (2014)
3. Professional employment in arts and culture (excluding self-employed)	31,270	34,750	36,510
4. Film, television and other screen-based media production spending	\$1.13B	\$1.2B	\$1.19B
5. Attendance at City-funded or City-programmed cultural events	18.2 million	19 million	19 million+

**Arts and culture are key aspects of an endless project to make sense of the places where we find ourselves – places we are longing to call home.”**

—Leah Houston  
Artistic Director, MABELLEarts

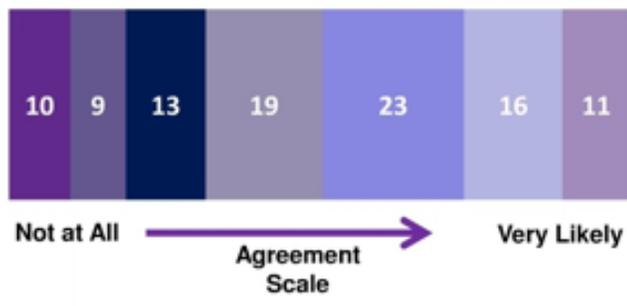
## Are Torontonians interested in the arts?

Studies continue to show that GTA residents are highly engaged in and are strong supporters of the arts in Toronto:

- Bringing the City Alive: A Survey of Arts in the GTA was completed on behalf of Toronto Arts Foundation in January 2014. The online [survey](#) of GTA residents found that:
  - o Three-quarters (74%) agree that the arts provide benefits to the city including:
    - attracting tourists (79%);
    - showcasing Toronto (75%);

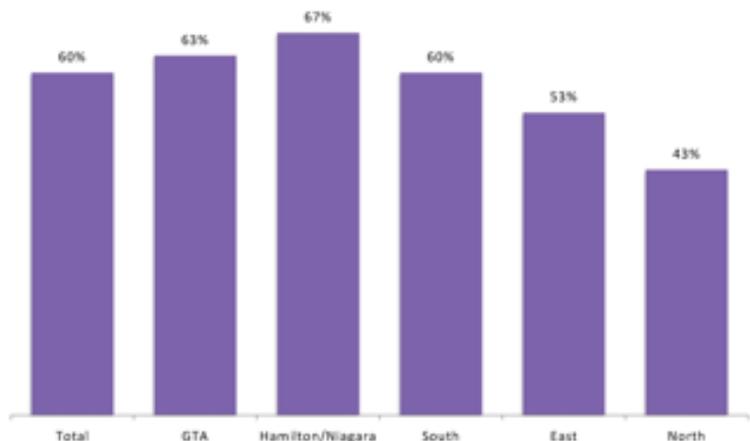
- highlighting our diversity (73%);
- improving the economy (69%); and
- providing employment (64%).
- o 71% feel that the arts improve the quality of life of individuals.
- o A majority (70%) attend events, volunteer or donate to the arts.
- o Roughly 40% see the arts as a way to engage in their own heritage (44%) and to explore cultures they are unfamiliar with (42%).
- o Half see the arts as an activity of choice for out-of-town guests.

Likelihood of Taking an Out-of-Town Visitor to an Arts Activity (%):



- A 2013 survey a year earlier (documented in the same [report](#)) found that 73% of Torontonians supported the direct arts investment motion. Of those who lived in Toronto, 73% supported it, as did 82% of those considering purchasing a condo in the city within the next five years.
  - o Six in ten Ontarians who lived, worked in, or visited Toronto said that the city's arts and cultural activities were important in their decision to do so. 69% of those who lived in Toronto agreed, as did 78% of people who owned a condo in the city.

How strongly do you agree or disagree: "Toronto's arts and cultural activities are important in my decision to live, work in or visit Toronto"?



**Despite these high levels of interest and engagement, a significant majority (83%) of GTA residents face barriers to attending arts programming:**

- Cost (56%) and lack of time (35%) are the biggest factors that make it difficult for people to attend arts events, visit arts locations, or participate in arts activities. Others include:
  - distance from home, 27%;
  - unawareness of what's going on, 20%; and
  - inaccessibility of venues to those with mobility issues, 6%.
- Encouragingly, only 5% of respondents say they "don't feel welcome," but the feeling is higher among those under 34.<sup>442</sup>

**Newer research from the Toronto Arts Foundation shows that not only do the arts matter to Torontonians, but they also positively impact the economy and our communities:**

- The Toronto Arts Foundation brought together researchers and arts leaders to [understand Toronto Arts Facts](#), the most recent available data about the arts in Toronto from a variety of studies and statistical resources.
- The publication tells a compelling story about the arts in Toronto. Amongst other benefits, they:
  - boost our economy - arts and culture contribute \$11.3 billion annually to the city's GDP;
  - create employment - Toronto's creative workforce has grown by 34% since 2001, more than twice the rate of growth of the overall labour force;
  - attract visitors - [Scotiabank Nuit Blanche](#) attracted more than 1 million people in 2013, including over 190,000 out-of-town visitors, for an economic impact of \$39.5M;
  - increase spending - Torontonians spent over \$132 million on tickets to [Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts](#) (TAPA) members' performances in 2009/10;
  - build bridges between cultures - 42% of Torontonians say the top impacts of the arts on communities are sharing experiences, building connections (39%), bridging differences (36%), increasing understanding between people (31%), increasing local participation (29%), and building local pride (15%);

- help neighbourhoods grow stronger - 40% of Toronto's performing arts organizations offer community programs, for youth, artists, adults, and at-risk or equity groups;
- allow people to give back to their communities - 11% of Torontonians regularly volunteer for an arts organization.<sup>443</sup>

**Toronto's culture animates the city, creating a sense of place, making the city economically vibrant, and attracting visitors, citizens and the businesses that employ them:**

- Toronto's cultural economy contributed \$11.3B in 2011 to the city's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
  - Toronto is home to 66% more artists than any other Canadian city, one in four of the country's creative industry jobs, and one in three of the province's cultural workers.
  - Two of the fastest-growing creative industries in Toronto, screen-based production and digital media industries, contribute more than \$1B annually to the local economy and directly employ approximately 25,000 people, or one in four of the industry nationally.
- Toronto's cultural assets include:
  - more than 80 film festivals;
  - 200 professional performing arts organizations;
  - internationally recognized symphony, ballet and opera companies;
  - many commercial and not-for-profit galleries and museums;
  - 10 city-owned [museums](#) housing 147,000 artifacts and 1 million archaeological specimens; and
  - more than 200 City-owned public artworks and historic monuments.
- Each year, the City produces and promotes numerous annual events, including:
  - [Doors Open Toronto](#), the largest Doors Open event in Canada and one of the three largest in the world, has seen more than two million visits to nearly 600 locations across the city since it began in 2000; and
  - [Winterlicious](#) and [Summerlicious](#), which in 2013 saw 580,000 prix fixe meals contribute \$25M in direct spending to the restaurant industry.<sup>444</sup>
- Over 19 million people attended City-funded or City-programmed cultural events in 2013.<sup>445</sup>

## Arts and culture provide employment and professional development, marketing and advocacy opportunities for creatives:

- Professional employment in arts and culture in Toronto continued its growth in 2013 to 36,500 people (excluding the self-employed).<sup>446</sup>
- Employment in cultural industries in the Region is declining, however, dropping 10.8% since 2011 to 83,800 people in 2013.<sup>447</sup>
- At the end of its last fiscal year, the [Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts](#) (TAPA) had 190 individual and company members from the disciplines of theatre, dance, and opera.<sup>448</sup>



Photo: Dahlia Katz

## An award-winning theatre company shares its assets and builds sector capacity for the Toronto theatre community:



- Founded in 1986, [Cahoots Theatre](#) is an award winning organization presenting work that reflects the diverse multicultural landscape of Toronto while working to enrich the sector by nurturing the skills and experiences of emerging and established theatre practitioners from Toronto's diverse communities.
  - o In 2013, Cahoots re-opened its doors after completing a major capital renovation to its office and rehearsal space. The renovation transformed its space into a cutting-edge creation studio, equipped with the latest technology, in which theatre artists across the sector can develop and rehearse visionary new works. Building on Cahoots' reputation as an open and welcoming community space, it now shares with both artists and the community one of the only affordable state-of-the-art barrier-free facilities in Toronto to rehearse and create interdisciplinary art.

## How well is the City supporting arts and culture?

### The City increased culture spending by 1.1% in its 2014 budget:

- The City budget for culture in 2013 was \$55.4M<sup>449</sup>, an increase from \$54.8M the previous year and 48.8M in 2011.<sup>450</sup>

### A major milestone has been reached in the 13-year push to create a tax on billboards and invest funds in arts:

- The relentless advocacy of [BeautifulCity](#), a coalition of young, diverse Toronto artists, has achieved a landmark victory, with \$22.5M in retroactive proceeds from a new tax on billboards committed by Council to fund the arts in Toronto over the next four years.

- BeautifulCity first proposed the billboard tax in 2001 as a way to:
  - o celebrate diverse voices and activate art programs across Toronto;
  - o create and build ownership of vibrant and healthy public spaces;
  - o support Toronto's living and practicing artists; and
  - o build the capacity of young adults, youth and children.
- The tax was finally created in 2009. The advertising industry argued that the City had no jurisdiction to implement the levy, but lost their case in 2012, and \$22.5M in retroactive payments created a reserve fund, which Council agreed to designate for arts funding to 2017. There is still no plan to use any future annual proceeds of the billboard tax for the

arts, which was its original intention. The tax is expected to bring in \$10.7M in 2014.

- The commitment means that Toronto will reach the \$25 per-capita commitment towards arts funding agreed to by Council by 2017. In 2003, Council set 2008 as the target and in 2010, it set 2013 as its deadline<sup>451</sup> and in 2013, it agreed to allocate funds to meet the target by 2016<sup>452</sup>; this is the third time the City has missed a target to increase arts funding to \$25 per capita.<sup>453</sup>
- Per capital municipal cultural investment in 2013 was \$22.07.<sup>454</sup>
- \$25 per capita has been seen as the standard since being reached in Montréal a decade ago. Montréal has since increased its arts funding to \$55 per capita.<sup>455</sup>

### Arts Funding from the City of Toronto, 2013 to 2017:<sup>456</sup>

Year	Total increased culture spending	Retroactive billboard tax	Property tax base	Tax-base pressure
2013	6 M	6 M	0	0
2014	10.5 M	7.5 M	3 M	3M
2015	12.6 M	5.5 M	7 M	4 M
2016	15.5 M	3.5 M	12 M	5 M
2017	17.5 M	0	17.5 M	5.5 M

(22.5 M total)

### A funding increase of \$1.8M for Toronto Arts Council brings its 2014 grants budget to just over \$16M:

- The new funding will allow the Toronto Arts Council to:
  - partner with City Museums to [animate historic sites](#);
  - support, in partnership with [ArtReach](#), 30 youth-led projects in underserved neighbourhoods;
  - create connections between arts outside the core and established arts organizations through [Platform A](#);
  - offer micro-grant programs to artists working outside the core;
  - partner with the Toronto Public Library to put [artists in the library](#);
  - partner with the Toronto District School Board on [Dare to Create](#);
  - partner with [Business for the Arts](#) on [ArtsVest](#).<sup>457</sup>

## How do Toronto’s screen-based industries showcase Toronto and attract Investment?

### On-location filming in Toronto in 2013 exceeded \$1B for the third straight year:

- The ongoing success of the city’s screen-based industry—film, television, commercials and animation—keeps more than 25,000 people directly employed in film and television. In 2013:
  - Screen-based production companies invested \$1.19B in on-location filming in Toronto, close to the \$1.2B reached in 2012<sup>458</sup> and up from \$1.13B in 2011.<sup>459</sup>
  - Major production spending was down overall (to \$948.1M from \$1.014B in 201), but major domestic productions reached \$515M (up from \$499.4M in 2012), exceeding the \$500-million level for the first time.
  - Animation spending exceeded \$100M for the first time, increasing by \$15M.
  - The television series industry continued to dominate production investment in Toronto with almost two-thirds (62% or \$730M) of total investment.
  - Production investment also increased significantly for commercials (more than \$32M) and music videos (more than \$4.6M).<sup>460</sup>

## **In addition to its impressive film, television and digital media production, Toronto is now home to over 80 film festivals:**

- The Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) has grown from a small 10-day event with an audience of 35,000 in 1976 into a cultural institution that contributes significantly to Toronto's international reputation.
  - The third largest film festival in the world, and the largest public film festival in the world, TIFF annually attracts well over a million attendees (including more than 1,100 media) from over 130 countries across all its activities.
  - TIFF drew 1.8 million people for all its annual activities (including its 38th annual festival in 2013), with an audience comprised of more than 432,000 for screenings of 288 features and 78 shorts from 70 countries.
  - TIFF's impact on the local economy has increased by \$50M over the past four years, reaching \$189M in 2013.<sup>461</sup>
- **Hot Docs** Canadian International Documentary Festival is the largest documentary film festival in North America, presenting more than 200 films annually from Canada and around the world to a total audience of about 180,000.
  - The 21st annual festival in 2014 featured 197 documentaries from 43 countries of production.
  - During the festival, Hot Docs mounts a full roster of conference sessions, market events and services for filmmakers, including the renowned **Hot Docs Forum**, **Hot Docs Deal Maker** and **The Doc Shop**.
  - Hot Docs' **Docs for Schools Festival** offers

free in-theatre (Toronto) screenings and DVD selections for screening in middle and secondary schools across Ontario, all linked to the Ontario curriculum. The program has expanded to include over 300 schools and reach more than 78,000 students.<sup>462</sup>

## **Toronto played host in 2013 to two new events celebrating the Canadian screen industry:**

- The inaugural **Canadian Screen Awards** (established by merging the Gemini Awards for television and Genie Awards for film) showcased Canada's talent in film, television and digital media.
  - The week-long series of events attracted about 5,000 industry leaders and participants and brought international attention to the industry and to Toronto.
  - The gala awards ceremony was watched by 800,000 people and generated over 52 million social media impressions, trending on Twitter in Canada and Los Angeles.<sup>463</sup>
- The inaugural **Canadian International Television Festival** is the country's first and only television showcase aimed at the public. Its mission is to develop and inspire audiences for Canadian-made television.
  - The festival also promoted Canadian talent and launched new projects through a program including professional development and networking opportunities for broadcasting students, advertisers, and the TV industry.<sup>464</sup>

## **How does our world-class library system benefit the whole city? Investment?**

### **Every dollar invested in the library generates a significant return for the city:**

- A new **report** from the **Martin Prosperity Institute** (at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto) puts dollar values on the library's economic benefit to the city.
- The economic impact study, the first of its kind in Canada and requested by the Toronto Public Library (TPL) Board and City Council, clearly demonstrates that Toronto Public Library delivers a strong Return on Investment (ROI).
  - For every \$1 invested in the library, Torontonians receive almost six times the value: \$5.63.
  - The direct benefits of a library membership make it worth \$502 for the 72% of Torontonians who use it.
- 44% of the adult population are frequent or heavy users of library branches (defined by 11 or more visits in the last year).
  - The average value of each open hour at a branch is almost four times its average cost: the average open hour generates \$2,515 in direct benefits while costing approximately \$653.

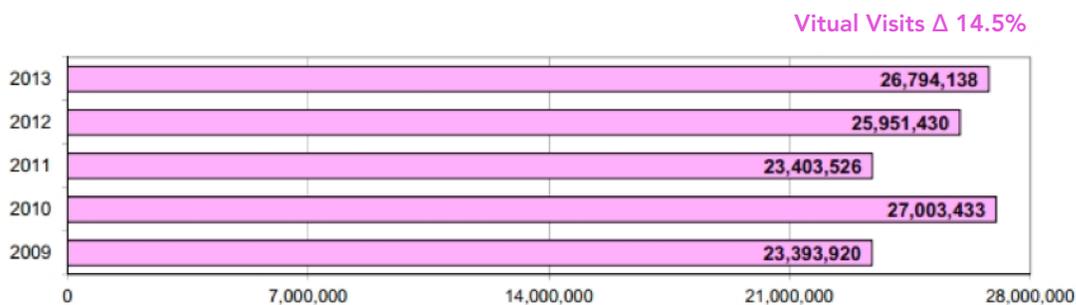
- In its calculations the Institute considered:
  - direct spending (money allocated to the institution and then spent on operations, capital, material, wages, and other expenses),
  - direct tangible benefits (benefits that accrue to an individual or organization and can be reliably estimated), and
  - indirect tangible benefits that deliver value (the result of multiplier effects on direct spending).
- This value includes opportunities for residents to improve their literacy skills or enhance their educational and employment opportunities—thus enhancing Toronto’s competitiveness and prosperity—and improve their quality of life through accessing library collections, services and programs.<sup>465</sup>

**The Toronto Public Library continues to be among the world’s largest and busiest urban public library systems:**

- 2013 was the third busiest of the last ten years, despite the closure of the Fairview branch for the full year, a number of short-term branch closures for renovations, and severe weather events that impacted branch visits and total circulation.
- While browsing and borrowing books continue to be key drivers of library activity, Torontonians also visit branches to use computers and access wireless internet, to study and to work, to network and to attend programs and community events. Notable increases in library usage in 2013 include:
  - 96.2% increase in e-circulation to 2.1 million, representing 6.6% of total circulation compared

- to 3.4% in 2012;
- 3.2% increase in website visits and 29.8% increase in website searches, reflecting the importance of online access to information, services and collections;
- 21.0% increase in wireless sessions, reinforcing the library’s vital role in bridging the digital divide, as participating in school, work, and lifelong learning or accessing government information and services increasingly requires a computer with access to large bandwidth;
- 5.0% increase in program attendance, with a 2.8% increase for the [Ready for Reading](#) program, a 5.8% increase for programs for school-age children, and a 10.2% increase for seniors’ programs;
- increases of 10.7% in visits at research and reference branches, 10.1% in programs offered, and 4.3% in electronic reference requests.
- New and emerging technologies were added to virtual library services and branches to catalyze and connect innovators and creators.
  - A fiber wireless network was introduced at the Toronto Reference and North York Central libraries, with expansion to 45 additional branches planned for 2014.
  - Digital Innovation Hubs featuring 3D printers, design software and classes were developed for the Toronto Reference Library and the new Fort York branch.
  - Total virtual visits—visits to TPL’s main site and specialized sites (e.g., [Kids Space](#)), e-content sites (including e-books and e-magazines), licensed databases, and the library’s online and social media channels—have increased 14.5% over the last five years.<sup>466</sup>

**TPL Virtual Visits: 5-year trend, 2009-2013:<sup>467</sup>**



Note: The catalogue merged with the TPL website in 2011, creating a more efficient search and change in counting.

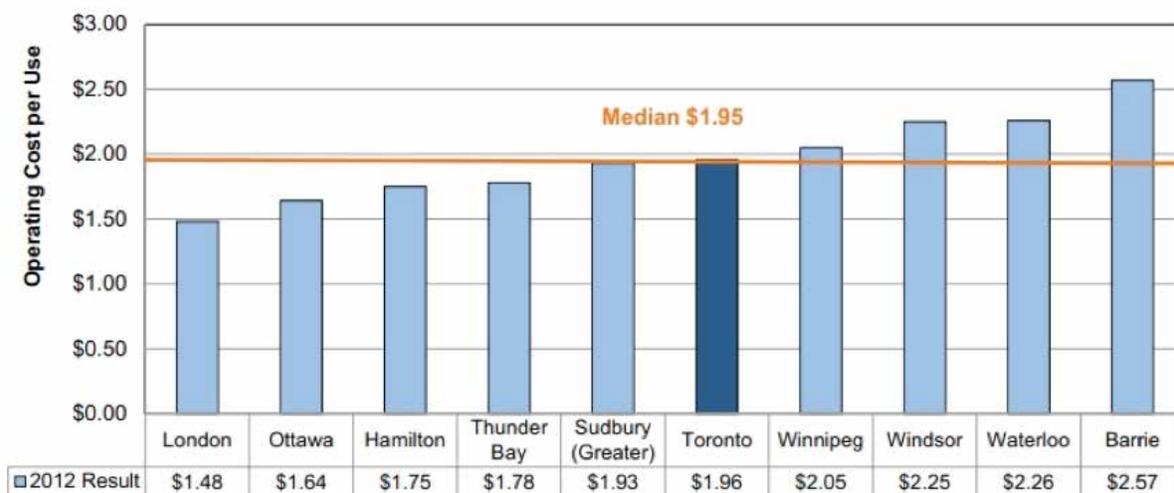
- o In 2012 (the latest year for which comparative data is available) TPL again ranked 1st in North America in circulation and visits per capita among libraries serving populations of 2 million or more.
- o TPL had the greatest number of branches (98) and highest square footage of library space per capita among these large urban systems in 2012.<sup>468</sup> In fall 2014, TPL had 99 branches.<sup>469</sup>
- o TPL had the highest overall circulation and

visits in Canada, and per capita ranked sixth in circulation and third in visits.

- o Of the 10 Ontario municipal libraries participating in the [Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative](#), TPL's cost per use in 2012 was at the median at \$1.96.<sup>470</sup>

Note: Information on library usage and programming in all of Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods is available at [Wellbeing Toronto](#).

### Total TPL Operating Cost per Use (2012):<sup>471</sup>



## What lasting legacy will the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games leave to the arts and culture sector?

**In July thousands of enthusiastic Torontonians crowded outside City Hall to kick off the official one-year countdown to the 2015 Pan/Parapan Am Games in 2014. As Toronto welcomes the world in Summer 2015 for its first major international sporting event, more than sport will be showcased:**

- [PANAMANIA](#), the [TORONTO 2015 Arts and Culture Festival](#), hopes to engage new audiences with the arts and increase the international profile of our culture and artists.
- The five-week, multidisciplinary cultural celebration will showcase Pan-American (the Americas and Caribbean) and Canadian talent, diversity and culture.
- The festival is supporting the creation of more than 25 [original works](#) by both established and emerging Canadian artists in theatre, photography, dance, music, spoken word, fashion and visual arts.
- o Projects will touch on the themes of water, immigration and Canadian identity, and have a special focus on artists connected to the 41 nations participating in the multi-sport Games.
- o The projects share \$1.5M in seed funding from a TO2015 legacy fund.
- The commissioned works will be staged throughout the Games as a mix of free and ticketed events in venues throughout Toronto and will be exhibited, performed and displayed for years to come.
- The festival is the culmination of a series of public cultural events in support of the Games, including 2012's "[Play Me, I'm Yours](#)" street piano project across downtown Toronto, and 2013's mobile music festival [STREETSIDE](#), which brought the music of the Caribbean and Americas to the streets of Toronto, Hamilton and Markham.<sup>472</sup>

**The following groups are addressing issues relating to learning through their innovative community-based programs.**

Click on the name of the group to be directed to their profile on the [Community Knowledge Centre](#) to learn more about how.

[Art City in St. James Town](#) – Provides free and accessible multidisciplinary arts programming

[Art Gallery of Ontario](#) - Bringing people together with art to experience and understand the world in new ways

[Art Starts](#) – Creating social change through community art projects

[Arthritis Research Foundation](#) – Working to beat arthritis and autoimmune diseases

[ArtReach Toronto](#) – Gives young artists access to resources, mentorship and skill building opportunities

[Arts Etobicoke](#) - A community arts council located in a beautiful storefront gallery

[Arts for Children and Youth](#) – Hands on, community and school based arts education

[Artscape](#) – Urban development organization providing shared space for non-profit and arts based orgs

[Buddies in Bad Times Theatre](#) – Developing and presenting artists’ voices in the LGBTQ\* community

[Cahoots Theatre Projects](#) - Interdisciplinary arts investigating the intersections of Canada’s diversity.

[Canadian Journalists for Free Expression](#) - Champions the rights of journalists and media professionals

[Canadian Stage](#) - One of the country’s leading not-for-profit contemporary theatre companies

[Children’s Peace Theatre](#) - Creating a culture of peace and transformative justice by engaging children

[Clay & Paper Theatre](#) - Community driven theatrical works using large-scale puppetry

[Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie](#) - Professional dance organization that presents locally and globally

[Creative Trust](#) - Builds the financial health and resilience of Toronto’s creative performing arts

[CUE](#) - A radical, arts initiative enabling young marginalized artists to develop art exhibitions

[Diaspora Dialogues Charitable Society](#) - Supports creative writing that reflects our city’s diversity

[Drum Artz Canada](#) – Mentorship and creative expression through percussion and music

[Dusk Dances](#) - Curates high quality contemporary and traditional dance events in public parks.

[Framework](#) – Delivers high-quality volunteer engagement events (Timeraiser)

[Harbourfront Centre](#) - Nurturing the growth of new cultural expression and artistic cultural exchange

[Hot Docs](#) – Advancing the creative imprint of documentary film

[imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival](#) – Celebrating the latest works by Indigenous peoples

[Inner City Angels](#) - Bringing imaginative interdisciplinary arts programs to children in Toronto

[Jumbies Theatre](#) – Makes art in everyday places with and about the people and stories found there

[Luminato Festival](#) - An annual, multi-disciplinary arts Festival, reflecting the diverse character of Toronto

[Mammalian Diving Reflex](#) - Interactive performances that occur beyond the walls of the theatre

[Manifesto Community Projects](#) - Unites and empowers diverse young people through hip-hop culture

[National Ballet of Canada](#) - Performs the masterworks of classical and contemporary

[Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto](#) – Building the collective capacity of Aboriginal women

[Newcomer Women’s Services Toronto](#) – Delivering educational and employment opportunities for immigrant women and their children

[Nightwood Theatre](#) – Propelling women to the top of their craft in Canadian Theatre

[No. 9: Contemporary Art & the Environment](#) - Uses art and design to bring awareness to environmental concerns

[The Remix Project](#) - Levelling the playing field in creative industries for youth from marginalized and underserved communities

[San Romanoway Revitalization](#) – Fostering a sense of belonging in residents of all ages and backgrounds

[Scarborough Arts](#) - Develops programming and cultural initiatives in collaboration with the community

[Shakespeare in Action](#) - Enhancing arts and education through exploring and performing Shakespeare

[Sistema Toronto](#) - Free, ensemble-based music lessons to inspire children to realize their full potential

[SKETCH Working Arts](#) - An arts initiative for young people who are homeless or living on the margins

[Soulpepper Theatre Company](#) - Creating a home in Toronto for the great dramatic works of our collective cultural inheritance

[Story Planet](#) - A story making centre running workshops that encourage young people to tell their stories

[Toronto Public Library Foundation](#) - Providing essential resources for the enhancement of the Toronto Public Library

[UNITY Charity](#) - Empowering youth to use artistic self-expression to make positive life

[UrbanArts](#) - Engaging youth in community development through the arts

[UforChange](#) - Inspiring newcomer and Canadian youth through arts-based community-building

[Vermont Square Parent-Child Mother Goose Program](#) - Fostering parent-child bonding and literacy through a rich oral language experience

[Words In Motion](#) - Using the arts to help children and their families achieve their full potential

[Workman Arts Project of Ontario](#) - Developing and supporting artists with mental illness and addiction issues

## Endnotes

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