



YEARS • ANS

2022
2023

ANNUAL REPORT



OTTAWA ARTS
COUNCIL | CONSEIL DES
ARTS D'OTTAWA

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ottawa Arts Council is located on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people, past, present and future caretakers of this land. We respectfully acknowledge our role and meaningful actions in reconciliation and are grateful to be working on this sacred land.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The arts play an important role in our Nation's Capital. We are home to thousands of creatives, so it is crucial for our city to nurture the development and growth of our local artists so that we create the conditions for a thriving arts sector for the benefit of our local arts community but also for the greater benefit of solidifying Ottawa as a world-class city.

The Ottawa Arts Council plays such an incredible role in the arts sector by investing in local artists through its various grants and awards programs, through its advocacy at both the municipal and provincial levels to ensure sustained government investments into the arts sector, and through its leadership role in facilitating opportunities for professional development and networking in the arts communities. The OAC's greatest strength is its dedicated staff team, with the illustrious Executive Director Nicole Milne at the helm, its broad range of members from various artistic disciplines, and its dedicated base of volunteers, which includes its Board of Directors, who have an array of core competencies that include arts advocacy, community engagement, government relations, professional artists, and legal and financial expertise.

Now is a great time to join us at the Ottawa Arts Council. Creatives and arts supporters can support the Council's mission and vision in many ways. Together, we can create a sustainable, thriving arts sector for the benefit of all Ottawans.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Kwong', written in a cursive style.

Jamie Kwong
President, Ottawa Arts Council

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year's Annual Report showcases the many accomplishments and milestones we have achieved and the challenges we have overcome. It is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our staff, donors, sponsors, and board of directors, who have worked tirelessly to support the arts in Ottawa. Your commitment to the arts in our city has been instrumental in our success.

Over the past year, our artists and arts organisations have seen incredible resurgence and innovation. We have continued to support our members through networking, professional development opportunities, and advocacy efforts. We have worked tirelessly to promote the importance of the arts in our community, advocating for increased public funding and highlighting the economic and social benefits that the arts bring to our city.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities on the horizon. We will continue to work closely with our members and partners to ensure that the arts remain at the forefront of our city's cultural identity. We will also continue to adapt to changing circumstances and explore new ways of supporting and promoting our members.

Thank you for believing in the Council.



Nicole Milne
Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

The Ottawa Arts Council (the Council) is a settler-led arts service organization that advances, promotes and advocates for the arts in Ottawa. We are catalysts in building an engaged, growing and inclusive sector. We support arts workers through leadership, guidance and providing opportunities to advance Ottawa's local creative potential. Through collaboration with partners, the Council creates an environment where equity and diversity are celebrated, and artistic achievement is recognized.



WHAT WE DO

Our organization focuses on five essential beliefs: integrity, innovation, inclusion, collaboration and responsiveness. We are transparent and respectful in our efforts to deliver value; we embrace the use of innovation and creative responses to solve problems and find solutions; we are committed to diversity and inclusion to ensure equitable representation and participation of everyone in the arts; we work collectively with others to advance our mandate and impact, and we are adaptive in responding to evolving needs in the arts.

ADVOCACY FOR ARTISTS

Collective advocacy can help to foster a sense of community among artists and arts organizations, encouraging collaboration and supporting the development of new and innovative work. By working together to advocate for the arts, we also help to ensure that funding and resources are distributed more equitably, enabling a greater diversity of voices and perspectives to be heard.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL

Government funding helps to foster a vibrant and diverse arts community, which is essential for promoting cultural exchange, social cohesion, and a sense of national identity. Provincial and federal arts advocacy also helps to ensure that arts and culture are accessible to all Canadians, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status. By investing in the arts, governments can promote creativity, innovation, and cultural expression, which are all essential for a thriving and dynamic society.

Through partnerships with the Ottawa Arts Initiative and the Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario, the Council supported advocacy campaigns to ensure cultural funding budgets were sustained at all levels, as we galvanized the arts community's support through petitions and offered advocacy resources at both the municipal and provincial levels.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE TOWN HALL FOR THE ARTS

With a municipal and provincial election in 2022, we created a joint advocacy team with Arts Network Ottawa entitled the Ottawa Arts Initiative, advocating for increased local and provincial arts community funding and addressing accomplishments and gaps. This campaign featured a Mayoral Candidate Town Hall for the Arts in October 2022, offering the community the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight into how each candidate will address supporting the arts. With 90 attendees, both online and in person, the outcome was well received. The hybrid event was live-streamed, and questions for the candidates were secured by social media marketing, surveys and in-person participation.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

ARTS AWARDS

Every year, the Council works to adapt the Arts Awards program to better reflect the value for laureates. This year we partnered with MASC, Arts Network Ottawa, and poet laureate Jamaal Jackson Rogers to present the new Community Arts Educator Award, honouring educators who teach art in classrooms and community centres. The awards aim to celebrate and promote artists' diversity, talent, and contribution to the city's cultural landscape. The event returned to in-person and was held at the Ottawa Little Theatre, welcoming 181 attendees to celebrate the creative community.





COMMUNITY ARTS EDUCATOR AWARD

Michael Tardioli

"Shortly after accepting the Community Arts Educator Award I was so touched by many current and former students sending their best wishes.

The classroom over the last 25 years has been very rewarding and a sincere honour to work with emerging talent."



YOUNG ARTIST AWARD

Jude Peter

"Winning the award made me feel more confident in my ideas and gave me the opportunity to make valuable connections at the show. Currently, I am attending the School of Photographic Arts Ottawa as a student, and I am preparing for our end-of-the-year exhibition."



EMERGING IBPOC ARTIST AWARD

Laurena Fineus

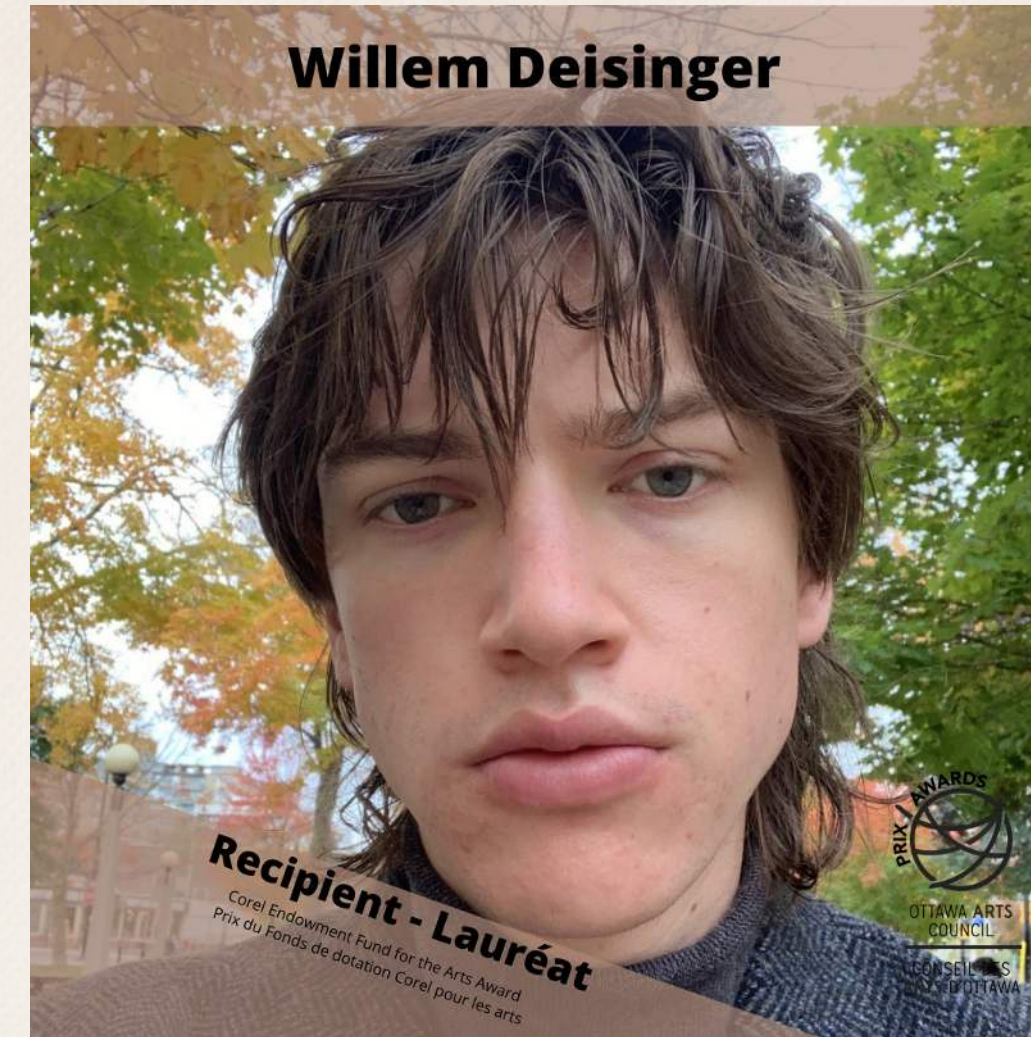
"I am extremely grateful for the support of the IBPOC Artist Award which came at a crucial time in my career. It allowed me to pursue and fund some important projects that have contributed to my portfolio for applying to a major graduate school outside of the country. It provided additional funding for materials and space I had at the time. It has also stabilized my income for the starting months of my stay abroad providing me with the appropriate immediate care and resources to succeed. None of this would have happened if not for the original funding of the OAC and the support of my community."



PETER HONEYWELL MID-CAREER ARTIST AWARD

Don Kwan

"I have found the award process to be a very positive experience for myself. The recognition I have received from my peers has boosted my confidence and given me the opportunity to reflect on my past career achievements. I am truly grateful for the opportunities that receiving this award has brought me, and I am excited to pursue my future goals and continue to further my artistic dreams."



VICTOR TOLGESY AWARD

Lydia Talajic

"As more of an arts facilitator, I was honored to receive the Victor Tolgesy Award as these behind-the-scenes roles often go unrecognized. This award gave me the confidence to dream bigger by focusing on governance and operations of arts organizations. It also inspired me to engage in more philanthropic work in my community outside the arts where I can apply artistic teachings, such as patience, compassion, and teamwork."

PROJECT X, PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

Angelina Barrucco

"Winning the Project X Award symbolized to me the approbation of my journey into the photographic arts in Ottawa. I am grateful."

I'm finishing up a solo exhibition at the Ottawa School of Art called Pandemic Fine. It showcases all the work I have created during the pandemic. I also won the Production Creation grant through the City of Ottawa for a new body of work that I am creating and have been contracted as a part-time instructor at the University of Ottawa. Things are moving along."

COREL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS AWARD

Willem Deisinger

"The award was a real boost for my art practice and cultural work at the time of receiving it. I was just graduating from my undergrad and looking into what the possibilities are in a career around art. Receiving this award was a big confidence boost for me to be able to do the work I'm doing today."

I believe confidence is a big key for artists; being able to pursue your ideas and think it's worthwhile can be difficult. This award helped me develop that kind of mindset."

"The Peter Honeywell Mid-Career Artist award helped me to purchase steel to create P.O.W. Piano, an interactive musical sculpture for my upcoming Instruments of War series. Due to extraordinary market pressures, steel prices have risen over 200% since 2020, so the funds came at the right time for my project."

Anna Frlan (finalist, Peter Honeywell Mid-Career Artist Award)

"I continued to push within my craft and do the above-and-beyond with Street Dance in my community, my professional work and also overseas. I was invited to Indonesia to represent Canada for a cultural festival, I taught in Mexico, I competed in my respective dance styles and continued to teach in Ottawa. So, it's been a great year!"

Alea De Castro (honourable mention, Community Arts Educator Award)

LUCK!

Our popular visual arts fundraiser, LUCK!, returned to an in-person event this year. Over 50 participants donated work, which expanded this year to include dance, theatre and creative arts experiences. We raised more than \$10,000 in support for the Council's new Microgrant Program, thanks to all the contributors, donors, partners, and supporters.



PARLOUR

SJ STIRLING
JOHNSTON
HOME TEAM

MANDALA PROJECT

Thanks to a multi-year grant from the Ottawa Community Foundation, the Council embarked on its first year of focusing on barriers encountered by Indigenous, Black and Artists of Colour. Community conversations focused on addressing archaic and colonial funding practices that exist in regards to funding support. Actionable outcomes for the first year were to have built trust in the equity-seeking communities and secured engagement to continue collaborating and partnering with the Council in a way that moves beyond tokenism. Success will be measured by shaping the learning into an advocacy, professional development and presentation opportunity for artists and IBPOC-led arts organizations when applying for financial support.

 OTTAWA
 COMMUNITY
 FOUNDATION

CINÉPOÉSIE

To celebrate the French language arts and the 40th anniversaries of the Council and the Centre d'Excellence des arts d'Ottawa, four Cinépoésie projects were created on 16mm film. During the creative process, seven students and their artist mentors learned how to map out their stories, use the Bolex 16mm camera, produce their Cinépoésie film, and develop their 16mm film by hand in the CEAO darkroom.



Canada 

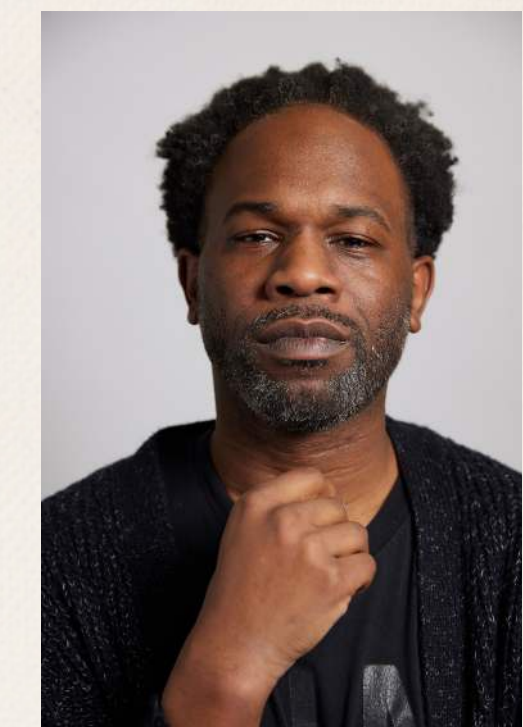
FULL SPECTRUM: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

The videos are available in English with French, Arabic and Chinese subtitles.

Full Spectrum was created in response to surveys and stakeholder interviews conducted by the Ottawa Arts Council with Ottawa’s artistic community, seeking feedback on services they wished to see prioritized by the Council. With resounding results, the need for professional development programming was identified. With this in mind, the Council set out to create this instructional offering.

Full Spectrum is a professional development series, developed by artists and cultural leaders, for artists at all levels - from project management to video production, marketing to communications. This multilingual 8-video series was designed for self-employed artists from their peers, sharing skills and information on practical professional development topics including:

- Brand Strategy:** How to Create a Compelling Brand Strategy for Artists - Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah
- Going Digital:** Moving Your Performance Online - Allison Burns
- Patreon:** The Ins and Outs of Peer Funding - Colin White
- Brand Longevity:** Localising, Evolving, and Diversifying your Brand Over Time - Kwende Kefentse
- NFTS:** A New Revenue Generator for Digital Arts - Carmilla Sumantry
- Advocacy:** A Tool Guide to Using Your Voice for Action in the Arts - Fae Johnstone
- Get Insured:** Navigating the World of Liability Insurance - Colette Mendenhall
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** Best Practices in Creating Authentic Change - Sharon Nyangweso

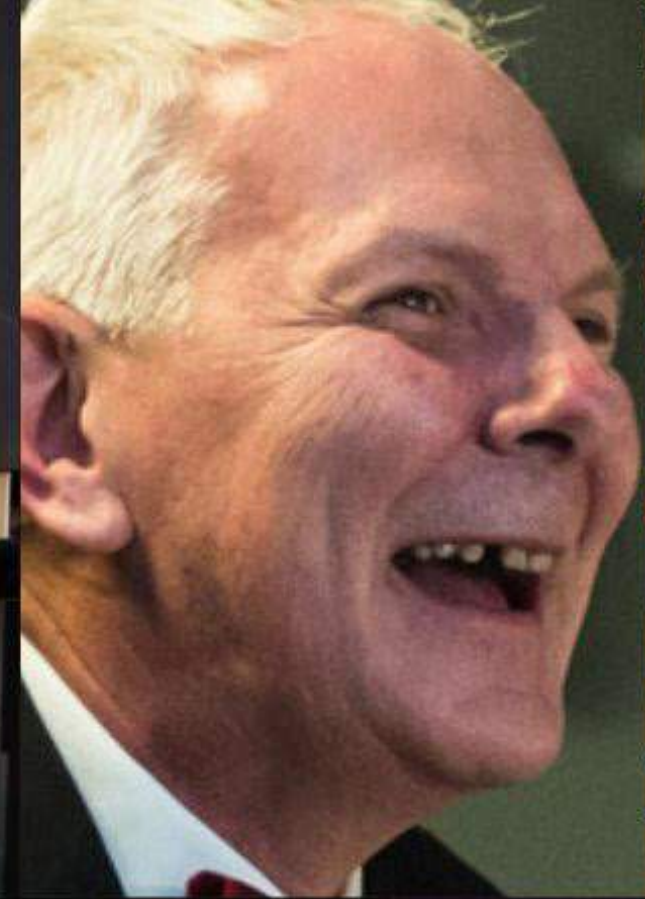


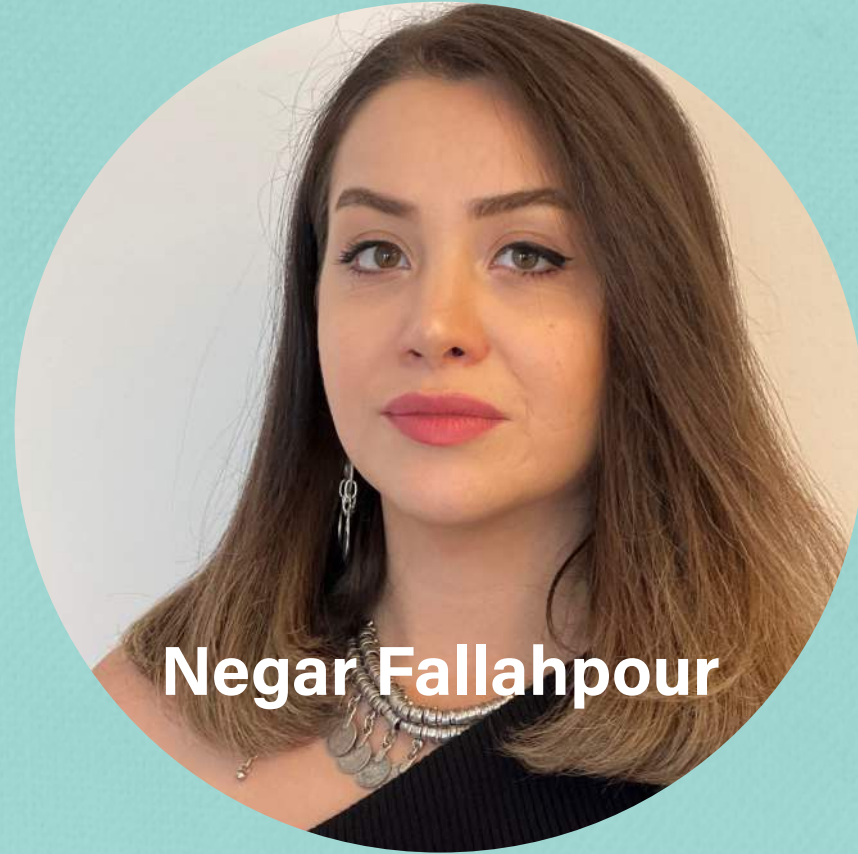
40TH ANNIVERSARY

2023 marks an important turning point in the history of the Ottawa Arts Council: our 40th anniversary. As we work toward an effective reopening of the sector, we want to channel the energy of the community into a celebration of creative resilience. We also want to build on the important work in the realm of diversified revenue and work internally and externally to improve our organization's services through a more equitable, inclusive and diverse lens.

Achieving this 40-year milestone gives us a chance to reflect on our past, and celebrate four decades of advancing, promoting and advocating for artists and arts organizations in Ottawa. We move forward into the coming year and will focus on learning, reflecting and collaborating with our members and the community at large.







Negar Fallahpour

Project Administrator
(she/her)



Joni Hamlin

**Communications and
Development Manager**
(she/her)



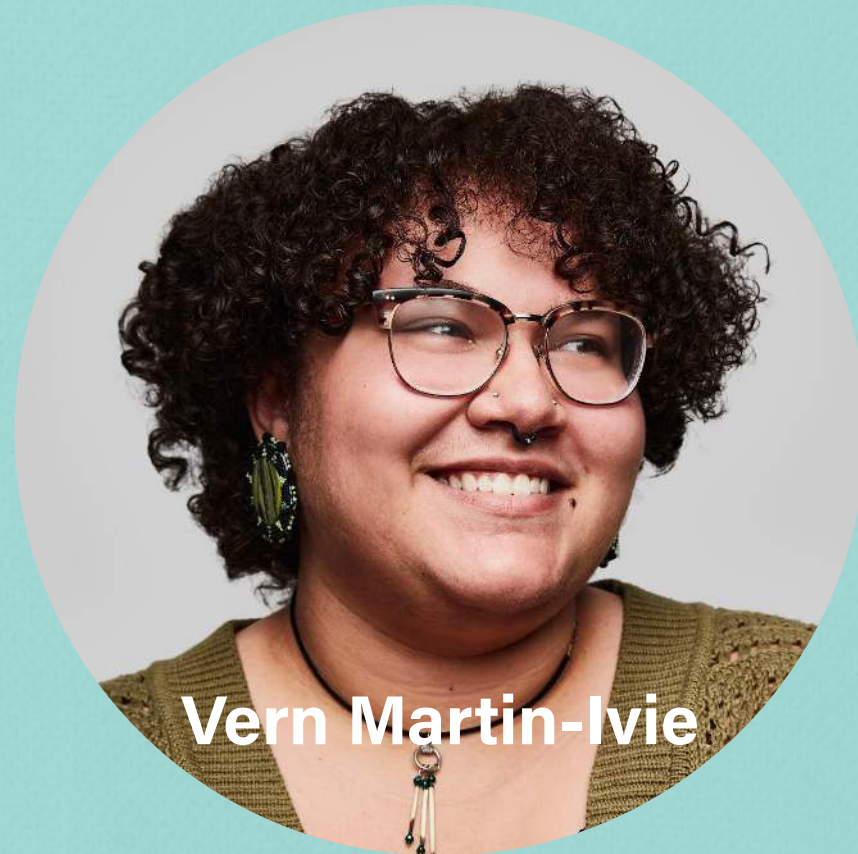
Axandre Lemours

**Administrative and
Communications Assistant**
(he/him)

WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN?

Our staff, board, members and donors include individuals who are essential creative contributors to our community, and great supporters of the Ottawa Arts Council.

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Vern Martin-Ivie

Administrative Assistant
(they/them)



Nicole Milne

Executive Director
(she/her)



Rebecca Rama

Programming Assistant
(she/her)

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(she/her)
President



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(she/her)
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Kalene DeBaeremaeker
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Antoine L Colins
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OTTAWA D'OTTAWA

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OTTAWA LITTLE THEATRE

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