



Halton Hills

# STATE OF CULTURE 2022-2023



CULTURAL SERVICES  
[HALTONHILLS.CA/CULTURE](https://haltonhills.ca/culture)  
TOWN OF HALTON HILLS





## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Arts and cultural experiences play a valuable role in building a diverse, safe, welcoming, inclusive and equitable community. This is especially important as Halton Hills continues to grow and become more diverse. A vibrant arts and culture scene also contributes to a thriving economy, attracting investment, cultural tourism and contributing to the high quality of life we all enjoy in Halton Hills. Cultural Services provides crucial supports to a thriving local arts and culture sector, by supporting and engaging local artists and cultural organizations, enabling them to raise their profiles, diversify their offerings and thrive.

This State of Culture report provides insight into the value of culture, the resilience of local artists, creators and organizations that continue to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, the unique and engaging opportunities that the local creative sector offers to residents and visitors, and the significant contributions of culture to placemaking, strengthening the social fabric and animating and enhancing public space.

The Town remains committed to offering inclusive programs and initiatives year-round that spotlight diverse artists and creators. The projects in this report demonstrate the Town's ongoing commitment to cultural vibrancy, through the delivery of unique and leading cultural initiatives.

*Ana Sawler*



The Town of Halton Hills is located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.



Top Photo: Credit River near Glen Williams. Bottom Photo: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation & Every Child Matters Flags flying at the Library & Cultural Centre, Georgetown.



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Unless otherwise noted, all photographs in this report are from programs presented or supported by Cultural Services in 2022 and 2023 and are used with permission.



# INTRODUCTION

The arts and culture sector in Halton Hills is comprised of artists, creators and cultural businesses, groups and organizations. This vibrant sector plays an important role in building safe and welcoming communities, enhancing public space, and contributing to a thriving economy by attracting investment, cultural tourism, and contributing to a high quality of life. The Town's commitment to cultural vibrancy is demonstrated through the continuous delivery of programs and initiatives that support a thriving cultural sector that continues to recover from the pandemic.

This State of Culture report covers the period from 2022-2023. It articulates the value of culture, the strong community support for cultural programs and opportunities, and provides an overview of the Cultural Services division and its programs to strengthen the creative sector by providing professional development, funding supports and new opportunities for programming and public engagement. Community partnerships and collaborations are vital to the successful delivery of Cultural Services.

At the beginning of 2022, the sector was still strongly impacted by COVID-19. Restrictions were lifted in phases throughout the winter and spring. In 2023, the sector returned to a full year of programming and events without restrictions for the first time since 2019. Lessons learned from the pandemic have been incorporated into ongoing practices with virtual program offerings continuing to provide increased accessibility. The data in this report will serve as a new baseline from which to monitor the future progress and ongoing impacts of arts and culture in Halton Hills.

# CULTURAL SERVICES AT A GLANCE



**\$57,540**

Paid to Artists



**202**

Number of Artists Paid



**11,902**

Participants/Program Attendance



**170**

Sales of Art



**420+**

Artists, organizations  
& partner collaborators



**21**

Calls for Artists



# VALUE OF CULTURE

## Economic Value of Ontario's Culture Sector

Ontario's culture sector directly contributes

**\$ 28.7 Billion** (\*1)

annually to the provincial economy, representing 3% of Ontario's GDP. (\*10)

There are

**272,181** (\*1)

culture jobs in Ontario or 3.7% of total Ontario employment. (\*11)

## Cultural Tourism (\*2)



The average arts and culture trip has nearly **triple** the economic impact of non-arts and culture trips.

Over

**18.4 million**

unique tourist trips to Ontario included arts and culture activities.

Arts & Culture tourists prefer to stay longer.

**36%**

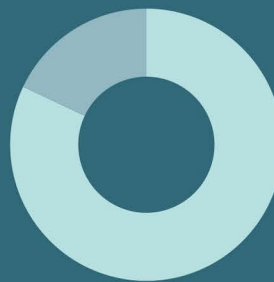
of trips had a duration of three or more nights, compared to 13% of non arts & culture trips.

## Investment Attraction

Quality of life is one of the

**TOP 5**

factors driving the decision to invest in Halton Region. (\*4)



82% of Ontarians believe that an active local arts scene helps communities attract businesses. (\*3)



## Public Sector Investment in the Arts (\*3)

**78%**

78% of Ontarians believe that helping make the arts available to people in Ontario is an important government investment.

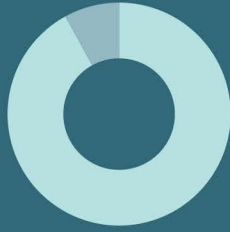
**74%**

74% of Ontarians believe that the Government should spend public dollars to invest in the arts.

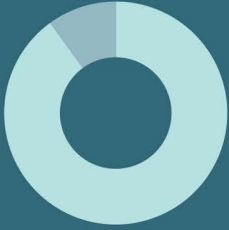
# VALUE OF CULTURE

## Culture and Quality of Life (\*3)

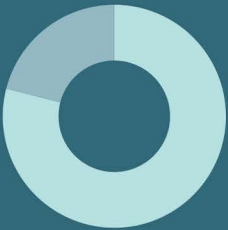
92% of Ontarians agree that art activities enrich the quality of our lives



90% of Ontarians believe that an active local arts scene makes a community a better place to live



79% of Ontarians believe that the arts are important for their mental health



## Culture and Community Identity & Belonging (\*3)

**87%**

87% of Ontarians agree that participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity.

**86%**

86% of Ontarians believe that arts experiences help bring people from diverse backgrounds together as a community.

**82%**

82% of Ontarians agree that the arts help us express and define what it means to be Canadian.

## Cultural Participation

With 81,800 professional artists, Ontario is home to

**40%**

of all Canadian artists. (\*5)



**59%**

of Ontarians intended to attend more or the same amount of arts or cultural performances in 2023, compared to 2022. (\*6)



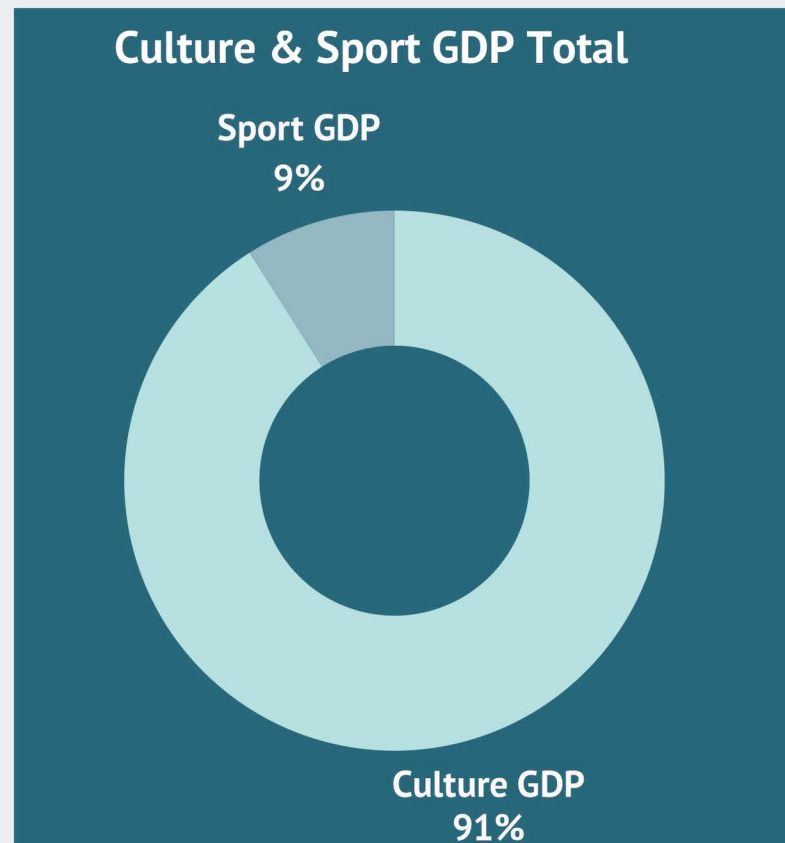


# ARTS & CULTURE IN HALTON HILLS



Direct Economic Impact of Culture & Sports in Halton Hills - 2021 (\*1)

## GDP CONTRIBUTION



## DIRECT ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURE



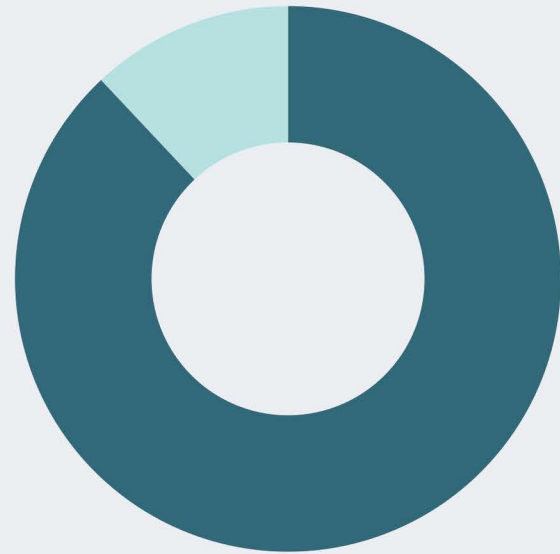
- Visual and Applied Arts  
**\$13.1 million**
- Audio-Visual and Interactive Media  
**\$6.1 million**
- Written and Published works  
**\$6.1 million**
- Other  
**\$19.6 million**  
including live performance and sound recording

# ARTS AND CULTURE IN HALTON HILLS

## CULTURE JOBS CONTRIBUTION <sup>(\*1)</sup>



Sport Jobs  
12%



Culture Jobs  
88%

525 +

73 =

598

Culture Jobs

Sports Jobs

Culture & Sport Jobs Total

Most common Culture jobs in Halton Hills:

177 

Visual & Applied Arts

89 

Audio-Visual and  
Interactive Media

70 

Written & Published Works

# ARTS & CULTURE IN HALTON HILLS

(\*7)



## 100%

Agree arts & culture helps improve Canada's economy

## 78%

Agree that arts & culture brings people in Canada together



## 72%

Agree that arts & culture improves quality of life in Canada



## 72%

Agree that arts & culture helps provide comfort in day to day life



## 72%

Agree that arts & culture creates new opportunities for people





# CULTURAL SERVICES OVERVIEW

The Cultural Services division implements programs that position Halton Hills as a diverse, welcoming, connected and vibrant community with a high quality of life. It makes the community more livable, contributing to economic development by making Halton Hills a preferred location to live, work, create and invest. The division supports a thriving arts and culture sector, presents varied cultural programming, and leads the Town's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation portfolios.



## Core Services

- Deliver diverse cultural programming
- Implement Public Art Program
- Operate Helson Gallery
- Care and maintenance of Town and Library art collections
- Support the local arts and culture sector
- Provide funding, commissioning, presenting and art sales opportunities
- Manage committees and boards related to the local arts & culture sector
- Engage and collaborate with cultural leaders and stakeholders
- Provide community engagement and volunteer opportunities
- Participate in regional, provincial, and national networks
- Collect, analyze, and report on key cultural data and indicators
- Lead Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation initiatives

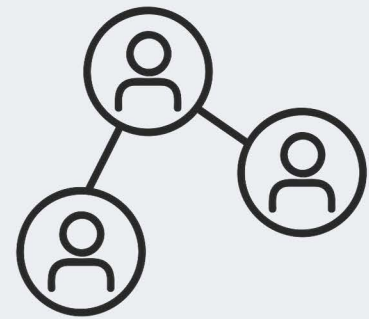
## Policies and Plans

- Cultural Master Plan
- Public Art Policy
- Public Art Master Plan
- Community Sustainability Strategy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan (in-progress)
- Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan (forthcoming)

## Connections to Additional Town Strategies and Initiatives

- Community Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Halton Hills Cultural Heritage Strategy
- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

# MEET THE TEAM



The Cultural Services workplan is implemented by a small team of cultural professionals.

## Management

**Manager of Culture and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Full Time)**

Manages all aspects of the Cultural Services division including the portfolios of Culture; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Truth and Reconciliation. Responsible for setting strategic direction, budgets, ensuring operational oversight, and advising the Commissioner on culture, equity and reconciliation matters.

## Programming & Policy

**Cultural Services Coordinator (Full Time)**

Supports all aspects of the delivery of the Cultural Services workplan, including communications, marketing, research, and information management.

**Cultural Program Producer (Full Time)**

Responsible for developing and delivering Cultural Services programming, and Professional Development and Community Funding Programs for the arts and culture sector.

**Public Art Coordinator (Contract)**

Coordinates all aspects of the Town's Public Art Program, in accordance with the Public Art Master Plan including temporary and permanent works, supporting private sector and community-led initiatives and developing programming and policy.

**Cultural Services Assistant (Annual Short-Term Contract)**

Assists in the delivery and development of cultural programs and events, including Culture Days.

## Helson Gallery

**Art Gallery Curator (Part Time)**

Manages the Helson Gallery including its exhibitions, public programs, volunteer docent program and the art collections of the Town and Library.

**Art Gallery Assistant Curator (Part Time)**

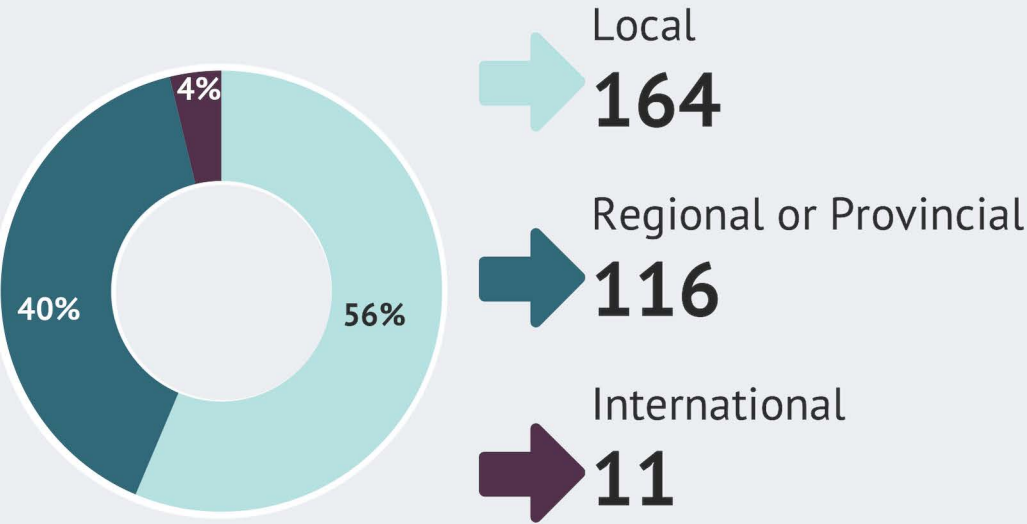
Supports the Helson Gallery including its exhibitions, public programs and art collections.

# PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS

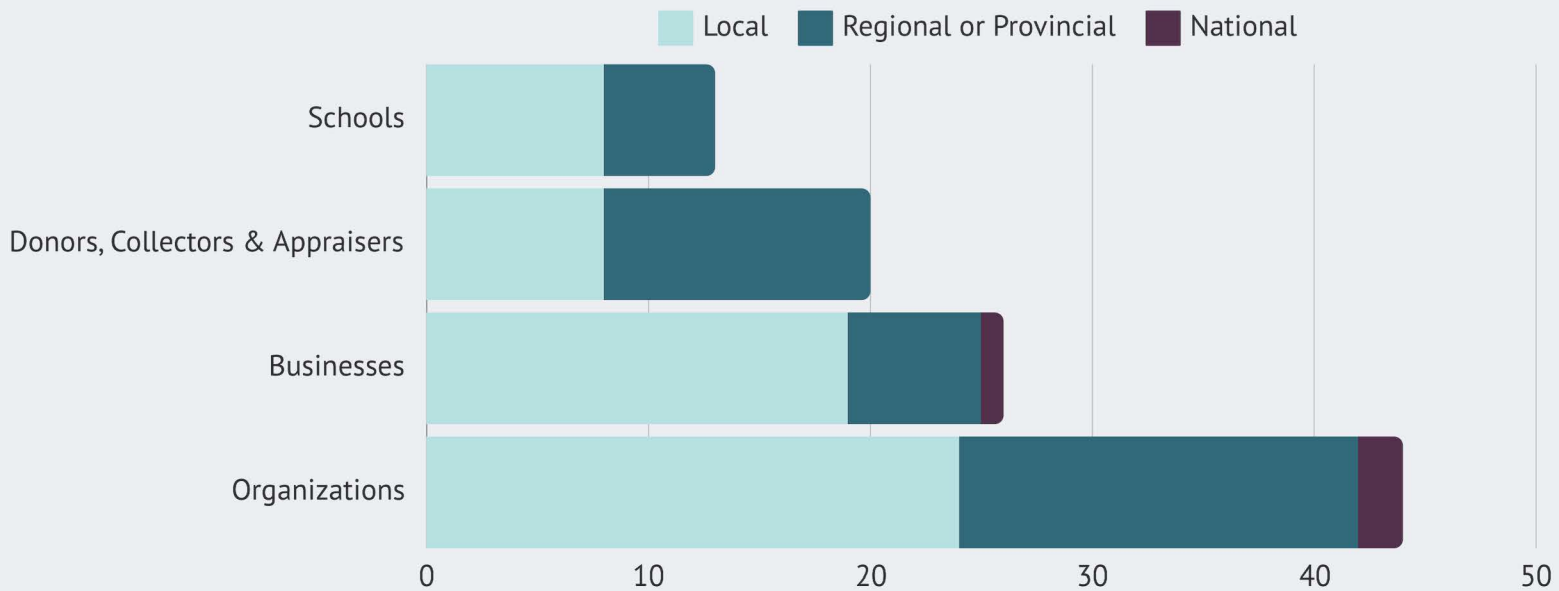


**420+** Cultural Services collaborated with more than 420 artists, organizations, businesses and partners

## ARTISTS



## PARTNERS, BUSINESSES & ORGANIZATIONS



# THE ARTIST NEXT DOOR



The Artist Next Door program funds new community-engaged artwork by local artists in any artistic discipline with up to \$1,000 per project. Launched in 2020, the program has funded 21 community-engaged projects.

This program highlights the capacity for the arts to build and strengthen community relationships, improve health and wellbeing, allow for creative placemaking and enjoyment, as well as create opportunities for public engagement and learning.

## 2022 & 2023 Program Highlights

Music in the Gallery

Downtown Murals

Community Mandala

Celebrate India Event

Visual Diaries

➔ **\$6,600** Total Funding Awarded

➔ **7** Projects Funded

➔ **882** Direct Participants

➔ **64** Participating Artists

"As an artist and organizer, the experience was amazing and heartwarming to see so many people using colours to express themselves on the mandala canvas... The overall engagement from the community was absolutely exceptional and it has definitely encouraged me to plan more art related activities in future."



# CULTURE DAYS

All activities are free or pay-what-you-can

#hhCultureDays | #hhIsCulture

Culture Days is an annual Canada-wide celebration of arts and culture. Culture Days aims to increase public awareness of and participation in arts and culture activities. It raises the profile of the cultural sector, increases year-round participation in the arts and attracts tourists who spend in the local community.

Each year, Halton Hills Culture Days showcases a community of talented local artists and creators. Since 2018, this annual celebration of arts and culture has been organized by Town staff who have supported artists, cultural groups and creative businesses to host 468 Culture Days events for nearly 20,000 residents and visitors.

The Town of Halton Hills participated in Culture Days for the

## 8th

consecutive year in 2023



## Culture Days Framework

Inclusive

Accesible

Diverse

Builds Community

Supports Local

## Activity Organizers are supported by

- Free activity space at Town Venues
- Culture Days microgrants
- Funding through Artist Next Door, which coincides with Culture Days
- Networking & Partnership Opportunities
- Marketing & Communications
- Culture Days Committee
- Cultural Services Staff & Volunteers

## Top 5 motivations for public participation (\*7)

- Experience something new
- Be involved in my community
- Events are free
- Learn about art and artists
- Support a specific artist or organization



# HALTON HILLS CULTURE DAYS

2022 & 2023 at a Glance

## National Rankings

# 3rd

Overall nationwide for communities of all sizes



# 2nd

Overall for 'mid-size communities' in 2023



Folk Collective at Dominion Gardens



# 100%

Said they were satisfied with the event or activity they participated in. (\*7)



Cranes for Ukraine



# 171

Activities



# 6,600

in funding to local artists and cultural organizations



# 47

Venues



# 384

Participating Artists



Photography Workshop



# 3,850

In-Person Participants



# 3,630

Virtual Participants



Paws for a Cause at Glazed Expressions



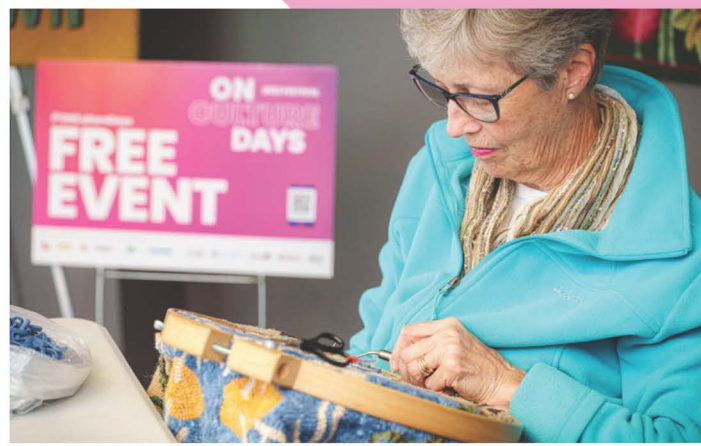
Designated Ontario Culture Days Regional Hub



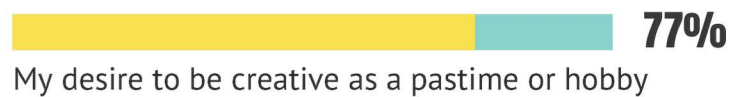
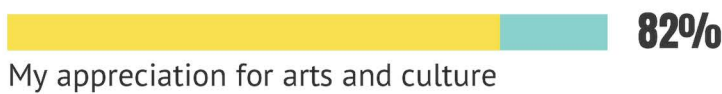
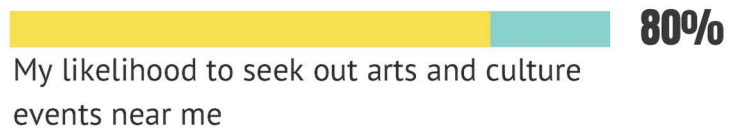
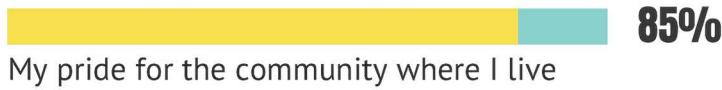
# 24%

of participants were tourists in 2023 (travelled 41k or more) (\*7)

# CULTURE DAYS IMPACTS <sup>(\*7)</sup>



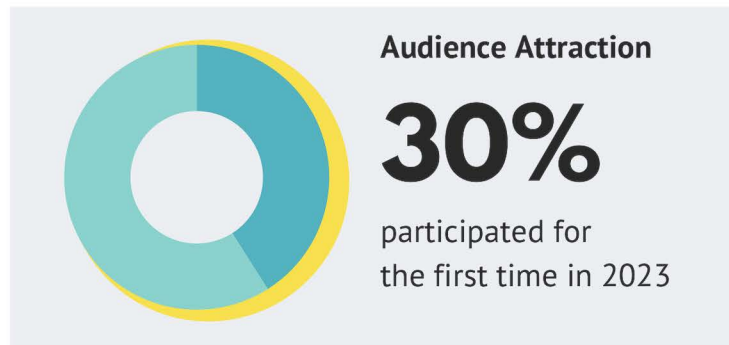
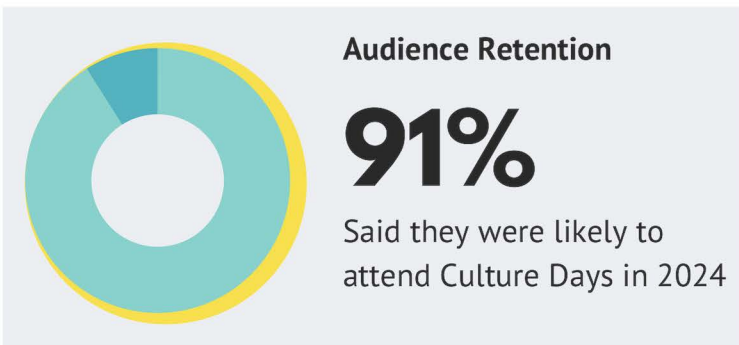
Attending Culture Days had a positive impact on:



"Thank you kindly for showcasing these marvelous fun, educational and free events. Amazing times..."

"Look forward to seeing more arts and music programs bringing the younger generation from different cultural backgrounds together as well as offering them the stage to communicate, connect, perform and collaborate together."

"A wonderful opportunity to expose oneself to new art forms...people and ideas."



# CULTURE DAYS PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

## A Place I Call Home Halton

This community-driven artwork was created and led by contemporary artist Faisal Anwar in collaboration with the Town of Oakville, Town of Milton, Museums of Burlington, and Halton Region Heritage Services. It explored the concept of “HOME” and invited participants to share their interpretations of home through images on social media. The photos culminated in an interactive large-scale installation projected in prominent locations within Halton Region, including the John Elliott Theatre.



Ontario Culture Days Spotlight Winner:  
Best Collaborative Program



## Steel Pan Workshop

Participants joined Luckystickz in the John Elliott Theatre for this fun, interactive introduction to steel pan drums. This 1 hour session included a performance, talk on the history and development of the instrument, and 30 minutes of hands on workshop time where participants learned and performed a song on the drums.



## The Community Colouring Page by Arielle Rahal

Artist and colouring book creator Arielle Rahal transformed two plywood panels into canvases for the public to colour, featuring the historic McGibbon Hotel and the Limehouse Conversation area. These colourful panels weave heritage and community into a downtown construction site.

Find the panels at Main and Mill Streets in Georgetown.





# HELSON GALLERY

The Helson Gallery is an important cultural space in Halton Hills. It features exhibitions of local art, private collections and travelling exhibitions. Curated shows are also exhibited in the Sisnett Lobby of the Cultural Centre, the Georgetown and Acton Library branches and Town Hall.

Gallery staff care for and maintain the Town and Library art collections, as well as the Helson Collection which was certified as Cultural Property by the Canadian Department of Heritage, recognizing its outstanding significance.

## HELSON COLLECTION

103 Artworks  
\$922,850

## TOWN ART COLLECTION

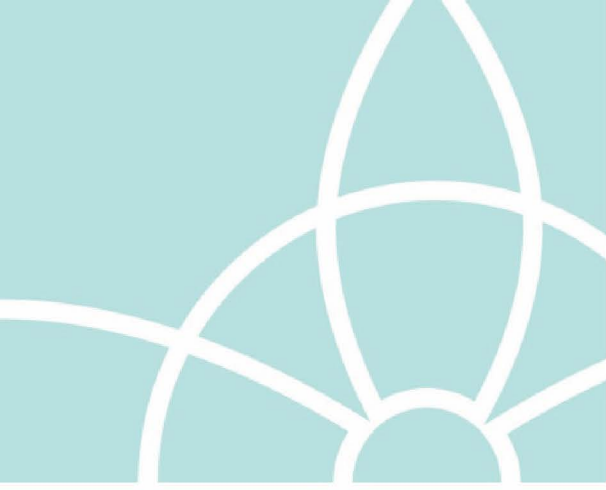
825 Artworks  
\$531,898

## HHPL ART COLLECTION

899 Artworks  
\$110,252

Total: 1827 Artworks, valued at over \$1.56 Million





# HELSON GALLERY

## At a glance 2022-2023



**8,500** Visitors



**1,008** Volunteers Hours



**2,474** Program Participants



**48** Exhibitions



**\$20,803** In Art Sales



**62** Donated Artworks

"Beautiful space, and beautifully curated exhibit. Thanks for sharing this collection."  
- Recent Acquisitions Exhibition

"What a lovely exhibit and a great space... I went with a couple of friends and we ended up at the Shepherd's Crook backyard patio for lunch. Then some shopping on the main street."  
- Impressionism show

"This has been a beautiful, blissful experience – I've enjoyed it so much."  
- Impressionism show, visitor from The Netherlands



# HELSON GALLERY PROGRAMS & EVENTS



## School Programs

Grade differentiated programs from kindergarten to grade 8 reinforce the requirements of the Ontario Curriculum in Visual Arts and offer opportunities for many more curriculum connections. In each 90-minute program students explore a variety of artworks as well as create their own art.



## Family Drop-in Sessions

Provide an opportunity for families to create a piece of art inspired by the work currently on display in the gallery. This program encourages visitors to explore the current exhibition and engage in a discussion of art and art making. Appropriate for all ages.



## Inspirations Art Program

This program is designed for those with special needs. Its purpose is to inspire creativity and promote social and therapeutic wellness while using art as a means of communication and confidence building. Participants tour the gallery before taking part in a watercolour lesson.



## Life Drawing in the Gallery

Connect and hone figure drawing skills with these free, self-directed sessions in the Helson Gallery. Artists bring their own supplies. Increased accessibility through online streaming offered during Culture Days.



## Plein Air Events

The Helson Gallery co-presents two plein air events annually in partnership with various local art organizations in June and September. Artists are invited to paint outdoors, capturing scenery and natural light. Works are juried and prizes are awarded.



## Music in the Gallery

Enjoy free live performances in the Helson Gallery. This program runs on select weekend afternoons. Visit [haltonhills.ca/gallery](http://haltonhills.ca/gallery) to learn about upcoming performances.

Past performances include:

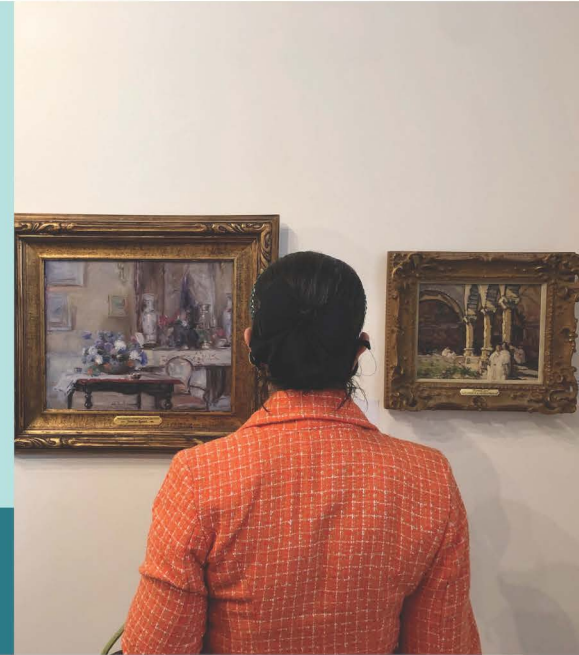
- Paul Shearer
- Don Ablett & Brent Cooper
- Matt Powell & Friends

# HELSON GALLERY: EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

## Le petit salon: Canadian Artists and Impressionism

April 27 - July 23, 2022

This exhibition featured over 60 works by noted Canadian artists. The exhibition traced the influences of French Impressionism during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Paintings and prints were generously lent from several private collections and appropriate works from the Town's historically significant Helson Collection were also included.



“Gorgeous exhibition – glad I took the trip from Toronto to see it.”



## Supporting Humanitarian Relief in Ukraine

April 2022

Donated artworks were exhibited for sale with proceeds supporting humanitarian aid in the Ukraine. The upper lobby featured paintings by Albert Gnosill, a contemporary of the Group of Seven. Proceeds were donated to the Pomich Ukraini Fund, which provides aid to Ukrainian war orphans. The work of several local artists was on view in the Lower Sisnett Lobby exhibition Hope/Nadiya. The show included a variety of styles and media. Artists donated proceeds to charities in support of Ukrainian relief.

Photo: Detail of Albert Gnosill, *Walking with Mother*, 1933

## Emancipation Exhibition

June 21 - August 27, 2023

In partnership with the Halton Black History Awareness Society (HBHAS), the Helson Gallery exhibited the sixth annual Emancipation Art Exhibition. The exhibition explored and celebrated freedom through the perspectives of Black artists. The exhibition featured over 20 artists exhibiting in a variety of mediums on view in the Helson Gallery and the Sisnett Lobby. Artworks that best reflected and articulated the Black Experience were selected for awards through a juried process. A learning opportunity was created for an Internship through Western University. The student learned both from HBHAS on its goals and community work, and from the Helson Gallery on the process for curating and exhibiting a juried art exhibition.

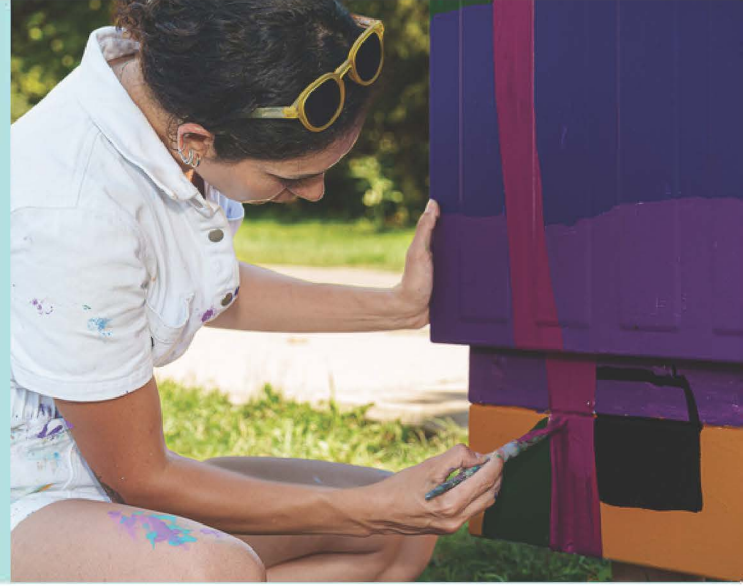


# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Bell Box Mentorship Program

This 2022 program was led by multidisciplinary artist, Yasaman Mehrsa. Five participants learned how to take their artwork off the canvas and into the public art landscape over the three-week program. Participants who completed this program had the opportunity to submit proposals to paint a utility box for the Halton Hills Bell Box Mural Project.

See more information about the Bell Box Mural Project on page 29.



“The Bell Box program was a great experience. It was nice meeting someone in the public art field and learning from them.”

“I really enjoyed the program. I’ve learned in depth about murals and how to approach them. As an artist that paints on canvas, I always left feeling motivated, uplifted, and confident that I can tackle a mural in the future. The mentor was highly knowledgeable and approachable making the classes enjoyable.”

“I recommend this program highly for other participants who want to learn and explore a new field of visual art; and who want to contribute in a positive way to the community.”

## Artrepreneur

Artists, creative entrepreneurs, and cultural not-for-profit representatives participated in this professional development program. Participants learned vital skills suitable for arts and culture businesses. This program was delivered by Cultural Services from 2020-2022 and was licensed from York Region Arts Council.

A total of 26 graduates participated in three Artrepreneur cohorts. Of these, 22 graduates have participated in additional Cultural Services programs & opportunities.

“I am grateful for the tons of valuable information that was presented through the whole program. The presenters were awesome...Endless possibilities and lots to absorb and put into practice.”

“I really look forward to these sessions each week and have found them to be very useful!”



### At a Glance

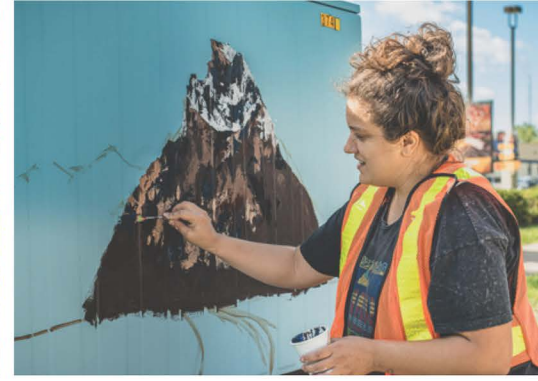
- 3rd Cohort
- 9 Graduating Creatives

### Program Content:

- Goal Setting & Critical Paths
- Business Planning
- Marketing (including research, strategy and tools)
- Grant-writing
- Networking & Partnerships
- Finances
- Pitching



# PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



Public art contributes to the creation of a safe, welcoming, vibrant, and connected community with a thriving economy. Unique works of art enhance public spaces, support placemaking, attract cultural tourism, and raise the quality of life, which is a major driver of investment attraction.

## Community Benefits of Public Art

- Contributes to complete streets and positive street activity
- Contributes to placemaking, creating a unique sense of place and character
- Creates a sense of belonging and fosters community pride and engagement
- Promotes artistic talent, supports artists and provides professional development opportunities to the sector
- Contributes to investment and workforce attraction and retention and cultural tourism
- Enhances public space and stimulates creativity and civic discourse

## Characteristics of Public Art

- Accessible in public space
- Created or overseen by a professional artist
- Created with the intention to reflect and/or engage
- Ephemeral, temporary or 'permanent'
- Functional, commemorative or purely aesthetic
- Site-specific – in response to place, community & relationship
- Diverse media including sculpture, mural, mosaic, installation, performance, sound and projection
- Product of public processes





# PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

In 2022 & 2023

**48**

- artists
- organizations
- businesses

have been directly involved in Town public art projects

**46%**

Regional,  
Provincial  
or National

**54%**

Local

Projects undertaken through the Town's public art program have had the following results:

- Professional development and capacity building for local artists
- Community engagement
- \$100,000 in grant funding for the Acton BIA
- Mitigated graffiti and enhanced streetscapes
- Provided community art opportunities where residents participated in the creation of artworks
- Provided novel experiences to residents and visitors



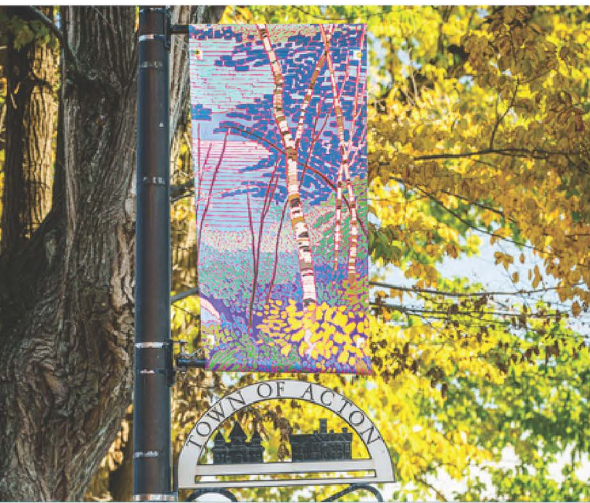
# ART AROUND ACTON



In 2022, the Town partnered with the Downtown Acton BIA to deliver Art Around Acton which provided residents and visitors alike with seven temporary and permanent public art activations in downtown Acton. Art Around Acton engaged local, regional, and provincial artists and businesses to enhance public space and draw people into the downtown core.

This project was supported by a \$100,000 grant from Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association through the Government of Canada's Tourism Relief Fund, delivered by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Art Around Acton directly engaged 23 artists and 14 businesses.



## Colour Unleashed, a banner series by Shelley Newman

Local artist Shelley Newman fills her canvases with an abstracted impressionist interpretation of the Canadian landscape. Shelley aimed to bring a smile to the community with this uplifting and joyful public art banner project displayed in downtown Acton. Five banner designs and a total of 29 banners were installed. Shelley's originals and prints are enjoyed across Canada, the United States and around the world.



## Picnic Tables

Local and GTA artists painted five picnic tables. The tables provided an accessible art experience to residents and visitors and made a vibrant addition to local restaurants in the Acton BIA core and Prospect Park. Photo features picnic table with artwork by Omar (Oms) Hopkinson.



## Storefront Window Installations

Storefronts featured the work of local artists:

- Elizabeth Bard, Acton Discount (photo)
- Kathleen Bignell, Music store
- Sonja Mortimer, The Roxy Centre



## Wrapped Utility Box, Jaguar by Andrea Rodriguez

Andrea Rodriguez aims to create awareness about the loss of the tropical rainforest through engaging and eye-catching messages that motivate people. Andrea works in a multidisciplinary setting, combining her design knowledge with her love for mural and lettering art. Located at the intersection of Main & Mill Streets in Acton.



## Music Series

A six-week music series at the Acton Farmer's Market featured musicians: Monty Greig, August Eleven (pictured left), Paula Sofia, Madison Galloway, Tragedy Ann, & John Muirhead.



## Artist Residency

Visual artist, curator, educator and community arts practitioner Ingrid Mayrhofer held an 8-week artist residency at the Acton Farmer's Market. Mayrhofer worked with a "Tree of Life" motif and invited the public to contribute sketches and clay pieces. Participants also had the option to take a self-curing clay piece home. The residency concluded with an artist talk and the presentation of a final artwork with Judi Henhawk Sault at the Acton Library Branch.



## Acton Solstice Festival

The Department of Illumination presented the Acton Solstice Festival, which saw over 500 people come out to Prospect Park on one of the coldest nights of the year. The festival transformed the park with lighted art installations, a festive community procession featuring giant puppets, Juno award-winning musician Richard Underhill and the Kensington Horns, illuminated circus artists from Trellis Arts, and more.

# BELL BOX MURAL PROJECT

Launched in 2022, this ongoing initiative in partnership with Bell Canada sees new murals added to the community annually through a juried selection process.

In its first two years, this project resulted in eight painted boxes throughout Halton Hills.



Top row (from left):

- A Trip to the Garden, Yasaman Mehrsa
- Wolf Pond, Robert John Paterson
- Wild Water's Edge, Joanne Feely DeGraaf
- Snow Day, Kelcy Timmons Chan

Bottom row (from left):

- Credit Where Due, Robert John Paterson
- A Reminder of Us, Chantel Bettencourt
- Hidden Beauty, Jody Leamen

Visit [haltonhills.ca/bellboxmurals](https://haltonhills.ca/bellboxmurals) for information about the artists, artwork and locations.

"Wow these are fabulous."

"...it will certainly brighten up Market Street. I so appreciate all your efforts."

"wonderful initiative"

# UNDER WRAPS

Under Wraps re-imagines utility boxes as canvases to enliven the streetscape in Halton Hills. The artworks include a range of disciplines, styles and subject matter such as abstract, impressionism, landscape, and realism paintings, photography, and digital artworks that are printed on vinyl wraps and installed on Town owned utility boxes.

Under Wraps raises the profile of artists, the local arts sector, and the Public Art Program. In 2022 and 2023, seven new artworks were added to this program which now includes 16 vinyl wrapped boxes throughout Halton Hills.

Visit [haltonhills.ca/underwraps](https://haltonhills.ca/underwraps) for information about the artists, artworks and locations.



Top row (from left):

- Coyotes Sing at Night, Robert John Paterson
- Them Eggs, Kelcy Timmons Chan
- Sweet Peonies, Julia Prajza
- The View from the Armstrong Avenue Property, Hope Flynn

Bottom row (from left):

- In Our Neighborhood, Junglee Ling
- Positive Outcomes, Dylan Lorriman
- Jaguar, Andrea Rodriguez

# ONSCREEN AT THE JET

Image: Still from  
“Little Richard: I am Everything”

In 2022, Create Halton Hills welcomed back in-person film audiences to the John Elliott Theatre. Since then, nearly 600 audience members attended 16 film screenings. Films were presented as part of TIFF Film Circuit, Culture Days and Indigenous History Month with the aim of providing diverse film programming to the community.

## Films presented:

- Beans
- Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry it On
- From Wisconsin with Love
- Grandmother's Voice: Healing the Scars of Colonialism
- Il pleuvait des oiseaux
- Little Richard: I am Everything
- Peace by Chocolate
- Phantom of the Open
- Rosie
- Run Woman Run
- Stories from Landback Camp
- The Last Bus
- The Miracle Club
- The Territory
- What's Love Got to Do with it?
- Wochigij Lo: End of the Peace

## Languages in films presented included:

Arabic

Cree

French

Mohawk

Portuguese

Tupi International

Urdu

tiff

FILM  
CIRCUIT

TIFF OnScreen at the JET is presented in partnership with TIFF Film Circuit, its sponsors and supporters, Create Halton Hills and the Halton Hills Public Library. The John Elliott Theatre is Halton Hills' designated TIFF Film Circuit location. Coined “the largest film club”, Film Circuit is TIFF's film outreach programme, bringing the best of Canadian and international film to communities across the country.

“Keep up the TIFF films, so interesting” - audience member



What's Love Got to Do with It?



The Miracle Club



The Territory

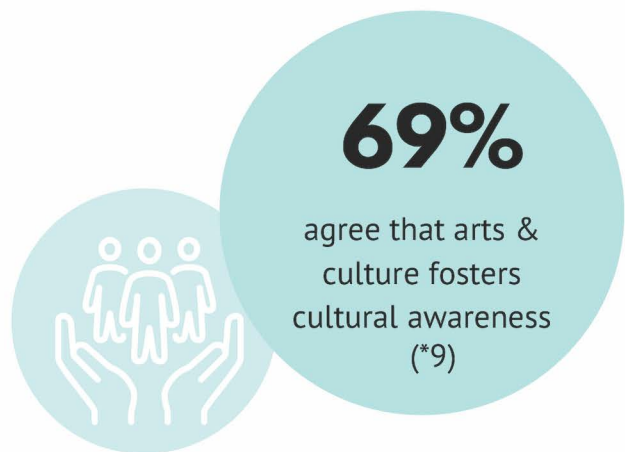
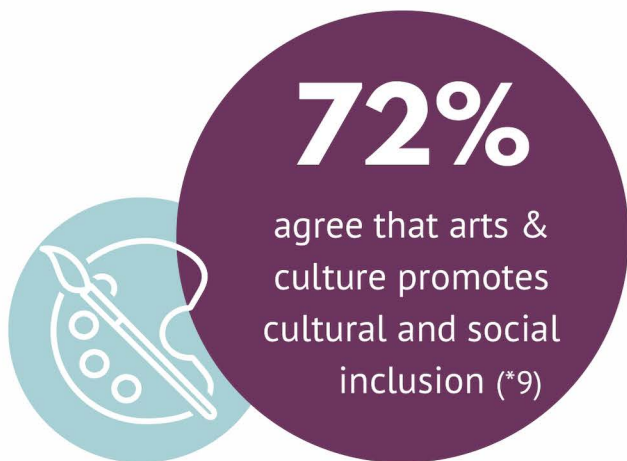
# EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION & TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Halton Hills is committed to being a diverse, safe, welcoming, inclusive and equitable community. The Cultural Services division leads the Town's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation portfolios, which includes ongoing efforts in the areas of:

- Relationship Building
- Recognition & Representation
- Education and Capacity Development
- Meaningful Consultation
- Policy Development
- Public Programming

This State of Culture Report focuses on actions related to cultural programming. Initiatives and advancement in the larger Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation portfolios is covered in separate reports.

The annual Halton Hills Culture Days survey consistently demonstrates the public's desire for more diverse representation in programming. Requested programming includes Afrocentric, Asian, Latin American, Indigenous and 2SLGBTQ+.





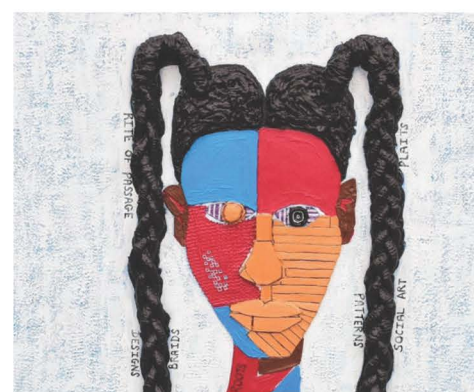
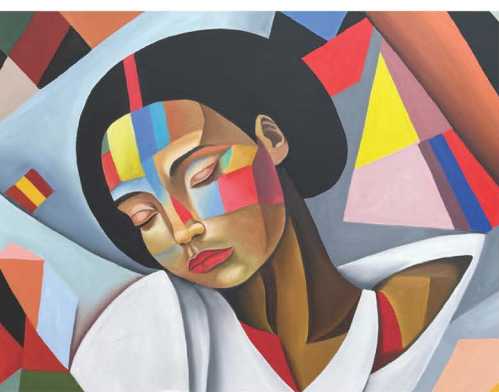
# EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Cultural Services partners with key organizations and artists in the region to offer diverse programs year-round that feature a wide range of experiences, practices and voices.

Diverse cultural programming presented by Cultural Services in collaboration with regional partners includes Black History Month, Emancipation Day, Indigenous History Month, Culture Days, and more.

2022 – 2023 Highlights include:

- Fifth and sixth annual Emancipation Day Art Exhibition & Programming in partnership with the Halton Black History Awareness Society
- Sheryl Keen Art Exhibition, titled 'Women in Growth' & Artist Talk
- Clef Notes to Canvas painting workshops in partnership with Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton
- Djembe workshop with Luckystickz
- Steel Pan Performance & Workshop with Luckystickz
- Halton Hills Public Library Lecture Series with actor, singer-song writer, Rob Green
- Celebrate India event with Rahul Kumar & Adiitee Goswami
- Dance Workshop with Bollywood West



Artwork credits: Top left detail of Aunt May by Segun Caesar. Top right, detail of Pigtail Paradise #1 by Sheryl Keen.

# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Everyone has a role to play in reconciliation

**91%**

Agree that arts & culture have a role to play in Truth and Reconciliation. (\*8)

**59%**

said Culture Days has positively impacted their desire to contribute to Truth and Reconciliation in their community. (\*7)

## Indigenous Programming

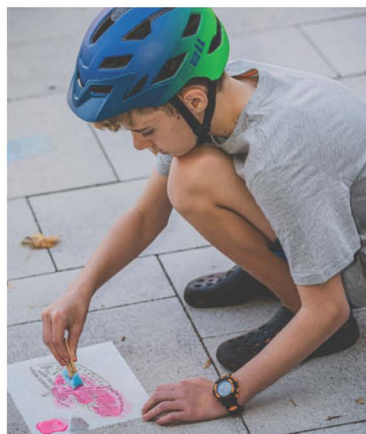
Cultural Services in partnership with community organizations supports and presents Indigenous programming year-round. Program offerings encourage residents to learn about the history and contemporary and traditional arts and culture of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Residents are encouraged to participate in programs, engage with learning resources and stay thoughtfully engaged in Truth and Reconciliation conversations throughout the year.

### 2022 – 2023 Highlights include:

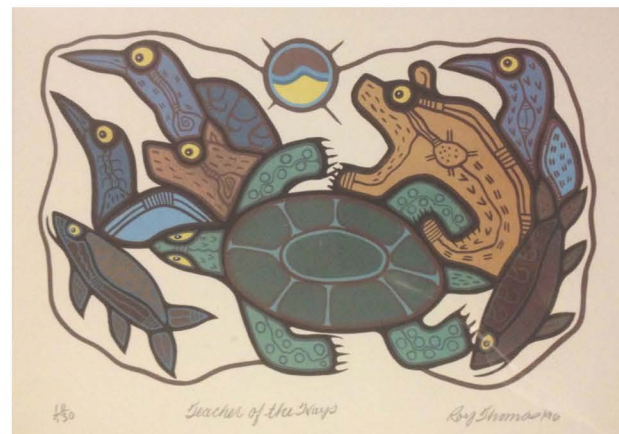
- Halton Hills Lecture Series: Relocation of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation in 1847 with Darin Wybenga, Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Coordinator for Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- 'Evolving Traditions: Indigenous Artists from the Town of Halton Hills Collection' exhibition, featuring prints by Roy Thomas, Michael Robinson, Carl Beam, Victor Ekootak and a selection of Inuit sculptures
- Spirit of the Bead: A Celebration of Northern and Woodlands Native Beadwork display
- Indigenous Art Exhibition, featuring two-dimensional indigenous artwork and Inuit sculptures and artifacts
- The Aunties Dandelion: The Woman Who Fell From The Sky & beading activity
- Film Night at the JET with Grandmother's Voice: Healing the Scars of Colonialism
- Indigenous Film Series at the JET including films Run Woman Run, From Wisconsin with Love, Stories from Landback Camp, Rosie, and Beans
- Join the Circle: Reflections on Truth & Reconciliation Culture Days activity
- Film Night at the JET with HHPL: Inconvenient Indian
- Opportunities to experience the Moccasin Identifier Project with HHPL
- HHPL Storywalk® of Raven's Feast by KungJaadee



Spirit of the Bead Display



Moccasin Identifier Project



Teacher of the Ways by Roy Thomas

# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

## Land Acknowledgement Plaques

Thirteen Land Acknowledgement Plaques, approved by MCFN, were installed in Town facilities including Youth Centres, Fire Stations, Town Hall, R.C. Operations and the arenas.



## Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation & Every Child Matters Flags

MCFN and ECM flags were permanently installed in these locations:

- Town Hall
- Library & Cultural Centre
- Acton Arena & Community Centre



## Orange Crosswalk

An Orange crosswalk was installed on September 30, 2022 at Main Street and Confederation Street in Glen Williams. The crosswalk is part of the Town's ongoing efforts to move forward on the path to Truth and Reconciliation. It is a symbol to honour the Indigenous children who did not return home from residential schools and to show support for the survivors who did. An inauguration event for the crosswalk was held in October. Special guests Gimaa (Chief) Laforme, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Eddy Robson, Halton's Indigenous Advisor, and former Mayor Rick Bonnette spoke at the event. Guests included Councillors, Town staff, students and staff from Glen Williams Public School, and residents. The public was encouraged to paint Moccasins on the bridge as part of the Moccasin Identifier Project and then all in attendance walked across the crosswalk together to inaugurate it and demonstrate their commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

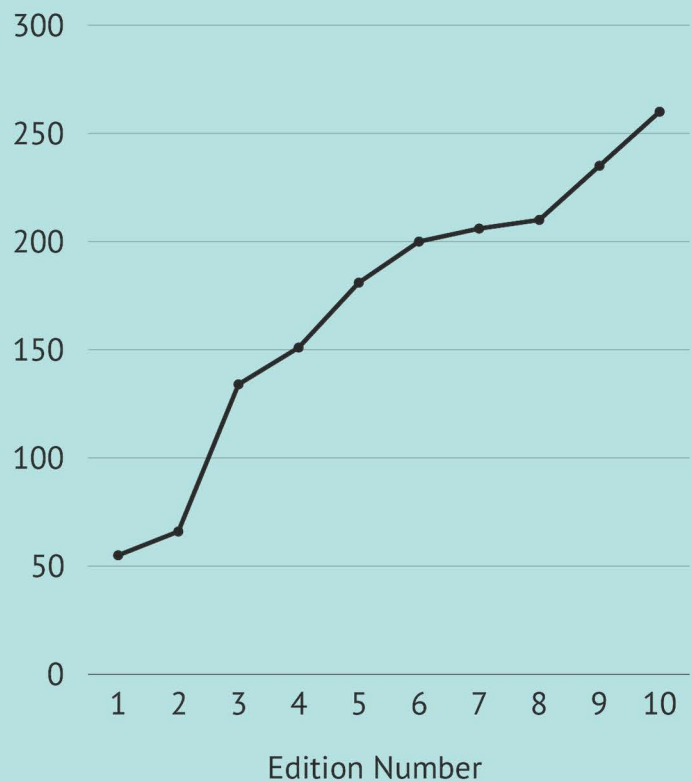
## Create Halton Hills - Your Arts & Culture Connection

The Cultural Services division works under the Create Halton Hills brand, developed in collaboration with Communications and launched in 2023. Under this banner the Create Halton Hills newsletter was developed with its first edition coming out in April. The newsletter highlights arts and culture opportunities and events for both the public and the arts and culture sector.

Scan the QR code to subscribe.



### Create Halton Hills Newsletter Confirmed Subscribers



### 2023 At a Glance



**270** Confirmed Subscribers



**10** Editions Released



**84%** Average Open Rate



**77** Articles of Information Published



**15%** Average Click Rate



**7.5 times** More than the Standard Average Click Rate

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

## Web and Social Media Analytics

#hhIsCulture

#HelsonGallery

#hhPublicArt

#hhCultureDays

**341,400**

Impressions and engagements on Cultural Services' social media posts

**122,145+**

Marketing impressions for the annual Cultural Days campaign

**12,798**

Visits to Cultural Services pages on the Town and Visit Halton Hills websites

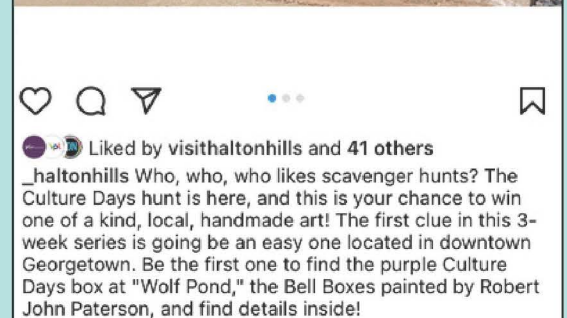
**353**

Social media posts on Cultural Services programs, initiatives and opportunities

Looking to have some outdoor winter fun? Bring the family to the Acton Solstice Festival on Sunday, December 18, 2022 at Prospect Park. Join us from 4 to 7 p.m. for an evening of illumination featuring acts by The Department of Illumination! Brought to you by the Downtown Acton BIA, in association with the Town of Halton Hills and the Department of Illumination. Visit [visithaltonhills.ca/ArtAroundActon](https://visithaltonhills.ca/ArtAroundActon) to learn more! #ArtAroundActon



This is one of the top performing posts on the Town channels with over 19,958 impressions and 2587 engagements.



Residents were invited to participate in a scavenger hunt for a chance to win original artwork by local artists and artisans. Clues were posted on the Town's Instagram channel during this three week series, as part of a marketing campaign for Culture Days.



# CONCLUSION

The arts and culture sector plays an important role in supporting a thriving economy through investment attraction and retention, cultural tourism, and raising the quality of life. The arts and culture sector provides 525 jobs in Halton Hills and contributes \$45 Million directly to the municipal GDP. The creative sector also supports community identity, a sense of belonging, and health and wellbeing that is recognized and valued by residents, visitors, and businesses in Halton Hills.

In 2023, Halton Hills' Culture Days ranked 3rd nationwide out of communities big and small. The number of activities offered by the local arts and culture sector demonstrates their desire to engage the community and a 100% satisfaction rate among local program participants speaks to the quality of programming and the interest of the public in arts and cultural opportunities. A robust public art program including annual programs Under Wraps and the Bell Box Mural Project contributes to positive street activity and has been well received by residents and businesses. The Helson Gallery is a key cultural hub, exhibiting local, provincial, national and international artists. It provides learning opportunities to schools and the community and supports activities and events like Plein Air Painting and Music in the Gallery. Diverse cultural programs year-round, including OnScreen at the JET, provide the community with opportunities to engage with a wide range of voices and experiences. Professional development and funding opportunities like The Artist Next Door, support the artists, creators, cultural businesses and organizations that make up Halton Hills' creative economy.

Create Halton Hills contributes to building a diverse, safe, welcoming, connected and vibrant community, providing valuable programs and services to the cultural sector and public and advancing Council's Strategic Plan. Cultural Services staff works with more than 420 artists, organizations, businesses and community partners to strengthen and raise the profile of the sector, contribute to a high quality of life, and make Halton Hills a preferred location to live, work, play, create and invest.

# SOURCES

Citations are marked with (\*#) throughout the report. The source number corresponds to the list below.

1. Municipal Cultural Indicators Strategy, Annual Halton Hills Report, 2021, Statistics Canada
2. Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile, 2023
3. The Arts and the Quality of Life, NANOS for Ontario Arts Council, 2023
4. Halton Region Business Conditions Report, 2022
5. More than 32,000 professional artists in Toronto. Hill Strategies (Kelly Hill), 2023
6. ARTS\_January2023, National Survey, Conducted by Nanos for Business/Arts and the NAC, 2022
7. Halton Hills Culture Days Survey 2023
8. Halton Hills Culture Days Survey 2022
9. Halton Hills Culture Days Survey 2021
10. Province of Ontario Presentation, Ontario Financing Authority, 2022
11. Labour statistics consistent with the System of National Accounts (SNA), by job category and industry, 2021, Statistics Canada

Unless otherwise noted, all quotes in this report were provided by participants in programs presented or supported by Cultural Services in 2022 and 2023.





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[haltonhills.ca/culture](http://haltonhills.ca/culture)



Subscribe to the Create Halton Hills newsletter to stay informed about arts and culture opportunities and events within Halton Hills. Scan the QR code or visit [haltonhills.ca/culture](http://haltonhills.ca/culture) to sign up.