

Q

I

E



T



U



P

A

A



R

D



E

QUIET PARADE

Wednesday, September 18th, 2024 1:00-2:00PM

Rain Date: Thursday, September 19 1:00-2:00PM

Initiated by Aislinn Thomas

Curated by Ellyn Walker

Contributing artists: Julian A M.P., Atanas Bozdarov, Trevor Copp, Deaf Spectrum, FlagSSS Day Collective, Birdie Gehrl, Ame Henderson (with Skye and Lleu), HUSH BAND, Sof Kreidstein, Germaine Liu and Mark Zurawinski, Lorena Torres Loaiza, Not Yet Collective, Peter Owusu-Ansah, Leena Raudvee, Shayla Shenanigans, St Marie φ Walker, Rhonda Weppler & Trevor Mahovsky.

This event is being livestreamed on the Blackwood Instagram: @blackwoogallery_utm.

Land Acknowledgment

The Blackwood and the University of Toronto Mississauga operate in the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. *QUIET PARADE* takes place in the Dish with One Spoon Treaty Territory. This was a treaty between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee which established the need to care for the lands and waters together, as we all eat from the same dish. Indigenous communities of many different nations continue to live and thrive here. The Mississaugas of the Credit also continue to legally assert their sovereignty over the water bodies in the region with their ongoing Title Claim to Water. We call on Canadian governments at all levels to engage in meaningful negotiations amidst this claim. We endeavor to be accomplices in the struggle for justice for Indigenous peoples. We recognize that disability is a colonial concept and we approach our access work in the spirit of love, resistance, and solidarity.

Most public spaces and gatherings are inherently high-stimulation. Competing sounds, bright lights, scented products, and unpredictable crowds present barriers to those who thrive in low-stimulation environments.

QUIET PARADE invites artists and the public to participate in creating a sensory-friendly, float-based ensemble that experiments with unconventional approaches to celebration and accessibility. Like a traditional parade, a series of discrete expressions come together to compose a multifaceted whole. One might encounter a marching band whispering songs of peace, joyful public stimming, heaping armfuls of soft sculpture worms, a dance between a broom and a walker, and more.

Unlike traditional parades, *QUIET PARADE* is experimental as much as it is experiential, and dependent on everyone's contributions to shape it. This project is guided by the desire for pleasurable, joyful, and extravagant experiences of accessibility in the broadest possible terms—with all the improvisation and messiness that entails. *QUIET PARADE* embraces our shared interdependence, approaching the creation of access as an ongoing, iterative, relational process and a deep source of possibility, connection, and magic. Gathering together can happen in a multitude of dreamed-for, yet-to-be-experienced ways. Please join us.



1

2

3

4

5

6

NORTH

LOUD ZONE



PARADE ROUTE



GROUND



PARKING



ROAD



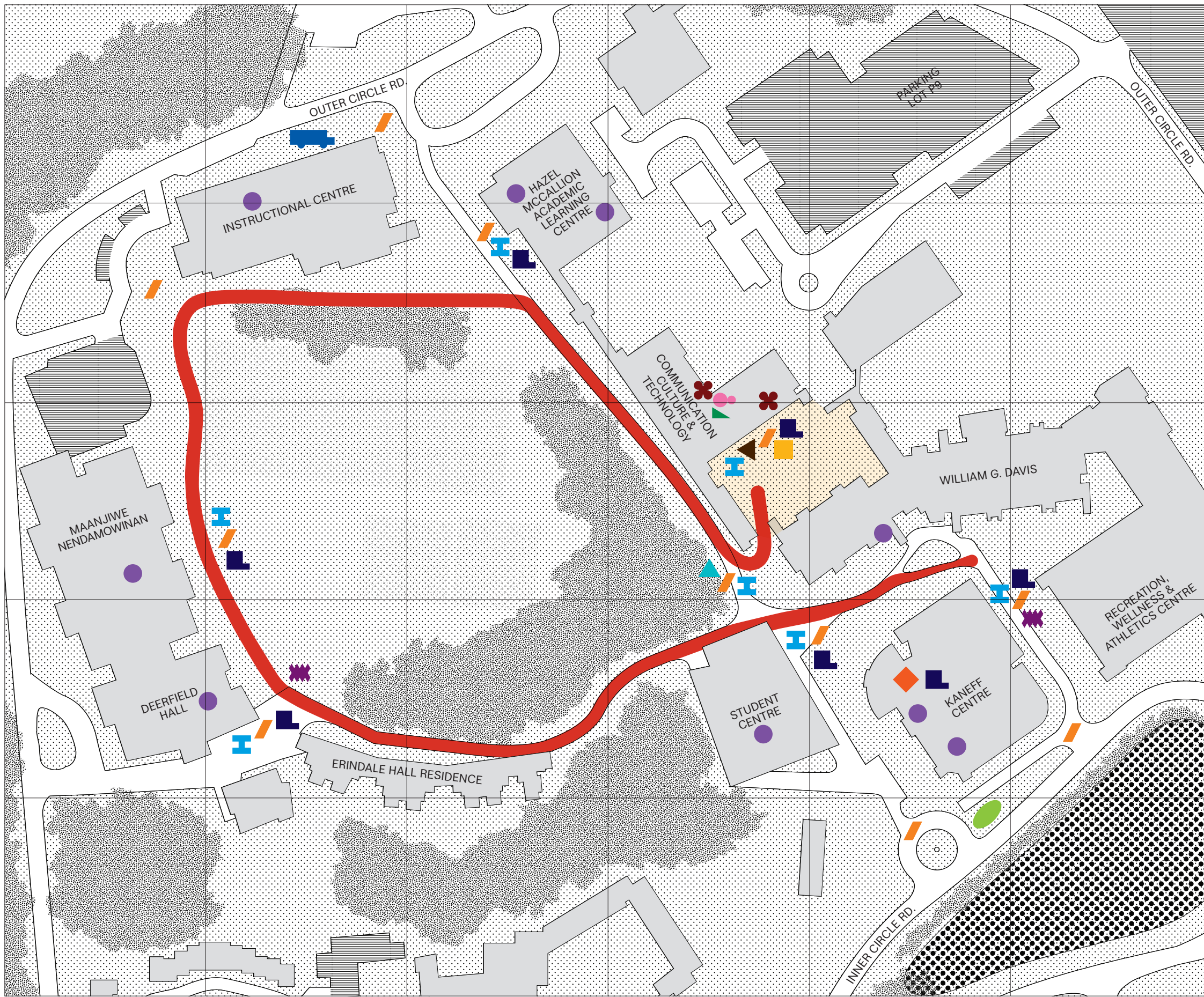
WATER



TREES



BUILDING

















A

B

C

D

E

-  Blackwood Gallery, 140 Kaneff Centre
-  Chill Zone, e|gallery, CCT Building
-  Loud Zone, CCT Courtyard
-  Visual Description Zone
-  Reception
-  Bus Stop
-  Shuttle Bus Stop
-  Information Tables
-  Volunteers
-  Seating
-  All gender washrooms
-  Accessible washrooms
-  Washrooms with baby change tables
-  ASL interpreter

Access Details

Below are details about the event and the access scaffolding that we are planning for. We welcome questions and requests and are here to problem solve with you. Unfortunately, limitations exist and access conflicts, glitches, and frictions happen. We ask for your grace as we navigate them together. You can reach out through email at blackwood.gallery@utoronto.ca, or by leaving a voicemail at 905-828-3789.

CHILL ZONE: The CHILL ZONE is located in the elgallery and is a low-sensory environment that can be used as a place to relax throughout the day.

LOUD ZONE: Created by artists Germaine Liu and Mark Zurawinski, the LOUD ZONE is located in the CCIT courtyard and is a place to make and experience sound.

VISUAL DESCRIPTION ZONE: Live visual description of the parade will be provided by Kat Germain at the VISUAL DESCRIPTION ZONE located in front of Deerfield Hall (see map). Please reach out to quietparade2024@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at 905-828-3789 to RSVP.

INFO TABLES: Info Tables are located along the parade route where you can get earplugs, masks and more information about *QUIET PARADE*.

What if there is inclement weather?
In the case of inclement weather, *QUIET PARADE* will be postponed to the following day Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 1PM. This decision will be communicated on our website and over social media by September 17 at 2PM.

Where can I get information, supplies, and access support at the event?
You can get information and support at the Info Tables located on the map. Access Team volunteers and staff will be at the Info Table and circulating along the parade route to assist you and will be wearing an orange sash. The Info Tables will have hand sanitizer, masks, ear plugs, folding chairs, and copies of this guide on hand.

What seating options are available?
There are folding chairs and stools located along the parade route.

What can I expect at the VISUAL DESCRIPTION ZONE?
Kat will be running a relaxed touch tour and answering questions from 12:30-12:45pm, and then will be focused on describing the parade floats. Volunteers at the Info Desks can guide you to the VISUAL DESCRIPTION ZONE. Please reach out to quietparade2024@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at 905-828-3789 to RSVP and/or connect with Kat before the event.

How can I access ASL interpretation?
Please come to the Info Table by the Student Center.

What is fragrance reduction and how do we create it together?
Some people experience illness when exposed to chemicals that are in many everyday products. Help us make *QUIET PARADE* more accessible by reducing fragrance in the area. We ask that you avoid smoking at the event and avoid the use of perfume, cologne, body spray, and other scented products. Please use the fragrance-free soap provided in nearby washrooms and consider using fragrance-free laundry and personal care products.

What Covid-19 precautions will be in place?
In recognition of those who are at high risk, we invite and encourage you to wear a mask if that is accessible to you. There are masks available at the Info Tables, including N95 and surgical mask options. Fragrance-free, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also available at the Info Tables. There will be an air purifier in the CHILL ZONE. We ask that you take care and rest at home if you have Covid-19. Thank you for helping to keep each other safe in this ongoing pandemic.

What if I want or need to be loud?
Being quiet isn't for everyone. The LOUD ZONE, created by artists Germaine Liu and Mark Zurawinski, is a place to make and experience sound. The LOUD ZONE is located in the CCIT courtyard.

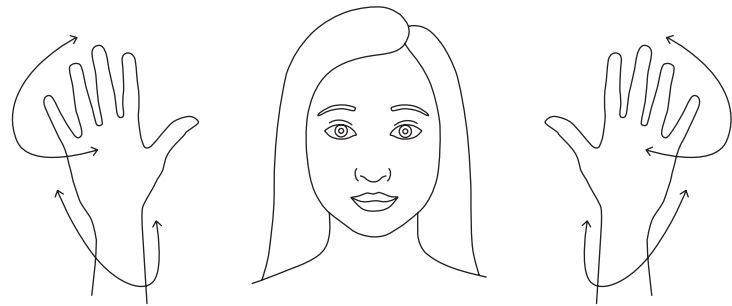
What if I need a place to relax during the parade?
Come visit the CHILL ZONE located in the elgallery in the CCT building. The CHILL ZONE is a low-sensory environment with dim lighting, water, and chairs that can be used throughout the day.

What if I don't wish to appear in documentation of the parade?
Stickers will be on hand at the Info Tables that you can wear on your lapel to indicate that you do not wish to be photographed or filmed.

Participation Protocols

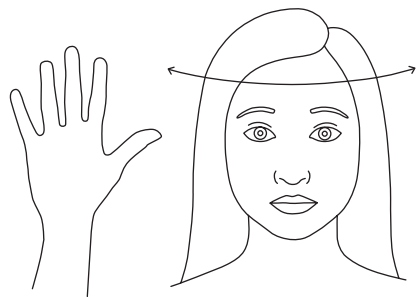
How can I express enthusiasm and appreciation in quiet or low-stimulation ways?

Simply being present and experiencing the parade is meaningful. Some other ideas include waving, smiling, and ASL applause (wave both hands in the air using a twisting motion). Flags are available at the Info Tables to hold and/or wave.



What if I don't want to receive a take-away or interact with the parade artists?

Some floats have interactive elements or offerings, such as charms and handmade stim toys. It's okay if you do not wish to interact or receive an item. Some ways you can communicate this are by taking a step backwards when someone approaches, shaking your head 'no,' or holding up your hand in a 'stop' motion. Parade artists respect and affirm that there are many ways to participate.



What is low-stimulation access and how do we create it together?

Some people thrive in quiet, calm spaces without a lot of sound, light, or other forms of stimulation. You can help make *QUIET PARADE* low-stimulation by being quiet (whispering or speaking softly if you need to talk to someone), moving more slowly, being mindful of other people's personal space, and not using lights or noisemakers unless a louder volume is required.

Creating a low-stimulation parade is a big experiment. We are working to minimize barriers, and we invite everyone's help. There are factors outside our control, however. Please do what you need to take care of yourself and don't hesitate to reach out if you need support.

Float Descriptions

What are the unspoken rules for gathering, and who decides them? How can we support divergent needs and redirect our assemblies towards different goals? What would a more accessible world feel, smell, and sound like? In a world prioritizing the able-bodied and fast-paced, what tools and practices support diverse tactile, olfactory, and auditory experiences? These questions are central to *QUIET PARADE*, a near-silent procession fostering mutual support and acknowledging barriers faced

by underrepresented communities. Contributing artists challenge social norms, reappraising neurodivergence and disability to balance diverse needs and reshape conceptions of accessibility in socially conscious, embodied, and collaborative ways.

QUIET PARADE opens with **Trevor Copp**, a mime, setting the tone for quiet and mutual care. The **FlagSSS Day Collective's** slow-moving flag corps guides the parade with gentle, snail-inspired movements.



COURTESY FLAGSSS DAY COLLECTIVE

Ame Henderson's mobile raft, made with her children and their possessions, reflects a child's sense of time and space. **Rhonda Wepler** and **Trevor Mahovsky's** reimagined marching band introduces the calming sounds of a distant storm, embracing inclement weather usually unwelcome at conventional parades.

The parade engages with various modes of communication. **Atanas Bozdarov's** captions enhance the visual experience while challenging traditional access systems available in public spaces. **Deaf Spectrum** showcases poetic American Sign Language music. **St Marie & Walker's** installation is made up of performers with gilded text on t-shirts carrying large protest signs, reconfiguring into formations to explore collaborative statement-making. Meanwhile, **Peter Owusu-Ansah's** coloured squares reflects his quest to experience and share the richest colours possible from his Deaf perspective.

Different sensory needs are addressed through various contributions. **HUSH BAND** subverts the traditional role of marching bands associated with war by advocating for peace and quiet connection. **Sof Kreidstein** celebrates neurodivergent expression through colourful, multi-textured garments and stim toys, visually amplifying

neurodiverse movement and touch. **Germaine Liu** and **Mark Zurawinski's** LOUD ZONE invites collaborative sonic play.

Interdependence and connectivity are imperative to this project. **Birdie Gerhl's** performance, inviting audience members to assist in carrying sculptural worms, transforms seeking care into a shared effort. **Shayla Shenanigans** walks as Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* with a seeing-eye stick and volunteer support, highlighting her personal experience navigating the built environment. The **Not Yet Collective** engages attendees in art-making activities to explore accessibility, emphasizing access intimacy.

Themes of care, labour, and refuge are highlighted by **Julian A M.P.'s** oversized books symbolizing reference and escape, **Lorena Torres Loaiza's** imaginary home reflecting a yearning for safe spaces for all, and **Leena Raudvee** leading a maintenance crew while using a walker, underscoring the adaptation and resilience needed to ensure accessibility. Her work draws attention to the invisible yet vital efforts that support community. *QUIET PARADE* opens up possibilities for collective access-creation and sharing space otherwise.

Biographies

Aislinn Thomas (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice includes video, performance, sculpture, installation, and text. Many of her recent projects respond to disability and standard approaches to access—or the lack thereof. She gratefully works alongside and in the legacy of so many who treat access and survival as spaces for creative acts, experimentation, and pleasure. Aislinn lives in Unama'ki / Cape Breton, on ancestral and unceded Mi'kmaw territory.

Ellyn Walker is an interdisciplinary arts scholar and curator with a background in decolonial curatorial methodologies and place-making in the arts. She holds a PhD in Cultural Studies from Queen's University and was the Acting Director/ Curator of the Blackwood in 2021-2022. She is currently co-editing an anthology project called *Curatorial Contestations: Critical Exhibition-Making Practices in Canada* and was recently the Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at Colorado College. Ellyn is a curator and scholar based in what is presently known as Toronto.

Acknowledgments

Christine Shaw, Director/Curator
Karie Liao, Assistant Curator
Aidan Cowling, Exhibition Coordinator
Fraser McCallum, Project Coordinator
Jacqui Usiskin, Curatorial Assistant/
Collections Archivist

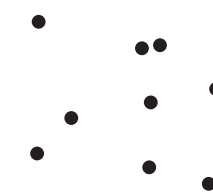
QUIET PARADE is generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the University of Toronto Mississauga, the City of Mississauga, and the Community Foundation of Mississauga.



Proudly sponsored by U of T affinity partners, Manulife and TD Insurance.



Thank you to all our partners and volunteers. For full credits of all contributors and support staff please use the QR code to visit our website.



The Blackwood
University of Toronto Mississauga
blackwoodgallery.ca

