

KAC in Conversation: Creative Placemaking Recap

On Thursday, 24 November 2016, we hosted the second KAC in Conversation event in the former Blockbuster Video building on Queen Street. Over 75 people joined a panel of out-of-town speakers, local artists and community members for an event that focused on creative placemaking and the opportunities it creates for civic involvement. In putting together this year's iteration of the KAC in Conversation series, Executive Director Danika Lochhead looked for diverse and creative examples of artists and professionals that were actively engaged in creative placemaking projects in their communities. The speakers included Patti Broughton, Executive Director at the Guelph Arts Council, Manjit Basi, co-founder of Synapcity in Ottawa, Prince Edward County Community Development Director Neil Carbone, and Sara Udow and Jennie Suddick, who work under the name Crazy Dames in Toronto.



Patti Broughton (pictured above), Executive Director at the [Guelph Arts Council](#), spoke about HATCH, a successful program run by the Guelph Arts Council that transformed empty storefronts into artist

work/exhibition spaces for a year and a half. She reviewed the work the arts council did toward finding artists to exhibit in the spaces and the partnerships that were developed with local landlords.



Manjit Basi (pictured above), co-founder of [Synapcity](#), discussed the work she does in Ottawa towards fostering a community of creative, engaged citizens that participate in cultural activities across the city. She stressed the importance of perseverance and the need to make connections, that will in turn, lead to creative projects and employment opportunities.

Neil Carbone (pictured below), [Community Development Director](#), Prince Edward County, highlighted the recent work his department has been doing in ensuring artists and artisans thrive in the County and find meaningful ways to contribute to local tourism. Part of the items discussed included the Arts Trail and challenges to small municipal governments to prioritize cultural initiatives.



The last speakers of the evening were Sara Udow and Jennie Suddick (pictured below). Combining their experience as a visual artist (Jennie) and an urban planner (Sara), the two collaborate as [Crazy Dames](#) to develop creative and experiential spaces aimed at generating conversations and ideas about how we design, interact and play in our cities. They provided an overview of some of their recent projects, such as the Gardiner Museum project ["We Built This City,"](#) that included a workshop series, a blanket fort and an artist residency, among others.



The evening concluded with an amazing panel moderated by local cultural producer [Tricia Knowles](#). The speakers had the opportunity to have an informal conversation about the challenges they face, opportunities for creative thinking and what they think about the

future of creative placemaking. Audience members had the chance to ask questions and talk about local projects. The evening wrapped up with a networking session.



In the coming weeks, we will be posting a second interview with local artist Tracey Guptill about their views on creative placemaking. You can read the first interview we conducted with Sunita Gupta [here](#).

A workshop on creative placemaking will follow in Winter 2017.

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