



For immediate release  
1 February 2018

## **Kingston Arts Council introduces the *Arts & Equity Project*, a new initiative designed to advance equity in the arts in Kingston**

The Kingston Arts Council (KAC) is excited to launch a new initiative titled the *Arts & Equity Project* that explores intersectionality, diversity and inclusion to advance equity in the arts in Kingston. The *Project* aims to introduce artists and arts organizations in Kingston to fundamental equity concepts, tools and frameworks and provide peer-to-peer learning opportunities and new connections. The *Project* includes three professional development workshops (February - April 2018), a community skill-sharing dinner (Fall 2018), and the creation of an Arts & Equity Toolkit (Spring 2019).

The workshops mark the first phase of the *Project* and are designed for Kingston-based artists and arts organizations to gain greater awareness of equity-related issues and how to improve equity through their work and practice. Participants will also learn about the experience of artists and community groups who are working to reduce barriers to community participation and collaboration, and increase access to resources that help expand arts engagement initiatives. The workshops were developed by [Kayley Marsh and Yasmine Djerbal](#) in collaboration with the KAC.

“We are committed to discovering, along with others in the arts community, the work that needs to be done in order for all of us to be thinking openly and honestly about equity in the arts,” says Danika Lochhead, Executive Director, Kingston Arts Council. “The *Arts & Equity Project* is an opportunity for us to come together, regardless of where we are in our equity learning journeys, to develop new insights and strategies towards learning inclusion and unlearning oppression as it pertains to our arts landscape.”

The Arts & Equity Project is supported by an Ontario Arts Council Arts Service Project Grant and through collaborative partnerships with the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts, Kingston Immigration Partnership, and H’art Centre.

### **Professional Development Workshops**

Participants are encouraged to attend all three workshops. If you cannot attend a workshop, please consider sending a colleague, board member or volunteer in your place. Registration for the workshops is requested. The KAC is introducing a sliding



scale, pay-what-you-can ticket model, in spirit of the *Project* and its goals. We will also be offering child minding, ASL interpretation and transportation support, as requested.

Registration info:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/laying-the-foundation-anti-oppression-for-arts-organizations-artists-in-kingston-tickets-41886677179>

#### Workshop #1

Laying the Foundation: Anti-Oppression for Arts Organizations & Artists in Kingston  
Thursday, 22 February 2018, 10 am - 1 pm  
The Spire, 82 Sydenham St

The first workshop in this series will focus on defining foundational terms and concepts of anti-oppression. This workshop is pleased to welcome guest artist facilitator, Randy Johnston, founder of Theatre with a Meal (TwaM). TwaM is a veritable soup kitchen dinner theatre designed to bring theatre to those who might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in theatre either through acting and participating as audience members. Furthermore TwaM offers a platform for those same people to share their stories, life views and comedy via theatrical expression.

#### Workshop #2

Intersectionality & Kingston's Arts Culture  
Thursday, 22 March 2018, 10 am - 1 pm  
Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning, 370 King Street W

The second workshop will examine the different aspects of social location and identity. This workshop will feature guest artist facilitator, Erin Ball, circus artist, coach and owner of Kingston Circus Arts. Erin will also be doing an aerial performance at this workshop. Erin's disciplines include aerial silks, single point trapeze, duo trapeze and duo silks, wheelchair acrobatics, flexibility and hooping. She took a year off in March 2014 due to life changing events that resulted in the loss of her lower legs. Erin has since returned to her passion of training, coaching and performing and loves adapting and creating new/different ways of executing skills.

#### Workshop #3

Integrating Intersectionality into our Collective Practices  
Saturday 21 April 2018, 1 pm - 4 pm  
The Spire, 82 Sydenham St



The last workshop in the series will explore resources to enhance equity in the arts. Facilitators will provide an intro to the organizational audit tool that they will develop following the workshops. The main question to be answered will be “what can be done to integrate intersectionality, equity and anti-oppression in the work of artists, artistic projects, and arts organizations”? This workshop is pleased to welcome guest artist facilitator Camille Georgeson-Usher. Camille is a Coast Salish/Dene/Scottish scholar and artist from Galiano Island, BC. She holds an MA in Art History from Concordia University with research focusing on Indigenous community-based artistic practices that bring forward conversations of fear, humour and sexuality as acts of cultural survivance that aim to reduce the rate of suicide in the Arctic. She continues her work as an artist in Toronto when time permits, where she also works as the Programs Coordinator at the Inuit Art Foundation.

### **About the Kingston Arts Council**

The Kingston Arts Council (KAC) is the region’s primary resource for arts information and support. Through communications, programming, and advocacy, the KAC promotes the creation, development, and appreciation of the arts in Kingston and supports artistic growth and engagement for arts organizations and artists at all levels of their careers. The KAC also administers key funding programs, the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) and the Nan Yeomans Grant for Artistic Development.

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