

**community
arts space**

**What
We Long
For**

**request for
proposals**

**Gardiner
Museum**



Documentation from *Invisible Footprints 0.2: Deep Cuts*, 2018. Photo: Yuula Benivolski



Grounded in the real and metaphorical ability of clay to transform, the Gardiner Museum's *Community Arts Space* is a platform for experimentation and socially-engaged art.

Established in 2016, the project connects artists, makers, organizers, and residents through the creation of public projects that inspire social action. We work within and beyond the gallery walls to re-envision what equitable community engagement looks like at a cultural institution.

The Gardiner is now accepting proposals for our 2019 spring/summer programming cycle.

We invite applications from a diverse field of professionals including artists, makers, organizers, curators, collectives, producers, presenters, designers, and architects. Priority will be given to Toronto-based artists who are doing ambitious work that digs deeper into community histories and brings forth accountable, intersectional methods of thinking and making. We welcome a myriad of project proposals, including but not limited to installations, performances, conversations, dinners, dance parties, tea ceremonies, readings, support groups, meditations, screenings, recordings, rehearsals, zine fairs, or fashion shows.

This year we will be exploring the theme of "What we long for".

"How would we organize and move our communities if we shifted to focus on what we long for and love, rather than what we are negatively reacting to?"

- adrienne maree brown

This year, we aim to showcase works that engage with pleasure activism; community healing; counter-archives; survival tools; racialized materiality; transformative justice; the differences between community and institutional memory; and how craft can be a site for both acknowledgement and action. There is an urgency for both justice and pleasure to co-exist as a counterpoint to calling out, gas lighting, exhaustion, and burnout.

How do we take care of ourselves, as well as each other?

Proposal Requirements

Applicants will apply for one of the three project categories listed below.

Your proposal should clearly include how your project contributes to the theme “What we long for”.

It should also outline how you will engage your audience in the exhibition space, what the visitor experience will look like, and how clay will play a role in your project.

We strongly encourage proposals from Toronto residents and, in particular, those from the current Toronto Arts Council-identified equity priority groups. We also welcome proposals from individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and those whose creative practices have been historically underrepresented.



Youth Project

July 9 - 25

Co-presented by Art Starts

The Gardiner believes in providing creative, hands-on opportunities for youth, especially racialized girls and young women. The Youth Project will engage and empower these future leaders through arts education, art making, and cultural heritage. In partnership with Art Starts, the successful applicant(s) will support the creation of a youth-led initiative through art-making sessions held at Art Starts' main hub in Yorkdale Shopping Centre, which serves residents primarily of the Lawrence Heights and Neptune neighborhoods.

Through mediums like spoken word, storytelling, craft, and digital media, these sessions will explore how girls and young women can take on leadership roles in their communities and amplify their voices and perspectives within cultural institutions, as well as how they can tell new stories about the Gardiner's permanent collections. Participants in the Youth Project will be invited to re-contextualize objects from the Gardiner's historical collections, which include Chinese and Japanese Ceramics, European Porcelain of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, and Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Ceramics. The Youth Project will also help develop and facilitate our Family Sundays public programming during the project's run.

[See application form]





Transformative Justice Project

July 30 - August 15

Co-presented by The 519

The Gardiner wants to authentically create space for the counter-archives and lived experiences of local Queer, Trans, Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (QTIBPOC) communities.

In partnership with The 519, the Transformative Justice Project will navigate how models of restorative justice can address oppressive systems. Spurred by the violence experienced within the Church and Wellesley area in 2017, and the ongoing violent realities for 2-Spirit, Queer, and Trans communities broadly, the Gardiner and The 519 seek to support projects that view conflict through the lens of community and transformational justice. We are looking for projects that consider

alternatives to the criminal justice system and engage in collaborative, therapeutic art making with residents and community members to explore what access to justice and police accountability looks like.

Project participants will access space at The 519 for up to 16 hours of skill-sharing workshop programming that supports peer-to-peer learning.

[See application form]





Artist-in-Residence

August 20 - September 5

Co-presented by Akin Collective

The Gardiner is accepting proposals that explore the broader field of ceramics, including its participatory, performative, and educational potential. The Artist-in-Residence stream invites a project that uses installation-based and site-sensitive strategies as an approach to the Gardiner's Ancient Americas collection, which encompasses 47 distinct cultures from the vast geographical areas known today as the American Southwest, Mexico, and Central and South America.

The selected Artist-in-Residence will have access to six months of studio space and a kiln at one of Akin Collective's network of artist studio spaces.

[See application form]



What the Gardiner will provide

The Gardiner is a small but nimble institution open to experimental and exploratory endeavors. As a museum devoted to clay, we recognize the intrinsic value of making. The act of shaping and molding an artwork goes well beyond the growth of an artist and can be transformative for society.

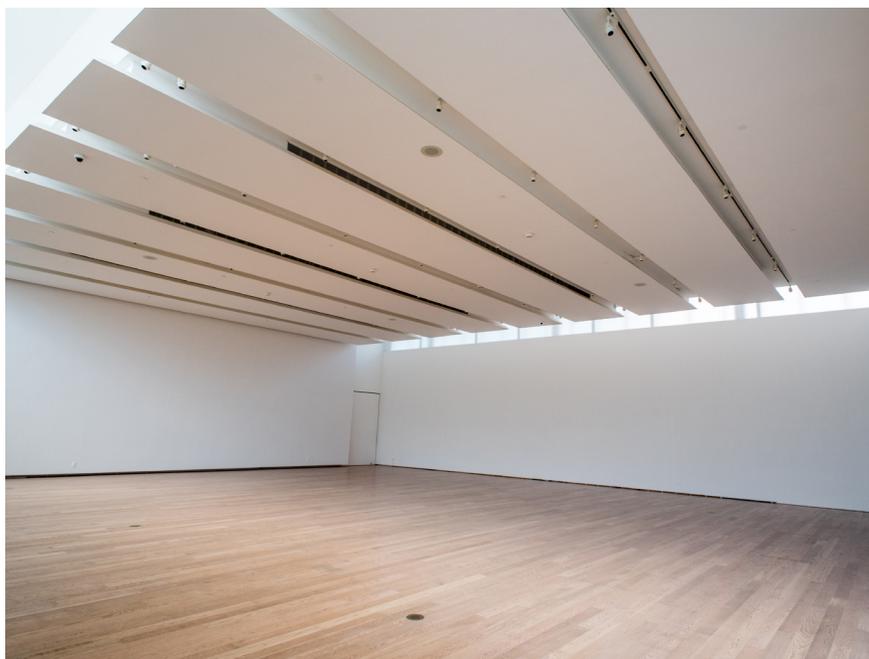
Community Arts Space functions as an arts incubator, offering participants a platform for programming and exhibiting their work, as well access to the Gardiner's institutional resources. This includes free entry to the Museum's permanent collection and access to our public programming in an effort to support a project's research and development. All projects benefit from directly engaging with the institution's Curatorial, Education & Programs, and Marketing departments.

In 2019, *Community Arts Space* projects will receive direct mentorship and professional development through the resource sharing of supporting partners, as well as direct dialogues and networking among project leads.

Here are some details about the space that can be accessed for programming. Please include any special requirements you would have in your proposal:

The George R. Gardiner Exhibition Hall

- 52'6" (16 m) x 34'9.5" (10.6 m)
- The space will be painted entirely white
- Flexible set-up
- Main entrance door for the public
- No concealed storage will be provided, however, the Exhibition Hall is available for you to set up as you wish.
- Limited number of tables and chairs can be provided. If you require any for your proposal, please include it in the facility requirements.



NEW THIS YEAR!

CAS Lab

Community Arts Space is committed to supporting artists and cultural producers impacted by the premium placed on downtown studio space. This year, the Gardiner and our partners are co-presenting the CAS Lab, a series of skills-building seminars exploring socially-engaged art and arts-based community development.

This programming will be offered to *Community Arts Space* project collaborators and supporting organizations during February and March. Additionally, the CAS Lab will pair selected projects with an advisor from our Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will constitute previous *Community Arts Space* artists and local artist-leaders that operate within the community hubs we support.

We work with local organizations such as The 519, Akin Collective, and Art Starts to launch public projects conceived and developed in our partners' respective sites: Church and Wellesley, King and Spadina, Dupont and Symington, and Lawrence Heights and Neptune.



Documentation from a *Invisible Footprints* workshop at The 519, 2018. Photo: Tony Wei-Han Chen

CAS 2019

Neighborhood Hubs

The 519

The 519 is committed to the health, happiness, and full participation of the LGBTQ2S community. A City of Toronto agency and a registered charity with an innovative model of Service, Space and Leadership, The 519 strives to make a real difference in people's lives while working to promote inclusion, understanding, and respect.

Since 2017, The 519 has provided space and resources for artistic workshops in support of the following *Community Arts Space* projects: *NU_FORuMS*, *Collecting Personal Archives*, and *Invisible Footprints*.

This year, The 519 will provide workshop space for the Transformative Justice Project, a process-driven project supporting the delivery of knowledge and skill sharing serving the LGBTQ2S community in Toronto and beyond.

Art Starts

Art Starts uses the arts to inspire long-term social change and brings together professional artists with residents of all ages to create accessible and dynamic art projects that reflect the identities and aspirations of each community. Their collaborative approach to art-making celebrates communities, nurtures resiliency, cultivates life-skills, and inspires personal growth.

In 2018, Art Starts supported *Reclaiming Artifacts*, which was developed in collaboration with residents from Lawrence Heights and Neptune, one of the five underserved Toronto neighbourhoods the charity supports. This year, Art Starts will again support the Youth Project, which will engage youth in Lawrence Heights and Neptune.

Akin Collective

Akin Collective is a Toronto-based arts organization that provides affordable studio space as well as arts-based programming through its sister non-profit organization, Akin Projects. Their studios provide a working environment that maintains a friendly and inspiring atmosphere where people can work on creative endeavors and entrepreneurial undertakings of all kinds. Akin builds community through monthly art critiques, workshops, open studio events, gallery tours, exhibitions, as well as various other art projects.

During *Community Arts Space's* inaugural 2016 cycle, Akin Collective mounted *Place/Setting*, an exhibition hall project delivering all-ages clay-making workshops and community events. Two years later, Akin supported a studio residency for our Museum Intervention Project, *Maldewin Weskijinu / Blood Soaked Soil*. For *Community Arts Space 2019*, Akin will support the six month long Art-In-Residence program, which will include credit towards kiln firing access at its Akin King and Akin Dupont studios.

The Gardiner Museum's Mandate

The Gardiner Museum brings together people of all ages and communities through the shared values of creativity, wonder, and community that clay and ceramic traditions inspire.

We engage audiences with exhibitions, programs, and hands-on classes, while stewarding a significant permanent collection. We interpret historical ceramics to emphasize their relevance today, and champion emerging and established Canadian artists and their role in the broader world. We innovate through clay education, as we bring together the experience of making with a deeper understanding of the art of ceramics.

We believe in making, looking, and thinking through clay.

History and Collections

The Gardiner Museum has a collection of over 4,000 objects from the Ancient Americas, Europe, Japan and China, as well as contemporary works with an emphasis on leading Canadian artists. The Museum was founded in 1984 by George and Helen Gardiner and is housed in a landmark contemporary building in Toronto designed by Keith Wagland, and subsequently substantially renovated by KPMB Architects. The Gardiner Museum is among the few museums in the world focused on ceramics, and is one of the world's most notable specialty museums.

“What We Long For” Suggested Readings

brown, adrienne maree. *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing World*. Chicago: AK Press, 2017.

brown, adrienne maree. *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*. Chicago: AK Press, 2019.

Gates, Theaster. “The Soul Ceramic Manufacturing Corporation and Other Notes on Racialized Materiality.” Craft Forward Conference, San Francisco, CA, April 3, 2011. Accessed November 29, 2018.

Jackson, Shannon. “Living Takes Many Forms” from *Living As Form: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011*. Ed Nato Thompson. MIT Press, 2012, pp. 87-93.

Molesworth, Helen. “Art is Medicine.” *Artforum International Magazine*, March 2018. Accessed November 29, 2018.

Richards, M.C. *Centering: In Pottery, Poetry, and the Person*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1964.

Sorkin, Jenni. “The Poetry Happening: M.C. Richard’s ‘Clay Things to Touch...’ (1958).” *Getty Research Journal*, No. 5 (2013), pp 197-202.

Sorkin, Jenni. *Live Form: Women, Ceramics and Community*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Weida, Courtney Lee. “BMC Women on Clay, Craft and Nature: Marguerite Wildenhain, Mary Caroline “M.C.” Richards, and Karen Karnes.” *Black Mountain College Studies*, Vol. 6., Summer 2014. Accessed November 29, 2018.