

**Gardiner  
Museum**

**Community  
Arts Space  
2018**

**“The Gardiner sees value in art projects intended to promote a better use of public space. Working with the Gardiner Museum has been a positive experience for our work as designers and more importantly, as a platform for the public.”**

– Pavel Tsolov, Waterloo Architecture student



Visitors participate in Waterloo Architecture's *What Makes a Space a Place?* outdoor plaza installation. Photo: Brittany Carmichael

# About the Gardiner Museum

The Gardiner Museum is a vital cultural institution and an innovator within Toronto's cultural landscape. The Gardiner celebrates the creativity of clay and the beauty that ceramics bring into our lives in so many ways. Clay is real, remarkable, and relevant in today's society.

The Museum has collections of international importance, including but not limited to objects from the Ancient Americas, eighteenth-century European porcelain, and contemporary ceramics, particularly the work of great Canadian artists.

The Gardiner is an institution rooted in its community, which helps artists take risks and inspires diverse audiences through clay.



# The Community Arts Space Vision

Since the summer of 2016, the Gardiner Museum's Community Arts Space program has acted as an incubator for arts-based community projects. Inspired by the transformative aspects of ceramics, both real and metaphorical, the Community Arts Space initiates both dialogue, and the hands-on creation of equitable and inclusive cultural initiatives that engage and give voice to local communities.

For the past two years, the Gardiner has supported the delivery of diverse public projects and wide-ranging activities including workshops, talks, screenings, music, and performances, all offered at no cost to the public.

Now entering its third cycle, the Community Arts Space project continues to evolve and position the Museum as an active force in the community and a compelling arts destination.

The Gardiner's 307-square-metre third-floor special exhibition hall is open to proposals for the summer of 2018 from July 3 to August 31. We're inviting applications from cultural and community organizations, collectives, presenters, artists, curators, designers, makers, architects, organizers, and producers that outline what they would do in the special exhibition hall that relates to our Community Arts Space theme for a two-week period. The possibilities are endless—dance, music or theatre performances, workshops, community arts outreach, installations, performance art—our space is yours for the taking.



From top to bottom: Mikiki's *NUL FORUMS* exhibition hall project, photo by Brittany Carmichael; detail of Nasim Asgari's performance during *Collecting Personal Archives* opening celebrations, photo by Brittany Carmichael; detail of a performance led by Christopher Willes of Pauline Oliveros' *To Valerie Solanas and Marilyn Monroe in Recognition of Their Desperation* during the Feminist Art Museum exhibition hall project, photo by Yuula Benivolski.

# What we're looking for Recent Histories

Ceramics have played an important role in our understanding of cultures throughout history. From a ritual Maya plate to a souvenir coffee mug, these domestic clay objects reveal both our public and private daily rituals: how we eat, drink, celebrate, and experience place. Whether it's functional or decorative, handmade or commercially-produced, these household items can say a lot about our past, present, and future.

In an increasingly digital world, our understanding of what is real, virtual, and even authentic becomes more complex. Online knowledge has accelerated social change, and its open access has empowered

communities; but, it has also led to information overload. It's no wonder that archaeologists are adapting the processes typically used to study the pre-historical in order to investigate our recent or contemporary past.<sup>1</sup>

As a public institution, the Gardiner is keenly aware of its responsibility to be an active force in the community and truly reflect the histories, lived experiences, and traditions of its publics. What then is the role of a museum in cultivating the so-called lived and living memory? How is cultural knowledge passed on or performed? Within certain marginalized communities, how are these histories preserved and communicated



**"The Gardiner is a uniquely precious fired gem of an institution within the bombastic museum scene in Toronto. The care and consideration of the staff in the supporting a very important and fragile project and community conversation was in fact more beautiful in its realization than I had hoped."**

- Mikiki, Community Arts Space 2017 artist

Documentation of Ness Lee's "How to Make a Clay Mountain Person" workshop during Madeleine Co.'s Works for Change exhibition hall project. Photo: Dainesha Nugent Palache.

<sup>1</sup> See the work of Christopher McHugh, author of "Ceramics as an archaeology of the contemporary past" in *The Ceramics Reader* (Bloomberg: 2017), Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, authors of *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past* (Routledge: 2001), and Rodney Harrison and John Schofield, authors of *After Modernity: Archaeological Approaches to the Contemporary Past* (Oxford University Press: 2010) on this emerging field of research.

**"Due to the support of the Gardiner Museum, we were able to realise a project and platform that engaged with peripheral histories and we were impressed with the contemporaneity and urgency of all the projects which shows an exciting and engaging direction for the Museum."**

- Aman Sandhu and Swapnaa Tamhane,  
Community Arts Space 2017 artists

across generations? The Gardiner is a podium and we want you to use it. As a museum devoted to clay, we recognize the intrinsic value of making. The act of shaping and molding an artwork can go well beyond the individual and be transformative for society.

Through this project, the Museum is hoping to engage with new audiences, form partnerships, and showcase the most interesting, thought-provoking, and trail-blazing arts programming that Toronto has to offer.

Your proposal should include how your project contributes to the theme *Recent Histories*.

It should also outline what the visitor experience will be, how you will engage your desired audience into the exhibition space, and how clay will play a role in your project. We strongly encourage proposals from lifelong Toronto residents; Indigenous artists, artists of colour, artists with disabilities, individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, those who have been excluded from the resources of the art world because of cultural, racial, and linguistic heritage, ability, and/or sexual orientation or gender-based identity; and those whose creative practices have been historically underrepresented from mainstream exhibitions and public works.



Documentation of Aanchal Malhotra's artist presentation, part of August Fröhls' Portable Stories outdoor plaza programming. Photo: Brittany Carmichael

**NEW THIS YEAR!**

# Off-Site Programming

In supporting artists and cultural producers who have been impacted by the premium placed on downtown studio space, the Gardiner has formed key community partnerships to offer off-site programming to its partners and their collaborators.

These community partners will be involved in the selection process of the 2018 projects.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white dress, is performing on stage. She is holding a large, illuminated, abstract sculpture that glows with blue and white light. The sculpture has a complex, multi-layered structure. In the background, there are other people and stage equipment, including a microphone stand and a light fixture. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and artistic.

**“The Community Space program at the Gardiner Museum gave us the space and resources for our group to come together, working towards the common vision of creating diverse and informed representations of Muslim women. The strength of our project was the series of workshops that brought together a collective of women to share their stories.”**

- soJin Chun, Community Arts Space 2017 artist

## Community Arts Space 2018

# Community Partners

### 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.

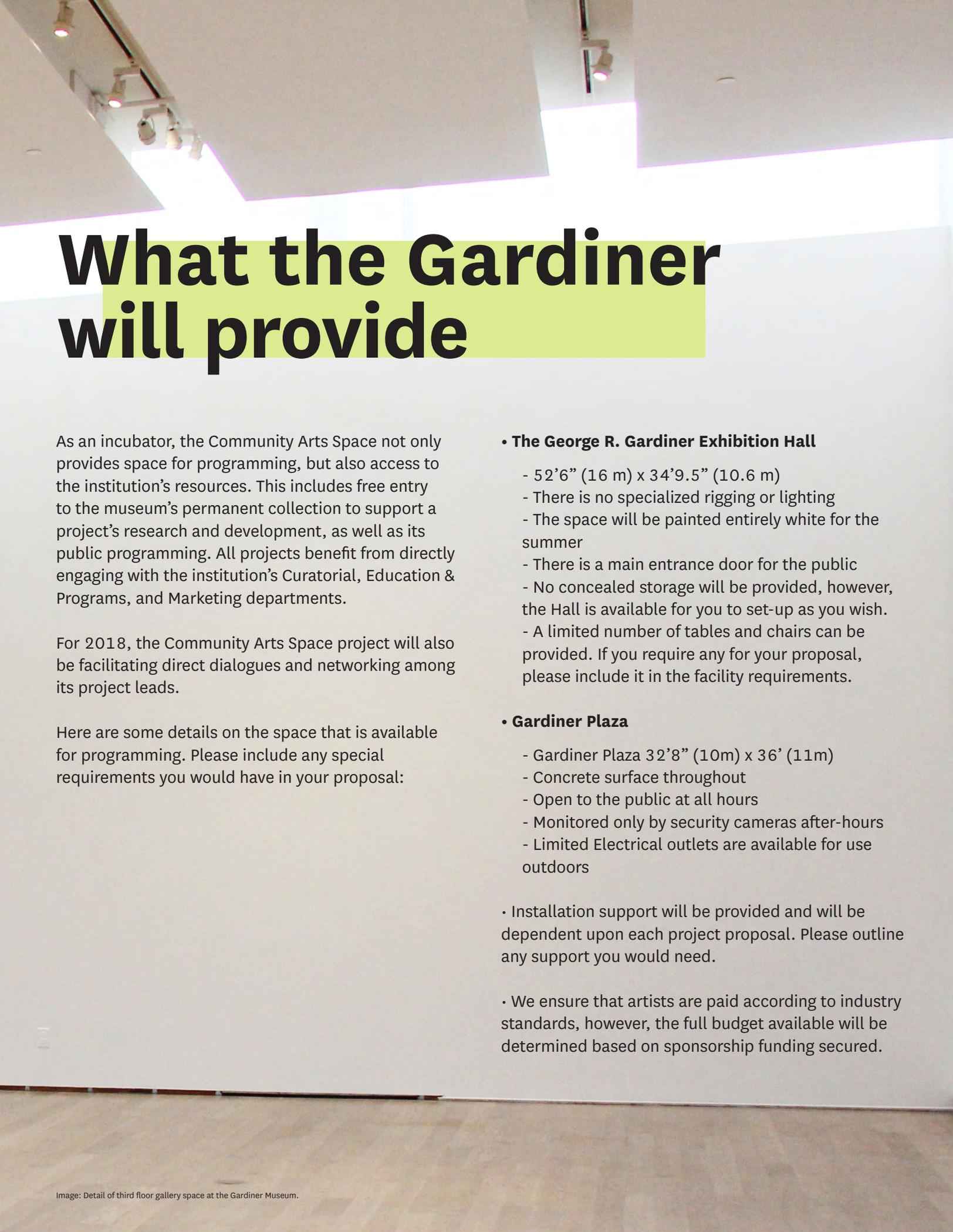
In 2017, The 519 provided in-kind space and resources for artistic workshops in support of the development of two process-driven projects, NU\_FORuMS and Collecting Personal Archives. For Community Arts Space 2018, The 519 will again provide workshop space for a process-driven project, supporting the delivery of knowledge and skill-sharing serving the LGBTQ2S community in Toronto and beyond.

### 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. Akin provides space to nearly 250 visual artists, designers, and creatives in studios that maintain 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, free or low-cost workshops, open studio events, gallery tours, exhibitions, as well as various other projects. During the Community Arts Space's inaugural 2016 cycle, Akin Projects mounted *Place/Setting*, an exhibition hall project delivering all-ages clay-making workshops and community events. For Community Arts Space 2018, Akin will provide six months of free studio time at one of its studios, as well as kiln firing access.



Documentation of a Collecting Personal Archives workshop at The 519. Photo: Kelly King



# What the Gardiner will provide

As an incubator, the Community Arts Space not only provides space for programming, but also access to the institution's resources. This includes free entry to the museum's permanent collection to support a project's research and development, as well as its public programming. All projects benefit from directly engaging with the institution's Curatorial, Education & Programs, and Marketing departments.

For 2018, the Community Arts Space project will also be facilitating direct dialogues and networking among its project leads.

Here are some details on the space that is available 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)
- There is no specialized rigging or lighting
- The space will be painted entirely white for the summer
- There is a main entrance door for the public
- No concealed storage will be provided, however, the Hall is available for you to set-up as you wish.
- A limited number of tables and chairs can be provided. If you require any for your proposal, please include it in the facility requirements.

## • Gardiner Plaza

- Gardiner Plaza 32'8" (10m) x 36' (11m)
- Concrete surface throughout
- Open to the public at all hours
- Monitored only by security cameras after-hours
- Limited Electrical outlets are available for use outdoors

• Installation support will be provided and will be dependent upon each project proposal. Please outline any support you would need.

• We ensure that artists are paid according to industry standards, however, the full budget available will be determined based on sponsorship funding secured.

# Proposal Requirements

## Outdoor Plaza

Applicants will apply for one or more of the following project categories. All proposals should address the theme Recent Histories, as outlined above:

### Public Space Intervention

*Project open to public from July 5 - Aug 29*

Design-build and/or socially-engaged installation that re-imagines what accessible, downtown public space can look like.

***See the Public Space Intervention application form***

### Performance on the Plaza

*Five performances staged during July 5 - Aug 29*

The Gardiner's Outdoor Plaza continues to be a place in the Yorkville neighborhood for free outdoor performances. We invite applicants to submit proposals for a performing art series that will amount to five performances staged during the Community Arts Space project. Whether it's an open air concert or unique theatrical event, we invite applicants to make our public space come alive.

***See the Performance on the Plaza application form***

## Exhibition Hall

### Young People Project

*July 3 - 20 or Jul 31 - Aug 17*

The Gardiner believes in providing creative, hands-on opportunities for children, tweens, teens and families. The Young People Project would engage this young audience, connecting them to local contemporary art and cultural heritage. Additionally, this project is invited to re-imagine our Family Sundays public programming during its run.

***See the Young People Project application form***

### Visibility and Representation Project

*Jul 3 - 20 or Jul 31 - Aug 17*

The Gardiner wants to authentically make space for the stories and lived experiences of local Queer, Trans, Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (QTIBPOC) communities. The Visibility and Representation Project supports critical engagement around issues like identity and belonging, as well as the systematic barriers these communities face. Additionally, this project is invited to access space at The 519 for workshop programming that supports skills sharing, professional development, and peer-to-peer learning.

***See the Visibility and Representation Project form***

### Museum Intervention

*Aug 21 - 31*

The Gardiner is accepting proposals that explore the expanded field of ceramics, evoking participation, performance, and pedagogical potential. The Museum Intervention invites a project that uses installation and site sensitivity to engage with not only the Gardiner's Exhibition Hall but also its lobby. Additionally, this project can access six months of free studio space and kiln access through the support of Akin Collective.

***See the Museum Intervention application form***