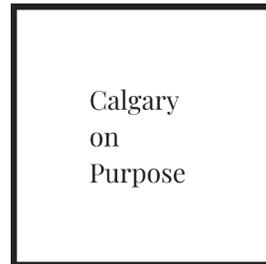


Artist as Changemaker

2020 PROGRAM REPORT





REPORT PREPARED BY:

Sally Njoroge

REPORT DESIGNED BY:

Amy Rintoul

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:

- Artists and Organizations involved
- Calgary Arts Development President & CEO: Patti Pon
- Calgary Arts Development Director, Communications & Engagement:
Helen Moore-Parkhouse
- Trico Changemakers Studio Director: Lena Soots
- Program Evaluators: Sara Bateman, Barb Davies, Melissa Tuplin

Table of Contents

Introduction	04
Year 1: Exploring Artist as Changemaker	06
Year 2: Artist as Changemaker Residency Pilot	10
What Happened	14
What We Learned	22
Highlights	26
Conclusion	30
Artist Bios	32

Introduction

WHY ARTISTS?

Artists are already paving the way for change.

As a society, the challenges we face are complex and do not have easy solutions, and artists have been playing powerful roles to help us understand and make sense of complexity. Using art, artists invite people to enter into alternative realities in all sorts of ways. Artists use playfulness, dialogue, and even controversy to evoke emotions that have the potential to catalyze action. This is one of the ways that artists contribute to systems thinking and systems change work. They help to clarify patterns and trends in society, by challenging mental models, which are founded on layers of beliefs, values, assumptions and traditions.

Through the artistic process, artists expose underlying conditions that are holding a problem in place, inspire new connections, and offer people new ways of thinking and participating within a challenge. This in itself is social innovation; it's finding various ways to challenge existing systems and the parts that keep it running. Combining the artistic process with social innovation concepts and tools can help socially engaged artists to further identify leverage points in a system to further amplify change making efforts.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to uncover the inter-relationship between art, the artistic process, and social change to amplify the capacity of socially engaged artists to create meaningful change.

OUR APPROACH

- Invite socially engaged artists “to the table” during the initial planning phase as valuable partners in the change making process, not only in the artistic delivery but also in informing and contributing to the decision making process.
- Utilize the creative intelligence of artists to understand how the artistic process is inter-related to social change.
- Apply social innovation tools and concepts to further advance social change.

OUR HOPES

- Demonstrate the power of arts and artistic processes in creating meaningful change.
- Demonstrate the value of socially engaged artists in ‘pushing the agenda’ for change, innovation and iteration.

OUR GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. “How might we build the capacity of artists to expedite meaningful social change?”
2. “How might artists guide organizations to find unique and creative ways to address complex problems?”

Year 1: Exploring Artist as Changemaker

(2018 - 2019)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first year of Artist as Changemaker Program had two phases. The first, a cohort of artists from various artistic backgrounds went through the Social Innovation (SI) Certificate program at Mount Royal University. The second, post social innovation courses, the artist cohort assembled to dive deeper in their role as agents of change.

The combination of these two phases brought forth insight that led the artists to explore the question:

“How might we build the capacity of artists to expedite meaningful social change?”



WHO'S INVOLVED

ARTIST COHORT

Barbara Amos

Mina Baluyot

Melanee Murray-Hunt

Kevin Jesuino

Skye Louis

Katie Pearce

Vicki Stroich

STUDENT RESEARCH SUPPORT

Sally Njoroge

These artists were invited into the program because of their socially engaged work. The artists are concerned about complex social issues - which are deeply intertwined with our social structures - and they have a desire to imagine a different world.

INITIATIVES

- Using playwriting and partnerships with anti-racist organizations to create transformative spaces for racialized people to empower them and break down the barriers that exist.
- Using theatre to communicate the dire need for action in response to climate change.
- Using architecture and street art in the urban environment to allow citizens to engage with their community and neighbours.
- Using visual arts to illustrate and push for better policies in regards to issues of water and water protection in rural Alberta.
- Using visual arts to explore the difficult concepts of death, loss and grief.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

PHASE I

Social Innovation Certificate Program (May - August 2019)

The aim of the Social Innovation Certificate Program was to deepen artist understanding of systems change and social innovation tools and concepts. The Social Innovation Certificate Program was delivered through a blended learning format; online classroom and in person. Artists explored the concept of systems level change, systems mapping, and tools such as theory of change, the adaptive cycle, and the iceberg model. They also explored various case studies to ground these concepts into reality.

From this experience, the artists realized that the work they were already doing within their own art practices was significantly aligned with social change, systems level change and social innovation initiatives presented in the courses. **Artists expressed that their work has always been in the realm of social innovation as they were looking at ways to disrupt social systems.** The artists also expressed that there was value in the social innovation courses as it served to bring a new sense of awareness and language for them to use when explaining their work.

PHASE II

Artist Cohort Assemble (September - December 2019)

After the social innovation course, artists assembled in a cohort. Trico Changemakers Studio and Calgary Arts Development concluded that it was important not to intrude on the process of the artist cohort, and consequently restrained from setting boundaries on the artists. This phase of the program was meant to serve as a learning opportunity, thus it was purposely designed to be ambiguous in order to provide the artists with full creative control of what the outcome would be.

This ambiguity led to uncertainty among the cohort, but still bred new opportunities. The artists maneuvered this uncertainty by building relationships with one another:

- They shared personal stories and experiences of being artists in Calgary.
- They shared insights on the nature of combining art and changemaking.
- They discussed their values, points of inspiration, culture, community, citizen engagement and the meaning of creativity and collaboration.
- They dug into the role of organizations, politics, and leadership.
- They discussed course material and how it may be applied to real life, how they prefer to learn and work, and finally what they were hoping to gain from this project.

This type of collective reflection allowed for the group to gel and move into action. They all wanted to create something that would have a long lasting impact. They felt an urgency to address some of the issues hindering artists from reaching their maximum potential to positively impact communities (barriers outlined in the [Arts Professional Survey](#)). Therefore, the guiding question was crystallized to: “How might we build the capacity of artists to expedite meaningful social change?”

YEAR 1 OUTCOMES

ARTIST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Artists gain credibility through having the Social Innovation Certificate.
- Social Innovation Certificate Program led to employment opportunities.

ARTIST PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Artists had more confidence in talking about social innovation concepts.
- Artists had heightened overall knowledge of systems level change.

CREATION OF GUIDED RESIDENCY PROGRAM

- The cohort found that it would be useful to share the knowledge they had gained from the social innovation courses with other artists involved and/or interested in changemaking work, while also involving organizations that are already participating in changemaking work.
- At Calgary Arts Development's Living A Creative Life Congress in November, a rapid prototype of the Guided Residency Program was conducted to gain perspective and response from the greater community.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

- At the 2019 Ashoka U Exchange, President & CEO of Calgary Arts Development, Patti Pon, alongside the artist cohort presented for the Big Ideas Talks. The presentation emphasized the effort of the Artist as Changemaker Program by demonstrating the role of artists and how artists have participated in creating change for generations.



Year 2: Artist as Changemaker Residency Pilot

(2019-2020)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the ideas from year one, the artists created the Artist as Changemaker (AAC) Guided Residency Program. It was a four month pilot program curated to help illuminate, elevate, and expedite the capacity of artists to create meaningful social change.

The program placed emphasis on collaborative, experimental and iterative processes between artists and organizations.

The residency aspired to provide artists the space, time and resources to focus on research and artistic processes. The guided program took both artists and organizations through a supported collaborative process. This process was designed to help both parties develop a strong knowledge of:

- Tools, resources and frameworks for social innovation and systems change.
- The specifics of the complex issue or wicked problem the organization set out to address.
- The strengths of the socially-engaged artist.
- Ways in which the artist and organization can collaborate.

The artists determined there would be value in inviting other artists into the program to share knowledge. They wanted to test the dynamics of knowledge by pairing an artist who went through the SI Certificate Program,

with an artist who had not. Calgary Arts Development, and artists from year one worked together to determine which local socially engaged artists to invite in.

Calgary Arts Development invited organizations engaged in systems change work, they paired the artists, and matched the artists with the organizations. Calgary Arts Development also managed the communications with the organizations, while the AAC program coordinator managed the communication with the artists. The remuneration that artists received for the four months was provided by Calgary Arts Development. The organizations invited did not pay to participate.



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

WHO'S INVOLVED

ARTIST COHORT

Barbara Amos
Tito Gomez
Melanee Murray-Hunt
Skye Louis
Sharon Stevens
Mel Vee X

SUPPORTING ARTISTS

Mina Baluyot, Kevin Jesuino

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Sally Njoroge

THE ORGANIZATIONS

Action Dignity, Calgary on Purpose, Trico Homes

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

(OCTOBER 2019 - JANUARY 2020)

PHASE I	Launch and One-day Social Innovation Workshop (November 10) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcoming• Social innovation history, context and language• Artistic tools and case studies• Identifying and understanding the wicked problem together• Identifying appropriate arts-based interventions
PHASE II	Field Study (14 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploration of wicked problems; “how might we...” questions• Relationship building• Artist cohort meetings
PHASE III	Program Review (January 30) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evening Showcase of Field study learnings
PHASE IV	Program Evaluation (February - May) Program Report (June)

FACILITATION + DOCUMENTATION

MINA BALUYOT

Mina Baluyot (Photography, Music) was the residency program documentor. Using film and photography, she captured program events (the launch and the showcase) and events from the field study. She connected with artists during their field study to gather information about their processes and impressions through video interviews.

KEVIN JESUINO

Kevin Jesuino (Performance Art) played the role of supporting artist from the perspective of art and social innovation. With 6 year of experience in art facilitation and using art space to solve issues, he assisted in developing the residency program workshop with Trico Changemakers Studio Director, Lena Soots. He also co-hosted the social innovation workshop, alongside Lena Soots, highlighting the value of arts in solving complex problems with presentation of case studies and activities. During the artist cohort meetings he provided insight to artists' projects and processes. At the showcase event he was the keynote speaker and MC. His role was intended to provide the outside perspective to questions or ideas that the embedded artists with organizations had.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

SALLY NJORGE

Sally Njoroge (Performance Art, Music), during year one, was responsible for gathering research, conducting artist interviews for deeper understanding of program aspirations, process documentation, and reporting. As the artists moved into the second year, they determined it would be essential to have a program coordinator where she was elected to take on this role. As program coordinator, key responsibilities included gathering reflections from program participants, hosting artist cohort meetings, managing program budget, and managing day to day program schedule and needs.



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

What Happened

RESIDENCY PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

ARTIST PAIR: Tito Gomez and Melanee Murray-Hunt

ORGANIZATION PARTNER: Calgary on Purpose (COP)

[Calgary on Purpose](#) is an organization made up of “a group of Calgarians working to uncover the shared ambitions of the community. In so doing, [they] improve conditions for the creation of effective policy options and for successful advocacy by those who seek change. As a citizen-led platform, [their] mission is to increase transparency, build trust, and facilitate inclusion. [They] believe that every individual has the power to shape Calgary’s future.”

Tito Gomez (Film, Videography, Spoken Word Poetry) and Melanee Murray-Hunt (Performance Art, Writing, Film) worked in collaboration with COP to explore the story

of Calgary. The artists and organization representatives met for dinners to discuss various issues and topics in regards to the reality and future of Calgary. As COP is still an evolving organization, there was no clear ‘how might we...’ question that the artists dug into. However, what kept emerging for the artists in the conversations was the theme of humanity.

The artists teamed up with well known Calgary Spoken Word Artist, Wakefield Brewster, to create a response.

Showcased was the poetic response: [Sumpin Aint Right](#)



ARTIST PAIR: Skye Louis and Mel Vee X

ORGANIZATION PARTNER: Action Dignity

[Action Dignity](#) is a non-profit community-based organization that “facilitates the collective voice of Calgary’s ethno-cultural communities towards full civic participation and integration through collaborative action. By embracing and promoting: respect for diversity, equity and social justice, active citizenship and democratic participation, and collaboration.”

Skye Louis (Visual Arts) and Mel Vee X (Performance Art, Spoken Word Poetry) worked in collaboration with Action Dignity in various capacities. Action Dignity is an organization with different levels of structures serving different needs towards a common goal; from community program development, to research development, to

advocacy work. During the social innovation workshop the organization was transparent with the different roles they play to fulfill their vision, missions and values. Collaborating with the artists, they developed their guiding question: “How might we inspire hope, connections and accountability by highlighting roles and contributions of racialized communities?”

As the field study progressed, the work of the artists evolved, developed and adapted to the organization’s current needs to engage community members. Skye Louis and Mel Vee X worked together in parallel toward projects that had the capacity to yield the most impact for the Action Dignity community, within the allocated time frame.

Skye Louis’ work responded to the physical space of Action Dignity and emotional impact to empower individuals.

Showcased:

- Mural created on an empty wall space at Action Dignity facilities.
- Poster created with the images of women working as Action Dignity community brokers.
- Images of screen printing workshops from various events such as: Human Rights Day where 75 poster were created by attendees.

Mel Vee X’s work also responded to the emotional impact to empower individuals, and especially the youth attending Action Dignity’s programs through spoken word expression.

Showcased:

- Videos of youth performing their own pieces at the spoken word workshops held by Mel Vee X.
- Highlights of spoken word booth at Human Rights Day events with approximately 40 people engaged in conversation about the art form and its capacity for impact and change.

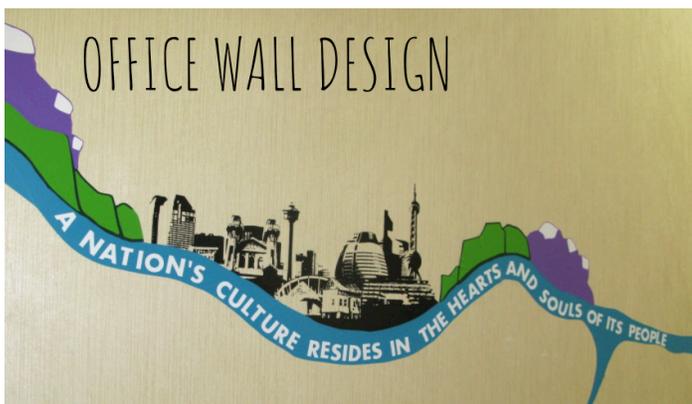


IMAGE BY SKYE LOUIS



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

ARTIST PAIR: Barbara Amos and Sharon Stevens

ORGANIZATION PARTNER: Trico Homes

[Trico Homes](#) is a for-profit socially conscious organization with a mission to “build homes with pride, that are crafted to enhance the lives of customers and the communities they live in. With core values being: trust, respect, integrity, community and opportunity.”

Trico Homes came into the program with an initiative they were embarking on to create homes and communities to fit the lifestyle of the age population. Barbara Amos (Visual Arts) and Sharon Stevens (Mixed Media) examined this issue closely alongside Trico Homes during the social innovation workshop, and further investigated during the field study to understand

the complexity of this initiative from various angles. Which led them to examine the question of “How might we co-create a thriving aging in place community?”

The artists spent the majority of their field study immersed in research of the demographic, and spent time surveying the proposed community for development. They found barriers which exist in the current model of communities for the aging population, and they collaborated with the Calgary Association of Lifelong Learners to create an educational video outlining their research.

[Showcased](#)





IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

RESIDENCY PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

ARTIST EXPERIENCE

- Professional Development
 - Addition of work experience to artist portfolio.
 - New employment opportunities and collaboration emerged.
- Personal Development
 - Artists felt valued for their artistic skills and capabilities.
 - Artists excitement of not being alone in changemaking work; inspired by other people and organizations doing impactful work.

ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE

All organizations:

- Agreed that artistic processes have value in engaging the community
- Expressed the value they saw and experienced in embedding artists into the organization to:
 - Use their art form to address social issues in a way that is powerful and creative.
 - Articulate a narrative and think outside the box.
- Expressed that art can be incorporated as a key component in organizational strategy, and artists can play a unique role in the execution.

ORGANIZATION TESTIMONIES

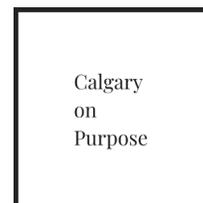
ACTION DIGNITY:

“We have come to value the important and unique contribution that a resident artist plays in our organization. In fact, having artists as part of the staff contingent is a step that we need to seriously consider. The role of the artist is to assist the different programs, staff, community members, to infuse artistic approaches in the way we do our community engagement, public awareness, participatory action research, public policy work and systemic change work... We have also come to the point of using art as a key component of our strategy, and that this needs to be done in a more proactive, deliberate and sustainable way.”



CALGARY ON PURPOSE:

“Going forward Tito has graciously agreed to be part of our Calgary on Purpose Advisory Panel and we have doubled down on our commitment to engaging artists in the refining then expression of our findings. The ‘Sumpin Aint Right’ video will, come Fall, be posted as part of our suite of interpretations. One learning we drew is that we want strong but accessible artistic expressions which while being strong, even condemnatory, allow those who maybe feel - or are - attacked, to still find ways into the bigger story of “us” we are seeking to express.”



TRICO HOMES:

“The artists’ work would be a great orientation or education media tool for anyone to understand some social challenges of an older adult. I would be interested in working with the artists and our team to build an educational series on the different aspect of co-creating an active aging in place community.”



ARTIST TESTIMONIES

BARBARA AMOS

I felt valued because I felt the project was meaningful.

TITO GOMEZ

With more time I would have loved to work with COP to record a reaction video to Sumpin Aint Right; to bring a community in to watch it and talk about it, capturing the good or bad reactions, and for it to be a companion learning for COP. I would also work with COP to make sure they are using the showcased video and to its full capacity.

SKYE LOUIS

I'd love to be able to jump in at the possibilities that came up from the pilot. I was asked to do 3 different things since the pilot ended, and it's only been a month. So there is definitely a thirst to do this kind of work.

MELANEE MURRAY-HUNT

I love that the program exists, love the adventure of it and not knowing what is going to happen, and I love being around people that talk about social change.

SHARON STEVENS

I learned more about ageing in place, and in our society and what kinds of programs and housing are available. I learned more about Trico; a corporation in our city that I wasn't aware of in a great amount of detail.

MEL VEE X

Felt valued 100%. This was one of the most clear examples of being valued for my skill set in my artistic career.

What We Learned

Our biggest learning from this experience is the importance of allowing sufficient time. The timeline of the residency program proved to be challenging and restrictive in many ways for the artists and organizations. It greatly affected the factors that the artists valued most in their original design. The restriction of time allowed us to learn four key things:

1. EMBRACE ITERATION

At the start of the residency program, the artists had aspirations about the structure of the program. These insights were also developed further based on feedback received from the rapid prototype in year one of the program. The artists had estimated that the pilot for the guided residency program would take approximately 6-12 months to fully test our assumptions. The following was the proposed structure:

OPEN HOUSE

- Mixer to meet socially engaged artists and organization working towards social change

INTAKE PROCESS

- Matching artists and organizations based on interests, values and mission
- Relationship building

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

- Diving deeper to build connection
- Establishing workflow and communication channels, roles and responsibilities
- Identifying and understanding the wicked problem together
- Identifying appropriate arts-based interventions

FIELD STUDY

- Arts-based human centered design process
- Application of relevant social innovation concepts
- Research
- Developing milestone projects
- Community/peers feedback and analysis
- Iteration

PROGRAM REVIEW

- Showcase of field study learnings
- Review of program; observations and recommendations
- Discussion of key elements for success in the future

SOCIAL INNOVATION CURRICULUM

- History, context, language
- Tools and case studies
- Exploring wicked problems
- Establishing and building trust

Based on time constraints the program's original structure was condensed for prototyping and testing for impact. It was important to test our assumptions on a smaller scale so that we could learn from it for future iterations.



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

2. COORDINATION IS CRITICAL

PROGRAM COORDINATOR LEARNINGS

- It's important to set clear processes in Phase I to gather information on participants' expectations of the program, collectively determine roles and responsibilities, main contacts, deliverables and anticipated outcomes.
- It would be beneficial to:
 - Invite program coordinator to assist in relationship management of artists as well as organization representatives to level the communication gap.
 - Invite artists and organization representatives in the planning process to determine best practice for check-ins and program reflections.
 - Invite program evaluators at the beginning of residency program for high level learnings and suggestions for iteration.
- Quicker distribution of artist material funds is important to allow artists to begin the project effectively, and without delay.
- Create space for natural conversations to take place; artists-to-artists and artists-to-organizations.
- Have set dates for gatherings and events available at onset of program to allow artists and organizations sufficient time to coordinate their schedules.

3. INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Having enough time to build connections between artists and organizations would help with clear communication and general understanding of each participant's role in the program.
- For meaningful relationships and deeper collaboration to occur, trust needs to be nurtured between artists and organizational representatives.
- Enough time would also allow artists and organizations to have the opportunity to uncover in depth artists unique skills, talents and resources.
- Enough time is also required for artists to artists relationships to develop; it would allow the artist cohort to share knowledge, skills, resources and support.
- To enhance relationship building and trust, it's essential to create space for natural conversations and interactions to take place, e.g. Within casual gatherings.



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

4. UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL INNOVATION TAKES TIME

- Enough time is required for artists and organizations to sit with their complex challenges, develop ‘how might we...’ questions, research, experiment with ideas, and iterate.
- More facilitated social innovation workshops required throughout the program for grounding tools, concepts, and application.
- Enough time required to implement the artistic process into changemaking work, and can be facilitated through workshops throughout the program.
- More time required for the transfer of social innovation knowledge to occur between artists that underwent with the Social Innovation courses and artists that did not. Without this time, new artists would have to enroll in the Social Innovation courses.



IMAGE BY MINA BALUYOT

Highlights

WHAT WORKED WELL

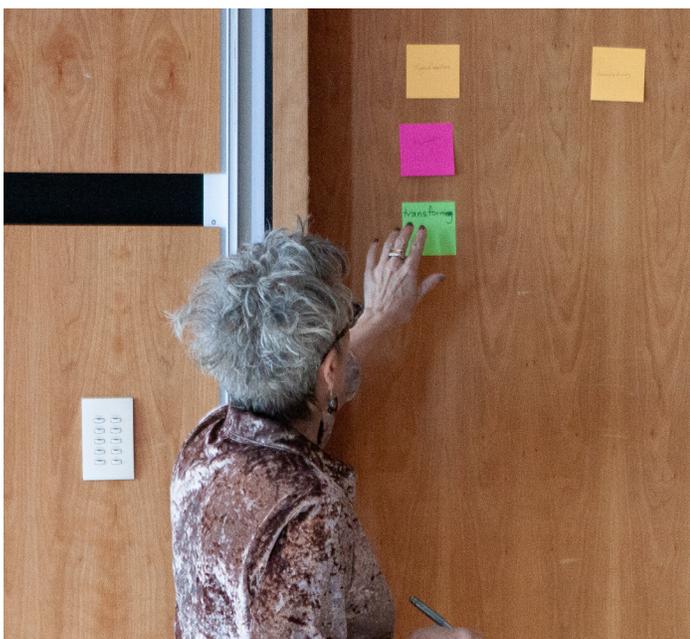
- Artists felt valued
 - The existence of this program is valuable as it amplifies the skills and expertise of artists.
 - Organizations allowed space for artists to respond and exercise their creativity.
 - Opportunity to learn and develop professionally and personally.
 - Sense of belonging from working with a cohort of artists who are passionate about social change.
- Artists who were invited to join in the second year for the Residency Program appreciated not having rigorous expectations.
- The partnership between the artists and organizations helped to inform the capacity of artists to engage with a challenge in a meaningful way.
- Organizations desire to continue working with artists.



IMAGES BY MINA BALUYOT

INSIGHTS

- Clear expectations, intent, deliverables and understanding of goals for artist and organization needed at onset of program.
- Understanding of social innovation approaches, and early inquiry of artists and organizational representatives' understanding of social innovation needs to be benchmarked at the onset of the program to effectively measure: what has changed, if knowledge has increased or not, and in what ways.
- Artists and organizations to play a role in the identification and selection process of whom to collaborate with.
- Criteria for the selection process for artists should include artists that identify as social-justice activists/ advocates.
- Artists do not necessarily need to be paired to work with an organization; could have one artist - one organization model.
- Important to artists to assess the impact of their work by gauging a response from their intended audience early on to bridge knowledge gaps, generate new ideas and jump on new possibilities.
- Evaluation is a key component that should be embedded into the overall program to further understand how the artistic process affects social change and to improve upon program delivery.
- Relationships with organizations and artists need to be held by program coordinator, with clear processes in place and clear points of contact for communication.
- Organizations should participate in the program showcase to share experiences and learning from their perspectives.
- More opportunities for artists and organizations to convene and exchange ideas throughout the program.
- Residency Program needs to include an implementation plan to gauge how the organization is integrating what they've learned about the artistic process into their social impact work.
- The timeline and framing of the showcase event caused a shift where artists felt pressured to focus on an "end-product" as a supposed to the process.



IMAGES BY MINA BALUYOT

WHAT WE WANT TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE

A second pilot of the Artist as Changemaker Guided Residency Program with an appropriate timeline of approximately 10 months to 1 year, to apply new learnings.



IMAGES BY MINA BALUYOT

QUESTIONS WE'RE STILL HOLDING

- What other ways of 'doing things' can we explore?
- How has this process transformed (if at all) the artists?
 - Have artists shifted perceptions of themselves as changemakers?
 - Artistic process — did it evolve for artists?
- What are the ways we can nurture the strength of the artist cohort?
- How do we embed and engage the supporting artists more throughout the project?

Conclusion

The Artist as Changemaker Program has been a learning process to expand and elevate the role of artists as changemakers. What used to be an idea among the artists has taken form in the physical world, and has been put to the test. This small step enhances our narrative of the value of artists, and is a milestone towards amplifying the role of artists in social change.

We hold true to our original belief that art can help make sense of complexity and can be used to catalyze people into action towards social change. Artists play a vital role in this execution, as guides to bring people into the unknown, to show possibilities that exist, and to imagine a different reality. We are hopeful that the exploration of this program will continue to unveil the valuable capabilities of artists, and the possibilities that lie at the intersection of art, the artistic process, and social innovation.



IMAGES BY MINA BALUYOT

Artist Bios



BARBARA AMOS

Barbara Amos is an artist who enjoys collaboration and an exchange of ideas. She has 25 years of experience in creating work that encourages inquiry about our role in the world. She has created temporal works, sculptures, photographic projects, paintings and sketches in response to issues and communities. She has completed 5 public art commissions and has over 20 years of experience on boards for non-profits. She has a degree from the U of Waterloo and recently completed a Social Innovation Certificate through Mount Royal University. She is represented by Abbozzo Gallery in Toronto and Gibson Fine Art in Calgary.



WILHELMINA "MINA" BALUYOT

Mina's is both a photographer and musician, who now works full time in the Community Development sector in Calgary. Mina operated 'True Reflection Photography' for three years - providing her brilliant photography services to individuals, families and businesses in Calgary, as well as free photography services to non-profit organizations events. Her photography not only reflected each client's beauty but also a piece of their personality. As a passionate musician, Mina produced an album entitled "Reciprocity". She composed and arranged two songs in the album, and managed to convince artists from all over Canada and the USA to donate songs to include in the album. All proceeds were donated in the Philippines to an orphanage called Laura Vicuna Foundation, that helps abused children. Since then Mina has worked in a variety of roles with local non-profit organizations. Her current role is with Canadian Artists Against Poverty (CAAP). For several years, Mina was the Chair of the Board spearheading the growth of CAAP to a thriving charity with Registered Charitable Status. Now as the organization's Project Coordinator and sole staff member, Mina works with the CAAP board to develop, plan, implement and fundraise for their unique programs. CAAP advocates and demonstrates the healing power of art for the artist, the viewer and the community. Mina directed CAAP's event videos (Heart for Art).



TITO GOMEZ

Tito Gomez is from the Chippewa-Cree & Tohono O’odham nations. While living in Calgary for the past 10 years he has worked in the communities in Dover and Forest Lawn helping out much as much he can in community events. He wrote and directed two short films called The Healing and Love of Two, which both could be watched on YouTube. When he isn’t busy with a community project, developing film projects he could be seen at Pow wows and round dances all over Alberta. His vision is to start changing the way First Nations people are portrayed in film and media.



KEVIN JESUINO

Kevin Jesuino is a Portuguese-Canadian queer multidisciplinary artist, facilitator, teacher and community organizer working in performance, installation and public art. He is based in Mohkinsis of Treaty 7 land, also known as Calgary, Canada. His work is oftentimes collaborative, site-specific, participatory, and process-oriented. His practice explores the intersection of the body, society and place. His recent research explores the queer body, climate and modes of being together. His community-embedded projects engage participants in performative actions, discussions, creative interventions, activations and other forms of organizing — positioning art & culture as a vehicle for meaningful social change.



SKYE LOUIS

Skye Louis is a Goan artist from Toronto whose creative collaborations revolve around empowerment and accessibility, human connection, emotion, and care. Skye’s work makes the invisible visible and brings to light new possibilities for our shared future. Skye is proud to have worked with and learned from organizations such as the Toronto Arts Foundation, Scarborough Arts Council, ArtReach, Inkstorm Screenprinting Collective, AROC and the Artist as Changemaker program.



MELANEE MURRAY-HUNT

Melanee Murray-Hunt is an actor, writer, filmmaker, director and activist. Her film *Race Anonymous* has won various awards including an award for Best Drama at the Edmonton Short Film Festival, along with her solo theatre show, *The Hoodwink*. She can be seen in various television episodes and films including: *Black n Blue* by Guerilla Productions, APTN's *Tribal*, *Jasmine Road*, *The Motherf**cker With The Hat*, and fiftieth-anniversary production of *To Kill A Mockingbird* at Theatre Calgary. Past on-camera credits include the feature Universal film *KPAX* starring Jeff Bridges and Alfre Woodard, *24*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Judging Amy*, and as a series regular on the Nickelodeon series *100 Deeds for Eddie McDowd*. She has written, produced, directed and starred in four other films including the short film version of *The Hoodwink*, *Do The Math* (the sequel to *Race Anonymous*), *The Trial of Miss Mudimbe* and *Looking Back* (written and directed by Stephen Hunt). *Our Canada, Our Story* produced by Action Dignity and Arts Commons is a story co-written and facilitated with youth actors and writers by Melanee to explore themes of race and racism. Her upcoming film project *The Invincible Trayvon Martin* was chosen for development by the Women In The Director's Chair career accelerator program, and nominated for Telefilm's Talent To Watch program by Caribbean Tales based in Toronto.



SALLY NJOROGE

Sally Njoroge is a Kenyan born artist residing in Calgary who found her voice through spoken word magic and recently DJ-ing. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, and a Minor in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from Mount Royal University. She's taken Social Innovation (SI) courses from Mount Royal University which has allowed her to have an understanding of SI tools and concepts while working on the Artist as Changemaker project. Sally has worked with various grassroots organizations in Calgary including: ReFreshed, Uproot YYC, Afros In Tha City, Icarus Sounds, Afro Beat Calgary, Haven YYC, and Expressions. She's also worked with the Crescent Heights Community Association in re-imagining community engagement through arts and place-making. Her vision is to discover innovative avenues for various communities to experience arts and culture.



SHARON STEVENS

Sharon Stevens, a multi award-winning media artist and activist, is an instigator who's made a career of integrating art, activism, feminism, and social justice into a series of projects that enlighten, enliven and entertain. Stevens' work demonstrates an unwavering belief in public, participatory art, and takes a beacon-like approach to leading Calgarians into artistic adventures in collaborative and meaningful art making. Her projects in art and social engagement have had the intent to situate works within communities and actively engage participation, predominately through new media. She has produced a body of video work ranging from documentaries, to feminist narratives to animation. Building on these previous projects, she has evolved and responded to different technologies within her media art practice. With 30+ years as a practicing artist, Sharon has been involved with many of the city's arts institutions and has served on boards, juries, committees and staffs.



MEL VEE X

Mel Vee X is a queer Black (out)spoken word artist, burlesque performer and photographer who was born and raised in Mohkinstsis. Out of the muck of living in a hostile and racist society, the lotus of her unapologetic dedication to speaking truth to power and looking damn good while doing it emerged. Mel Vee is dedicated to inspiring marginalized people to tell our own stories from our own perspectives. You can follow all her latest shenanigans on Instagram @melveepoetry and Twitter @melveex