

# ARTWORKSTO

Skills for a Creative Future



## *Impact Report*

*2020-2022 Highlights*



# INTRODUCTION

ArtWorksTO supports Indigenous, Black, or Persons of Colour (IBPOC) and/or 2SLGBTQ+ youth who are who are pursuing careers in the media arts industry. It is a workforce development program that provides paid creative contract work, industry-focused mentorship, and skills training.

Between 2020 to 2022 ArtWorksTO delivered its programming with funding from the Future Skills Centre and the City of Toronto. This report highlights impacts of the program during this time with information gathered and analysed by independent consultants Kris Erickson, PhD and Fiona Scott. The impact report was jointly authored by Laura Metcalfe from the City of Toronto and Angie Aranda from the Toronto Arts Foundation.

To receive a full copy of the evaluation report please contact us:  
artworksto@torontoarts.org.



*Photo by Blue Karakus (Cohort 3), for Toronto Arts Foundation*

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS



OCAD U Portfolio Development training

OCAD U Certificate in Art and Design Professional Skills



A guaranteed, paid creative contract with partner organizations including the City of Toronto, Toronto Arts Foundation, OCAD U, Corex Creative, Sketch, ImagineNATIVE and TonyxTones



Mentorship with industry advisors from The Remix Project

Networking through masterclasses, workshops and panels



Wrap-around support including assistance with employment goals, including education, training and mental health



Alumni pathways

# PROGRAM PARTNERS



**OCAD University** offers and delivers customized skills education programming and provides advisory support on the program model and implementation.



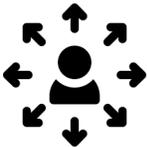
**The Remix Project** coordinates industry networking and professional development activities through “masterclasses” with industry professionals and one-on-one industry advisor, matches of ArtWorksTO participants and Remix alumni.



**Toronto Arts Foundation/Neighbourhood Arts Network (TAF/NAN)** provides program management and administration, including contract management, outreach, communications, data collection, report writing and industry engagement.



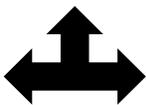
**The City of Toronto** works with TAF/NAN to provide program management, including partnership development, sustainability planning, and knowledge mobilization. The City provides financial and in-kind support to the program.



**Outreach partners** include community based organizations that provide media arts training for equity deserving youth. Outreach partners support with recruitment and selection of program participants. Outreach partners include **JAYU, POV, ImagineNATIVE, Street Voices, Sketch, Eva’s Phoenix, The Remix Project, OCAD University and Film Stars.**



**Contract host partners** include organizations that host program participants to complete a media arts contract. Contract host partners include the **City of Toronto, TAF/NAN, OCAD U, Corex Creative, TonyxTones, POV, Sketch, LOOP Design for Social Good.**



**Alumni pathways partners** include organizations who provide paid work opportunities, internships and/or industry-based training for program alumni. Alumni pathways partners include the **Directors Guild of Canada—Ontario, Hot Docs, Warner Music, Smart Simple, Wealth Simple Foundation Westin Harbour Castle and the City of Toronto.**



“ Participating in ArtWorksTO has completely transformed my arts career and how I identify as a creative.

Prior to this program, when someone asked what I did, I would simply say, ‘I’m just a graphic designer.’ As a self-taught, freelance artist, I had to learn everything from scratch.

This program taught me that I am a justified creative now, and not later. I now believe that

**not only do I have a place in the creative world, but that my work is valuable. ”**

- **Jessica Campbell**  
Graphic Designer &  
Illustrator

# MISSION

ArtWorksTO supports IBPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+ youth to apply and build their skills through mentorship opportunities, paid contracts and work integrated learning.

By establishing strategic and cross-sectoral partnerships to connect IBPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+ youth to work opportunities within the media arts industry, ArtWorksTO is a catalyst for systems change.

# VISION

ArtWorksTO envisions sustainable and inclusive pathways to support young and emerging IBPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+ media artists to realize their full potential through active participation in a representative and responsive media arts industry.

# VALUES

ArtWorksTO values collaboration, transparency and action towards increasing equity. ArtWorksTO values the skills and perspectives of IBPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+ youth and aims to ensure that program participants' experiences inform the program's design and growth.

ArtWorksTO values safe and accountable workspaces that build the confidence of IBPOC and/or 2SLGBTQ+ youth media artists to prepare for industry realities while seeking to transform what is inequitable about conventional practices and structures.



*Digital illustration by Mujda Hakime, (Cohort 1) for Toronto Arts Foundation*



“ Working with Jasmine (ArtWorksTO participant, Cohort 2) has been a great experience, she is very professional, listens to the clients ideas, ensured that she understood our vision, did her research, provided timely updates and was fully engaged in the process.

Jasmine is an incredibly talented artist she is creative, she was able to successfully design a solidarity (Black and Indigenous) themed visual that is rich, vibrant and captures the essence of the idea of ‘strength in unity’. The two renderings for the Indigenous Land Acknowledgments were incredible and beautiful also, the additional option of creating the visual piece with movement was stunning.

I am thrilled to have worked with Jasmine on this project, and I look forward to the opportunity to work with her in the future as an ArtWorksTO alumni. ”

**- Joanne Isaac,  
Cohort 2 contract host  
City of Toronto**

# OUR OBJECTIVES

## Access

The overall objective of ArtWorksTO is to **enhance access for early career creatives** to the media arts and creative industries, particularly young people who are Indigenous, Black, a Person of Colour, and/or 2SLGBTQ+

## Connection

A functional objective of ArtWorksTO is to **connect motivated, job-ready early-career creatives with clients in need of creative talent**. These clients are drawn from connections within the City of Toronto as well as project partners and the organizations to which our advisory members belong.

## Building Capacity

ArtWorksTO aims to create sector capacity by supporting the development of **a talent pipeline that offers inclusive, supportive, accredited, and work-integrated learning experiences** to our cohort while creating unique value for our client partners.



*Digital illustration by Lily Huang, (Cohort 1) for City Planning*

# BETWEEN 2020 AND 2022, ARTWORKSTO:

Directly facilitated creative sector career training and professional exploration opportunities, including panel discussions and portfolio development training for

**250**

prospective applicants

Reached an estimated

**25,000+**

creative sector professionals from the GTA and beyond through ArtWorksTO promotions and outreach

Enrolled

**61**

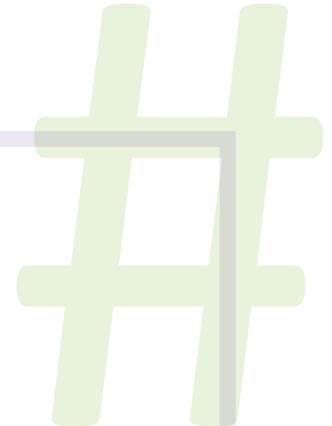
participants in work-integrated learning opportunities,

**100%**

of whom self identify as **Indigenous, Black, and/or Persons of Colour** and more than

**50%**

of whom also self identify as **2SLGBTQ+**





Each participant is able to access up to

**240**

hours of direct programming while enrolled, including:

**90**

Hours of **OCAD U** course instruction for a Continuing Studies Certificate in *Business Skills for Creative Professionals*

**5+**

hours of personalized, one-on-one check-ins with the ArtWorksTO Program Manager from **Toronto Arts Foundation's Neighbourhood Arts Network**

**150**

hours of industry advising opportunities, including:

- coaching
- masterclasses
- workshops
- one-on-ones &
- remote co-working coordinated by **The Remix Project** & their international network of creative sector professionals



**“** *ArtWorksTO provided the mentorship, education, and connections we needed to grow and succeed in our creative entrepreneurship journeys and unique disciplines. Blessed to have a great learning opportunity for my first ever sale in my new creative entrepreneurship as a director/producer/editor and CEO of my new media production company.* **”**

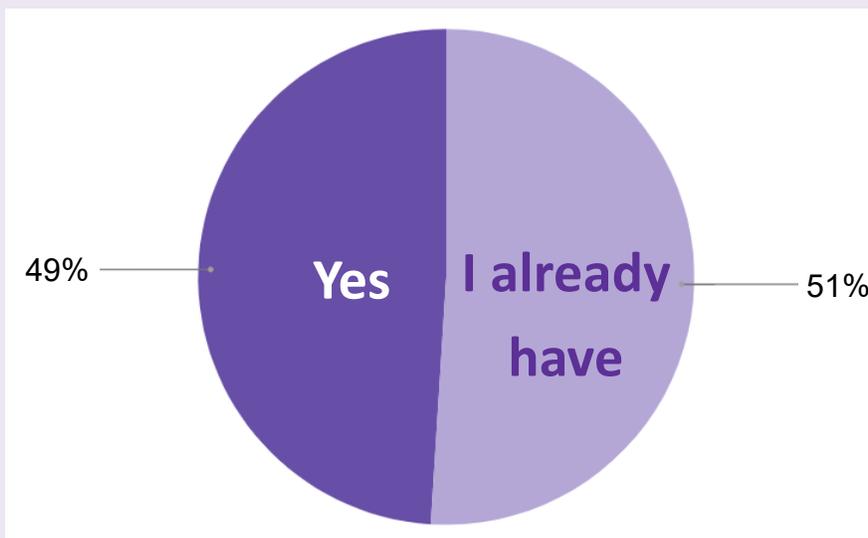
*- Paolo Manalo,  
Videographer, Graphic  
Designer and  
Multimedia Artist*

# PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

Participants\* were asked, **overall**, how **satisfied** are you with ArtWorksTO?



And, would you **recommend** someone else to ArtWorksTO?



\*31 out of 61 participants completed the survey upon completing the program.



*Image by Jasmine Swimmer (Cohort 2) for Toronto Employment and Social Services for use in Land Acknowledgements*

# CREATIVE CONTRACTS

## \$244,000

was directly awarded to participants as **\$4,000 project budgets for creative contracts** with contract host partners, funded by contract hosts and the City of Toronto

## 75

**distinct media assets**, including digital illustration, digital video, graphic design, photography, and social media marketing campaigns were produced by participants for contract hosts

# 19

Contract host organizations participated in a survey (of 22 in total)

# 74%

Contract hosts were *“very satisfied”* with their experiences

# 89%

Contract hosts will be able to put the final products or deliverables to use

# 89%

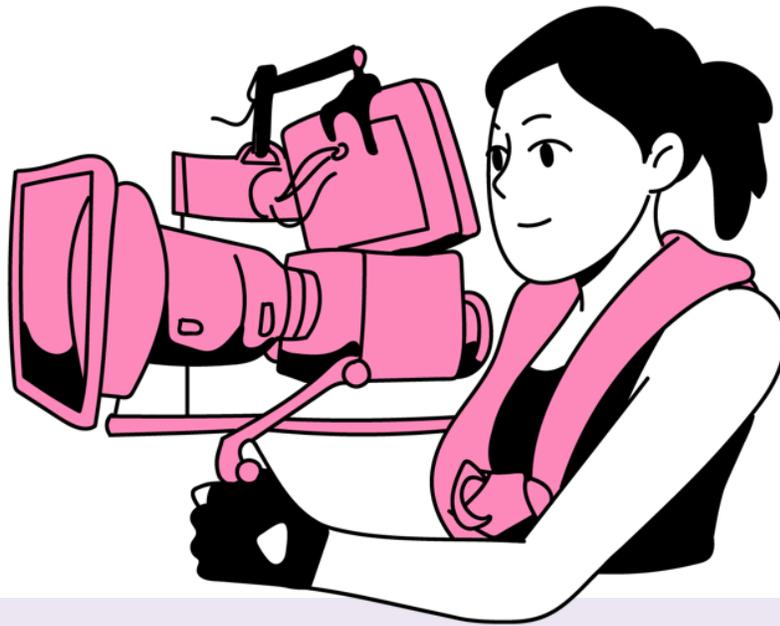
Contract hosts plan to partner with ArtWorksTO again in future



*“ I felt so much pride and gratitude not only to be able to provide exactly what my client wanted, but to be able to offer more.*

*The amazing staff and wrap-around support has been huge and life changing. ”*

*- Jasmine Swimmer,  
Photographer, Writer,  
Content Creator*



*Digital illustration by Charissa Olano (Cohort 2) for OCAD University*

# CREDENTIALIZED TRAINING

## 41

participants out of 61 opted to enroll in the **Certificate in Art and Design Professional Skills** at OCAD University through the ArtWorksTO program

## 20+

**Course offerings from OCAD U**, including the prerequisite course “Professional Practice for Emerging Artists,” tailored specifically for ArtWorksTO participants

## ArtWorksTO awarded the 2022 CAUCE Program Award

The School of Continuing Studies at OCAD University was awarded the 2022 CAUCE Program Award. This was the first time that OCAD U received this prestigious award.

The Program Awards recognize excellence in university continuing education programs in Canada and aim to nurture the concept of the scholarship of practice inherent in the program development process.



“ ArtWorksTO contributed to me gaining increased access to leadership roles by not only informing myself and other participants of available opportunities around the Toronto/GTA area, but also creating them for us as well.

While in the ArtWorksTO program, I was able to successfully complete a video campaign project for the City of Toronto's transportation department. As an emerging director and videographer, this meant a lot to me because it was my first project of that scale for a notable client.

In addition, the partnership that ArtWorksTO has with Warner Music Canada, allowed me to apply for the Marketing and Social Media intern position. I was hired for the four month internship which tremendously impacted my career as an emerging leader in the social media and music industry.

ArtWorksTO has contributed to enhancing my skills in communication, teamwork, networking, and problem solving through the programs I participated in and opportunities I've been given.

**I am so grateful for the team at ArtWorksTO and the organizations they collaborate with because they take the weight off of artists to figure it all out on our own.** ”

- *Selina McCallum, filmmaker, photographer and videographer*



Image by Blue Karakus (Cohort 3), for Toronto Arts Foundation

# INDUSTRY MENTORSHIP

## 40

**Masterclasses and group sessions with Industry advisors** from The Remix Project provided participants with one-on-one and group coaching support to build soft and technical skills

## 10

**Industry Advisors and creative sector professionals** hosted panels and workshops on topics including:

- Finding Your Path as a Creative Professional
- Developing & Maintaining Client Relationships
- Planning For Milestones & How To Achieve Them



# ADVISOR FEATURE

## Introducing Industry Advisor **Christina Cheng**

Christina Cheng is a creative multi-hyphenate with a background in journalism/media, marketing and branding; and a passion for impactful storytelling through culture, community, philanthropy, health + wellness.

Christina is the Chief Creative Officer (CCO) & Co-Founder of YUTE INC., co-founded with her son. YUTE is a youth-focused, full-service creative and experiential studio created for the youth, by the youth. YUTE houses multi-hyphenate creative youth by alley-ooping opportunities, support and mentorship; while creating meaningful and impactful content through play (creativity). Give them the tools and watch them do magic.

With every project, YUTE hires and mentors Black, Indigenous, POC, and/or 2SLGBTQ+ creative youth from under-served communities; with proceeds invested back into youth- focused programs, initiatives, and organizations.

Christina has been an industry advisor with ArtWorksTO for three years, and continues to share her advise as an industry professional to assist participants as they further their experience as creative sector professionals.

More about Christina can be found at:

[www.christinagcheng.com](http://www.christinagcheng.com)

# OUTCOME AREAS

ArtWorksTO has measured five outcome areas drawn from the City of Toronto's Youth Outcomes Framework:

- 1.** Toronto youth have the skills and opportunities to develop **professional networks** and build knowledge of a **sector** of interest
- 2.** Toronto youth have **employment or career goals**, know the steps needed to work towards them, and feel they have the skills to obtain or create work
- 3.** Toronto youth have **transferable and technical skills** to succeed in employment
- 4.** Toronto youth pursue and successfully complete **education and training** related to their interests and chosen path
- 5.** Toronto youth obtain, create, retain, and advance in **meaningful, sustainable work**



*Image produced by Janie Hao (Cohort 1) for Social Development, Finance & Administration, alumni contract for the Youth Outcomes Framework*

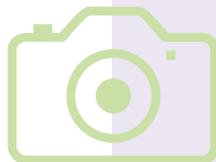
# 92%

of participants surveyed (31 of 61) reported that ArtWorksTO has helped them achieve the following **outcomes**:

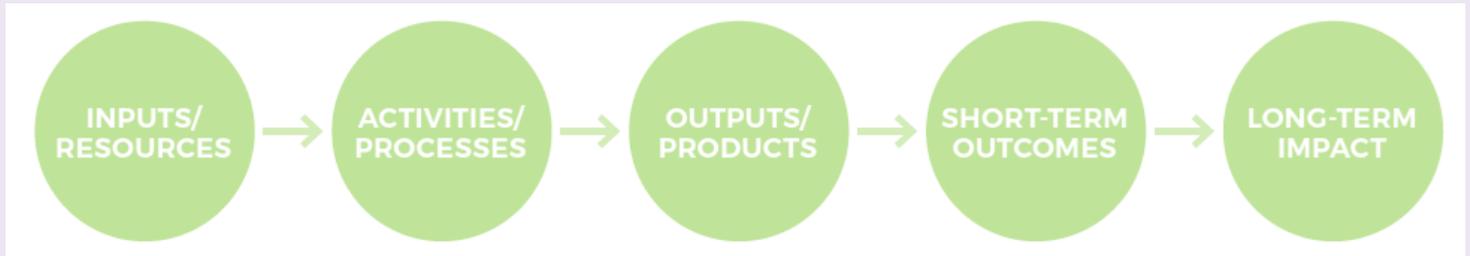
- ⇒ make progress towards employment or career goals
- ⇒ meet someone they might ask for career advice, information, or job leads
- ⇒ get connected with people in the creative sector

A majority of the participants surveyed felt that ArtWorksTO helped them to become **more confident** in one or more technical skills including:

- ⇒ media arts technical skills
- ⇒ business and entrepreneurial skills
- ⇒ professional communication skills



# INTENDED IMPACTS



As a program in its early years, ArtWorksTO is working towards measuring long-term impacts. Alumni who were part of the 2020 to 2022 cohorts were surveyed in June of 2023. 25 of 61 alumni completed the survey. Alumni were asked if ArtWorksTO helped them achieve the following intended impacts:

**84%** Gained **meaningful employment** in safe and accessible workplaces

**92%** Have **skills and resources** needed to develop a successful career or business

**64%** Gained increased **access to leadership roles** across sectors, within organizations, and in governance

**76%** **Contributed their voices and visions** to local culture and economies

# ARTWORKSTO

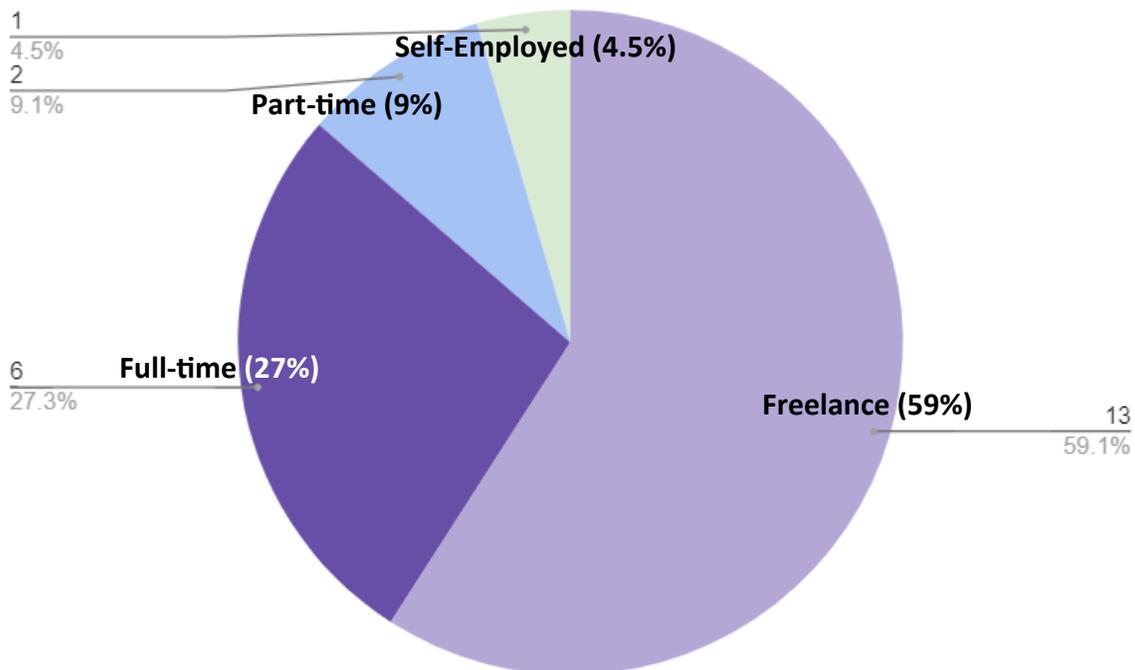
ArtWorksTO alumni surveyed in 2023 were asked about their current careers. Of 25 respondents:

**92%**

are **currently working in the media arts industries** (Graphic Design, Film/Video, Photography, UX/UI Design, Social Media, etc.)

**68%**

have **accessed additional paid work through ArtWorksTO** after completing the program



# ARTWORKSTO VIDEO



Hear more from ArtWorksTO alumni in this [short video](#), accessible through the QR code.

## MEET THE FILMMAKER, NIYA ABDULLAHI



Niya Abdullahi is a 2020/2021 ArtWorksTO alumni and multi-disciplinary artist. Niya is the founder of @Habasooda, a platform dedicated to sharing the richness of the Muslim experience through a variety of storytelling avenues including through films and data-based graphics.

According to Niya, “I’ve learned amazing technical skills, professional knowledge and am really looking forward to what the future has in store for us all. ArtWorks TO has really made us industry ready and I will forever be grateful to this program.”

# ALUMNI FEATURE



## Introducing ArtWorksTO Alumni, Danica “Dizzy” Ricamara

Danica “Dizzy” Ricamara is a multifaceted award-winning director from Scarborough. Known for her work in short-documentaries such as “Worst Student Ever” (2018), The Community Healing Project, (2022) and CBC Gem’s “Black Boys Skate Too” (2023) she brings a unique lens to the film industry through branded content, music video production and short-format unscripted content.

Reflecting on her experience as an ArtWorksTO participant, Dizzy expressed how the program was a pivotal stepping stone in her career, having opened doors to some of her first opportunities in the creative industry. In addition to getting an understanding of the business side of a career in the arts through OCAD U’s Certificate program and her time working with 1NBRH, Dizzy had the opportunity to network, build an extensive client list, and spark connections for the production of her documentaries, including The City of Toronto’s Community Healing project.

Dizzy’s goal has always been to highlight the missing voices from the underrepresented communities by changing on-screen narratives. After graduating from ArtWorksTO in 2021, her passion for community building manifested into Dizzy founding “Friends From The Endz”, a collective based production house, bridging the gap between emerging filmmakers from underrepresented communities with industry clients and opportunities.

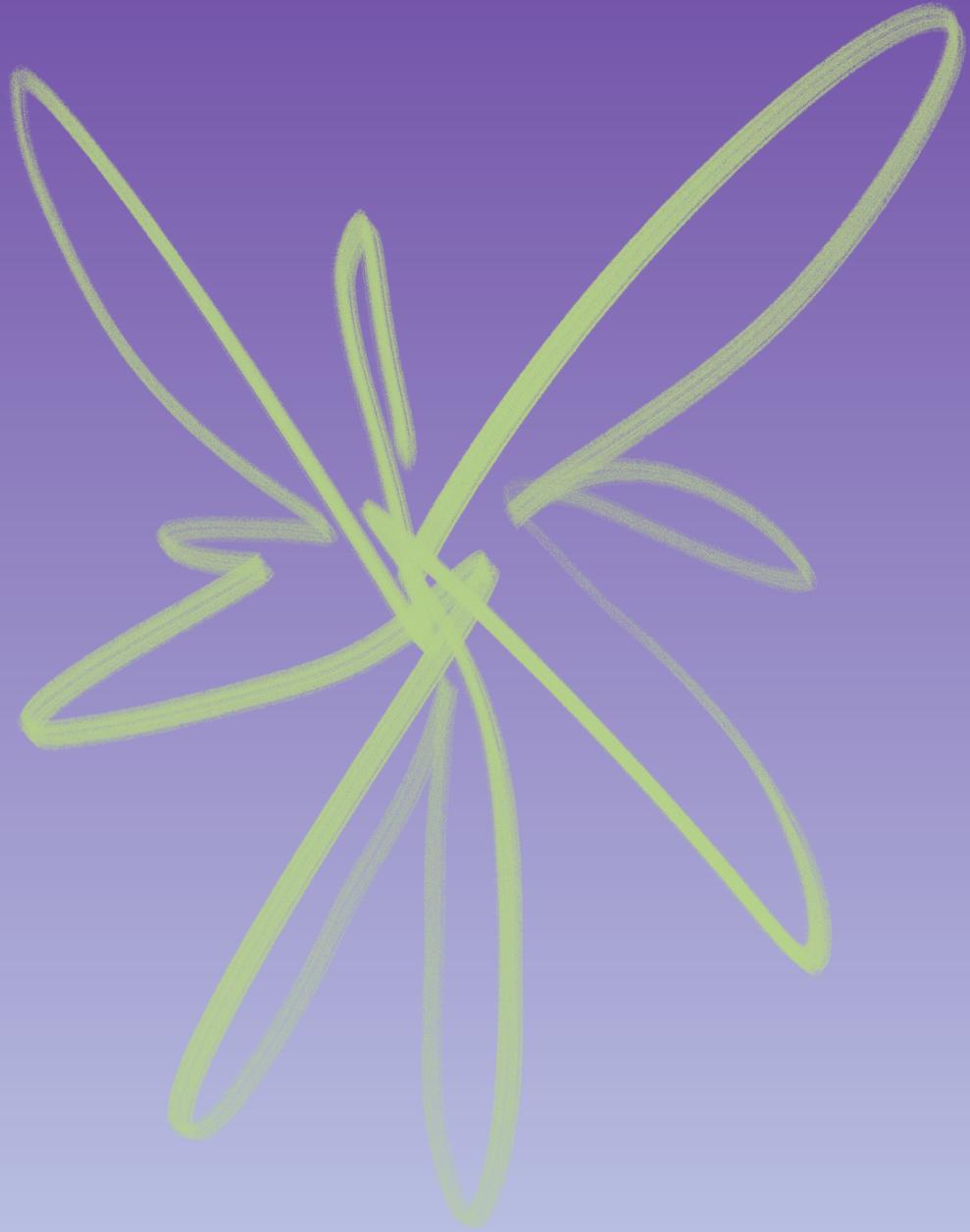
Check out more of Dizzy’s work on social media:

[@directordizzydinero](https://www.instagram.com/directordizzydinero)

[@friends.fte](https://www.instagram.com/friends.fte)

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**For more information:**

Email: [artworksto@torontoarts.org](mailto:artworksto@torontoarts.org)  
Website: [neighbourhoodartsnetwork.org/artworksto](https://neighbourhoodartsnetwork.org/artworksto)  
Instagram: [artworks.to](https://www.instagram.com/artworks.to)