



Scarborough Arts Mural Project

Notes on Nostalgia

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CONTENT CREATOR



Executive Summary

The aim of this project is to help young artists tap into their creativity by creating murals inspired by their upbringing in Scarborough. From performing spoken word in alleyways to eating beef patties with coco bread, artists experience a shared sense of nostalgia for their Borough.

Artistic expression and outsider art forms often go hand in hand. For the Mural Project, Scarborough high school students get an opportunity to collaborate on three murals from the ideation and design stages to the painting and unveiling. We will partner with the Akin Collective, a group of artists with ties to the Scarborough community who have agreed to mentor our students.

The mural artists in training will perform original poetry readings and spoken word to animate these building walls during the unveiling. This project, from its process to completion will reflect the themes of diversity and inclusion. In the design stage, we would like to see our student painters express their emotional connection with the Borough in carefully chosen images and words. During the mural unveiling, we would like to hear our student mural artists speak confidently about their creations and contribute to the Borough's credibility as an artistic and cultural hub in the city of Toronto.

Background

TRADING THE SPRAY CAN FOR A PAINT BRUSH: GRAFFITI BECOMES MURAL ART

Sanctioned graffiti art, called street art or mural art, has become a popular form of public art in large cities.

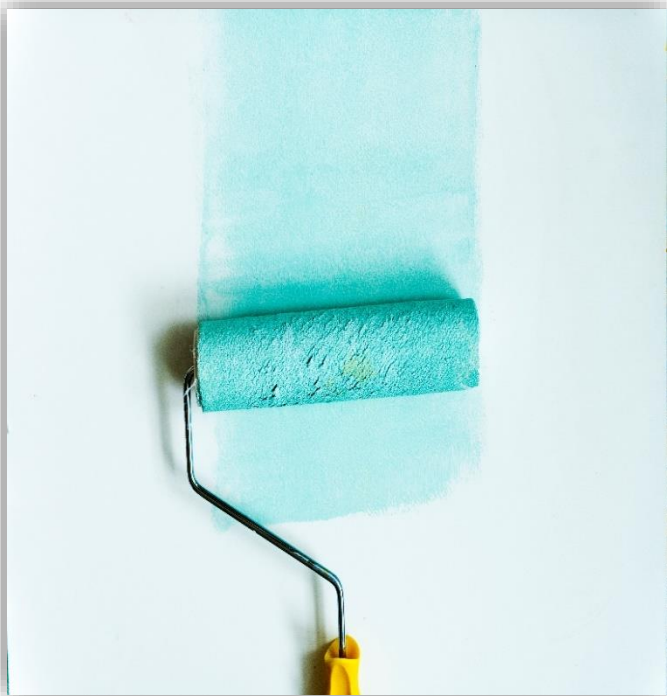
At its best site-specific street art, clustered together, can transform buildings into an outdoor art gallery space. It can also express the character of a community by its subject matter. Since artists get approval to paint murals on the walls of private and public buildings, mural artists can use paint instead of spray cans. They can also carefully design and develop the theme of their mural and sign their work.

As an art form, murals have been used as a tool to beautify buildings and revitalize neighbourhoods. With origins as outsider art, murals are an ideal medium to express the identity of a place and community.

Rationale

Portrayed by the media as the ghetto “Scarberia,” Scarborough has seen perceptions shift in recent years by its participation in large scale art events such as Nuit Blanche. Nevertheless, Scarborough needs recognition as a culturally rich suburb. We need to support and nurture the creativity of emerging artists, writers, and poets who live there and ensure they thrive and grow. Their success can help revitalize forgotten neighbourhoods and change perceptions.

This project brings together youth and an experienced graffiti artist to engage in a process of creating three distinct murals on the theme of nostalgia. Youth artists will help generate mural art topics and ideas. Under the guidance of an Akin Collective mentor, students will bring these ideas to life. This team of artists will be considered cultural ambassadors, as they pay homage to their memories growing up in the Borough.



Strategy

**Innovative in design,
delivery, and message**

Initial Phase

Collaborative Design
Process

- Students are chosen from local high schools and mentored by an established graffiti artist.
- Designs for the mural painting will centre around the theme of “nostalgia” and will be based on participants’ responses to the question: “What do you miss most about the Borough when you’re away?”



Mural Materials

- The murals will be painted on 4' X 8' panels of crezon plywood.
- This ensures no alterations will be made to building walls, no scaffolding or ladders will be needed, and painting can be completed in the studio space.

Site Selection

- Mural sites will be chosen based on certain eligibility criteria and approval from the building owner (some on the shortlist are members of Kennedy BIA).

Final Phase

Community Engagement and Mural Unveiling

A program of spoken word, literary and poetry readings performed by mural artists will animate the mural painting sites and bring excitement to the project. Sufficient efforts to promote the Workshop Event and Mural Unveiling Event will take place among media partners, local arts organizations, community centres, high schools, and local businesses.



Evaluation/Results

The goal of the mural project is to create street art that is visually compelling and meaningful and represents the unique perspectives of Scarborough's youth. The objective of the project is to facilitate the mentorship of 15 emerging youth as they undergo the process of creating 5 distinct murals. The participants' progress will be tracked by their detailed journal entries throughout the phases of the project. Their feedback will also be shared with other Scarborough area arts

organizations and the Mural Routes organization. The student artists will also be tasked with writing a summary of their experience in terms of the skills they've gained and what they've learned. These findings will be shared on the Akin Collective's blog along with the

participants' spoken word poems and snippets of their journal entries. These stories will also be shared with media partners for online and print such as Diaspora Dialogues.

