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**Curator calls Scarborough, “A Hotbed” of “High Art”  
at Nuit Blanche 2019**

*According to Scaberian slang, the celebration of Queens and Kings was so “Truuuu” and “Live.” Did perceptions change overnight?*

**Toronto, Ontario, October 6, 2019** – As the fearless curator behind an exhibition of contemporary art titled, “Queens and Kings,” Ashley McKenzie-Barnes declares something most Torontonians don’t realize – that Scarborough is actually “the forefront of arts and culture without getting credit for it.” Tonight, was different though. First, more than 1.2 million visitors are expected to participate in these adventures of art appreciation. Next, on a sleepless night where the City transformed into one massive public gallery space, Scarborough represented loud and proud.

High school collective, the Mary Ward Steampunks, made it their mission to counter negative stereotypes of the Borough with positive impressions. Their data visualization experiments occupied the Scarborough Civic Centre Public Library. One project used old school methods such as chalk and marker to collect data. Students built a 3-panelled wooden booth to voice opinions. On one side, a pastel coloured wall of ribbons showed positive responses. On the other side painted black, responses written in chalk reflected common misconceptions. It was also no surprise, art revellers waxed poetic about Scarborough’s deep and diverse food culture.

Another art work called “Handshack,” by Marites Carino demonstrated a “tactile conversation” with hands. It was installed on the second floor of Scarborough Town Centre Mall – two unassuming strangers get acquainted through touching hands, without visual cues. The set up resembles two photo booths, and an open space in-between. The hands are exposed and the subsequent dance they play through tapping, grasping, and handholding is projected onto an overhead screen.

The other art works were some of the best I’ve seen all year, and it was definitely worth the painstaking commute on the TTC to get there.

And, final word on Scarborough Slang: “Truuuu” means something that makes sense (more U’s for further emphasis), and “Live” refers to a situation that is exciting.

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