



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, May 19, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Brightening Barriers* exhibition returns for third year, bringing local art to downtown Barrie patios**

Barrie, ON—Nine restaurant patios in Barrie's downtown now have temporary art installations displayed on their patio fencing as part of the *Brightening Barriers* public art project, which pairs local and regional artists with downtown businesses. The exhibition is on display until September 30, 2023.

"*Brightening Barriers* was originally organized with an aim to relieve the physical separation necessary during the pandemic; turning a "barrier" of imposed separation into a collective artistic experience," says Stephannie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Development. "As we head into the third year of this program, this exhibition has evolved to become a celebrated and highly anticipated annual event in downtown Barrie."

As part of the 2023 exhibition, there are six new works, and three works that have been in previous *Brightening Barriers* exhibitions (legacy works). Also new to the program is a partnership with the MacLaren Art Centre's education team that led to the development of a youth mentorship opportunity, where ten youth were mentored by two professional artists to create a collaborative work of art for the exhibition.

The participating downtown patios and featured artworks in 2023 are:

- Bohemia – *Window Watching* by Marne Grahlman
- The North – *Downtown Disco* by Vivian Heliotis
- P_zza – *Hearts of the City* by Monica Loney
- Groovy Tuesdays Bistro – *FREE!* by MacLaren Youth
- Flying Monkeys Craft Brewery – *Ultra Pose* by Neil Smith
- McReilly's Public House – *Fishbowl* by Michael Ciesielski
- North Country – *The Land Between Rama and Barrie I & II* by The Birdbath Collaboration (2021 legacy work)
- Kensington Burger Bar – *It's a Dog's Life* by Christina Luck (2021 legacy work)
- Michael & Marion's – *Garden Party* by PRNT Collective (2022 legacy work)

The *Brightening Barriers* initiative has been recognized with [awards](#) from the International Economic Development Council for Excellence in Neighbourhood Development and an Honourable Mention from the Economic Development Council of Ontario.

Brightening Barriers is organized by the Barrie Public Art Committee. To learn more about works on display as part of this project, visit "[Brightening Barriers](#)" at barrie.ca/PublicArt.

The *Brightening Barriers* project was made possible by several sponsors: Downtown Barrie BIA, Flying Monkeys Craft Brewery, Joan and Bob Gilroy, Jackson's Toyota, Liz and Barry Peacock, Podhradsky Medicine Professional Corporation and Royal Homes.



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– 30 –

For more information, please contact:

Emily O'Brien
Communications Advisor
Emily.obrien@barrie.ca
705-627-0796