

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

City of Toronto Announces First Successful Candidate for the Inaugural ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence (AiR) Program

(TORONTO, ON. May 17, 2022) The City of Toronto is pleased to announce that Maria Hupfield is the first successful candidate for the inaugural ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence (AiR) Program.

For her residency, Maria will be working with the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Urban Forestry branch bringing her creative force to bear in exploring and highlighting perception of and pressures on Toronto's ravines.

This residency will result in a public facing project whose form will be defined through the residency process and will be an opportunity to expand and build on Hupfield's current work with the Don Valley River, and the Credit Valley at the University of Mississauga where she teaches, work that is grounded in conversations on and with water. The artist will be embedded within the Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) division, working alongside staff, studying their work, how it relates to the public and to her own artistic practice which centers lived experience and embodied knowledge. Activities will include meeting with and attending regular scheduled outings with the PFR team, ongoing onsite conversations and walks with local mentors, advisors, artists, Knowledge Keepers and experts.

In October 2021, three City divisions were shortlisted, and an Open Call to Artists for Expressions of Interest was circulated. There was a tremendous response, with the program receiving 66 artist submissions across the 3 City sections. Artists were asked to submit artist statements (and qualifications) specific to one of the departments. Artists were allowed to submit to more than one department. The AiR Selection panel selected an artist and host department matched by the most compelling alignment of artistic concern and departmental interest.

Toronto, often called a "City within a Park," is home to one of the largest urban ravine systems in the world, extending over 300 km and covering 17 percent of Toronto's land area. Toronto's ravines are rich in biodiversity, providing vital habitat for wildlife and ecosystem services, and intersect with a diverse array of cultures and communities who use and perceive ravines in equally diverse ways. Climate change and the effects of urbanization, such as increased use of these areas, are significantly impacting our natural systems. Through this project, in support of Toronto's Ravine Strategy, PFR hopes to showcase the benefits of our ravines, the impacts we have on our ravines, and the ongoing commitment of staff, volunteers, partners and residents to preserving and improving this invaluable resource. Hupfield's work within the City division will help develop creative approaches to sustainably celebrate these spaces and encourage recognition and respect for nature throughout Toronto.

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The ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence program has the goal of bringing visibility to the arts as a significant civic process; creating lasting impact on departmental practices, improved relations between civil servants and citizens, increased visibility for marginalized populations and a meaningful integration of art into the everyday business of city building.



About Maria Hupfield:

Maria Hupfield (she/her) is an artist and transdisciplinary maker working with Industrial felt at the intersection of performance art, design and sculpture; an Assistant Professor in Indigenous Performance and Digital Arts, and Canadian Research Chair in Transdisciplinary Indigenous Arts, Director / Lead Artist of the Indigenous Creation Studio, Department of Visual Studies / English and Drama, at the University of Toronto Mississauga. Her work with industrial felt, performance forms, and present-day materials crosses boundaries and operates at the intersection of Anishinaabek cultural knowledge / methodologies and Western based art practices. She is Canadian like her white settler father, and Anishinaabe like her late mother, and belongs to Wasauksing First Nation, Ontario, Canada. Her work in the institution seeks to promote accountability to Indigenous people; and looks to model new ways of connecting with Indigenous communities through arts-based practices; and

establish respectful ongoing relationships with Indigenous peoples, language, and land.

Hupfield has exhibited extensively including the solo exhibition *Nine Years Towards the Sun*, at the Heard Museum, Phoenix (2019–20), following her first major touring solo exhibition with monograph, *The One Who Keeps on Giving*, organized by The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto (2017–18). She has presented her work at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; the BRIC House Gallery in Brooklyn, New York; the Bronx Museum, New York; Gibney Dance, New York; the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Site Santa Fe; Panoply Performance Lab, Brooklyn; the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; and Galerie de L'UQAM in Montreal; with work in private and public collections including: the Art Gallery of Ontario, National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa; the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian, New York; the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art; Forge Projects, New York; and the Nordamerika Native Museum in Zurich, Switzerland, amongst others. Hupfield is a current 2020-2022 inaugural Borderlands Fellow for the project *Breaking Protocol* at The Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School and the Center for the Imagination in the

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Borderlands at Arizona State University and was awarded the Hnatyshyn Mid-career Award for Outstanding Achievement in Canada 2018. She is the founder of the 7th Generation Image Makers, at Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, co-owns Native Art Department International with her husband artist Jason Lujan.

About the ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence (AiR) Program.

The ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence (AiR) Program supports the three pillars upon which both the 10-year Public Art Strategy and Year of Public Art are built: “Creativity + Community—Everywhere.” The program gets to the heart of embedding creativity in Toronto as a core element in city building. To be piloted with Toronto’s Year of Public Art 2021–2022, in its first year this program will embed a professional contemporary artist working within a City of Toronto department.

The model proposed for the ArtworxTO Legacy Artist in Residence (AiR) Program, is entirely new to Toronto with a centralized commitment to recognizing and deploying the creative strength of artists within the business of running of City services.

Artists working alongside City staff will bring new ways of thinking about the work that is done within the City. The Artist in Residence term will range from 12 to 18 months, depending on the project timeline that works best for the artist and host department, working collaboratively. The term will include 60 hours (across the first 3-6 months) working alongside a department host in a period of embedded research. Following this, the artist will embark on development of a public-facing project, which may take any number of forms.

The City of Toronto would like to thank the Legacy Artist in Residence Program’s Founding Partner, Partners in Art, for their continued support of projects like this. Partners in Art is a not-for-profit which promotes and funds contemporary art in Canada, and whose volunteer members value education and collaboration.

ArtworxTO: Toronto’s Year of Public Art 2021–2022, kicks off the City’s new 10-Year of Public Art Strategy and signals Toronto’s renewed commitment to public art. Read the City’s 10-Year Public Art Strategy at www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/92e1-Toronto-Public-Art-Strategy-2020-2030.pdf.

More information about ArtworxTO: Toronto’s Year of Public Art 2021–2022, including an interactive map of Toronto’s extensive collection of public art, is available at www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/history-art-culture/public-art/year-of-public-art/

Toronto is home to more than 2.9 million people whose diversity and experiences make this great city Canada’s leading economic engine and one of the world’s most diverse and livable cities. As the fourth largest city in North America, Toronto is a global leader in technology,

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finance, film, music, culture, and innovation, and consistently places at the top of international rankings due to investments championed by its government, residents and businesses. For

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Media contact: daniel@acteam.ca

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