

artsp_ce



Bronwyn Butterfield and Charlotte Nolin in front of *Vamp for my Cápán* (2022)

ANNUAL REPORT 2022: Building and community

I - MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

My first direct involvement with Artspace Inc. was through its unique full building art experience, celebrating three decades as a cultural hub. The event was billed as **Lost in Artspace**. The event was for me and, I suspect, for others attending, an awakening to what a full building of art creation looks, feels, and sounds like. Anchoring the arts in the revitalization of Winnipeg's historical district was a bold social investment that shaped the narrative of this district, and the Winnipeg arts scene in general.



I reflect on this start, in part because I'm at the end of a 6-year mandate as a proud board member of Artspace Inc. Remembering **Lost in Artspace** is especially poignant because in the middle of my mandate our Artspace Board had to grapple with a reality that felt like it might prematurely end this 100-year dream. The impact of the pandemic was especially devastating for social capital assets and in particular, art focused ones. Art-focused not-for-profit organizations are accustomed to being vulnerable -- through our funding

model and through our democratic member dynamic. We wear who we are and what we do on our sleeves. We democratize available financial and human resources made to the benefit of our mission. The pandemic exposed and highlighted our vulnerabilities and required discussions around "what if" scenarios that potentially meant **Artspace would be lost**.

Fortunately, those scenarios were not what played out. Instead, we saw unprecedented funding from the Federal Government, and from the Provincial Government through the Manitoba Arts Council. We are extremely grateful.

We are all aware the stress points of the pandemic still exist. But I remain optimistic about the fundamental strength of the arts community in Winnipeg. As Artspace gathers itself to maintain its anchor in the community, I am confident that the Board has the necessary skills and dedication to maintain and build on its history and its partnerships.

Over the last year we undertook a Strategic Planning exercise with the guidance of Blueprint. We are proud to submit the 2023 through to 2027 Artspace Strategic Plan to the members, for their approval. I hope it reflects our sincere desire to be an example of community building. If done right, our organization will build on our history towards a more profound and diverse future.

My time on the Artspace board might be at an end, but my time at Artspace is not. I look forward to more Winnipeg film makers premiers at Cinematheque, more vernisages at Platform, more First Friday open studios on the 6th floor, more Drayway Art Lounges, more reasons to step into the building and more completely become immersed the perspective of the many Winnipeg artists who have something to say about the human experience.

In closing, I do want to thank all volunteer board members for their time, expertise, and willingness to engage. They deserve to be named, as these are not just names, they are people, who also have numerous demands of their time, both professionally and personally, and yet they feely give so that Artspace may thrive. My colleagues of the last year are, Evan Sinclair, Johanna Chipman, Philip Bobby, Jaimz Asmundson, Brian Drader, Chim Undi, Richard Bars, Luc Fournier, Louise Smith, Joe Kaltornyk and Evan Taylor. I also want to thank the small team of Artspace staff who continue to amaze us by accomplishing so much with so little. Thank you Eric Plamondon, Mahri White, Dave Weibe, Lois Hogg, and Kelly Campbell. And a special shout out to my good friend Eric, for getting me involved in the first place. It's been a wonderful journey.

One last thought. I believe our society needs art. There are no great spaces without Art. I hope the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and the Federal Government recognize that. We all need to feel confident in reminding them loudly and often. Artspace was born out of the three levels of government believing in an idea brought to them by artists. I am not an artist, but I am a lifelong supporter of artists speaking truth to government. We need more art, we need more artists, and we need more Artspace.

Linda McFadyen
President

II - ABOUT ARTSPACE

MANDATE

To improve the efficiency, effectiveness and capacity of Manitoba arts and culture organizations by:

- i) providing facilities at below market value rates to house their operations and
- ii) providing shared administrative and management services to support their operations.

MISSION

Artspace creates space for arts and culture to flourish. Through low-cost facilities and shared administrative services, we play a vital role in supporting the health of Manitoban arts and cultural organizations.

VALUE STATEMENT

Artspace embraces collaboration and innovation as it strives to provide stability for Manitoban arts and cultural organizations and practitioners.

PROFILE

Artspace is an influential presence in the lives of our creative community. Standing at the epicenter of Winnipeg's historic Exchange District, this unique example of turn-of-the-century architecture is home to dozens of artists and art organizations... and therein lays our greatest strength. Artspace is people.

Inspired by the conviction that community would be enriched with an arts centre, one ideally located in the historic warehouse district, community leaders joined Winnipeg's \$90 million Historic Area Development Program in the early 1980's. These cultural sector visionaries imagined a literary and visual arts centre, one that could be built in the then-vacant Gault building.

In 1986 these creative sector leaders saw their vision realized when the doors opened that October. And now, over thirty years later, Artspace remains a leader in Winnipeg's arts community as visual and media artists, writers, publishers, musicians, actors, photographers and other cultural workers develop their respective crafts and strengthen Manitoba's reputation as a creative community equal to any other.

As the creative community continue to thrive in Manitoba, Artspace plays an important support role across all artistic disciplines.

Our core objective of providing a 'safe and accessible space' for artists and arts organizations to explore their individual artistic visions remains one of Arstpace's fundamental principles. Art making within an accommodating community environment has allowed artists and arts organizations to focus on their art.

As a 'centre for the pursuit of distinctive, experimental, and artistic creations' Artspace holds up the value of making - literally and figuratively - space for art in the lives of all people.

The relationship between Artspace (the organization) and its member arts organizations is deeply symbiotic. Our organization's strengths are operational and organizational; it exists to provide administrative support, guidance, a collective voice for the creative community and a physical hub for the community at large. For their part, the strength of member arts organizations lays in the making of art and allowing it to reach an audience. Thus the reach of Artspace is not confined to the four walls of the building itself.



Artspace will remain focused on ensuring that the arts are a central part of the creative sectors' evolution. By seeking innovation that allows artists to continue to produce, and by laying the groundwork for organizations to succeed, we'll continue to extend our reach and promote the Artspace model to the benefit of the whole community and existing and emerging arts organizations.

In cooperation with other arts organizations and artists, we will continue to animate our space to attract more people, promote community gatherings for artists, arts organizations and art lovers, and encourage greater diversity among the tenants and in the community at large.

Our over-arching goal is to continue being an inclusive, relevant and supportive place and a strong voice for Manitoba's vibrant creative sector. Artspace remains a bold and audacious project fostering stability in smaller and mid-sized art organizations so they may democratize their art offerings.

III- PREAMBULE

Artspace's current strategic plan and associated action plan has guided the work of the organization over the last year. Nonetheless, in 2018 we could not have predicted the last three years of global pandemic. Thus, the work of the organization has not dogmatically followed the strategic plan, but rather has used it as a focus for activities that align with our mandate. This is why the plan has a set of goals grouped under three axes of activity. They exist in a way that allowed Artspace to be responsive to threats and opportunities over the last year. We have committed to reporting back to members on advancements in each strategic axes by structuring our annual report according to the strategic axes and its goals. We are happy to continue this tradition that also now a standard of transparency and accountability.

What follows is an overview of activities undertaken by Artspace between September 1st, 2021 and August 31st, 2022. This report is has grouped activities along strategic goals (identified in orange text) and its larger strategic axes, which are:

- i. Operational sustainability
- ii. Financial sustainability
- iii. Sustainable engagement

We offer this annual report as a fair representation of the activities of the year.



Drayway Art Lounge Summer 2022

IV- ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO STRATEGIC AXES

1- OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Under the management of Artspace Inc, the Gault building is a well-maintained historic building in the Exchange District, serving as a hub for the arts. The building is 120 years old and was renovated in 1984. Meaning it has some original elements that need restoration (windows) and some renovated elements that will soon need capital attention. There is also some modernization elements that would make the building more accessible (accessible washroom for example). Artspace must not only be responsive, but also engaged in long-term maintenance, restoration, replacement and or upgrades, to elements of the building. Since we have a 99-year lease, we are stewards of the building and we are active participants. Ultimately, the building is a provincial asset, through the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation (MCCC). Therefore, major work is done in collaboration with the Government of Manitoba.

- ✓ a full building assessment identifying and prioritizing immediate, medium or long term capital needs;

In 2018 the Government of Manitoba did a building condition report. It generated a list of needed capital investments. No critical work was identified. This is not a detailed building assessment, but it is the beginning of a process. We are now working with the MCCC to prioritize and coordinate needed work, so that the government of Manitoba can budget for these works. These priorities are now integrated on a tracking sheet of all MCCC assets. It is worth noting that there is consensus that the restoration of the windows is the most urgent need. The Government of Manitoba has already done an assessment of each window in the building, and has estimated the cost of restoring all the windows. The Government of Manitoba is considering this project, and we are hopeful that it receives budget approval in the near future.

- a clear fundraising plan for the establishment of a capital reserve

We recognize that the Government of Manitoba will not fund all identified capital needs. As such it is important that Artspace establish a capital reserve.

Artspace has spent the last 5 years developing fundraising capacity. This includes year end donation campaigns, and event based fundraising. This fundraising has resulted in some increased revenue but the revenue has been needed to sustain programming / support services / operational costs that are not self-sufficient. Said simply, funds raised were not available to place in a capital reserve.

Artspace has implemented a rent increase policy that will set a yearly rent increase between 0 and 4%. The immediate goal is to ensure the rent revenue covers the operational costs of the building. We also believe that it would be in good practice to set some of the rent revenue into a capital reserve. Due to the pandemic, the board decided to freeze the rent increase for a second year, to alleviate what is already high financial pressure on art organizations members. Nonetheless, it is the plans of Artspace to formalize a capital reserve policy that will include dedicating rent revenue to this reserve. We can expect this to be fully implemented in the upcoming years.

- ✓ continued maintenance of building features, seek opportunities to restore, upgrade or replace, building systems.

It is critical that Artspace continue respecting annual safety inspections. Consequently, we continue to respond to fire safety evaluations. We can predict that a building of its age will always have a mix of these maintenance repairs every year. We will continue to budget accordingly, and thus respond to needs as they are identified.

Such a project involved the restoration of the common area floors on the third story of the building. The areas with wood flooring have had some irregular growths for the last decade or so. Such a growth continued to grow in the entrance of the Winnipeg Film Group production centre. It became a hazard for patrons of the production centre. As such, Artspace investigated the cause. We discovered floating joists. We remedied the issue, and at the same time restored the common area floors. Similar work would be required on the main floor and 2nd story of the building.

There has been an increase in vandalism to the building requiring continued counter work. This includes a sidewalk level window being broken. As well as graffiti in the vestibules and Drayway. Since these spaces have been artified, there is added pressure to not let damage and vandalism sit too long. We will continue to respond to vandalism with needed repairs.

The Manitoba Art Council made funding available through a pandemic relief fund. Artspace applied for a variety of projects. Included in the projects was the replacement of all bathroom door knobs into door handles. This is an accessibility improvement, but also a hygienic option for users. We also removed all key access. Finally, we also took the final step of making all washrooms in Artspace non-gendered washrooms.



Further funds were made available to visual artists tenants of the 6th and 4th floor. Since safety of workspace has meant that doors are often closed, we wanted to ensure that even with a closed door, their art practice can interact with community. Thus we commissioned every visual art studio to transform their door into a representation of the artists that work on the other side of that door. Meaning the 6th floor is visually a work space for visual

artists with an eclectic practice. The 6th floor also is home to Take Home, Winnipeg's only BIPOC artist run centre. We decided to give them funding not only for their door, but also to do a mural utilizing the whole wall in the hallway where their space is located. We couldn't be more proud of the result, an original art piece by Bria Fernandes. It is a way of supporting, valuing and investing into our members while making building upgrades.

This approach has become the core of our efforts through the Summer Art Internship. With funding through the Canada Summer Works program we were able to hire visual artist Kelly Campbell this past summer. A printmaker whose art practice often explores issues of accessibility, Kelly Campbell was interested in exploring the relationship the building and its infrastructure has with different treaty territories. The result is an art transformation of the elevator. A feature that allows the building to be accessible, but is a considerable utilizer of energy. The project was launched publicly along with ceremony performed by elder and Two Spirit icon Charlotte Nolin and with the local Member of Parliament Leah Gazhan. The following is the artist statement related to the piece:

An elevator is a key element in making multi-story buildings accessible, and as such is a key space, a frequently used space. Pressing the elevator button to rise or lower oneself to some of the creative spaces of **Artspace**, is an act that requires electric power. Every time you press the button. In order to bring awareness to where the electric power comes from, printmaker **Kelly Campbell** transformed the elevator cabin into a broken diptych, or rather a before and after homage to the lakes of Manitoba's north.

Three panels depict the blue, Sturgeon and White Fish filled lakes; which were the backbone of many life-filled ecosystems. An ecosystem that including many Indigenous communities like South Indian Lake. On the other side of the cabin are three panels depicting lake life post hydro dam construction, and the associated water flow controls. Waters that are now murky, algae filled and mercury poisoned. Campbell borrowed patterns from the iconic tin tiles found on the ceilings of Artspace as well as the historical elevator gates, and reimagined them as fish nets and water ripples in order to present a cohesive art piece. In so doing, Campbell made a direct connection between the north and the space where the elevator rider finds themselves. Plunged in the waters, for as long as it takes to get to their destination, we hope that it gives people time to reflect on privilege, natural resources, historical and contemporary colonial structural decision processes.

We hope that this is but one way we can acknowledge the structural injustice that led to some of the privileges we benefit from daily. It is one way of making land acknowledgements, as the land of the North was sacrificed for the economic prosperity of Winnipeg. Of which, the financial district is the embodiment of that philosophy of colonial growth. It is only the start of a conversation, and hopefully inspires riders to find out more. As such we want to acknowledge and thank Wa Ni Ska Tan for the wealth of information, research, and collection of stories on the affects of Hydro dams in Manitoba that they offer freely. We would also like to acknowledge and thank Martha Street Studio, where most of the print work was created, as well as the Interchurch Council on Hydropower for the sturgeon stencil.



✓ clear, relevant and up-to-date policies for membership and building use.

The pandemic meant that policies vis-à-vis the use and operation of the building by the public and by tenants was a dynamic thing. We endeavored to communicate in a transparent and timely manner. Our priority became making the building a safe and secure space for tenants to work.

Over the last year we took on the task of updating and consolidating Artspace policies, and have one coherent document with all Artspace policies. These policies, along side our bylaws, is what governs the decision making process for Artspace Inc. The work was accomplished by a committee of the board, and the resulting work was adopted unanimously by the whole board of directors. At the beginning of the year all tenants received an up-to-date copy of the consolidated policies of Artspace along side an updated copy of their license.

Artspace board and staff took part in a workshop offered by Vitoria Steele that explored issues related to Safer Spaces. This allowed for a better understanding of our role and how policies relate to our responsibilities and our values.

Artspace board and staff took part in a land acknowledgement workshop offered by Aimée Craft. The result is the development of a multi-pronged approach in order to deepen our relationship with the land and with nibi (water). This is in addition to the four public art pieces that speak to our relationship to this land and its multi-millenia of history.



The Executive Director took part in Mawa Chihitotaak, a Métis summit of art and history offered in partnership through the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Our current Executive Director is a Red River Métis citizen and an active member of both the Métis communities and Two Spirit communities.

The board and staff undertook the task of having an up to date Strategic plan. This five year plan is being presented to members at the 2023 AGM. In order to have a contemporary strategic plan Artspace hired Blueprint in order to guide the process but also in order to consult with members and stakeholders in a completely anonymous way. Questions and surveys went out in order to gather information. Artspace staff and board members took part in a workshop in order to extract the elements that populated the strategic plan and the associated action plan. Both are anchored in nearly four decades of Artspace existence. But its also a reflection of our current threats and opportunities, our current reality. It is a reflection of us and our members.

2- FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

During the pandemic, the financial sustainability of Artspace and the art sector in general was in large part attributable to relief funds made available by both the Federal Government and the Provincial Government. We are extremely grateful to both. We are also reminded that the arts is not a constitutionally designated responsibility. As it is a social benefit that crosses many functions of society, we need all levels of government to invest in the arts and thus the well being of our society. We also know we need to do our part in leveraging funds from a variety of sources. Currently, less than 10% of Artspace's total budget is from Government Sources. Over 80% of our revenues are auto-generated through fees for services. As auto-generated revenues continue to rise, operational funding from the Manitoba Arts Council has remained unchanged in nearly four decades.

✓ a plan for relevant financially viable programming

Artspace continues to offer below-market rates for its services. The primary service Artspace offers remains to be caretaker of space for small to medium size not-for-profit organizations. The rent at Artspace is well below market rate. It is set to reflect the operational costs of the building. With a new rent-increase policy, Artspace will adjust rent to build a capital reserve, as the 122 year old building was renovated nearly 40 years ago, and will continue to need capital investments.

Artspace also offers various support programs. What is commonly referred to as Member Services, consists primarily of use of a photocopier /scanner and postage machine. These services are set as per-use rates and are strictly cost-recovery. Artspace also operates a boardroom, the use of which is free to members.

There are a variety of punctual group services that Artspace undertakes for its members. We regularly send out surveys to see if there is a need or desire for certain services. This has resulted in the organization of a yearly flu clinic. Meaning that tenants can book an appointment for a flu shoot offered in the boardroom via the services of a community clinic. This has become a yearly valued service. We also offer a recycling program. Battery recycling is an ongoing service. This year we also organized an electronic recycling program. This resulted in many organizations being able to free themselves of dated equipment. Similarly, we organized a shredding day. By pooling together, this has resulted in preferred rates. All this services are offered as a cost-recovery basis. Exceptionally this year, we continued to offer pandemic related equipment. We made available k95 masks and rapid covid test for free. We also offered bacteria killing wipes and alcohol based hand disenfectant.

Artspace does continue to look for opportunities to answer the needs of the arts sector. As these opportunities present themselves, we will ensure that they are financially viable, and do not require cross-subsidization.

Artspace was able to secure the installation of cell antennas by Bell/MTS. This represents a twenty year rent contract. We were also able to secure funding for the renovations of the Drayway, as the rooftop will no longer be available due to the presence of two sets of cell antennas.

✓ a plan for future fund raising to support programs



We have a year end individual donor campaign. Taking advantage that Artspace is a registered charity, individual donors can benefit from a tax receipt for their donations. All donations are run through Canada Helps. In 2022 we decided to showcase the 2021 Summer Art Intern's (Tamiko Chase Kavanagh) work by commissioning them to take elements of their boardroom mural for a graphic printed on an apron. An apron to be worn for painting or cooking, both art forms that proved popular during the pandemic. Those who partook in the campaign found a hand written recipe card slipped into the apron pocket. Our little touch to say thank you and to remind that real people are linked to the creation of art.

This year also marked the return of event based fundraisers that are also community engagement projects. We secured corporate sponsorship along with Manitoba Art Council grants in order to take on the second phase of the Drayway renovations. The idea was to highlight the unique historical value of this space by drawing from the architectural features of the space. We also wanted the space to be a semi-outdoor event space. Ready for pop-up events. To test the space out and to launch the renovations, Artspace partnered up with the Exchange District Biz to bring to life Alleyways events once a month during the summer. The first event was a Secret Cinema screening in June, followed by a Drayway lounge with DJ Louie Lovebird, and a final Drayway Lounge and pop up gallery featuring the work of Lyle Kokesch. We featured both Nonsuch and Little Brown Jug beer for patrons to enjoy as they hung out in a unique space, stimulated by architecture and art, and were re-engaging in community building. The events proved popular and were a perfect testing of the space to host events. Since we have hosted a fundraiser for Manitoba Craft Council as well as a dance party during Nuit Blanche. We will continue to utilize the space for the benefit of the arts. We are very grateful to our



partners who believed in the upgrades to the Drayway to the benefit of community. This includes Manitoba Art Council, Bell/MTS, Johnson Group, the city of Winnipeg (and particularly councilor Vivian Santos) Caisse Group Financier, Derek Johnson, 5468796 Architecture. We are also thankful to the many volunteers who re-committed to helping us out during these events.

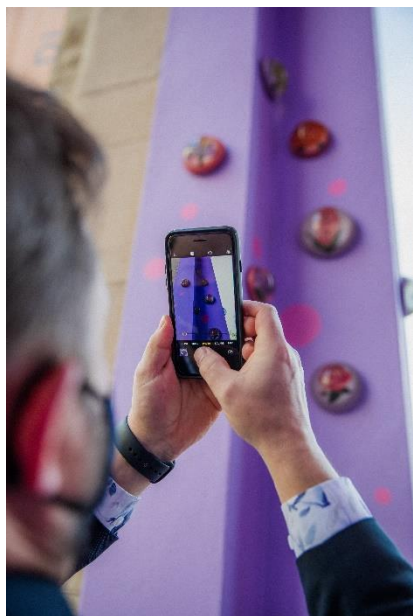
3- SUSTAINABLE ENGAGEMENT

- ☐ more Artspace without putting the organization at financial risk
- ☐ enhanced relevance to a broader and younger clientele (including the benjamin art organizations)
- ☐ continue relevance to arts organizations and their members
- ☐ continued role as a key leader in the arts and as an active Exchange District community member

Part of Artspace's pledge to sustainable engagement is to make the asset that is Artspace accessible to emerging and independent artists / creators. We continued to do so by making our spaces available for photo, film shoots and other independent artistic projects. There were commercial shoots where this represents a revenue generating opportunity, but it's minor. Its mostly helping the film industry. But for independent creators, access comes with no charge. Many have taken advantage of this, and we are always thrilled to see our spaces reflected in the creative output of local artists.

Artspace has a presence on social media (facebook, Instagram and twitter). It is useful in terms of communicating with patrons directly. We also repost social media offerings from our members as well as a variety of art organizations.

We continue to be engaged members of the Exchange District. Meaning we participate in Exchange District initiatives. From AGMs and consultation meeting, to special projects.



We recognize that through the pandemic, the public was not accessing creative spaces the same way. Entering buildings was sometimes illegal, sometimes anxiety inducing. But the appetite for art did not diminish. In many cases, it augmented. Thus, Artspace decided to undertake a significant public art project. Under the banner of The vesti-art project, we were able to transform the two entrance vestibules into public art. We discussed our vision with fabulous organizations like the Exchange District Biz, Johnston Group and Caisse Groupe Financier and they quickly supported the project financially. We sought out two young artists to conceptualize a public art piece in each vestibule. Artspace helped them research and test ways of transferring their medium into public art, something that

is less common with beadwork and embroidery. The result is a young métis woman, Bronwyn Butterfield not only making an art statement, but also an Indigenous narrative statement, with her piece Vamp for my Càpàn. Similarly, James Turowski allows for some queer art and queer narrative to speak loudly and beautifully with Queer in Bloom. The art pieces were an instant success. Placed in the vestibules, they also serve as a reminder that you are entering a creative space when coming to Artspace. Or while leaving, you are reminded of the importance of art to connect with a public. We were also honored to have Two Spirit Elder Charlotte Nolin attend the art unveiling and offer her knowledge and perspective which elevated the importance of both pieces. The success of this project has already set us upon dreaming of future public art pieces that Artspace could undertake with support from corporate sponsors. Hint... take a walk through the Drayway to get a sense of things to come.

V – WHAT ENDS ONLY BEGINS

This is a report on what happened during our last fiscal year. However, we have already accomplished much since. Proof that one can have a foot in the past, a foot in the present and an eye for what lays ahead. We truly believe the arts is on an upward momentum. We must work hard to renew and build new relationships with community and its members. Leadership has changed. Membership has changed. Society has changed. But the value of art remains unchanged. And for art to truly be a societal asset we need space for it to be created from, and to be placed in public, for all who choose to experience its power. We look forward to building community through art assets for which we are custodians of, on behalf of all Manitobans.

VI- BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, FUNDERS, AND SUPPORTERS

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Linda McFadyen | President |
| Evan Sinclair | Vice-President |
| Philip Bobby | Treasurer |
| Johanna Chipman | Secretary |

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Luc Fournier | Director |
| Louise Smith | Director |
| Chim Undi | Director |
| Brian Drader | Director |
| Evan Taylor | Director |
| Richard Bars | Director |
| Joe Kaltornyk | Director |
| Jaimz Asmundson | Director |

Staff

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Eric Plamondon | Executive Director |
| Mahri White | Executive Coordinator |
| Dave Wiebe | Building Superintendent |
| Lois Hogg | Weekend maintenance |
| Kelly Campbell | Summer Art Intern |

Funders and Supporters

The Government of Canada
The Manitoba Arts Council
The Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation
The City of Winnipeg
The Winnipeg Foundation
The Exchange District Biz
Johnston Group
Bell/MTS
Caisse Financial Group
5468796 Architecture
Nonsuch Brewery
Little Brown Jug

And community members, citizens, artists, art patrons, volunteers, who support Artspace in so many different ways.

Thank you - Miigwetch - Merci