



SUSTAINABLE  
CREATIVE SPACES  
ORANGEVILLE / CALEDON



MAY 14, 2013 SESSION SUMMARY

HOSTED BY HILLS OF HEADWATERS TOURISM ASSOCIATION

ARTS  ONTARIO



## ABOUT ARTSBUILD ONTARIO

ArtsBuild Ontario is the only organization in Ontario dedicated to realizing long-term solutions to building, managing and financing the sustainable arts facilities needed in Ontario's communities.

Together with industry, non-profit and government partners, ArtsBuild jointly and cost-effectively develops and delivers innovative tools, services and resources to help over 700 arts organizations across Ontario construct and operate the facilities they need.

ArtsBuild's organizational model is one of collaboration and partnership. By forging relationships with leading non-profit and private sector partners, ArtsBuild delivers programs surrounding topics such as capital project planning, facilities management, energy efficiency, sustainability and finance.

In 2012, ArtsBuild Ontario received significant support from the Government of Canada and The Ontario Trillium Foundation to implement a suite of innovative tools, services and resources around capital project planning, facilities management, accessibility, energy efficiency, sustainability, training and professional development and finance.

### **Questions about this document?**

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# PREFACE

## ARTSBUILD'S 2013 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS ABOUT SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE SPACES

In 2013, ArtsBuild visited eight communities across Ontario to involve local leaders in conversations about the successes they are achieving around creating the spaces they need for vibrant cultural activity in their communities and the challenges they are facing in developing and maintaining these spaces. The sessions were structured around three areas that relate to developing and maintaining arts facilities: Building, Managing and Financing. With provided discussion prompts and seed questions, participants seated at tables of six to eight were encouraged to talk with each other, in a conversational format, and provide their perspectives on each of these topics. As well, ArtsBuild will share the innovative approaches it has been developing and engage the communities in assessing the relevance these hold for local arts organizations.

Hosted by ArtsBuild, and when feasible, local municipal departments supporting culture and community arts councils, these by-invitation community engagement sessions involved leaders from local arts organizations, arts volunteers, libraries, museums, universities and colleges as well as representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Community participation was captured in a variety of ways, including a graphic summary and recording with a live scribe pen. A final report summarizing the session conversations will be distributed to all participants in 2014.

## WHY DID ARTSBUILD VISIT ORANGEVILLE?

In 2011/2012 ArtsBuild Ontario partnered with Municipal Cultural Planning Inc. on a series of municipal cultural planning workshops that were customized by the participating communities. Municipal Cultural Planning Inc. and ArtsBuild Ontario had the pleasure of visiting Caledon as they hosted a session for their community. The turnout from arts organizations and engaged community members was outstanding and proved to be an area of growth for the community. We learned about the needs and the thoughts of arts organizations as this session, so it was a natural fit to return to the area for a discussion on arts facilities.

This time around we partnered with The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association and through them we put together this session on Sustainable Creative Spaces in Orangeville.

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

ArtsBuild is providing a draft Session Summary for participants in each community to review to ensure we have correctly and completely captured their thoughts. The purpose of this Session Summary is to record the key ideas, needs and wants that were articulated during the session. We have arranged this document by discussion topic: Building, Managing and Financing. Highlights of each discussion can be found starting on page 6 for quick reference. Noteworthy ideas presented by the participants in the full report are indicated with this light bulb icon.



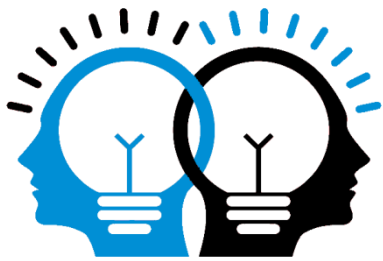
## NEXT STEPS

All eight Session Summaries will be available in the ArtsBuild Resource Library, with links to case studies and ArtsBuild programs and services that could assist communities.

In Spring 2014, we will also assemble the Session Summaries into a document that will be presented to funders. It will identify the key themes and common threads amongst all eight communities. This document will allow ArtsBuild to look at the discussions holistically and provide funders with a baseline for the common concerns and needs affecting arts facilities in Ontario.

## HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS DOCUMENT

PLEASE READ THROUGH THE IMPORTANT WANTS AND NEEDS EXPRESSED BY THOSE WHO ATTENDED THIS SESSION AS THERE IS VALUABLE INFORMATION FOR ALL INVOLVED WITH ARTS AND CULTURE IN ORANGEVILLE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.



Great ideas from participants are indicated with this light bulb symbol.

Areas where ArtsBuild programs and services can be of assistance to you are indicated this with this icon and the text is highlighted in blue.

**ABO CAN HELP!**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With an engaged arts and culture sector we knew that this session would be full of great conversation that could provide us insight into the challenges and the successes of arts organizations and their facilities.

Of the 48 individuals invited to attend, 17 attended this session. While this was a smaller group than other communities, we had strong and experienced voices in the room from arts facilities in the area that were able to provide examples of best practices and lessons learned.

A key need that appeared in all of the conversations was properly identifying spaces in the community. By knowing what spaces exist, the community can then understand what spaces are being underutilized and what spaces are needed. Having the knowledge and the capability to capitalize on spaces that are available could provide an opportunity for revenue generation for organizations. To match these needs would be beneficial for all involved.

During this session ArtsBuild Ontario learned that:



Partnerships have been explored as a way of increasing revenues or developing facilities for the arts organizations.



There is a desire to keep the local arts community thriving and make efforts to retain artists/organizations within the area. Some organizations are required to go to other towns/cities so that they can get the proper space needed for rehearsals.



Like many communities we have visited, there is a need for resource sharing and added expertise on fundraising and revenue generation.

## BUILDING: DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

The discussion around BUILDING surfaced many realistic issues / needs / wants that the community CAN act on. The idea of sharing spaces and partnering occurred over and over in this discussion and it seems to be the key idea of those that were present.

### KEY ISSUES/IDEAS



Town's priority is sports; it always has been. Difficult to change that mentality.



Our local organizations need to evolve, change and merge in order to remain sustainable.



Need an inventory of arts spaces.



Space may be available but it is not affordable.



Need to partner people who have space and those who need space and yet are struggling to afford it.



Schools can be a resource for space. Community arts groups should be able to make sure of school stages – they have sophisticated equipment including AV equipment and media classes, etc.

“The community should take an analysis of where partnerships could be developed before any capital projects to align the needs, have us identify them and then come forward.”



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## MANAGING: DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

The discussion on MANAGING arts facilities focused on managing sustainable facilities, the balance between community and organizational interests and the importance of working together for a common goal.

### KEY ISSUES/IDEAS



Bulk purchasing amongst arts organizations would help with purchasing larger quantities of items that need replacing (i.e. toilets etc.).



We need a venue finding system where you could book your event in advance.

“Organizations shouldn’t have a business without a business plan or sustainability plan.”

## FINANCING: DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

The discussion of FINANCING was an interesting one as many creative avenues were discussed such as accepting stocks, revenue generation through private events and becoming a social enterprise.

### KEY ISSUES/IDEAS



Weddings and other events are popular ways to supplement income.



Need a single organization that raises money for the arts, a “Community Chest” – we have lost that model in Canada.



Need fundraising tips.



There is a real incentive for organizations to accept stocks.

“If arts organizations take out a loan, many require that the Director / Board offer up a personal guarantee. This is a huge hurdle for most organizations.”

# BEST PRACTICES

Many ideas were put forth in the conversations on BUILDING, MANAGING AND FINANCING arts facilities. We encourage Orangeville and the surrounding area arts organizations to continue this discussion and realize some of the ideas presented.

To assist the participants in the arts sector in connecting with one another and to inform you about great arts facilities in Ontario, ArtsBuild has developed a case study series called [Making Spaces for Art](http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/making-spaces-for-art/). Each study focuses on one organization or a related group of organizations, and highlights the exciting steps they took to realize their capital projects.

We have included links to case studies below that we believe will be helpful for Orangeville based on the conversation. We encourage you to visit our website to access the full series at <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/making-spaces-for-art/>. These case studies could be the first step in understanding how you can make the changes needed in your facility!

ArtsBuild's online Resource Library will be launched in 2014 to provide useful examples, best practices and reference material about creative spaces. Following are some resources particularly relevant to Sustainable Creative Spaces: Orangeville.



## REINVENTING FACILITIES & MULTIUSE SPACES

REGISTRY THEATRE, an organization in Kitchener that has repurposed the Waterloo County Registry Office into office, rehearsal, and theatre space, is a great example of reinventing an existing facility and using its space to accommodate a variety of needs. ArtsBuild Ontario has done a short case study on this project and has featured it in The Making Spaces for Art case study series. This case study is located in Appendix C and is also available to read on ArtsBuild's website:

<http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/making-spaces-for-art/>



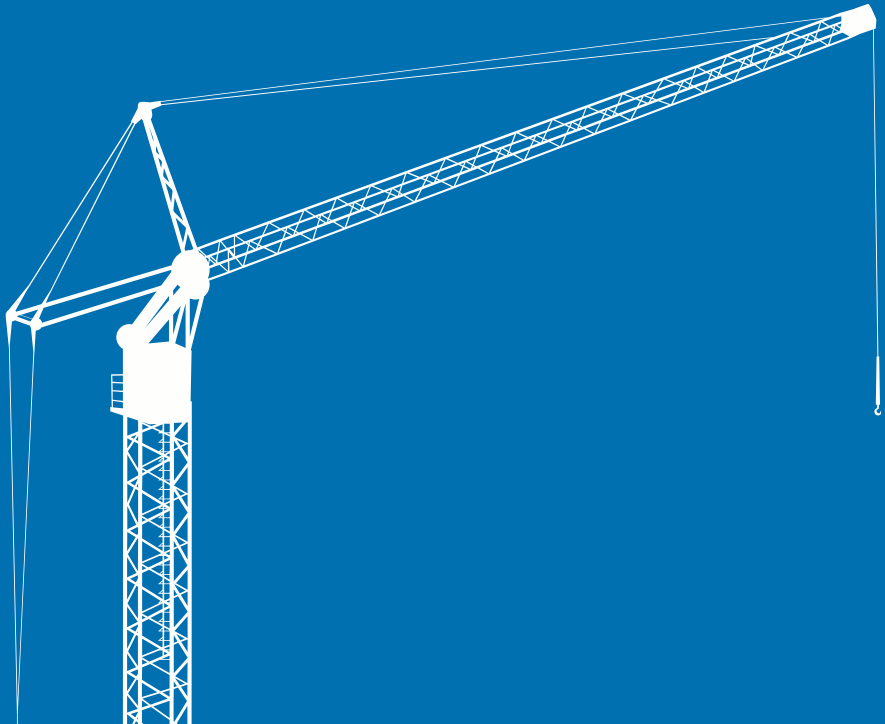
## ACCESS TO RESOURCES

A common need expressed in all conversations was access to resources. ArtsBuild is working hard to be the go-to source for resources related to Building, Managing and Financing arts facilities. Details on our programs and services can be found starting on page 28 of this document or you can go directly to [www.artsbuildontario.ca](http://www.artsbuildontario.ca). If you have questions and / or are looking to improve your skills in areas related to your arts facility, please contact ArtsBuild.

WorkInCulture is the right place to turn to when looking to improve or develop new skills for the arts sector. A partner of ArtsBuild, they provide educational webinars, courses and workshops designed specifically for the cultural sector. [www.workinculture.ca](http://www.workinculture.ca)

Artscape is a resource for arts organizations that are interested in anything related to cultural hubs and community transformation through culture. As a partner of ArtsBuild, they are developing new content and resources available through their newly launched DIY website as a source of information and inspiration to support creative placemaking in your community.

<http://www.artscapediy.org>



BUILDING

## COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Municipalities / Recreation staff are having difficulty working collaboratively with their spaces.
- Municipalities' wants are often different from arts community's needs and wants.
- Municipalities are promoting their available spaces for other activities other than arts.
- Orangeville community supports recreation facilities without arts. Town's priority is sports; it always has been. Everything is set up for sports. Difficult to change that mentality.
- Spaces the community supports are the arena, the community room, and pools.
- Municipalities feel cautious about supporting specific initiatives for fear of backlash from public.
- Municipalities / Government tend to run Mon-Fri, generally not conducive to operating after hours. Arts and Culture tends to peak on evenings and weekends. There's a huge disparity there.
- Accessibility is a challenge at some spaces and the biggest roadblock is understanding it all.

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See page 32

## LACK OF ENGAGEMENT / INTEREST IN THE ARTS

- Tourism is down in the area.
- The community has a lack of awareness, because it is a bedroom community.
- People are busy travelling to and from work in other centres and they don't always engage in their own community.
- More people need to start buying the art that people are trying to sell.
- People would rather go to Winners and buy a print of a painting than buy an original piece of art, or go to a show.
- A common question: Why support this arts organization instead of an important social organization?

## CHALLENGES TO SPACES

- Access to space has been challenging as there has been no inventory of arts facilities.
- In order to pay the rent you often have to sacrifice your mandate.
- Collaborating on a space will be a challenge. You're going to get one group saying they need one thing, and another looking for something different – and then not coming together with a facility that supports everyone.
- Capacity – need market research – is there the capacity to keep the facilities running in competition with the other existing arts organizations?
  - Is there enough traffic to support them all?
  - Support beyond the local market needed, likely
- Reluctance around opening up evening programs and advantages for our youth, due to insurance and problems that may occur etc.

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Need a group where the artists can come together to find out what their goals are.



Form umbrella organizations in order to share resources.



Our local organizations need to evolve, change and merge in order to remain sustainable.



Feasibility expert needed to advance building projects.



If you really want to make Orangeville a destination for the arts, it almost needs to be a private endeavor

## SPACES THAT ARE NEEDED

- Many groups, organizations and individuals need facilities, yet there a lot of facilitates out there that are underutilized – not necessarily arts, culture or heritage facilities but might have some potential for groups that have zero resources.



No one knows the number of artists in the area – and to keep them here, they need to have spaces to display their art. There's no place/resource where that love connection can happen.

- Arts display spaces are needed.
- Theatre Orangeville is looking for a bigger space.
  - Right now it's 273 seats
  - Talks of 400 or 500 seats
- Arts incubation in downtown Orangeville (being spearheaded by a community leader)
- Retail presence where artists can sell their wares.
- The dance community would benefit from a performance space.
- For what purpose do these organizations want the new spaces? This impacts where it is and who pays.
  - Will it be a multi-use facility?
  - It seems when you have a physical space it creates competition; other kinds of organizations feel that they have to compete with the arts.
  - Once you have a space, you're constrained by that space, because you have to make it sustainable.
- Arts organizations need both short-term and long-term spaces.
- We don't have a cultural hub within this region. We have a lot of disparate parts, which in some ways is a fabulous thing, but can also create quite a challenge. Not just from a tourism point of view, but it's also a challenge pulling together the people, the resources and expertise needed.
- Dufferin Arts Council needs a place for monthly meetings.
- There are still some spaces / buildings available, but they are larger spaces.
- Space is available but it is not affordable.
- In Orangeville there is a lot of property but it is also not affordable.
- To rent the community room for 2 days is almost \$5,000.

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See page 28



Share space within the community – acting responsible on behalf of the taxpayer.



Need to partner people who have space and those who need space, and yet are struggling to afford it.



Should share supplies – pool resources, rather than renting.



Need an inventory of arts spaces.



We need to have an artist co-op including retail space, multi-use space for workshops and seminars etc., rather than renting space.



The creative hub model, where people can either book a room or drop in – this could be an option for the library. Envision it as a place where knowledge is created and shared rather than just stored.

## SPACES IN ORANGEVILLE

### THEATRE ORANGEVILLE

- Manages all the ticketing for the people who rent their space
- It's the only main performing arts space in town
- There is potential for outdoor performance space through property the TO owns
- Working with CBC to perform on Island Lake (estimated 600 – 1000 people?)
- Too small for large productions – i.e. contemporary dance
- Orangeville, Burlington, Richmond Hill – all have B-Class theatres, have the technology, lighting etc. and Theatre Orangeville needs the same thing
- Need more technical infrastructure, but first needs growth
- Theatre Orangeville is limited because it's a historical building and there is not enough space and limited capacity
- There are four dance studios in town that would use the space; there are dance studios that are driving to Brampton to rehearse
- More shows could come to this area, if the capacity were here
- Everyone recognizes the theatre space however doesn't understand the administrative and rehearsal space that is required. It forces them into making partnerships and or decisions without creating a building or permanent space. Whether it is good or bad, not sure.
- Administrative space needed for arts, culture and tourism. Because it is such a visual field the backend administration tends to get quite neglected and the administrative space component is huge.
- Credit Valley Conservation and the work with Community Living Dufferin – fascinating and progressive and wonderful – give full credit to the team at Theatre Orangeville. Parties involved have been forced



to think differently and fostered that innovation. Affected by people working for you, around space, whether that is traditional space, or non-traditional space.

#### ALTON MILL

- Funding was a huge undertaking that took years. Was a derelict building in the 80s that sat empty until they found the funding.
- Mixed reactions to event at Alton Mill called Cuisine Art – partner with chefs, breweries, wineries etc., – they set up tasting studios in the artists’ studios. We find that the chefs are collaborative, but artists are so competitive.
- The Mill does corporate events and weddings for revenue generation.

#### DRAGON FLY

- Spaces for artists: 4-12
- Are more needed?

#### LIBRARY

- Trying to change the space from a heritage space to a more accommodating space / better community space “community living room”.

#### Gallery – closing

- Two retail spaces will be available. Specialized, one of a kind store.
- A lot of traffic through the building. Lower-end retail, like a gallery shop.



Partner with a college program – Humber perhaps



If people partnered (such as the dance studios) they could share the space

### RETHINKING SPACES

- Like the idea of involving recreation spaces with the arts spaces.
- Parking lots for sale on Mill Street – build something and put units in it – idea.
- How do we train people to look at our existing resources differently before building a new space?
- Libraries have changed into community centres. More arts focused programming.
- Every municipality has schools that have gyms, screens, stages, music rooms, libraries, etc. Empty after school hours.
  - It is an issue with the school board.
  - In the past these spaces were used for classes, Brownies, Scouts, etc., but now the schools don’t want to pay insurance costs, worry about liability.



Schools can be a resource for space. Community arts groups should be able to make use of school stages – they have more sophisticated equipment including AV equipment and media classes, etc.



Community should take an analysis of where partnerships could be developed before any capital projects to align the needs, have us identify them and then come forward.



Need help / direction from someone that has a good understanding of core real estate in downtown Orangeville.

## BUILDING SPACES

- Business model: the starting point is to have a vision, dream an idea, an insight into an unmet need. If you have one and it fits, the money follows. In the non-profit world, if you don't have a valid story for the community, money will be a barrier. But if it is in fact something that resonates across the community, money follows.
- It's not about the physical space; it's the vision and identifying the gaps and who's actually going to support it. The walls and the roof are the easy part. The harder part is maintaining it, making it sustainable and the programming to fill that space to make it viable for the long term.
- "Before we build buildings, we should build leadership." It's about building leadership, as much as building as space.
- Leadership is about keeping people focused on the same line, as opposed to saying "here's the way, follow me."
- Dilemma: before you go into a building project we should do an analysis – but to do that before building and planning you have to have the leadership.
- It's about finding a way to converge all of the needs and wants with the physical space. Who is going to take on that role of understanding that complexity of the challenge?
- There is a committee gathering to discuss if we should, could or are going to build a floating stage on Island Lake.
- Question is: how many of these dedicated, purpose-built venues can a town support? And what do you need to get there?
- It's great that you can secure money but it may not be the greatest use of the money collectively; sometimes that is what is missed.
- Can government services be applied to a privately owned facility?
- Do you have buy-in from the communities? Might have to compromise, find multiple purposes for it.

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In terms of technical support, staging Orangeville has a lot of equipment that can be rented reasonably.

# MANAGING



## ASSET MANAGEMENT

- Municipalities are required by law to have an asset management system in place
- The Town of Orangeville has a life cycle for everything but the facilities are not informed
- Asset management software accounts for all parts of the facility
- When you take an asset management approach money can be put away for improvements whether you use it or not. This creates surplus but the money has to be in place for that eventuality.
- Asset planning needs to get out of the finance department and into a usable tool for us
- Life cycle planning needs to be taught

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- Orangeville is behind in life cycle planning because they haven't put the funds there to maintain it
- Behind in reserves, and once you are behind it is hard to catch up

- Need to make asset management software available to other arts organizations that need it
  - ArtsBuild is offering an applicable Asset Manager for the Arts tool to arts organizations

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Can we put together a collective fund for improvements instead of trying to convince politicians to put money away?



Bulk purchasing amongst arts organizations would help with purchasing larger quantities of items that need replacing (i.e. toilets etc.).

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- Many organizations do not always plan for a restoration but respond to a grant opportunity
- Where do you go to ask technical questions, such as Alton Mill asking "Do you stick with the heritage windows or to you put in the more energy efficient ones?"
- Many organizations do not develop a 10-year, or 20-year plan for replacement of significant components of their building

## CHALLENGES TO MANAGING ARTS FACILITIES

- Organizations tend to manage by crisis, how do we get beyond that?
- Most organizations manage by crisis. What organization is self-sustainable?
- Organizations often respond to financial incentives, crisis or not.

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All organizations need a business plan or sustainability plan

## SKILLS

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- Organizations need to learn how to develop business and strategic plans
- Many organizations lack vision and human resources
- Some organizations have the cultural skills, creative skills but not the management skills
- Managing arts facilities are a challenge as you need a breadth of skills: managing, expertise, staffing, technology costs etc.
- Some organizations need business skills training for managing a building
- Sometimes we have to manage the artists and as well as manage facilities
- Need skilled technicians
- Renting your space is an issue if you don't know how to use it
- Board and board management – you don't necessarily have business-minded people making the decisions, which is a challenge
  - Every third year we have to have a strategic plan which is a board responsibility

## MARKETING CHALLENGES

### THEATRE ORANGEVILLE

- Success is based on subscribers (currently have about 1400)
- At 2300 subscribers we could almost pull our marketing and anything beyond that could put some money in reserves
- There is no longer a subscriber loyalty; people are impulsive
- Marketing should expand on what's already available or achieve an increased appreciation for the arts
- Some people still don't realize that Orangeville has a professional theatre
- What percentage of the audience is local, within a 40-minute radius?
- Would like to see a sign over the entrance to the Opera House at 87 Broadway, a real marquee with the names of the shows, but the heritage committee won't allow it
- Younger generation is familiar with choice
- Options for digital signage would be an asset to the community



We need a venue finding system where you could book your event in advance

## GRANT WRITING CHALLENGES

### CANADA COUNCIL

- First in the list of grants to do for Theatre Orangeville. In the past we would have to have our own reporting, statistics and financials separately for each funder. With CADAC we can do it once and both funders can access that report.
- CADAC (third party for financials and statistics) is wonderful, lightened the load, now only have six pages to write.
- Entire document is 40 pages so there are 34 pages of written work explaining programming etc – lots of work.
- This year, wanted Theatre Orangeville to budget four years forward and three years back, for a total of seven years of financial planning. That is a lot of time allotted to grant writing.
- Annual funding
  - An existing theatre would have to fold before another organization could be eligible for multi-year funding.
  - Applying for the annual grant takes up a tremendous amount of time, requires working overtime and dedicating yourself to the grant and only the grant.
- Grants take two sets of resources. One to write the grant and another to fulfill the grant.
- Grant opportunities often result in requiring you to change your plans.
- Grant opportunity can force organizations in a direction they weren't necessarily going, because that is where the money is – "grant chasing".
- Grant spending is often very reaction-based.
- Often times you can get more money, but that doesn't mean that your human resources grow.
- We need to be conscious of the demand that new grant money puts on existing staff and their workload.
- With the amount of work that needs to be done with the grant writing, progress reports and financial reporting and auditing, sometimes the return isn't worth it.



We need great grant writers for arts organizations.



# FINANCING

## RESERVE FUNDS

- Theatre Orangeville has a reserve set aside that they call a “rainy day fund”. They are hopeful that they will be going under a renovation at the Opera House. Some of that money has been put aside for that specific purpose.
  - With this money we can access partnering funding from other organizations, i.e. Canadian Heritage as they require confirmed funds.
- Most arts organizations need to break even before they can think about a reserve fund.
- Building a contingency fund is one of the hardest challenges to securing funding for a capital project.
- If you put money away in a reserve fund you can use the interest to put the money towards your day-to-day operations.
  - This can be used to borrow against, if there is a project that comes up.



Reserve of money, an “Art Pot” – a collective contribution (everyone contributes a small amount) and it will be ready for whomever might need it.

## GREENING FACILITIES

- The greenest building is an existing building.
- Heritage Buildings are a challenge as they have a larger carbon footprint.
- Old buildings have inconsistent spaces, incredibly difficult to maintain temperature.
- There is money out there to green your space but not without expense. You need to invest upfront.
- The Town of Orangeville had an opportunity to put solar panels on the roofs of the arts facilities through an agreement with the Province of Ontario. This would give them 80 cents on the dollar for every kilowatt-hour of electricity for 20 years.

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## HERITAGE BUILDINGS

- Many hard decisions to make around upgrading to modern fixtures to improve bottom line
- There is not a lot of grant money to retrofit

### THEATRE ORANGEVILLE

- Built the rehearsal hall and they were able to take advantage of funding for ground source heat. For a building of that size the savings were substantial.



## FUNDING/SUPPORT FOR EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

### THEATRE ORANGEVILLE

- Three levels of government funding – Municipal, Provincial and Federal – consider all of that operating. Provincial – OAC – \$82,000, Federal with Canada Council \$25,000, Municipal, Town of Orangeville and the County.
- They operate out of the Town Hall Opera House, managed by staff in the facility on behalf of the Town.
- We are responsible for the ‘consumable capital’, things that depreciate in value and quality over time.
- When we rent that facility to anyone, we keep 100% of the funds, that go right back into the Opera House maintenance account to be used for that facility. We also collect \$1 per ticket for any event there toward improvement of the Opera House. The system is built right in, then the Town contributes \$35,000 towards the staffing per year, for the people who manage the Opera House.
- Theatre Orangeville gets to use the facility at no charge, first pick of times, set schedule. The Town also provides us with office space, I.T. and utilities and that’s how we survive.
- If we had our own facility, we would not survive or be on the map.
  - If the Museum falls short the municipality makes up the difference.

### CITRUS DANCE

- Redesigned the facility – was all private money.
- How is it now going to sustain itself? The renovations cost almost \$80,000.
- Had a free architect to do a very specific design.
- Their student base is over 300 – for ten months they have an income.
- The cost is over \$5,000 a month to run.
- Citrus is an in kind sponsor for Theatre Orangeville – need space for programs, events or workshops etc. In kind space exchange.



There are opportunities for organizations that are sitting empty throughout the day - should be utilized.



Have a seminar or lecture for arts organizations on how to be more financially savvy learn business skills and revenue generation alternatives.

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## OPERATIONAL COSTS

- Theatre Orangeville does a lot of youth programs – want to have a program that breaks even, have to make enough money to pay the operating costs of the Theatre. A business run on breaking even, we have to charge an overhead.
- Non-profit organizations have to have audited financial statements. Non-profit statements are intensive and can be very expensive. Audit prices are high.
- Transparency is really important. The organization has to have all the matching documents.
- With the challenges we face are we better off private or public?
  - It's nice to be able to give a tax receipt, because that legitimizes fundraising.
  - Some organizations cannot do that. It's worth looking at again, and sometimes the mandate just needs fine-tuning.

## PARTNERSHIP – LOCAL EXAMPLES

### COMMUNITY LIVING DUFFERIN AND THEATRE SHOP

- After being in a number of locations over the years, the Theatre Shop spoke to the Director of Community Living Dufferin who needed space. The agreement was if you assist in the fundraising campaign we will give you a lease for a dollar a year (pay own utilities) for a hundred years in return for partnering with us. So we started the capital campaign on that basis, got part way through and the recession hit, but because we were shovel ready we got a federal infrastructure grant for 1.7 million and it finished the job.
- We now have a gorgeous rehearsal hall, huge workshop, and storage for a dollar a year. We just had to find the utility costs.

### ALTON MILL ARTS CENTRE

- Formed a private and non-profit partnership between Headwaters Arts and The Featon Group. Funding was available from the Royal Economic Development Program. Four years later, after a very onerous application process, their funding came through: 1 million dollars of federal and \$750,000 provincial money. That's almost enough to bridge the gap between the cost of the restoration and what could be justified from the rents. Once of a lifetime opportunity, part of it was own money and part was mortgage. Still paying interest only on the mortgage.
- Partnerships with private/commercial are great either through donations or gifts in kind.
- Theatre Orangeville was wise, financially, to partner with the Town of Orangeville.

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## GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- Main obstacle is the ability to find the grant funds. Grant funds do exist but organizations don't have resources to find them. Each agency has their own representative and it's hard to track them down.

### MUSEUM

- The financial support comes primarily from the Council although they do get a small government grant from Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport – CMOG grant, as long as the standards of the Community of Museums (seven criteria) are met.
- The Museum has a fairly strong infrastructure, good staff and good county support which allows you to understand all of the requirements around reporting, granting, funding. Some of the other smaller groups ask how do we access expertise around building?
- Local government lacks support for arts and culture for things that already exist or are underutilized in the sector.
- Building supervisors, I.T. departments, education department, are not involved in any way with offering us facilities and they are totally underutilized.
- Everyone is competing with each other for these little pockets of funding.

## FINANCING AND ALTERNATIVES

- Main obstacle is that if arts organizations take out a loan many require that the Director / Board offer up a personal guarantee. Then the Directors are personally responsible if the loan fails. This is a huge hurdle for most organizations.

### CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

- Wanted to build a new facility. They issued a community bond – have to be rated – pay a fixed rate, like getting a treasury bond, raise money to build capital infrastructure and then you get say 2%. May be lower than a mutual fund at the bank, but the investment is local – (so you're supporting your community and you're getting a return) the other 2% is your good will, towards the community. And it's really safe.

### SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

- Blending of non-profits and for profits – Paul Martin previous prime minister has been trying to get our Revenue Canada rules changed so that it recognizes the social enterprises better. Because they do work in fields that provide a financial return, but maybe the financial return is less than what you would get on the open market and there is a social component in the work that they do. Huge growing field around this.

- A lot of work being done. How do you support these organizations, and how do you treat them legally? They're making money but they have this non-profit piece to them, so there is this grey area around them.

## COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

- Many large communities have a way of pooling people that want to donate money and then find the groups they want to support and divvy it up.
- It shares the wealth and they don't get rid of the principal.

## THE MUSEUM

- Has two trust funds, because the problems with foundations (like hospital uses) for arts or cultural organizations is that they end up having to spend the money on things they don't really need, because they have to spend it all or you have to spend at least the interest. The Museum has a separate private trust, which supports The Museum because municipalities are not allowed to hold stocks. One of the greatest tax rigs for people is that if you donate your stocks you get a real tax break, but if you cash them and keep them yourself it may be considered capital gain. So there's a real incentive for cultural organizations to accept stocks.
- If you are government you have to sell them, so The Museum has a private organization that handles over a million dollars in stocks – recipient of all the dividends and when the trust closes the money all comes back to the other trust.
- A way to capitalize on this wonderful tax break – donate stocks = savings.
- All arts organizations could benefit from this model.



Weddings and other events are popular ways to supplement income



Need a single organization that raises money for the arts "Community Chest" – we have lost that model in Canada



Need fundraising tips



Community bonds are a new way to raise money for capital investment



There is a real incentive for organizations to accept stocks

## FUNDRAISING

- There are other fundraisers in the community that compete against our efforts.
- It's grassroots fundraising that's the ticket! Not the exception, it's the rule.
- Raising funds is the biggest challenge when trying to do a capital project.
- Never have enough revenue to do anything but operate for a theatre season. Anything above and beyond that we have to hone in and find the money.

ABO can help!  
See page 28

- 
- It's a full time job to look for funds.
  - Arts organizations often don't get into benefitting.



We should hire a fundraiser and they get commission on the funds that they bring in. This way if they don't bring in money we haven't lost an investment.



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH ARTSBUILD ONTARIO

ArtsBuild is a resource for arts organizations in Orangeville for issues related to arts facilities. We have programs and services that were developed with the issues surrounding BUILDING, MANAGING AND FINANCING arts facilities in mind, and we encourage you to take a moment and see what we have that can assist you.

We have highlighted programs and services that this discussion identified as being needed that already ArtsBuild offers.

## PLAN IT | BUILD IT

**ArtsBuild has commissioned senior culture sector capital project managers to develop PLAN IT | BUILD IT, an online step-by-step guide to planning and completing capital projects.**

This free guide is designed to help arts organizations going through any of these capital project processes:

1. Major maintenance or green improvement projects
2. Small-to medium-sized renovation projects
3. Large renovations or additions
4. New construction projects

For more details on PLAN IT | BUILD IT and to access this free tool, please visit – [www.artsbuildontario.ca/pibi](http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/pibi)

## CREATIVE HUBS

**Cultural development through creative hubs and clusters is transforming our understanding of community spaces for art and artists.**

ArtsBuild has partnered with Artscape to develop new creative placemaking resources for Artscape DIY, including:

### Eight Creative Placemaking Webinars

1. Developing Sustainable Cultural Space: Multi-Tenant Arts Centres 101  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1rm71rz>
2. Making Space for Creativity: Designing for Collaboration  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1Gf5zT>

3. Shared Spaces, Shared Values: Building Partnerships for Community Cultural Hubs  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1l3bKfU>
4. School's Out: Repurposing Surplus Schools as Cultural Spaces  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1pryLO6>
5. Artspace USA, featuring Colin Hamilton, Senior Vice President, National Advancement  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1f50cci>
6. Project for Public Spaces, featuring Cynthia Nikitin, Senior Vice President  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1fr1Gba>
7. 401 Richmond / Urbanspace Property Group, featuring Margie Zeidler, President and Founder  
To register for this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/QyZusi>
8. Evergreen, featuring Geoffrey Cape, CEO  
To watch this webinar visit – <http://bit.ly/1hm1Wfl>

## Short Film Series: Key Aspects of Creative Placemaking

Film #1: Clustering [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_MsYgNRMZE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_MsYgNRMZE)

Film #2: Collaboration <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knHZTrhQ0y0>

Film #3: Leadership <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xf5QfKLJxz0>

This seven-part series is an ongoing project, with further short films being released in 2014. Watch for further updates at <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/building/creative-hubs/>

### Future resources available through Artscape DIY will be:

- Two Meet the Expert Q&As
- Two case studies on Artscape properties


These new projects were begun in 2013 and are being released on an ongoing basis. They are available on the ArtsBuild website and Artscape DIY. See more at: <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/building/creative-hubs/>

## BRICKS&MORTAR

### The Home for Ontario's First Arts Facilities Census

Make sure that your organization is represented in the first ever ArtsBuild Ontario Arts Facilities Census. You can complete the information by contacting [Natalee@artsbuildontario.ca](mailto:Natalee@artsbuildontario.ca) who will assist you in entering the information systematically.

To house this crucial information, ArtsBuild has developed Bricks&Mortar, which will collect the information in a dynamic way. Arts organizations registered in Bricks&Mortar are able to search for valuable information about other arts facilities in Ontario and learn about:

- 
- a. Nearby projects
  - b. Potential partners
  - c. Those who have tackled similar projects

## ASSET PLANNER FOR THE ARTS

### **A robust online facilities management tool and the technical support to get the most from it**

Accurate and validated information about the condition of facilities allows organizations to proactively manage their facilities and budget for needed capital improvements. The technical term for this approach to facilities management is ‘asset management’.

ArtsBuild has partnered with Ameresco, a recognized leader in the field of asset management and sustainability, to provide arts organizations with very affordable access to Asset Planner – their acclaimed asset management tool.

Included with each two year Asset Planner for the Arts license is a site visit, where an engineer will document, photograph and input all the data about your facility, and provide the training and support you need to you get the most from it.

#### **Asset Planner for the Arts lets you:**

- Create building condition assessments
- Prioritize needed capital improvements and identify funding gaps
- Develop data-driven facilities management plans, budgets and cases for funding
- Identify opportunities for efficiencies and cost savings

With the support of the Government of Canada, ArtsBuild is pleased to offer a subsidy towards the cost of Asset Planner to make it affordable for Ontario arts organizations.

Watch our introductory video at: <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/managing/asset-planner/>

## ARTSBUILD’S ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM

ArtsBuild’s new Energy Conservation Program helps arts organizations identify and implement cost-effective energy conservation projects for their buildings. Get insulated against rising utility costs by understanding your current energy consumption and committing to change. Our goal with the ArtsBuild Energy Conservation Program is to build your knowledge and capacity so that you can lower operating costs by reducing your energy consumption, and channel those savings towards artistic programming.

In partnership with Natural Resources Canada, ArtsBuild is offering energy conservation training workshops in southern Ontario. We are offering another workshop in Toronto in Spring 2014 that will also be live-streamed so that organizations outside of the GTA can watch live online.



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Energy savings realized in your facility can result in more money put back into programming / artistic practice for your organization.

## E-LEARNING WITH WORKINCULTURE

### Project Management E-Learning – Newly Released

ArtsBuild has partnered with WorkInCulture to develop a project management E-Learning course tailored to the needs of arts organizations and created by experienced culture sector project managers.

The course is 5-8 hours in length (depending on your timing and retention), can be accessed on demand 24/7 and is affordably priced at \$40.

See more at: <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/?s=project+management>

## ARTSBUILD'S ONLINE RESOURCE LIBRARY – NEW, APRIL 2014

**ArtsBuild has compiled an online Resource Library for all things facilities related!**

This Resource Library is a current and curated source for guides, templates, examples, case studies, short films and links to related resources to help busy arts organizations manage their learning and knowledge around sustainable facilities.

Visit Resource Library at: <http://resourcelibrary.artsbuildontario.ca/>


## ARTS FACILITIES MENTORING NETWORK

ArtsBuild partnered with WorkInCulture to develop the Arts Facilities Mentoring Network. The Network provides established leaders in Ontario's non-profit arts community who are responsible for building, managing and financing facilities with the opportunity of one-on-one learning with experienced topic experts.

The Arts Facilities Mentoring Network is a practical way to build on people's desire to learn and share skills, connections and knowledge. Each mentee identifies a key learning topic, and the Network matches them with a mentor who has tackled a similar challenge. Pairs meet for three hours every month and take part in two in-person workshops that provide the opportunity for Network peers to meet.

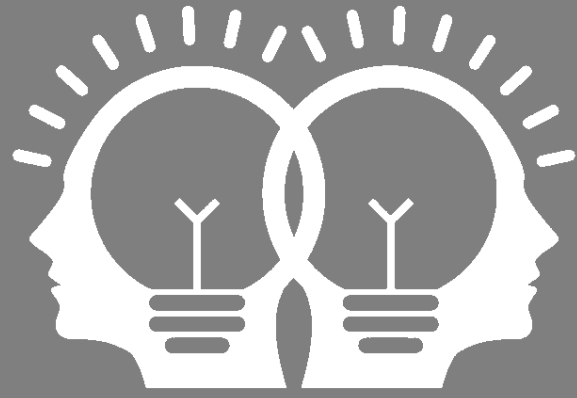
The inaugural session of the Arts Facilities Mentoring Network launched on February 27, 2013 with 17 partnerships and a full-day workshop on best practices in mentoring. Intake for the 2013 Network is now closed. To learn more about the Arts Facilities Mentoring Network and possible upcoming offerings, please contact us.

See more at: <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/mentoring-network/>



Susan Cohen from WorkInCulture and Lindsay MacDonald from ArtsBuild Ontario presented the successes from the program in their presentation *Forging a Collaborative Path for Superior Professional Development* at the OMA Conference on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in Markham.

ArtsBuild Ontario and WorkInCulture are hoping to do a second iteration of this program in the near future.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS INVITED

Organization Name	First Name	Last Name	Title
Orangeville BIA	Alison	Scheel	Manager
Orangeville Art Group	Barb	Imrie	
Town of Orangeville - Asset management staff	Brian	Parrott	Treasurer
Orangeville Public Library	Darla	Fraser	Chief Librarian
Dufferin County Museum	Darrell	Keenie	General Manager
Theatre Orangeville	David	Nairn	Artistic Director
Community leader & property development	Doc	Gillies	
Caledon Studio Inc.	Enza	Falzone	School Program Director
St. Andrew's Stone Church	Erica	Pratt	
Orangeville Blues & Jazz Festival	Gary	Brown	
Erin Centre 2000	Graham	Smith	
Dufferin Arts Council	Harvey	Kolodny	President
Headwaters Arts	Heidi	Von Der Gathen	Executive Director
Alton Mill	Jeremy	Grant	Vice President Planning and Development
Century Church Theatre	Jo	Phenix	Director
Dragonfly Arts on Broadway	Joan	Hope	Owner
Shelburne Town Hall/Grace Tipling Theatre	John	Telfer	CAO
Orangeville Art Group	John	Walsh	President
Georgian College	John	Woolner	Continuing Education
Headwaters Arts	Jordan	Grant	Marketing Committee Chair
North of 89 Artists	Kai	Liis McInnes	Artist
Blackhorse Village Players	Kate	Horzempa	President
Lyndia Terre Studio Gallery	Lyndia	Terre	Owner
Theatre Orangeville	Marilyn	Logan	General Manager
Alton Mill	Meg	Floyd	Marketing
Claude Presbyterian Church	Merle	Harstone	Artist
Town of Orangeville	Nancy	Tuckett	Dir. Econ. Dev, Planning & Innovation
Caledon Townhall Players	Pam	Niesiobedzki-Curtis	President
River Bend Artists	Peter	Marshall	Artist
St. James Anglican Church	Ruth	Sowrey	Secretary
Town of Orangeville	Ruth	Phillips	SBEC & Arts & Cultural Planning
Melville White Church	Sarah	Bohan	President
Town of Caledon	Sharon	Doherty	Facilities Manager
Shelburne Town Hall/Grace Tipling Theatre	Shawnette	Crouse	Special Events Coordinator

Best Western Orangeville	Stacey	Coupland	General Manager
Dufferin.biz	Theresa	Sauren	Marketing Coord.
Framed X Design Art Galleries	Tracey	Miller	Owner
Virginia May, Fine Art	Virginia	May	Owner
Dufferin County Museum	Wayne	Townsend	Curator

## APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANTS IN ATTENDANCE

Organization Name	First Name	Last Name	Title
Headwaters Arts	Wayne	Bagley	
Town of Caledon	Sharon	Doherty	Facilities Manager
Alton Mill	Meg	Floyd	
Orangeville Public Library	Darla	Fraser	Chief Librarian
Citrus Dance Inc.	Jenee	Gowing	
Hills of Headwaters	Michelle	Harris	Executive Director
Dufferin Arts Council	Harvey	Kolodny	President
Theatre Orangeville	Marilyn	Logan	General Manager
Town of Orangeville	Ruth	Phillips	SBEC & Arts & Cultural Planning
Orangeville BIA	Julia	Poletto	
Dufferin.biz	Theresa	Sauren	Marketing Coord.
Dufferin County Museum	Wayne	Townsend	Curator
Town of Orangeville	Nancy	Tuckett	Dir. Econ. Dev, Planning & Innovation
Theatre Orangeville	Don	Voisey	
Headwaters Arts	Heidi	Von Der Gathen	Executive Director
Orangeville Art Group	John	Walsh	

## APPENDIX C:

### MAKING SPACES FOR ART CASE STUDY - ARRAY MUSIC

# Making Spaces for Art

## A Case Study: Array Music



***“Artists need centrally located, affordable space.” Rick Sacks, Artistic Director***

Arraymusic never intended to be anything other than a chamber group ensemble. Sometimes however evolution takes over. Arraymusic has been on a journey that Rick Sacks, Artistic Director, and Sandra Bell, General Manager, could not have predicted but that necessity did. A quick visit to their website--one that gets hits from all over the world-- demonstrates their split screen identity. A quick listen to their music reflects the

diversity in their instrumentation.

Arraymusic is both a chamber group ensemble (the Array Ensemble) and an affordable space that artists can rent at a reasonable rate, at any time of day, to create, record and produce music. Arraymusic is a one-stop shop where artists can experiment and hone their craft. As such, they are about fostering creative collaborative relationships. And they don't follow a formula. There is no formula for what Arraymusic has created.

Like all good bands, the Array Ensemble started in a cinder block garage on Albany Street resplendent with a tiny washroom in the early 1980's. The Ensemble had already been performing together since 1972 but they needed a cost-effective rehearsal space. Word spread and other groups started asking to use the space. Quickly it became a home for new music improv groups and other creative musicians. Sacks realized that providing affordable space was another way for Arraymusic to realize its mandate of promoting Canadian New Music. Like most success stories, garage days are limited and best remembered with a bittersweet nostalgia. They eventually outgrew their space and moved to the Artscape Liberty Village development at 60 Atlantic Avenue in April of 1992. This represented a big stepping stone moment for the group as their rent more than doubled in the move but they knew the

need was there. When Artscape decided ultimately to close the Liberty Village development, Arraymusic started looking for their new, permanent home.

“What we needed was silence, and a space to make good music,” says Sacks, “and that is hard to come by in Toronto.” From Craigslist to realtors, Arraymusic embarked on a search to find a home that fit their needs. They looked at partnerships with other like-minded arts organizations. They considered another Artscape development but nothing seemed like just the right fit. Just as the situation was starting to look bleak, Sacks stumbled on the Kijiji ad that changed everything. What they found was a turn of the century building that was actually two buildings fused into one. What could be more perfect for Arraymusic? After all, they too have fused and become something they never intended at the outset.

On one-way Walnut street, smack-dab in the middle of the cultural corridor, in a turn of the century building that was once a factory, is the new home of Arraymusic. Sandra Bell, “knew it was home when [she] walked in.” How they got there is one part serendipity and the kindness of strangers, and an equal part dedication to evolution.

The project was more than a little daunting. The building would require major renovations in order to become a suitable home. They found out the Ontario Trillium Foundation had a capital grant deadline in just three weeks. Could they even pull it off? They worried if they didn’t make the grant deadline and receive the funds, they wouldn’t be able to complete all the necessary renovations. Bell and Sacks turned to ArtsBuild for help and advice. Executive Director Adele Dobkowski encouraged them to go for it. They met with their Board and took the leap of faith. They managed to get their Trillium application in on time.

Using advice from ArtsBuild and a document Artscape published called, “Square Feet: The Artist’s Guide to Renting and Buying Creative Space”, they set about negotiating with their new landlord. It was a learning curve that could only be described as vertical but the negotiations with the landlord went smoothly. Arraymusic has been blessed with the sort of landlord many of us can only dream of. He clearly saw the vision of what Arraymusic is looking to create. They were able to agree to escalating rent over the initial five year rental period which will allow Arraymusic to grow their business in the new location. The landlord also threw in some free rent at the start of their occupancy, has taken on some of the retrofitting work and has made a sizeable donation to the organization. They were off to a good start. Then came the good news that they were to receive the grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in the amount of \$150,000. Arraymusic moved into their new home in November 2012.

In four short months, so much has changed. Walls went up to partition off offices. Five offices have already been rented to like-minded partners. There is a new floor. The building has been sound proofed. And they have been meeting with contractors about the elevator.

There is lots more to come with a priority list that is both daunting and commendable as it incorporates environmentally friendly choices. A primary capital improvement is an elevator that runs on gravity and



not electricity. From cost efficient lighting, to collapsible risers, tables and chairs for cabaret events, a deck for outdoor social receptions, a brand new entrance complete with ramp and eye-catching signage, to key code locks to ensure twenty-four hour access for all, no detail is being overlooked. The board of directors is thrilled and everyone is anticipating greatly increased community use.

Sacks and Bell have an eye to the future and the enormous potential of both the building and what they are building. They invite community participation to their events to make the most of these mutually beneficial relationships. For instance, a frequent user of Arraymusic has offered up his social media savvy. Arraymusic has gone from having twenty-five Twitter followers, to more than five hundred in four months. Another example would be the pan, tilt, and zoom stationary video cameras they are hoping to purchase to record concerts.

One person can operate the system, and handle real time edits. They hope to eventually create a premium subscription series available by video simultaneously increasing their audience and diversifying their funds.

Yet another thing that sets Arraymusic apart from just any rental space is the way they promote their events. A proud feature of their website includes enticing event listings, something they do for all their rental clients. Sacks and Bell acknowledge that is a lot more work on their plates to offer this service for free but they believe the pay off of increased attendance for everyone and the cross-pollination of audiences is well worth the effort.

An ambitious outreach plan is also taking shape, which takes advantage of everything the neighbourhood has to offer. It is a neighbourhood with kids and schools and diverse demographics. They are contemplating offering children's programming in addition to their already full calendar. Arraymusic wants to enmesh itself in this community and become a friendly façade within it as well.

For an organization that never intended to be anything than a music ensemble, they are unquestionably doing a brilliant job, seamlessly incorporating both sides of their split personality. As memories of their garage days fade, a unified new vision for Arraymusic comes into focus and takes the stage. Bravo!

## APPENDIX D:

### MAKING SPACES FOR ART CASE STUDY – THE REGISTRY THEATRE

# Making Spaces for Art

## A Case Study: The Registry Theatre



**“Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments”**

The story of The Registry Theatre is intimately and irretrievably entwined with that of J.M. Drama and the City of Kitchener. Originally built in 1939 as the Waterloo County Registry Office, it is one of the few art deco buildings in Waterloo Region. Yet what became The Registry Theatre was the result of its own perfect marriage between the City of Kitchener and J.M. Drama. Like all

relationships, they have their own romantic tales and foibles. But make no mistake, this marriage not only is growing strong, but still has its spark.

J.M. Drama began as a group of alumni sharing an emotional connection. Putting the “J” and “M” in J.M. Drama, graduates of St Jerome’s High School, and St Mary’s High School established this group with the intent to perform in 1984. They performed in various locations throughout Kitchener, ending up at the Victoria Park Pavilion. They quickly realized that an affordable performing arts space was needed for the community as well as themselves. Beyond affordable, it also needed to be financially viable and sustainable. The emotional connection that pulled the group together logically led to a location—the turn of the century buildings of the St. Jerome campus, one of their former high schools.

In the 1990’s, the Mayor’s Committee on Downtown, agreed. A feasibility study determined that a performing arts space for the community was needed and that the St. Jerome’s campus was indeed a good fit. J.M. Drama, whose membership now had expanded beyond alumni, worked together with the WalterFedy Partnership (a top architectural and engineering firm) on the proposal. All good marriages begin with a proposal of course. Alas, rejection. After hundreds of volunteer and donated hours

working on the plans, and a significant price tag to boot, the owners of the site refused to sell. Undeterred, the members found another site. That site too, was quickly removed from possibility.

Enter the City of Kitchener. In the 90's, the City of Kitchener acquired the former Registry Building at 122 Frederick Street in a land deal with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. They approached J.M. Drama and asked them to see if it suited their needs. Don Bourgeois, and the other members of the Board of Directors inspected the site. Bourgeois laughs about how he was the only one who didn't see the potential of that first date – but others did. J.M. Drama enthusiastically said yes.....with some conditions.

Wiser with experience, J.M. Drama wanted a “planned, phased approach” and a “long term relationship.” What was to become The Registry Theatre was going to be a relationship built in many steps. To begin, it needed to be feasible. The building itself needed to be converted. And at each step, the negotiations between the City of Kitchener and J.M. Drama allowed for transparency, accountability and the option to “opt out” at any time by either party.

The Registry Theatre is a building that is a public asset with a public purpose. Like a prenuptial agreement, the terms of the contract negotiated between J.M. Drama and the City of Kitchener that gave birth to this space is designed to protect both parties from mutual risk while affording maximum benefit to both parties and, more importantly, the community they serve. “Everything was at risk for J.M. Drama” says Bourgeois. At the time, they were a small non-profit with an annual operating budget of \$15,000-\$20,000 with no staff and no line of credit. If the deal went bad, it would bankrupt the organization and leave them without a space. They were taking a huge risk leaving their (then) current 12,000 square foot space in the former Lang Tannery Building at a monthly cost of three hundred dollars. They negotiated clauses with the City so that they could only be kicked out of the Registry building if they breached the agreement. J.M. Drama would also retain the right to occupy part of the building whether they continued to manage the facility or not. By the same token, the City of Kitchener needed to protect its efforts. The facility had to be sustainable and completed at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer. The City agreed to manage the contracting process and provided financial support with a loan of \$224,000 interest free. They also managed the relationship with the WalterFedy Partnership, the firm retained to complete the designs. The task was daunting, fraught with its own renovation nightmares, and yet simultaneously completely perfect. Soulmates.

An essential element of the project was the timing. An economic downturn and the turn of the millennium gave access to funding that otherwise would not have been available. The business plan for The Registry Theatre stated that funds for the capital improvements would need to be secured through grants and donations and that operating costs would be covered through facility operations.

Additional capital funds were secured through the government's Millennium Fund. Interestingly, timing made the renovations to the building cost so much more. With the recession, contractors were ironically very busy and bids were coming in 20-30% higher than anticipated. Renovations were ultimately completed creating a viable, affordable space for the community to rent. On New Year's Eve, 2001, Don Bourgeois and many other volunteers rang in the new millennium painting at The Registry Theatre.

Once the space was opened, it was an immediate success. In their first six months of operation, 101 days were rented. They were already at two-thirds capacity. In their second and third years of operation, they applied for a Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for part time management to relieve the stress on volunteer time. In 2004, they were able to hire someone to direct programming.

Part of the formula underpinning this success is the philosophy. What started with J.M. Drama wanting a space to perform became a completely successful and distinct brand known as The Registry Theatre. On the books of J.M. Drama, The Registry Theatre is set up as a separate, charitable project of the organization, with its own bank account and mission. The Registry Theatre is dedicated to building audiences and allowing artists an “affordable place to fail.” Yes, fail. Artists require a space within which they will not be bankrupted by failure—a space where they can mature as artists and learn their craft. At a daily rental rate of \$250-\$300, they do not discriminate between professional and amateur. And as such, they want a space where professionals can flourish, and amateurs can develop by making mistakes, learning and thriving. The Registry is also building audiences for jazz, folk, classics and other forms of art. More recently, The Registry Theatre lobby art gallery was installed for visual artists. J.M. Drama continues to invest in The Registry Theatre, upgrading lighting and sound systems, staging, back of house, and preparing for the next phase of its existence.

The overall vision of the Registry Theatre is to be a place for arts and culture to flourish and to develop. And flourishing is something that The Registry Theatre does consistently. From the “willingness of others to collaborate to achieve a public benefit,” came the beautiful marriage of J.M. Drama and the City of Kitchener. This is one marriage we can’t wait to celebrate the diamond anniversary of!