



Public Art Backgrounder

Waterfront Toronto has embarked on an ambitious public art program that seeks to acquire and commission impressive work by artists of national and international renown. By pooling funds on a precinct-wide level, we are able to commission works of public art that have greater impact and place them in areas with higher visibility and accessibility for the surrounding community.

An Innovative Funding Model and Comprehensive Plan for Public Art

Waterfront Toronto budgets one per cent of the projected gross construction costs of waterfront projects to fund a comprehensive plan that will make public art an integral part of each neighbourhood from the early planning stages. As development partners come on board and construction begins at each site, Waterfront Toronto uses the framework laid out by the City of Toronto's [Percent for Public Art Program](#) to finance the investment in public art. When completed, the art is owned and managed by Toronto Cultural Services as part of the [City of Toronto Public Art and Monuments Collection](#).

Public Art in West Don Lands

One of the first neighbourhoods to integrate public art in the early planning phases of the neighbourhood is the West Don Lands. As Waterfront Toronto designed the public realm – streets, overpasses, parks and other public spaces – public art was integrated from the start, rather than added as an afterthought. The West Don Lands Public Art Strategy, released in October 2009, is the first public art master plan of its size and nature to be implemented in Canada.

Public art projects in the West Don Lands include:

Mirage, 2012, by Paul Raff

Mirage, by Toronto-based artist Paul Raff, was selected through an open public art competition. The installation of 57 octagonal mirror polished stainless steel surfaces applied to the underside of the Richmond/Adelaide overpass draws inspiration from the definition of a mirage as an optical illusion by atmospheric conditions. The artist uses the unusual site conditions of a park under an elevated roadway to blur the horizon lines between earth and sky.

Each of the panels is slightly different in size and spacing to create a subtle sense of movement as their mirror-polished surfaces bounce light around the space.

No Shoes, 1967, by Mark di Suvero, restored 2013

Mark di Suvero is internationally considered to be one of the most significant sculptors of the 20th century. In 1967, while in the early stages of his career, di Suvero was invited by the City of Toronto to participate in an International Sculpture Symposium in High Park. Di Suvero was given access to a crane and operator and the results were two monumental pieces, *Flower Power* and *No Shoes*, which were the first works in what became the artist's signature style. After a lengthy restoration and re-installation

coordinated with the City of Toronto, which continues to own the work, and overseen by di Suvero himself, *No Shoes* was installed in Corktown Common.

Peeled Pavement, to be installed 2014, by Jill Anholt

Peeled Pavement was developed by Vancouver-based artist Jill Anholt, through collaboration with the Planning Partnership as an integrated feature of the public realm design for Mill Street. To be installed along Mill Street beside the Distillery District, *Peeled Pavement* punctuates the sidewalk, curling up to reveal an underside of industrial artifacts cast in bronze and swathes of glowing light, the energies of the working city. Exposing the systems of the site links its rich and complex history to the renewal of life and growth envisioned for the public realm of the future.

Toronto Lamp Posts, to be installed 2015, by Tadashi Kawamata

Tadashi Kawamata's *Toronto Lamp Posts* for Front Street will create an iconic visual landmark for this area. The proposal applies the artist's international art practice in a concept that is unique to Toronto and the industrial heritage of the West Don Lands area. Over the decades and across the map, Toronto's city of neighbourhoods, has donned lampposts in a wide variety of styles, materials and heights that have come to characterize eras or areas. Having the appearance of [Mikado sticks](#) just before they fall, the formal bundling together of this jumble of city infrastructure collapses history and geography into one playful gesture.

The Water Guardians, to be installed 2015, by Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins

The Water Guardians by Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins, with landscape architect James Khamsi, thoughtfully integrates art, landscape and play in a concept that is both serious and whimsical. The artwork acts as a bridge between the nearby man-made water feature and the real Don River that flows beyond the end of Front Street. The forms and materials suggest the fluidity, flow and buoyancy of water, while the absence of actual water hints at a natural resource to be protected and appreciated.

Garden of Future Follies, to be installed 2016, by Hadley+Maxwell

Taking inspiration from the fanciful "follies" of 18th and 19th century landscape gardens in England and France, *Garden of Future Follies* rearranges fragments of Toronto's existing monuments, sculptures and architecture. Using a unique "cinefoil" casting process, the artists take impressions from actual monuments and reconfigure them to create a series of new sculptures. Installed at ground level, these new works will celebrate the city's monuments and architecture and make them more accessible to the public.

Public Art in East Bayfront

Waterfront Toronto is working closely with the City of Toronto to develop a Public Art Master Plan for the East Bayfront precinct that will use art to draw people south of the barrier created by the Lake Shore Boulevard transport corridor. The objective is to deliver a program of unique, site-specific experiences at the shore of Lake Ontario. This ambitious master plan, which is built on unprecedented collaboration across private and public partners, will be released once it received formal approval from the City.

Public art projects in East Bayfront include:

Light Showers, 2011, by Jill Anholt

The first component of the Public Art Program for East Bayfront is Light Showers, completed in 2011 and installed in Sherbourne Common. A series of sculptures integrated into the water purification system of the park, these graceful arcs echo the scale of the nearby Gardiner Expressway while giving visual and tactile expression to the surrounding community's aspirations to sustainability and the future.