
REPORT TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: December 6, 2021

SUBMITTED BY: Emily Robson, Manager, Arts & Creative Industries, 519-741-2200 ext.

PREPARED BY: Karoline Varin, Program Administrator, Arts & Creative Industries, 519-741-2200 ext. 7912

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All Wards

DATE OF REPORT: November 25, 2021

REPORT NO.: DSD-2021-172

SUBJECT: Partnership with Textile Magazine for the 2022 Artist in Residence Appointment

RECOMMENDATION:

That report # DSD-2021-172 regarding the Partnership with Textile Magazine for the 2022 Artist in Residence Appointment, be received for information.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to outline the rationale for a partnership with Textile Magazine and its role in the Artist in Residence program.
- The key finding of this report is that Textile Magazine's broad community practice, focus on engaging local artists from equity-seeking groups, and experience in administering an effective mentorship program, strengthens and broadens the delivery of the city's artist in residence program.
- The financial implication is a consultation and programming fee of \$5000 plus HST for Textile Magazine.
- Community engagement included consultations with Public Art Working Group and the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

Established in 1995 as the first municipal program of its kind, the City of Kitchener Artist-in-Residence program aims to engage the community in the production of contemporary art that reflects our shared identity and supports the development of local artists. The program delivers on the understanding that meaningful engagement in the arts, and growth of the creative sector contributes positively to the dynamism, authenticity, attractiveness and overall competitiveness of the City of Kitchener.

Link: [Learn more about the City of Kitchener's Artist in Residence program](#)

The annual program continues to emphasize a high level of community engagement such as workshops and events, exhibitions in the Rotunda Gallery and Berlin Tower ARTSPACE, collaboration with City and community events, programs and facilities, and participation on Public Art Working Group (PAWG), a subcommittee of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC). The artist-in-residence is provided with an honorarium.

The residency has seen very talented artists deliver programming in Kitchener over the years. Artists who successfully continued to develop their careers locally, nationally, and internationally. Last year saw the passing of the 25th anniversary of the program. Due to the pandemic response, honouring these artists and this anniversary has been postponed until this year in lieu of choosing a 2021 artist in residence. To celebrate the anniversary in a meaningful way A&CI staff has initiated a partnership with Bonn Park Podcast – a local podcast, focused on local creative producers - to conduct a series of interviews with a selection of past artists of the program, to highlight their residency experiences, their successes and current artistic pursuits. In addition, staff hopes to facilitate a showcase in 2022 with all past artists participating. This anniversary has further contributed to re-evaluating how the program is currently serving the needs of the local artists and artistic community.

It has been noted that the majority of past artists have focused on visual art, and thus the need for broader representation among selected artists has been identified. Since 2015, the call for the program has been expanded to include artists working in disciplines other than visual art (a shift developed in close consultation with PAWG and ACAC): performing arts, dance, design, digital and media arts, folk and traditional arts, literature and spoken word, music, multidisciplinary works, opera, theatre, musical theatre and performing arts. In 2019, in hopes of further encouraging proposals from diverse and equity seeking artists, staff adjusted the program description and language to expand the eligibility criteria. While these efforts have resulted in some expansion of both the disciplines and backgrounds of the selected artists, staff and PAWG continue to prioritize the evolution of the program to address persistent barriers for local artists from equity-seeking communities.

REPORT:

To diversify the artists who are served by the Artist in Residence program, staff and PAWG recommend an approach that will offer a pilot mentorship opportunity and will reach out into communities historically underrepresented in the program. To achieve this, a partnership with Textile Magazine is proposed due to its expertise in providing local writers with a nurturing approach to supporting artistic practice, a focus on centering the voices of artists who have been marginalized and showcasing diverse perspectives of this region. This opportunity will also provide beneficial and valuable resources for the selected artist to expand their writing skills, knowledge of the publication process and offer a chance for the opportunity to access the magazine's wide networking resources to establish community connections. Furthermore, this pilot will offer important feedback to staff in order to consider the benefit of future partnerships with local arts organizations, in order to enhance the residency program experience for the artist.

Textile Magazine

Textile Magazine has a history of working with arts practitioners, schools, non-profit organizations, regional governments, and other groups to empower equity-seeking/marginalized junior writers and artists across the region. It is a community-engaged arts organization/publication and mentorship program based in Kitchener-Waterloo.

It was founded in 2018 with the goal of merging community work with writing and publication. Founders saw that some writers face publication barriers and envisioned a magazine that supports a literary landscape that is approachable and inclusive in addition to providing relevant commentary on what is happening in Waterloo Region.

In 2019, Textile published *In Transit*, its first print issue, with a collection of over twenty writers and artists from across the Region of Waterloo. In 2020, it organized a mentorship program that paired curious new writers with more experienced mentors. In 2021, it published *Space(s)*, the second annual edition. The magazine continues to grow and explore opportunities for publishing on a rolling basis, incorporating as a non-profit, and reaching out to collaborate with like-minded organizations.

Its focus is on creating time and space for writing. Their mentorship approach/program seeks to allow the voices of writers to emerge. The work of the team is driven by a desire to build relationships, celebrate our community's strengths and assets, and call attention to important social issues. The magazine already works through a series of workshops and collaborations to support the publication of each issue. All these goals closely align with the mandate of the city's Artist in Residence: community engagement through an artistic process and supporting the development of an artistic practice

Textile Magazine x Artist in Residence

The process for submissions will remain the same. However, the public call for submissions will specifically seek literary proposals. Textile Magazine will provide input into writing the call. Submissions will be jointly adjudicated by PAWG and editorial staff from Textile Magazine. The selected artist and their residency proposal will be the subject of a future staff report to be brought to Council for consideration in the second quarter of 2022. This staff report will outline the residency project and associated budget. Once the artist is selected, Textile will provide mentorship with the outcome of publishing the artist's work in an upcoming issue of the magazine.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The fee for Textile Magazine, \$5000 plus HST, will be paid from the existing Arts and Creative Industries Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

CONSULT – PAWG evaluates the program as a subcommittee of ACAC. A PAWG motion carried on November 8, 2021, that city of Kitchener enter into a mentorship partnership with

Textile Magazine for the 2022 City of Kitchener's Artist in Residence program was considered and supported by ACAC on November 16, 2021.

COLLABORATE – An important component of the Artist-in-Residence program is the requirement for meaningful public engagement. By entering a partnership with Textile Magazine, the City is collaborating with the region's literary community. Furthermore, the chosen artist will have expanded opportunities to deliver the goals of the program as they will both work with City staff and Textile Magazine to identify interesting opportunities for public engagement.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

APPROVED BY: Readman, Justin, General Manager of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Textile Magazine's responsibilities and anticipated timeline of delivery.

APPENDIX A

Textile Magazine will be paid \$5000.00 plus HST for their services.

Textile Magazine's Responsibilities

- co-authoring the call for submission
- joint adjudication with PAWG
- mentorship – offering insight into publication/production, developing writing craft
- working one on one with the artist as well as through workshops and in collaboration with other writers from different populations
- expanding the artist's research methodology
- creating opportunities for community facing events and networking
- promotion of program and artist's work during residency
- publication in the next issue of Textile Magazine
- scheduling consistent updates with city staff

Anticipated Timeline of Delivery

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| • DEC. 6 | Report to Council on Textile Magazine partnership |
| • Week of JAN. 3 | Call for Proposals for 2022 Artist in Residence becomes active |
| • MARCH 14 | Deadline for application and adjudication to follow |
| • Beg. MAY | Report to Council on artist appointment |
| • Mid May | Start of residency |