



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Arts, Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee

From: Karen Rennie, Manager Arts, Culture and Heritage Division

Meeting Date: February 11, 2021

Subject: Report ACHAC21-001
Presentation by Dr. John Marris

Purpose

A report to advise the Arts Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee (ACHAC) of a presentation by Dr. John Marris.

Recommendation

That the Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee approve the recommendation outlined in Report ACHAC21-001, dated February 11, 2021 of the Manager of Arts, Culture and Heritage, as follows:

That the presentation from Dr. John Marris be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budgetary or financial implications associated with the recommendations.

Background

Dr. John Marris is a community artist and consultant working in Peterborough. John came to Canada in 2007 to study for his PhD at Trent University. As an artist, John's work is deeply influenced by the social and physical environment in which he lives, and he is committed to a practice that engages with fellow artists and community members in projects that use the arts in community development and social change. A significant part of his professional art practice over the past three years has been developing programs that facilitate collaborative art making with street-involved youth, mental health patients and people living in poverty. He has worked with the YES Shelter for Youth and Families, Peterborough Regional Health Centre, The Mount Community Centre and Peterborough Youth Services.

His work ranges from photography, both digital and film, to creating and documenting green-wood sculptures, print making, poetry, collage, mosaics, hand-building with clay, and painting. Our relationship to the natural environment and its ability to ground us, has been a consistent theme in his work.

John's methodology and views on collaborative artmaking are similarly grounding:

"Making art together raises our capacity for understanding and empathy. There is an inherent hospitality to sharing the experience of making and creative expression... This is not a conventional art class but a place where we sit down together and make art. There are not teachers and pupils, but fellow travellers with many different experiences and skills working together... To be human is to make marks, self-expression and art-making is essential to health and well-being."

He will present an overview of his work in the community with a focus on the collaborative artmaking initiatives he has been able to continue despite the pandemic.

Submitted by,

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Manager, Arts, Culture and Heritage Division

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