



Supportive Arts Programming Overview

Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow Grant

September 2020 – June 2021

WEEK 1

It's official! We just finished the first week of our new and expanded Supportive Arts program! We are so grateful for a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation that allows us to grow the program over the next 3 years! We've had to modify the launch of Phase 1 due to Covid restrictions so we are taking art "on the road" twice a week to the Live & Learn space in Guelph! What a first week it has been! This week, we spent our time getting to know each other through reflective self-portrait making and magical outdoor moving & mindfulness lead by ECFTA Art Instructor Judy Anderson and Mindfulness Guru Stephanie Toohill.

A major thanks to the team at Live & Learn and our ECFTA instructors, staff and helpers who pivoted, re-imagined and pulled together a wonderful kick off to our program! Together we are making a creative difference in our community.

To find out more and view more photos visit <https://eloracentreforthearts.ca/making-a-creative.../>

WEEK 2

Happy Thanksgiving from our Week #2 participants in our Supportive Arts program! On location at Live & Learn in Guelph, we used brush pens to draw turkeys and then added watercolour washes with bright colours to express ourselves. This week our festive art project was led by Arts Instructor Eileen MacArthur. We finished the morning with a lovely mindfulness meditation & project lead by Instructor Stephanie Lines-Toohill. We made glass jars filled with glitter, sequins and beach glass. Once complete, we shook them up and then quietly watched the pieces settle. A great lesson for us all to remember that when the clutter of our lives gets too overwhelming, we can take a few breathes and envision the chaos slowly settling as we calm our swirling minds.

We also got started on our massive wall mural that we will be creating together over the coming weeks! Thank you Ontario Trillium Foundation for the investment into this amazing community endeavor!

WEEK 3: Week of October 11, 2020

Designing our Avatar characters this week for our Super Hero appreciation mural at Live and Learn Centre Guelph. Working with comic artist and illustrator Katherine Olenic of @artby_katherineolenic and katherine-olenic.com

Mindfulness and Movement led by Steph Toohill with week one of the five senses. Hearing and sound! Shhh can you hear the rainforest with Julie?

WEEK 4:

Vibrant ornamental squash using watercolour and masking fluid this week and amazing "Infinity mirror" collages by ECFTA's Supportive Arts group at Live and Learn in Guelph! We were inspired by artist Yayoi Kusama's "eternal love of pumpkins" and used mirror reflections as part of the artwork. Steph Toohill guided us through our mindfulness session. This week we talked about our sense of touch and explored different textures on a cube, from soft and smooth to rough and coarse. Another wonderful morning with this lovely group of artists!

WEEK 5

Halloween is always the best day/week? of the year in Elora and we brought our lively spirits to @liveandlearncentre in Guelph for ECFTA's all-inclusive, Supportive Arts' Tuesday and Thursday this week! Eerie-Eileen MacArthur led us on an imagined journey to the graveyard to create **Skeleton Scaredy-Stick** wooden centrepieces on chunky maple bases and we had a visit from *Svenghouli* the skeleton to help us with drawing our skeletal anatomy!

Scary-Steph Toohill led our spooked-out version of *Mindfulness & Movement* this week, exploring a third sense; the sense of taste. Everyone called out their favourite food combos!...ice cream on pizza?! Followed by monster moves, where Steph encouraged each participant to demo their best monster dance move!

Thanks to the haunting Chelsea for her helping hands this week.

WEEK 6

A horse of course! This week @Elora Centre for the Arts Supportive Arts program @liveandlearncentre in Guelph, soft and beautifully-smudgy chestnut horse drawings using conte and photocopy transfers, led by talented ECFTA art educator, Eileen MacArthur. We used black, white, sanguine and brown conte to add shading and details. Some artists opted to use a smudging technique and some added extra details. A wonderful group of drawings by all of the artists! Followed by Mindfulness & Movement, where we explored our sense of sight by looking through kaleidoscope windows with the insightful Steph Toohill. The colours helped us see everyday objects

with new perspectives and offered our minds the time to find joy in unexpected places.

WEEK 7

This week [@Elora Centre for the Arts](#)' Supportive Arts, all-inclusive Tuesday and Thursday, we use our imaginations to wander out into nature to paint *en plein air*! Our source photo helped us create these vibrant autumn acrylic landscapes in oranges, greens and blues on black canvas. ECFTA Arts Educator Judy Anderson loved seeing the many variations and expressive brushwork done by all our amazing young artists! Two of our participants even created work using AJ Casson's *Little Island* as inspiration! So great JD and Kerri!

During Mindfulness & Movement with our serenity leader Stephanie Toohill, we used our sense of smell to find moments of mindfulness with sprigs of fresh mint, coriander leaves, cinnamon bark and a drop of lavender oil. Steph and Live and Learn participant Jessie often share a special moment. Looking forward to next week's collaborative tree team-painting with Eileen MacArthur!

WEEK 8

It was *Triangle Tree Forest* week at ECFTA's Supportive Arts program at Live and Learn Centre in Guelph. This table-top tree project incorporated design, collaboration, mark making, patterning and learning from one another! We used oil pastels on spray-painted triangle templates to share ideas about designs for trees in all four seasons. Students volunteered to teach one another a set of marks or pattern to add to their trees. [Eileen MacArthur](#) helped us build on each other's ideas and created a lively, shared forest of trees. The act of repetition encouraged artists to consider variations on a design they already used. For our second project we practiced drawing trees by layering oil pastel, starting with the leaves and then adding the trunk and branches!

During Mindfulness & Movement, Steph Toohill brought us lively choreography cards with "stickman" figures to inspire dance movement in our bodies. These figures mirrored shapes we have been exploring in our first weeks together. Dancing is a big favourite at Live and Learn!

WEEK 9

We're always happy to hear project ideas from our amazing participants at *Live and Learn Centre* about what they would like make in our Tuesday and Thursday Supportive Arts program! This week, we rose to their challenge and learned how to transfer images and names onto coffee mugs to be used in the morning *Coffee Club* program! Each person chose an image that meant something to them. We printed them on "waterslide" paper, transferred them onto the mugs and then baked them to make them dishwasher safe. Super fun!

For our mindfulness moment this week, we embellished "Worry Boxes" as a special place to leave our worries. Every week we have been practicing setting aside worries, as an empowering tool for calm. We hand-embossed foil lids using everyday objects as mark-making tools and lined them with gold and mirror to transform our worries into something we can manage and talk about.

Many thanks to Jason Dudgeon at the Live and Learn Centre for hosting us each week and to ECFTA educators' Steph Toohill and Judy for leading such a lively week!

WEEK 10

We championed the *International Day for People with Disabilities* on Dec 3 this week at @ECFTA's *Supportive Arts* program by celebrating our unique selves through the art of self-portraiture! Using sharpies on Mylar polyester paper, we expressed all the distinct lines in our faces by tracing on Mylar over a photograph. We then painted using acrylic and latex in 3 tonal values to capture highlights, mid-tones and shadows. Once they were dry, we flipped them over so we could see all the strong line work we first did and we loved how the colours muted so nicely through the Mylar.

During Mindfulness & Movement with Stephanie Toohill, we used our choreography cards to connect with our bodies and added words to our Worry Boxes that bring us joy and help us find calming thoughts when we feel anxious.

Big thanks to Eileen MacArthur for preparing this wonderful project, to Judy Anderson for stepping in to guide the classes on Eileen's behalf and to Lianne Carter for bringing some happy energy to our week!

WEEK 11

It was *Ho Ho Ho* full-steam ahead towards the holidays this week with our Supportive Arts group! ECFTA's Arts Educator Judy Anderson helped us get Christmas-crafty with holiday ornaments. We really enjoyed each creating our own snow-globe, glass-ball ornament with a woodsy caribou snow-scene inside, followed by a chunky wood-slice snowman!

During Steph Toohill's *Mindfulness and Meditation*, we continued our work with our Worry Boxes to help our minds focus on feeling joy and calm.

We finished up the morning with sound and movement, and played hand instruments for group meditation. Ahhhh!

WEEK 12

Our final week of the year @Elora Centre for the Arts' Supportive Arts program @liveandlearnguelph was full of winter magic and our hearts were definitely filled with gratitude for the time we've had together this Fall, despite the many obstacles. This week Eileen MacArthur led a solstice winter mashup canvas, inspired by both the work of French Canadian painter Clarence Gagnon and Contemporary Canadian artist Kim Dorland, whose vibrant paintings prompted our colour choices. So many lovely interpretations and beautiful moody winter landscapes painted by these expressive artists! 28 of these canvases will be on view through to January 15, 2021 in the window of the Gregory Oakes Law office, 155 Geddes St, in downtown Elora.

Many thanks to the Elora Fergus Arts Council for organizing this display!

Stephanie Toohill also provided a moment of self reflection with her mirror box that reflects "a very important person". She quietly engaged each of our group, explaining that there was a very special person inside the box. Each participant expected to see someone else, but their hearts were warmed when they saw simply a reflection of themselves. Some truly beautiful moments!

The arts offer us a mindfulness tool that can create a space of connection and calm in a stressful world. When art makers transform materials, sounds and movement into an expression outside of themselves, they are engaging in the world without words. Thank-you so much to the resourceful and resilient artists @liveandlearnguelph for sharing a creative space with us every week. We all have much to learn from their brave, kind and wise hearts.

This wonderful program is made possible through the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

WEEK 13 Virtual

ECFTA's Supportive Arts program reconnected with our good friends @Live and Learn this week for a live zoom session, hosted by Daniella Bonacci. This week, we explored Rainbows during a Noodle and Doodle time with Judy and Steph!

We noodled the science of rainbows and how colours make us feel and doodled a colour-wheel rainbow eyeball. It was great to see everyone again and to use our mindfulness tools with our worry box and calming jar. We're looking forward to Friday's Dragon Eyes!

WEEK 14

Our *Noodle and Doodle* Supportive Arts' Friday with Live and Learn was fierce and fire-breathing as we explored the world of Eastern and Western DRAGONS! We used our main gallery @ECFTA to host our zoom session with Bree and the Supportive Arts group participants.

Our art project was laser-focused as we each designed our own dragon-eyeball with scales and gradient colours!

We ended the class by talking about our "dragon powers" and played the dragon name-game, inventing our own distinct dragon name. Steph learned that her secret dragon name is *Blazing Fire-Heart* and Judy chose *Flying Sharp-Claw*! Fun!!

WEEK 15

We meet via zoom today with our Supportive Arts' Tuesday *Live & Learn* group and kept the colour wheel turning from last week, as we explored a few "chakra" points and gave them glowing colours to help us both express and release our feelings. Our light rings of colour then flowed into a reflective Kandinsky-concentric-circle-inspired Valentine's heart drawing using coloured pencils on black as we explored eye-popping colour combinations and how they gave us the feels!

Steph shared her worry box as always and we finished our session by playing the name game and each choosing our own unique Heart Name.... Cinnamony Dazzling-Red Black-Heart! Next week, we take on the Year of the OX to celebrate the Lunar New Year and marvel at his perseverance and resilience. Something our Supportive Arts' participants have all been amazing at this past year!

WEEK 16

Our Supportive Arts live Zoom with the amazing participants at Live and Learn today was bullish fun as we celebrated the Chinese New Year and the year of the Ox! We talked about the attributes of the ox and how we have all been strong, resilient and persevered over these past few months. We are grateful that the Ox has come to carry us on his strong back into 2021!

Thanks to ECFTA's Sonia Cheng for helping us with learn a couple of phrases in Mandarin. We all practiced saying *ni hao* and *gong hei fat choi*!

Our remote art project turned out fantastic, as each artist blocked out an ox on paper, used red as an accent colour to represent joy and good luck, and we even added the Chinese symbol for happiness. We finished up the session by learning about the Chinese zodiac and our birth year animal! We can't wait to take our program back on the to Guelph, in-person next week!

WEEK 17

For our first week back to in-person learning with Supportive Arts at Live and Learn in Guelph, Eileen MacArthur led us deep into an imaginary jungle and used various approaches to representation including tracing, copying and inventing!

We looked at the work of French, Naïve painter, Henri Rousseau and made conte transfer drawings of tigers and shaded them in using white, black and sanguine conte. Our Rousseau photocopy was a perfect map for where to place colour and value. We then invented shapes for leaves, trees, plants and flowers and surrounded the tigers with a painted landscape. We considered the black paper space as part of the composition and thought about how we wanted to incorporate the tiger into the jungle. We also talked about our role as viewer. Is the tiger looking at us? Is he/she calm or about to pounce? Or hiding? We looked at our finished artworks and tried to assess what mood and narrative we achieved with the combined elements.

For our Mindfulness session, we remained in the jungle with Steph Toohill as she encouraged us to release our worries into the Worry Box and used our inner roar to champion power moves and raised the roof along with the song "Eye of the Tiger."

We then listened for calming sounds in the jungle as we played soft sounds to "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and used our breath for a quiet meditation with thoughts of soaring eagles in a vast clear sky.

WEEK 18

March 9 & 11, 2021

This week at Supportive Arts, we were once again live and in-person @Live and Learn where we celebrated the quiet and confident tradition of still life painting. Working alongside instructor Judy Anderson, our 28 artists worked on 10 x 10 square canvases and considered composition as we each arranged a trio of fruit in red, green and yellow.

We discussed foreground, middle ground and background and each young artist learned how to ground their fruit with strong shadows, create dimension with paint and even added a bubble wrap motif to their backgrounds. An amazing job working with colour and composition this week!

While our canvases were drying, our soulful Steph Toohill reminded us to give thanks to our minds and bodies by using movements that helped us feel powerful. We shook up a fruit salad dance party with songs that used fruity words and stretched as far as Saturn for planet power! We played instruments softly in our wind down into meditation with calming music.

WEEK 19

Supportive Arts is a weekly opportunity to release our worries to the sky, as we breathe in our favourite colours and make space in our hearts for mindfulness art making. This week we were Cloud Weaving with the uplifting Stephanie Lines-Toohill, as we learned how to hoop weave with warp and weft threads and linen filled with hand-written words of things we love.

Weaving can be very challenging as it requires lots of small movements of dexterity with our fingers. Our friends at Live and Learn are always resourceful and we supported each other to persevere, while we listened to calming music, allowing our focus to drift and flow in the freedom to create.

Resilience and team spirit carried us as our Dream Clouds floated onto our looms, woven with calming care. We added a tiny clay bird bead to sing songs of joy and celebrate all the things we love!

WEEK 20

This week at Supportive Arts we dove deep into the sea to explore the largest creatures with which we share our planet and created Japanese-inspired whale illustrations, using Chinese ink brushes and pen and ink! We started the morning by learning about the incredible majesty of whales, their massive size and how they vocalize beneath the water to communicate and echolocate their food. We learned that an average sperm whale is as long as the Live and Learn Centre itself and that their heart weighs an average of 2 Jason's, our incredible Live and Learn leader!

It was a week of new and challenging materials as ECFTA Arts Educator, Judy Anderson worked alongside our participants to harness the beauty of India ink, walnut ink, crimson-red acrylic ink and calligraphy dip pens. Each artist created their own unique and beautiful version of a whale, compete with Japanese *Kanji* symbols and red seal *chop* marks.

During our Mindfulness time, we listened to “whale music” and discussed the difference between illustration and drawing. Our Mindfulness facilitator and wordsmith, Steph Toohill helped us to illustrate our inky whales by adding poetic watery words and sentences, using our dip pens. It was a great week for new challenges and exploring our creativity using words and images!

WEEK 21

Hello Easter! What a light, bright and sensory-filled project this week at Supportive Arts, in person, at Live and Learn in Guelph! We celebrated Spring and the holiday with ECFTA Arts Educator Eileen MacArthur leading the way down the Easter trail as we made Easter-inspired bouquets with readily found objects and a variety of materials for a sensory buffet! This project was all about marks, design, pattern, reconsidering familiar objects for art making and composing everything into a finished piece.

To create our centrepieces sculptures, we focused on using touch and sight together as we figured out how to hold onto different objects in order to draw on them. We had hands-on fun squishing and rolling sweet scented plasticine, as we watched the plasticine colours swirl and mix to use as the base to hold our “bouquet” flowers and eggs. We then drew colourful patterns on the slippery glass cups and considered transparency and colour mixing. To create the “bouquet” itself, we drew on multiple surfaces with complex shapes and textures, including fabric flowers, plastic eggs and small birds. We then drew patterns on paper eggs and then considered composition as we assembled all the pieces together! During *Mindfulness and Movement* with our own Stephanie Lines-Toohill, we sent our worries flying out the door and welcomed in Spring as we bounced about to Easter music! What a happy hoppy week!

WEEK 22 ONWARD (VIRTUAL/ZOOM)

The month of May literally “Zoomed” by with our friends at Supportive Arts as we continued to work together online, through our twice weekly Zoom sessions. We all miss being together, but it’s great to see everyone’s smiling face on-screen without a mask on!

Our thanks to Daniella Bonacci and Bree Live & Learn Centre in Guelph for their commitment to sustaining this important connection during lockdown. It means so much to everyone involved! We accomplished a lot with just paper and pencils at our disposal. Led by Elora Centre for the Arts Educators, team Noodle and Doodle, Stephanie Lines-Toohill, Judy Anderson and Eileen MacArthur, we looked at examples of paper sculptures including origami, pop up books, paper cut outs from China, woven paper, paper dolls and snowflakes. We talked about the conditions that turn a drawing into a sculpture (folding, gluing, layering) and how a drawing is 2-D and a sculpture is 3-D, then

made pop-up Mother's Day cards with a fold out bouquet. We talked about warm and cool colours and how to use them to make colours come forward or recede.

Next we used "feeling" adjectives to invent our own monsters with adjective-inspired face parts and colours. It was fun imaging the various adjective-noun combos, such as "bubbly horns"!

We then considered the art of the mandala and used our hands to create a meditative concentric pattern to give each other a hand-drawn hi-5! Mark making is always an important theme during our sessions and how marks can tell us about texture, space and mood. We completed a step by step tree drawing and used different types of marks to define each part of the composition and looked at Van Gogh's marks in his work and how he used different marks to describe different objects. We held up our finished drawings to make a forest on our screens and talked about how doodling marks for feelings can be a good way to strengthen mind/body connections!

Finally, this month we thought about our favourite foods that we love eating at home and miss eating in restaurants and how foods nourish us in so many ways. We topped our hand-drawn pizzas and stacked our burgers with our fave toppings.

All month our mindfulness Facilitator Stephanie helped us to celebrate teamwork and friendship inspired by each of our weekly themes. We used Tai Chi hand movements to create healing energy light balls and threw these to our on-line friends to feel connected as a caring team.

Thanks to Simon for helping in the classroom all month! June is here and we're excited to share more art-making this month! This program has been made possible by the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow grant.

JUNE 2021

Check out this massive mural that our Supportive Arts participants created with our head mural guru Judy Anderson! Earlier this year, we had fun picking the Super Hero qualities that best suit each of our unique personalities. Then we created the avatar design that went along with those super hero traits! We picked the best quotes that express how we feel about inclusiveness. The project took us several months to complete, but man! What a vivid reminder for us all to embrace our best super-hero selves and support each other.

The mural also recognizes the ongoing support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow Grant, as well as International Day of Persons with Disabilities (which happens every year - this year it will be December 3, 2021). The mural is now a permanent piece of art at the amazing Live & Learn Centre in Guelph.