

a RE-birth

Despite the unpredictability of the last couple of years, 2022 turned out to be incredible.

At the end of January, RE-create launched RE-shape, an expressive arts group for youth to explore their experience of the pandemic.

In the spring, it felt like we were finally emerging from lockdowns. Our programming calendar started to look more like our pre-pandemic schedule with field trips to local galleries, art-film nights at the Gasworks and exploring art crawl. We also had the pleasure of welcoming two placement



students: Claire, a co-op student from Hamilton District Christian High School, and Hannah, a student in the Act Five gap-year program at Redeemer University.

With the easing of restrictions, we were able to get back into the community and host workshops at partner agencies, like Brennan House, The Living Rock and the Youth Wellness Centre.

We initiated a new partnership with the Hamilton Public Library's Central Makerspace to introduce youth to its incredible resources and helpful staff. Malcolm Lau facilitated a series of workshops on machine embroidery, laser cutting, creating vinyl sticker and 3D printing.

In May and June, we had great opportunities to connect with the broader Hamilton community and share what we do. These included: hosting a youth makers' market and open house in our studio space for Doors Open Hamilton; setting up a youth makers' market and button-making station at the Locke St Community Fair; and hosting the Art Zone at the Barton Village Festival where folks could design characters to be added to our RE-create Video Game.

Like every non-profit, we are always looking for ways to fund our dreams. Thanks to a gener-

ous donation from the Burton Family Foundation, we were able to breathe new life into our technology at the studio!

It also funded the creation of Hamilton's R.O.M. – RE-create Outdoor Museum. This is a miniature art gallery, similar to a little free library. Brock McNichols, a friend of RE-create, generously used his carpentry skills to build the gallery structure, which has been installed outside the Gasworks. Passers-by are invited to stop and look, take a piece of art or leave one for someone else. We invite you to come check it out.

The summer brought lots of laughter, fun and creativity to RE-create. Thanks to funding we received through the Canada Summer Jobs program, we hired two summer students, Anna and Olivia, as well as a Youth Artist in Residence, Farhana. All three brought a lot of talent and expertise to RE-create.

Anna led an anime workshop, Olivia taught youth how to assemble a quilt block and Farhana led two workshops: one on zine-making and another on digital drawing & character design. As part of Farhana's residency, she spent the summer writing and illustrating her own comic RE-medial Quests, which culminated in her solo exhibition at Hamilton ▶

Public Library's Central Branch's Gallery 4 Annex. You can view the comic online at webtoons.com.

We wrapped up the summer with our annual Tie Dye BBQ, which was a perfect summer send-off! In September, we launched RE-connect, a new partnership between RE-create and Willowbridge Community Services that invited youth with intellectual disabilities to come and check out RE-create Outreach Art Studio. It has been



Youth working with henna designs

so exciting to see this project come to fruition after being thwarted by COVID 19.

After more than five years, Emma stepped out of her role as Youth Outreach Worker and Community Developer. To send her off, we hosted the most "Emma" themed party we could, including glitter curtains, disco balls and Hawaiian pizza. She will definitely be missed.

While endings involve a good-bye, they also mark a new beginning. And we are thrilled to welcome Marie who takes on this role.

Throughout the last couple of years, and as 2022 winds down, one thing that kept coming to mind are these words penned hundreds of years ago by Julian of Norwich: "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall



Youth building clay at a pottery workshop

be well." As we continue to rebuild youth engagement and remind folks that "hey, we're still here," my hope and prayer for RE-create and the youth is that "all shall be well." ●



Megarrah Buxton
Studio Coordinator

New Youth Outreach Worker and Community Developer

This fall has been a season of transition for RE-create, as I (Marie) began my new role as the Youth Outreach Worker and Community Developer. My long history with RE-create makes this position particularly meaningful and it is with great eagerness that I step into Emma's shoes.



Marie Sinclair



Emma Silverthorne

Marie and I (Emma) had two weeks of overlap and it was exciting to see her connect with the familiar faces I had been working with for so long. In my three years as Outreach Worker, I had the privilege of getting to know many youth and creating great relationships with

community partners. My role at RE-create allowed my playful, creative and people-first self to thrive and I loved introducing youth to the beautiful community that also embraced me.

I am excited to see how RE-create continues to build community and art-focused connections in Hamilton. ●



samples from
a paint pouring
workshop

There are many established relationships with community partners, such as the Notre Dame Youth Shelter, Brennan House and the Youth Wellness Centre, that I am happy to foster and grow. I look forward to building new connections and continuing to make sure that RE-create lands in the laps of the youth who need it most.

Often on our outreach walk route to the Central Public Library and down James Street North, we see the stark reality of people struggling to survive. This makes programs like RE-create, which provides connection and community, all the more relevant. RE-create continues to build momentum, one connection at a time and I look forward to seeing the conversations, memories and art that will be produced around the RE-create tables in the winter months.

re: prefix; once more, afresh anew create: to bring something into existence

RE-create, as its name suggests, is about creating something anew, again, a rediscovery.

This is something the program is in the midst of doing — some of it by choice and some as a result of the pandemic.

We are sad to say goodbye to Emma, RE-create's Outreach Worker and Community Developer, as she embarks on her clinical career as a psychotherapist at Shalem. And we are excited to welcome Marie who comes with a deep passion for RE-create and is an interdisciplinary artist.

With the arrival and ongoing presence of the pandemic, RE-create has had to find creative ways to continue operating. We sought to maintain connections while keeping physically distant and we've had to pivot numerous times. As a result of these changes to how we work, we have taken the opportunity to look at what we do well, what we need to tweak, and what we need to let go of.

We've also asked ourselves important questions, including: who is RE-create seeking to serve? With the pandemic and repeated shutdowns our numbers have understandably dropped, but we know that mental health issues have risen. At-risk youth did not disappear; they just haven't been able to seek help as they used to.

COVID-19 continues and we are working out ways to exist alongside it. How do we connect with youth when, as a society, we have become used to fewer social interactions?



Youth gathering at the summer tie-dye BBQ

In some ways, we wonder if people feel more isolated now than during the start of the pandemic? When lockdowns were new, many of us found creative ways to socially connect while staying physically distant. Now we are trying to resume life when we have become accustomed to being more virtual. Realistically, we still need face-to-face connections.

RE-create seeks to be present in a tactile, non-digital, in-person way that fosters connections especially with youth living on the fringe. ●



Betty JB Brouwer
Artistic Director



RE-shape launched three expressive arts groups (4 weeks each) for youth to explore their pandemic experience. It was led by Emma, and Kelsey Dykstra, who is an art therapy student and former RE-create summer student. This was an amazing opportunity to combine Emma's psychotherapeutic skills with her love for art and the youth at RE-create.

In the RE-shape program, youth were able to put an image to feelings they didn't have words for. This helped them develop their own visual vocabulary and make art with other people who had shared pandemic experiences. Youth experimented with drawing,

collage, music therapy and Kintsugi — the Japanese art of repairing broken vessels.

Each group was different, but youth reported feeling more calm, connected and hopeful throughout all the sessions! ●

"I loved my four weeks attending RE-shape. It was a perfect space for having productive conversations about my emotions related to the pandemic, and the therapeutic exercises were also very inspiring. In the end I had a ton of take-aways about how to feel better in my life" – RE-shape participant

Battle of the Brushes



On November 19 at the Hamilton Craft Studios, Battle of the Brushes made a vigorous comeback! After a three-year halt due to the pandemic, 13 artists painted live in support of RE-create Outreach Art Studio. Over 130 attended and helped raise \$6,800 that will directly go to providing free art supplies, workshop opportunities, programming and to provide a safe, inclusive space to youth in Hamilton. As part of our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, a portion of our art auction revenue was to the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre to support their Indigenous programming.

We thank our sponsors: Cogeco, P.V.&V. Insurance, Cinnamon Toast, The Compassion Project, MP Matthew Green, Revive Physiotherapy, Ian Brisbin MHA Law, Locke Psychotherapy Group, Outerspace Landscaping and Cottage 13.

Our team at Shalem Mental Health Network and RE-create Outreach Art Studio also thank the participating artists, our volunteers, the planning committee, staff, raffle prize donors, event partners; DJ Mac, Merit Brewery, Collective Arts, Jamaican Patty Shack, Hamilton Craft Studios and Hamilton Arts Council. So many people played a special part in this event to make it a memorable night. Thank you! ●

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RE-create is a program of Shalem Mental Health Network. All donations over \$10 will receive a charitable receipt.
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