

toronto.com

Toronto Coach Terminal mural to help build community through art

WhatsOn Jul 25, 2017 by [Justin Skinner](https://toronto-author/justin-skinner/54D31846-9175-4ADF-9F8A-F160ADFF28AD/) (<mailto:jkskinner@toronto.com>) City Centre Mirror

From visitors who arrive in Toronto by bus to cab drivers in the city's downtown to residents at a local women's residence, a bright new mural at the Toronto Coach Terminal will brighten the day of countless onlookers.

The mural, a colourful and abstract work, will capture the notion of movement - a fitting choice for the exterior of a bus terminal.

The piece is currently being painted by a team of volunteers that include public art organization The STEPS Initiative, established and up-and-coming artists and residents of the YWCA Elm Centre, who helped shape the mural's design.

The residents of the housing building will add their own personal touches to the mural, sharing their culture through designs of their own choosing.

"I'm part of Mohawk Nation, and when (the Mohawks) first came to the area, they called it tkaronto - where the trees meet the water," said Cheryl Smith, a resident of Winona's Place, a part of the YWCA Elm Centre. "I want to add a canoe to the tapestry of movement."

Smith added that residents of Winona's Place know Edward Street - which the mural faces - as "diesel alley" because of the large number of taxis, buses and vehicles that travel along it. By adding a cheerful and upbeat mural, the artists are turning a drab wall on a nondescript city street into something that can be enjoyed by those who live, drive or visit there.

"It's so joyful coming out here, doing the work and just looking out at the street now," she said. "And people come by and talk to us and thank us for making it nice. It's really helping us build good relationships with people here."

The mural will span two storeys, with the lower level stretching more than 150 feet. While residents of the Elm Centre will benefit from the added brightness on a regular basis, it will undoubtedly make for a better welcome for visitors who come to Toronto by bus, with public art serving as their introduction to the city.

"The piece will be seen by more than two million travelers every year as they come through the terminal," said Anjuli Solanki of the STEPS Initiative. "It's already brightened people's experience as we've worked on it, and we've had cab drivers, pedestrians and the women living across the street all happy to see it going up."

The plan for the mural started to come together a year ago, with the STEPS Initiative partnering with the YWCA Elm Centre shortly thereafter. Sean Martindale, the lead artist on the project, said the partnership made for a great fit.

"The whole mural's an abstract piece, but it was inspired by workshops we had at the YWCA, the function of the space and the architecture itself," he said. "We're conveying a sense of motion and movement, partly because this is a transit hub and partly to recognize the journeys of the women at the Y and to recognize Toronto as a whole being a city of immigrants."

The mural is expected to be completed by the end of July.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Some updates were made to this story to reflect that the women working on the mural are from an affordable housing building on site, not a shelter. July 28, 2017

by [Justin Skinner](https://toronto-author/Justin-Skinner/54d31846-9175-4adf-9f8a-f160adff28ad/) (<mailto:jkskinner@toronto.com>)

Justin Skinner is a reporter with toronto.com and Metroland Media Toronto.

Email: jkskinner@toronto.com (<mailto:jkskinner@toronto.com>) [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/torontodotcom) (<https://www.facebook.com/torontodotcom>) [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com/CCMirror) (<https://www.twitter.com/CCMirror>)

Tags: [Community](https://toronto-community/) ([/toronto-community/](https://toronto-community/)) - [Wellness](https://toronto-community/wellness/) ([/toronto-community/wellness/](https://toronto-community/wellness/)), [Community](https://toronto-community/) ([/toronto-community/](https://toronto-community/)), [WhatsOn](https://toronto-whatson/) ([/toronto-whatson/](https://toronto-whatson/))

Do you know how to improve content on this page?

[Send us Feedback](https://pages/feedback/) ([/pages/feedback/](https://pages/feedback/))

[Contact Us \(/news-static/73842-insidetoronto-contact-us/\)](/news-static/73842-insidetoronto-contact-us/) [Advertising Terms \(http://www.metroland.com/advertising-terms-and-conditions\)](http://www.metroland.com/advertising-terms-and-conditions) [Newsletter Signup \(/community-static/4220277-toronto-newsletter-sign-up/\)](/community-static/4220277-toronto-newsletter-sign-up/) [Terms of use \(http://www.metroland.com/terms-of-use\)](http://www.metroland.com/terms-of-use) [Corporate Privacy Policy \(http://notices.torstar.com/privacy-policy/index.html\)](http://notices.torstar.com/privacy-policy/index.html) [Accessibility \(https://www.toronto.com/community-story/8859238-accessibility/\)](https://www.toronto.com/community-story/8859238-accessibility/)

