

Date: June 7, 2023

Hello everyone,

My name is Mushtari Afroz and I am a GTA based dancer and choreographer and was Artscape Gibraltar Point's (AGP) Winter Island artist in residence in 2022. My residency project at AGP last year would not have been possible without your wholehearted participation and co-operation in the work that culminated in a series of dance films and a short documentary. The artistic outcomes brought to the surface a unique narrative of the island that most often stays hidden from us - the city-dwellers. Simply to softly remind you of the artistic project that I completed last year on the islands, here is a link to the short documentary film that resulted from the process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC751C8CLrk>

What am I doing during my residency at AGP?

I am coming back to AGP again with a new project. This time I am conducting a self-directed residency from June 19 to 26, 2023. During my residency, I will be conducting an artistic research exploration in the public spaces within your residential neighbourhoods. The week-long research will investigate different visual qualities of your streetscape as well as observe the social dynamics of everyday life that unfolds within your residential areas.

When is the participatory event?

The artistic research will culminate in an interactive participatory event on Saturday, June 24, 2023 in which I cordially invite you to take part and discover your familiar neighbourhoods anew. Bring a friend, a neighbour with you and immerse yourself in various fun-filled activities that I have been developing for the past 8 months. In fact, the early stages of my research exploration took place in your neighbourhood in Fall 2022.

What activities are part of the event?

The activities will include walking in your neighbourhood, observing and framing the built environment as well as social dynamics in public spaces (and some quirky stuff!). Please bring your cell phone or a camera so that you can take photos of things that you discover on your street. We will use them also as references during the group discussion.

How long will the event last and where to meet?

The event will last for [2 hours in total. Saturday, June 24: 1:30pm to 3:30pm. I encourage you to arrive by 1:20pm.](#)

We meet [at the corner of Bayview Avenue and Sixth Street.](#)

How to sign up for the event?

I encourage you to sign up for the event by [confirming your participation at the following email: \[kathakexchange5@gmail.com\]\(mailto:kathakexchange5@gmail.com\).](#)

There is no deadline for signing up but it would be useful to know by Thursday, June 22 so that I can organize materials and other logistics.

[The important details of the event - location, date, time, what to bring etc - can also be found on the poster attached.](#)

Finally, I would like to express my deepest and sincerest gratitude to Luisa Milan - your friend, your neighbour and a very active and responsible citizen of your community - for helping me connect with you again. Community members like her are needed more than ever before because they are the ones who hold the community together. Her contribution to my projects along with everybody else's on the island will be cherished in my memory for as long as I live.

Thank you everyone on Wards Island and on Algonquin Island for taking the time to read and engage with my invitation email. The event poster is attached to this email and I look forward to seeing you at the event.

Best Regards,

Mushtari

Mushtari's Short Bio:

Based in Toronto Mushtari Afroz is a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and an emerging artist-researcher in public spaces. In her more than 20-year career as a professional dancer and choreographer she has created and presented multiple original works across Canada and the US. While she continues to create choreographic work for the stage, her current artistic practice is developed outside of the stage and explores residents' multi-sensory engagement with public spaces within residential areas as a means to enhance the sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods. Incorporating sensory walking, choreographed movements, participatory practice and tactical urbanism her practice is concerned with the functions, role and purpose of public spaces within residential neighbourhoods that have been linked to the well-being and the quality of life of residents as well as to the development of a sense of community.