

LASSONDE
ART
TRAIL

LASSONDE ART TRAIL
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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Artist impression of the proposed Art Trail on Villiers Island courtesy Norm Li AG+I.



THE LASSONDE ART
TRAIL WILL BE A FREE,
OPEN-AIR DESTINATION
FOR OUTSTANDING
CONTEMPORARY ART FROM
AROUND THE WORLD.

SITUATED ON THE
EXTRAORDINARY SITE OF A
NEW ISLAND IN THE TORONTO
HARBOUR ARCHIPELAGO,
LAT BELIEVES PUBLIC ART
ENHANCES WELLBEING,
GUIDES RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE
AND OPENS OUR EYES TO
HOW WE STEWARD THE
ENVIRONMENT.



CHAIR'S LETTER TO THE BOARD AND MEMBERS

I am proud to present LAT's first Annual Report 2024, which marks a pivotal moment in what has been an extraordinary journey from concept to reality. When my father, Pierre, first envisioned creating an art trail that would inspire, connect, and transform Toronto, I'm not sure that he fully knew the magnitude of the project we were embarking on. Soon, my father and I realised that this was something unprecedented. We would be bringing together art and nature at the new Biidaasige Park on Ookwemin Minising Island in a way that would be unique in Canada.

The journey that is bringing LAT to fruition today has been one of perseverance, collaboration, and unwavering belief in our mission. What began almost a decade ago as conversations about possibilities grew into countless meetings, strategic decisions, and the careful cultivation of relationships that proved essential to the organization's successful emergence. We have navigated the complexities of establishing a new charity while simultaneously developing partnerships with artists, community leaders, and stakeholders who share this vision.

This past year has been foundational—not just in laying the groundwork for operations, but in proving that our ambitious goal of creating a 4.2 km open-air cultural experience on the site of one of the world's most significant urban flood protection projects could indeed become a reality. This incredible adventure has taught me that transformative projects require both bold vision and meticulous attention to the details that make dreams sustainable.

My father and I have an unwavering belief that free access to outstanding art in the outdoors can spark dialogue, foster connection and wellbeing, and bring new perspectives to shared spaces. As I look toward our June 2026 opening, I see the culmination of years of dedicated work, and the beginning of LAT's role in building a healthier, more vibrant, and culturally rich city.

To our donors, collaborators, volunteers, and supporters who believed in this vision before others could see it—your trust and generosity have been the foundation upon which everything else has been built. Thank you for joining me on this remarkable venture.

Julie Lassonde
Board Chair



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION



New islands in Port Lands. photo courtesy Jonathan Careless

2024 marked the successful completion of our inaugural year as a new charity with a clear mandate: to create a free, open-air destination for outstanding contemporary art on Toronto's waterfront.

Our achievements this year reflect the strength of LAT's core values and strategic approach. We have successfully established the critical infrastructure needed to support LAT's mission— building robust partnerships, engaging with brilliant artists, and establishing international networks and support. This work, along with implementing a foundational structure for operations and staff, will ensure LAT's long-term sustainability and impact.

LAT is on track to deliver a dynamic outdoor experience that will be site-responsive to Toronto's waterfront revitalization and unique in Canada. Our holistic approach to artist engagement, partnerships, and stakeholder collaboration has positioned us strongly for our June 2026 launch.

Central to LAT's mission is our commitment to create an inspiring environment for residents and visitors to have meaningful encounters with art. By providing free access to art in the outdoors, encouraging collaboration, and participating in the exchange of ideas, we will ensure that LAT contributes to building a thriving city.

A highlight of this year has been visiting LAT's extraordinary future site. We were lucky enough to walk on the new riverbed before it held water, and spent hours across all seasons exploring the development of the new island park with artists, stakeholders, advisory members, and donors. A huge thank you to Waterfront Toronto and Ellis Don staff for facilitating site tours and sharing their expertise and knowledge of this special site.

Looking ahead to 2025, we will be hard at work producing and installing artworks, building integrated art infrastructure into the park system, and planning the visitor experience programs that will make LAT a transformative destination.

I extend my deep appreciation to our donors, collaborators, volunteers, and stakeholders, whose continued support and partnership enables our success.

Chloë Catán
Executive Director



Photo courtesy of Vid Ingelevics and Ryan Walker





Photos courtesy Vid Ingelevics and Ryan Walker

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrated the first of two \$5 million commitments for permanent artworks and the generous \$1.5M contribution towards programming and operations from the Pierre Lassonde Family Foundation

Launched public identity, with specially commissioned logo, website and social

Announced artist Kent Monkman as first permanent art commission

Launched competition for second permanent artwork

Established two major partnerships with more in the works

Celebrated the renaturalized Don River mouth flowing into Lake Ontario

Established an internationally esteemed Art Selection Committee

Welcomed our first new board appointment since incorporation

Expanded the circle of donors and founders with major pledges from corporations and individuals

Confirmed our first founding level pledge of \$1M

Introduced LAT to a global audience at the 2024 World Art Foundations Summit

ART & NATURE

In September, LAT announced that internationally renowned Cree artist Kent Monkman was commissioned to contribute a permanent sculpture. Monkman's work is the first of two major permanent commissions that will anchor a dynamic program of rotating artworks by Canadian and international artists, exhibited on a series of interconnected outdoor locations.

LAT celebrated the birth of the new Don River mouth in the fall, when the re-naturalized riverbed was filled and began to flow into Lake Ontario. This historic feat of engineering is part of the massive flood protection project in the Port Lands and the major milestone brings us one step closer to the day when LAT will bring exceptional contemporary art to the banks of the new river.



Photo courtesy Vid Ingelevics and Ryan Walker

KENT MONKMAN

“I’m honoured to have been asked to be part of this project. Given the importance of water to us as Cree people, all Indigenous people—really everyone—it means a great deal to me to create an artwork that will live on the shores of Lake Ontario in Toronto, where I have lived and worked for over three decades. I want to create an artwork that sends a message to this city—which is home to people from many diverse backgrounds from all over the world—referencing, in a playful way, the many layers of Indigenous presence here.”

Kent Monkman

Kent Monkman and Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow
Photo courtesy Vid Ingelevics and Ryan Walker



PERMANENT ARTWORK COMPETITION

LAT also made significant progress on its second permanent commission. In consultation with our Art Advisory Committee, we announced five international artists shortlisted to develop a proposal for a major permanent artwork on the Lassonde Art Trail: **Shezad Dawood, Nicole Eisenman, Shilpa Gupta, Yinka Shonibare and Joana Vasconcelos**. LAT hosted each of the shortlisted artists and their studios for a tour of the Art Trail's future home to ensure proposals were site-responsive, and matched the outstanding natural setting and vibrant urban context. The winner of the competition will be announced in fall 2025.

Left to right: Art Advisory member Cliff Lauson,
LAT Artistic Director November Paynter,
Art Advisory member Tairone Bastien,
LAT Executive Director Chloe Catan.
Photo courtesy Vid Ingelevics and Ryan Walker



SHEZAD DAWOOD
NICOLE EISENMAN
SHILPA GUPTA
YINKA SHONIBARE
JOANA VASCONCELOS



PARTNERSHIPS

PUBLIC ART FUND

In 2024, a major cultural partnership between **Public Art Fund** in New York City and LAT was announced, connecting storied Central Park to the Lassonde Art Trail through a co-commissioned public artwork by artist **Monira Al Qadiri**.

The landmark partnership with Public Art Fund marks the first time the U.S.-based organization has co-commissioned an artwork with a Canadian organization. The two organizations worked together to select artist Al Qadiri and develop a project that will be unveiled in summer 2025 at Doris C. Freedman Plaza, at the southeast entrance of Central Park. It will then come to Toronto's waterfront and exhibited on the Lassonde Art Trail in September 2026.



Monira Al Qadiri, photo Zuzanna Glod

PARTNERSHIPS YORK UNIVERSITY

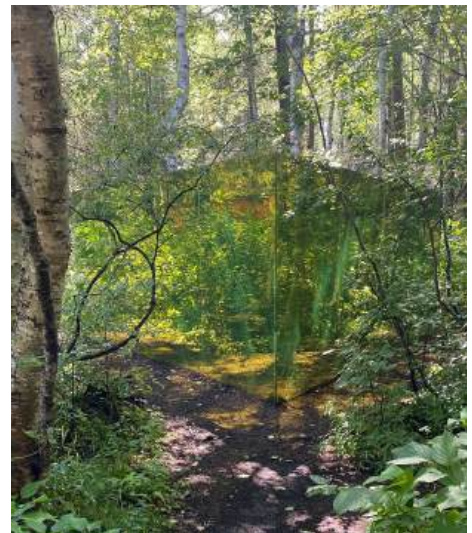
Closer to home, LAT has established a partnership with the York University L.L. Odette **Sculptor in Residence Program**, selecting Toronto-based artist Kara Hamilton to research and fabricate a sculpture in collaboration with York students.

The LAT-York University partnership gives Hamilton time, space and support to delve into exciting research with York students and explore ecological materials for public art with the aim to create a work that is empathetic to natural ecosystems on the future art trail. The final artwork will be exhibited as part of LAT's opening program in 2026.



RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

The LAT team has worked to expand its professional network of Canadian and International artists and arts organizations through outreach including the initiation of site tours, studio visits, public talks, and both in-person and virtual meetings. In 2024 the team visited public art at the Venice Biennale; Italy; Naoshima, Japan; AKG, LACMA, Public Art Fund, Madison Square Park Conservancy, Glenstone, Storm King and Art Omi, USA; Compton Verney and Goodwood, UK; Jardins de Métis and Prince Edward County among other locations in Canada. We were honoured to be invited to introduce LAT to a global audience at the 2024 World Art Foundations Summit in Lisbon, Portugal.



Photos taken by LAT team. From left to right, works by Lauren Halsey, Delcy Morelos, Hal Ingberg, Nancy Rubins, Alicja Kwade, Cannupa Hanska Luger



“Both Public Art Fund and the Lasonde Art Trail believe art is an essential building block for great public spaces and that the dynamic relationship between nature and the built environment is a valuable inspiration for artists.”
Melanie Kress, Senior Curator at Public Art Fund.

In 2024 the Port Lands Flood Protection Project’s Indigenous Advisory Circle named the island that hosts the Art Trail Ookwemin Minising, meaning “place of the black cherry trees” and the park Biidaasige, meaning “sunlight shining towards us” in Anishinaabemowin/ Ojibwemowin. LAT was fortunate to be able to tour Canadian and international artists and curators around this incredible site with the aim of fostering opportunities for future partnerships and loans. We also wanted to start spread the word about one of the most important climate adaptation projects in the world, and the aspiration to create a world-class destination Art Trail.

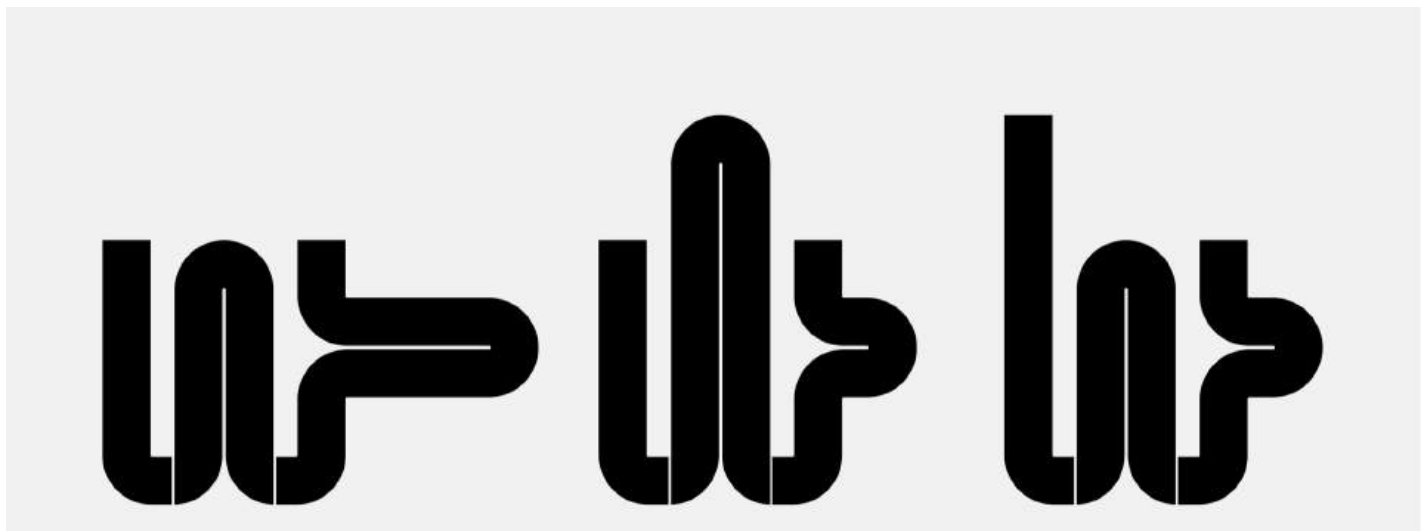
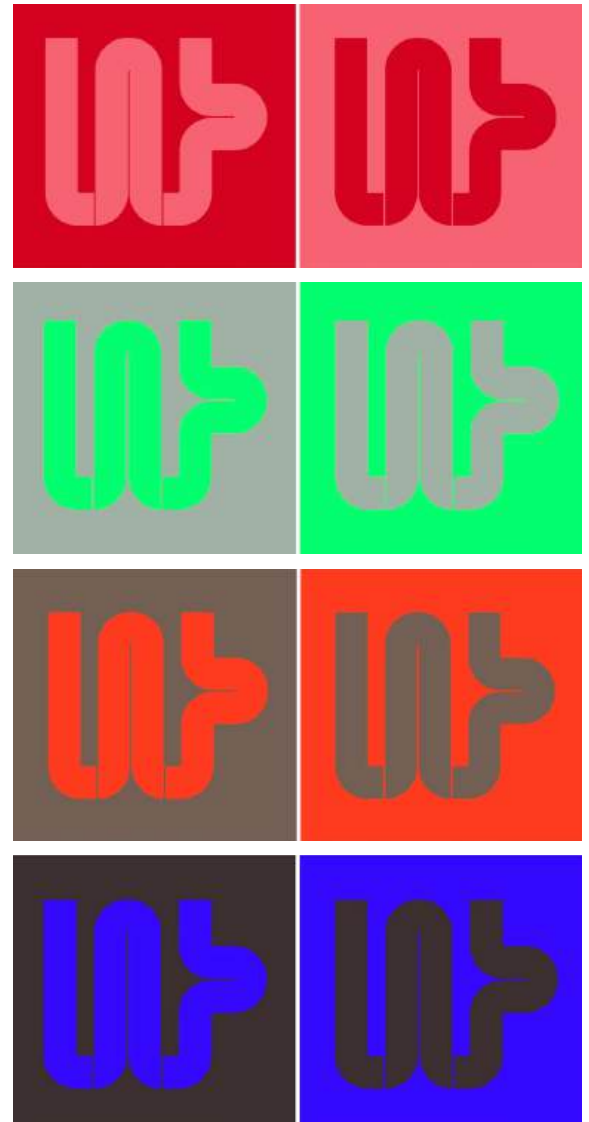


IDENTITY AND VIRTUAL LAUNCH



LAT worked with internationally renowned SPIN Studio in the UK to create an identity and phase one website. The identity, titled **FLOW**, started life as an investigation into the natural roaming curves of the new river running through LAT's site. The letterforms of the logo spell L.A.T., and at the same time suggest water-flow and the meandering art trail experience. As with a river, the form can shape shift organically without losing any of its essential character to offer moments of surprise and delight.

LAT considers this design the organization's first creative commission, as it will become the visual anchor and identifier for the entire project. The logo and identity were launched in spring 2024 to critical acclaim on platforms including the website latfoundation.org, a newsletter, and social media channels.



STUDENT MENTORSHIP

Mentorship and sharing information about the site and public art programming is important to LAT's development. Already in 2024, LAT had the opportunity to tour several university groups around the site, including those from Mount Allison Lassonde School of Fine Arts faculty and John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, University of Toronto.

“Thank you so much for your time and thoughtful tour of the Art Trail. It was fantastic! The students were so inspired by the plans, the rich content of the project, and enthusiastic about environmental conservation and flood mitigation.”

Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, University of Toronto.





“Visiting the site of the future Lassonde Art Trail with our students was a truly inspiring experience. They had the chance to see how public art takes shape, from vision to planning to community impact, and to appreciate how creativity can transform a city. It was a powerful reminder of the learning that happens when ideas connect directly with the world around us.”

Courtney Pringle-Carver
Vice President, University Advancement

LAT IN NUMBERS

→ 12+

site tours with artists, donors and stakeholders

→ 50+

unique artist studio visits

→ 8

art projects in development

→ 90+

conversations with peers and galleries internationally

→ 700

Instagram followers by year end

→ 142

Newsletter subscribers by year end

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

Thanks to generous donor support, we successfully established our first full-year of operations and invested in both permanent and temporary art programs in preparation for the Art Trail's grand opening in June 2026. We covered all annual expenses through in-year fundraising and a modest surplus from our FY23 start-up funds.

The summaries on page 22 show our first full year of operations with comparative numbers for the period from incorporation on March 23, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The deficit reported at the end of 2024 is a result of cashflow timing across two fiscal years, as some revenue and expenses did not align within the same fiscal period. This reflects our early-stage growth and strategic investments in start-up operations, and we remain confident in our financial sustainability moving forward.

For a full copy of our audited financial statements and accompanying notes, please contact chloe@latfoundation.org.

Lassonde Art Trail Foundation
Statement of Financial Position
As at December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 236,200	\$ 486,946
Accounts Receivable	24,272	-
Government Remittances Receivable	23,474	-
	283,946	486,946
Art	272,913	13,797
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 556,859	\$ 500,743
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
Current		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$ 11,182	\$ 9,801
Government Remittances Payable	-	2,237
Deferred Contributions	-	86,203
Total Liabilities	11,182	98,241
Fund Balances		
Operating Fund	272,764	388,705
Art Fund	272,913	13,797
	545,677	402,502
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES	\$ 556,859	\$ 500,743

Approved on Behalf of the Directors:

 Director
 Director

Lassonde Art Trail Foundation
Statement of Operations
For the year ended December 31, 2024

(with comparatives for the period from incorporation on March 23, 2023 to December 31, 2023)

	2024	2023
Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 662,094	\$ 752,205
Interest income	336	-
	662,430	752,205
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	419,907	261,656
Office and general	10,229	8,160
Professional Fees	96,863	50,038
Programming	157,820	9,009
Fundraising	13,170	4,293
Marketing & Communications	80,382	30,343
	778,371	363,499
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenses	\$ (115,941)	\$ 388,706

THANK YOU

LAT is grateful to all the volunteers and donors who stepped up to help us blaze the Trail in 2024.

DONORS

Thank you to the following donors who made pledges and gifts of \$1,000 or more in 2024.

Founding Lead

The Pierre Lassonde Family Foundation

Pacesetter

Frances and Tim Price

Innovator

CIBC

Power Corporation of Canada

Founder

John Donald

Mark and Catherine Graham

The Jay and Barbara Hennick Family Foundation

Susie and Vahan Kololian

Supporter

Business/Arts

Chloë Catán and Michel Couttolenc

Fela Grunwald

VOLUNTEERS

LAT Board of Directors 2024

Julie Lassonde - Chair

Michael Gibbens

Susie Kololian

Jennifer Lassonde

INTERNATIONAL ARTWORK COMMISSION SELECTION COMMITTEE AND ART ADVISORY

Tairone Bastien, Independent Curator and Assistant Professor, Criticism & Curatorial Practice, OCAD University

Daisy Desrosiers, Director and Chief Curator, Gund Gallery at Kenyon College

Melanie Kress, Senior Curator, Public Art Fund

Cliff Lauson, Director of Exhibitions Somerset House

Clare Lilley, former Director, Yorkshire Sculpture Park

2024 TEAM & SUPPORT

Chloë Catán - Executive Director

November Paynter - Artistic Director and Chief Curator

Julie Cookson - Lead on Development

Emily Chudnovsky - Coordinator

Artful Strategies - PR

SPIN Studio - Design



Photo courtesy of Victoria Jones and Ryan Walker

