

## OTHER NEWS

**Artists' Co-ops** Two artists' co-ops are currently under development in Toronto - Coxwell Artist Co-op and Lakeshore Artist Co-op. Though both are well along in their planning and design, there may be opportunities to participate or to get on an early waiting list.

**Short Term Space** The Art Garden is a visual art facility in the King/Dufferin area offering open work space on a short term basis. If you need a large space to put a show together or just additional work space for a limited time call Susan Patrick at (416) 516 0744.

Artscape is working on a plan with the City to access City-owned buildings (mostly warehouses) on a short term basis (weeks or months - not years) for special arts projects, exhibits, performances etc. If you need this kind of space please call the office. We have no way to gauge the need but if there is sufficient interest we will see what we can find for you.

**Theatre Space** Several new initiatives have been launched which will provide more theatre space over the next few years. The 12 Alexander St. space (the old home of Toronto Workshop Productions) was bought by the City in order to insure that it was kept as a theatre. The City then tendered a long term operators contract within the arts community. There were a number of interesting bids and the Selection Committee awarded the contract to a consortium of well-known professionals headed by Chris Wooten and Mark Hammond. The space is slated to open in a year after extensive renovations.

A City Hall-based task force on the Theatre Block has received and accepted a consultant's report on the redevelopment of two old bank buildings on Yonge Street south of Shuter. The report includes the potential for a 300 seat theatre. When approved by City Council the City will be looking for an interested theatre company, with which to partner in the development of the site.

**Literary Centre** The Toronto literary community, so long informally clustered at 24 Ryerson Ave., has received a grant to undertake a study on the feasibility of creating a real centre for the literary arts in Toronto. For more information contact Angela Rubeiro at the League of Canadian Poets, (416) 363 5047.

*For information on any of the items in this Newsletter please call the Artscape office at (416) 392 1038.*

*Toronto Artscape Inc. gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Toronto, the Ministry of Culture and Communications, and Canada Employment and Immigration.*



### COMMUNITY

### INFORMATION

### RELEASE

## WE'VE MOVED

As of January, 1991, Toronto Artscape Inc. has been located at 141 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ontario, M5V 2R2. Our new telephone number is (416) 392 1038. Our FAX number remains the same at (416) 392-6920.

## 53 STRACHAN UPDATE

Buildings 1 & 2 at 53 Strachan, comprising 38,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space, were leased to Toronto Artscape Inc. by the City at nominal yearly rent 3 years ago. The space is intended for visual artists' studios and, to a lesser degree, other group work space. After a delay of several years caused by a conflict between the building's intended use, the targeted below market rental rates and the Provincial Municipal Act (concerning unfair

bonusing), Artscape was finally able to tender a feasibility study on the site this past May.

The winning bid was submitted by a consortium of several companies and arts consultants headed by Susan Friedrich and Bruce Burnham architects. Copies of the study are available as of February 1st, 1991 from the Artscape office.

The report analyzes the site and its future operation from many different points of view: soundness of the physical structure, appropriateness to its intended use, cost of renovation, funding sources for renovation, breakdown of space, operational models and budgets, and appropriateness of location vis-a-vis projected long term plans for surrounding area.

One of the most important revelations in the study has to do with projected long range planning for the area. Several studies have recently been completed

revealing the potential for considerable change over the next few years: there is the potential for two rapid transit stations for the area - a GO and an LRT station; the zoning may be changed from industrial to residential/industrial (thereby allowing live/work studios on this site); the rail corridor on the south side of the site may be removed. The answers to these three questions alone could completely reshape the Strachan/King neighbourhood and the type of presence and contribution a resident arts community can bring.

We see all these changes as positive in relation to our development of 53 Strachan and will be moving quickly over the next few months to initiate formal funding requests with all levels of government based on the physical plans and budget projections outlined in the Friedrich/Burnham report.

## **THE ARTS BUILDING**

Over the past 18 months five artists and arts administrators - Jim Montgomery of the Music Gallery, Jane Marsland of the Danny Grossman Dance Company, April Hickox of Gallery 44, Jini Stolk of the Toronto Theatre Alliance and Angela Rubeiro of the League of Canadian Poets - (collectively known as the Steering Committee) have worked with Artscape to advise the City on the development of a major arts facility planned for the corner of Shuter and Victoria Streets. A large office/condominium development had been proposed to the City by Live Entertainment Corporation (Garth Drabinsky) which would include a substantial amount of non-profit arts space in exchange for concessions from the City.

What that space would be, for whom it would be designed and how it would be managed became the subject of a very long and often heated negotiation process. The Steering Committee worked very hard to determine where the real space needs were in the arts community and what facilities would most effectively alleviate some of the pressure.

The results could be substantial. The facility is to be dedicated to Toronto's small and medium sized non-profit arts organisations. It includes: 43,000 sq. ft. for visual art live/work studios, two dance rehearsal halls, a large rehearsal hall, a 250 seat flexible performance space, two small recording studios, two small music rehearsal halls and appropriate support space for lounges, lobby and storage.

A Board of Management, made up on the majority of artists, is now in place. This City-appointed volunteer Board will oversee the operation of the facilities - management, booking policies, rental rates, etc. - on behalf of the City. Once the space is open (scheduled for late 1992) it will be up to the arts community to use the facilities and initiate the necessary changes, through the Board of Management, so that the facilities continue to serve our needs.

## **CULTURAL FACILITIES POLICY WORKING GROUP**

The CFPWG is a City-initiated planning group chaired by City Councillors Nadine Nowlan and Martin Silva. It was set up in 1989 in answer to the Toronto Arts Council's "No Vacany" report

with a mandate to look at the need for and the implications of developing a cultural facilities policy for the City of Toronto. The Group is made up of approximately 20 members - artists, arts administrators, representatives from the Toronto Arts Council, Artscape and various City Departments. It will report back to City Council in February 1991 with a list of key recommendations pertaining to the development and retention of cultural facilities within the City of Toronto.

## **LIVE/WORK STUDIOS - ZONING AND BUILDING CODE IMPLICATIONS**

One area of the CFPWG's work has been to look at the need for live/work studios in Toronto and to investigate the impediments and the solutions to introducing a special zoning which would allow live/work studios. Discussions have also been initiated with the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Housing under whose auspices Building Codes fall to try and find a safe but financially feasible middle ground - perhaps a special artists' live/work Building Code category.

It is hoped that a proposal for the creation of a special artist live/work zoning with appropriate Building Code specifications will be introduced at City Council within the next year.

## **OLYMPICS FALL OUT**

Artist housing was one of the few areas in which the Toronto arts community stood to gain directly from the Olympics. The arts had been singled out as an appropriate segment of the low-rental housing market to be targeted as users of post-Olympic housing. Following Toronto's loss of the 1996 Olympic bid, it was thought that the developments which had been fast-tracked for the Olympics would be "backburnered". In September, however, Mayor Eggleton was quoted in the *Globe & Mail* as saying "Having shown we can pull together when we have that kind of a deadline on a project, then I'm saying, 'Let's keep it going'". He again sited artists as potential users ... it remains to be seen.

## **LONG RANGE POTENTIALS**

Artscape continues to sit on a number of Committees involved with the long term

development of residential and/or industrial areas in the downtown core:

**Artist Housing and Workspace Coalition:** is a group of artists and arts administrators whose mandate it is to communicate with sectors of the visual arts community regarding studio and housing space issues. The Coalition has hosted meetings to disseminate information and has acted as a spokes agency and focus group with respect to housing and work space needs.

**Ataratiri** a large site in the east downtown area, has articulated artists of all disciplines as a desirable resident target group. The area is scheduled to be developed over the next 10 years.

**Gooderham and Worts:** is a site to the south of Ataratiri owned by Allied Chemicals. The City has undertaken a study of the area to guide their negotiations with Allied as the company undertakes its development of the land. Artist work space has been articulated as an appropriate use of some of the historic buildings. However, in view of the fact that the City does not own the land, but merely can exert influence through the negotiation of bonusing issues, etc.

it is not anticipated that there will be space available on this site within the next five years - if ever.

## **ARTSCAPE'S INFORMATION SERVICES**

**Space Clearing House:** Artscape continues to operate an informal space referral service between landlords and artists requiring work space. Over the next few months we will be putting this information on a specially designed data base and will begin to solicit information on a much more concerted basis from landlords, the City, etc.

**Resource Data Bank:** Over the past four years Artscape has researched and secured materials from a wide cross-section of art space related agencies around the world. This material is currently being entered into a data base for easy retrieval. A list of materials on hand is available at the Artscape office and within two months print outs of specific sub-sections of the data will be possible.