

A group of people, mostly young adults, are dressed in white tank tops and white shorts. They are gathered at the base of a large, weathered metal wall, looking up in awe. One person is being lifted horizontally by the group, reaching towards the top of the wall. The wall itself is covered in a large, vibrant, abstract mural with swirling colors of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. The scene is set against a clear blue sky.

2025 IMPACT REPORT

# FROG IN HAND

A year of resilience  
and breakthroughs



## A note from Colleen Snell, Artistic Director

Hello friends,

It's been an incredible year: a year of gritty determination, breakthrough artistic performances and brand new collaborations. We've had incredible highs, like the Bodies of Knowledge project (reaching over 450 people aged 14-94), and our first fundraiser (the Summer Dances Soiree). We've also encountered obstacles. Our lease was terminated early, and we dismantled our home, the Art Shelter... a space that was shared with hundreds of artists and community members. Through these highs and lows, **we've had you: our incredible community.**

These are hard times - not just for artists, but for all of us. There is an economic crisis, a crisis of social isolation - daily news headlines spark concern. It's hard to remain optimistic, and to maintain hope. But times like these also remind us WHY the arts matter and HOW they can help. The arts shape who we are, they ground us in community, they spark joy, they create meaningful moments of insight and connection. They remind us we aren't alone - they help us understand what we are feeling before we can find the words. Like Elbert Hubbard said, **"Art is not a thing; it is a way."**

2025 was a journey. Frog in Hand created work with and for the communities we serve. That included seated audiences and passersby, arts patrons and folks new to dance. We worked in public spaces like Farmer's Markets, parks, street corners and even a local charcuterie shop - making creativity more accessible and more visible to everyone. We encouraged everyone to engage in public life in their own city, within their own means. And we had so much fun.

This Summer we also met a wonderful cohort of new generation artists during our 2025 Summer Company. 10 youth dancers were joined by a production assistant and a costume designer. We were inspired by their work ethic, professionalism, creativity and emotional buoyancy. They took initiative as individuals and they cared for one another as a team. The Summer Company has now been running for a remarkable 8 consecutive years, and we are already planning the next one... stay tuned.

In closing, THANK YOU. **We couldn't have done this without you.** Because of you, we move into 2026 grounded in the belief that art matters, and it can make a difference when we **work together.** Thank you for your generosity and belief in Frog in Hand. We wish you all the best for the New Year. If you see me, come say hi.

With respect and gratitude,

Colleen Snell  
PG Dip., DEC, MA



Colleen by Copper Beech Photography

## A note from Ruben Burga, Chair of the Board

Dear friends and community,

On behalf of Frog in Hand's Board of Directors, I want to share how meaningful this past year has been. In 2025, we witnessed the power of dance to bring people together in the streets of Mississauga through shows like Tour, a site-specific show inspired by the Tour de France. In partnership with the Port Credit BIA, Tour celebrated our local downtown core. We also saw our programming ignite courage in young people through our Summer Company, which has supported over 80 young artists since 2018.

Two moments stood out to me: the talent that our Summer Company showed including the ingenuity of the company artists as they restaged the 2023 Noir dance piece from a full one hour performance to a 5 minute passionate synopsis at the Art Shelter in the Summer; and then the end of season performance at Clarke Memorial Hall in Port Credit. These two moments showed the love and passion of the dancers and also encompassed the inclusivity of the company for its dancers and for the community. Moments like this remind us why we do this work. They reflect Frog in Hand's commitment to storytelling, community engagement, inclusivity of all genders and age groups, and for all physical and mental abilities.

This year also marks the closing of a successful chapter with our Art Shelter, where we hosted performances, workshops, rehearsals, and mentorships alongside the Mississauga community, artists and youth. We are deeply grateful to everyone who made this space possible; thank you all for your support.

As we look toward 2026, our priorities are clear. We will discover a new creative home: a space that reflects our values and offers the flexibility needed to continue our site-specific work with artists, audiences, and partners. We will also concentrate on touring our existing works, ensuring the performances we create at home can reach wider communities.



Ruben by Revel Photography

Frog in Hand will continue to provide meaningful opportunities for youth through the Summer Company, nurturing training, leadership, and hands-on experience. We will continue to create, perform and exchange knowledge with our Mississauga community, so people of all ages can see themselves reflected in the stories we tell.

Thank you for believing in this vision, and for standing with us as we move into the next chapter of our story.

With gratitude,

Ruben Burga  
*Ph.D., MBA, P.Eng., FEC*

**CHAIR** Dr. Ruben Burga  
**SECRETARY** James Roy  
**TREASURER** Lorraine Alyea  
Wayland Chau  
Emilie de Caen

# THE FROG IN HAND TEAM



**Colleen Snell**

*Artistic Director,  
Cofounder*



**Noelle Hamlyn**

*Costume Designer,  
Cofounder*



**Jessica Cen**

*Director of Operations*



**Alice Cavanagh**

*Artistic Associate*



**Andrew Gaboury**

*Artistic Associate*



**Bri Clarke**

*Summer Company  
Mentor, Dancer*



**Abby Silvera**

*Summer Company  
Mentor, Dancer*



**Jill Hollingsworth**

*Educator, Mentor,  
Dancer*



**Fortunato Pitaro**

*Financial Controller*

# THE 2025 SUMMER COMPANY



**Bryce Johnson**

*Dancer*



**Denise Igama**

*Dancer*



**Derek  
Souvannavong**

*Dancer*



**Julia Mak**

*Dancer*



**Raxel Kempenaar**

*Dancer*



**Miah Lewis**

*Dancer*



**Samantha Wan**

*Dancer*



**Shelby Nilsen**

*Dancer*



**Jada Wallace**

*Production Assistant*



**Hannah Dulong**

*Production Assistant*



# OUR IMPACT

50+ original and new works since inception

100+ artists and artistic staff hired

30+ Mississauga-based artists hired

75% of our budget spent on artists

180+ of community workshops offered

5000+ audience members engaged



2025 Summer Company in TOUR. PHOTO: Hank Wright





# THE LEGACY OF THE ART SHELTER

Colleen Snell PHOTO: Stephen Urhaney



# THE ART SHELTER

**2020-2025**

Frog in Hand's Art Shelter was a 42-ft geodesic dome in Mississauga, an off-grid, repurposed greenhouse born from a post-pandemic need for space, creativity, and connection. As an artist-run, community-engaged hub, it became a home for rehearsals, collaboration, and climate-conscious experimentation, showing artists how to do more with less, and practice their art in more sustainable ways.

From its inaugural season in Spring 2024 to countless shared moments, the Art Shelter nurtured bold ideas and forged new relationships. We dismantled it in Winter 2025, and we are deeply grateful for all it held. We look forward to our next chapter.

**10+ residencies**

**50+ workshops sheltered**

**30+ performances sheltered**

**Infinite learning, growth, and connections created.**



From left to right: Abby Silvera, Jill Hollingsworth, Derek Souvannavong, Carmen Romero, Holly Small, Bri Clarke

PHOTO: Stephen Urhaney

# The Future of Dance

## Youth education, mentorship, and employment

**2025 marked the 8th year of Frog in Hand's flagship program and our boldest, most impactful initiative: The Summer Company.** Every summer, young dancers and production workers are hired full-time for 9 weeks to train, create, and perform in a professional setting. It is a space where emerging creatives transform into confident artists, pushing the edges of movement and meaning. This year, dancers rehearsed and performed Tour across Port Credit, activating public spaces with a high-energy site-specific work. They created original choreography for our Summer Dances series, engaging with meaningful themes such as addition to technology and female empowerment. After the Summer Company, we launched our first ever New Generation Artist Residency, which provided a youth group under 24 with studio space, mentorship, professional marketing materials, and opportunities to perform alongside established professional dancers - taking their artistry to the next level.

Through these experiences, new generation artists gained confidence, professional experience, and forged their own pathways, practicing dance not "only" as entertainment, but as a way of supporting positive change in our local community. The Summer Company develops teamwork, leadership, time management, endurance, empathy and patience, opening career pathways beyond the arts. **Look for the return of this exciting program in 2026.**

**14 youth hired and mentored**

**250 youth mentorship hours**

**2 youth peer mentors hired**







# Original creations

We told site-specific stories through movement.

Frog in Hand created and performed 10 original works in 2025, each offering a distinct blend of movement and storytelling. Our newest full-length production, *Bodies of Knowledge*, brings together professional dancers aged 24-72, sparking intergenerational exchange and celebrating embodied knowledge. *Tour*, our Tour-de-France themed site-specific production, activated the Port Credit waterfront with 4 free performances in partnership with the Port Credit BIA. Seasonal Activities brought over 20 thrilling and multidisciplinary artists together with mixed programs of dance, theatre, music, clown, object puppetry, storytelling and more - celebrating Spring, Winter, Summer and Fall.

# Sharing the benefits of the arts

We advocated for artists in Mississauga and beyond.

In association with other Mississauga arts groups and cultural leaders, Frog in Hand has been advocating for the arts through two depositions at Mississauga Council, and one deposition at the Region of Peel - in addition to participation in multiple working groups, panels and conferences from Kingston to Toronto.


# In the community

Workshops, performances, residencies and more...

Frog in Hand performed *Taranta* at Take Back the Night and the Peel Elementary Teacher Local (PETL) Status of Women Committee dinner. Both events recognize and increase awareness to support women and gender diverse people's right to live without the fear of gender-based violence.

Dancing in the Library was an initiative that offered a hybrid live dance performance of varying genres and an interactive workshop at two City of Mississauga Libraries for all ages.

Other workshops offered in the community included stage combat, contemporary dance, world-building, grant writing, Fighting Monkey, and fitness.



"Throughout my time here this summer and last, I discovered that mentorship comes in so many different forms. Being able to enter a space where my current well-being and my future goals are valued and being poured into has allowed me to appreciate non-traditional spaces of work (meaning I've been spoiled and now I never want to get a corporate job). Being able to get an internship in the arts, I learned that production also reflects community and movement.

As a Mississauga native, it is so special to me that youth in the arts are being reflected in my community. In spaces like the art shelter and Mississauga Youth Hubs, we are setting the tone for the culture and future of our community. It 100% makes a difference in how we feel accepted and appreciated in society. The lessons I'm learning here are shaping the way I view working in the arts and inspiring me to continue thinking of creative solutions for interactive art pieces that brings us just a little closer together and puts a smile on more people's faces."

**– Jada Wallace, Summer Company member 2024 & 2025**



From left to right: Jess Cen, Jada Wallace. PHOTO: Bharat Vyas.



*"Looking around at the full audience, it was clear from the riveted, teary-eyed faces that the piece struck a universal chord."*

*-Sasha Ivanochko about **Bodies of Knowledge***



Left to right: Abby, Jill Derek, Carmen, Holly, Bri (Bodies of Knowledge cast)

PHOTO: Bharat Vyas.

# Thank you to our Funders







# Special Thanks

## Board Members


Ruben Burga  
James Roy  
Lorraine Alyea  
Wayland Chau  
Emilie DeCaen

## Key Volunteers

Heather Snell  
Ken Snell  
Jill Hollingsworth  
Bill Soper  
Jake Kempenaar  
Claudio Ghirardo  
Joe Dilecce

## Allies & Collaborators

Callahan Connor  
Clarke Blair  
Miquelon Rodriguez  
Ryan Lee  
Sid Sawant  
Carmen Romero  
Holly Small  
Rapier Wit  
CreativeHub1352  
Port Credit BIA  
MabelleArts  
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Copper Beech Photography  
Jeremy Pearson Data



# Special Thanks

## Donors (\$100+)

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## Thank you to our generous silent auction sponsors

