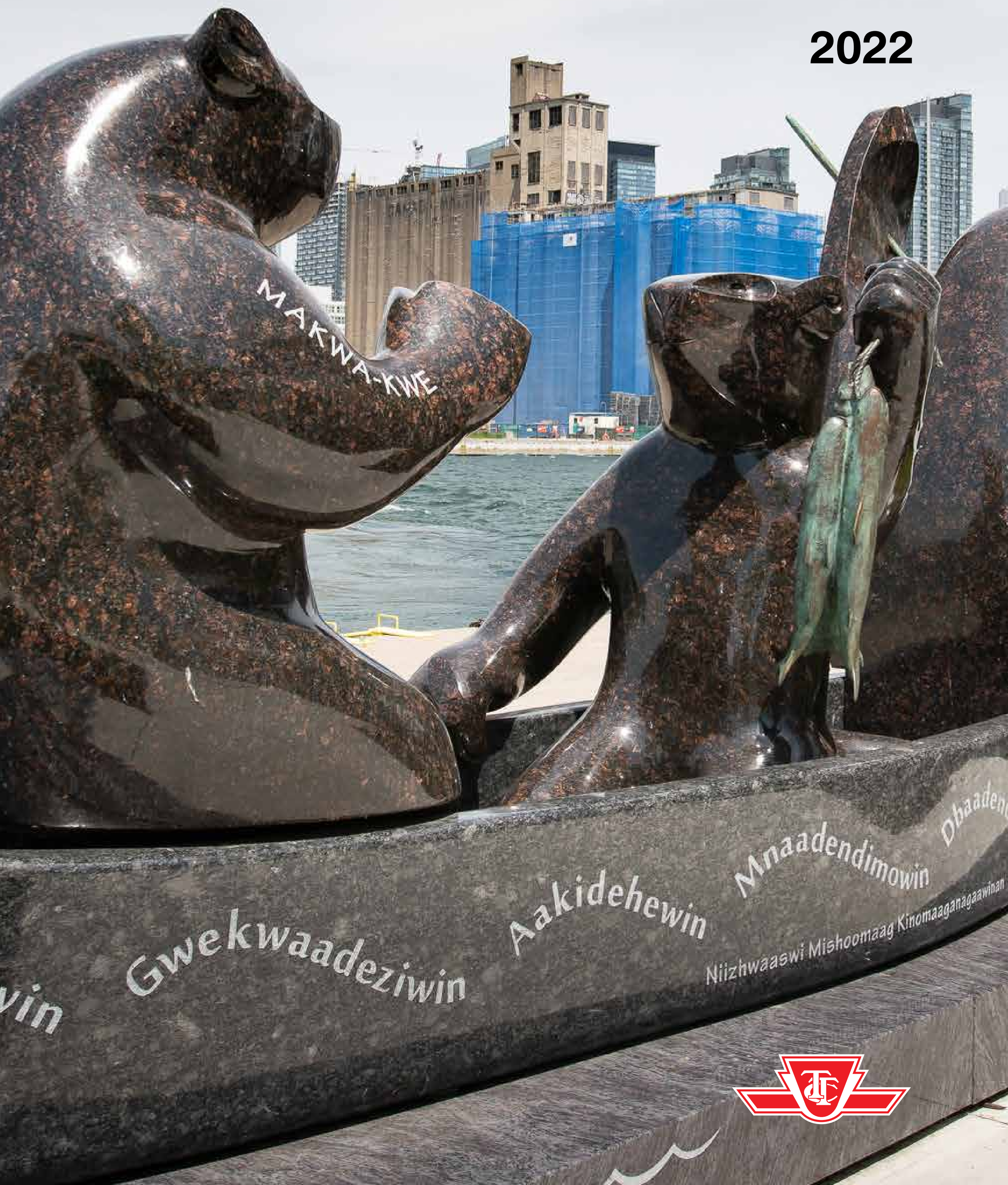


Ride & Find

A guide to artists of African and Indigenous descent featured in the TTC's **Black History Month** and **Indigenous History Month** campaigns

2022



Diversity, equity, and inclusion are top priorities for the TTC, and we are proud to play a role in acknowledging and celebrating the many cultures that make up our city each and every day.



Ride & Find

A guide to artists of African and Indigenous descent featured in the TTC's **Black History Month** and **Indigenous History Month** campaigns

You can use this guide to learn more

about: Leyland Adams, Jacquie Comrie, Elicser Elliott, Adrian Hayles, Leone McComas, MEDIAH, Phade, Curtia Wright, Que Rock, Philip Cote, David General, Paula Gonzalez-Ossa and Nishina Loft, and use it to travel to see their art in the City.

Visit **ttc.ca** to learn more about our other diversity and inclusion initiatives.

LEYLAND ADAMS

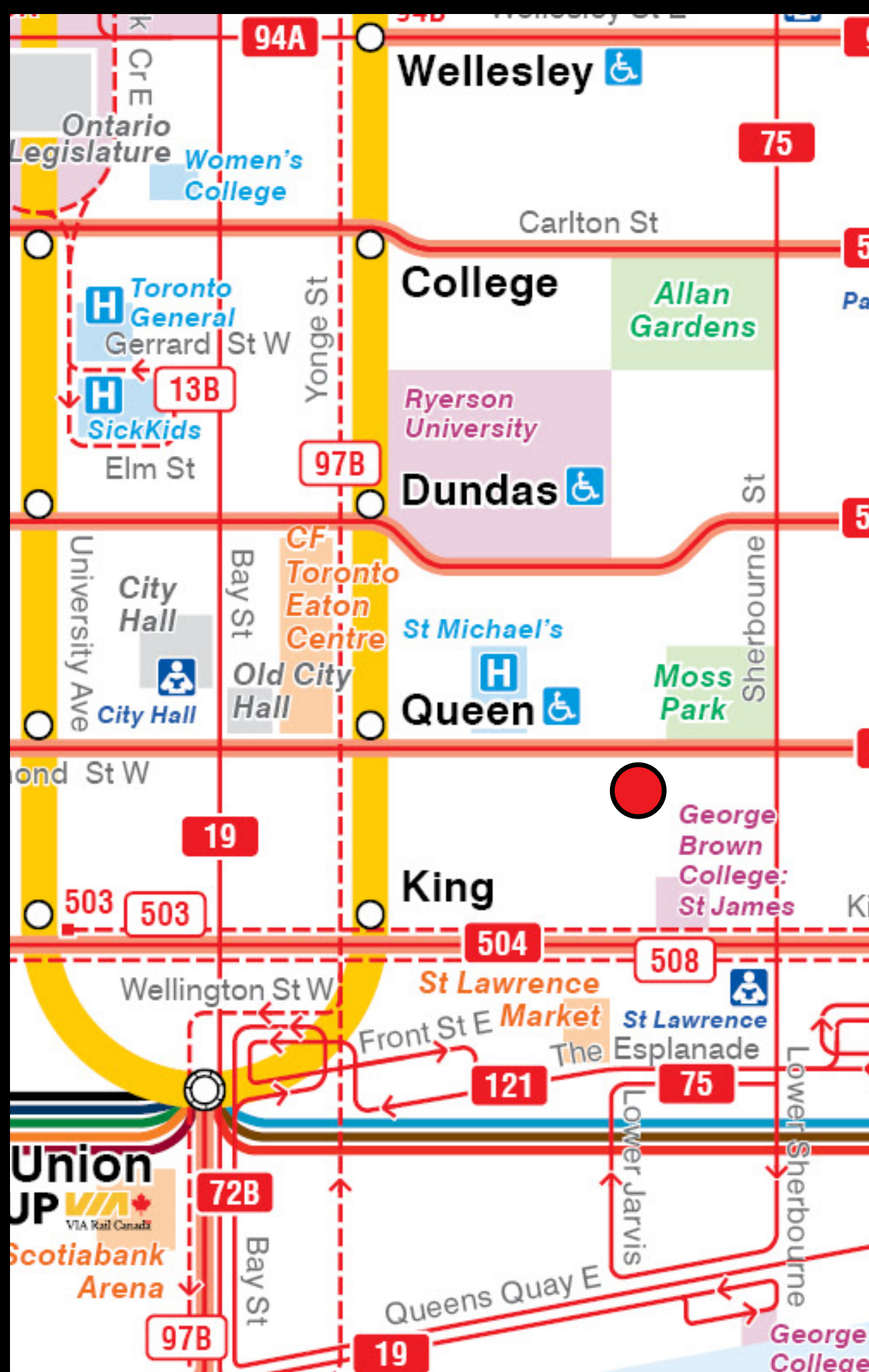
Toronto Artist Leyland Adams is a creative person of colour who has always pushed boundaries, including the boundaries of accessible art.

Working with the CNIB, Adams is making murals accessible for people with visual impairment, while beautifying his community. His work features high-contrast imagery, audio descriptions, and – in the case of Toronto Island Sunset (2020, commissioned by StreetARToronto) – textured imagery and QR codes with audio descriptions.

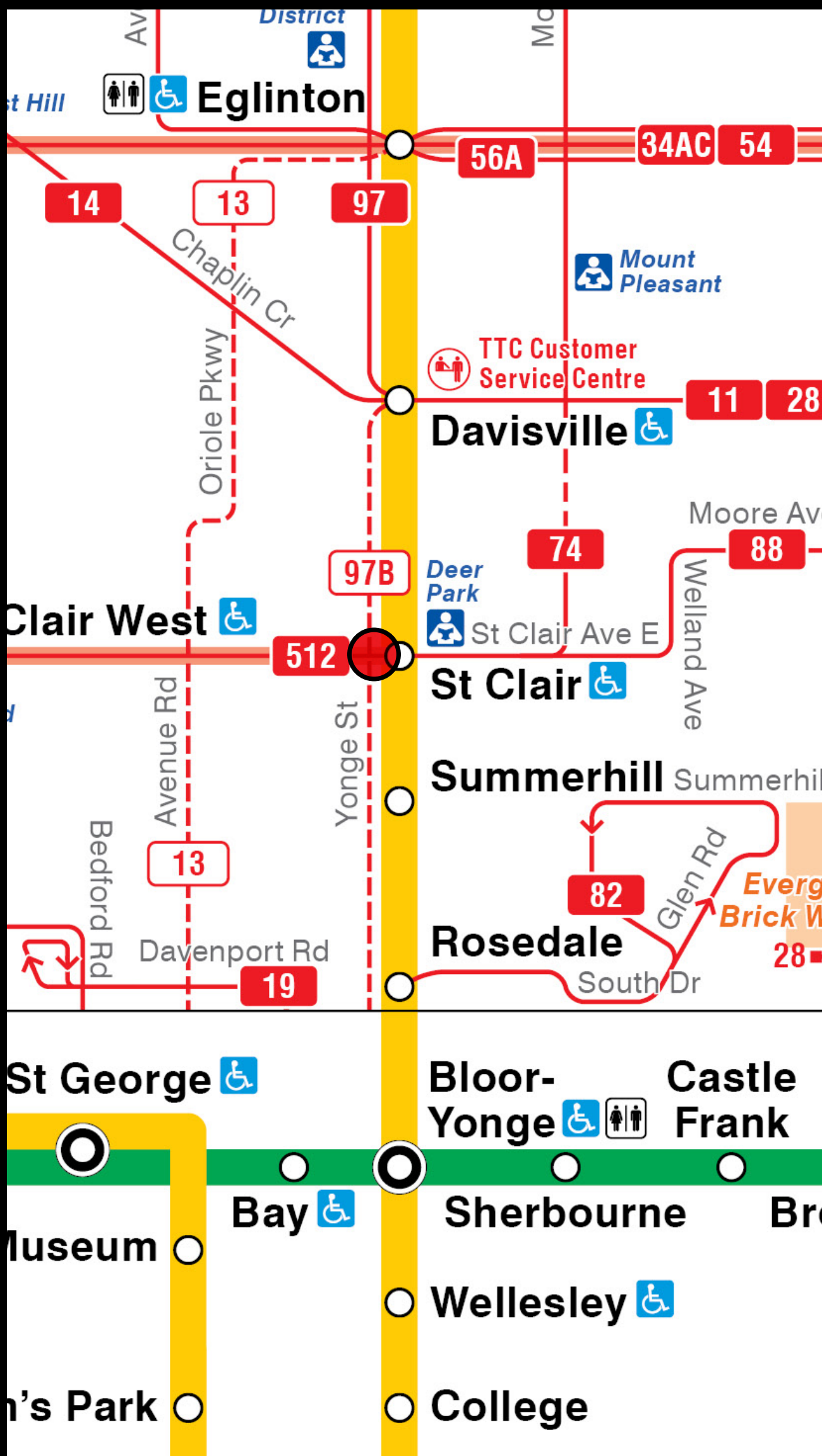
Adams is a community-based public artist who partnered with the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area to stage a public exhibit of street and graffiti artists' work in 2019. Leyland has travelled the country and across the globe to places like London and India to bring his special brand of public art to the world. In addition to private commissions, the Sheridan College Fine Arts graduate works as a facilitator and project coordinator for StreetARToronto on projects that enliven and beautify the city.

[@leylandadams](#)

Find his "Portrait of Nelson Mandela" mural at 147 George St, east of Queen Station on Line 1



Find his "Toronto Island Sunset" mural at Yonge St and St Clair Ave, near St Clair Station on Line 1



JACQUIE COMRIE

Jacquie Comrie is a Toronto-based multimedia artist and mental health advocate.

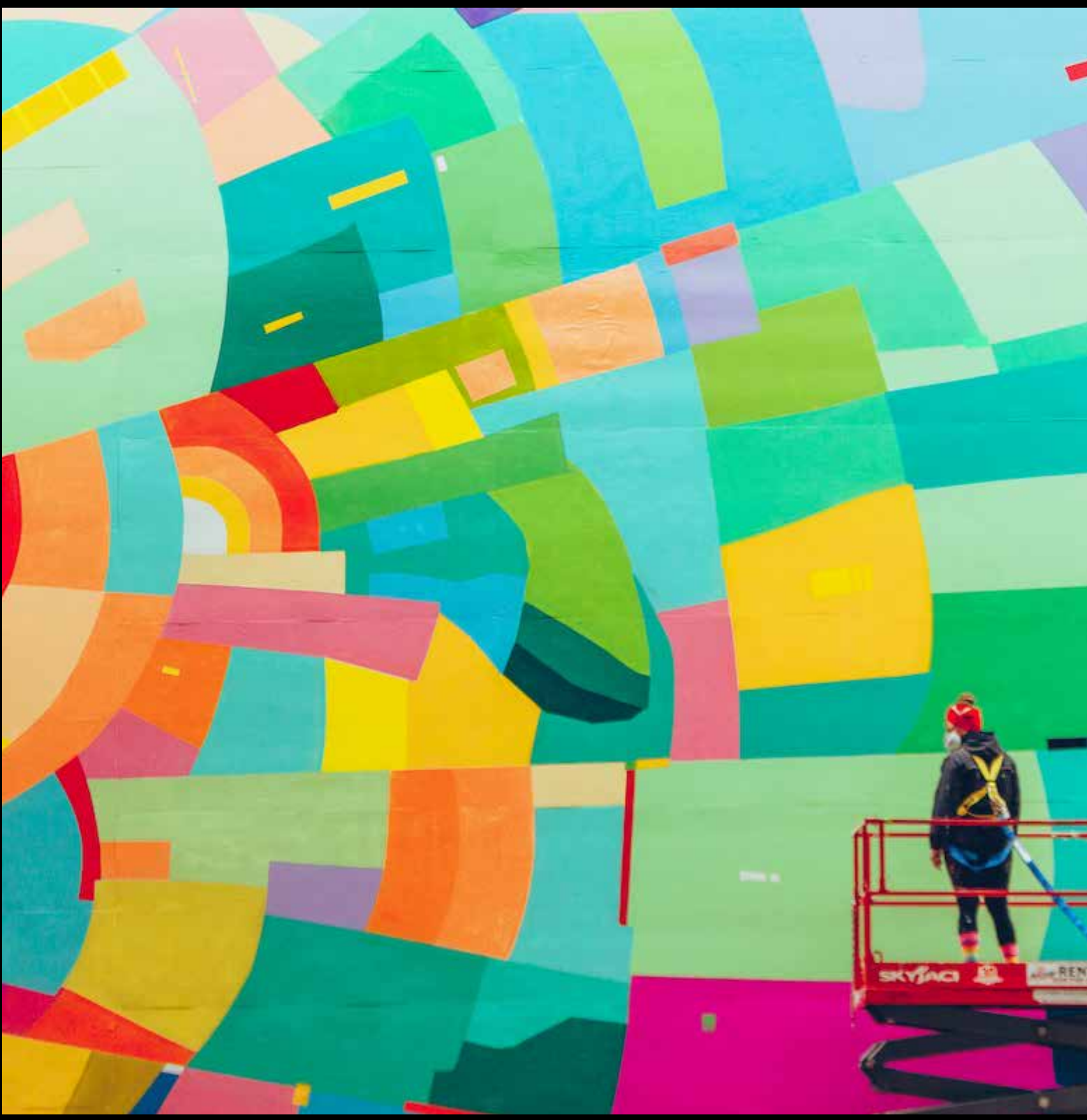
Her work stands at the intersection of art and wellness, centring colour as the universal language of emotions. Colour psychology has proven beneficial to the human body, psyche and overall well-being.

Through a range of artistic mediums, including large scale public murals and digital installations, she explores colour psychology and scale to create vibrant, chromatic public art experiences with a holistic approach.

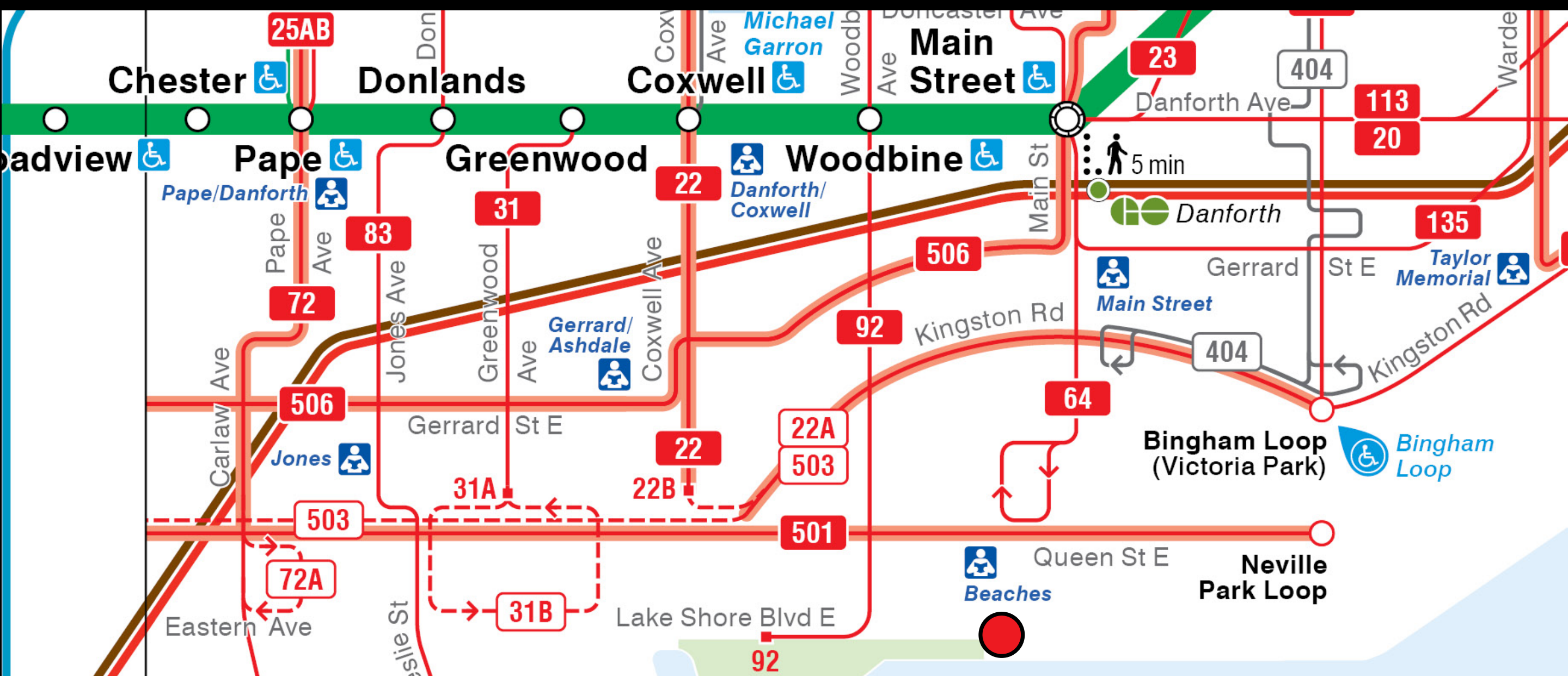
With mental health issues on the rise across the globe, especially since COVID-19, Comrie's works seek to reimagine public art, creating accessible spaces of colour therapy for everyone.

[@jacquiecomrie](https://www.instagram.com/jacquiecomrie)

Find her “Birth of Light” mural at 291 Lake Shore Blvd East, near Union Station on Line 1



Find her “We All Come From Water” mural at Leuty Boathouse in the Beach, south of Main Street Station on Line 2



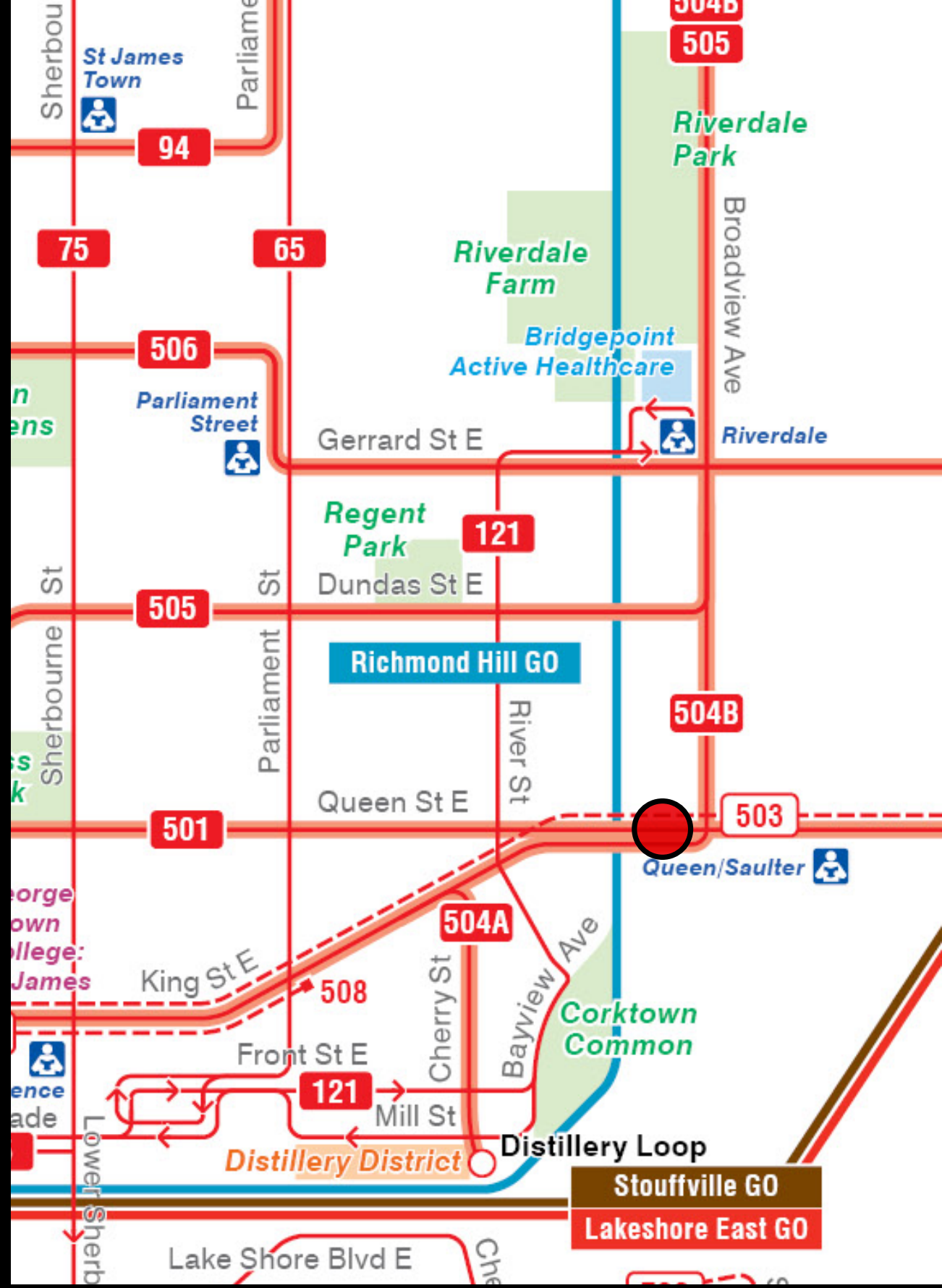
ELICSER ELLIOTT

Elicser Elliott is a Toronto based aerosol artist whose creations adorn the cultural landscape here and abroad.

As an integral part of downtown Toronto's street art community for over 2 decades, he has been recognized for his artistry and praised by both street and fine art collectors all over the world. His work has been featured in a multitude of publications, hung in prestigious galleries like the Art Gallery of Ontario, and for a number of years he had his own installation in the Royal Ontario Museum.

Although he is a Montreal native, Elicser grew up on the West Indian island of St. Vincent, where he was first made aware of his artistic abilities. His father was the creative genius behind the country's annual festival, and he followed alongside him while he created the costumes for the event, trying to recreate the designs to the best of his ability. Eventually his family returned to Canada, where he was introduced to the world of street art while attending the Etobicoke School of the Arts. However, suffering from the influence of what he describes as the "West Indian mindset" he had not seriously considered art as a possible occupation until he had a discussion with a guidance counsellor who encouraged him to study animation at Sheridan College.

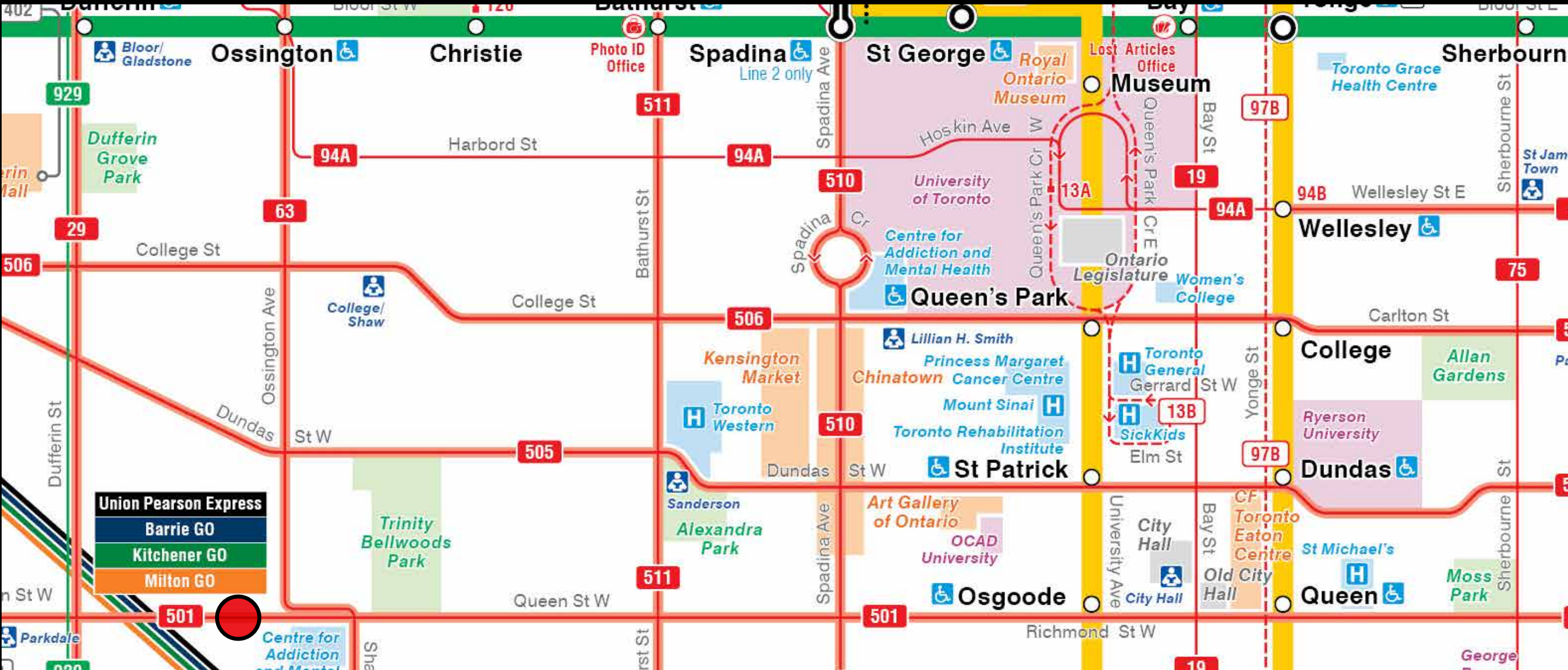
[@elicserelliott](#)



Find his “Summer Wishes” mural at 685 Queen St East, east of Queen Station on Line 1



Find his “Communication” mural at 1052 Queen St West, south of Ossington Station on Line 2



ADRIAN HAYLES

At the tender age of nine, Toronto-based illustrator Adrian Hayles discovered the expressive nature of the visual arts.

With his continued artistic development, illustration became his deepest passion and talent. His desire to learn and absorb from his surroundings led him on a personal creative journey. As a graduate of the Graphic Design Program at Humber College with over 10 years of working experience behind him, Adrian has established his place in Toronto's modern art community.

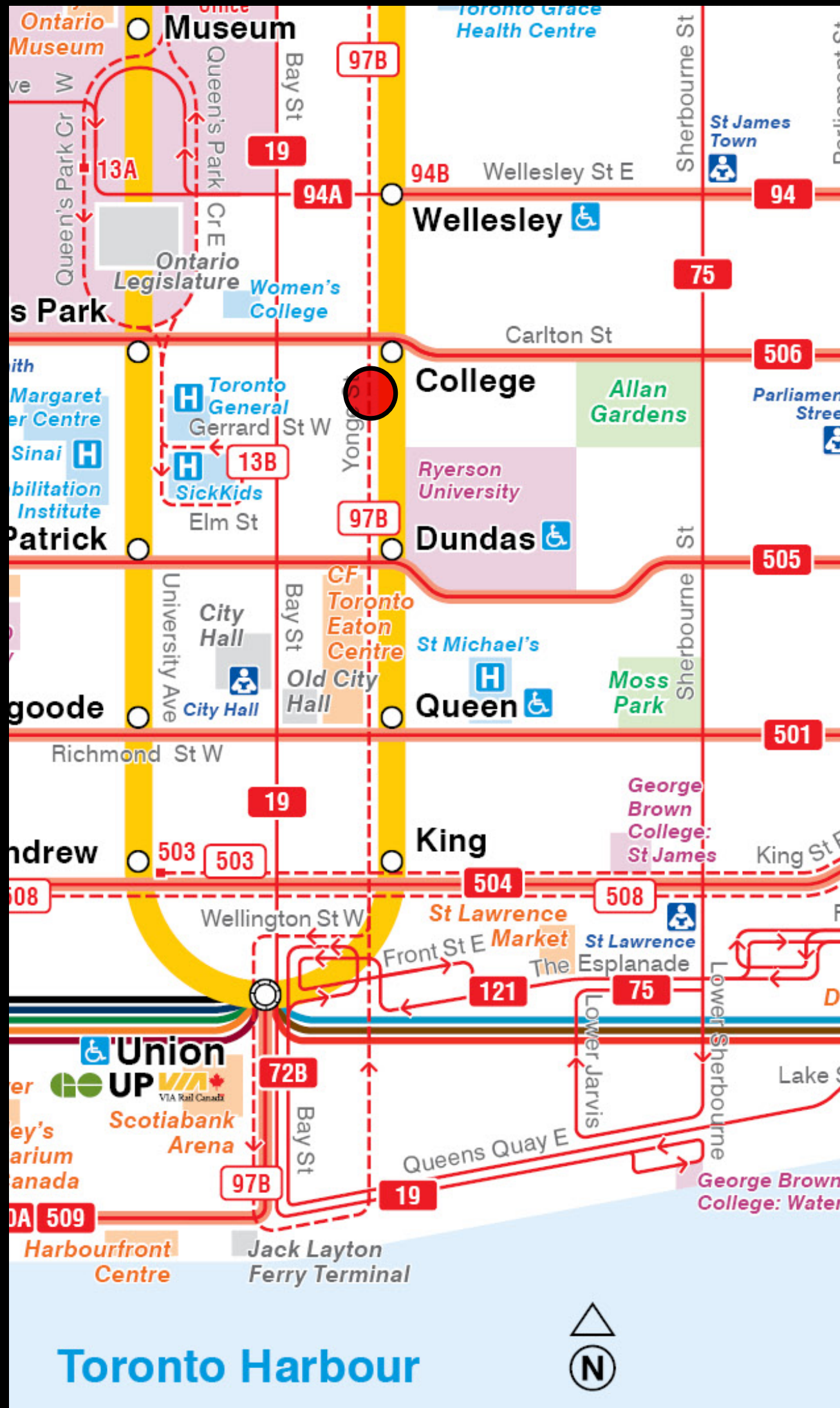
His style is provocative and inspiring and defies categorization. Blurring the lines between graffiti and ultra-realism, Adrian's voice and vision is instantly identifiable. His works include countless portraits and illustrations for various magazines and collaborations with the City of Toronto to develop murals for vacant community spaces. In the past Adrian has painted complete buildings and city blocks, designed award winning video games and animated television shows. He has also successfully developed and filed a functioning patent for the Stud Horse Foldable Drawing Bench, and is the Principal and Founder of Behind the Front Visual Arts Studio.

[@adrianhayles](#)

Find his “Cleanlocs” mural at 707 Dundas Street West, south of Bathurst Station on Line 2



Find his “Yonge Love Murals” mural at 423 Yonge St, near College Station on Line 1



LEONE MCCOMMAS

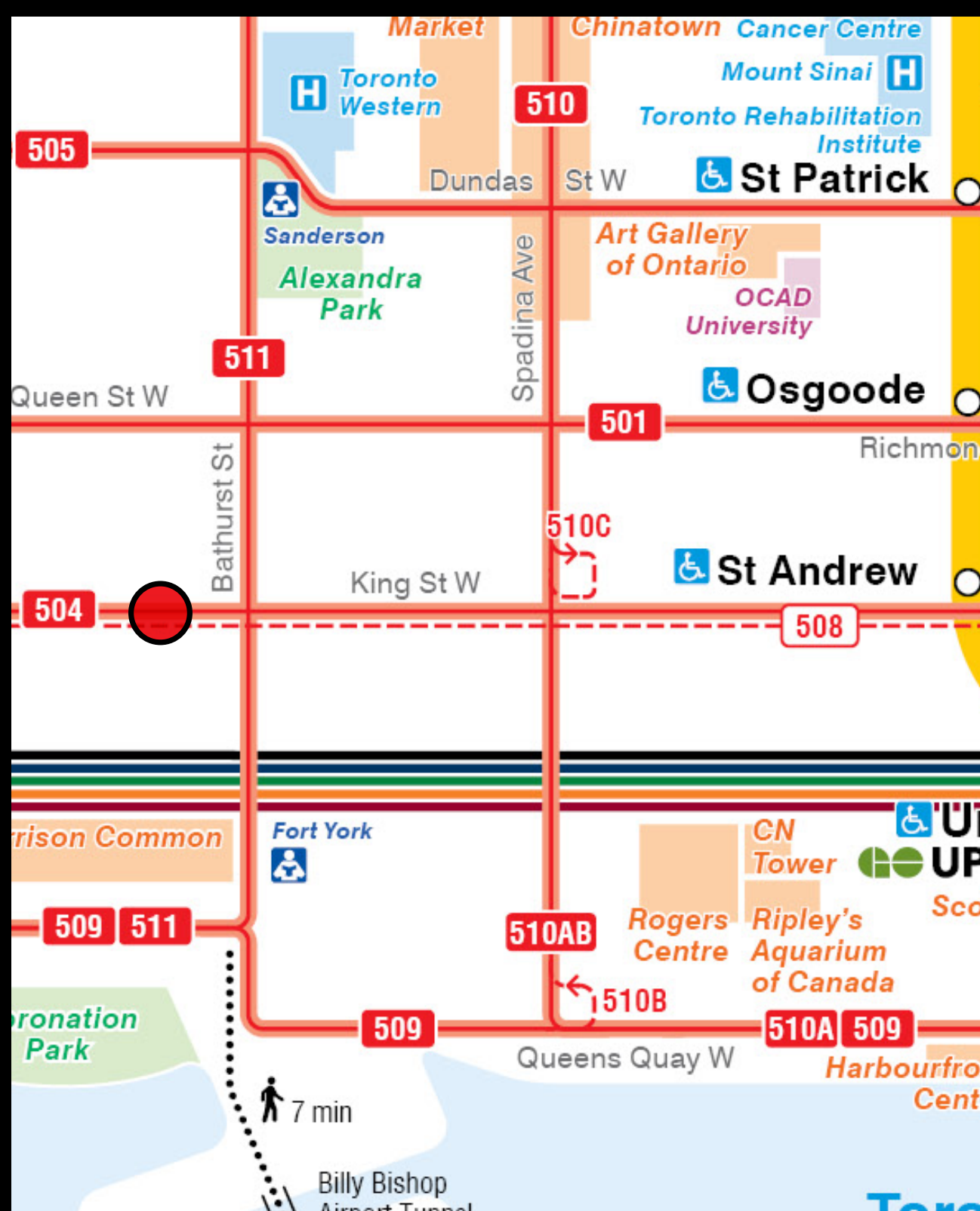
Leone McComas is a Visual Artist, Muralist, and Designer based in Toronto.

Inspired by her faith, she creates murals to uplift communities with a focus on hope and transformation; as such, her art features a heightened sense of movement and luminosity. Leone's public projects include works for StART Toronto, WomxnPaint, STEPS 'I HeART Main Street', Canderel 'St. Clair Village' with MRL™, and Canada Ireland Foundation 'Miotas/Myth'.

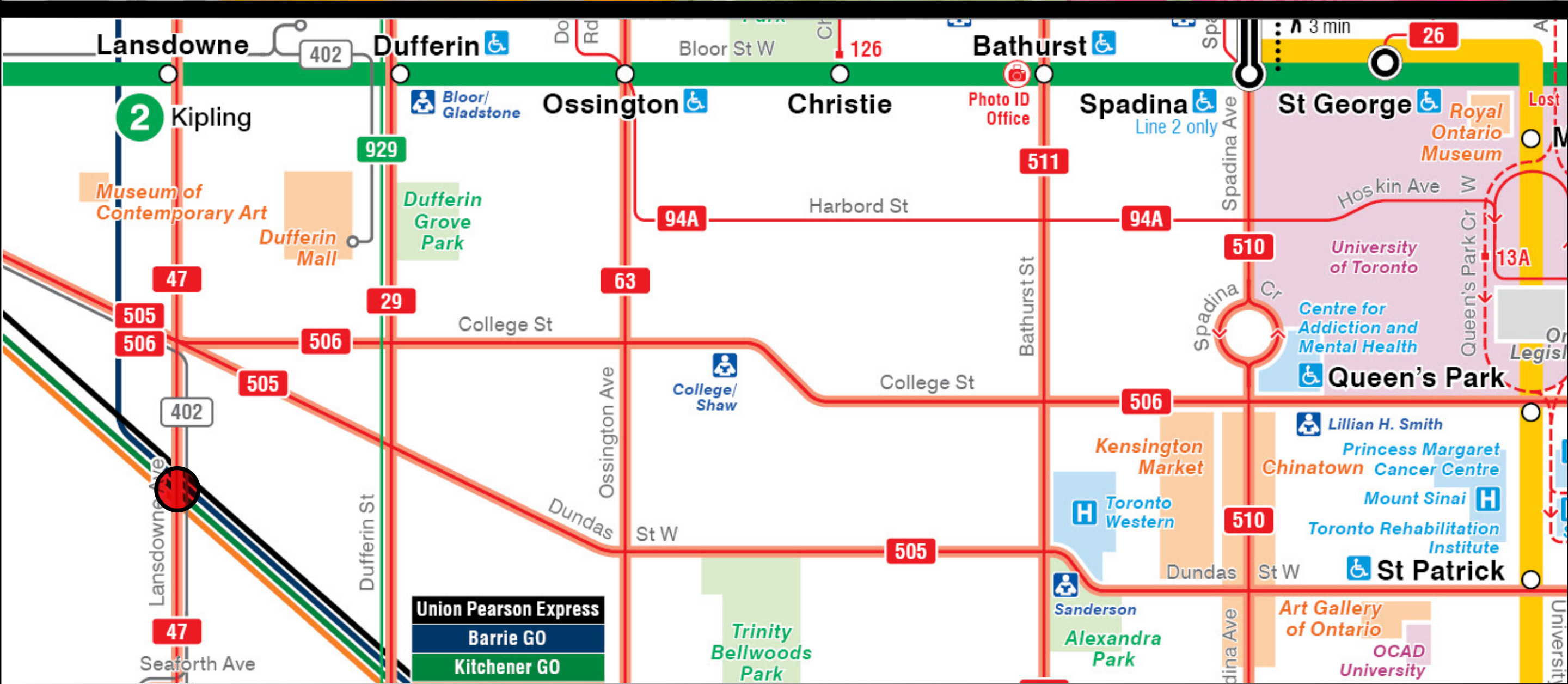
Since receiving her Bachelor of Design from OCAD University, Leone has exhibited in solo exhibitions and art fairs across Toronto, as well as internationally in Italy and South Korea. She is a recipient of the OIEOS 2010 Scholarship, OAC 2018 Visual Arts Project Grant, Mural Route's MACD, and the AKIN x MOCA residency 2018-19.

[@lehohneh](#)

Find her "Bloom" mural at King Street West & Tecumseth St, west of St. Andrew Station on Line 1 1



Find her "Commune" mural at the Lansdowne Underpass, south of Lansdowne Station on Line 2 2



MEDIAH

Evond Blake is a Canadian multidisciplinary visual artist who has worked under the pseudonym MEDIAH for over 25 years.

An internationally renowned visual artist, MEDIAH is a trendsetter sparking new ideas and originality by blurring the lines between post-graffiti and dynamic abstraction.

MEDIAH's work consists of weaving traditional street art forms with traditional painterly techniques and mixed media printmaking using many forms and approaches found in digital art and design. Heavily inspired by avionics, mechanical engineering and schematics, the artwork glorifies and captures the essence of speed, motion, dynamism and force to create movement on the image surface.

MEDIAH's work provides the viewer with not only this glorification of speed relating to the thirst for a faster and more streamlined world but also its unavoidable repercussions of collision, disaster and chaos.

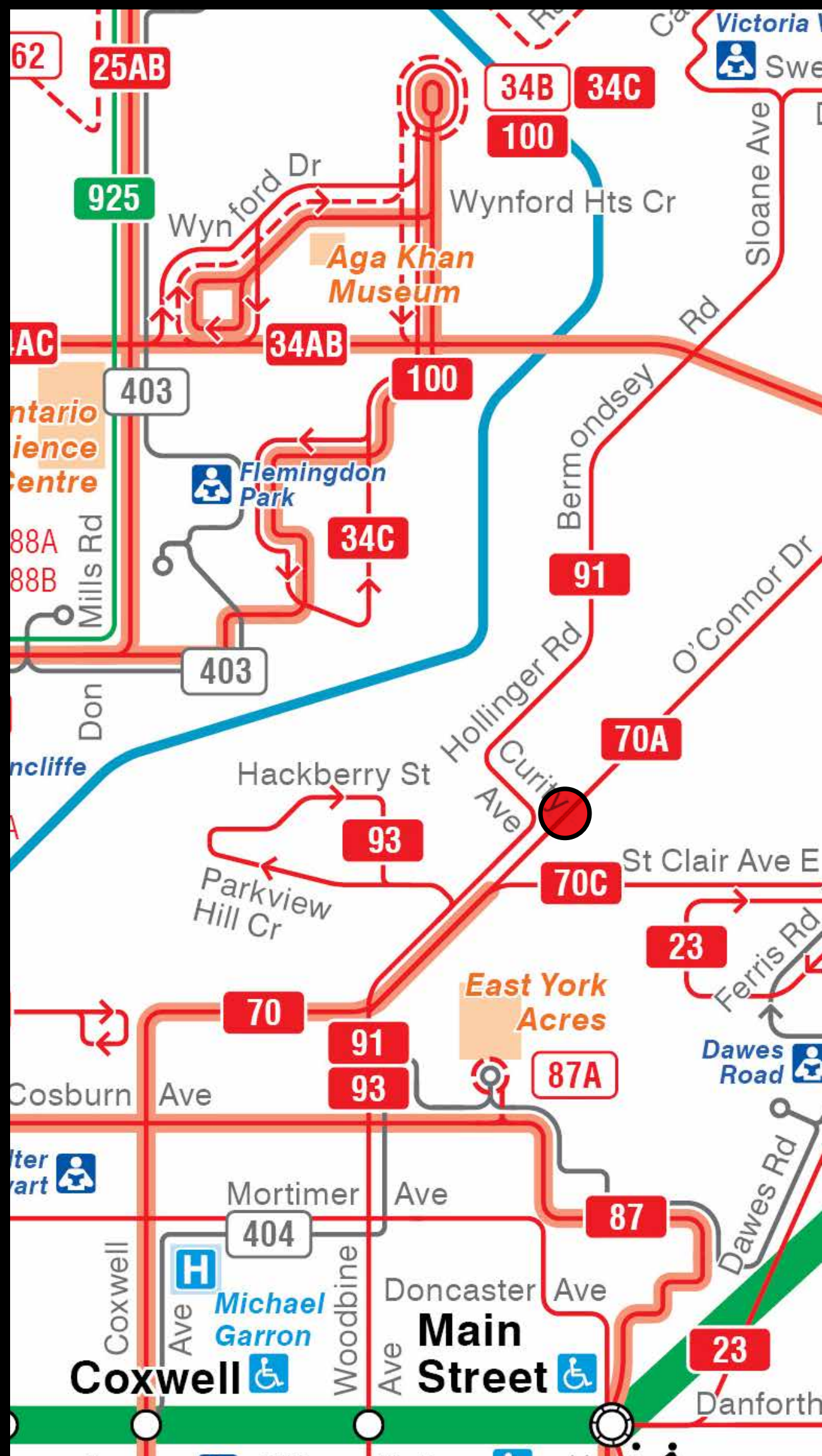
MEDIAH is part of CBS – Can't Be Stopped, one of the most prolific and respected international graffiti labels based out of Los Angeles.

[@mediah](https://www.instagram.com/mediah)

Find his "INTEROH GALE" mural at 42 Finch Ave East, near Finch Station on Line 1



Find his "LANTERN SHELL" mural at 984/986 O'Connor Drive, north of Coxwell Station on Line 2



PHADE

Jessey (Phade) Pacho is a renowned graffiti artist honoured by the Canadian government and Armed Forces for his exceptional work.

Jessey has dedicated his life to mural making, aerosol art, traditional graffiti, and shaking graffiti-related misconceptions.

Since overcoming homelessness through his craft, Jessey has positioned himself as a leader in his industry. For over ten years, he has managed multiple professional artists' teams and delivered high-impact programming across Canada. He has been internationally recognized and published nationally, most recently for #paintthecityblack. Jessey also co-founded the event #everyonevsracism at Dundas Square and, during the pandemic, started his own mural production company, Phade Creative Inc.

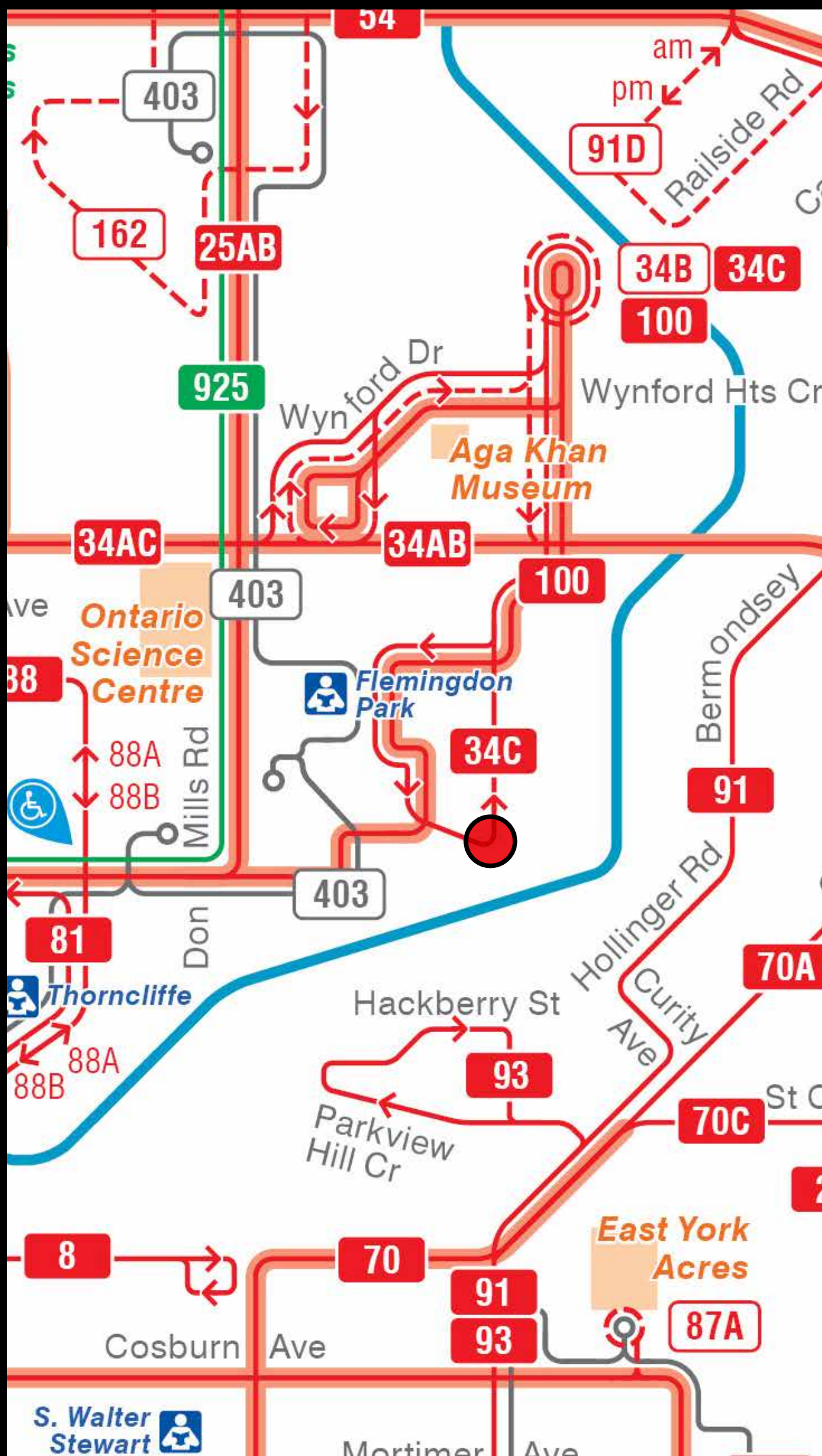
Jessey's work builds community and breathes new life into spaces that could use a boost of both color and commerce. Pursuing greater heights in his craft, Jessey remains a student to time and a humble servant of the arts.

[@artofphade](#)

Find his “Find Your One Piece” mural at 180 Montrose Ave, south of Christie Station on Line 2



Find his “Phader” mural at 160 Grenoble Dr, east of Eglinton Station on Line 1



CURTIA WRIGHT

Curtia Wright is a multi-disciplinary fine artist, mural artist and arts educator based in Toronto, Ontario.

She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts at OCAD University in the Drawing and Painting Program in 2015. Her artwork re-imagines our reality using elements of fantasy and surrealism. Using bold and vibrant colour, she aims to transport audiences to her alternate worlds. Colour functions as a powerful element to create a sense of bliss within the viewer.

Wright's murals commonly depict abstract figures surrounded by floral patterned elements. Her narratives focus on telling stories of Black peoples of the African diaspora, primarily speaking about her own heritage and history as a Jamaican-Canadian.

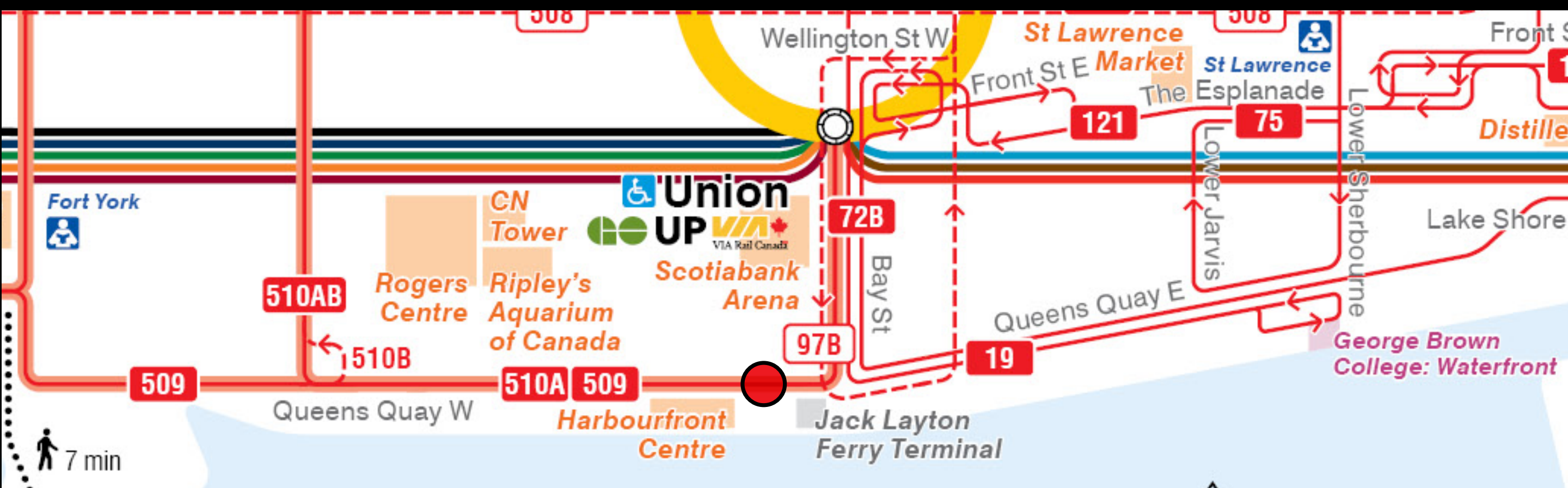
She's collaborated on mural projects with community organizations and private mural commissions across the Toronto and the GTA.

[@curtia](#)

Find her “Celebrating Queer Black Lives” mural at 529 Oakwood Ave, near Eglinton West Station on Line 1



Find her “Love Park” mural at York Street and Queens Quay West, near Union Station on Line 1



QUE ROCK

Que Rock is a Nipissing First Nation-born, multi-disciplinary artist.

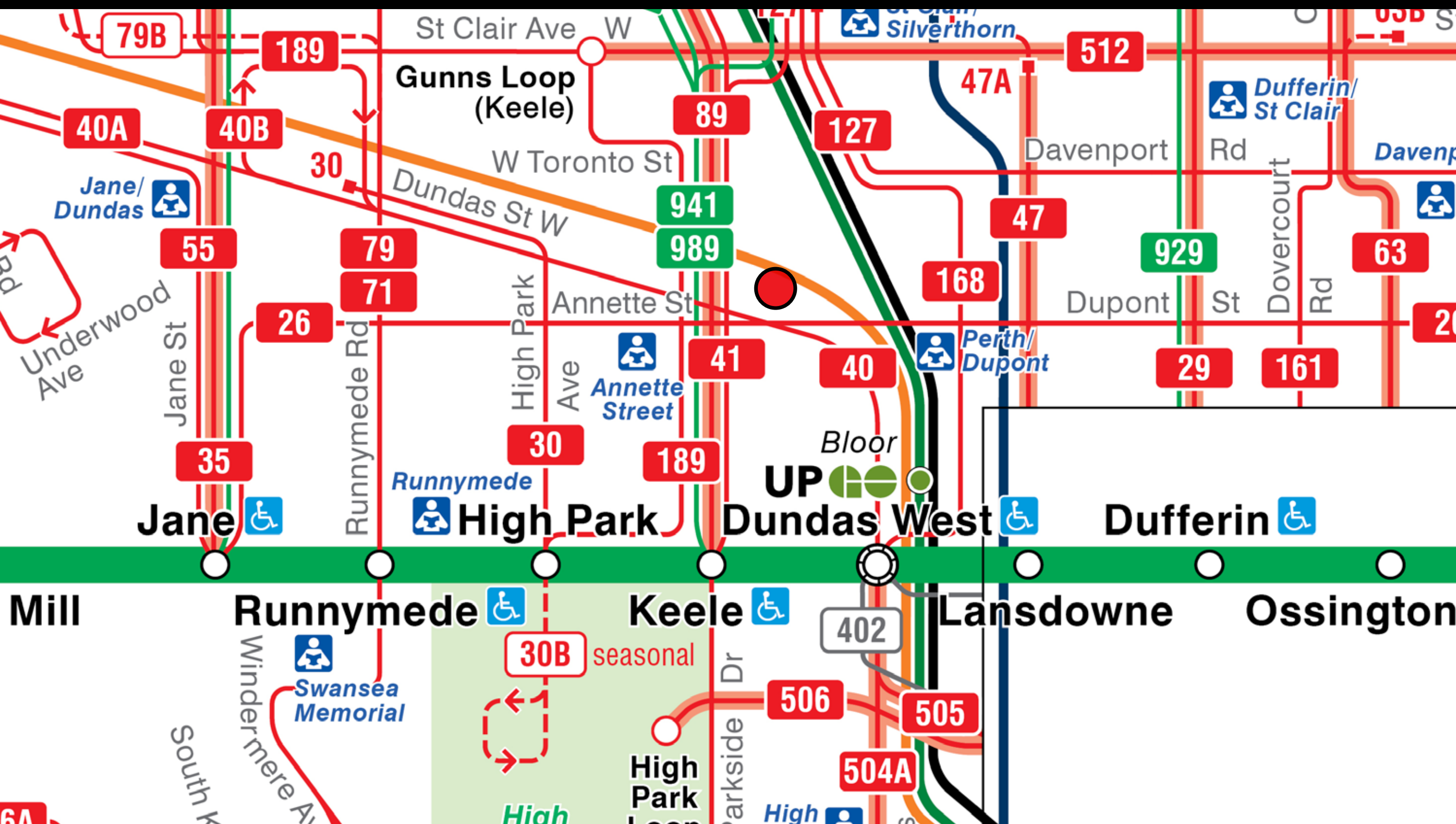
He started life learning his Anishinaabe and Odawa cultures through ceremonies. As an Anishinaabe graffiti artist, his work has matured from quick pieces into large street art projects and canvas work. Using his Anishinaabe teachings and different methods, Que Rock focuses on unique painting styles and techniques to create smooth transitions of colour, blending abstract forms with realism and expressionism.

Que Rock aspires for his artistic evolution to form a distinct look and feeling in all the art forms he works with – dancing, emceeing, DJing, painting and designing. He calls his style “making the woodlands dance”. His goal is to portray the teachings of his ancestors, sacred geometry and shapes in all his art forms to create a visual healing experience for the viewers.

[@miangunclan](#)



Find his “Wolf Clan (Miangun Dodem)” mural at the West Toronto Railpath, north of Keele Station on Line 2



PHILIP COTE

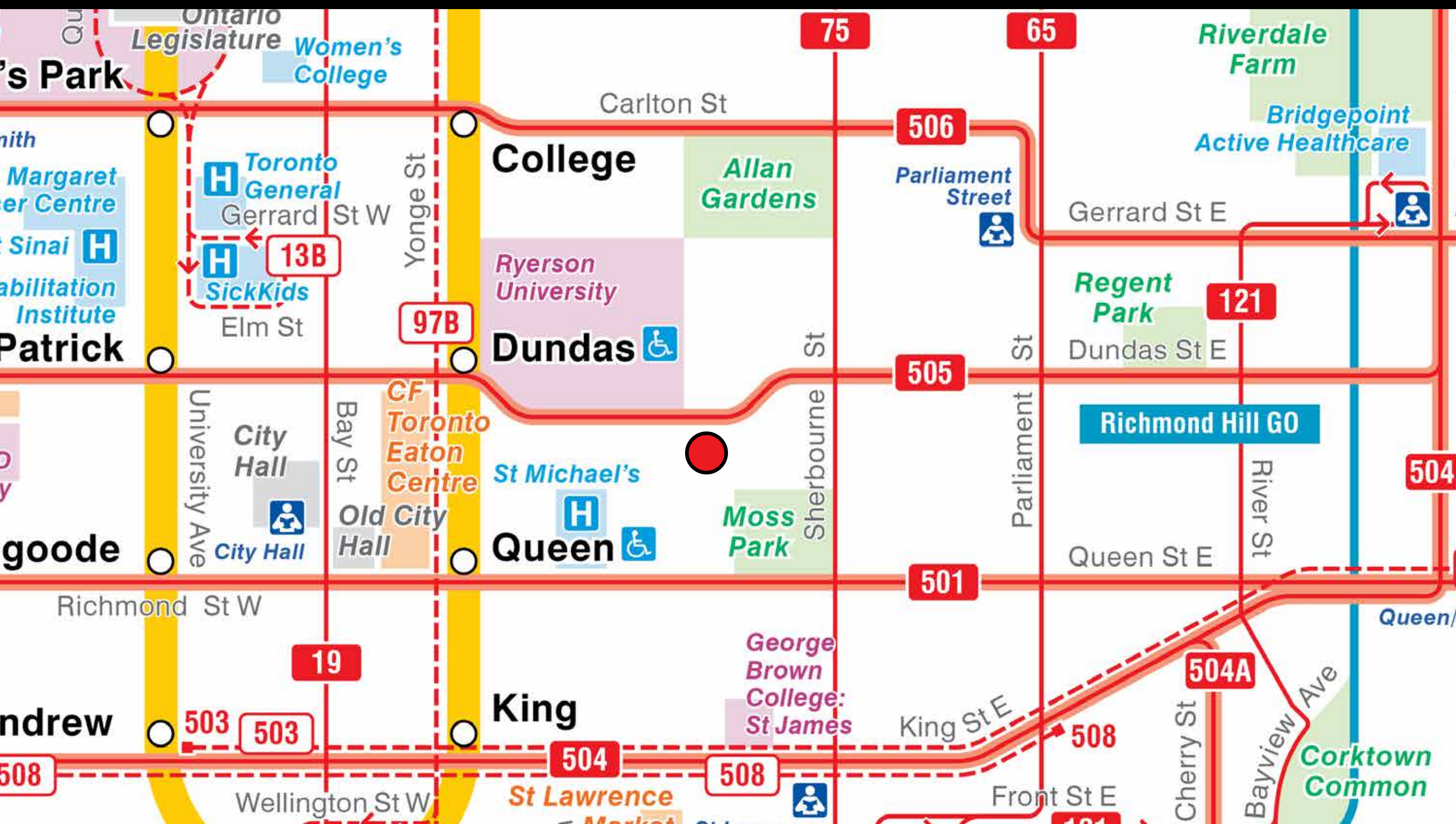
**Anishinaabe-izhini-kaaz-o-win
Nodj-mowin-Miskogayaashk
Gichi-manidoo-anishinaabe
indoodem Mishu-pishu
niin Anishinaabe, Shawnee,
Lakota, Potawatomi,
Ojibway, Algonquin
Min-a-waa Mohawk. Philip
Cote, MFA, Moose Deer
Point First Nation, is a Young
Spiritual Elder, Indigenous
artist, activist, educator,
historian, and Ancestral
Knowledge Keeper.**

He is engaged in creating opportunities for art-making and teaching methodologies through Indigenous symbolism, traditional ceremonies, history, oral stories, and land-based pedagogy. Citing all of his ancestry, Philip Cote is Shawnee, Lakota, Potawatomi, Ojibway, Algonquin, and Mohawk.

[@philipcote_indigenous_artist](#)



Find his “Original Family” mural at 181 Dundas Street East, east of Dundas Station on Line 1



DAVID GENERAL

**David General, an Oneida/
Mohawk Indigenous artist and
a member of the Six Nations
of the Grand River. is known
for blending Indigenous and
modernist styles and typically
working with stone.**

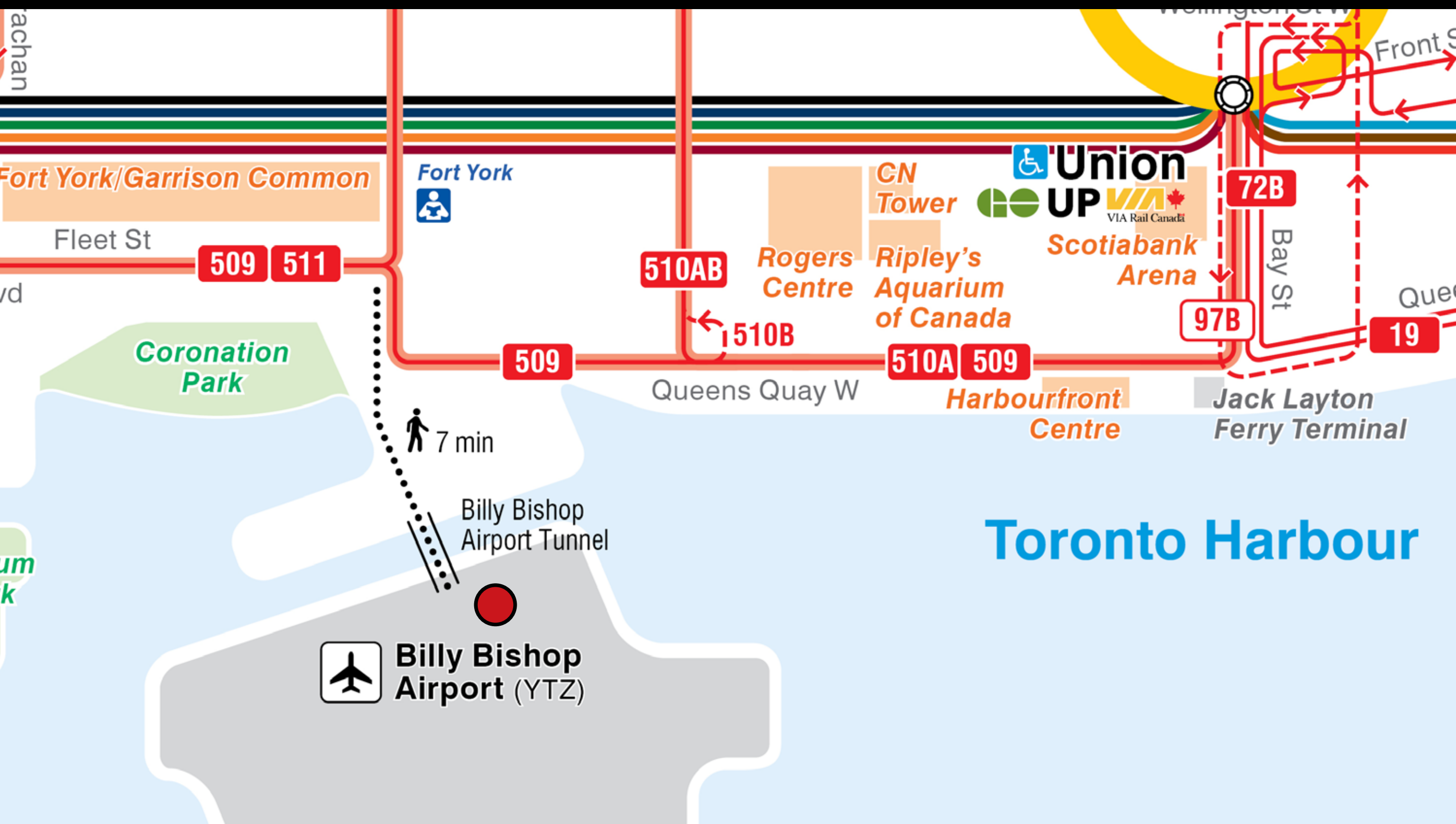
Prior to his art career David worked as a Journeyman Bridge and Structural Steel Ironworker, an Elementary School Teacher and an Arts & Culture Officer with the federal government.

David also served several years on the Six Nations Elected Council, first as a Councillor and then as Elected Chief from 2004 to 2007.

Since 1980 he has worked as a full-time sculptor developing a distinctive modernist style in marble and bronze. His most recent works are typically large scale, with a 2019 commission and installation of a granite sculpture at the University of Ottawa celebrating the long and continuing history of the Anishinaabe people. David's sculpture is in the permanent collections of The Royal Ontario Museum, McMichael Canadian Collection, Indian Art Centre Collection, Indian and Northern Affairs, Woodland Indian Cultural Educational Centre, Thunder Bay National Exhibition Centre, Ontario Crafts Council, McIntosh Gallery, University of Western Ontario and the Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan.



Find his “Maanjidowin: The Gathering” sculpture at Billy Bishop Airport, southwest of Union Station on Line 1



PAULLA GONZALEZ-OSSA

with Na-Me-Res-Sagatay

Born in Talca, Chile, but based in Toronto, Canada, Paula “BOMBA” Gonzalez-Ossa is one of Toronto’s pioneer artists of the New York-based and Hip Hop-founded graffiti writer culture.

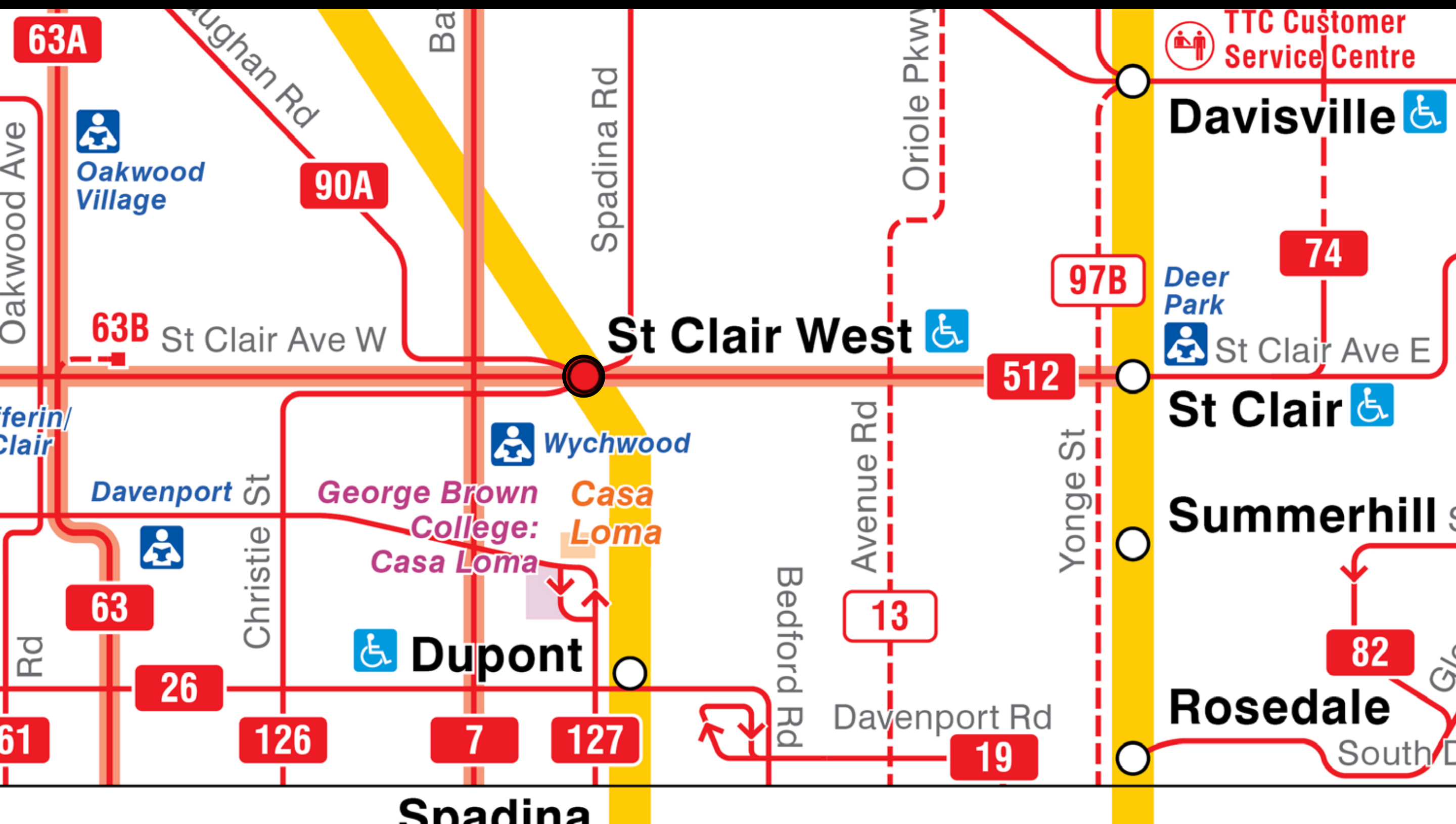
Her style fuses traditional mural production techniques gleaned from a rich texture of influences and Teachings from her native continent of South America, with the newer phenomenon of street art in North America. Gonzalez-Ossa has applied said process in collaboration with teams of Indigenous organizations and Knowledge Keepers to showcase Indigenous Teachings in relation to the lands of what we know as Canada, highlighting the pivotal stories they tell us. In addition, she has produced multiple murals throughout the city that communicate advocacy and empowerment for racialized, at-risk and under-represented communities. Gonzalez-Ossa has been voted Best Graffiti Artist for the City of Toronto by Now Magazine’s Readers’ Poll in 1997, in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Gonzalez-Ossa is widely known as Canada’s “First Woman of Graffiti”, and has been painting since 1986. She is featured in multiple books and publications that outline the history of underground graffiti culture in Canada.

[@amazonica2012](#)



Find his “The Spirits of the Ancestral Trees” mural at St Clair West Station on Line 1



NISHINA LOFT

Nishina Shapwaykeesic-Loft is a Kanien'kehá:ka woman from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. She is a 2S queer, multi-disciplinary artist in a wide spectrum of mediums. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours from York University in Theatre Production and Design.

She works within the theatre industry with a specialization in costuming. She just completed working with the ADC for Designing the Revolution. She looks forward to working with Young People's Theatre as a costume designer for Bentboy.

She is a mural artist working within the city as a member of the RUN Collective. She works with StART as a project coordinator and an indigenous advisor for multiple projects.

She is the Programming Coordinator for the Toronto Queer Film Festival. She is the Print Traffic Coordinator at imagineNATIVE Media + Arts Festival. She completed the Indigenous Youth Artist-in-Residence at U of T Scarborough. She continues to grow within her field and explore new opportunities.

[@nshtsh](#)



Find her “Ohné:kanos” mural at Ashbridges Bay, south of Coxwell Station on Line 2

