

Ride & Find

A guide to the artists, artwork and
stations murals celebrating Black
Excellence in Toronto 2024



**Building on Legacies: Celebrating
Black Excellence in Toronto**
#BHMxTTC



Ride & Find

A guide to the artists, artwork and stations murals celebrating Black Excellence in Toronto 2024.

You can use this guide to learn more about:
Jovita Odegua Akahome, Indiigo Cocoa,
Samantha Dennis, Camille Lauren, Meighan
Morson, Andrew Patterson, Gordon Rowe, Mya
Salau, the key Black individuals they profiled,
and the spots where they left their mark.

Visit [ttc.ca](https://www.ttc.ca) to learn more about our other diversity and inclusion initiatives.



Diversity and equity are top priorities at 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.

Visit [ttc.ca](https://www.ttc.ca) to learn more about our other diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Visit [ttc.ca/jobs](https://www.ttc.ca/jobs) to learn about the TTC's commitment to fostering a positive workplace culture with a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve.

Diversity Department

The TTC recognizes the importance of taking action to be responsive and reflective of the communities it serves, as well as to provide positive workplaces that value and support the full participation of all employees. To do so, while acknowledging a history of systemic racism and bias, the TTC is committed to implementing targeted initiatives to create an organizational culture of inclusiveness, respect and dignity that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination. This will require “seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing work differently” (Racial Equity Tools, 2020), and the Diversity Department is here to provide leadership and guidance on how to do that.

Racial Equity Office

The Racial Equity Office (REO) is housed within the TTC's Diversity Department. Through consultation and capacity building, the REO applies a racial equity lens to TTC policies, programs and initiatives to close opportunity gaps for Black, Indigenous and racialized communities. The REO also supports departments and business units across the TTC in promoting diversity, enhancing inclusion, and combatting racial discrimination in all its forms.

Racial equity is both an outcome and a process. “As an outcome, racial equity is achieved when race no longer determines one's socioeconomic outcomes; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live. As a process, racial equity is applied when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives” (Race Forward, 2021).



INDIIGO COCOA (SHASHANN M.T)

@IndiigoArt

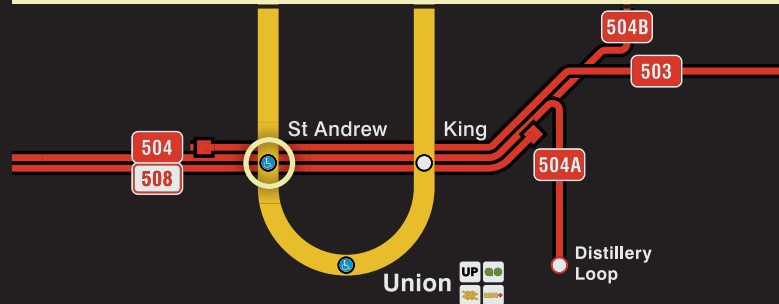
Shashann M.T. who is artistically known as Indiigo Cocoa is a multi-disciplinary visual artist from Toronto, Canada. Her work is inspired by the richness of black culture, self-love, music, self-care, Afrofuturism, social issues, and her environment.

Through her work, Shashann aims to evoke positive emotions and reflection with vibrant pigments to create a captivating atmosphere that draws you in a style that reflects a relatable reality.

Dr. Beverley Salmon, was a Civil Rights activist and was the first Black female City Councillor in her hometown of Toronto, serving as Vice Deputy Chair of the TTC in 1989. Dr. Salmon also served as the first Black female Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, between 1979 and 1985, and co-founded the Urban Alliance on Race Relations.



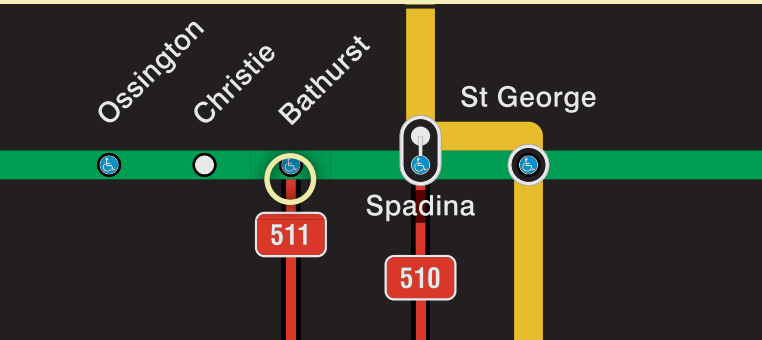
Visit the mural at St Andrew Station to learn more.



Dr. Itah Sadu Scarborough-born Itah Sadu is an award-winning author, educator, community developer and entrepreneur. Dr. Sadu is the owner of a Different Booklist, Toronto's longest running Black-owned bookstore, and is also the Managing Director of the Blackhurst Cultural Centre.



Visit the mural at Bathurst Station to learn more.





SAMANTHA DENNIS

@SamanthaDennis

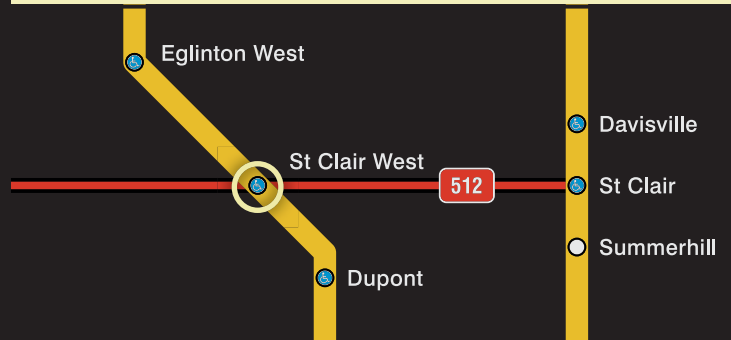
Samantha Dennis is a Toronto based visual artist of Jamaican descent. Marrying abstraction and realism techniques, she creates vivid portraits showcasing black bodies.

Not seeing enough representation in art, Samantha explores an interesting but amazing space of being a black woman whilst viewing and painting other black bodies and their experiences. Samantha received her BFA in Drawing and Painting from OCADU (Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto) in 2014.

Charles Roach, was a co-founder of the Black Action Defence Committee in 1988, formed in response to the police killings of Black men in the Greater Toronto Area. This led to the Commission on Systemic Racism in Ontario's Criminal Justice System, and the formation of the province's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to investigate Police shootings. Charles was also one of the founding members of Caribana, the festival currently known as Toronto Caribbean Carnival.



Visit the mural at St Clair Station to learn more.



Walter Alexander Foster Remembered as a man in service to his community, Walter Foster joined the Toronto Railway Company (a company which later became the TTC) in 1916 as one of the first Black TTC Conductors. As a member of the British Methodist Episcopal church, Walter helped many Black Canadians, immigrants and other members of the Toronto community to find work, and also provided meals at his place in the Bathurst and Bloor region.



Visit Blackhurst Cultural Centre, 777 Bathurst St.
to learn more.





GORDON ROWE

@RoweArt

Gordon is a Toronto born freelance illustrator, and designer. He has been drawing since he's been able to pick up a pen.

Inspired by the cartoons and movies of his childhood he spent his early years making comics and drawings for friends. Since then he has broadened his artistic range to digital painting, acrylic painting, gouache painting, portraiture and life drawing. These days he has made illustration and art direction for album artwork and editorials his main focus and has worked with several high profile clients in the music industry. Some of his passions include, hip hop culture, jazz and film.

Hon. George Carter CM, was called to the bar in 1948, one of Canada's first Black lawyers. Decades of advocacy and representation led to an appointment as an Ontario provincial court judge in 1979, the first Black judge born in Canada. In a career spanning near 50 years, George was instrumental in establishing legal aid services in Ontario.



Visit the mural at Osgoode Station to learn more.

Lansdowne

Dufferin

Ossington

Christie

Bathurst

Angela James OC, is the first and only Black captain of Canada's national women's hockey team and won 4 Gold medals at the IIHF World Women's Championship, scoring the first goal in tournament history. One of the first three women inducted into the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) *Hockey Hall of Fame*, Angela James went on in 2010 to become one of the first two women inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.



Visit the mural at Pape Station to learn more.

Broadview

Chester

Pape

Donlands

Greenwood



505

504B



JOVITA ODEGUA AKAHOME

@Jovita_Art

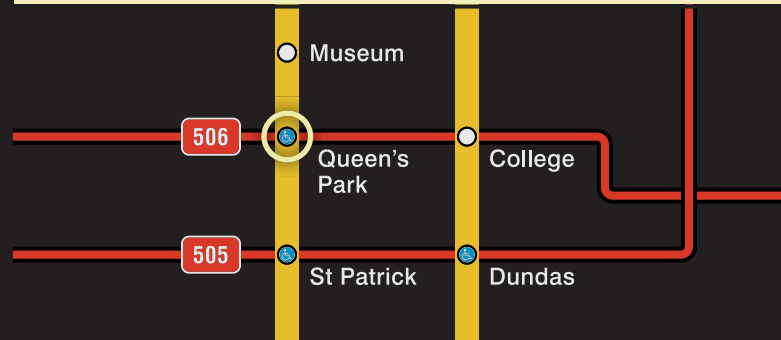
Jovita Odegua Akahome is a Canada-based visual artist. Her work focuses on exploring the relationship between culture and identity.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts, with a major in Visual arts and minor in history, from the University of Ottawa. Jovita's Nigerian background is an important inspiration for the recurring theme of identity marks in most of her work.

Dr. Zanana Akande MPP, made history in 1990 as the first Black woman elected to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, serving as Minister of Community and Social Services. As a tribute to this achievement plus decades of work in education, community development and advocacy for women rights, in 2018 Dr. Akande became the first Canadian-born Black woman to be awarded the *Key to the City of Toronto*.



Visit the mural at Queens Park Station to learn more.





ANDREW PATTERSON

@VisibleNoise

Andrew Patterson is an artist and designer based in Toronto, ON.

His work is largely focused on the topic of identity and challenging the traditional ways we define it, and falls into two stylistic approaches; portraiture and geometric abstraction.

Dr. Dionne Brand CM, FRSC, as a multi-award-winning author who often focuses on themes of gender, race, sexuality and feminism, white male domination, injustices and the “moral hypocrisies of Canada”, Dionne Brand has served as an academic leader in English and Poetry at several colleges and universities across Canada. This body of work led to the designation of *Poet Laureate of Toronto* in 2009, the first Black person to hold that role.



Visit the mural at Finch Station to learn more.

 Finch

North York Centre

4 Sheppard-Yonge



Bayview



CAMILLE LAUREN GORDON

@SuperArtGirl

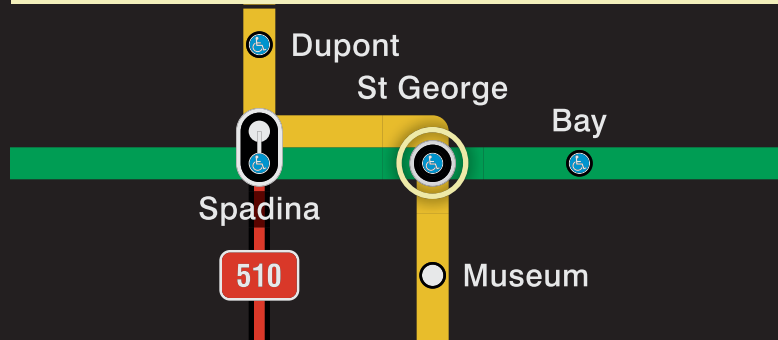
Camille Lauren is an illustrator, designer and live painter at her company Art of Ciel.

She holds a Bachelors in Design from OCAD University. She is currently a grad student in Humber College's UX Design program. Camille has captivated audience members with her live painting and portrait sketching at private weddings across Ontario and overseas, and public events in the GTA. Her illustrative approach includes blending insights from her subject's story with imaginative symbolism to bring their personality to life visually in a fresh way.

Dr. Roberta Timothy As a registered psychotherapist, co-founder of Continuing Healing Consultants and an educator, Dr. Timothy is the first Black health lead at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health. With a focus on community, Dr. Timothy developed a Master of Public Health program in the field of Black Health, the first of its kind in North America.



Visit the mural at St George Station to learn more.





MYA SALAU

@Myas.Art

Mya Salau is a Toronto-based, self-taught visual artist. With a versatile approach, Mya explores various painting styles such as Modern Cartoon; Pop Art, Portraiture, Landscape, Realism painting and Digital Art.

Embracing a palette of vibrant colors, Mya has been experimenting with methodologies, inspirational storytelling and color theory to evoke diverse moods in her work.

Professor Carl James Through years of research across Sociology and Education, Professor Carl James has become one of the leading voices in research and programs on identity, racialization and masculinity of Black youth. Professor James has become a leader in educational development and curriculum change to support Black and immigrant students, informing policy and practice in Toronto and Canada as a whole.



Visit the mural at York University Station to learn more.

 Pioneer Village

York University

Finch West



MEIGHAN MORSON

@Emelle_Arts

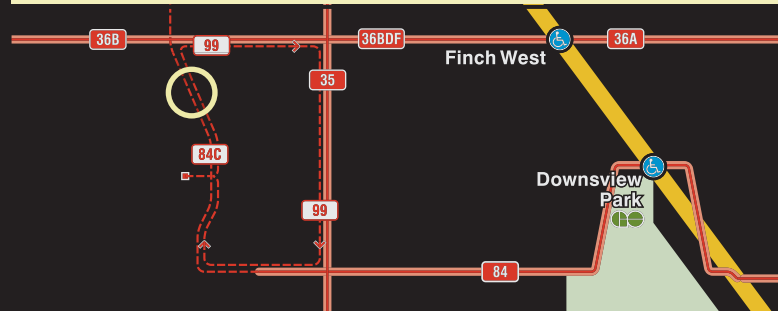
Meighan Morson (she/her) is a digital Afrofuturistic painter that primarily works with the human figure.

Employing the use of high contrast, light and form, she creates strong, otherworldly and ethereal beings. She also writes poetry and short fiction.

Irma James, is a beloved community member and matriarch figure who supported many of Toronto's Black activists for decades. In 1983 Irma became the first Black woman to be a TTC streetcar operator, which opened up the doors for many Black and racialized women. This trailblazer continued as an Operator for 24 years, ending in 2007.



Visit Caribbean African Canadian (CAFCAN) Social Services, 995 Arrow Rd. to learn more.



ASTROSANKOFA ARTS INITIATIVES

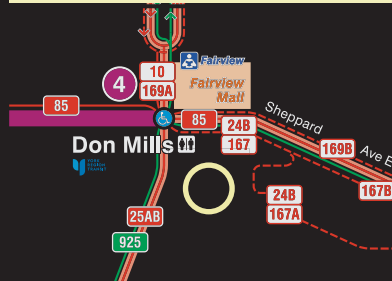
@ASTROSANKOFA

Astrosankofa Arts Initiatives is a national artist collective and arts organization based in Toronto. Their services explores the connection to the past, present, and future through the West African concept, sankofa.

The practice of this exploration is called *Sankofanology* which is at the heart of the work of the organization as it relates to Afrofuturism, which centres stories and practices towards the healing, growth, evolution, and exponential potential of people of African descent- this limitlessness is the *Astro* in the name. The organization is instrumental in collaboration and partnerships highlighting Black creative works and providing opportunities for Black artists to share their pieces within various community settings.



Visit the Harriet Tubman Community Organization, 1761 Sheppard Ave. E., or the mural at Finch West Station to learn more.



York University

Finch West

Downsview Park



The TTC has partnered with **AstroSankofa Arts Initiatives** and is proud to highlight and celebrate 11 Black Torontonians including two past Black TTC employees who have contributed to building the vibrant City of Toronto and Canada we enjoy today.

AstroSankofa Arts Initiatives explores the connection to the past, present and future through the West African concept, sankofa. The practice of this is called “*Sankofanology*”. Sankofanology is at the heart of the work of the organization as it relates to Afrofuturism, which centres stories and practices towards the healing, growth, evolution and exponential potential of people of African descent. The organization is instrumental in highlighting creatives and providing opportunities for Black artists to share their pieces within various community settings.

@Astrosankofa

To build on any legacies is to learn and honour the past and present that has informed the flooding wonders, and the embers of hopes for the future.

WE CAN BE, BECAUSE THEY WERE!

– AstroSankofa Arts Initiatives



#BHMxTTC

Learn more at ttc.ca/2024BHM
or scan the QR code.

