

THIS IS NOT ART THERAPY ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM AT PWA

Balca Arda: *The Match Girl in Toronto*



images from the studio of Balca Arda

BALCA ARDA

The Match Girl in Toronto

PWA and Disco Hospital are pleased to announce the second resident artist in this year's studio residency program: Turkish-born artist, Balca Arda. Arda will bring her studio project, *The Match Girl in Toronto*, to PWA for 5 weeks from January 7 to February 10, 2017.

For *The Match Girl in Toronto*, Arda proposes a contemporary adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale, *The Little Match Girl*, set in present-day Toronto. At the heart of her art project is the creation of a photo-novel that unfolds in various well-known Toronto neighbourhoods, including Cabbagetown, Yorkville, Bay Street, and the city's downtown Entertainment District.

Drawing on contemporary questions surrounding issues of unemployment for educated immigrants, *The Match Girl in Toronto* will explore playful, critical approaches to these challenges in context with what the artist describes as "spectacular Toronto winter scenery." Through this creative play of ideas and identities, one of Arda's goals is to facilitate a shift in perspectives toward—and changes in perception of—people living with HIV/AIDS in the public sphere. In her recreation of the fairy tale, Arda will engage PWA collaborators in the project's theatrical layers (acting, costumes, make-up, etc.).

HIV/AIDS is situated at the intersection of social justice, race, gender, sexuality, poverty, harm reduction, and the social determinants of health. In this light, *The Match Girl in Toronto* promises a lively engagement by highlighting issues at this crossroads. Arda aims to present her photo-novel of *The Match Girl in Toronto* in different arts festivals and events in the city. As well, she plans to produce the photo-novel in both digital and hard copy formats.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

in *This Is Not Art Therapy*

- Are you an artist and interested in occupying PWA's studio for 5 weeks in February-March 2017? The residency includes studio space and opportunities for creative engagement with PWA constituents. Deadline for proposal: **Friday 16 December**. ASK how can we help you with your proposal!
- Art works by this year's resident artists will be featured in a curated group exhibition at Beaver Hall Gallery (McCaul Street near OCAD University) in June 2017.

CONTACT

Erin Howley

program coordinator at <notarttherapy@pwatoronto.org> or 416 506-1400

This Is Not Art Therapy is developed by PWA in collaboration with artist Andrew Zealley (*Disco Hospital*). Zealley was PWA's artist-in-residence from July 2015 through March 2016. *This Is Not Art Therapy* is both community-based participatory research and the site of Zealley's doctoral research into artistic responses to the biopolitics of HIV/AIDS. He imagines *This Is Not Art Therapy* as a performative defining (and populating) of a research territory—the AIDS service organization as an active site of arts practice—and a form of activism, in and of itself. Zealley's Ph.D. research project is supervised by Professor Cate Sandilands, Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. Conceptualized as a template for AIDS service organizations (ASO) in general, *This Is Not Art Therapy*, developed specifically at PWA, seeks ways to understand the healing possibilities of art that is unbounded by "art therapy."

Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA)

Founded in 1987, PWA's mission is to engage people living with HIV/AIDS in enhancing their health and well-being through practical and therapeutic support services and broader social change, and we inspire them to live into their dreams and discoveries. PWA provides four pillars of programs and services: Practical Supports, Community Access, Health & Therapeutic Care, and Dreaming & Engagement. The inspiration behind THIS IS NOT ART THERAPY comes directly from our strategic plan and from the powerful and meaningful history and connection between art and HIV/AIDS.

THIS IS NOT ART THERAPY is funded by The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)



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