

THIS IS NOT ART THERAPY ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM AT PWA

Peter Hobbs: *PWA Queer EcoSpirits Lab*



Peter Hobbs, *Faggot Patch* (2009)

PETER HOBBS
PWA Queer EcoSpirits Lab

PWA and Disco Hospital is pleased to announce the new resident artist in the studio program. Peter Hobbs brings his *PWA Queer EcoSpirits Lab* to *This Is Not Art Therapy*, for five weeks, November 7 to December 12 2016.

Toronto-based artist, Peter Hobbs has a history of creative interaction with community and queerness. With his *PWA Queer EcoSpirits Lab*, Hobbs proposes “working directly with individual clients to develop a creative lab that uses Allan Gardens Conservatory as a space of communal importance (historical, ecologically, and spiritually), with the ultimate goal of producing an invocation/ séance event.

“PWA’s proximity to Allan Gardens can be seen as a pleasant coincidence, offering clients and staff a convenient place to wander off to relax, cool one’s toes in the grass, shoot the breeze with friends and strangers. But rather than happenstance, this proximity to PWA and the Gay Village speaks to the historical role Allan Gardens has played in shaping queer lives, community, and forms of intimacy. I am proposing to use Allan Gardens as a way to trace queer ecologies: the multiple and varied interrelationships between humans, critters (domestic and wild), and plant life (domestic and wild) which together inform the individual and communal lives of queers.

“I am proposing to use the park as a creative laboratory. Much of my residency at PWA will involve taking walks in the park with clients and then returning to the PWA studio space to generate material (sketches, notes, anecdotes, lists, diagrams) that will help us map the queer ecologies and spirits of the park. The ultimate goal is to use the material generated in the *PWA Queer EcoSpirits Lab* to mount a site-specific invocation. [...] I see us engaged in a community-client inspired séance that acknowledges the living and dead spirits that constitute and inhabit Allan Gardens. And while it is difficult to imagine the city would give us permission to perform a queer spirited séance in the dome conservatory of Allan Gardens, I still want to use this image as a shared reference point, as it constitutes an engaging visual node that we can take on as a group and give shape to by spending time in the park, drawing out its fleshy communal spirit.”

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 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

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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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