



For Immediate release: Thursday, 22 January, 2026

## Expressions 51: KWAG Marks 51 Years Celebrating Waterloo Region Youth Artists

Kitchener, ON - The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery is proud to announce the public reception of [\*Expressions 51: Forging a New Path\*](#), a celebration of youth in the arts, on Saturday, 24 January 2026. Expressions is an annual exhibition organized by the Gallery in collaboration with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board and Waterloo Region District School Board.

Students across the Waterloo Region, from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12, along with KWAG's Youth Council, have created artwork with the theme of

“Forging A New Path”. *This year’s theme* is inspired by the feature artwork from last year, *Encroachment*, by Hayden Percy, as well as by the works of Rosalie Favell, a Métis artist who uses photography, portraiture, and painting to understand and represent her ancestry and identity. A major exhibition by Favell will open at KWAG in summer 2026.

At the reception, KWAG will announce the 2026 Feature Artwork—one student artwork from this year’s exhibition that will serve as inspiration for Expressions 52 in 2027. This artwork will be prominently featured in promotional materials, including postcards, website features, and brochures.

“The students’ works displayed during [Expressions 51](#) will hang alongside pieces from the Gallery’s Permanent Collection, selected to reflect this year’s theme. As the Gallery celebrates its [70th anniversary](#), this pairing takes on special significance—connecting prominent artworks held in trust for the public with the region’s emerging artists. ‘When the Gallery first opened 70 years ago, our founders understood the importance of art education for youth,’ explains Shirley Madill, Executive Director. ‘That vision continues as we celebrate this milestone, working with schools, parents, and teachers to secure a creative future for our young people.’”

More than 1,100 students are expected to visit the Gallery with their schools during the exhibition, in addition to those who attend with their friends and family outside of school hours.

“These young visionaries remind us of our potential to shape a better world, rather than merely accepting what we inherit,” remarks Darryn Doull, Curator, Exhibitions & Programs.

#### Programming:

##### [Opening Reception](#)

Saturday, 24 January

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Remarks at 1:30 p.m.

##### [Exhibition Tour](#)

Sunday, 1 February

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

##### [Family Sunday: Express Yourself](#)

Sunday, 1 February

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

## About Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

As Waterloo Region's leading public art gallery, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) connects people and ideas through art. Its nationally acclaimed exhibitions and programs welcome all to be inspired and challenged through a deepened understanding of ourselves, our cultures, and our communities. Admission is free.

KWAG respectfully acknowledges that we are located in Block 2 on the Haldimand Tract: land promised to Six Nations, which includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.\* This is the traditional home of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee Peoples, whose resilience we honor by offering this Gallery as a space to reflect and learn from one another.

We are committed to reconciliation and ensuring that our Gallery's programs and Permanent Collection demonstrate more diverse, culturally relevant Canadian art and artists.

Accessibility: KWAG is fully accessible.

### Visit Us

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 101 Queen Street North, Kitchener, ON N2H 6P7  
[www.kwag.ca](http://www.kwag.ca)

Media Contact: Áine Belton, [abelton@kwag.on.ca](mailto:abelton@kwag.on.ca), 519.579.5860 x 214

### Connect with us

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**Image:** Hayden Percy, *Encroachment*, 2025. Expressions 50: Foresight, 29 March - 4 May, 2025. Photo by KWAG.

*Expressions* is supported by Waterloo Region District School Board and Waterloo Catholic District School Board.



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