

Two Local Recipients to share the 2018 Guelph Arts Council Jane Graham Memorial Award

Guelph, ON – November 6, 2018 – Guelph Arts Council is pleased to announce that the 2018 Jane Graham Memorial Award will be shared by visual artist **Jessica Masters**, and **VERSA**, an audio-visual collective led by multidisciplinary artist Monika Hauck and music/video artist Alex Ricci. The recipients all live and work in Guelph, and submitted requests for assistance to pursue specialized professional development opportunities.

Jessica Masters works in both soft pastel and oils, painting in a simplified and poignant way that grabs viewers' emotions. She also teaches art to adults. Her request for assistance is to cover the costs of a four-week online course with Felicia Forte whose painting style and compositions are simplified and poetic, and engage the viewer directly. Jessica feels that working with Felicia would be a good match, and would help her develop her technical skills, ideas of composition and colour use. Jessica also believes that Felicia could help her develop some skills for future online teaching. The jury commended Jessica for her longtime involvement in the local artistic community, and for her desire to take her work to the next level.

VERSA creates powerful instrumental music written around live looping bass guitar, and pairs this with responsive projections that visualize sound. Their new performance format, with its intrinsic combination of music and visual art, makes their work accessible, immersive and memorable. In order to further develop their skills and expand the scale and complexity of their projection installations, VERSA submitted a request that would allow Monika and Alex to attend a four-day video projection mapping workshop at Trinity Square Video in Toronto. The jury were excited by VERSA's work and commended their goal of unlocking new creative possibilities as well as a wider variety of presentation opportunities.

Both Guelph Arts Council and the jury panel were extremely pleased with the applications for the 2018 Jane Graham Memorial Award. The applicants' stories were all compelling, presenting the jury with some challenging decision-making.

Established in memory of local artist Jane Graham following her untimely death in March 2005, the Guelph Arts Council Jane Graham Memorial Fund is managed by the Guelph Community Foundation. As a result, Guelph Arts Council is annually able to assist visual artists residing and actively practising in Guelph or Wellington County, helping them to pursue professional development opportunities that will contribute to individual personal artistic growth.

For more information about the Jane Graham Memorial Award program and Guelph Arts Council, please visit guelpharts.ca, phone 519-836-3280, email administration@guelpharts.ca, or drop by our offices at 10C Shared Space, 42 Carden Street, Guelph. For more information about Jessica Masters or VERSA, please visit their websites at <http://www.jessicamasters.com/> or <http://www.versavisuals.com/> respectively.

About Guelph Arts Council:

For forty years, Guelph Arts Council has been dedicated to supporting, stimulating and promoting arts and culture in Guelph. Guelph Arts Council is funded in part by **The Guelph Community Foundation** and **City of Guelph**. We also acknowledge the support of the **Ontario Arts Council**, an agency of the Government of Ontario, and our annual sponsor **Meridian**.

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For recipient photos or more information, please contact:

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