



101 Queen Street North  
Kitchener, ON  
N2H 6P7  
www.kwag.on.ca



*Thursdays Together* participants work on their art projects, June 2008. Photo: M. McNeilly, *ArtAccess*.



*The Market*, part of the *Thursdays Together* art installation, modeling clay. Image courtesy of the artist. Photo: M. McNeilly, *ArtAccess*.

## ***Thursdays Together* Has Special Meaning for St. John's Kitchen**

*Kitchener, Ontario, Canada* - *ArtsAccess* and St. John's Kitchen invite community members to a special art exhibition celebrating *Thursdays Together* on Thursday, July 31st from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. *ArtsAccess* is a community arts outreach initiative of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KW|AG) in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario, which focuses on building relationships with cultural organizations, schools, libraries and community centres.

Mosa Neshamá McNeilly, *ArtsAccess* Lead Community Artist Facilitator, initiated the idea of a drop-in lunch hour art project in May 2007 and launched it in October 2007, with the support of St. John's Kitchen administration and staff. The idea was to offer an invitation to engage in an afternoon of art-making for community members having lunch at St John's Kitchen. Each Thursday for nine months, participants explored a different medium and a theme, building creative skills and trust for one another in the process. The participants made art with modeling clay, paint, collage, pen and ink, printmaking, origami, found materials, ceramics, and more.

The *Thursdays Together* exhibition opening on July 31st highlights the artworks of the participants over several months. According to McNeilly, "St. John's Kitchen's underlying philosophy is that it belongs to the people who go there regularly. Our *Thursdays Together* exhibition reflects this philosophy in that the artworks form a permanent installation. They mark a time, they represent the people who created them, and they are part of the history of the place."

"Mosa asked me to continue to facilitate this program on an on-going basis beginning in September and I have agreed," explains Misha Gingerich, Project Co-Facilitator, The Working Centre. "In so doing, St. John's Kitchen can continue to provide this creative outlet to our community members and carry on the legacy of the project for participants who found real value in it, and for others who have not yet sat down at our table. The art installation can continue to grow and evolve as different participants contribute."

"People arrive at St. John's Kitchen for reasons beyond the need for food. I think many of us stay because the Kitchen provides an offbeat forum in which we can express ourselves. Those who participated found the Thursday art project a tangible outlet for the desire for creative expression," said Leslie Morgenson, The Working Centre.

The public is invited to come and view the art works that have been permanently installed in the communal eating area, and to learn more about the *Thursdays Together* art project during the exhibition opening on July 31st.

### **Gallery Hours:**

Mon - Wed 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Thurs 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
Fri - Sat 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sun 1 - 5 p.m.  
Open Civic Holiday, Mon Aug 4 10-5  
Open Labour Day, Mon Sept 1 10-5



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*Thursdays Together* artists explored different mediums such as paint, clay, pen and ink, relief images and more. Photo: M. McNeilly, *ArtAccess*.



St. John's Kitchen lunch art sessions provided interest for participants and observers in the lunch area. Photo: M. McNeilly, *ArtAccess*.

**Media Contact**

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**Event Details**

*Thursdays Together* Art Exhibition Opening  
Works by St. John's Kitchen Lunch Art Program Participants  
Thursday, July 31; 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
St. John's Kitchen, 97 Victoria Street North, Kitchener

For more information, contact Mosa McNeilly at 519.579.5860 ext 226 or mmcneilly@kwag.on.ca or Misha Gingerich at 519.749.9177 ext 238 or mishag@theworkingcentre.org.

**About St. John's Kitchen**

St. John's Kitchen is a unique place in Kitchener-Waterloo that offers differing levels of support. Located in downtown Kitchener, it serves up to 300 meals per day and provides a refuge from isolation for people-in-need in the Kitchener-Waterloo community. St. John's Kitchen offers any food and community services. The Kitchen, now in operation for 19 years, has grown to a total of 160 volunteers, 85 of whom participate weekly, and 80% of whom are patrons from the dining room. St. John's Kitchen's infrastructure encourages collaboration with community members who work together to produce the meals, create an atmosphere of camaraderie, and provide clean up services afterwards. Every year approximately 200,000 pounds of usable food is prepared or distributed through St. John's Kitchen to people who would otherwise not have access to these services. For more information, visit <http://www.theworkingcentre.org/sjk/meal/meal.html>

**About the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery**

Through thoughtful and engaging programs, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KW|AG) connects people and ideas through art. The Gallery's exhibits and programs are built on the mission that art is the catalyst for shared experience, dialogue and imagination. The Gallery emphasizes contemporary art, often premiering works by Canadian and international artists. Exhibitions frequently draw upon selections from the 4 000 work permanent collection to provide a forum for dialogue. KW|AG plays a vital educational role in the community, offering a full spectrum of artistic experience for adults, children and families alike. Established in 1956 and operating within Centre In The Square, KW|AG is the oldest and largest public gallery in Waterloo region: roots in the community, eyes on the world. For more information, contact mail@kwag.on.ca or visit [www.kwag.on.ca](http://www.kwag.on.ca).