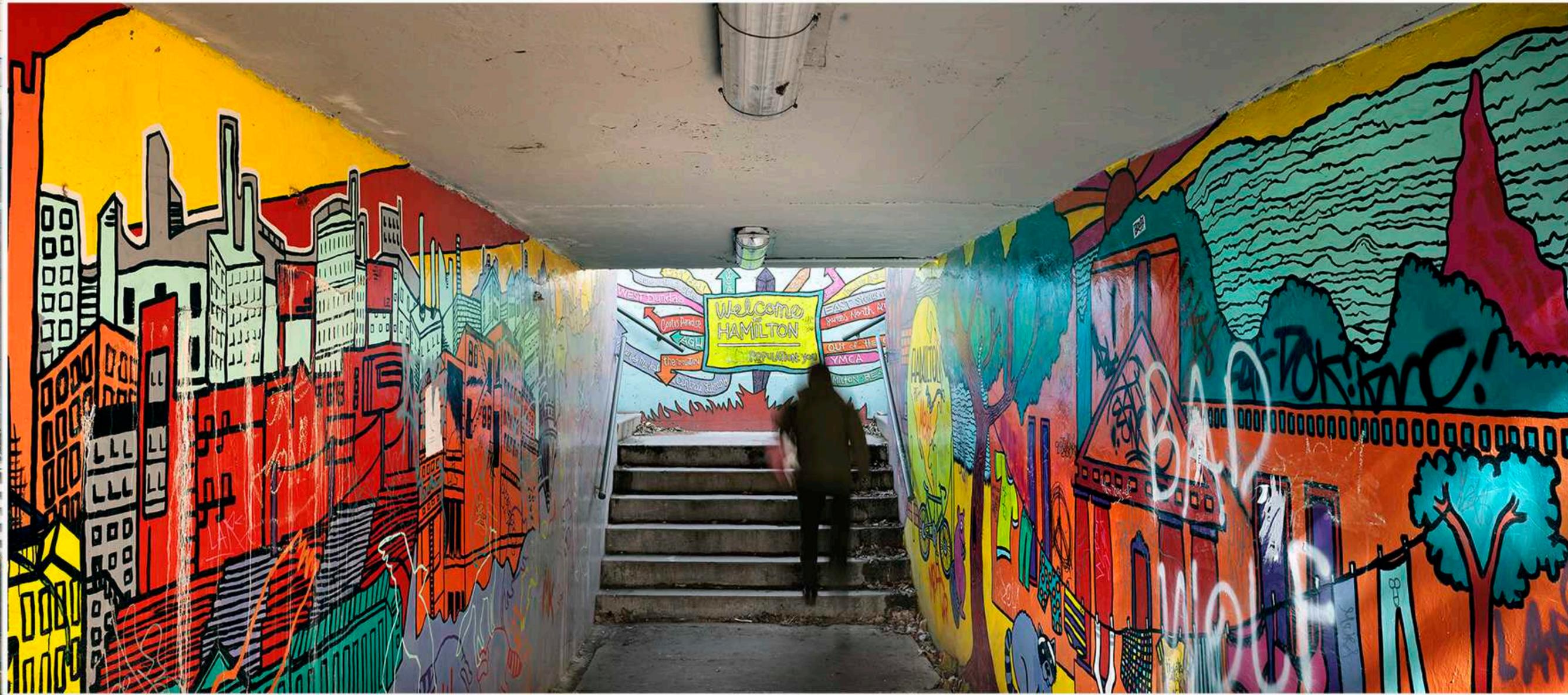


# Intermission



Janusz Wrobel

# About

Life without "progress" has consequences. Good and bad, and that depends how we define the means and terms of our progress. Advancing goals set by selective individuals, organizations, corporations or nations happens all the time. The outcome could be both positive and negative for individuals or the rest of us. What interested me is how our society can progress to benefit us all while minimizing the risk of the consequences.

Once I lived in a typical European city that grew over centuries, built with materials to endure, and layouts to preserve social structures. Traditions and cultures were ingrained in stones, city halls to endure a millennium rather than being built and demolished within a human lifespan. However, with no prospect of progress in the political system.

Living in the town of Dundas, engulfed by Hamilton city, I had my interest then in city "progress". Built by the capital flowing from what was once the colonial and industrial empire, by people escaping turmoil in many European countries, and on the land conquered by the same empire. New "land of opportunity" that before was a pristine nature paradise in the corner of Lake Ontario. What happened since then could be symptomatic of many locations on this continent. The trajectories of processes and their outcomes. The multitude of them unfolded now, finding us not well prepared to face them or to deal with incoming penalties.

Democracy is a system of governance based on our formal ability of collective choice making. Essentials are faculties of collective sensemaking, meaning identification, common abilities to exchange views and ideas. Democracy relies on our awareness of what's going on, what's important, and how we find the best ways to progress forward. All of it is to be framed and supported by laws, education to prepare us for it, and the press to inform about it.

All depends on being ready for it. The evolution of cognition was long in small tribal groups or ecological niches. Then, many generations of economic servitude. Democracy, a few generations old, still blends servitude-based relationships with access to massive education and information systems. While capable of processing it, we are burdened with validating democracy's merit and credibility.

I have chosen the role of a chronicler, following a tradition of photographers' generations documenting realities of their lives. To gather evidence of the original fabric of the city, its past evolution, and mounting troubles. One mighty source of iron, cars, farm machinery, appliances, textiles, and the labour and social movements, the city evidently had been struggling for decades to find a new identity. A case study for anthropologists, sociologists, and city planners. A city like many others on the continent, inhabited by passive expectations and a self-absorbed population.







Carling  
ZONE

Tim Hortons Tim Hortons Tim Hortons 9 Tim Hortons



14 15 16 17 18 19 20

go for more High Speed

TIGER TOWN







1  
2  
2



ONTARIO  
GOAL EH  
DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE





*The most perfect political community  
is one in which the middle class is in control,  
and outnumbers both of the other classes.*

Aristotle

Evaluating changes in human social structure inevitably must consider human population growth and resource consumption. From a few million since the ice age, the population reached about 200 million at the start of our calendar, one billion coming into the Industrial Revolution, 2.3 billion at the end WWII, and over eight billion now. Using our planet's resources twice faster, the population grows. We still use GDP to measure "progress", concealing growing liabilities and redefining the means of our advancement.

None of the above crosses daily our minds.

The rapid industrial growth at the beginning of the last century doubled fast the city's population. Immigrants from various countries formed own communities, establishing places of worship, community centres, and bars. They further expanded their social integration by identifying common interests and forming unions and social organizations. Today, only traces and remnants of these communities and their forms of organization remain, along their common interests, opinions, affiliations, or cultural heritage.





WELCOMES



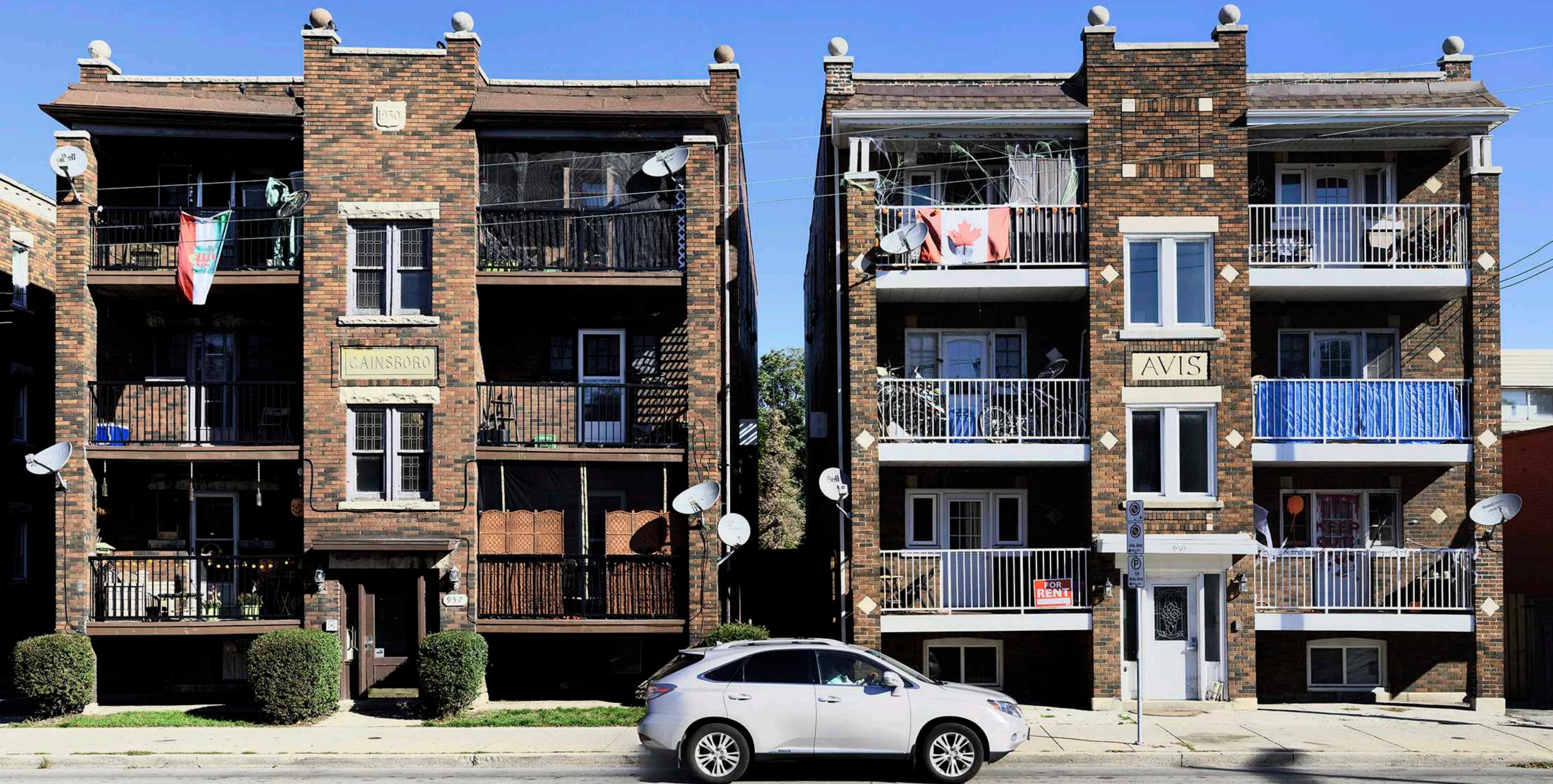
15



OLD MAN'S GARAGE

CAUTION





1950

GAINSBORO

957

AVIS

950

FOR RENT

NO PARKING  
1st-5th  
4pm-6pm



ABERDEEN  
APARTMENTS

*"We must learn to live together as brothers  
or perish together as fools."*

Martin Luther King Jr.

I cherish old memories of daily life on my hometown street. The small private stores, independent from the state-controlled distribution network, with their storefronts showing the face value of what they offered. Values confronted and debated on the street in the face-to-face information exchange, debating their merits, trusts, and reliability of reputations, daily. Along them, things that had been hidden between lines in the state-controlled media and TV news, or the latest church sermons. In confined store spaces, the trust of information exchange, away from snooping ears and eyes, was paramount. The only advantage of aging is having enough own materials to draw conclusions. That is not a basis for assuming that maturity is age-related.

It was still easy to find signs of decades-long changes in Hamilton neighbourhoods, correlating with evolving strategies of the marketing industry. Or, in fact, with market economy policies. The dominant one appeared to be the concept of isolating consumers from the established smart street and peers validation processes. As a result, the concept of shopping malls has developed to overwhelm consumers with choices. More strategies follow to pave the path to the growth economy. With the consumerism trap finding more fuel in the cheap labour elsewhere, more industry closures followed, farther affecting the social fabric of the city. The sidewalks once crowded with pedestrians and shoppers in the city centre seen on archived photographs, illustrate well this period. That was before they built the shopping mall there, took down the City Hall to make room for mall expansion.

All of it directed my interest to the consequences for the city's social fabric.





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# Tattoo and Art Studio



445



H  
PRINTING  
T

905-549-8111

CHANEL  
CHANEL

ALLURE

8800  
8800  
8800  
600  
500



4PC  
Clip On  
Extension Wig  
Angie3  
\$19.99

Quality Extensions  
\$19.99

Quality Extensions  
\$19.99

MAGNIFICENT  
1B

# BARTON FURNITURE

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581 Barton St

581

NO PARKING  
7AM-9AM  
MON-FRI









"Art is never finished, only abandoned."  
Leonardo da Vinci

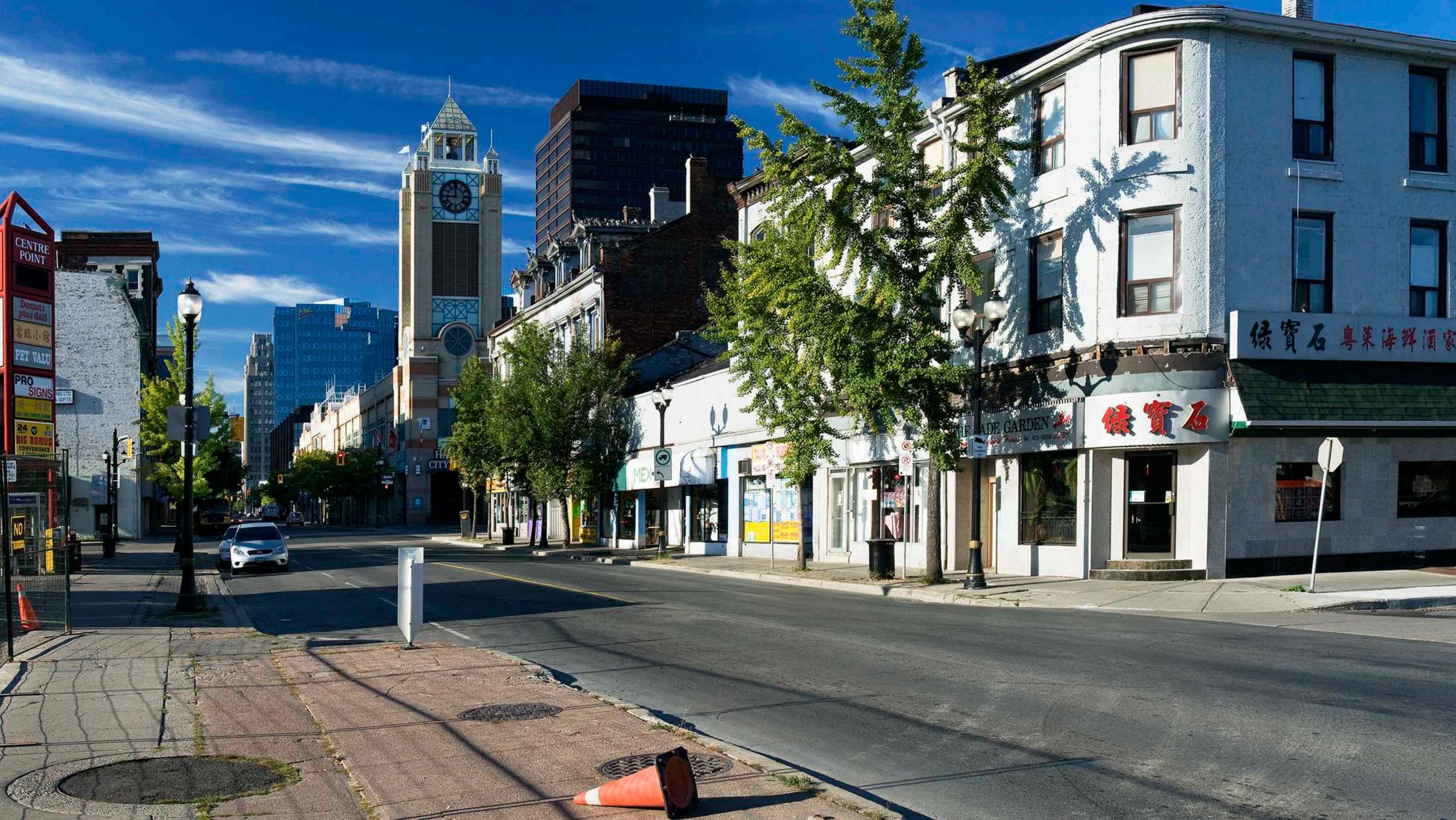
"Art is the only way to run away without leaving home."  
Twyla Tharp Appropriated by many on social media posts.

Any attempt to define what art is carries a risk not worth taking. It is much safer to look at how art functions at the receiving end. Although that is still shrouded in ambiguity, as it involves many art handling channels. To keep it simple, I evaluate it on the merit of its contribution to the state of our culture, yet another sphere of broad range of interpretations. I used the Leonardo da Vinci quote above for its wisdom expressed not only in his artwork. In short, art maintains its staying power through the ideas sprouting in the minds of beholders. Connecting us to, not facilitating, escapes from our realities of living.

*I used the attendance at New York trade shows decades ago as an excuse to spend evenings in Soho. Crowded galleries in the evenings, people sharing wine, being able to talk for hours about what any artwork could stir us to. The last time I was there was before Covid. Almost all galleries are replaced by fashion stores.*

The Hamilton Art Crawl on James Street North began in 2005, the year I moved to the city's area. Having been involved in the arts before, naturally, I had an interest in what was happening there. By the end of that decade, once a month, a sizable crowd of people was touring many private and public galleries, as well as many artist studios on the street. Artists serving cheerfully free wine, getting disillusioned with every passing month. Thousands of voices, or rather the noise of individual emotions, each focused on itself, a testimony of the rapidly changing human culture. It was already clear how the social media extorted their fees, with all due consequences.

In the last few years, only two spaces on the public support, and only one tiny private gallery survived on "gentrified" street.



CENTRE POINT  
Donuts plus delectables  
富臨小館  
PET VALU  
PRO SIGNS  
24 HOURS  
BIG BONUS  
CONVENIENCE

CLOCK TOWER

H. CITY

MEX

THE GARDEN  
People's Favorite Tel: 972-6288-2222

綠寶石

綠寶石 粵菜海鮮酒家











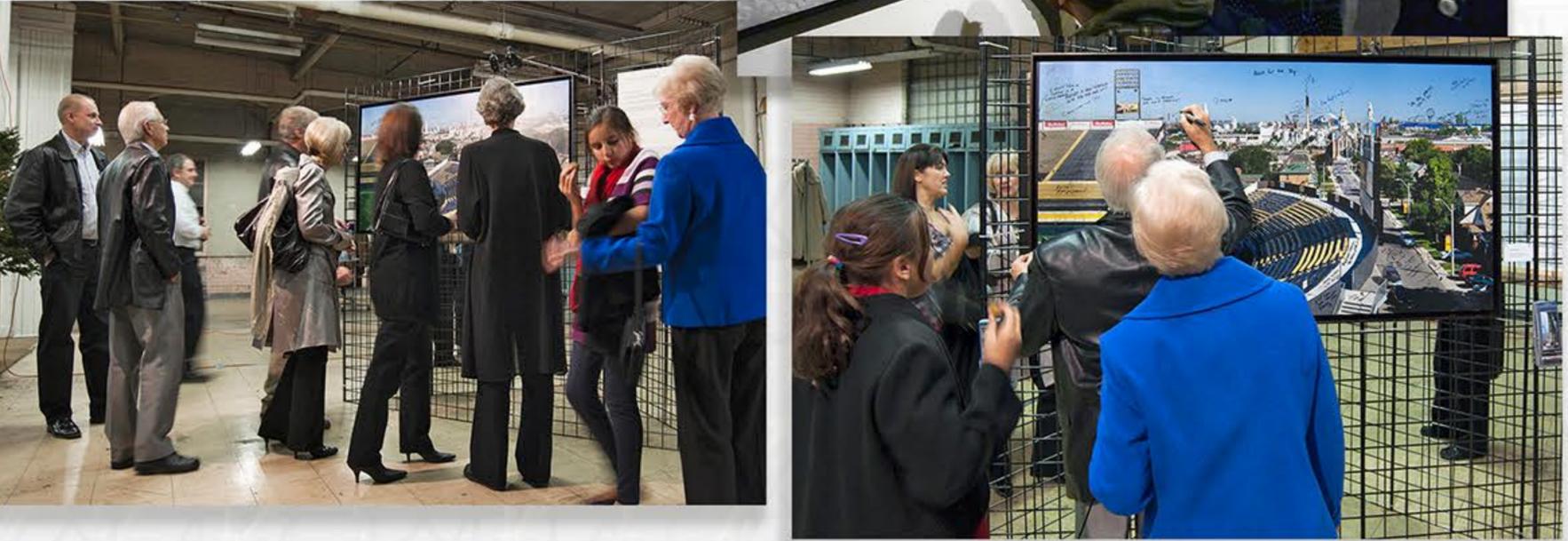
## I Take My City Back Public Art Project



The essence of this project was, as I had intended, to encapsulate in one image the issue presented in Hamilton's traditional public media channels. An issue like finding a place in the city for a new football stadium, at the expense of some proposed neighbourhoods. The LRT public transportation proposals, the prospect of buying the NHL franchise for the city, etc. Then, after finishing them to the high gallery standard, to exhibit them at large city public gatherings. In the project declaration also displayed, I portrayed myself as a newcomer asking for guidance on what was happening in the city. I challenged viewers to make their comments on my images with a selection of permanent markers. The finishing line of this manifesto was, "Art is democracy. Democracy is an Art."

The most constructive input came from the city's mayor, posting it above. The bicycle on the tightrope he drew with the thinness marker, summarizing what to expect from him in his position. And not to have high hopes coming from my project, either. Indeed, I had no luck finding a place in the city to host my ready to hang "Intermission" exhibition, or a place for extending the public interaction project. Although there was something to learn from it. The city's mayor lost in the election that followed. He approached the election next after with his platform, unlike all other candidates, expressed in one sentence. He won, although with a quarter of all eligible votes.

These observations I share might be a comparative case study of values attached to information and emotions. Or the practical illustration of Marshall McLuhan's theory. And the explanation of why in provincial and federal elections people "vote for their" next premier without the legal and technical rights of doing so. Regardless of consequences.



Andrea  
Bilco...  
in the wall

THE  
WOLVES  
NEED  
FEEDING

A WINDOW TO OPPORTUNITY  
I'm so lost, and I live just around  
the corner!  
-the arkells.

Up Cycle!  
Hampden is Top Drawer  
Stay Safe!  
my diary is in here & keep safe.  
Emma  
I love him...

PIPE DREAM  
DRAINAGE  
GREEN POWER  
CHRYSLER

# LIFE'S TREASURES

WAY TO HIGH!

FOR THE POLICE

Community

HELLO!!

DO I have to pay?

critical mass ride bikes!  
less resource to  
less cost Frisbee  
of the month

Final cat

my Home

La la La!!!

All You Need

I LOVE RENO REBAMONTAN!

love is the greatest thing  
you'll achieve.  
Freedom

Will  
was  
here



Melissa & Melissa ROBE!!!

Running to something...

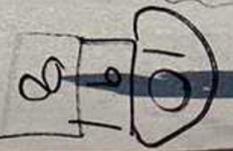
BE!  
June loves Jamie  
PARKING TICKET.  
Molly O'Connell  
I DO BELIEVE...  
AT THE ART ROCKS  
Amen braha.

TRUE GAIT  
CLOSED  
SORRY  
3234  
GIRISCHLY

ONE LEADS TO THE CASTLE AT THE  
CENTRE OF THE LADY WITH...

another opera...

Big Love!!!  
Margarete Donato



once a wild cat, always a wild cat.  
Westmount, CA.



Here comes the Bride

shake it out  
WPE

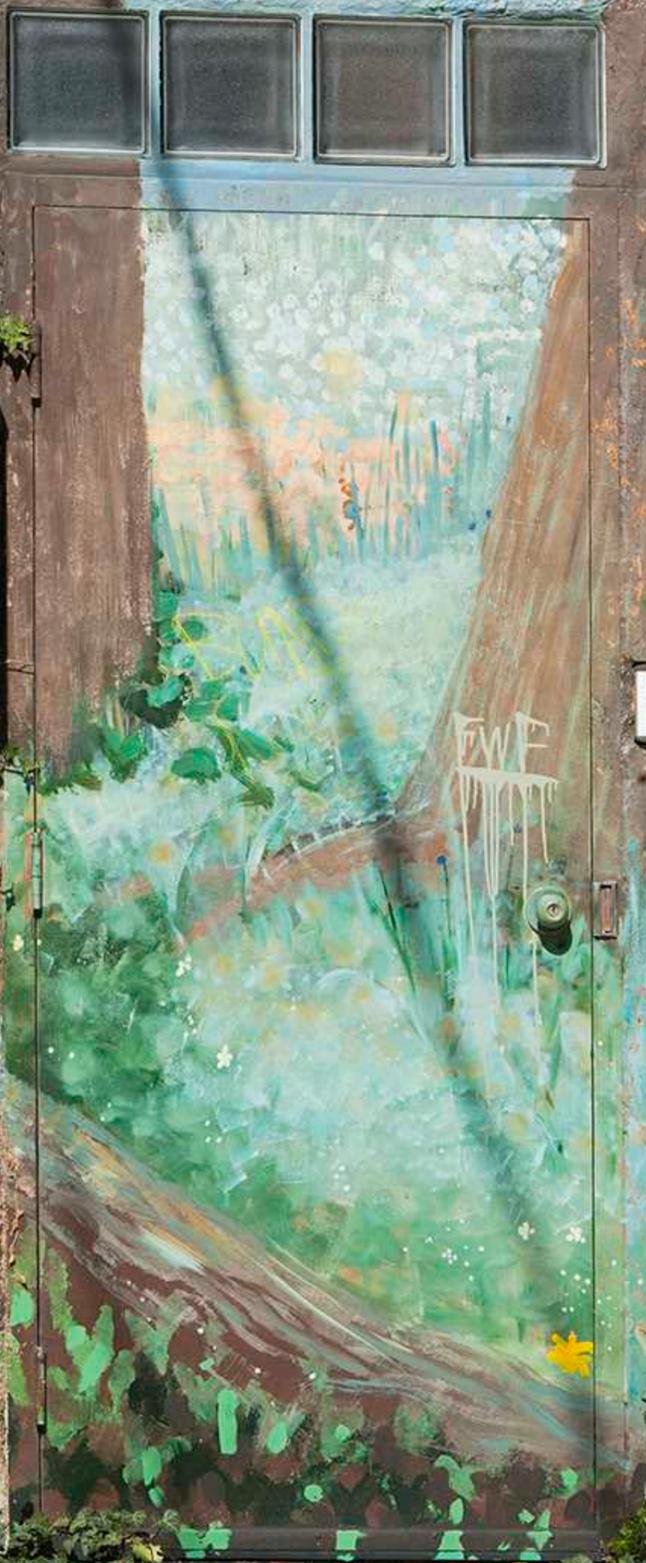
Mary's xo.





NEW SERIES THURSDAYS  
**PRIME SUSPECT**  
Global









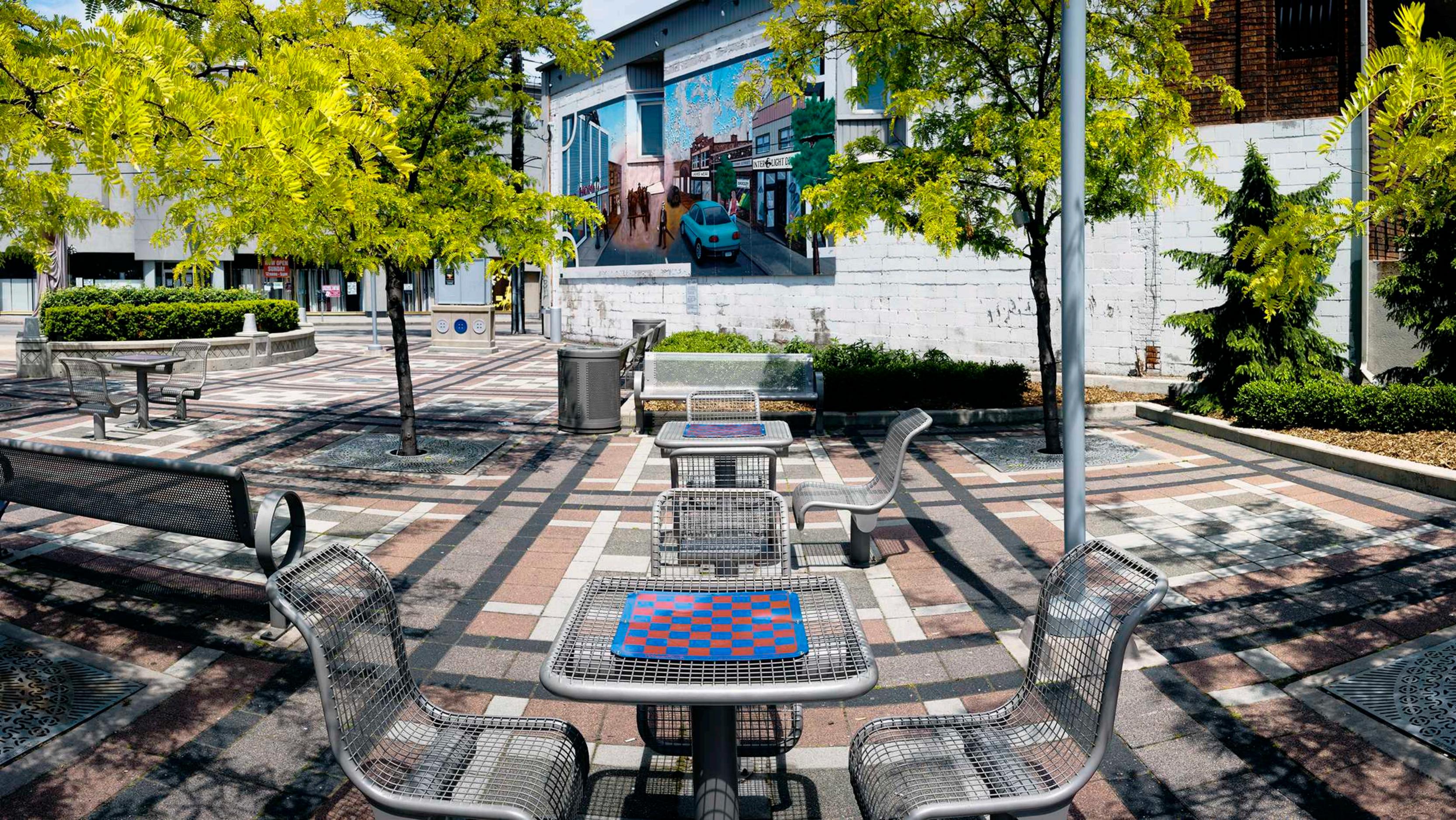
Being born behind the “Iron Curtain”, establish after WWII not by people’s choice, I escaped from it to feel free. Now I wonder. How we became, quoting Timothy Snyder, less free by our own choices? Still, more questions are piling up without answers.

How one can force her-himself to reflect upon what’s going on? Why do we disassociate ourselves from our common predicament, from common interests, from agreeing about common values, from sorting out between us what matters? Why do all candidates have copycat electoral platforms, and we can’t talk about it to find out?

I left Hamilton and stopped chronicling what was happening there. But many of the conclusions are not unique to it. The shattered by commuters traffic communities, brownfield lands, polluted harbours, rivers, must wake up and influence the shape of their future. That is still free.

Information never was. If it appears this way, it has already exacted the heaviest toll.









*Janusz Wrobel/All Projects*

*"The best argument against democracy  
is a five-minute conversation with  
the average voter."*

*Winston Churchill.*

[All Projects](#)

I fear the promise of a New Jerusalem.  
How to weave new strands of meaning into the fabric  
of our lives?