



## **New report examines creative neighbourhoods in British Columbia and across Canada**

*Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada*, a new report from Hill Strategies Research, highlights creative neighbourhoods across the country – areas where artists interact and help shape the character of their communities. Using mapping technology, the report examines artists as a percentage of the labour force in various postal regions – “neighbourhoods” – based on 2001 census data.

The report demonstrates that there are many significant artistic clusters in urban and rural areas across Canada. The full report and regional summaries of these artistic clusters are available for free from the Hill Strategies Research website (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>).

Nationwide, the “most creative neighbourhood” is H2W in Montreal’s plateau area, which has an artistic concentration of 8.0%, 10 times the national average of 0.8%. The most creative rural area is Nunavut’s X0A region. This area, encompassing Baffin Island (Iqaluit, Cape Dorset, etc.), has an artistic concentration of 3.4%.

### **British Columbia – Home to many creative neighbourhoods**

With 24,100 artists, British Columbia is the province with the largest percentage of its labour force in arts occupations – 1.1% – the only province above 1% and a figure that is well above the Canadian average of 0.8%.

British Columbia artists are distributed among many postal regions. In fact, 45 B.C. postal regions have concentrations of artists that are at least double the national average.

Two B.C. areas are tied for 7<sup>th</sup> among Canadian postal regions, with 5.0% of the local labour force in arts occupations:

- V8K (Saltspring Island); and
- V6A (east Vancouver).

### **Vancouver artists spread among many creative neighbourhoods**

In the Lower Mainland, almost all postal regions have a higher concentration of artists than the national average. Next to V6A, the east Vancouver V5L neighbourhood is highest, with 4.3% of the labour force in the arts.

A number of neighbourhoods on the west side of Vancouver have over 3% of the labour force in the arts: V6R (3.7%); V6K (3.4%); V6G (3.4%); V6T (3.3%); and V6J (3.2%). Other postal

regions in the Vancouver area with over 3% of the local labour force in the arts are V6Z in downtown Vancouver (3.5%) and V7V in West Vancouver (3.2%).

### **Vancouver Island artists**

Many postal areas on Vancouver Island also contain a higher-than-average concentration of artists, including Victoria-area postal regions V8S and V8V (each with 2.4% of the labour force in the arts).

Four postal regions in rural areas of British Columbia have concentrations of artists that are among the 10 highest in rural areas of Canada:

- The V0R region of Vancouver Island, an area that surrounds Tofino and Clayoquot Sound, has an artistic concentration of 1.9%, 3<sup>rd</sup> highest among rural postal areas in Canada.
- In the V0N region, a large swath of coastal British Columbia to the north and northwest of Vancouver, artists comprise 1.7% of the overall labour force, tied for 4<sup>th</sup> among rural postal areas in Canada.
- The V0S region, a rural area further southeast on Vancouver Island, also has 1.7% of the local labour force in arts occupations.
- The V0P region, the north-central portion of Vancouver Island, has 1.3% of the local labour force in arts occupations, tied for 8<sup>th</sup> among rural areas in Canada.

### **Many creative neighbourhoods in other areas of B.C.**

Although not as high as the concentration of artists in the Lower Mainland and nearby islands, other areas of British Columbia also have above-average concentrations of artists, including:

- V4P, V4A and V4B in Surrey, which have artistic concentrations of 1.5%, 1.4% and 1.4% respectively.
- V7A, V6Y and V7C in Richmond, where artists comprise 1.2%, 1.1% and 1.0% of the local labour force (respectively).
- V4M in Delta, which has an artistic concentration of 1.2%.
- V4R in Maple Ridge, which also has an artistic concentration of 1.2%.
- V1Y in Kelowna, where artists comprise 1.2 % of the local labour force.
- V1L in Nelson, which also has an artistic concentration of 1.2%.
- V1B in Vernon, where artists comprise 1.1% of the local labour force.
- V2V in Mission, where artists comprise 1.0% of the local labour force.
- V0E, a rural area surrounding but excluding Salmon Arm and including Revelstoke, where artists comprise 1.0 % of the local labour force.
- V0M, a rural area north of Chilliwack, which also has an artistic concentration of 1.0%.
- V0G, a rural area surrounding but excluding Nelson, which also has an artistic concentration of 1.0%.

### **Why is it important to track creative neighbourhoods?**

The arts contribute to the quality of life as well as the social and economic vitality of communities. Recent research has also examined how the arts help attract talented people, jobs and investment to communities. On a personal level, the arts can stimulate, inspire and entertain.

A strong artistic community can therefore enhance the whole community's well-being. For these reasons, it is important to identify and track creative neighbourhoods – areas that are attractive to artists for a number of reasons: inexpensive housing, access to employment and self-employment opportunities, access to resources (such as studio space, galleries, rehearsal and performance space, artist-run centres and associations), social networks, physical environment, family reasons and more.

*Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada* can be used by associations, arts funders, policy-makers and others to ensure that programs and services are tailored appropriately to arts communities across the country. Further research could also examine the correlation between creative neighbourhoods and other local attributes that may help attract and retain artists.

### **Report and data notes**

The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Cultural Observatory and Arts Policy Branch), and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the funding organizations. The Hill Strategies Research website also provides detailed tables showing the number and concentration of artists in postal regions across Canada. The report is the twelfth in a *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series by Hill Strategies Research.

The data is drawn from a custom data request from Statistics Canada's 2001 census, conceived of and commissioned by Hill Strategies Research. The census captures information about the occupation at which a person worked the most hours between May 6 and 12, 2001.

Nine arts occupations are included in the analysis:

- actors;
- artisans and craftspersons;
- conductors, composers and arrangers;
- dancers;
- musicians and singers;
- other performers (such as circus performers and puppeteers);
- painters, sculptors and other visual artists;
- producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and
- writers.

The occupational categories are not a perfect fit for all artists but do provide a reasonable approximation of arts employment and self-employment. No census data is released for areas below a population size of 40. Postal areas with fewer than 40 artists are noted as "not reliable". Please see the full report for census data limitations.

Hill Strategies Research is a Canadian company that aims to provide top-quality, highly-relevant and insightful research for the arts. For additional information, please contact Hill Strategies Research, [info@hillstrategies.com](mailto:info@hillstrategies.com), 905-528-8891, <http://www.hillstrategies.com>.