

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Elbows Up! Visual Expressions of Canada’s Culture, Democracy, and Sovereignty at ARTSPACE Gallery**

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, Nova Scotia (January 5, 2026) – ARTSPACE Gallery welcomes “Elbows Up!”, a group exhibition developed by the Lunenburg School of the Arts that brings together contemporary visual artists in a collective reflection on Canada’s culture, diversity, resilience, and sovereignty. Previously exhibited at the Lunenburg School of the Arts, and at the Mary E. Black Gallery on Halifax’s waterfront, this timely exhibition considers what it means to stand together as an independent nation through the enduring lenses of visual art and the written word.

Throughout history, artists and writers have served as reliable recorders of social, political, and cultural events. In response to recent expressions of disregard by the administration of the United States toward Canada’s sovereignty and its democratically elected officials, the Lunenburg School of the Arts initiated this exhibition as a thoughtful and assertive cultural statement. The exhibition title “Elbows Up!”, or en français “Les coudes élevés”, invokes a familiar Canadian expression of resolve and collective strength. As former Prime Minister of Canada, The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, wrote on January 11, 2025, “Canadians will never give up the best country in the world.”

The School issued an open call on April 11, 2025, inviting artists to submit one visual artwork responding to the exhibition theme, accompanied by an Artist Statement. Artists were encouraged to reflect on Canada’s sovereignty and democracy and to explore the country’s distinct cultural identity, diversity, and shared values. The School received 40 works of art; and, the resulting exhibition presents a wide range of artistic responses shaped by both historic and current events that continue to influence life in Canada.

“Elbows Up!” opened on June 26 and originally ran through August 10, intentionally overlapping with Canada Day. The opening event also featured theme-related remarks by acclaimed Canadian writer Michael Harris, underscoring the vital role of the written word alongside visual expression.

At ARTSPACE Gallery, the exhibition is presented in the Main Gallery from January 17 to February 14. A closing reception takes place on Saturday, February 14, from 12 to 2 pm, with an artist panel question and answer session scheduled from 1 to 2 pm. Special thanks are extended to the Hon. Wilfred P. Moore, K.C., LL.D., Volunteer Chair of the School, and it’s staff for their support.

ARTSPACE invites the public to engage with this collection of works and the perspectives they offer on Canada’s past, present, and shared future.

*“Elbows Up!” opens Sat. January 17, 2026 and runs through February 14. Closing reception Sat. February 14, 12-2 p.m. Artist panel Q&A 1-2 p.m. Light refreshments served, all welcome.*

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ARTSPACE is a public Art Gallery that is operated by the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council, a registered charitable, community organization dedicated to encouraging and promoting the arts. Supported through the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts.

ARTSPACE Gallery is located at 396 St. George Street in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

For more information please contact:  
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