Economic Development and Culture Division (EDC)

Toronto History Museums French Language Initiatives 2025

Presented to the Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee

July 11, 2025

TORONTO

Agenda

1. Background
2. Toronto History Museums
   French language initiatives 2025
3. Questions and discussion

Fort York National Historic Site

1. Background

Toronto History Museums is a network of ten City-owned and operated historic sites. From Fort York to North York, Etobicoke to Scarborough, each site offers engaging experiences and public programs that connect Toronto's residents and visitors to the city's past, present, and future.

- Colborne Lodge
- Fort York National Historic Site
- Gibson House Museum
- Market Gallery
- Mackenzie House
- Montgomery's Inn
- Scarborough Museum
- Spadina Museum
- Todmorden Mills
- Zion Schoolhouse

Background, continued…

- Toronto History Museums are operated by the Economic Development and Culture (EDC) Division's Museum and Heritage Services Unit.
- On October 17, 2025, EDC staff presented plans to strengthen French language services and programming at its museum sites to the Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee (2024.FA3.3).
- The goal: support Toronto's diverse Francophone communities and advance the City's "Culture for All" priority by enabling access to relevant, engaging cultural experiences.
- The desired outcome: increased access to culturally relevant programs and services for the city's Francophone communities.

2. French Language Initiatives 2025

Toronto History Museums

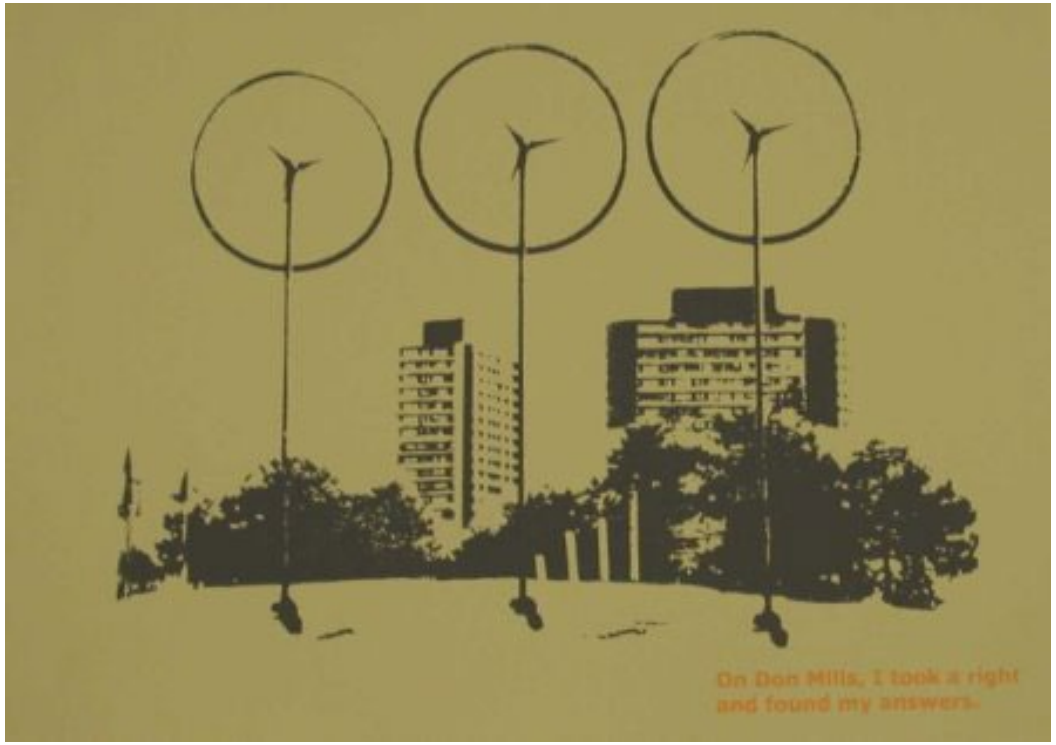
Museum and Heritage Services

Economic Development and Culture Division

TORONTO

At Home in Toronto // Chez Soi à Toronto Exhibition

- This new exhibition features exhibition text in French and English and highlights works from the City's collection by Francophone artists, including Yasmine Louis, Raoul Olou and Amikley Fontaine.
- Opens at the Market Gallery June 27, 2025.



Flemingdon Park-Victoria Village, by artist Yasmine Louis.

At Home in Toronto // Chez Soi à Toronto Programming

- The exhibition’s programming will include a French language discussion panel delving into the complexities of home, curated and moderated by a guest Francophone curator.
- The panel will be scheduled for late September at the Market Gallery, to align with Franco-Ontarian day.

Market Gallery

Chef-in-Residence Program

- The THM Chef-in-Residence 2025-2026 is Chef Jean Régis Raynaud—chef and co-owner of Le Baratin in Toronto's Little Portugal.
- Jean Régis is originally from Côte d'Ivoire, with family roots in Auvergne. He trained in Paris and gained international experience in St. Martin and London.
- The program comprises of a series of bilingual culinary experiences, including talks, cooking classes, demonstrations and more, as Chef Raynaud partners will other Toronto chefs to offer ways for the public to connect, create, and celebrate diverse culinary heritages.

Chef Jean Régis Raynaud

Welcome to Toronto History Museums Brochures

- EDC is developing a series of French-language interpretive brochures.
- One will provide an overview of all the Toronto History Museums sites and their themes, offering a warm and inviting welcome. This brochure will be made available at various City locations, including the museums. To be launched in Q3 2025.
- Also in development: French language self-guided tour brochures for each site (one exists currently for Fort York NHS). To be published Q4 2025.

Montgomery's Inn

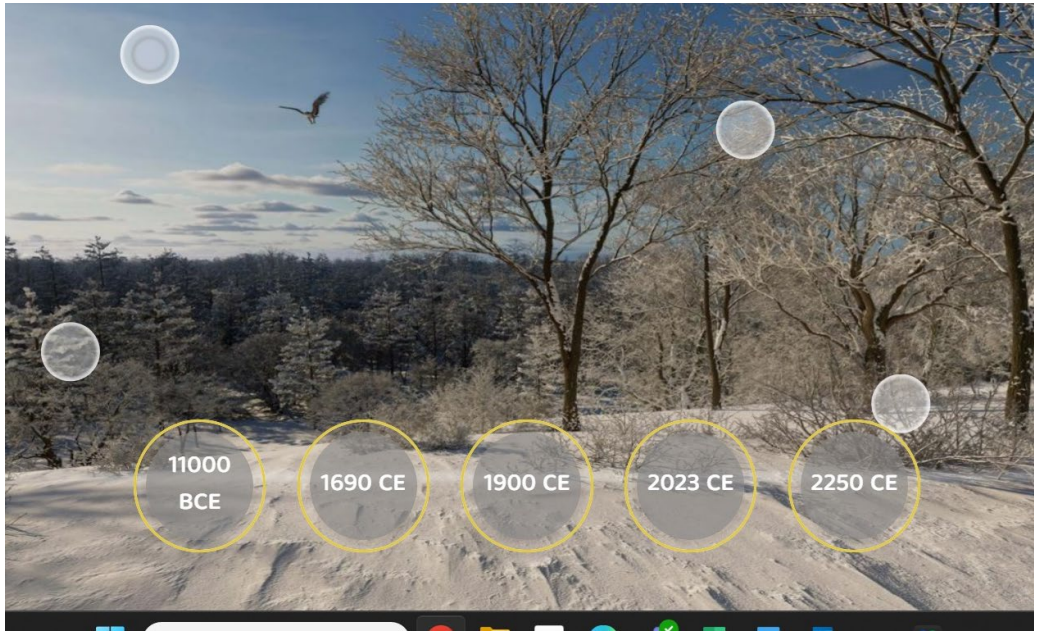
French Lanagage Tour Pilot

- On June 28, Spadina Museum will pilot a French language tour for La Société d'histoire de Toronto.
- This tour will inform EDC on specialized vocabulary, ideal tour length, and staff capacity for French-language in-person interpretation.

Spadina Museum

Where the Water Met the Land—Online Exhibition

- This virtual exhibition reveals how the land surrounding Spadina Museum and Fort York National Historic Site have transformed over time. It will be available in English and French.
- Funded by the federal Digital Museum of Canada and aimed at middle school students, the experience will offer storytelling through a series of interactive 360 degree views and interpretive pop-up descriptions and stories.



Screenshot, Where the Water Meets the Land

Confront the Past, Change the Future: Legacies of Resistance--Public Education Campaign

- "Confront the Past, Change the Future: Legacies of Resistance" is a City led public education campaign to acknowledge the impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as directed by City Council (2023.MM.13.29).
- In partnership with the Toronto District School Board's Centre for Black Student Excellence for Black Student Achievement, EDC created a collection of student work inspired by 19th Century anti-slavery activist Mary Ann Shadd Cary entitled "The Provincial Freeman: Reimagined."
- This project elevates Black youth voices, who through their work challenge dominant narratives, share their unique experiences and stories, and foster a more inclusive and informed community.
- EDC has partnered with La Passerelle-I.D.É, a not-for-profit organization that offers culturally appropriate services for Black and racialized francophone immigrant communities, to create a French language translation of the students' work.

Artwork by Kanisha Dabreo (Artistic Perception), AstroSankofa Arts Initiatives, 2024.

Animating Historic Sites Exhibition

- Opening at Spadina Museum this fall is an exhibition created by The Groupe d'Action Féminin Francophone de l'Ontario (GAFFO) working with Aitkamekw Iskwe.
- This exhibition will feature ribbon skirts and African collars, made for the exhibition.
- GAFFO are interested in bringing a range of French language groups to experience the exhibition and to assist with French language museum interpretation.

3. Questions

What services and strategies would you like to see advanced by Toronto History Museums in 2025-2026?

Scarborough Museum