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The flooded Island won't keep these feminist artists from their exhibit

The 22 artists participating in the Feminist Artist Conference evacuated their residency on a party boat.



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Part of the group of 22 artists in residence who evacuated Toronto Island due to the flooding. Left to Right: Milena Pafundi, Adrienne Matheuszik, Karla Monterrosa, Christina Hajjar, Ilene Sova and Carmen Aleman.

By: David Hains Metro, Published on Tue May 23 2017

The flooded Toronto Island can't keep 22 feminist artists from their showcase exhibition.

The Feminist Art Conference (FAC) attracted artists from as far as Spain, Argentina and El Salvador for a two-week residency on Toronto Island. But due to rising water levels that have flooded 40 per cent of the Island and put about half of the buildings at-risk, their stay was short-lived.

On Thursday afternoon, the artists were told they would have to evacuate the following morning. Emergency services could no longer access the Artscape facility on Gibraltar Point due to a closed road, and it was deemed too dangerous.



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Oakville interdisciplinary artist Adrienne Matheuszik, 24, is part of the group of 22 artists in residence who evacuated Toronto Island due to the flooding.

“I was pretty disappointed, but it was understandable,” said 24-year-old Oakville interdisciplinary artist Adrienne Matheuszik.

After a night that included songs written about the flooding by the in-house band MINTZ, the artists left the island behind Friday morning on a rented party boat to accommodate all their belongings.

Ilene Sova, the facilitator for FAC, said the artists have handled the situation well. “They’ve been really positive,” she said.

Sova and Artscape found last-minute replacement studio space and living accommodations for the artists, and they’ll display their work Wednesday night at Regent Park’s Daniels Spectrum.

Twenty-six-year-old illustrator Karla Monterossa from San Salvador, El Salvador, was disappointed by the flooding, but she hopes more people can check out the exhibition on the mainland as a result.

While she really liked learning from all the artists she met through the residency, Monterossa especially valued how they supported one another through an uncertain time.

“It’s been a real bonding experience,” she said.

You can check out the Feminist Art Conference exhibition for free Wednesday evening from 7 to 10 p.m. at Daniels Spectrum, 585 Dundas St. E.