

KICKING BUTT

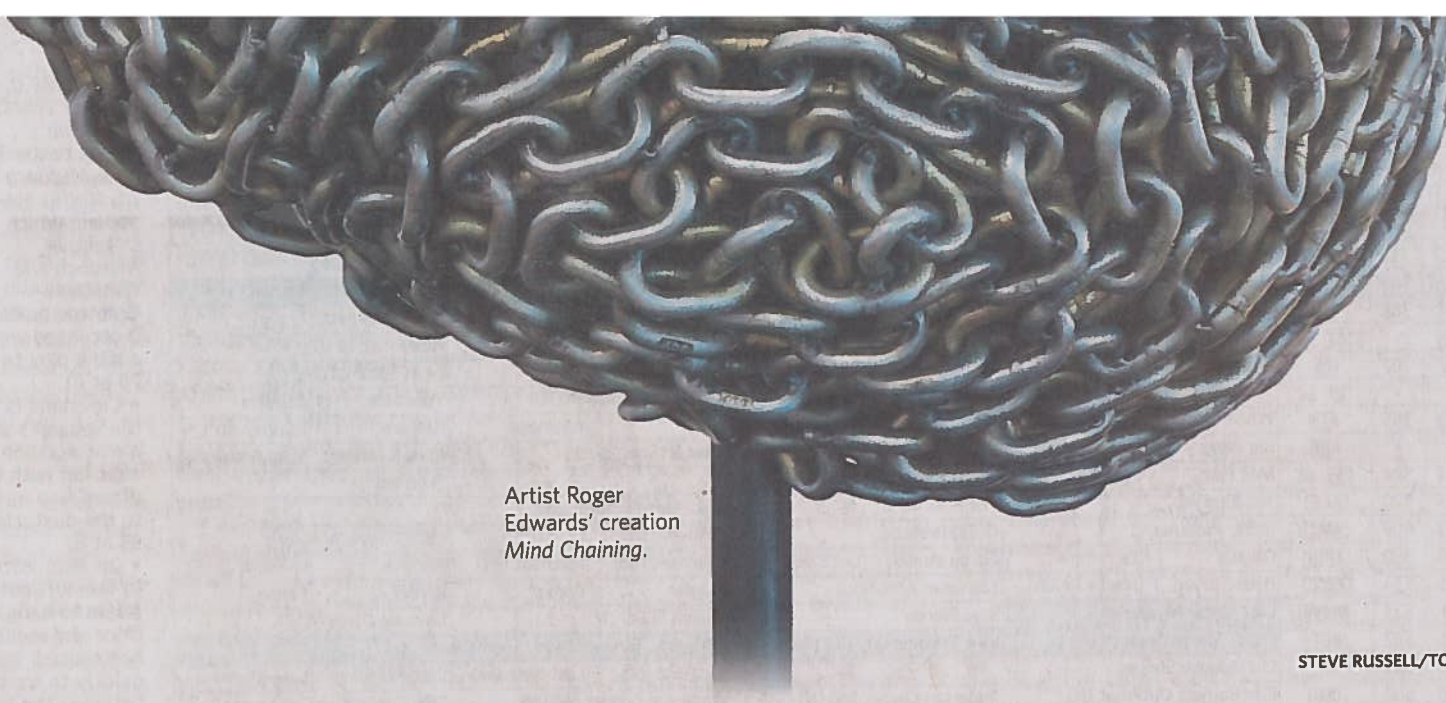
Young girls, such as Ahn Seo-hyun, becoming the next generation of action stars in TV, films, **E3**



ENTERTAINMENT & LIFE

This is your
brain on display





Artist Roger Edwards' creation *Mind Chaining*.

STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR

Sculptures of human brain will be placed at over a dozen locations this summer

MEGAN OGILVIE
HEALTH REPORTER

Soon, the brains will be among us.

In Union Station, we will see a brain moulded of chicken wire, set on a pedestal, luminous butterflies emerging from the silver tangle.

In the Distillery District, along Gristmill Lane, we will find a sky-blue brain dotted with colourful cows that appear to drip down from a swirl of white clouds.

Floating in the reflecting pool at Nathan Phillips Square, look for a glistening black brain splotted with blue, red, green and white, an artist's re-

presentation of how it feels to emerge from the bleak darkness of depression into a world of colour and light.

These are just three of 100 sculptures of the human brain that will be placed at more than a dozen Toronto locations this summer. Each is created by an artist or well-known Canadian, including Peter Mansbridge, Wayne Gretzky and Kurt Browning, who incorporated skate blades into his piece.

The outdoor art exhibit, which runs July 11 to Aug. 31, is called the TELUS Health Brain Project and its aim is to raise awareness for brain health and money for

Toronto's Baycrest Health Sciences. In 2016, its inaugural year, the project raised more than \$1.3 million for research projects and patient care at Baycrest.

The artists involved — some applied to be a part of the exhibit; others were invited — were each given a standard brain sculpture made of compressed polystyrene to turn into their own unique creation using whatever materials they liked, from paints to puzzle pieces, clay to metal. Several artists opted to fashion their own brain without the supplied model.

BRAINS continued on E6

> AT THE THEATRE WITH ...

For this couple, the Fringe festival is the main event

They started with 10 shows, now they're producing their own plays

KAREN FRICKER
THEATRE CRITIC

They're hardcore Fringe-goers: audience members who love the festival so much that they see dozens of shows every year.

They're opinionated, they're passionate, they're quirky and, in some cases, they get so into the Fringe Festival spirit that they start to make shows themselves.

When I met up with Joan Jamieson and Shelley M. Hobbs in the line for a Fringe show on Thursday night, their hardcore

status was already on full display: they'd run into a festival friend and were deep in conversation about what's hot and what's not this year.

Joan and Shelley had agreed to let me tag along on a round of Fringe-going, which included only two shows — a light night for this married couple.

The pair were already regular theatre-goers when they discovered the Fringe a decade and a half ago. "We said, 'Hey, 160 shows to choose from over 12 days: let's go do that,'" says Jamieson, who retired as an elementary schoolteacher in 2005. "The first year we probably saw, like, 10 shows and thought we'd seen a lot."

"Then it started to become more obsessive, like, I'm going to take two weeks of vacation so that I can go to shows during the day!" says Hobbs, a lawyer for the provincial government who retired this year.

This month, they're seeing 30 productions; they buy 10-show passes to get the discount (\$85 per pass rather than \$12 per show). Hobbs describes their selection methodology: each goes through her own copy of the Fringe program (the hard copy version, online would be too confusing) and highlights what she wants to see.

FRINGE continued on E4



COLE BURSTON FOR TORONTO STAR

This month, Joan Jamieson, left, and Shelley Hobbs are seeing 30 productions. They buy 10-show passes to get the discount.

Art exhibit is a win-win-win experience

BRAINS from E1

All are displayed in a protective case.

Erica Godfrey, co-founder and co-chair of the project and board member at Baycrest Foundation, says the art exhibit is a win-win-win experience for all involved.

The artists get to showcase their work outside traditional galleries, expanding their audience.

The funds raised — from corporate and private sponsors, online donations and from the sale of sculptures at the end of the exhibit — help researchers, patients and clients at Baycrest.

“It gives us all something to enjoy and it gives everyone a chance to consider how important it is to care for their own brain,” Godfrey says.

“Younger people assume we don’t have to worry about brain health now. But we need to get the awareness out there that this affects everyone, not just those 65 and older. Every single person should care about the aging brain.”

Dr. William Reichman, president and CEO of Baycrest, agrees that people of all ages — especially those in middle age — need to focus on their brain health to ward off diseases, such as Alzheimer’s, stroke and Parkinson’s disease.

Reichman recommends regular physical exercise, eating a Mediterranean-style diet that includes cold-water fish, dark green leafy vegetables and berries, among other foods, and taking on new challenges, such as learning a language or musical instrument, as ways to maintain brain health.

“Just as we work to keep our heart healthy, we need to focus on our brains and recognize what we can do throughout life to make our brains as healthy as possible.”

Brains behind the brains

A look at a few of the brains that will be showcased at more than 15 locations around Toronto.

Morgan Sheardown, contemporary artist, graphic designer, painter, illustrator, writer, Toronto

Work: Raining Cows, Blue Sun, on



Morgan Sheardown with *Raining Cows, Blue Sun*.



Conectica by Charmaine Lurch.



Artist Lindsy Hollend with her creation, *Progression*.



Genius Tomorrow by Tanya Besedina.



Artist Sophie DeFrancesca with her work *Free Thinker*.

display in the Distillery District

Inspiration: “The splashes and the rain create this calming effect. I want people to get a good, happy feeling when they see it. Something like when people listen to a good piece of music. I want you to feel like that when you see the bright colours and the cows and the rain.”

How he made it: “I use mixed media; so oil paints, acrylic paints, water colours. I layer my paints. On top of each layer, I use a resin. I layer and layer and layer so you get a 3-D effect when you look at it.”

Charmaine Lurch, interdisciplinary visual artist and award-winning arts educator, Toronto

Work: *Conectica*, on display at Union Station

Inspiration: “When I painted the brain, I wanted to hint at a planet or a world. It’s why there are underlying blues and greens and purples; it’s very subtle.

“This idea of brain function and research is a worldwide consideration, and so I wanted to map the world. But I also wanted to map our

connectivity to each other.”

How she made it: “This project allowed me to have some fun and let my imagination go a bit. I used materials I had on hand (including miniature figures often used by architects and different types of wire). I decided to put these two things together; I was thinking of pathways and connectivity and how we encounter each other and how we connect to each other.

“I loved that when I started to place the figures on the brain, they felt like travellers; and there was movement, which is so much a part of my work. I love that the travellers seem to move along the different synapses, the different corridors of the brain.”

Lindsy Hollend, contemporary fine art photographer, Toronto

Work: *Progression*, on display at the reflecting pool at Nathan Phillips Square

Inspiration: “The brain is really the contrast between the light — the orbs and the colours — and the space in between, the dark. It’s a progression, a journey through the darkness. It’s

cliché to say it, but only by going through the darkness can you understand the relief that the light will bring you.”

How she made it: “It’s an abstract photograph, vinyl wrapped around the brain sculpture.”

Tanya Besedina, artist, sculptor, fashion designer, story teller, painter, Toronto

Work: *Genius Tomorrow*, on display at Union Station

Inspiration: “Some members of our family have autism so I decided to make my sculpture about autism. My (10-year-old) daughter is a child with special needs and we are involved in that community.

“We see the work to connect them to society and to have them accepted and how hard it is for parents. The puzzle pieces are about connections.

“I did research and found people like (filmmaker) Stanley Kubrick, (author) Lewis Carroll, Mozart and Einstein were very talented but at the same time couldn’t have easy conversations, were kind of socially

> WHERE TO FIND THE BRAINS

To find out where to see brain sculptures on display from July 11 to Aug. 31, go to brainproject.ca. After Aug. 31, all the brains will be on display at Yorkdale Shopping Centre in North York. They will then be available for purchase on brainproject.ca.

disabled. The ceramic faces represent the ideas that spark from people like them (with special needs) and how we enjoy their talents.”

How she made it: “The puzzle pieces are glued to the brain sculpture. My daughter helped me. There are 1,000 of them. I made the ceramic faces — I call them flower babies; they represent the brightness of these (special needs) children — and put them on the brain. We painted the whole thing white and gold.”

Sophie De Francesca, contemporary artist, Toronto

Work: *Free Thinker*, on display at Union Station

Inspiration: “When I think of the brain, I think of the potentials of humanity, that ideas emerge seemingly out of nowhere and the changes within you when you allow these expressions to come out into the world. When I think of the metaphor of the butterfly, where it starts out as a ravenous little critter and then it cocoons itself and struggles out of the cocoon into a beautiful creature, it’s a lovely metaphor for life.

“I’m very optimistic about our humanity, despite the pessimisms and negative ideas circulating in the world. I wanted to express those optimistic ideas through the sculpture and also human potential.”

How she made it: “I started with a roll of chicken wire, moulding it (on to the brain sculpture) and shaping it with my hands and a pair of pliers. Then I cut it off the mould and manipulated the wire to give it more dimensions.

“I used layers of paint and resin to build up the texture. I bought the butterflies and layered the paint and resin on those as well.”