



DEAR

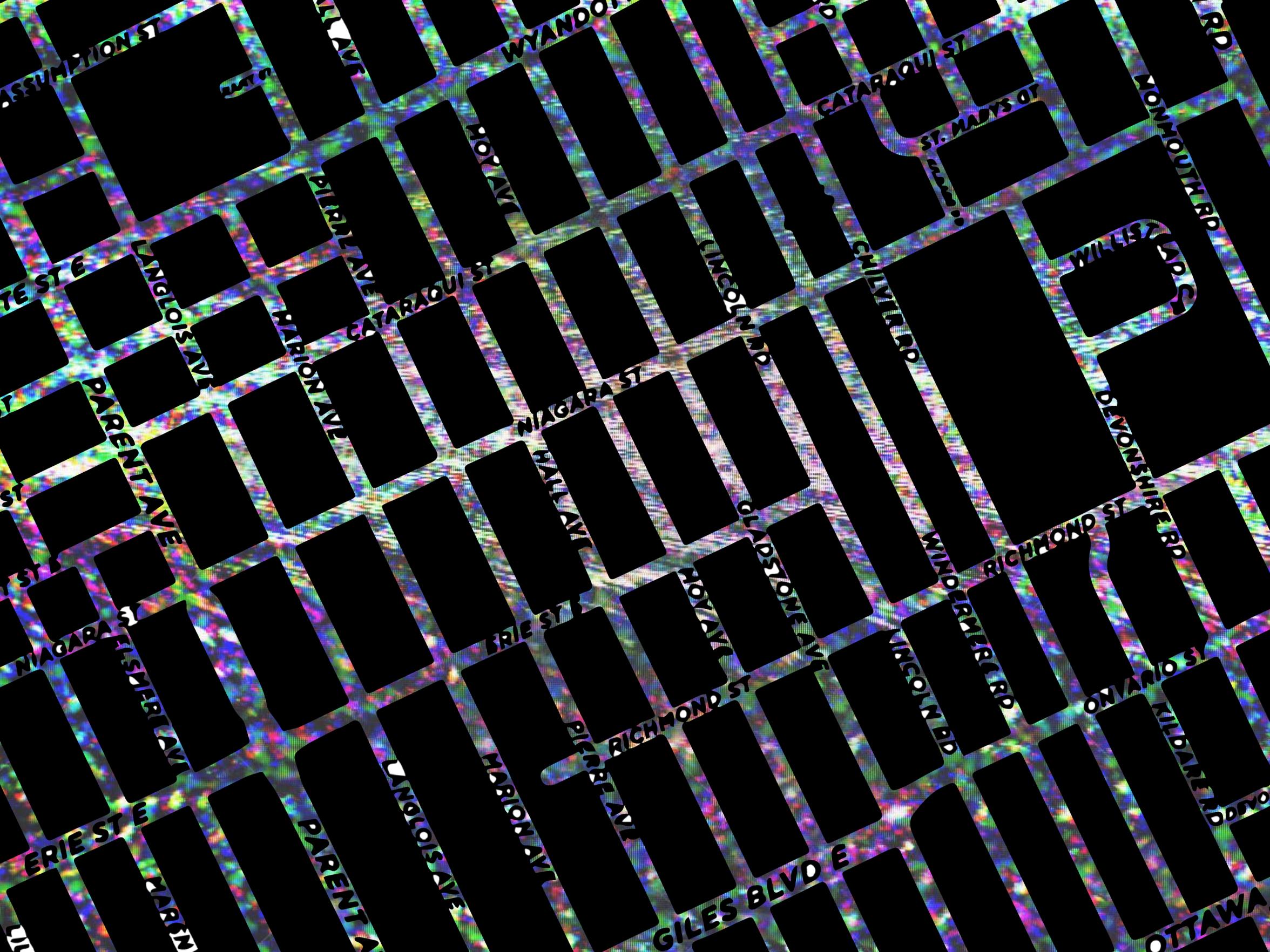
WALKERVILLE,

IT'S NOT

ALWAYS

ABOUT YOU

BY HIBA ABDALLAH



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ST. MARYS ST

MONMOUTH RD

TE ST E

LANGLOIS AVE

MARION AVE

CATARAQUI ST

MARY AVE

LINCOLN RD

SILVER RD

WILLIST AVE

PARENT AVE

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DEVONSHIRE RD

NIAGARA ST

RIAT AVE

CLADSTONE AVE

WINDERMERE RD

RICHMOND ST

ONTARIO ST

ERIE ST E

ERIE ST E

RICHMOND ST

LINCOLN RD

KILDARE RD

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PARENT A

LANGLOIS AVE

MARION AVE

PIERRE AVE

GILES BLVD E

OTTAWA

The city of Windsor, Ontario is culturally and aesthetically defined by its history of resilience and its people. However, in its drive to cultivate urban progress and commercial growth, the city has sacrificed venues, organizations, buildings, and entire neighbourhoods, often resulting in the displacement of lower-income communities. In the Walkerville neighbourhood, the overall sheen tells a different story; highly gentrified, increasingly unaffordable, and filled with growing businesses, it's starkly different when comparing to its Wyandotte East and Ford City neighbours. Driving along Wyandotte street through Ford City, Walkerville and then Wyandotte East, I get the sense that my eyes are deceiving me. How can these neighbourhoods be so close, yet look and feel so different?

Windsor is where I grew up, but I haven't lived here for over 8 years. Being invited back as an artist-in-residence brought on a sense of catharsis, but I was also reunited with some of the same challenges I faced when I lived here. The city is still, in many ways, experiencing growing pains.

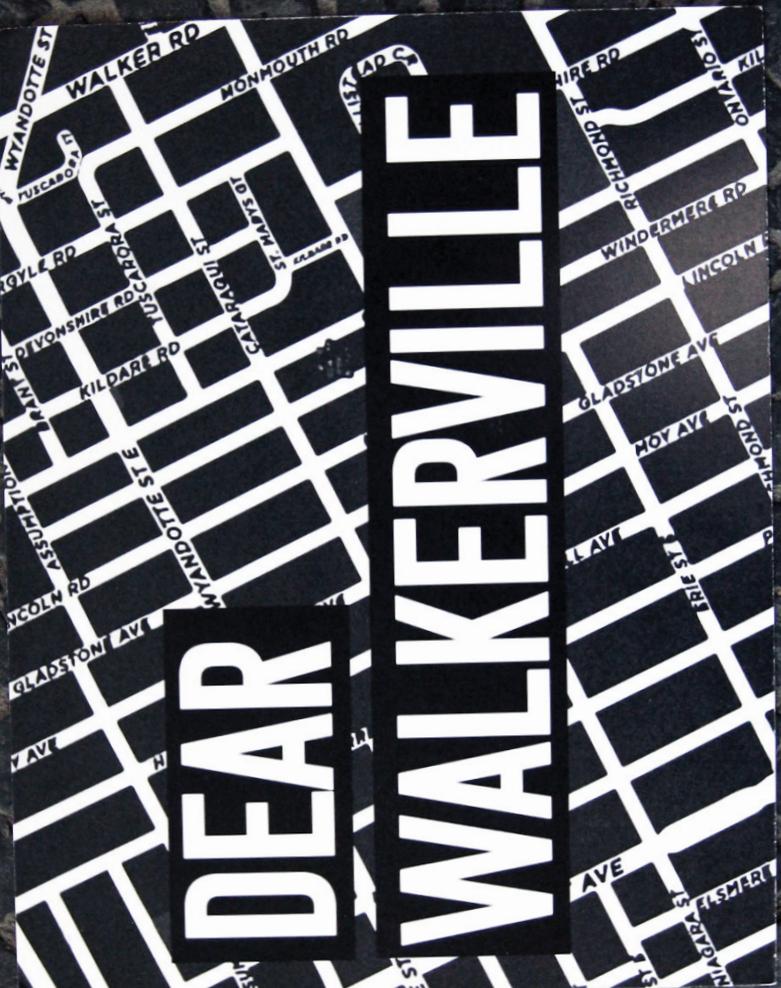
My residency began in the Walkerville neighbourhood. I found that so much of my initial findings were riddled with stories of the person for whom the neighbourhood is named after: Hiram Walker (do we really need more statues of white men in our cities?) Overshadowed by this history, I found it challenging to get at the heart of what this neighbourhood is about. I changed my tactics and turned to the community. When I reached out through my networks in Windsor, I found

a different story. While some people were happy to share positive memories and experiences they have of Walkerville, others were quick to point out the disproportionate focus that is constantly placed on Walkerville while other neighbourhoods struggle to survive. This discovery piqued my interest.

While we often seek to unearth the positive and successful characteristics of a place, we tend to overlook the challenges and complexities that exist when one neighbourhood's success becomes the depleting disadvantage of another. Should Walkerville be accountable for supporting its neighbours? This became the central question and point of inquiry while I worked through the New Voices Community Arts Residency at the Arts Council Windsor & Region.

The result is this book: *Dear Walkerville, It's Not Always About You*. This is an experimental project that looks at Walkerville within the scope of the larger Windsor ethos. This publication is an exploration into what has changed over time, as well as my observations and reflections on what continues to remain important throughout that change. With the use of speculative fiction, this book puts forward a series of open letters to a personified neighbourhood, with the interference of a voice from the future trying to make contact.

— Hiba Abdallah



New Voices artist in residence Hiba Abdallah is collecting and researching material to help frame the basis for *Dear Walkerville*—a book project that aims to explore the lesser known stories of the Walkerville neighbourhood.

Throughout the month of July 2022 Hiba will be collecting photographs, oral and written stories, and archival material from the community: this can be memories you have, myths you've heard or hopes you carry for the future of Walkerville.

To contribute to the project, please share your stories or archival material to dearwalkerville@gmail.com

**DEAR
WALKERVILLE**

**THE SOUND OF
THE SYMPHONY
STILL LINGERS**

ROLAND

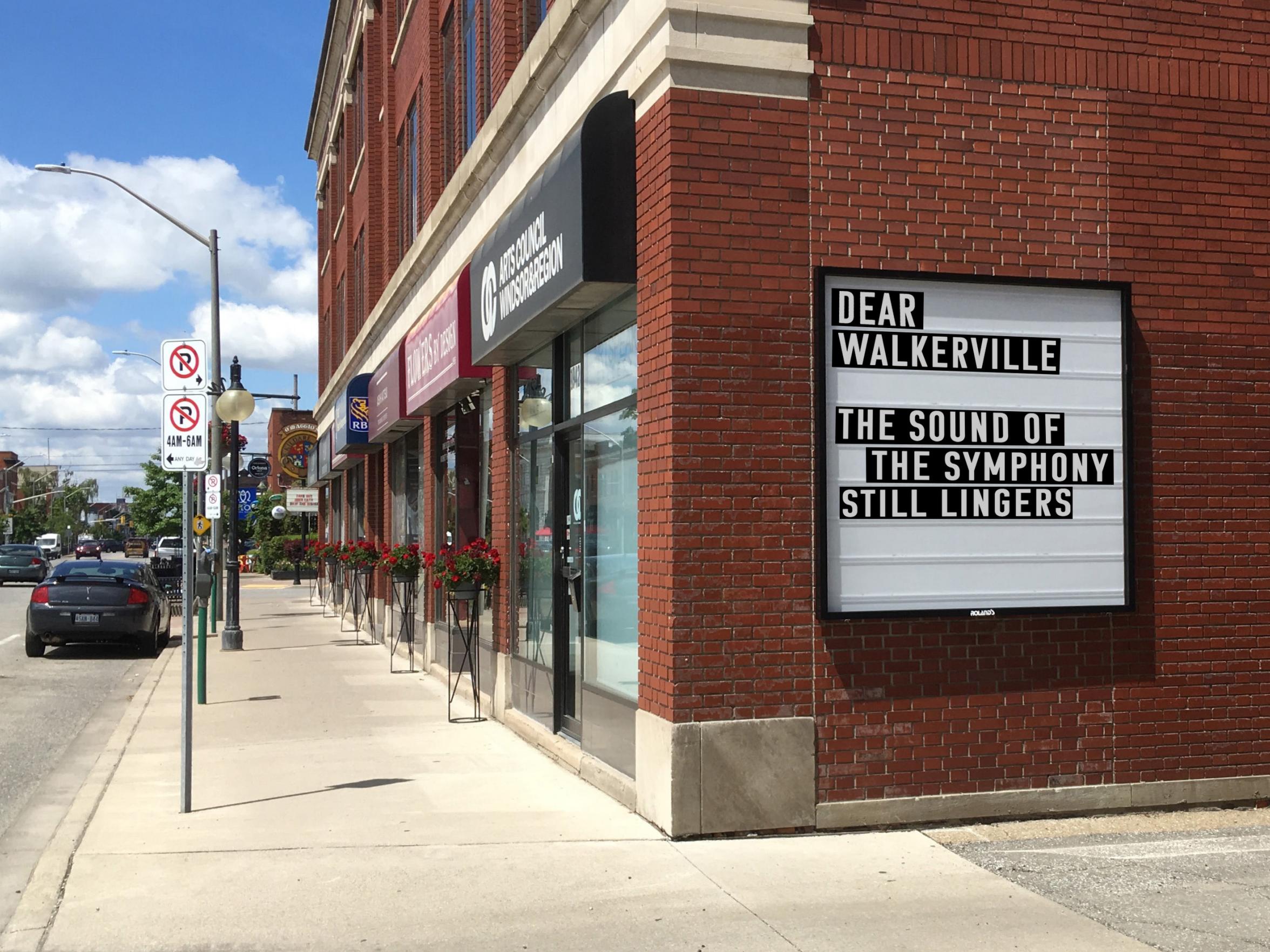
**ARTS COUNCIL
WINDSOR/REGION**

WALKERS ST. PASCAL

RB



4AM-6AM
← ANY DAY



Dear Walkerville,

The sound of the symphony still lingers.
I have fond memories of walking by Tivoli
Theatre and hearing the orchestra practice.
It would be so lovely to hear them play in
Walkerville once more.

Robyn



Dear Walkerville,

You may already know that the Ford Motor Company of Canada, Canada's first automobile manufacturer, was founded by Walter McGregor, who converted his company "Walkerville Wagon Works" to manufacture automobiles. I believe he was also involved with the local militia. It was Ford Motor Company of Canada which brought the kilts for the 241st Scottish Borderers, one of the precursor regiments to the Essex & Kent Scottish Regiment. If memory serves, his son Walter McGregor Jr., was captured during the Dieppe Raid in 1942. He later went on to command the Essex Scottish.

During World War I, the Peabody Company, which made uniforms for the Canadian Army, was bombed by German saboteurs living in the Detroit area. I believe that industrial building is still standing at Riverside and Devonshire. It has been converted to condos.

In that same building, Wolfgang Eberhart, one of North America's most-well known artistic glass blowers ran his business.

Brian





Dear Walkerville,

I have a memory of the decade of work we did in Ten Thousand Villages. Thanks to Donna Longmoore and the Global Rsource Centre's hospitality, we met often to sit around their tables and work on community and activist projects. Artcite Inc. and Leesa Bringas would organize their Stitch & Bitch there. MayWorks made Artist Trading Cards and several MayWorks Windsor Quilts were sown and organized there.

Many "cross-over" sessions of Sown Artist Trading Cards took place. Friendships were stuck. Actions and events were planned. The oppenness of the space create support for many. A diverse community of interest came together to make stuff together based on hospitality and gift culture.

Susan



Dear Walkerville,

There's a little girl that haunts the building that used to be the Crown Inn. I wonder if she's still waiting for the train to arrive. I wonder if this is why the Twisted Apron is moving across the street.

Anne



**DEAR
WALKERVILLE**

**YOUR
NEIGHBOURS
NEED YOU**

ROLAND®

**ARTS COUNCIL
WINDSOR®ION**

FLOWERS BY DESIGN

RB

No Parking

**4AM-6AM
← ANY DAY**

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No U-Turn

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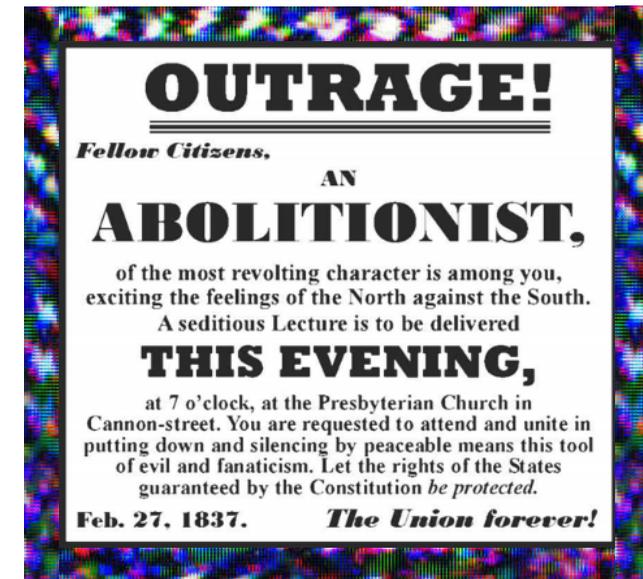
Dear Walkerville,

Do you ever think about Sandwich Town? This place is my refuge. This neighbourhood is filled with important history. We used to be the heartbeat of the city. We used to be the centre of revolt.

Some may remember reading Voice of the Fugitive, the first Afro-Canadian newspaper, made here in Sandwich Town.

Now, all we see is the shadow of the Ambassador Bridge looming and growing. Our people are being displaced everyday, with no where to go.

Henry



OUTRAGE!

Fellow Citizens,

AN

ABOLITIONIST,

of the most revolting character is among you, exciting the feelings of the North against the South. A seditious Lecture is to be delivered

THIS EVENING,

at 7 o'clock, at the Presbyterian Church in Cannon-street. You are requested to attend and unite in putting down and silencing by peaceable means this tool of evil and fanaticism. Let the rights of the States guaranteed by the Constitution *be protected.*

Feb. 27, 1837. *The Union forever!*

Dear Walkerville,

Downtown, Little Italy, Uptown Ottawa street, South Walkerville, Central, East Riverside, East Windsor, Ford City, Forest Glade, Fontainbleau, Little River Acres, Pillette Village, Polonia Park, Riverside, Roseville Gardens, RiverWest, Brighton Beach, Morton Industrial Park, Ojibway, Sandwich, South Cameron Woodlot, West Windsor, Yawkey, Devonshire Heights, Remington Park, Roseland, Sandwich South, South Windsor.

Ben



NEIGHBOURHOODS FOSTER COMMUNITIES. PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES. PROTECT OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS.
NEIGHBOURHOODS FOSTER COMMUNITIES. PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES. PROTECT OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS.

Dear Walkerville,

Ford City made you what you are today. It seems as though you have forgotten this.

Lina



WE ARE TRYING TO REACH YOU

Dear Walkerville,

I wonder what would happen if you reached out to your neighbours. You've found a bit of success and want to keep it for yourself. Don't you know that this will eventually come back to you as a regret? Don't you know that you can't survive on your own?

Regardless of how you've treated the rest of us these past few years, I'm always here if you want to talk.

Louis

**DEAR
WALKERVILLE**

**GENTRIFICATION
WILL NEVER
BE A SOLUTION**

roland's

**ARTS COUNCIL
WINDSOR REGION**

TOWERS OF WINDSOR

RB



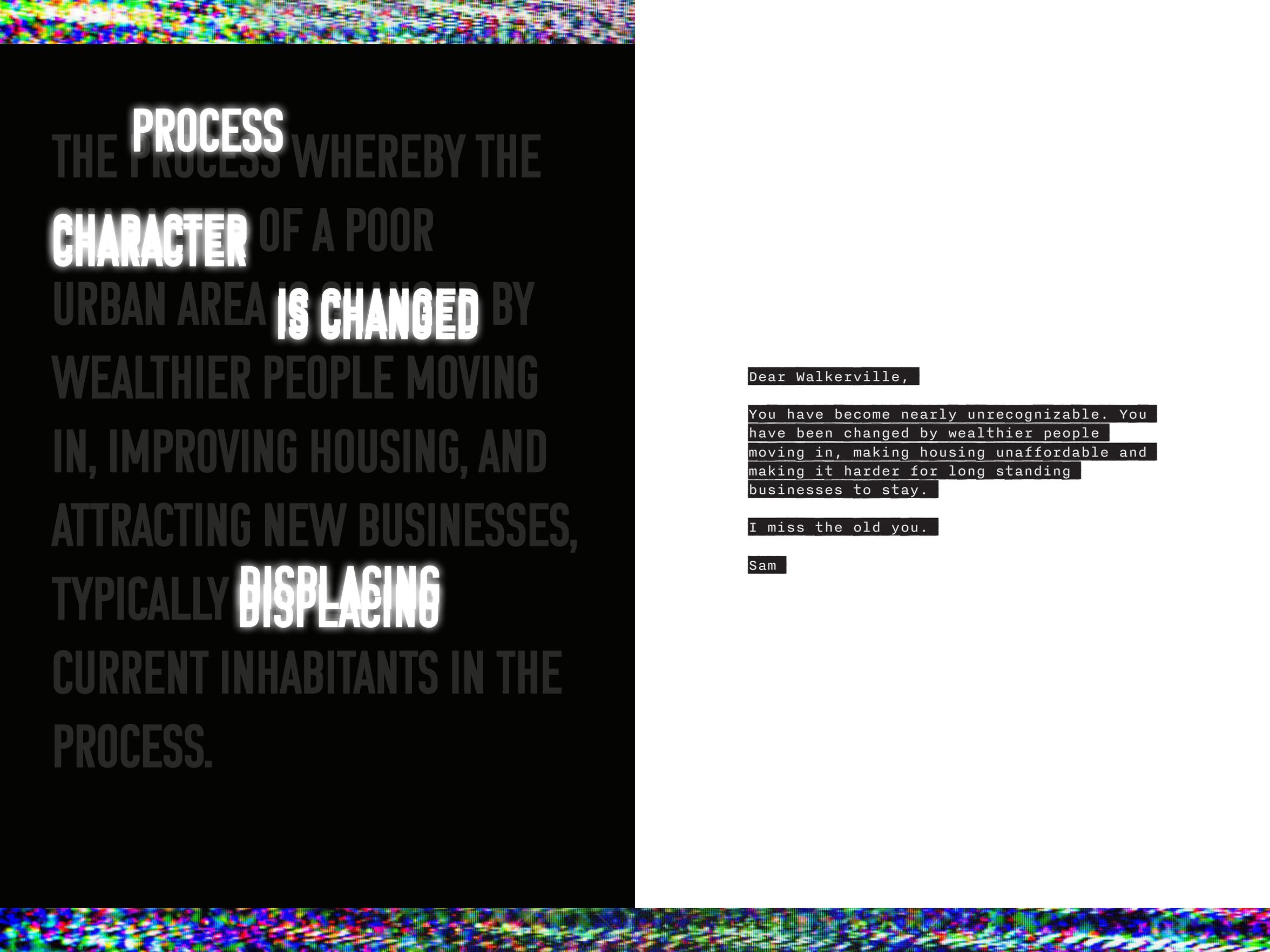
**4AM-6AM
← ANY DAY**



Ontario

**TAKE ONE
STEP FARTHER
WITH YOUR BUSINESS**





PROCESS
THE PROCESS WHEREBY THE
CHARACTER OF A POOR
URBAN AREA **IS CHANGED** BY
WEALTHIER PEOPLE MOVING
IN, IMPROVING HOUSING, AND
ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES,
TYPICALLY **DISPLACING**
CURRENT INHABITANTS IN THE
PROCESS.

Dear Walkerville,

You have become nearly unrecognizable. You have been changed by wealthier people moving in, making housing unaffordable and making it harder for long standing businesses to stay.

I miss the old you.

Sam

Dear Walkerville,

It's not always about you.

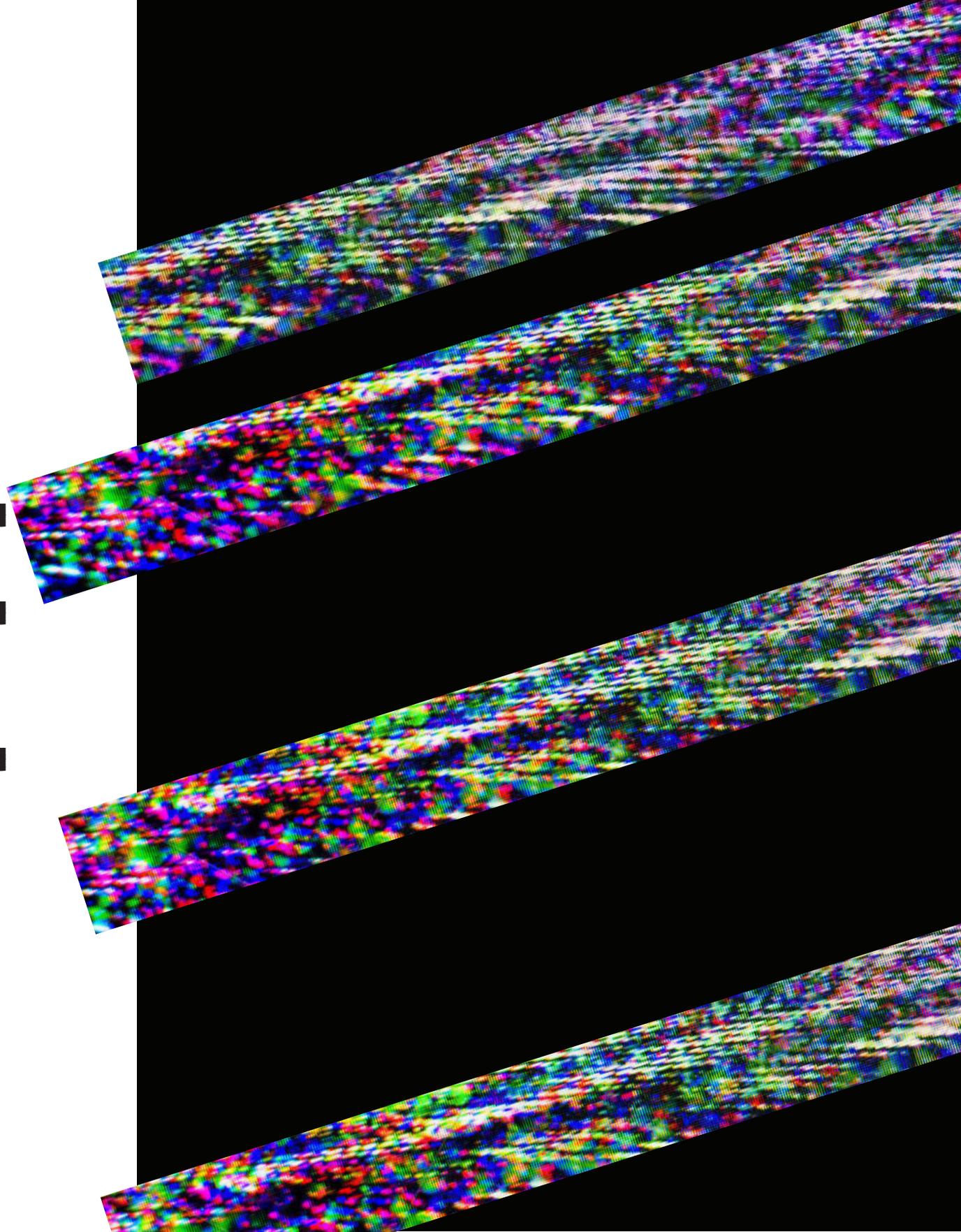
It's becoming increasingly difficult to have productive conversations on how to move our community forward when most of our shared resources are being given to you.

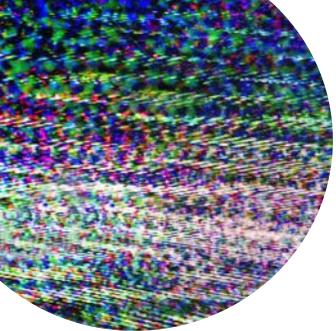
Just because the city decided that this is how the neighbourhood lines would be drawn, it doesn't mean our resources should be severed in the same way.

It's not always about what you want.

Whether you like to admit it or not, we are forever connected. I think it's in your best interest to start acting like it.

Fiona



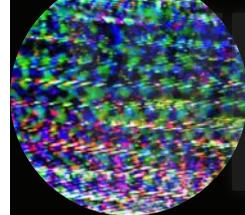
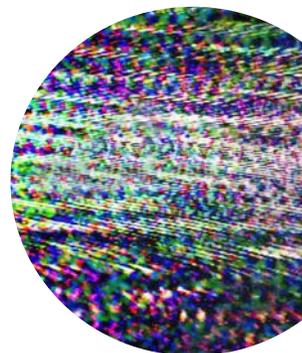
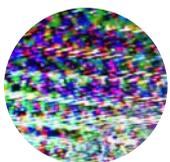
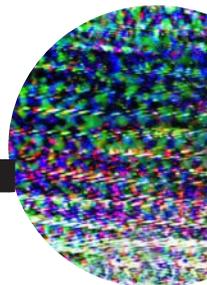


Dear Walkerville,

I've always admired you from afar. It's amazing to see how much you've grown and evolved over time. You have a contagious energy that others seem to want to emulate.

Have you ever thought about sharing your secrets with the rest of us?

John



WE CAN'T GIVE
WE CAN'T GIVE
WE CAN'T GIVE
UP ON ONE
ANOTHER.
WE ARE ALL
WE HAVE LEFT.
WE HAVE LEFT.



**DEAR
WALKERVILLE**

**WHAT DO YOU
HOPE FOR
YOUR FUTURE?**

ROLAND'S

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WINDSOR REGION**

WINDSOR REGION

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4AM-6AM
← ANY DAY

WINDSOR REGION

RB

**TAKE ONE
BOOK EACH
BY THE BRIDGE**



t r a n s m i s s i o n
c o n n e c t e d

Dear Walkerville,

I hope this transmission reaches you. There's a particular force pushing life to its limits. I can't exactly pinpoint it, but I feel its presence growing with each passing day. It's become unbearably difficult to make ends meet. The cost of living is costing our lives. It's become a monster we can no longer tame.

I wonder how you are doing. The movement of people across the land seems to occur without any conscious understanding of consequence; without any acknowledgment of what came before. There is a profound disregard for anything other than one's own survival. I find a deep irony in human-

kind thinking it can survive on its own.

I wonder if we can transmit energy to one another outside of these systems. I want to believe there's another way to create sustainable communities that are unhindered by these washed up and outdated agendas. I have to believe there's another way forward.

Our way of living is no longer justifiable. We need to think of another way to be in the world, together.

I hope you receive this message before it's too late. Oh dearest Walkerville, I sincerely hope it's not too late...



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MY MAIN STREET
MA RUE PRINCIPALE

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