



Board Meeting

Monday, February 12, 2024, 6:00 -8:00pm

Art Gallery

Agenda:

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests**
- 3. Review of Minutes of Board Meeting held on January 15, 2024 (Page 2)**
- 4. Business arising from the minutes**
- 5. Directors Report (Page 7)**
  - **Fundraising Request (Page 12)**
- 6. Development Officer Report**
- 7. Financial Report from**
- 8. Committee Updates**
  - A) Governance Committee**
  - B) Fundraising Committee**
- 9. New Business**
- 10. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the Varley McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on March 11, 2024.
- 10. Adjournment**



**Minutes**  
**Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham**  
**Monday, January 15, 2023**  
**6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
**Art Gallery**

**Attendance**

**Board of Directors Present:** Jim Schmidt (Chair), Amin Giga (Treasurer), Connie Leclair (Governance Chair), Deputy Mayor Michael Chan, Carolyn Le Quéré, Councillor Reid McAlpine, and Nik Mracic

**Staff Present:** Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery; Francesca Dauphinais, Cultural Development Officer, Varley Art Gallery, Laura Gold, Clerk

**Regrets:** Craig McQuat (Vice-Chair), Emily Li, Lisa Joy-Facey, and Arpita Surana

Item	Discussion	Action
<b>1. Call to Order</b>	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham convened at 6:15 PM with Jim Schmidt presiding as Chair.	
<b>2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests</b>	There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.	
<b>3. Minutes of The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Board Meeting held on February 15, 2023</b>	<p>A minor edit was made to the attendance.</p> <p>Moved by Nik Mracic Seconded by Connie Leclair</p> <p>That the November 13, 2023, Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Minutes, be approved as amended.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p>	
<b>4. Business Arising from the Minutes</b>	There was no business arising from the Minutes.	
<b>5. Director’s Report</b>	Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director of the Gallery, provided the Directors Report. Some of the highlights of the report include:	

Item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congratulated the Foundation on the success of the Glitter and Gold event.</li> <li>• Announced that the Varley Staff won the “Innovation in a Collections Based Exhibition” award at the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual GOG Awards Ceremony.</li> <li>• Thanked Jim Schmidt for covering the printing cost of the Varley Brochures.</li> <li>• Shared the 2023 Varley Attendance figure, noting that overall there were 51,325 attendees.</li> <li>• Presented the 2024 request for financial support from the foundation, noting that the amount being requested is \$35,000 (same as last year).</li> </ul> <p>Amin Giga, Treasurer, requested that the Gallery’s request for financial support from the Foundation be deferred to the next meeting, as the financial update will be provided at that meeting.</p>	
<p><b>6. Development Officer</b></p>	<p>Francesca Dauphinais, Cultural Development Officer, provide and update on the Glitter and Gold Event. The net profit from the event was \$22,000.</p> <p>The Directors provided the following feedback on the event:</p> <p><b>General Comments About Event</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congratulated the team on a successful and impressive event.</li> <li>• Noted that the event had a positive energy.</li> <li>• Impressed with how the event came together given the short timeframe it was planned under.</li> <li>• Impressed with the quality of the music.</li> <li>• The Board of Directors should have name tags to wear at the event.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notice and Event Attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could have had more attendees if the event had been planned earlier, as more notice could have been provided to potential attendees.</li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted that it is easier to get patrons that have attended a Varley Fundraising event in the past to attend another event.</li> <li>• Suggested that the Directors provide a complimentary ticket at their cost to start a relationship with potential long-term donors, as if they come to one event, they will likely come again.</li> <li>• Need to work on increasing the number of new attendees at Varley fundraising events.</li> <li>• Noted that the holiday season is a difficult time to get people to attend, as there are many other events happening at the same time.</li> <li>• Noted that the attendance and profit of the event could easily be increased if each Director brought a few more guests.</li> <li>• Noted the importance of the Directors being in attendance at the event.</li> <li>• Suggested that patrons need to be educated that they get a tax receipt for their purchase of tickets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sponsorship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hoped that the sponsors were happy with the event.</li> <li>• Need to diversify who the Directors are approaching for donations and sponsorship, as everyone is going to the developers.</li> <li>• Suggested reaching out to Chris Rickett to obtain support and advice on fundraising (The Chair to reach out to Chris).</li> <li>• Suggested asking Members of Council for advice on who the Directors could reach out to for sponsorship.</li> <li>• Suggested the event should have a prime sponsor.</li> <li>• Should provide potential sponsors with more information on what their funds are being used for, such as: to purchase artwork; supporting a children's program; or paying for school buses (make them feel as if they are buying something tangible for the Gallery).</li> <li>• Suggested possibly creating a video to visually show what the donations support.</li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noted that the Foundation will have to follow through with any fundraising promise they make.</li> <li>Need to better understand the Gallery's sponsorship needs prior to fundraising for a specific program or purchase.</li> </ul> <p><b>Event Set-Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggested that there should be some tables and chairs, as attendees from some demographic groups may need to sit down.</li> <li>Encourage more mingling of guests.</li> </ul> <p><b>Silent Auction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggested the silent auction payment process should be hybrid in the future to serve different demographic groups and in case there are issues with the Wi-Fi;</li> <li>Suggested that the presentation of the artwork could be improved, as the location did not encourage the fluid movement of viewers.</li> <li>Noted that the grids may need to be rented next time as the grids used were borrowed and did not have legs, which limited where the artwork could be displayed.</li> <li>Suggested spreading out the silent auction pieces.</li> </ul> <p><b>Food</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Unionville Arms expressed an interest in providing the food for the next Varley Fundraising event.</li> <li>Need one or two food items that really stand out.</li> <li>Impressed with the food at the event.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ticket Price</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noted that the price point of the ticket may have deterred some demographic groups from attending.</li> <li>Noted that getting a tax receipt for the purchase of the tickets appeals more to people of a certain income bracket.</li> </ul>	

Item	Discussion	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussed the appropriate price point and generally agreed to keep the price point as is for the next event.</li> </ul>	
<b>7. Financial Report</b>	There was no Financial Report presented at the meeting.	
<b>8. Committee Reviews</b>	<p><b>a. Fundraising Committee</b></p> <p>The 2023 fundraising event was discussed under the Development Officer Report.</p> <p><b>b. Art Acquisition Committee</b></p> <p>There was no report provided.</p> <p><b>c. Governance Committee</b></p> <p>There was no report provided.</p>	
<b>d. New Business</b>	Councillor Reid McAlpine advised that the Mayor will be presenting his budget at the end of January. Councillor McAlpine advised that he submitted a budget request to the Mayor to re-pave the Gallery's courtyard. He also questioned if there were any other pressing needs of the Gallery that should be put forward as a budget request from the Board.	
<b>e. Future Meeting Dates</b>	The next meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on February 12, 2024.	
<b>f. Adjournment</b>	<p>Moved by Emily Li Seconded by Nik Mracic</p> <p>The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham adjourned at 7:45 PM.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p>	

## SUMMARY

- Congratulations on the success of the TD Grant
- 2024 request for VMAF support
- Staffing updates
- Exhibitions and Attendance
- Programs
- Facilities

## CONGRATULATIONS ON THE SUCCESS OF THE TD GRANT

I would like to congratulate Francesca Dauphinais on her continued success in receiving support from TD Bank Group. The \$30,000 in support of exhibitions, programs and free admission in 2024 is much needed for the Varley.

## 2024 REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FROM THE VMAF

At the January 15, 2024 meeting of the Board I respectfully requested financial support from the Varley-McKay Art Foundation in the amount of \$35,000. The funds requested are for the items listed below. Each of these items is related to the Gallery's core functions, supports the goals identified in the Gallery's current Council-approved Strategic Plan, and is consistent with the "Goals of the Gallery" as identified in the 2006 MOU between the City of Markham and the Varley-McKay Art Foundation. Further detail about each project was included in the detailed request attached to the January 15, 2024 report. At that time the decision was deferred. I hope that the Board can agree to the request today.

1. Education	\$5,000
2. Exhibitions	\$10,000
3. Public Programming	\$10,000
4. Operational Support	\$10,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>

## STAFFING UPDATES

We have several new people at the Varley Art Gallery. Ryan Taylor, Lucie Bolduc and soon Kate Tan are joining us as ISAs, or front desk staff, playing a key role in customer service and security at the Varley. Public Programmer Rachel D'Oliveira Fell has posted for a Programs Assistant and hopes to hire as soon as possible. Staffing for March Break Camp is now being finalized. We also have intern Susanne Lee doing a placement here for a couple of months. Enrolled in the Centennial College Museum and Cultural Management Program, she is assisting Anik Glaude with a variety of

curatorial tasks. (She joins Bob Chan from the same program, who is assisting Francesca). Following queries from a local high school we are considering once again taking a high school co-op student to assist with programs related activities.

## EXHIBITIONS

The Winter Exhibitions Opening Reception for *Lost and Found, Subject: Landscape* and *A butterfly flaps its wings* and combined catalogue launch for the publication *Gathering Fictions: A Dialogue on Painting*, went off very well. The Mayor attended and participated in remarks. We were joined by artists Kevin Schmidt and Holly Ward and Janet Jones and Michel Daigneault. Also present were Markham Public Art curator Yan Wu and catalogue contributors Mary Reid, Director/curator of the Woodstock Art Gallery and Curator Emily McKibbin of Art Essex-Windsor. Thanks to the VMAF board members who attended, Connie Leclair, Carolyn Le Quéré, Councillor Reid McAlpine and Arpita Surana. We had an excellent turnout with a total of 248 visitors at the opening.

Attendance at the exhibition continues to be strong, with 251 on Saturday February 3 and 174 on Sunday, February 4. The gallery space will be animated by participating musicians in the *Lost and Found* project Wednesdays through Sundays until the end of the exhibition (May 5, 2024).





The 2024 exhibition schedule remains as previously outlined and in the chart below.

Date	Main Galleries	Intro Gallery	Collections Gallery
Jan 27 to May 5	<i>Lost and Found</i>	<i>Subject: Landscape</i>	<i>A butterfly flaps its wings</i>
May 25 to Sept. 2	<i>To go boldly</i>		<i>TBC</i>
Sept. 21 to Jan 5	<i>Meera Seethi</i>		

## PROGRAMS

February is shaping up to be a very busy month, between *Lost and Found* exhibition activations, LunarFest celebrations, Family Day programs a P. A. Day, and Black History Month events. Below is a list of the forthcoming programs and events in February, which include a mixture of free, drop-in activities and revenue generating events. Not included in this list are our ongoing art classes, currently in progress are four for adults (Wednesdays and Fridays) and five for children (weekends), not to mention the school visits on Monday and Tuesdays. Since the winter exhibitions opened on January 27, we have achieved the following full-day school bookings January 29 and 30 and February 12, 13, 20, 26 and 27. We are now booking into March and April.

January 21 to March	<p><b>Lunar Lanterns</b> January 21 to March 2024</p> <p>Lanterns hold a significant place in Asian festivals, symbolizing new beginnings with the advent of the Lunar New Year.</p> <p>Collaborating with six contemporary Indigenous artists this year, the Lunar Lanterns in the Varley Art Gallery courtyard each tell a unique story, casting a warm glow as we welcome the promise of a bright new year.</p>
January 27 to May 5	<p><b>Lost and Found Musician Practice Sessions</b></p> <p>Saturdays to Sundays, January 27 to May 5, 2024   2 PM to 4 PM   Free   Registration not required.</p> <p>Every Saturday and Sunday afternoon throughout the exhibition's run, visitors will encounter a musician or musical group practicing their respective instruments in the gallery space.</p>

February 2	<b>P. A. Day Extravaganza!</b> Friday, February 2   9 AM to 4 PM   \$77
February 3, 10, 24	<b>Black History Month: Reading Series</b> Saturdays, February 3, 10 and 24   2 to 2:30 PM   Free  Drop in for an informal reading in the Varley's Introduction Gallery. Readings will be drawn from <i>Pioneers of the Caribbean</i> by Ingrid V. Lambie, and Patricia L. Tully, and from <i>Stories from the Krib</i> by Ingrid V. Lambie, Patricia L. Tully, and Angola Charles.
February 3, 4, 10, 11, 24 and 25	<b>Black History Month: Silent Art Auction</b> Saturdays and Sundays, February 3, 4, 10, 11, 24 and 25   2 to 4 PM  The Silent Art Auction will feature framed paintings by local artist Dawn Brotherton, along with pieces donated from a senior's collection of Afro-Caribbean art by artists Herbie Rose, Bernard Reid, and a commissioned work by Expo 87 artist Alexander Cooper. Proceeds support the Afro-Caribbean home for seniors.
February 4	<b>Black History Month: Bob Marley Tribute</b> Sunday, February 4   2 to 4 PM   Free  Enjoy casual musical performances throughout the afternoon in the Varley lobby, presented by Markham vocal artist, Noel Hugh. Presented in collaboration with the Cornerstone Church community.
February 10 to 11	<b>Lunarfest at the Varley</b> Saturday and Sunday, February 10 to 11   10 AM to 5 PM   Free Celebrate the Lunar New Year at Varley Art Gallery! Drop-in on February 10 and 11 for free family activities.
February 11	<b>Black History Month: Fashion Show</b> Sunday, February 11   2 to 4 PM   Free  Experience a dynamic fashion show and music in the Varley lobby presented by members of the Cornerstone Church community. Featuring designs by Bridget Abioye, a fashion designer from Nigeria.
February 17 and 18	<b>LunarFest 2024 at the Varley</b> Saturday and Sunday, February 17 and 18   10 AM to 5 PM   Free

	<p>Welcome to the Year of the Dragon with a colourful blend of culture, arts, and storytelling this February!</p> <p>At this community festival in partnership with the Asian Canadian special Events Association, celebrate the Lunar New Year with themed activities, games, and free, family-friendly craft workshops. Ignite your imagination through the arts and embrace the new traditions. Fun for the entire family awaits.</p>
February 19	<p><b>Family Day Canvas Challenge</b> Monday, February 19   1 to 4 PM   Family Booking   Ages 4+   \$50</p> <p>Families, are you ready to paint? Join us at the Varley this Family Day for a collaborative canvas challenge! In this fun, and educational gallery experience, families get a private tour before heading to the studio to complete a painting inspired by current exhibitions. Work together to bring home a finished painting! Note: The program fee is for families of up to four members.</p>
February 25	<p><b>Black History Month: Steel Pan Performance</b> Sunday, February 25   2 to 4 PM   Free</p> <p>Immerse yourself in the captivating sounds of steel pan music performed by pannist Daryl Williams. Presented in collaboration with members of the Cornerstone Church community.</p>
February 28	<p><b>Lunch and Learn with Kevin Schmidt and Holly Ward</b> Wednesday, February 28, 2024   12:30 PM to 1:30 PM</p> <p>Free   Online   Registration required. Zoom link provided upon registration. Join us for an engaging discussion by Kevin Schmidt and Holy Ward as they explore their collaborative practice through images and conversation.</p>

## FACILITIES

The Varley and McKay Life Cycle files have been updated and sent to Sustainability and Asset Management. John Abrams has completed resanding of the front desk. We have had ongoing issues with some of our touchless infrastructure. John has reconnected the door opener on one of the Deacon Room doors. Due to a potential 6 month wait for a part to fix the second floor washroom toilet, we have installed a new hand flush toilet.

The Varley McKay Art Foundation Board  
216 Main Street Unionville,  
Markham Ontario L3R 2H1

January 5, 2024

**RE: Funding Request for Varley Art Gallery 2024 Projects**



To the Varley McKay Art Foundation Board:

For the 2024 year the Varley Art Gallery respectfully requests financial support in the amount of \$35,000. The funds requested are for the items listed below. Each of these items is related to the Gallery’s core functions, supports the goals identified in the Gallery’s current Council-approved Strategic Plan, and is consistent with the “Goals of the Gallery” as identified in the 2006 MOU between the City of Markham and the Varley-McKay Art Foundation. Further detail about each project is appended to this letter.

1. Education Program Support	\$5,000
2. Exhibition support for three 2023 exhibitions	\$10,000
3. Public Program Support	\$10,000
4. Operational Support	\$10,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>

As always, the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be recognized and acknowledged appropriately by the Gallery for all support the Gallery receives from the Foundation. Thank you very much for your attention. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Niamh O’Laoghaire, Ph.D., Director

## 2024 Request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

### Summary

1. Education	\$5,000
2. Exhibitions	\$10,000
3. Public Programming	\$10,000
4. Operational Support	\$10,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>

### Request Details

#### 1. Education Programming **\$5,000**

Education-related Public Programming focusses on two areas:

- Contribution towards Zoom licenses and sundry costs for our virtual programs (\$2,500)
- The Varley's Lunch & Learn Program, which is now going into its eighth year. The Lunch & Learn Program involves informal talks by contemporary practicing artists, frequently involved in projects at the Varley. The Lunch & Learns also provide our community members the opportunity to learn about current and future exhibitions, and to hear about on-going curatorial research happening at the gallery. This program also supports emerging and established artists by providing them with a forum in which to present their work. (\$2,500)

#### 2. Exhibition Support **\$10,000**

The request for support is in relation to two major shows planned for 2024, one in summer and one in Fall.

#### **To go boldly** **May 25 to September 2, 2024** **\$5,000**

Organized by the Varley Art Gallery and curated by Anik Glaude, our major summer presentation is a multi-artist exhibition. It will examine the ways in which contemporary creators look to science fiction as a means of making sense of the present and imagining the future. Using Star Trek as an anchor, the exhibition will explore issues of equality, optimism, alienation, assimilation, and reclamation. It will also consider how popular culture inspires artistic practice, how artists can express fandom conceptually, and how imaginative storytelling and rich world-building can influence artistic processes. The exhibition is part of a larger investigation of how fandom and science fiction can shape curatorial methodology.

Featuring works by Sonny Assu (Indigenous), Stefana Fratila (co-founder of Crip Rave, event for more accessible rave spaces), Rosalie Favell (Métis), Brendan Tang, Dara Gellman (Queer), Shelley Niro (Indigenous), Alex McLeod (Queer), Ana Diab, Sky Hopinka (Indigenous), and Syrus Marcus Ware (Black, Queer).

**Meera Sethi**

**September 21, 2024 to January 5, 2025**

**\$5000**

Our major fall show is a solo exhibition organized by the Varley Art Gallery of Markham and curated by Anik Glaude. Artist Meera Sethi works in an interdisciplinary, intuitive, and research-based mode. Through her work, she asks critical questions about history, migration, memory, the body, cloth, labour, and care. The show, featuring the artist's paintings, drawings, and installations, will be presented by the Varley Art Gallery as the largest retrospective of the artist's career to date. Sethi has significant connections to this area, having lived in Markham and York Region for several years, attending the nearby William Berzcy public school. The exhibition underscores the Gallery's commitment to showcasing the work of BIPOC artists.

### 3. Public Programming

**\$10,000**

Funds are requested to mount public programming in relation to our three major 2024 exhibitions including *Lost and Found* (January 27 to May 5) and the two exhibitions outlined above (*To boldly go* and *Meera Sethi*). This will include, but is not limited to:

- Opening reception activities/activations for each of *Lost and Found*, *To boldly go* and *Meera Sethi*
- An Artist's workshop and participation in Summer camp, and a camp-wide project
- Free public programming activities onsite in conjunction with: LunarFest 2024, Unionville Festival, Canada Day and other holidays.

#### 4. Operational Support

**\$10,000**

These funds are requested, to assist the Varley Art Gallery to meet the following goal identified in the 2006 MOU between the City of Markham and the Varley-McKay Art Foundation:

3b) To encourage appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts in Markham by providing a facility where every visit will be a warm, friendly and enjoyable experience for all patrons and citizens...

The funds provided will support a welcoming environment, appropriate security for art works and exhibitions and to assist in the promotion of Varley Art Gallery activities, events and programs.

# Varley McKay Art Foundation of Markham

February 12, 2024

6:00 pm

Varley Art Gallery

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