



Board Meeting
Monday, January 13, 2025, 6:00 -8:00 pm
Art Gallery

Agenda:

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests**
- 3. Review of Minutes of Board Meeting held on November 11, 2024 (Page 2)**
- 4. Business arising from the minutes**
- 5. Directors Report**
 - Report (Page 7)
 - Funding Request (Page 13)
- 6. Development Officer Report**
- 7. Financial Report**
- 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 February 10, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

- 10. Adjournment**



Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

Monday, November 11, 2024

6:00 p.m.
Art Gallery

<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>Board of Directors Present: Jim Schmidt (Chair), Craig McOuat (Vice-Chair), Amin Giga (Treasurer), Connie Leclair (Governance Chair), Nik Mracic, Paul Cicchini, and Councillor Reid McAlpine</p> <p>Guests: Sophia Sun, and Josy Jamieson</p> <p>Staff Present: Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery; Francesca Dauphinais, Foundation Cultural Development Officer, Laura Gold, Clerk</p> <p>Regrets: Deputy Mayor Michael Chan, and Arpita Surana</p>
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Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
1. Call to Order	<p>The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting convened at 6:05 PM with Jim Schmidt in the Chair.</p> <p>The Board welcomed potential new Directors Sophia Sun and Josy Jamieson.</p>	
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests	<p>There was no disclosure of pecuniary interests.</p>	
3. Review of Minutes of Board Meeting held on September 9,	<p>The Directors were advised that the October 7 AGM Minutes were circulated for information purposes, noting the minutes will be formally approved at the 2025 AGM.</p> <p>Moved by Craig McOuat Seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine</p>	

<p>and June 10, 2024</p>	<p>That the October 7, 2024, Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Minutes be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	
<p>4. Business Arising from the Minutes</p>	<p>There was no business arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p>5. Directors Report</p>	<p>Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery, presented her Director’s Report. The report included a summary of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the fall exhibitions and virtual tours. • An update on programs. • An update on rentals and community partnerships. • An update on the facilities, advising that the courtyard project had begun. • An update on public art. 	
<p>6. Development Officer Report</p>	<p>Francesca Dauphinais, Foundation Cultural Development Officer, presented the Development Officer Report. Some of the highlights of the report included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fall 2024 Volunteer Program – 32 volunteers were interviewed on November 11, 2024. All four Cultural Department leads were involved. Metrics of volunteer activities were provided in the update. • An update on grants was provided. The impact report for the TD Bank Connected Communities Grant needs to be submitted by November 15, 2024. A grant application was submitted to the Destination Markham Board for the Partnership Support Program. An application is being submitted to the Canada Summer Jobs program, opens on November 18, 2024, for two Gallery Animateurs, one Summer Volunteer Program Supervisor, and a Marketing Assistant. 	

	<p>The Board liked the inclusion of metrics in the Development Officers Report.</p>	
<p>7. Financial Report</p>	<p>Amin Giga, Treasurer, provided a financial update. Mr. Giga compared the Foundation’s 2023 deficit of \$8,500 with its 2024 deficit of \$22,350 to date. Mr. Giga and Councillor Reid McAlpine will meet with the City’s Chief Administrative Officer to discuss securing an annual transfer of funds from the City to the Foundation for the work that the Foundation performs on behalf of the City, which includes the management of the volunteers for the Gallery and other functions. An update on this meeting will be provided at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Provide update on meeting with the CAO at next meeting – Amin Giga</p>
<p>8. Committee Updates</p>	<p>A) Governance Committee</p> <p>Nik Mracic advised he will be following-up with Arvin Prasad regarding the Foundation’s proposed Charter, which was developed by combining a series of documents into one proposed governing document for the Foundation. The Charter may need to be resubmitted due to changes in staffing.</p> <p>Connie Leclair circulated a template that could be used to prepare the 3-year business plan for the Foundation, noting that the business plan needs to be developed as a group effort. Creating the plan for a three-year term, will allow it to be strategic and operational. The Board should start working on the business plan in January. A draft business plan could be prepared as a starting point.</p> <p><u>Business Plan Discussion</u></p> <p>The Directors discussed the MOU, recognizing that it is dated but understanding the importance of respecting the wishes of Kathleen Gromley McKay as the Gallery was created from her generosity.</p> <p>The Directors noted that some Foundations hold a full day planning session or charette to create their business plans.</p> <p>The Gallery Director provided an overview of the type of artwork the Gallery has in its vault and provided</p>	

	<p>some examples of how and when these artworks may be shown, noting that the Gallery tries to acquire artwork that can be used in many different contexts. The Directors questioned whether a new exhibition could be created that displays the Gallery’s Group of Seven artworks.</p> <p>The Gallery Director noted that one way the Foundation could help the Gallery is by engaging and promoting the Gallery to diverse communities in Markham.</p> <p>Craig McOuat noted that he was having a meeting with Chris Bratty as he is interested in supporting the Gallery again. He agreed to report back on this matter at the next meeting.</p> <p>B) Fundraising Committee</p> <p>Francesca Dauphinais, Foundation Cultural Development Officer, provided an overview of some of the past events hosted by the Foundation and recommended that the Foundation focus on one annual event and applying for grants as its fundraising strategy.</p> <p>Fran Dauphinais asked the Directors to think about the following: What is the value the Art Gallery brings to the community? What does the Gallery do? Why does the Gallery need your help? Suggesting that these questions are important to answer when coming up with the Foundation’s fundraising strategy.</p> <p>The Board discussed how COVID has changed fundraising, such as there are fewer Galas and events being run. They questioned how they can best engage the community to visit the Gallery, noting that an event is not required to bring people to Gallery.</p>	<p>Report back on meeting with Christ Bratty – Craig McOuat</p>
<p>9. New Business</p>	<p>There was no new business.</p>	

November 11, 2024

Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

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10. Next Meeting Date	The next board meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on January 13, 2024, at 6:00 PM at the Gallery.	
11. Adjournment	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham adjourned at 6:17 PM.	



SUMMARY

- Thank you to the Foundation and Board Chair
- 2024 Statistics
- Varley Art Gallery 2025 Request to the Foundation
- 2025 Exhibitions Program and Winter Exhibitions
- Public Programs Updates
- Rentals/Community Partnerships
- Facilities updates

Thank you to the Foundation and Board Chair

I would like to thank the Foundation for the fun get together at the Duchess of Markham on December 9, 2024. It was a lovely way to set the mood for the holidays. Thanks to our host Paul Cicchini of the Duchess of Markham and to Sophia Sun for her support of the event.

I also want to thank Board Chair Jim Schmidt for his continued personal support of the Varley Brochures. The next edition will be ready in time for the January 25 launch of our 2025 Winter Exhibitions.

2024 Statistics

The Varley had one of its best years in 2024. The final statistics are in and we exceeded attendance of 60,000 for the first time in our 27 year history, reaching 62,373.

Month	Exhibition	Programming	Education	Rentals	Fundraising Events	Other	Total
January	724	204	14	125	0	515	1582
February	3460	310	216	444	0	628	5058
March	2019	1175	264	443	0	915	4816
April	1481	346	345	359	0	608	3139
May	353	441	146	1100	0	1371	3411
June	3995	218	508	741	80	2393	7935
July	2428	1183	73	2635	0	2870	9189
August	3856	1129	155	2869	0	2478	10487
September	1795	257	46	735	0	1114	3947
October	2957	461	343	560	95	1429	5845
November	1553	343	472	851	0	741	3960
December	1333	194	182	839	0	456	3004
TOTALS	25954	6261	2764	11701	175	15518	62373

We are now planning to use the statistics that we already compile for CADAC and the City, etc. in order to produce a very simple annual report that we can circulate for promotion. We have also compiled the total annual attendance since opening in 1997. The total to date tops out at: 1,080,985. While there is still a lot to do to tease out how the attendance breaks down (among exhibitions, programs, education, etc.) before 2013, we do have most of that data going back to 2005, but it will take time to sort out.

Varley Art Gallery 2025 Request to the Foundation

Attached to this report is the formal request from the Varley Art Gallery to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham for 2025 support in the amount of \$40,000. The support is for activities which align with those outlined in the 2006 MOU between the City of Markham and the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham. The funds would be allocated as follows.

1. Education	For the virtual Lunch and Learn Program	\$5,000
2. Exhibitions	For seven exhibitions across three exhibition rotations	\$12,000
3. Public Programming	For 3 Exhibition Launches: Winter, Summer and Fall Artists' workshops and camp-wide project Free public programming for at least 7 events throughout the year	\$13,000
4. Operational Support	To support a welcoming environment, security for art works and promotion of events and activities	\$10,000
Total:		\$40,000

2025 Exhibitions

Meera Seethi exhibition closed on January 5, we are now in exhibition changeover through Friday, January 24. The 2025 program, as a whole is shaping up as outlined in the chart below. Details about the 2025 Winter exhibitions follow the chart.

Rotation	Main Gallery	Intro Galley	Collections Gallery
Jan. 25 – May 4	<i>Karen Kar Yen Law: Better Bitter</i>	Reading Space and intro to three exhibitions	<i>The Printer's Matrix: Process, Image and Innovation</i>
	<i>Beneath the Surface: Stories of Kinship and Connection (Emma Nishimura and Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona)</i>		
May to Sept. 1	<i>The Z'OTZ* Collective</i>		<i>Virtual Visions: Exploring F.H. Varley's Artistry Through Technology</i>
Sept. 20 to Jan. 4	<i>Shifting Landscapes: Contemporary Visions of Nature</i>	<i>Kejie Lin</i>	

Winter 2025 Exhibitions Details.

Karen Kar Yen Law: Better Bitter

curated by Anik Glaude



Image: Karen Law, Untitled (detail), 2024, acrylic on canvas, 121.9 cm x 91.4 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Markham-based artist Karen Kar Yen Law 羅加欣 works primarily with monoprints, blending the structured layers of printmaking with the fluid expressiveness of painting. Hand-cut stencils are central to her process, creating precise shapes and patterns that build visual layers and reveal or mask parts of the composition. Through colour layering, she forms negative and positive spaces that enhance or obscure underlying forms. Law also incorporates experimental techniques, like using stencils to sun-cure her canvases

Law's work is deeply shaped by her Chinese heritage, particularly its cuisine, where balance in flavour—such as the transformation of bitterness—is essential. In her latest work, the bitter melon serves as a symbol for exploring the concept of bitterness, both as a flavour and emotional experience.

Beneath the Surface: Stories of Kinship and Connection

curated by Anik Glaude

This exhibition features the evocative works of Emma Nishimura and Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona, who use printmaking to explore culture, family, and identity.

Nishimura's practice delves into themes of memory, loss, and resilience, focusing on her family's experiences during the Japanese Canadian internment in WWII. Her work reflects on the enduring impact of this history across generations.



Image: Emma Nishimura, **An Archive of Rememory** (detail), 2017, photo-etching on flax and abaca, 7.62 cm x 7.62 cm x 6.35 cm. Photo: Emma Nishimura. Courtesy of the artist.

Kabloona, inspired by her Inuit heritage and artistic lineage, celebrates her identity while questioning it, blending tradition with contemporary exploration. Both artists incorporate sculpture to their printmaking practices, extending their work to amplify stories of personal and collective memory. Together, their art connects the past and present, highlighting kinship, heritage, and cultural identity.

The Printmaker's Matrix: Process, Image and Innovation

curated by Anik Glaude, with assistance from Amani Hassan



David Blackwood, **Two Scouts from the S.S. Eagle**, 1975, colour etching and aquatint, Edition 5/50, 43.5 cm x 53.3 cm. Collection of the Varley Art Gallery of Markham. Gift of Wallace Joyce, 2011.4.3

This group exhibition showcases prints from the gallery's permanent collection, exploring three interconnected themes: process, image, and innovation. Process unveils the intricate techniques and behind-the-scenes efforts that bring each print to life. Image celebrates the finished works, focusing on their compositions, forms, colours, and meanings. Finally, innovation highlights how artists push the boundaries of printmaking—whether through adopting cutting-edge techniques or reimagining traditional methods.

Inspired by the works of contemporary artists Karen Law, Emma Nishimura, and Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona, presented in the Main Gallery, this exhibition offers an accessible introduction to printmaking techniques and methods. As with all our collections-based exhibitions, The Printmaker's Matrix provides a chance to delve deeper into our holdings, uncover fresh insights into overlooked pieces, and bring attention to works that are being displayed for the first time.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Varley's contribution to Old Tyme Christmas on December 14 went extremely well. Attendance was amplified by the Mom Market taking place in the Deacon Room. There were plans for free hot chocolate for about 150, but we ended up fielding about 400 requests, so there was some difficulty keeping up with the demand. Total attendance seems to have been 500. But all turned out well. Along with the programs outlined below, we are also gearing up for a busy February, with LunarFest, Black History Month and Family Day events.

Art Classes

The following 5 children's art classes began the weekend of January 11 and will run for 10 sessions.

- Elements of Art and Design
- Start with Art
- Art Adventures
- Sculpture
- Mixed Media for mini artists

Adult classes begin on January 15 and include:

- Watercolours: Beginner (8 sessions)
- Watercolours: Intermediate (8 sessions)
- Acrylic Pouring for Beginners (4 sessions)

Two weeks later in the week of January 27 we add:

- Introduction to Drawing (8 sessions) (8 sessions)
- Introduction to Oil Painting – beginner to Intermediate
- Landscape Painting (8 sessions)
- Portraiture Drawing or Painting (8 sessions)
- Life Drawing. (8 sessions)

Adult Workshops

Brush Calligraphy: Beginner is offered on January 19

Exhibition-related Programming

January 25: The 2025 Winter Exhibitions Launch, 2 to 4 PM.

Free Seniors Art Workshop Series

The Free Seniors Art Workshop funded by the Ontario Seniors Community Grant restarted on Wednesday, January 8. There is only one left in the schedule of seven workshops. The deadline for the 2025-26 application is coming up fast on January 16. Given the success of the program to date we are planning to reapply for the coming year.

Schools Programs

School visits do not generally pick up until the exhibitions are in place, but we do have a full day booking for January 21.

Camps

Winter Break Camps ran extremely smoothly, with virtually full bookings for each of the seven days of two camps on December 23, 24, 27, 30, 31 and January 2 and 3.
We have two full-day P.A. Day camps scheduled for January 17

RENTALS/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In January we have the following taking place at both the Varley

Rental events/Community Partnerships/Other

January 5: A Youth Fundraising Event for the Canadian Cancer Society

January 15: UBIA Meeting

January 26: Private 90th Birthday Party

FACILITIES

- Work on the courtyard repaving, in progress during the November Board meeting was completed by the end of the month.
- The week of December 16 the floor of the Deacon Room was refinished to match the floor in the lobby, giving it a cleaner, brighter feel.
- The radiator covers in each of the Deacon Room, Paint Studio and Stollery were replaced in the first weeks of January. They had become dented and misshapen over time. The upgrade improves the spaces and makes the Deacon room, in particular more appealing to renters.
- The new large screen funded by the Varley-McKay Art Foundation is in place and a clean connection to power set up by an electrician.

2025 Request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

Date: January 9, 2025

To: The Board of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

RE: Request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham for 2025 Support

I would like formally to request that the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham provide \$40,000 in support to the Varley Art Gallery of Markham in 2025.

The funds are requested to support a range of activities, all of which align with those outlined in the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Markham and the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham. They further align with the goals outlined in *Building Markham's Future Together, 2020-2026*, the City's strategic plan and also those in *Markham is More: Markham's Economic Development and Culture Strategy, 2023-2027*.

The funds would be allocated as follows: \$5,000 towards Education, specifically the Lunch and Learn Program; \$12,000 towards seven separate exhibitions presented in three exhibition rotations, Winter, Summer and Fall; \$13,000 for a range of public programming including exhibition opening events, artist's participation in camp activities and free holiday activities and \$10,000 towards operational support, ensuring an optimal customer experience and safety and security of the art on display.

Further details about the request are provided on the following pages. Thank you very much for your attention. I look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,



Niamh O'Laoghaire, Director
Varley Art Gallery of Markham.

Request Summary

1. Education	\$5,000
2. Exhibitions	\$12,000
3. Public Programming	\$13,000
4. Operational Support	\$10,000
Total:	\$40,000

Request Details

1. Education Programming

\$5,000

Education-related Public Programming focusses on the Lunch and Learn Program.

- 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. \$2,000 is required for zoom licences, youtube channel and sundry costs. The remainder goes toward speaker fees.

2. Exhibition Support

\$12,000

The request is for the seven exhibitions featured over the course of the Varley's three annual exhibition rotations: winter, summer and fall 2025. The exhibition program has been developed by Varley Curator Anik Glaude.

Winter: January 25 to May 4, 2025

\$4,000

- ***Karen Kar Yen Law: Better Bitter***, curated by Anik Glaude
Markham-based artist Karen Kar Yen Law 羅加欣 works primarily with monoprints, blending the structured layers of printmaking with the fluid expressiveness of painting. Hand-cut stencils are central to her process, creating precise shapes and patterns that build visual layers and reveal or mask parts of the composition. Through colour layering, she forms negative and positive spaces that enhance or obscure underlying forms. Law also incorporates experimental techniques, like using stencils to sun-cure her canvases. Her work is deeply shaped by her Chinese heritage, particularly its cuisine, where balance in flavour – such as the transformation of bitterness – is essential. In her latest work, the bitter melon serves as a symbol for exploring the concept of bitterness, both as a flavour and an emotional experience.

- ***Beneath the Surface: Stories of Kinship and Connection***, curated by Anik Glaude
Beneath the Surface: Stories of Kinship and Connection features the evocative works of Emma Nishimura and Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona. Both artists harness the expressive power of printmaking to illuminate facets of their cultural and familial identities, drawing viewers into deeply personal and universal narratives.

- ***The Printmaker's Matrix: Process, Image and Innovation*** curated by Anik Glaude with Amani Assan

This group exhibition showcases prints from the gallery's permanent collection, exploring three interconnected themes: process, image, and innovation. Process unveils the intricate techniques and behind-the-scenes efforts that bring each print to life. Image celebrates the finished works, focusing on their compositions, forms, colours, and meanings. Finally, innovation highlights how artists push the boundaries of printmaking – whether through adopting cutting-edge techniques or reimagining traditional methods. This exhibition offers an accessible introduction to printmaking techniques and methods. As with all our collections-based exhibitions, The Printmaker's Matrix provides a chance to delve deeper into our holdings, uncover fresh insights into overlooked pieces, and bring attention to works that are being displayed for the first time.

Summer: May 24 (TBC) to September 1, 2025

\$4,000

- ***The Z'OTZ* Collective***

The Gallery's major summer exhibition will focus on Z'OTZ* [sic] Collective. Established in 2004, the collective comprises Nahum Flores, Erik Jerezano, and Ilyana Martinez. These artists collaborate across various mediums, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and most recently, animation. Meeting weekly, they engage in a collective creative process, with each artist contributing to every piece. The artworks are passed among the members, evolving through shared input until they reach completion. Each artist brings their own unique style and approach to the collaborative process, resulting in a final product that not only reflects each artist's sensibility but also embodies something entirely new. The Z'OTZ* exhibition will occupy both the Intro Gallery and the Main Gallery space. While the specific works have yet to be finalized, we anticipate including framed drawings, new animated pieces, ceramic works, and the creation of a site-specific mural, of the kind for which the collective is particularly well-known - immersive, whimsical and fantastical.

- ***Virtual Visions: Exploring F.H. Varley's Artistry Through Technology***, curated by Anik Glaude

The work of F.H. Varley will be exhibited in a new light thanks to a collaboration between the gallery's curatorial and education teams. Contemporary interventions from contemporary artists will complement paintings and drawings by Varley from the permanent collection.

Fall 2025, September 24, 2025 to January 4, 2026

\$4,000

- ***Kejie Linn***, curated by Yuluo Anita Wei

The Gallery will mount a solo exhibition by Kejie Lin, again an artist of Chinese heritage based in the region. This will be important as her first public art gallery show. Ms Lin employs both traditional Chinese painting materials and the meticulous technique of traditional Chinese Gongbi paintings, featuring floral motifs, birds and landscape themes as the main subjects. Along with traditional Chinese aesthetics, Lin's intricate ink paintings, explore contemporary themes. The exhibition will be organized by local curator Yuluo Anita Wei, reinforcing the Gallery's dedication to fostering emerging and diverse curatorial voices.

- ***Shifting Landscapes: Contemporary Visions of Nature***, curated by Anik Glaude and Yuluo Anita Wei

Shifting Landscapes is a group exhibition exploring a range of approaches to the depiction of nature in contemporary art. Programmed to complement Keijie Lin's exhibition and help place her work within the large discourse of contemporary Canadian art.

3. Public Programming

\$13,000

Funds are requested to mount public programming in relation to our three 2025 exhibition rotations, comprising seven separate installations.

This will include, but is not limited to:

- Three opening reception activities/activations for the launch of each of the 2025 Winter, 2025 Summer and 2025 Fall exhibitions
- An Artist's workshop and participation in Summer camp, and a camp-wide project
- Development, staffing and materials for free public programming activities onsite in conjunction with:
 - LunarFest 2025
 - Black History Month (February)
 - Unionville Festival
 - Canada Day
 - Culture Days
 - Doors Open Markham
 - Old Tyme Christmas

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

January 13, 2025

6:00 pm

Varley Art Gallery

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