



Board Meeting
Monday, February 10, 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 January 13, 2025 (Page 2)**
- 4. Business arising from the minutes**
- 5. Directors Report
Report (Page 7)
Funding Request (Page 12)**
- 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 March 10, 2025,
at 6:00 PM.
- 10. Adjournment**



Minutes

Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

Monday, January 13, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Art Gallery

Attendance

Board of Directors Present: Jim Schmidt (Chair), Craig McOuat (Vice-Chair), Connie Leclair (Governance Chair), Nik Mracic, and Councillor Reid McAlpine

Guests: Doug Denby, Sophia Sun, and Josy Jamieson

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

Regrets: Arpita Surana, Amin Giga (Treasurer), and Paul Cicchini

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action Item |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting convened at 6:05 PM with Jim Schmidt in the Chair. | |
| 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests | There was no disclosure of pecuniary interests. | |
| 3. Review of Minutes of Board Meeting held on September 9, and June 10, 2024 | Moved by Craig McOuat Seconded by Connie Leclair That the November 11, 2024, Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Minutes be approved as presented. | Carried |

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| <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> <p><u>Thank you to Foundation and Foundation Chair</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thanked the Foundation for the holiday gathering at the Duchess of Markham.• Thanked Paul Cicchini for hosting the event and Sophia Sun for supporting the event.• Thanked the Foundation Chair for his continued personal support for the printing of the Varley brochures. The next brochure will be ready for the Jan 25th launch of the 2025 Winter Exhibitions. <p><u>2024 Statistics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Varley’s 2024 statistics were presented.• The statistics will be used in the future to produce a simple annual report that can be used for promotional purposes.• Noted that it is difficult to determine how much business the Gallery generates from patrons dropping into the building. <p><u>Varley Art Gallery 2025 Request to the Foundation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A request for \$40K was made to the Foundation to support the Gallery’s virtual lunch and learn programs, seven exhibitions across three exhibition rotations, 3 exhibition launches, and to provide operational support. <p><u>Exhibitions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 2025 exhibition schedule was shared with the Board.• The exhibits being displayed between January 25-May 4, 2025 included: Karen Kar Yen Law: <i>Better Bitter</i> (Main Gallery), <i>Beneath the Surface: Stories of Kinship and Connection</i>, Emma Nishimura and Gayle Uyagagi Kabloona (Main Gallery), <i>The Printer’s Matrix: Process, Image and Innovation</i> (Collections Gallery). <p><u>Public Programs, Rentals and Facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An update on public programs, rentals, and facilities was provided | |

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| | <p><u>Art Acquisition</u></p> <p>The Director of the Gallery provided background information on the artists proposed for acquisition and approved by the Acquisitions Committee, and explained how the artwork connects with the Markham Community and the Gallery's collection. All three artworks recommended for acquisition appeared in the <i>To Go Boldly</i> exhibition.</p> <p>Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine Seconded by Craig McOuat</p> <p>The Foundation approved the following art acquisitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the donation of Claire Scherzinger's <i>Strangling Fruit</i>, 2019, oil on canvas, 30 in. x 40 in. x 2 in. / 76.2 cm x 101.6 cm x 5 cm be approved, plus the cost of the appraisal.• That the donation of Brendan Lee Satish Tang's <i>Move Along Home, Cardassian</i>, 2024, ceramics and mixed media, 35.5 cm x 12.7 cm x 12.7 cm be approved, plus the cost of the appraisal.• That the purchase of Brendan Lee Satish Tang's, <i>Attempts to Contain Evil</i> (Manga Ormolu Version 4.1b), 2011, ceramics and mixed media, 50.8 cm x 24.1 cm x 20.3 cm be approved, for \$16,800 (includes 12% tax and museum discount). <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p> | |
| <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> <p><u>Grants</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An overview of the Grants received was provided.• Grants that have been approved for 2025 to date include - K.M Hunter Foundation Grant, and the Destination Markham Grant.• Conditions of the Destination Markham Grant are digitally advertising the Gallery with the Globe and Mail and CBC, and tracking visitors attending the Gallery from outside of Markham. <p><u>Special Events</u></p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the Foundations 2024 events was provided. • Noted that Santo Natale, Past Director of the Foundation, is looking to host the Old World/New World Wine Testing event again this year, on a date to be determined in March – proceeds will likely be split between the Gallery and the hospital. The event will possibly be held at the Gallery. <p><u>Volunteer Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 154 volunteers involved in the Gallery’s public programs in 2024, which is the equivalent of 2.3 full time employees or 4,134 hours of work. • There are 2 additional volunteers that contributed 24 hours assisting with fundraising and event delivery. <p><u>Wallace Joyce Scholarship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024 scholarship was awarded to Angel Zheng from G.W. Williams Secondary School in Aurora who is currently studying architecture in Shanghai. <p><u>William J. Withrow School Visits Bursary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation was provided to 4 schools visiting the Gallery in 2024. The William J. Withrow School Visits Bursary funded the transportation. | |
| <p>7. Financial Report</p> | <p>The Chair advised that the Treasurer met with CAO and that the City has committed to providing the Foundation with 40K this year and next year for the work the Development Officer (the Foundation’s employee) does for the City.</p> <p>The Treasurer will provide a financial report at the next meeting.</p> | |
| <p>8. Committee Updates</p> | <p>A) Governance Committee</p> <p>Nik Mracic advised he spoke with Arvin Prasad, Commissioner of Development Services, regarding the Foundation’s proposed Charter and that he was referred to Andrew Baldwin, Director of Destination Markham, and Acting Director of Economic Development.</p> <p><u>Business Plan Discussion</u></p> <p>Connie Leclair advised that she met with the Development Officer and that together they came up with a list of potential business plan items, noting that she would like to add more depth to the plan. Ms. Leclair spoke about the Development Officer splitting her time</p> | |

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| | <p>between the Gallery and the Foundation, and the amount of volunteer work being undertaken at the Gallery.</p> <p>B) Fundraising Committee</p> <p>The Board discussed holding a 2–3-hour brainstorming session to come up with fundraising ideas. Directors will be polled to see if they would like to participate in the session. The Directors noted that raising funds for the Gallery is one of the primary goals of the Foundation.</p> | |
| 9. New Business | <p>The Director of the Gallery advised that she will consult with the Curator to provide a 2025 wish list of art works the Gallery would like to purchase as soon as possible.</p> | |
| 10. Next Meeting Date | <p>The next board meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on February 10, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Gallery.</p> | |
| 11. Adjournment | <p>The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham adjourned at 7:06 PM.</p> | |



SUMMARY

- Welcome to the new board members
- Varley Art Gallery revised 2025 Request to the Foundation
- Acquisitions Wishlist
- Grant writing
- 2025 Exhibitions Program and Winter Exhibitions
- Public Programs Updates
- Rentals/Community Partnerships
- Facilities updates

WELCOME

We understand that Josey Jamieson and Sophia Sun have now been officially approved as members of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation Board. I would like to welcome them officially in their new roles. The Varley Art Gallery team looks forward to working with them.

VARLEY ART GALLERY 2025 REQUEST TO THE FOUNDATION

At the January 13, 2025 meeting of the board I attached a request for support in the amount of \$40,000. Following discussion at that time, it was suggested that I revise the operational support portion of the request upwards. Attached to my report is a request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham for 2025 support in the amount of \$50,000. As previously noted, 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 outlined in the chart below.

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 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 clean, welcoming environment, security for art works, promotion of events and activities and maintenance of new technology | \$10,000 |
| Total: | | \$50,000 |

ACQUISITIONS WISHLIST

At the previous meeting members of the board requested an acquisitions wishlist for 2025. While we are working to create one in detail (including specific artworks and prices) there is one work we can make you aware of now, although not yet brought to the acquisitions committee.

Winnie Truong

Meadow II, 2023

Cut paper wall installation

Dimensions variable

Cost: \$45,000 purchased through her Toronto dealer, Patel Brown

Several board members may remember this work as it was a highlight of the 2023 Winter exhibition *Field Notes*, when it was shown alongside works by F. H. Varley.



GRANTS

Since the Meeting of January 13, we completed an application to the 2025 round of the Ontario Seniors Community Grant Program, submitted on January 16. This year the application was for a grant to support activities at the both the Varley Art Gallery and the Markham Museum. Our asks were combined into one, as the province will accept only one application per organization, and as departments/facilities within the Corporation of the City of Markham we are considered a single organization.

We have also decided to apply to the Canada Council for the Arts for operating funding, similar to what we receive from the Ontario Arts Council. The application is due in April, so we have a lot of work to do in a short space of time. However, the application will comprise much of the same content as for the OAC and also the CADAC statistics that we normally submit in June.

EXHIBITIONS

The exhibition schedule outlined at the January 13 Board remains in effect. Since then, we opened our Winter 2025 exhibitions on Saturday, January 25. We have also had a whole team meeting with Z'otz* Collective members to begin planning for the major summer show.

| 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> | |

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Since the last board meeting we have been extremely busy. We had the 2025 Winter Exhibitions Launch Opening reception on January 25, which ran very well. It included a land acknowledgement and singing by Dakota Law of the Hiawatha First Nation Reserve, and brief remarks. This was followed by artists' talks by each of Karen Kar Yen Law, Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona and Emma Nishimura, refreshments and a hands-on print-making activity in the Deacon Room, and culminated with a lion dance. Thanks so much to Vice-Chair Craig McQuat for coming out to support the event.



Artist Karen Kar Yen Law speaking, with curator Anik Glaude



Dakota Law of the Hiawatha First Nation performing



Artist Gayle Uyagaqi Kabloona



Lion Dance



Audience



Artist Emma Nishimura

February opened with LunarFest 2025 at the Varley on February 1 and 2, with 1,982 people attending over the course of two days. This was followed by an online Lunch and Learn by Emma Nishimura on February 5. Other events coming up in February include:

- February 15 and 16: Black History Month events.
- February 17: Family Day Canvas Challenge
- February 23: Curator's Corner with Anik Glaude.

We had two P.A. Day Camps on January 17. With the opening of new exhibitions school visits have returned in earnest and we are receiving many bookings for the coming months.

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)

RENTALS/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Since the last board meeting we also had the following taking place:

Rental events/Community Partnerships/Other

January 15: Meeting of the Unionville BIA

January 26: Private 90th birthday party

February 3 to 5: a three-day rental of the McKay Art Centre for Hallmark Christmas movie.

FACILITIES

- Updated Lifecycle files were completed and submitted. Their contents provide the basis for capital requests to the City in 2025 for capital project funding in 2025.
- The exterior stair railings at the McKay House have been installed.
- The McKay House now has swipe card access

2025 Request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

Date: February 7, 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 \$50,000 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 \$20,000 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 | \$20,000 |
| Total: | \$50,000 |

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

\$20,000

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 appropriate security for art works and exhibitions. They will also support a warm and welcoming environment, and assist in the promotion of Varley Art Gallery activities, events and programs. This includes underwriting costs associated with new technology: the annual fee to maintain the Varley's new website on a dedicated server (required by the City's IT Department), payments for an app (currently StQry) to run the in-gallery kiosk animating exhibitions (development in progress) and monthly payments to maintain the TipTapPay donation system.

Varley McKay Art Foundation of Markham

February 10, 2025

6:00 pm

Varley Art Gallery

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