

Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham
Minutes
December 13, 2021
5:00 PM

Attendance:

Board of Directors Present: Terrence Pochmurski (Chair), Craig McOuat (Vice Chair), Amin Giga (Treasurer), Edie Yeomans, Lisa Joy-Facey and Councillor Reid McAlpine,

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

Regrets: John Ingram, Jim Schmidt, Carolyn Le Quéré, Christina Kakaflikas, Acting Director, Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship at City of Markham,

Item	Discussion
1. Call to Order	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting convened at 5:09 PM with Terrence Pochmurski presiding as Chair.
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest	None disclosed.
3. Additions / Changes to the Agenda	Correction to Agenda Item 4 as the previous meeting was held October 18, 2021, not November 8, 2021.
4. Approval of Minutes	Moved by Edie Yeomans Seconded by Councilor Reid McAlpine That the minutes of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting held October 18th, 2021, be approved as distributed. Carried
5. Business Arising from The Minutes	None disclosed. a) MOU Update None disclosed.
6. Director’s Report	Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery, provided the Board with an overview of the Director’s Report, which included the following highlights:

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	<p><u>GOG Exhibition of the Year Award</u> Varley Art Gallery has won the GOG (Galleries Ontario / Ontario Galleries) "Exhibition of the Year" award in the "Budget under \$10,000" category. The Varley was recognized at the 44th annual awards ceremony on the evening of November 29, 2021, for the installation <i>Luke Parnell: Repeat the chorus three times</i>.</p> <p>The GOG awards celebrate: "the outstanding achievement, artistic merit, and excellence of arts institutions and professionals in the public art gallery sector". A hearty Congratulations on this resounding achievement to artist Luke Parnell and to the Varley's Anik Glaude, the show's curator, exhibition designer and exhibition coordinator, and to the installation team of John Abrams and Phil Scott. If you didn't get a chance to see the show in person, it remains available online.</p> <p><u>Exhibitions</u> <i>Elusive Desires: Ness Lee and Florence Yee</i> has remained in place and will continue until January 2, 2022. Also on display is <i>Subject/Object/Process</i> comprised of abstract works from the permanent holdings and installed in the Collections Gallery. exhibitions are also available through the Varley virtual exhibition experience.</p> <p>Anik Glaude is currently working on implementing the exhibition <i>Karen Tam: With wings like clouds hung from the sky</i> early in the new year. This show has been rescheduled several times due to the pandemic. Due to landslides and highway closures impacting the show's co-organizer, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (AGGV), loans may not arrive in time to be installed for the January 22nd opening. Alternative solutions will be explored, such as opening with an explanation about the missing loans or deferring the opening. To recap, the show re-imagines the Cormorant Street studio of Lee Nam, a Chinese immigrant painter who was active in Victoria in the 1930s. This installation is a starting point for examining the experience of immigrant artists in Canada, their sites of artistic production, their reception, and contribution to Canadian art history. The exhibition will include works by Chinese Canadian artists who work in the traditional brush painting tradition. The exhibit will close in April 2022.</p> <p>There are also permanent collections show with works from AGO transfer scheduled in 2022. <i>Michel Daigneault and Janet Jones</i> exhibit is scheduled for May-August 2022 and Shantel Miller (right here / right now) is scheduled for September 2022-January 2023.</p>

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	<p data-bbox="467 239 651 268"><u>Holiday Hours</u></p> <p data-bbox="467 275 1398 386">Varley Art Gallery will be closed to the public December 24, 2021, until January 22, 2022, with the exception of holding public hours on January 2, 2022, for the last day of <i>Elusive Desires</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="467 432 529 462"><u>Staff</u></p> <p data-bbox="467 468 1370 579">New staff will need to be hired for the launch of new programs and return of the Program Coordinator. Several contracts are in hand and more interviews will be held the week of December 13.</p> <p data-bbox="467 625 553 655"><u>Grants</u></p> <p data-bbox="467 661 1370 814">Museum Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage recovery funding application was completed submitted in September. The deadline was extended from October 20, 2021, to November 29, 2021, and there is no indication of when results will be received.</p> <p data-bbox="467 856 1419 1163">There is a “My Main Street” grant program that is a collaboration between Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) and the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) to help support the revitalization of approximately 200 neighbourhoods across southern Ontario, (excluding Toronto). We are exploring options to apply to the “Community Activator” stream that supports events, activities and enhancements that bring people out to their Main streets. We hope to work on this in January as the deadline is February 1, 2022.</p> <p data-bbox="467 1205 1398 1394">The Unionville BIA received a significant grant from this same program under the accelerator stream. Collaboration with the Unionville BIA could be possible to the degree that the Varley Art Gallery is a business. The City of Markham can assist with data on Main Street and Varley Art Gallery will have Gallery specific data.</p> <p data-bbox="467 1440 870 1470"><u>Public and Education Programs</u></p> <p data-bbox="467 1476 1419 1745">Two virtual events in relation to <i>Elusive Desires</i> were held. A Lunch and Learn on October 27. It focused generally on the theme of “What about the “T” in LGBTQ? And a Round Table Discussion: What Comes After? on Thursday, November 18. Participants included the artists Ness Lee and Florence Yee, along with guest writers Dr. Casey Mecija and Elisha Lim, and moderated by Marissa Largo. This event also functioned as the launch for the exhibition catalogue.</p> <p data-bbox="467 1787 1377 1898">An online Holiday Party with the Varley is planned for December 14, 2021. Participants are encouraged to wear ugly holiday sweaters with cameras on while doing crafts and playing games. Registration is</p>

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	<p>required as space is limited. Tickets include one game card and a guided art workshop led by a Varley instructor.</p> <p>Virtual school programs continued through November and will end this year on December 17 with the final Varley Lounge. Attendance was 9,449 for October and November.</p> <p>Returned Public Programs Coordinator Rachel D’Oliveira Fell has put together a selection of programs both virtual and in-person for winter 2022. Registration began on December 7 and already several of the in-person programs (P.A. Days, Family Day Canvas Challenge and March Break Camps) have sold out, while the virtual programs are, so far, undersubscribed. Due to COVID restrictions our in-person capacity limits overall have been reduced to approximately 75%. However, the registrations to date give us a sense that there is an increasing appetite for in-person programs.</p> <p><u>Public Art</u> The fifth and final online program in relation to <i>Double Gazebo (Markham)</i> by Native Art Department International (NADI) was released on November 1. In <i>With Star Knowledge</i>, artists Maria Hupfield and Jason Lujan, undertook a conversation with astronomer Dr. Hilding Neilson. Flowing from Indigenous knowledge to astronomy to the physics of the Universe, the conversation considers how we study the universe and how we are related to it, from bodily, intellectual, cultural, and philosophical perspectives. The work itself was deinstalled and taken away on December 7, 2021. Its counterpart, <i>Double Gazebo (MOCA)</i> remains on display at MOCA Toronto until January.</p> <p>Community consultation around the Pan Am Centre Commission wrapped up. In total there were interviews, four workshops and an online survey. Consultants Art+Public Utd have provide their final report and staff have completed a Staff Report to Council. Initially planned for November 23, presentation of the Staff Report has now been deferred to the January 22 meeting.</p> <p><u>Facilities</u> The bid to repair the second-floor meeting room cracked window has been awarded. Due to supply delays, the window will likely not be repaired before 2022.</p> <p>The City-wide touchless infrastructure project overseen by Sustainability and Asset Management is almost complete. There are now hands-free</p>

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	<p>paper towel and soap dispensers, touchless toilets, and sanitizer dispensers at the Varley. All that remains is to replace the water fountain. We had a leak in the second-floor staff washroom, fortunately noticed by the ISAs on Sunday November 26 and it was repaired on December 8.</p> <p>The Varley flat roof replacement project originally scheduled for November has been delayed. Waiting to hear when it will begin.</p>
<p>7. Development Officer Report</p>	<p>Francesca Dauphinais, Cultural Development Officer, provided the Board with an overview of the Development Officer’s Report, which included the following highlights:</p> <p><u>Rouge: Virtual Varley Gala</u></p> <p>The event was held on Friday, October 15, 2021. The event was a tremendous success with 64 event tickets purchased, and all 50 Mystery Party Boxes sold. The online silent auction featured 92 lots, some with multiple items available in the lot (with one item going to each of the top bidders). 16 items did not sell, with 6 of those items sourced through Givergy. Givergy improved their platform, and the livestream delivery was better this year. There was unfortunately an issue with the recording so there is no recording of the event available.</p> <p>Jessica Holmes was a fantastic MC. She kept the crowd engaged, motivated to bid, and entertained. Though it was a virtual event, she did her utmost to connect with our audience, acknowledging guests by name and watching the comments section for additional speaking cues.</p> <p>The Spoons provided a 30-minute video recording of a selection of their greatest hits. They went the extra mile to evoke the feeling of being at a live concert, with great videography, lighting and editing. There were very positive responses to their performance, with many guests, including Jessica Holmes, saying that they were dancing and singing along at home.</p> <p>Donation receipt requests were sent to Stella Attai in Finance and are currently awaiting the CAO’s authorization signature on each receipt. These will be mailed out donors in early January 2022.</p> <p>We are very grateful to all the sponsors, with Remington being the largest sponsor. As the event may be in person in 2022 with venue and</p>

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	<p>food prices going up every year, as well as live entertainment costs, we are looking to secure and retain sponsors and raising ticket sales.</p> <p>Thursday December 16's event guestlist includes a lot of new contacts, thank you to Councillor Reid McAlpine on spreading the word about the event.</p> <p>Terence Pochmurski, on behalf of the Board, thanked Francesca, Ivy and Abby for their hard work and contribution to make this a successful event.</p> <p><u>Support Staff Consideration</u></p> <p>It is imperative that we continue with the strong social media presence that has been established by Abby Sasikumar, Social Media and Marketing Assistant. Abby brings knowledge and expertise in a field that is out of Francesca's focus area. The Canada Summer Jobs fund deadline for 2022 is not available as the current grant period runs until February 26, 2022. Parts of the position cost can be recouped through Canada Summer Jobs and from grants. This can be built into the budget; cost isn't prohibitive and allows Francesca to focus on other areas. Proposal is to hire Abby on a parttime basis of 12 hours a week starting in February.</p> <p>MOTION Moved by Craig McOuat Seconded by Edie Yeomans</p> <p>To approve the hiring of Abby Sasikumar, Social Media and Marketing Assistant on a parttime basis of 12 hours a week starting in February 2022.</p> <p>Approved by all.</p> <p>CARRIED</p> <p><u>Grant Funding</u></p> <p>TD Connected Communities Arts and Culture grant deadline is January 6, 2022. The proposal will be for a multi-year request 2022-2023 for \$70,000 (up to 20% of operating budget per year request). Grant proposal with focus on area of need: exhibition support, virtual education programs, free admission, and summer camp support.</p>

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	<p>Letters of inquiry will be submitted to private foundations for the following projects: new exhibition support, new acquisitions specifically focused on the 25th anniversary exhibition, summer camp workshops and continuation of the vault improvement.</p> <p>Recently a new grant was learned about, the Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund for non-profit organizations impacted by COVID-19 to support recovery efforts and help rebuild their capacity and resiliency. Amount awarded per year (maximum of 12 months) is \$5,000-\$150,000.</p>
<p>8. Sub-Committee Report</p>	<p><u>Rouge: Virtual Varley Gala</u> An update on the Rouge: Virtual Varley Gala was provided as part of the Development Officer’s Report.</p> <p><u>Art Acquisition Committee</u> Edie Yeomans provided the Board with updates from the Art Acquisition Committee.</p> <p>The Varley Art Gallery acquired a total of thirty-six works of art for the permanent collection in 2021. This includes twelve purchases with the assistance of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation, which are all at the gallery. Twenty-four works were acquired through donations, including eight from the Estate of Ann Stanfield. Per the mandate to address inequities in the permanent collection, out of the thirty-six acquisitions, twenty works are by women artists and thirteen works are by BIPOC artists.</p> <p>There were also twelve acquisitions through purchase for the Public Art Circulation Collection (for the Civic Centre). All twelve works by BIPOC artists, eleven prints by Indigenous artists from the Dorset Fine Arts cooperative and a major work by Markham artist Esmaa Mohamoud.</p> <p>The variety, scope, and breadth of works that are coming into the collection boosts its integrity and the Art Acquisition Committee is pleased to present this report to the Varley</p> <p><u>Vintages at the Varley</u> There was no update from the Vintages at the Varley Committee.</p> <p><u>Development Committee</u> There was no update from the Development Committee.</p>

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9. Financial Report	<p>Amin Giga, Treasurer, reviewed the Varley-McKay Art Foundation’s Statement of Financial Position as of September 31, 2021. The Statement of Financial Position data do not include the Gala and he will have updated numbers in the new year. Funding from Canada summer jobs is also not included in the numbers.</p> <p>With Councilor Reid McAlpine’ assistance, a meeting will be coordinated with the City of Markham to discuss continuation of support in 2022. Looking to schedule the meeting in January 2022 with more current 2021 numbers. The end of year numbers will also be useful in creating preliminary 2022 numbers and budget.</p> <p>Amin will send an email communication to the committee for approval to move a deficit from one fund to another fund.</p> <p>Amin will update budget codes for more clarity and try to have these sent by the middle of next week.</p>
10. New Business	None disclosed.
11. Future Meeting Dates	The next meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on February 7, 2022.
12. Adjournment	<p>The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting adjourned at 6:04 PM.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>