

Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham

Minutes

November 14, 2022

5:00 PM

Attendance:

Board of Directors Present: Jim Schmidt (Chair), Amin Giga (Treasurer), Carolyn Le Quéré, John Ingram, Lisa Joy-Facey

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

Regrets: Councillor Reid McAlpine, Chris Rickett, Director of Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship, Craig McQuat (Vice Chair)

Item	Discussion
1. Call to Order	The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting convened at 5PM with Jim Schmidt presiding as Chair.
2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest	None disclosed.
3. Additions / Changes to the Agenda	None disclosed.
4. Approval of Minutes	That the minutes of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting held October 17, 2022, be approved during the December 12, 2022, meeting.
5. Business Arising from The Minutes	None disclosed.
6. Director’s Report	<p>Niamh O’Laoghaire, Director, Varley Art Gallery, provided the Board with an overview of the Director’s Report, which included the following highlights:</p> <p><u>Edie Yeomans</u> Varley Curator, Anik Glaude, Foundation Development Officer, Francesca Dauphinais, Board Chair Jim Schmidt and Director, Varley Art Gallery, Niamh O’Laoghaire, attended the Celebration of Life for former Varley-McKay Art Foundation Board Member and Acquisitions Chair, Edie Yeomans, on November 5th, 2022. Both the Gallery and the Foundation were well represented. There was a significant number of people present for the deeply moving event. Edie was clearly very much beloved by friends, family members and colleagues.</p> <p><u>GOG/OAAG Awards</u></p>

Pleased to announce that the Varley has been shortlisted for four Galleries Ontario / Ontario Galleries (GOG) awards. Three of them are in relation to the Fall 2021 show, *Elusive Desires: Ness Lee and Florence Yee*:

- Exhibition of the Year Budget over \$20,000 Thematic
- Best Exhibition Design and Installation
- Curatorial Writing Text between 2000 – 5000 Words

The fourth shortlisting is in the category of Art Publication for Annie Wong and Chen Chen's *How to be a Chinese Ally* published by the Varley Art Gallery. Published in both Chinese and English, it is available in hard copy and online. Congratulations all the artists, curators, writers, and installers involved in these projects. The results will be announced at the 45th Annual GOG awards on November 28th, held at Ted Rogers Cinema (Hot Docs) in Toronto. Three free tickets were received and hoping to buy more for artists and members.

Exhibitions

There are no changes to the 2022 exhibition schedule since the meeting of October 17th, 2022. Response to the major fall exhibition *Chun Hua Catherine Dong* continues to be very positive. The virtual exhibition experience for both *Chun Hua Catherine Dong* and *Refracting the Lens, Part II*, is available on the website.

2023 Exhibition schedule

Due to ongoing uncertainties in relation to the COVID pandemic, exhibition scheduling continues to be more influx than usual. However, the main elements of the 2023 exhibition schedule have now firmed up, the chart and exhibition descriptions below were shared with the group.

2023	Main/Introduction	Collections
Jan to early May	<i>Sara Angelucci: Undergrowth</i> , curated by Shannon Anderson	<i>Drawing the Botanical</i> F.H. Varley and contemporary artists
Late May through Labour Day	<i>Long Time No See</i>	Permanent Collections Exhibition
Late Sept. to early January 2024	<i>Shantel Miller</i>	

***Sara Angelucci: Undergrowth* January to early May**

Sara Angelucci transforms found photographs and creates images exposing the cultural and historical conditions outside the image frame, bringing attention to the social forces that generate the language of photography. *Undergrowth* brings together several bodies of work produced over the last decade that examine the ways in which photographic practices have contributed to the divide between humans and nature. This direction found its impetus in her series *Aviary* (2013), which morphs extinct and endangered birds with nineteenth-century carte-de-visite portraits to reveal the colonizing role the camera has played in capturing animals for consumption. This focus continues across an expansive body of work that culminates in *Nocturnal Botanical Ontario* (2019–ongoing) in which images of entwined native, introduced, and invasive plants made with a digital scanner consider the history of botanical photography through the study of species that exist in the artist's immediate proximity. These complex botanical compositions point to the impacts of settler colonialism and global trade on our ecology.

Through acts of empathy, embodiment, and envisioning, Angelucci's practice seeks to examine and reconcile our relationship with the natural world. (Shannon Anderson).

Long Time No See early May through Labour Day

The Varley Art Gallery of Markham is collaborating with Long Time No See (LTNS) to present an exhibition and community engagement project in Markham. Working as a collective, LTNS brings together Chinese Canadian artists and educators of different generations and backgrounds. Members include Emily Chan, Richard Fung, Kwoi Gin, Brenda Joy Lem, Keith Lock, Morris Lum, Maylynn Quan, Amy Shuan Wang, Rick Wong, Sandy Yep, and Shellie Zhang. The collective came together in 2021 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a rise in anti-Asian racism, and development pressures in Toronto's Chinatown. Their first project, a series of public street art interventions, was an effort at community building during a time of change and uncertainty. A second initiative included outreach to seniors as a way to envision Chinatown's future. The project at the Varley Art Gallery is very timely as 2023 will mark the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which banned Chinese immigration to Canada from July 1, 1923, to May 14, 1947.

The project will encompass both an outdoor, public art element and in in-door exhibition component. Through their street art projects, LTNS have found people are looking for community and long to see their faces reflected in the places they live. Photographs of community members will be rendered as posters to be pasted in the windows of the gallery and along Main Street Unionville, where possible. These images will also be the basis for a temporary vinyl mural installed in the gallery's courtyard or on the building's façade. The exhibition will include a historical component addressing the Exclusion Act, and more visual materials (video, audio, and photographs) stemming from the collective's engagement with the community.

Shantel Miller late September to early January 2023

Shantel Miller is an African Canadian, Markham-based artist who explores intersections of religion and identity in representations of Blackness. Working primarily in oils, Miller uses colour and gesture symbolically to emphasize relationships between figurative elements and personal narrative inspired by lived and imagined experiences. She employs autobiographical themes and biblical imagery that relate to broader social realities around her. She is currently pursuing an MFA at Boston University. We anticipate that another solo exhibition or small group show will be paired with the Miller installation. This pairing allows for the work of York Region artists to be placed in dialogue with those of other practitioners working on similar issues.

Public and Education Programs

Public and Education Program are coordinated by Rachel D'Oliveira Fell.

Forthcoming

Along with ongoing art classes for children and adults, the following programs are being offered over the next two months.

- November 16th: Lunch & Learn on Zoom with Chun Hua Catherine Dong, 12:30PM-1:30PM (EST). Registration is required.
- November 27th: 1PM-4 PM – Artist Trading Card event with Judi Livingston.
- December 3rd: 12PM-4PM – Handmade Holiday Buttons. Free family drop-in activity to celebrate the holiday season at the Varley Art Gallery. A free button-making activity before the Old Tyme Christmas Parade on Main Street Unionville.
- December 3rd: 1PM-3PM – Holiday Cards/ The Art of Printmaking with Sarka Buchl-Stephenson.
- December 4th: 1PM-3PM – Hand Lettered Holiday Cards; Instructor: Erica Pinto.
- December 13th: 6PM-8PM –Karaoke Christmas Holiday Party at the Varley. An evening celebration, full of sweet treats, warm drinks, and holiday music.
- December 14th: 12:30PM: Lunch & Learn on Zoom with Curator Anik Glaude. Registration is required.
- December 28th-30th: Winter Break Camp.

Winter 2023 Registered Programs

Registration for winter programs opens on November 29th, 2022. Winter programs begin in mid-January 2023.

School Programs

This inspiration for the November ART+ workshops for schools is being drawn from the work of *Chun Hua Catherine Dong* and her exhibition at the Varley with the following themes:

- Finding Patterns
- The Colours of Camouflage
- Symmetry
- Augmented Reality
- Underwater Imagination

A full PA Day extravaganza program was held on October 21st, and another will be held on November 18th.

Rentals

Unionville BIA held a very successful Ladies Night on October 20th. The Varley rented the Deacon Room to a local business as the site for a fashion show. Doriana Cabeceiras, who arranges rentals, also kept the galleries open for attendees to have self-guided tours. The event was very well attended, and the renter was very pleased with the outcome with most of the visitors taking the time to view the exhibitions.

Facilities

- The McKay front steps have been rebuilt and refinished.
- The API alarm system tech repaired the system, which had been bleating intermittently for the previous two weeks.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quote for the cracked meeting room window has been secured and hope to proceed with repair soon. • Received permission to repair the wall between the McKay Art Centre and Starbucks on Main Street and are now seeking quotes. <p><u>Public Art</u></p> <p>Work on the installation and curation of a large-scale photo mural on the west façade of the Pan Am Centre building continues. The first of four iterations of this Façade project will take place in April 2023. The large-scale frame is being installed in Spring 2023.</p> <p>The pilot project “Our Park: Community Grant Program,” in collaboration with York Region Arts Council and intended for Ada MacKenzie Park, has been rolled out and information is now up on the YRAC website and Your Voice Markham, the deadline to apply was November 13th.</p> <p>The Heritage Committee consultation process around an integrated public art project for Main Street Unionville was held and now working towards the wider community consultation event.</p>
7. Development Officer Report	<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>Art of Plenty Art Show and Sale Fundraiser</u></p> <p>Following the conclusion of the Art of Plenty Art Show and Sale on October 23rd, there was continued work on the post-event tasks and activities. Thank you letters were mailed out last week and the documentation for cheque requests and tax receipt requests were submitted to Finance. Hope to have signed tax receipts returned to by December 12th in order to send them out to donors before the holidays. We are still waiting to receive one invoice (Slab Town Cider Co.) and two cheques for sponsorship. Ten paintings and eight prints were sold.</p> <p>GROSS REVENUE: \$18,891.50 EXPENSES: \$10,849.74 NET REVENUE: \$8,041.77</p> <p>The full budget was also shared with the committee members.</p> <p>The event is different from anything else we have previously done so there aren’t any metrics to measure against, however, 3,000 people attended the art show so there was significant exposure and traffic. Artists gave positive reviews as there isn’t anything else like this being offered in the community as an avenue to get exposure for their works.</p> <p><u>TD Bank Grant</u></p>

An impact report is due on November 15th, 2022. This report will demonstrate the significance of TD's \$30,000 contribution. As a reminder, in our application to TD, we stated the intended outcome to be the following:

Through the continued support of TD Connected Communities, we will be able to support the Gallery's exhibitions, the related programs including exhibition opening receptions, educational and public programming activities, and any accompanying catalogues mentioned within the exhibition descriptions above. This combination of projects will enable the Gallery to reach a much broader audience, demonstrating their support of BIPOC artists, curators and writers working within the community, giving agency and voice to their practices, and facilitating important discussions on issues facing our community today.

Progress will be measured and tracked using the following methods:

1. Tracking by Gallery Information Services Attendants of numbers of visitors upon entry.
2. Number of registrants for exhibition programs and events (both in-person and virtual programs).
3. Number of increased followers on social media channels (the Foundation's and the Gallery's combined numbers).
4. Number of new sign ups for Gallery e-newsletter mailing list.

Giving Tuesday

We are participating in the Giving Tuesday global giving program again this year. Giving Tuesday takes place on Tuesday, November 28th, 2022. Our appeal this year is to support free art education programming at the Varley Art Gallery. The fundraising goal for this campaign is \$5,000, aligned with the Varley Art Gallery's 2022 funding request to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham for education programming. Donations can be made through the website varleyartgallery.com, using the embedded Canada Helps form. Abby has developed social media marketing material to promote this campaign and an e-blast will go out next Tuesday (one week prior), with a second e-blast on Monday, November 27th and a third e-blast on the morning of Giving Tuesday.

Volunteer Program

Culture Department volunteer interviews were held last Wednesday, with nineteen volunteers attending. Francesca Dauphinais will be hosting the next session, scheduled for December 1st. These interviews will ensure there is adequate volunteer support for the Varley Art Gallery's upcoming Winter Programs, including March Break Camps. Volunteer opportunities for the winter session will go live on the volunteer portal for sign-up on December 19th.

Varley Karaoke Holiday Party

Supporting the Varley Art Gallery's holiday get-together being held on Tuesday, December 13th from 6PM-8PM. Anticipated contribution for the event is \$100 to \$200. This social event is a great opportunity for the Varley-McKay Art Foundation to make important connections with members of the community, especially those that are supporters of the Varley Art Gallery. All board members are encouraged to attend this fun, casual evening.

8. Sub-Committee Report	<p><u>Art Acquisition Committee</u> There was no update from the Art Acquisition Committee.</p> <p><u>Vintages at the Varley</u> There was no update on the Vintages at the Varley.</p> <p><u>Development Committee</u> There was no update from the Development Committee.</p>
9. Financial Report	<p>Amin presented the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balances as of October 31, 2022.</p> <p>The statements include the same type of activity as previous and there is nothing unusual to report in the numbers. The revenues are less than anticipated but so are the expenses. There are still some revenues that are expected by end of the year, such as from the City of Markham and the Art of Plenty show.</p> <p>More donors and fundraising activity are required to increase revenues.</p>
10. New Business	<p>New Board member recruitment is ongoing with meetings and interviews with potential members conducted by Jim Schmidt, Craig McOuat, and Amin Giga. Referrals for possible candidates are encouraged and the social media post about the recruitment will be open for another week, until November 21st, 2022. Currently we have three candidates through network referrals and portal applicant numbers are unknown.</p>
11. Future Meeting Dates	<p>The next meeting of the Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham will be held on December 12, 2022.</p> <p>There will be a possible in-person get together held December 15th. An invitation will be sent to the committee members, as well as staff and supporters to RSVP. Francesca Dauphinais and Jim Schmidt will meet tomorrow morning to discuss the guestlist.</p> <p>Congratulations to Councilor Reid McAlpine for reelection to the Markham City Council. The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham looks forward to his continued contribution to the committee and community.</p>
12. Adjournment	<p>The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham meeting adjourned at 6 PM.</p> <p>Moved by Jim Seconded by Amin</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>