



Art Museum
University of Toronto

—
2016 -2017
Annual Report

Art
Museum

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's been an energizing and highly productive year at the newly federated Art Museum at the University of Toronto. In the 2016-17 season, we reached larger audiences than ever before, drawing in new visitors with ambitious, original exhibitions and a wider range of special programs. We've also enhanced our online presence with an extensive archive, greatly improved research capacity, and a site that does more to support and promote our full range of activities and offerings. This year has also seen the launch of a new program of exhibition publications, as well as ongoing development of our four collections – to which 90 notable works of art were added this year.

We undertook substantial improvements to our infrastructure in 2016–17 with the support of a major Cultural Spaces grant of \$524,257. The first phase of the work we've done on our facilities will result in improved storage for our collections, increased visibility for our gallery spaces, and a more accessible and welcoming Art Museum overall (see page 7). We were also pleased to receive our first Toronto Arts Council operating grant this year, which complements our federal and provincial operating grants.

Our entire team was especially proud of the success of the major Kent Monkman exhibition that opened in January 2017 (please see page 3). *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience* was supported by major grants from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the OAC National Touring program, as well as support from the Sobey Family Foundation. We supported this exhibition with the most ambitious cycle of outreach programs we've ever produced, reaching unprecedented numbers of faculty, students, classes, and schools, as well as media in print and on the web.

In addition to drawing a remarkable number of visitors to the galleries, *Shame and Prejudice* has become the largest touring exhibition in our combined histories. As it began an extensive tour that's planned to continue through 2020, we continued to support Art Museum-originated exhibitions already being shown across Canada, such as John Hampton's *Why Can't Minimal*, which concluded its tour at The Rooms this past spring, and our collection of Allan Ginsberg photographs, which returned to us from the Carleton University Art Gallery at the end of 2016.

The Art Museum continues to benefit from the contributions of talented and insightful volunteers and staff. In 2016-17 our Advisory Board welcomed Jeanine Barnicke and Mimi Joh, as well as students Liora Belford, and Chloe Yin as new members; we're pleased to have them aboard as we embark on our first shared strategic planning process. In the curatorial realm, we appointed our first Adjunct Curator, UofT alumnus John Hampton, and hosted two new Canada Council Curatorial Residencies, ably taken up by Yan Wu and cheyanne turions. Finally, we were grateful to receive critically important Young Canada Works grants in support of our full-time summer and longer-term internship positions.

The internship and residency support we receive through Young Canada Works and the Canada Council fuels not only the vitality of our Museum, but the career development prospects of the talented students, graduates, and emerging arts professionals who come to work with us. This year once again we were delighted to see some of our program alumni and former work-study students, interns, and curatorial studies students garner prestigious positions in the visual arts sector. These included Corrie Jackson (Assistant Curator at TD); John Hampton (Director, Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba); cheyanne turions (Director of Education, Vancouver Art

Gallery); Sandy Saad (Director, Visual Arts Centre, Clarington); and Denise Ryner (Director, Or Gallery).

In the year ahead, we're looking forward to a range of initiatives that will further enhance the Art Museum's presence and capacity; these include preparing for our first major strategic plan, the continuation of interior renovations, a new fundraising initiative through a group of Friends of the Art Museum, and way-finding improvements in and around the galleries. We're eagerly preparing an intensive cycle of fall exhibitions, including a new exhibition by John Hampton; the first art and architecture outdoor project and exhibition, curated by Yan Wu; and the national Sobey Arts Awards exhibition, in collaboration with the National Gallery of Canada, which will be presented in the fall of 2017. With these and many other projects, the Art Museum will continue to make vital contributions to the University community and to visual arts in Toronto, across Canada and internationally.

EXHIBITIONS

The Art Museum's year in exhibitions was a satisfying and successful one. We saw unprecedented levels of attendance in our own spaces, strong interest from galleries across Canada in bringing our shows to their communities, and promising research and curatorial endeavours from students across the University community.

Exhibition highlights included:

Counterpoints: Photography Through the Lens of Toronto Collections *May 6–Jul. 30, 2016*

This guest-curated exhibition by Toronto's Jessica Bradley revealed the remarkable breadth and depth of local collectors' interest in photography. Including many works that were being publicly exhibited for the first time in this city, the show was presented in partnership with the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival.



Form Follows Fiction: Art and Artists in Toronto

Sept. 6 – Dec. 10, 2016

Guest curator Luis Jacob opened the fall season with an exhibition featuring an impressive number of museum and private loans, encompassing the work of 86 artists in all. Focused on local art production over the past 50 years, Jacob's show considered the ways in which artists have visualized Toronto. The exhibition also extended the Art Museum's own ongoing engagement with art and placemaking in our city.

Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience

Jan. 26 – Mar. 5, 2017

Narrating a story of Canada through the lens of First Nations' resilience, Kent Monkman's first major solo exhibition at the Art Museum included his own work in dialogue with historical artefacts and artworks borrowed from collections across the country. This remarkable exhibition attracted public interest beyond our wildest anticipation, drawing over 20,000 visitors during its short run and now touring across the country through 2020.



In addition to mounting original exhibitions by our own curatorial staff and guest curators, the Art Museum facilitates opportunities for University of Toronto students throughout the year.

- **Master of Visual Studies (MVS)** curatorial student **Jaclyn Quaresma** organized the exhibition ***All This Time***, featuring artists and artefacts speaking to the context of the Anthropocene. The show was programmed in response to the **Jackman Humanities Institute's** 2016-17 research theme **Time, Rhythm and Pace**.
- Students from the **Master of Museum Studies** program organized the Shelley Peterson Student Art Exhibition, mentored by **Renée van der Avoird**, featuring the studio output of undergraduates **across the three University of Toronto campuses**.



- **MVS** curatorial student **Jenn Goodwin** presented ***all our days are full of breath: a record of momentum***, foregrounding dance choreography.
- The Art Museum presented graduate thesis exhibitions by **MVS** studio graduates **Evan Tyler**, **Sona Safaei-Sooreh**, **Léa Grantham**, and **Sandra Brewster**.

PROGRAMS

This year we committed to extending our outreach efforts in order to draw new audiences into the Art Museum. We focused in particular on school groups, arts appreciation groups, and community organizations, offering guided tours both during our regular opening hours and on weekday mornings. The early results of these efforts have been promising and we look forward to building on the year's successes.



Welcoming new visitors. We were glad to share the gallery experience with a number of groups who joined us for the first time this year. These included Ontario Science Centre staff as well as students from Cardinal Carter Catholic High School, Georgian College, Scarborough High School, the Illustration program at Seneca College, and the Criminology program at the University of Toronto. Following specific invitations to attend the exhibition *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, we were also pleased to welcome Sagatay participants (a Native Men’s Residence culture-based education and transitional housing program), representatives of the University’s Sexual and Gender Diversity Office, and visitors associated with Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (see page 4 for more on the exhibition).

Reconnecting with existing audiences. This year we welcomed a number of groups who were returning to the Art Museum after satisfying tours in the past, including Cawthra Park Secondary School, Downsview Public School, East York Collegiate Institute, Etobicoke University Women’s Club, Port Credit Secondary High School, Jill Glessing’s photography class at Ryerson University, and Fabulous Fridays through the University of Toronto’s School of Continuing Education.

New resources for educators. This year we improved the packages we offer to educators as they prepare to bring classes to the Art Museum. The new kits include additional information about our exhibitions and suggestions for discussion topics to explore in advance of the visit. We’ve found the guides especially helpful in cases where educators have requested a guided tour at a time we’re unable to accommodate; with a richer set of support materials from the gallery, a self-guided tour is a more inviting prospect.

Checking in with tour participants. When visitors join us for scheduled tours, we build opportunities for feedback and exchange directly into the museum visit. We invite participants' reflections on the exhibition experience and make additional interpretive resources available to visitors. We also take the opportunity to update contact information and check whether the communications approaches we're using are effective. These conversations help us adapt our programs and do a good job of staying in touch.

By the numbers

Number of Toronto artists exhibited (out of total of 203 artists shown): 107

Attendance at Art Museum exhibitions: 35,557

Attendance for our touring exhibitions at hosting venues: 13,426

Number of educational events and group tours: 165

Total attendance at educational and outreach activities: 7,573 [conferences, talks, curatorial tours, etc]

COLLECTIONS

It was an active year for the Permanent Collections, as Art Museum staff and University of Toronto students worked together to prepare for the Collections' move to a much enhanced storage vault. The vault transformation will not only support access to and conservation of the Collections over the long term (see Organizational Development on page 6-7), but in the near term it's providing a wealth of opportunities for students to learn about the artworks in the Collections, as well as how to care and handle them. The vault transformation is a once-in-a-generation transition – requiring cataloguing, documentation, auditing, and more effective storage access.

Acquisitions

This year, 90 works entered the Permanent Collections by both gift and purchase.

The University College Art Collection acquired works by Mary Pratt, Kazuo Nakamura, A.Y. Jackson, A.J. Casson, and Jack Nichols.

The University of Toronto Art Collection acquired a very rare portrait by Lawren Harris, as well as works by David Partridge, Roula Partheniou, and John Marriott. Of particular interest this year is a group of 37 Inuit graphics acquired from the Museum of Inuit Art's dispersal of their collections.

The Hart House Collection acquired works by Abbas Akhavan, Laurel Woodcock, John Sasaki, Gordon Lebrecht, and Robyn Collyer.

Loans

Institutions in Canada and beyond regularly request loans of artworks in our Collections to support their exhibitions. This year, the Art Museum was pleased to facilitate the loan of 19 artworks from our Permanent Collections. These included:

Edwin H. Holgate, *Suzy (model in studio at Ste. Famille Street)*, Hart House Collection, was loaned to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) for their exhibition, *The Beaver Hall Group: 1920s Modernism in Montreal*. This is a travelling exhibition originating at the MMFA, and travelling to the Art Gallery of Hamilton, the Art Gallery of Windsor, and the Glenbow Museum, Calgary. In all, the work will be on loan from 19 October, 2015 to 12 February, 2017. Three works by Lawren S. Harris – *Top of the Hill Spadina*, University of Toronto Art Collection, and *Isolation Peak* and *Red House*, Hart House Collection – were loaned to the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles for the exhibition *The Idea of North: The Paintings of Lawren Harris*, curated by Steve Martin. In addition to the Hammer Museum and the AGO, the works will appear at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and will be on loan from 11 October, 2015 to 27 November, 2016.

Will Kwan, *Flame Test*, Hart House Collection, was loaned to the Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne (MACVAL), Vitry Sur Seine (Paris), France, for the exhibition, *Tous, des sang-mêlés*. The loan is from 22 April to 03 September, 2017.

Two platinum photographs by Edward Weston, *Breast* and *Margrethe Mather*, University of Toronto Art Collection, were loaned to the McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Ontario, for the exhibition, *Struck by Likening: the Power & Pleasure of Artworld Analogies*. The photographs will be on loan from 17 August to 02 December, 2017.

Mentorship

The Permanent Collections facilitated opportunities for – and benefited from the contributions of – seven students, undergraduate and graduate. These students' work focused on copyright, the Art on Campus program, outdoor art, audits for the Permanent Collections, database updating, research into the Malcove Collection, the vault transformation, and class visits working directly with the Collections. The Art Museum Collections Manager supervised all seven students.

- Museum Studies graduate students **Justine Kicek** and **Natania Sherman** completed internships for degree credit in the summer of 2016 and continued as Work/Study for Fall/Winter 2016-2017;
- **Natania Sherman** continued on contract to support the vault transformation, following her Work/Study placement;
- **Sasha Gorjeltchan**, PhD candidate, History of Art, continued into her second year of Work/Study, focusing on the Malcove Collection;
- Undergraduates **Ursula Carmichael**, **Taylor Irvine**, **Tegwen Lewis** and **Gabriela Tersigni** completed internship placements for academic credit for courses in Material Culture, Religion and Fine Art History.

Permanent Collections Access for Students

We hosted class visits from the University of Toronto's St. George and Scarborough campuses, as well as from Western University and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies.

Individual students worked directly with materials from the Permanent Collections, advancing their academic work in Sexual Diversity Studies, Classics, Theology, English, History of Art, Slavic Studies, and Manuscript Studies.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year the Art Museum laid the foundations for improved accessibility and increased visibility on campus and online. Driving our ambitious digital and infrastructure renewal has been a commitment to engaging our audiences with more energy and purpose than ever before. We're thrilled with the steps we've taken this year toward comfortable and inviting gallery spaces, enhanced Collections infrastructure, and a rich online presence.

Improved collections infrastructure for better conservation and access. One of the year's major projects was the rationalization and optimization of our Collections infrastructure. We undertook this work with a view to adding badly needed storage capacity, and enhancing the public life of our holdings by improving access for students, researchers and institutions seeking loans. Our Collections will also benefit from an upgrade to the HVAC system in the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery. Replacing an apparatus first installed in 1983, the new HVAC system will refine our control over environmental conditions in the Gallery. This will improve visitor comfort, support the preservation of our own holdings, and protect our ability to secure loans from other institutions and private collections.

A new entrance that offers a warmer welcome. Construction is underway for the Art Museum's new entrance area, with wheelchair-accessible double doors and a glazed entrance hall. Both visually and functionally, the new entranceway extends a warm invitation to all members of our community. In addition to offering vastly improved access to visitors using mobility devices, we believe the new entrance better reflects the Art Museum's commitment to sharing our work and physical spaces openly and generously. The new entrance makes the Art Museum more visible and approachable, letting anyone new to campus know we're here – and reminding existing students, faculty, researchers and community members know that this is a space for them. Designed by Team Project, the renowned Toronto architectural design studio, the entrance will be unveiled in conjunction with the March student exhibition openings.

Better online access for scholars and the public. Our online presence now better reflects and supports our mission. A new site launched this year offers better digital access to our collections to support scholarship and research. Complemented by our social media feeds, the new site also offers a timely window onto our exhibitions and programs – as well our participation in events and activities in the wider art community.

A new strategic plan. As we conclude a productive year of infrastructure and digital-asset development, we look forward to laying strong foundations for the future through an intensive strategic planning process involving Art Museum staff and our dedicated Advisory Board. We'll be drawing on the skills and experience of an external facilitator and consultant, whose fees we aim to support with an Ontario Arts Council Compass Grant.

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Form Follows Fiction: Art and Artists in Toronto

"[*Form Follows Fiction*] marries an internal logic of inclusiveness . . . to something elemental in our civic DNA."

- Whyte, Murray, "At the Art Museum Toronto Art History 101", *Toronto Star*, September 10, 2016.

“In a play on the notion of function following form, [*Form Follows Fiction*] also examines the many ways in which artists and their work have actually helped shape the city’s character.”

- Reilly, Tina, “How Toronto Sees Toronto: Form Follows Fiction”, *NGC Magazine*, September 6, 2016.

“Luis Jacob . . . understands that the past as remembered isn’t singular and unchanging but threaded with various histories, both official and secret, that evolve as generations change.”

- Dick, Terence, “Form Follows Fiction at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto”, *Akimblog*, September 28, 2016.

Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience

“Subverting the style of painting’s Old Masters and the founding narratives of Confederation, a Cree artist and his alter ego . . . are challenging colonial national myths in a new exhibit.”

- Everett-Green, Robert, “Kent Monkman: A trickster with a cause crashes Canada’s 150th birthday party”, *The Globe and Mail*, January 12, 2017.

“Sharply critical, with a touch of the ribald...history will never quite be the same.”

- “20 Shows We Want to See in 2017”, *Canadian Art*, January 2, 2017.

“This is art that steps in where impersonal, ‘official’ history falters.”

- Payne, Nancy, “The Art of Reconciliation”, *Canada’s History*, March 8, 2017.

“[Kent Monkman’s] art – gratifyingly – is no longer truly subversive. A truer, less simplistic Canadian narrative is finally starting to emerge.”

- Macdonald, Nancy, “How Indigenous people are rebranding Canada 150”, *Maclean’s*, March 13, 2017.

“*Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience* by renowned artist Kent Monkman, has attracted tens of thousands of people as it takes on the country’s collective memory”

- Kassam, Ashifa, “Canada celebrates 150 but indigenous groups say history is being ‘skated over’”, *The Guardian*, June 27, 2017.

all our days are full of breath: a record of momentum

“... Both Leary and Karuhanga propose that in tracing the ephemeral, choreographing the time-body is as important as performative liveness, maybe even more important.”

- Poon, Coman, “all our days are full of breath: a record of momentum”, *C Magazine*, Summer 2017.

It’s All Happening So Fast: A Counter-History of the Modern Canadian Environment

“In a dense display of image, text, and yes, even art, this show affirms that . . . yesterday’s disasters aren’t going away so much as piling up offstage . . . ”

- Whyte, Murray, “Suzy Lake reprocesses the gender divide at the Ryerson Image Centre”, *Toronto Star*, May 18, 2017.

