

CURATORIAL REPORT

Submitted by Ewa Chwojko-Srawley

October 15, 2018

for period July 24 – October 15

Note: Since March 2018 it was decided that the curatorial reports should be submitted every three months instead of monthly. Therefore this report covers the period stated above.

SUMMARY

- **Exhibitions, July – October**
There have been three main exhibitions in this period, and one that is being hung this week (October 16-20).
- **Satellite Galleries**
There has been great activity at all the satellites! Two exhibitions are finishing at the end of this month, and three are starting!
- **Exhibition Schedules**
Schedules of the exhibitions for 2019 and 2020 are complete, and include our regular shows and new shows.
- **The Wall and the Alcove Gallery**
The division has been revised to make the Alcove Gallery more versatile. See the details in this report.
- **Curatorial Volunteers**
There have been two curatorial volunteers in the time frame of this report: Cristina Liu and Sabrina Chianelli. Details of their activities and contributions are provided below.
- **Collection room**
The logic of the storage space has been reviewed, and a new system implemented.
- **Donations from Giuseppe Pivetta**
A student of Chiarandini, Pivetta has donated two paintings to the Permanent Collection. They have already been on show in the exhibition over the summer, and the artist was on hand to talk about his work.
- **Donations from Jim Baillie**
Jim Baillie continues to donate wonderful Indigenous artifacts! The latest is two masks, which have been on permanent display on The Wall since summer.
- **Promoting our Artists**
To create more 'community' among our member artists, I am compiling biographies and images that will (eventually) be put on our web site.

- **The Palette**
The autumn edition was published exactly on time (as usual!). It is available in paper format at the front desk of the gallery and will be available on the web site as soon as we get information on how to link to it.
The deadline for the submission of articles for the winter edition is Sunday December 9 2018. Please note this date and submit a paragraph or two!
- **Database**
It is now possible to expand the database with shelving references for each artifact. This is due to the work on storage logistics that was undertaken this summer.
- **Social media**
Regular posts on a daily basis on 3 platforms – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
- **Web site**
The current state is not good. I have addressed some critical points in this report.
- **Diverse Tasks**
There are several tasks that are ongoing and daily. See the list in this report for details.

* * *

General comments

Promotion: I am committed to promoting the Gallery, and especially the exhibitions and the collections. To this end I write short articles for the Georgina Advocate. The next one is scheduled for the second half of October, and it will be promoting two of our local artists, Paul Harpley and Janet Harpley-Aco (*see Exhibitions*). These articles are published online, and sometimes they also appear in the printed newspaper.

York-Durham Region Tourism: *yorkdurhamheadwaters* has a series called ‘Creative Curator’, and I have been invited to participate. I promoted the Gallery, and the information about this is in the fall edition of the *Palette*. A copy of the promotional material was inserted in the *Globe and Mail*, national circulation. This was also distributed on all social media. This gave the Gallery great exposure because the information reached tens of thousands of readers.

Social Media

I submit material for regular posts on a daily basis on 3 platforms – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Interaction with the users is constant, and we always get a lot of comments!

The social media posts involve gathering and editing information, together with relevant images (which usually need to be cropped to fit the format), and planning a balance of posts so that there is representation of each art or craft, children, local artists, Indigenous art, *etc.* I submit this information to Nathanael, who deals with the technicalities of social media.



Web site

The current state of the web site is not exactly what was commissioned. We require a framework for a dynamic site, but it is in fact static. In this sense dynamic means that it is possible for us to interact with the contents of the site pages in an easy and constant manner. I try to keep some essential information posted, but it is far from the dynamic and constantly changing site we used to have.

Ongoing problems include:

1. No ability to change the home page. Already the *Palette* is out of date, and there will be special things we need to highlight. News of immediate concern, such as Tuesday Luncheons or Reel Gem presentations, are not shown.

2. I have found no way to change links. So, for example, I have changed the image for the Palette to the current autumn edition, but if you click it you are taken to the old summer edition.
3. The images at the top of each page are too big (when you open the home page, all you can see is the image), and they are not relevant to our gallery. I want to be able to change them, and then change them again in the future (seasonal images, for example).
4. There is no comprehensive user manual, with images, so that we know what we are doing. Any modification is a major undertaking of searching around and trying different things, which is a huge waste of time, and means constantly duplicating effort. Anyone else who needs to learn to use this site in the future would read the manual – except there is not one!

The Wall and the Alcove Gallery

For the past five years the gallery space has been divided into three parts: the Main Gallery, which comprises the area between the window and the kitchen; the Alcove Gallery, which comprises the area in front of the elevator; and The Wall, the first thing that visitors see when they climb the stairs, to the right. This division was made to accommodate as many different exhibitions as possible. Following extensive reflection on how to show as much of the Permanent Collection as possible I decided to group The Wall and the Alcove Gallery, and to refer to them simply as the Alcove Gallery. Behind the screens, the division will still exist, because often the artist exhibiting in the Main Gallery will also require the space in front of the elevator. However, The Wall will always hold a display of artifacts from the Permanent Collection, and this for three reasons:

1. It is the first thing visitors see, and therefore it is appropriate that they see our Permanent Collection before anything else!
2. At least two of the artifacts are too large to move often – the totem pole, and the painting by Morriseau. It is better to leave them where they are.
3. It sends a clear message to everyone that the Gallery embraces Indigenous art – and this is the first message visitors get when they climb the stairs. I think this is important.

The alcove will now display the collection on a rotating basis, except when there is a bigger show to accommodate, such as the Juried Art Show, or a second (smaller) exhibition that runs consecutively with the Main Gallery exhibition. This is the case at the moment, since we have photographs by Gabi Von Gans (*Women of Wisdom*) on one wall, and works by Albert Chiarandini and Tom Zsolt on the other.

Exhibitions, July–October

- *Shades of Water* (finished July 22), an exhibition of works by the Newmarket Group of Artists
- Permanent Collection (July 29 – September 2), an exhibition of 50 or so of the works in our Permanent Collection

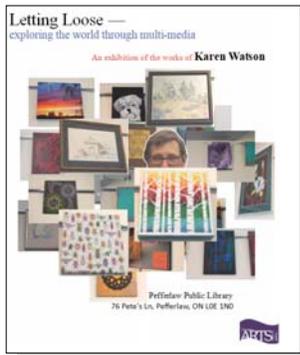
- KidzArt (September 9 – October 14), an exhibition of some of the works created by the children during the summer camps
- *Places: Near and Far* (October 21 – December 3), an exhibition of works by Paul Harpley and Janet Harpley-Aco

Except for KidzArt, these exhibitions occupied the whole gallery (Main Gallery and Alcove Gallery).



Satellite Galleries

The current exhibition at the Peter Gzowski Library in Sutton is of works by Tom Zsolt – *Georginians and Georgina, Through the Lens*. I created a catalogue for this exhibition and placed one copy at the front desk of the library and one at the GAC. It is also available online.



Karen Watson has had an exhibition of her work at the Pefferlaw branch of the Georgina Library, entitled *Letting Loose*. For this show also, I created a catalogue and gave an electronic copy to the artist so that she could produce as many copies as she needed.

Both of these exhibitions are replaced this month with *KidzArt* (after the *KidzArt* show finishes at the GAC).

The Central Library at Keswick will host a show of the works of Annett Westlake, starting at the end of this month and going through to the end of the year.

I am very pleased with the activity at the satellite galleries! It is rare that there is an exhibition simultaneously at all three libraries, and it is an excellent way to promote awareness of what the GAC is doing.

Exhibition Schedules

Schedules of the exhibitions for 2019 and 2020 are complete. I am working with each artist (or group of artists) on details. There will of course be our standard exhibitions: the Juried Arts Show, the Georgina Creative Group Exhibition, and the *KidzArt* exhibition.

Curatorial Volunteers

Cristina Liu

Cristina helped at the reception for the opening of the *KidzArt* show. She engaged the children with a wide variety of games (pasting, painting, and – a great success! – a large OXO game stuck on the floor) and offered her help for future initiatives.

Sabrina Chianelli

Sabrina volunteered from May to September 2018, and worked under the umbrella of Junior Assistant Curator. Her work was exemplary; I discussed with her what needed to be done, and she then did it without supervision. The result was always excellent, and she always seemed to find some improvement on the process I had suggested. I will very much miss her! She worked on the Collection Room, and helped on hanging shows and taking them down (as I am sure you are aware, hanging a show requires knowledge of artifact density, colour balance, progression, the visitor perspective, *etc.*).



She has now left to pursue her college career at Sheridan College (Bachelor of Illustration degree).

Collection Room

Sabrina Chianelli did an excellent job over summer of rationalizing the Collection Room. The problem she tackled was the following: paintings were placed back-to-back, to avoid damage to the paint surface. What do you do when you need to remove a painting from storage (you are leaving two paintings face-to-back)?

She found an ergonomic solution by reusing old signs as dividers. Perfect! Cheap and efficient.

The work is not finished though. I now need to add to the database the information about the position of each painting on the shelves (obviously paintings cannot be in alphanumeric order because of size). I shall continue this work over the New Year break. I will make a short presentation on this for the board to explain the artifact storage system, when it is finished.



Donations from Giuseppe Pivetta



Giuseppe Pivetta, a student of Albert Chiarandini, generously donated two of his landscapes to our Permanent Collection.

A painter of international repute, he studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, France, and later with Albert Chiarandini in Toronto.

Pivetta's works are in many corporate and private collections in Canada and abroad. This is a very welcome addition to our Permanent Collection.

Donations from Jim Baillie

Jim Baillie is a Toronto lawyer who has amassed a huge collection of Indigenous art. At the time he closed his Toronto office, he contacted our Gallery and offered to donate a number of Indigenous artifacts. He has donated 2 totem poles, 3 Morrisseau paintings (including the large painting that is now permanently displayed at the top of the stairs), 2 masks, and 2 Inuit sculptures.

The latest donation is of the two masks, which are on permanent display on The Wall, together with the large Morrisseau painting. All paperwork for these donations is now completed (appraisal, adding to database, transfer of deeds, *etc.*)

Promoting our artists

I am compiling profiles of our artists (members of the gallery) which will be available online on our website, as soon as that may be possible. The problem is that the web site is not suitable for this, and so the publication is on hold.

The purpose of this is to create an atmosphere of 'community' for our member artists, and give them a platform to display their work which is less formal than an exhibition hung on the gallery wall.

The Palette

The autumn edition of The Palette was published on schedule – the first day of the fall season, September 22. It is available in paper copy in the gallery shop as well as an electronic version (although this is not, at present, accessible due to problems with the web site).

Work for each edition includes gathering material, writing articles, editing submitted material, soliciting texts, organizing information, designing the layout, and manipulating and formatting graphics. All of the technical part is done using the computer application called Publisher.

- Board members please note: the deadline for you to submit your article for the winter edition of the Palette is Sunday December 9 2018! It would be great to have articles from more than just the Chair...

Database

I am in the process of adding collection room shelving references to the database of Permanent Collection artifacts. The work of Sabrina Chianelli has allowed me to add these references (as indicated above, she installed a system whereby each artifact has its own place on the shelves).

There have been some unexpected technical problems with the application that underpins the database (MySQL), but these have been resolved. Uploading the information is easy, and just requires a lot of time! I will do this bit by bit over the next few months.

As usual, diverse tasks have included:

- Creating marketing materials
- Writing promotional texts for local media
- Submitting free ads, online and newspaper
- Creating promotional materials for social media
- Documenting Gallery events/classes etc. for the Palette and social media

* * *

Ewa Chwojko
October 15 2018