

CANADIAN ART MUSEUM DIRECTORS' ORGANIZATION (CAMDO)
ORGANISATION DES DIRECTEURS DES MUSÉES D'ART DU CANADA (ODMAC)

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Minutes

Toronto: June 8–10, 2008

June 8 — Tours and Gallery Visits

June 9 — Symposium

June 10 — Annual General Meeting & Business Meeting

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, June 10, 2008, 9:00-10:30 AM - University of Toronto Art Centre

AGM Attendance:

Kent Archer	Robin Metcalfe	Celeste Scopelites
David Aurandt	Shauna McCabe	Martin Segger
Carolyn Bell-Farrell	Elizabeth McLuhan	Marilyn Smith
Janet Brooke	Josephine Mills	Robert Steven
Mela Constantinidi	Mary Misner	Matthew Teitelbaum
Louise Dompierre	Philip Monk	Peter Thompson
Peter Dykhuis	Nataley Nagy	Shawn Van Sluys
Ingrid Jenkner	Diana Nemiroff	Gaëtane Verna
Anthony Kiendl	Francine Périnet	Jennifer Woodbury
Ann MacDonald	Niamh O'Laoghaire	Mirko Zardini
Darrin Martens	Carol Podedworny	
Brian Meehan	Stuart Reid	

Call to Order: 9:12 am

Adoption of the agenda moved by Josephine Mills. Seconded by Brian Meehan. Carried.

Adoption of the 2007 AGM minutes moved by David Aurandt. Seconded by Diana Nemiroff. Carried.

President's Report (Niamh O'Laoghaire)

First of all, I would like to congratulate and thank the Professional Development Committee for assembling such a thrilling and dynamic line-up of speakers for yesterday's symposium. I am very pleased that CAMDO is able to offer such an extensive program for this meeting along with all of the tours and banquets which hopefully make attendance worthwhile.

Much of the past year had been dedicated to CAMDO's organizational development and to building and improving relationships with our colleagues in the visual arts. CAMDO completed its Organizational Plan; co-presented the Visual Arts Summit and the Visual Arts Alliance; and accomplished a fee schedule agreement with CARFAC/RAAV. CAMDO will continue to build on these major developments as we make progress organizationally and as a more unified sector.

It is within this context that CAMDO plans to complete the final component of our organizational development by undertaking a Communication and Advocacy Plan. Our Organizational Plan defines who we are—our vision and mandate—and points us in the right direction to achieve our goals. The new communications project, which will take us into the new year, will look at how CAMDO, as an association, and art museums in Canada can create and communicate an advocacy message to better position ourselves and the visual arts in the public consciousness and governmental/bureaucratic debates. This project remains hypothetical until funding is confirmed from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Canadian Arts & Heritage Sustainability Program. This will likely form part of the discussion at our next meeting in Calgary on October 19-21.

2007 was a year in which we were preoccupied with the cancellation of the Exhibition Transportation Service. Despite CAMDO's work and the valiant efforts of the membership, we were unable to convince this government or the bureaucracy that the elimination of ETS is a stunning blow to Canadian culture. The future remains quite unknown as to the impact that this will have. CAMDO has initiated an ongoing research project to study this impact financially and qualitatively with a sample of art museums across Canada. (Shawn will report on this in more detail).

The Visual Arts Summit requires little introduction as many of you attended the event after the CAMDO meeting in November. CAMDO worked very closely with the CMA and other associations in presenting the Summit. The most

significant deliverable has been the formation of the Visual Arts Alliance with which CAMDO is very active. The alliance is an informal advocacy network consisting of the national visual arts service organizations. Shawn, who is also the current chair of the alliance, will provide a more detailed update on their activities.

A major breakthrough that deserves another mention was the resolution of the fee schedule dispute with CARFAC/RAAV regarding temporary exhibitions. At our meeting in November we adopted the 5-year recommended fee schedule for temporary exhibitions, marking a significant improvement in our relationship with the artist collectives, CARFAC and RAAV. This relationship has been key to the collaborative spirit of the Visual Arts Alliance and moving forward on an advocacy agenda.

The committees continue to be active on a number of initiatives on which each of the chairs will report. The Legal Affairs Committee worked on the By-law revisions. The Collections Committee has been involved in a number of discussions regarding CCPERB, a collections management survey and collections best practices. The Professional Development Committee is responsible for programming the symposium yesterday. That committee has also held discussions about possible international exchanges with France and Mexico. The Advocacy Committee will be advising on the Communication & Advocacy Plan when that initiative is underway.

Adoption of President's Report moved by Janet Brooke. Seconded by Robin Metcalfe. Carried.

Treasurer's Report (Niamh O'Laoghaire, in absence of Treasurer)

(Financial statements available upon request.)

Adoption of Treasurer's Report moved by Marilyn Smith. Seconded by Darrin Martens. Carried.

Executive Director's Report (Shawn Van Sluys)

Visual Arts Alliance:

As was already reported in the President's Report, our advocacy activities of the past year have centred on the formation of the Visual Arts Alliance which was formed out of the Visual Arts Summit. The eleven participating visual arts service organizations involved with presenting the summit have given birth to an informal communications and advocacy network for the purpose of achieving progress in areas of common interest.

The initial preoccupation of the Visual Arts Alliance has been the drafting of a Visual Arts Research Plan which consists of the following three components:

1. Structural and Economic Study of the Visual Arts Sector

For the sector to more clearly understand how to achieve sustainability, it must have a detailed analysis of the inter-dependence of the sector's components. Through this detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis we will begin to understand, for example, the role that art museums play in stimulating the art market; the role of artist-run centres in shaping artists' careers; and the role of artists within art museums. As part of a larger body of research, this section would deal specifically with charting the myriad ways in which the "sector" operates. By conducting a comprehensive examination of the ways in which the various elements function (both autonomously and as part of a larger interrelated system), we can create a better understanding of the visual arts as a whole and "map the terrain" we work in.

2. Market Development

The market for Canadian artists is presently limited and extremely under-capacity. Market growth will benefit Canadian artists through sales and will benefit the whole sector including dealers, secondary markets and museums/artist run centres. The intent is to make Canadian art more "top of mind," with emphasis on fine art, not merely decorative art.

3. Study on Work Conditions for Visual Artists, Cultural Workers and Volunteers

Many questions arise concerning the situation of artists who seem to remain permanently at or below poverty level while consumer spending on cultural products is strongly increasing.

- Why are artists experiencing poverty after years of studies documenting their needs?

- What measures could be implemented to ease the situation for senior artists?
- What measures implemented in other countries are relevant and useful to Canadian artists?
- How do we inspire the larger society to become more directly engaged in understanding and supporting artistic production?

This Research Plan will be publicly released on August 22, 2008. We will be seeking partnerships with university research centres to complete the research.

Exhibition Transportation Service:

CAMDO is currently conducting detailed research on exhibition transportation to assist the Canada Council Visual Arts Section to make a case to the Touring Office for funds to transport fine art. This program has been preoccupied with funding the performing arts in the past but does have a mandate to fund the visual arts as well. This research is being conducted with 6-8 art galleries as case studies.

Fee Schedule Negotiations:

At our meeting in November, CAMDO ratified the Fee Schedule for Temporary Exhibitions which was resolved after a number of mediated meetings with CARFAC/RAAV and CMA. The discussions have been ongoing with regards to works held in permanent collections. Similarly, we are continuing to research the feasibility of an Exhibition Right Fund and an internal report is due from Keith Kelly shortly.

Communications and Advocacy Plan:

As mentioned in the President's Report, the next step in our organizational development is to complete a Communications and Advocacy Plan to better enable us to execute our advocacy and communication functions as articulated in the Organizational Plan. Grant applications have been submitted to the Canada Council Flying Squad (rejected) and to the Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program. The project will have a budget of \$60-65,000. The Advocacy Committee will act as the advisory council to the consultants (tbd).

Centre for Curatorial Expertise:

CAMDO has struck a small working group to determine how best to proceed with this project. The committee consists of Matthew Teitelbaum, Nataley Nagy, Kate Davis and Victoria Dickenson. This working group will maintain contact with the Professional Development Committee. The working group will hold its first meeting over the summer or early fall, pending funding from the Canada Council.

Collections Committee Report (Josephine Mills)

At last year's AGM the membership adopted the Deaccessioning Policy. Since then we have been working on a number of initiatives including a needs assessment for provenance research on Holocaust-era cultural property.

Needs Assessment for Provenance Research on Holocaust-era cultural property:

The needs assessment survey was completed last September and the final report was submitted to the Department of Canadian Heritage last November. However, the Department and CAMDO have been negotiating the wording of the recommendations as the Department felt that the document was placing too heavy a responsibility on the government rather than on the institutions. The Executive Summary is slated for public release within the next few months.

Collections Management Survey:

The Collections Committee will conduct a collections management survey to assess the conditions and needs of collections in Canada. In recent years, art museums have seen increasing constraints in their budgets relating to acquisitions and collections management. Very few institutions have conservators on their payroll. Very few have substantial budgets for purchasing works. This survey will provide valuable information to support our arguments for museum funding. The Collections Committee will also use this information when they draft Best Practices Guidelines for Collections Management in 2009-2010.

The questionnaire will be developed in consultation with a professional researcher to ensure efficiency and ease of analysis.

Collections Best Practices Guidelines:

The Collections Committee realized much success with the development of the deaccessioning guidelines which were added to CAMDO's Ethics and Professional Practice Guidelines document. These guidelines were developed through research by committee members and subsequent drafts were debated by the CAMDO members. The final version was adopted in May 2007.

The Collections Management Survey results will provide the starting point for developing comprehensive best practices guidelines for collections management. The committee will develop a set of policy-oriented guidelines based on the ethical and professional management of collections held in the public trust. This work will be completed in a number of phases over the next three years.

Professional Development Committee Report (Marilyn Smith)

List-serve Guidelines:

The committee has drafted guidelines governing use of the list-serve which will be operating shortly.

Symposium Development:

The committee advised on the development of the symposium on June 9 on the theme of *New Methodologies for Art Museums*. The committee is currently discussing possible themes for future CAMDO meetings.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held in Calgary on October 19-21 with a side-trip to Banff. The likely theme for this meeting will be *Communication and the Museum*.

Legal Affairs Committee (Brian Meehan)

The Legal Affairs Committee revised the By-laws which will be presented for ratification at this meeting, unless more revisions are required. This committee will be on hiatus until further notice while the organization focuses on the mounting workload within the other three committees. (Brian Meehan will become the Chair of the Advocacy Committee.)

Advocacy Committee

On hiatus: no report. (This committee will be reactivated with Brian Meehan as the Chair.)

Presentation of Revised By-laws (Niamh O'Laoghaire)

The new By-laws were presented in comparison to the original By-laws to highlight the major changes. After discussion, it was determined that further revisions were required before the By-laws can be adopted. Brian Meehan and Shawn Van Sluys will prepare the revisions and these will be presented at a special re-convening of the AGM in October.

Acceptance of New Members (Niamh O'Laoghaire)

Candidates presented for membership are as follows:

Ray Cronin, Director of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

Vincent Varga, Director of the Mendel Art Gallery

Acceptance of new members moved by Martin Segger; seconded by Janet Brooke. Carried.

No new business

Adjournment moved by Janet Brooke; seconded by Elizabeth McLuhan.

BUSINESS MEETING

Tuesday, June 10, 2008, 10:45 - 11:30

Exhibition Transportation: What's Next?

As mentioned, CAMDO is conducting detailed research on exhibition transportation to assist the Canada Council Visual Arts Section to make a case to the Touring Office for funds to transport fine art. This program has been preoccupied with funding the performing arts in the past but does have a mandate to fund the visual arts as well. This research is being conducted with 6-8 art galleries as case studies. Likewise, the Collections Management Survey will look at transportation resources and possibilities for exhibition consolidation across Canada.

UCAGAC discussed local solutions such as packing work appropriately to enable shipping by Purolator or FedEx.

It was suggested that we should map Pacart's movements especially in terms of price increases.

We should establish baseline standards and best practises for shipping to ensure security and stability.

The members have stated adamantly that they will not compromise their programs. It is a policy question: we cannot compartmentalize the nation into regional transportation units.

Memorandum of Understanding on Exhibition Right for Works Held in Permanent Collections

Niamh O'Laoghaire provided an update on proceedings related to pursuing a Memorandum of Understanding on Exhibition Right for Works Held in Permanent Collections with CARFAC/RAAV representatives. The joint committee of CAMDO/CMA and CARFAC/RAAV representatives met on March 27 to draft a memorandum. This document was presented to CMA members at the CMA Conference in April, however, the CAMDO Board of Directors could not support the memorandum and therefore chose not to present it for ratification to CAMDO members. The Board continues to study the issue and maintains close communication with CARFAC/RAAV. The joint committee continues to assess the feasibility of establishing an Exhibition Right Fund.

Address by Pierre Arpin, Head of Visual Arts, Canada Council for the Arts

Having been in his new role as Head of Visual Arts for several months, Pierre Arpin felt more confident in addressing art museum directors with his perceptions of the Canada Council's strategic direction. (He had only been on the job for one week before his address last year.)

As most people know, the Council has articulated five major strategic directions and the challenge has been how to allocate funds accordingly. Art museums and art galleries received an additional \$1 million directly, while the visual arts section received just over \$3 million. Three art galleries received multi-year funding for the first time; all three are university art galleries.

Arpin recognizes that program reform should be explored. To that end, he will be reactivating the advisory committee which hopes to meet in the fall. He intends this process to be highly consultative.

Arpin encouraged CAMDO to prepare a shopping list of needs for the visual arts sector. He mentioned the Catherine Cole report as an important starting point for future strategic discussions.

The transportation of exhibitions remains a concern at the Canada Council. Arpin will be pursuing this with the Touring Office at the Canada Council to free up funds for the visual arts.

The Canadian Arts Database (CADAC) is progressing well and hopes to be operating soon. This database will enable centralized reporting to all granting agencies in Canada. The database will become a treasure trove of sectoral data.

Arpin is pleased to see that the Visual Arts Alliance is operating so well within a highly collaborative environment. He will be meeting with the alliance on August 22 to discuss the alliance's Visual Arts Research Agenda.

One item of unfortunate news is the threat to the Venice Biennale with the withdrawal of funds from DFAIT. Both DFAIT and the National Gallery have withdrawn their funding from the Venice Biennale. The Canada Council has committed more funding for 2009, however, the Council may also have to withdraw their support beyond 2009.

During the question period, a delegate asked about Council's perception of matching endowments. Arpin replied that it is traditionally the role of the Department of Canadian Heritage, however, art galleries do not fall under the category of arts organizations there. This is currently an item of discussion between the Canada Council and PCH. CAMDO should also begin a lobbying campaign on this.

Another question was raised regarding Council funds for the production of work. This funding would enable art galleries to fund site-specific work, for example. Production funds are available in every sector except the visual arts.

Presentation by Su Ditta, Coordinator, Canada Council Flying Squad Program

Su Ditta provided an overview of the Flying Squad Program including eligibility, the types of projects funded, maximum amounts, etc. Further detail on this program is available online at <http://www.canadacouncil.ca/grants/iu127676494620069427.htm> or by phoning Su Ditta at 1-866-359-7782 (toll-free) or 613-566-4443. Application deadlines are April 15 and October 15.

Presentation on New Polling Data on How Canadians View Museums

by Greg Lyle, Innovative Research & John McAvity, Canadian Museums Association

While the detailed data in this presentation is confidential and therefore cannot be reproduced in these minutes, representatives at the Canadian Museums Association would be happy to discuss this with you by telephone (613 567-0099). Some aspects of the presentation are available online at http://www.museums.ca/en/info_resources/current_issues/alerts/index.php?pid=1213588800.

The polling data revealed several poignant insights about how supportive Canadians are of museums in Canada. Interestingly, this data was organized by political affiliation to reveal how arts and culture could easily become an election issue. Swing voters consider arts and culture to be an issue that would persuade their vote one way or another.

The Canadian Museums Association has been meeting with Members of Parliament, Senators and bureaucrats to discuss data.

SYNOPSIS OF SYMPOSIUM: New Methodologies and New Thinking for Art Museums

June 9, 2008

Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art and University of Toronto Art Centre

Keynote Presentation

The Keynote Presentation was delivered by John Holden, Head of Culture at the London, UK-based Demos and a Visiting Professor at City University. His paper was titled *Museums, Leadership and the Future*. (The full text of this presentation is attached to these minutes.)

Panel of Art Museum Directors

A panel of art museum directors responded to Holden's presentation. The panelists were Carol Podedworny (moderator, McMaster Museum of Art), Matthew Teitelbaum (Art Gallery of Ontario), Marc Mayer (Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal), Barbara Fischer (Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at Hart House, U of T), and Martin Segger (Maltwood Art Museum & Gallery, U of Victoria).

Martin Segger launched the discussion by raising the issue of institutions as content providers. From the perspective of universities, the institution is a knowledge provider, however that continually shifts beyond a student-centric basis towards a larger civic engagement. Universities are looking to establish a broader community network through experiential learning. Art museums are perceived to be well-positioned in this new paradigm.

Marc Mayer responded with the question of authority. There is a difference between the role of the art gallery as an expert on contemporary art or an expert on historical art. How can one become an expert on contemporary art? The lesson here is that our curators must become more competent experts.

Matthew Teitelbaum stated that content is about the experience, not only about the art. Similarly, we must think within the concept of the prosumer, not only the consumer: in the act of being "for" something, we consume it. This raises the question of excellence: are we giving up quality for collaboration and public content providing?

Barbara Fischer argued that when we think about new ways of "reading" work, we must recognize that participation is critical. Roland Barthes' writing on the "death of the author" argues that it is the text from which the reader draws meaning, not from the author. Therefore, the content is of primary importance. Similarly, intellectual and cognitive skills are more important than learning. Does the artist have authority?

Matthew Teitelbaum then steered the conversation towards the authority of the director as the institution's leader. He made two observations that "the better director, the fewer decisions he/she makes" and that "it is better to influence than to be authoritative."

The conversation moved to a discussion of the virtual and the real. The engagement with the object is transformative: is there an increasing thirst for the real? Is this in opposition to reducing our carbon footprint?

Panel of Architects and Architectural Critics

A panel of architects and architectural critics responded to John Holden's presentation. The panelists were as follows:

- Samantha Sannella (moderator, Design Exchange)
- Ian Chodikoff (OAA, MRAIC) is an architect and the editor of Canadian Architect magazine. He holds degrees in architecture and urban design from the University of British Columbia and Harvard University respectively.
- Neil Minuk is a partner at DIN Projects in Winnipeg. He holds undergraduate degrees in Native Studies and Art History and a graduate degree in Architecture, all from the University of Manitoba where he now teaches.

- Bruce Kuwabara is founding partner of KPMB Architects in Toronto and the 2006 recipient of the RAIC Gold Medal for Architecture. He studied architecture at the University of Toronto (B.Arch. 1972) where he currently teaches.
- Victoria Baster is a professor of art and architectural theory at the University of Lethbridge.
- Robert Kleyn is a Canadian architect, visual artist and writer. Recent projects Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Stan Douglas Studio and a proposed new gallery for UBC in Vancouver's downtown east side.

The panel's discussion centred on the paradox between the museums' innate *raison d'être* and its so-called utilitarian purpose. The museum is perceived as a grounds for learning and training, especially by those who believe in the concept of the creative class. The museum contains the "aura of the object" in the classical sense and acts as an anchor within the community. The struggle for architects is how to balance these in building designs.

The discussion also focussed on models of museum leadership driving particular architectural choices.

Closing Commentary by Mark Kingwell, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto.

(The full text of Mark Kingwell's presentation is not available, however, the following contains several of his key points.)

Kingwell began his comments by pointing out that the discussions throughout the day focussed on everything except art itself. The central theme of his presentation was the concept of "temporality" in art and museums.

There are numerous tensions at the heart of any discussion about museums. There is the tension between museums as community stimulants and museums as object collectors. There is a tension between heterogeneity and core values; between environmentalism and being in the place with the real; between learning, knowledge, pleasure and participation.

Kingwell cited J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* in which Calfield goes to the Natural History Museum in Manhattan. Everything in the museum remained where it was in a perpetual stasis; the only that moved was the viewer. Even in sameness there is change.

Museums are the most sought after large-scale projects for architects. What kind of architecture would you use for a Museum of Museums?

Heidegger argued that the mere object is not the work of art. The physical object is the necessary condition of existing. The work is a complex relation between the artist, object and audience. Ancient Greeks deemed Music to be the premiere art because it has no object.

What is the "work of art"? It is the work that art does. The work of art is endless. The question, then, should be "When is art?" It is not just the institutionalization of art; it begins when we begin to consider it as a work of art. Time is at the centre of our thinking. Human consciousness is our way of spatializing time. Thus, consciousness is all about temporality. When considering art, we are constantly making connections that are not simple or finite.

We all contain within us the capacity for wonder. The muse within each of us is set free by this wonder. Architecture creates a threshold to the sacred space for the experience of wonder. The museum forces collisions of meaning which must end, but can begin again.

TOURS & BANQUETS

Four Seasons Performing Arts Centre
Toronto Sculpture Garden
Niamh O'Laoghaire's Residence (Lunch)
Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation
Art Metropole
Art Gallery of Ontario (Canadian Galleries)
The Crystal at the Royal Ontario Museum
Design Exchange (Tour and Banquet)
University of Toronto Art Centre
Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art
Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at Hart House
Jamie Kennedy at the Gardiner Restaurant (Lunch)
The PowerPlant (Banquet)
Textile Museum of Canada (Closing Banquet)