



Oakville Art Society

putting a little art in your life since 1965

At A Glance

January, 2020

President's Message

Well – the turkey is finished, the decorations will be coming down soon and those New Year resolutions are looming as we prepare to get back to Real Life! I hope everyone had a splendid time with family and friends during this festive season and that you are looking forward eagerly to whatever adventures 2020 has in store.

I should like to thank everyone who came out for our AGM in November – and yes, we had sufficient members there to be able to make our prize draw resulting in two lucky winners!

I am pleased to welcome several new Directors to the OAS Board for 2020. Elaine Royds will take over as Secretary and both Rebecca Taharally and Patty Noonan are joining us as Directors-at-Large. Robin Mitchell will remain on the Board but is switching from the role of Secretary to Gallery Director. I should like to extend a huge “Thank You” to Jayne Cangemi (Treasurer) and Heidi Rohde (Gallery) who are both stepping down after serving for a number of years. Frank Duyvelshoff is continuing for a second year as Director of Membership and Volunteers. Carolyn Crosby remains as our Past President in an honorary capacity and I look forward to picking her brain as she has such a wealth of knowledge of the history and previous activities of our Society.

Having said all this, there is still one glaring gap in our ranks - **WE NEED A TREASURER!** Can you help? If you do not have the time, inclination or expertise yourself do you know someone who might be able to volunteer? Each of us has a different circle of friends and acquaintances so surely somewhere out there is someone who could step into this function. The individual must be a member (or be willing to join) and should have some financial/accounting knowledge but the position is not onerous. I am asking each of our members to help in the **critical** search for our new Treasurer!!

Thank you!

Best regards - Maggie

Quote of the month:

“To be an artist is to believe in life.”

- Henry Moore

Be creARTive



What's next at OAS?

In the Gallery

Coming in January.....

.....a show featuring our Friday Painters. Watch for announcement of dates.

OAS Office Hours

Starting in January, our office will be open four days a week instead of the previous three. We are delighted to introduce our new Office Assistant, **Michelina Williamson!** Michelina, who is a practicing artist, brings a wide range of skills to this role including an extensive administrative background as well as a variety of experience in the art world. Michelina will be working in the office on Wednesdays. Please do introduce yourself to her the next time you are in the building!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Marianne Goulden
 Joan Hatten

Winter Classes are now available!

There are still spots available – check them out on our website at:

http://www.oakvilleartsociety.com/art_classes.html

**Friday
 Morning
 Painters**

**Fridays
 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 in Studio 1**

**Plein Air
 Painters**

**3rd Tuesday in each month
 10:00 a.m.
 Meet at Sovereign House,
 7 West River Street, Bronte**

We are very pleased to introduce the slate of OAS Coordinators (both new and returning) for 2020

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Program Coordinator: | Mary Driussi (Staff) |
| COAP Coordinator: | Karlene Bland |
| QEPCCC – displays and liaison: | Tania Orton |
| Art in the Park: | Maggie Sims |
| Plein Air Painting: | Carol Sanders |
| Friday Painters: | Carol Palmer-Spall & Paul Shemilt |
| Facilities: | Ron Van Zutphen |
| Gallery Assistant: | Sima Azhar |
| Juried Show: | Carolyn Hassard |
| Art Auction (2021) | Vacant |
| Student Show: | Susan Cameron |
| Bulletin: | Leslie Sutherland and Susan Cameron |

Our thanks to all these wonderful people for stepping forward to help run our organization!

**A note
about the
monthly
Bulletin...**

Our heartfelt thanks go out to Sandy Greer who has been producing our members' Bulletin for several years now but has decided to step down in order to focus on other activities. On behalf of all members we thank Sandy for her work on the Bulletin –everyone has enjoyed reading the informative and educational articles that Sandy included from time to time

We are very pleased to announce that two members have stepped forward to take over from Sandy....Leslie Sutherland and Susan Cameron will be producing the Bulletin in future. Welcome to both from everyone at OAS!

From the Editor's Desk.....

Why Don't Canadians Know Any Canadian Painters?

An article by Grant Gordon, President and Creative director of Key Gordon Communications
(courtesy of The Huffington Post)

A Mainstreet Research poll found that 54% of adult Canadians cannot name a single Canadian visual artist, living or dead. In contrast, the poll also found that 97% of adult Canadians can name at least three Canadian hockey players.

It's hardly surprising the names of our painters don't roll off our tongues like our iconic hockey heroes -- but not being able to name even one? Are we really so divorced from art a majority of us can't name Emily Carr, Tom Thomson, Jean-Paul Riopelle or Norval Morrisseau? According to the poll, first reported on by The National Post, this is sadly the case.

It's hard to overstate what the Group of Seven did for our national identity. Canada's first art movement, the Group of Seven pushed back at the European art world -- "Our landscapes are worth painting, and we can paint them however the hell we want," they seemed to be saying. Their paintings celebrated our sense of place. "The Indian Group of Seven" was another formidable influence on our collective consciousness. Daphne Odjig, Norval Morrisseau and Carl Ray helped their people reconnect with their culture and inspired generations of artists after them. Indigenous art has helped Canada's most disenfranchised peoples tell their stories with dignity and power.

Our art has also helped us see things we don't want to see, but desperately need to. Edward Burtynsky's stunning, eerie, large-format photographs of industrial landscapes like Alberta's tar sands shocked the chattering classes. His work awakens, startles, even frightens -- a crucial step if we are ever going to take meaningful action against global warming.



From the Editor's Desk.....(cont'd)

Hockey, we are reminded regularly, defines us as a nation, binds us in passion for a game we claim to own. Canadian art is just as important to our national self. It enriches us emotionally and intellectually -- studies show the more children are exposed to art, the better their outcomes. Art helps us see things differently. Funding art should be a critical piece in our approach to creating a better society, but it's easy to keep sidelining it, budget-cutting it and waiting for a year of abundance to prioritize it again. It's seen as a luxury product -- in times of economic hardship, a needless frill.

So why are so many of us disconnected from art

Young adults fared the worst in the poll. Is it because so many of them dropped art in grade 9? Or is it the way we consume art that turns them off? Perhaps the traditional way of viewing art in galleries is the root of the problem. The growing success of interactive art events such as Nuit Blanche suggests that may be so.

Perhaps most of us think we aren't smart (or rich or stuffy) enough to understand art. What do galleries need to do differently to allow the raw experience of art to be enough? Maybe we need to democratize art.

Maybe galleries should be free.

I have nothing against hockey. There's nothing I enjoy more than playing shinny with beer chilling in the snow. But the fact I can rattle off the roster of the 1976 New York Rangers more easily than I can name the Group of Seven strikes me as alarming. It concerns one of my shinny mates as well, Peter Doig, one of the world's greatest living painters -- and not a bad hockey player either. He suggests, "Artists themselves are partly to blame for the fact that their work is not known by the wider populous," Doig says. "Artists and their art have to make their presence felt, that it matters. We should then in turn be helped, through our education system, to learn why. In the same way that not every hockey player will have the presence of a Connor McDavid, we have to learn why some artists are more like a Marc-Édouard Vlasic--but equally important."

It's an interesting juxtaposition: the value we place on a game versus the value we place on art. This poll confirms something I have long feared -- Canadian art is becoming less and less important to the average Canadian. We are a society obsessed with big league sports. But when we neglect Canadian artists and their work, we risk losing our capability to challenge the norms and pieties of our society, to tell our stories, to make our voices heard, and to fight injustice. Worse, we risk losing our humanity -- in the usual way one's humanity is lost: insidiously, incrementally and without even really noticing it's gone.

We need more Canadian art -- and we need more Canadians to experience it.