

ANNUAL **REPORT** 2020

AGH

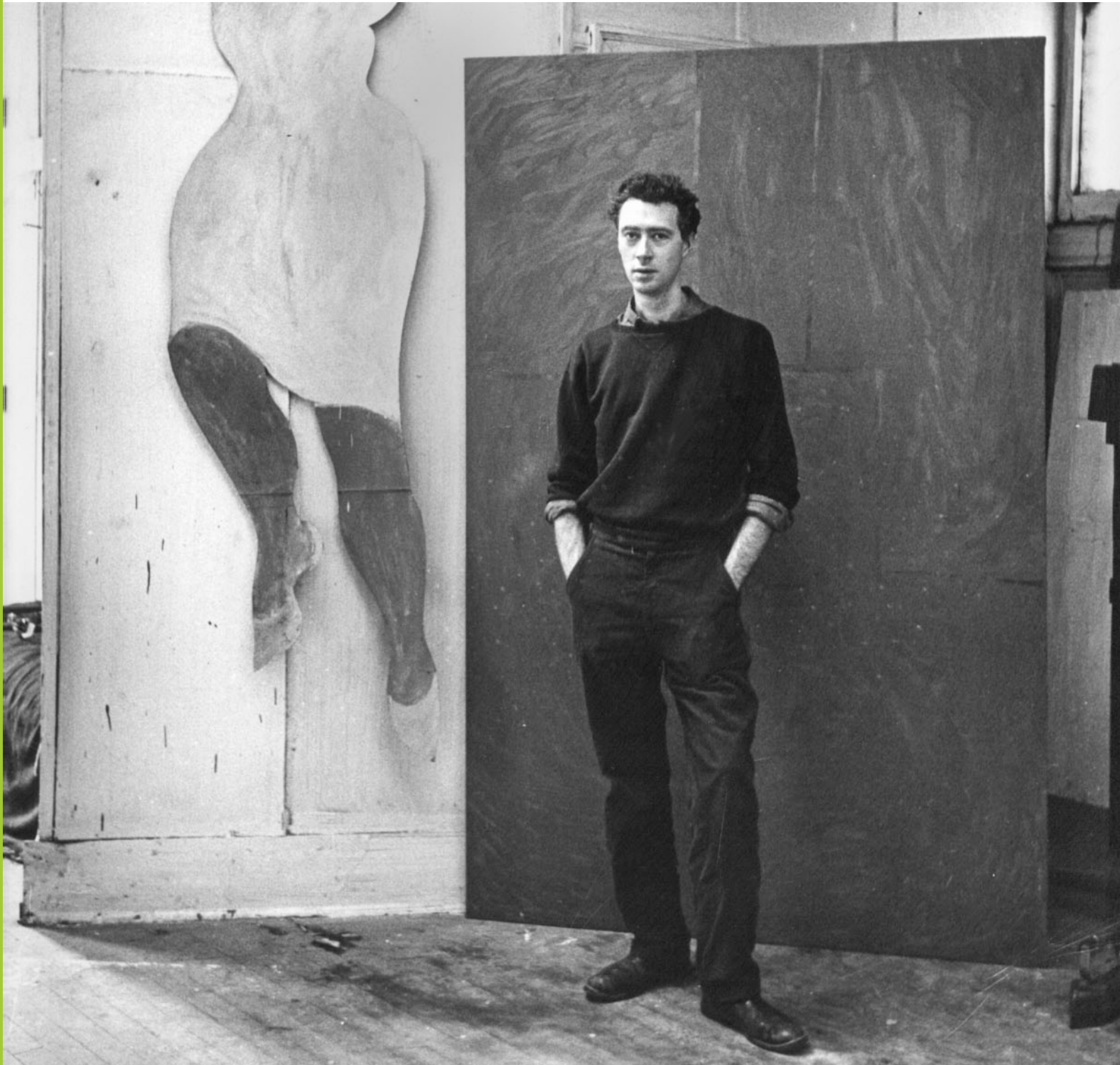


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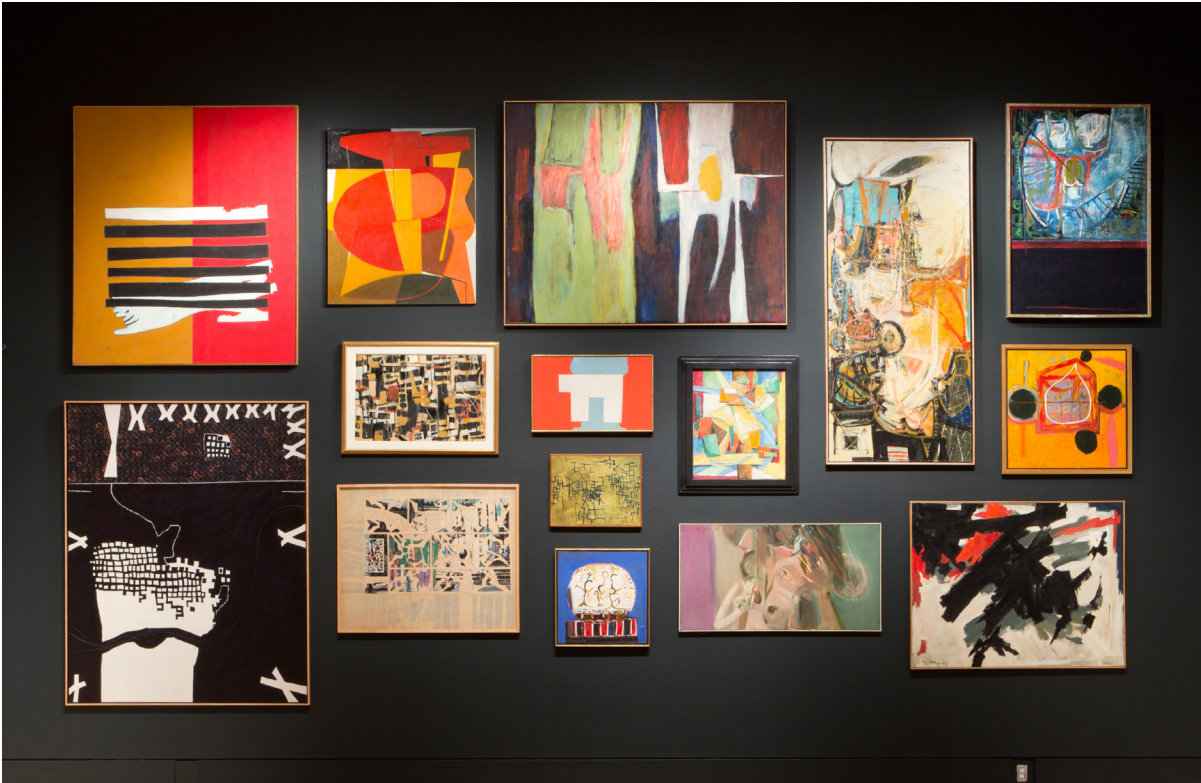
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Shelley Falconer

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, PRESIDENT & CEO



Gary Graham
Chair, Board of Directors



Shelley Falconer
AGH President & CEO

Following a year of unprecedented year of learning and adapting in response to the pandemic, we are incredibly proud to have achieved such great new heights throughout 2020. Most notably, we were challenged to think more critically and creatively about how we can pursue our mission as the region's leading art museum. Through both the physical distance required by the pandemic and the global uprisings against social injustice, we recognized that we must work harder to engage and be reflective of our diverse communities. Throughout this challenging past year, the Art Gallery of Hamilton remained committed to using art as a vehicle for dialogue, engagement and inspiration.

It is always such a thrill to reflect back, recount the many reasons we have to celebrate, and to take the opportunity to express our endless gratitude for our generous supporters, and volunteers - and our truly remarkable staff who have triumphed over unforeseen obstacles to serve our community. On March 15, 2020, we closed the Gallery to protect the health and safety of our city during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff rallied together and quickly pivoted to adopt a series of digital strategies to support artists, our community and keep us connected.

Despite the obvious challenges throughout this unique year, the AGH presented 10 exhibitions, including over 250 artists, and with the support of 25 partners. Highlights include the important works presented as part of *Early Snow: Michael Snow 1947-1962*. This was the first exhibition to focus exclusively on the prolific Canadian artist's early formative years, with over 40 works reflecting his broad creative practice, and including his early *Walking Women* works. *The Artist's Dream: Works of French Symbolism* brought together impressive works from the AGH Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection including works by Jean-Jacques Henner, Auguste Rodin, and Sarah Bernhardt. *Building Cultural Legacies*, presented by the Hamilton Arts Council, explored the history of visual arts in Hamilton between 1950 and 2000 through an in-person exhibition and online storytelling platform. As part of this unique exhibition, Governor-General Award-winner Sandra Meigs and prolific Hamilton muralist Lester Coloma brought thought-provoking beauty to our lobby spaces. Reflecting our core mandate to forefront the AGH permanent collection, *The Contemporaries* presented works by two artist groups who were central to the city's burgeoning art scene at the time: Painters Eleven and The Isaacs Group.

Our inaugural year-long artist in residence REITZENSTEIN capped his exhibition off in 2020 with the completion of multiple collaborative art projects created by the artist and members of the AGH community. We also welcomed Sylvia Nickerson, local comics artist, writer, and illustrator, as our second artist in residence who tackled everything from artificial intelligence to city encampments, and successfully adapted to deliver much of her work through a series of online content.

In addition to an exciting year of exhibitions, we successfully hosted 115 public programs, delivered primarily online, demonstrating how our digital advancements have made a significant impact in how we continue to bring meaningful programming to audiences both near and far. Our AGH at Home platform welcomed families and individuals to enjoy online classes, behind-the-scenes videos, an increased number of AGH Magazine articles, and regular online community gatherings to discuss and connect through art.

Our on-site education team provided virtual tours for over 500 students and in-person tours for 1300 students, while our AGH In-Class team complete 100 virtual projects, engaging over 2800 students. Both of these massive accomplishments taught us the power of digital connection and inspired us to continue expanding in this direction. Further evidence of our digital progress, we hosted the first-ever online AGH Film Festival including over 40 feature films, multiple post-screening Q&As, virtual discussions, and take-out dinner with at-home movie packages paired with local partners. Our annual fundraising Gala, AGH Dream: A Virtual Gala Experience, also took place exclusively online including performances from some of the city's most exciting young talent such as Terra Lightfoot, Logan Staats, and the Hamilton City Ballet. Our Annual Art Sale transitioned to be fully online, proving to be a great success. Finally, the Shop at AGH made the leap to online as well with the launch of an e-Comm store.

These are just a few highlights of an extraordinary year. They reflect the time, effort and tireless contributions of so many: our passionate staff and volunteers, our devoted members, our committed Board of Directors and Governors, and our many generous partners and donors, whose names you will see further along in this report. Thank you and congratulations to the artists and community we have been honoured to serve throughout 2020.

On behalf of our AGH colleagues, thank you for being part of our incredible journey.



Gary Graham



Shelley Falconer



EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

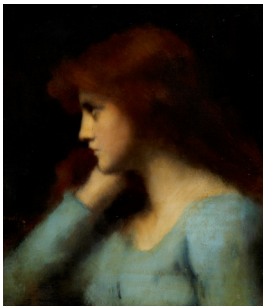
NORA HUTCHINSON: Rebel Opera



Senior and award-winning Hamilton artist Nora Hutchinson occupies a key position in the evolution of video art and performance installation, having begun her practice when these artistic genres were in their infancy. This retrospective exhibition offered a selection of video works made over four decades. Rooted in feminism, her evocative moving-image works developed from her foundation in performance art and musical composition.

The videos presented were a unique combination of performance documentary and cinematic collage. These works from the 70s and 80s revolve around self-representation and her exploration of identity in the context of second-wave feminism, in contrast to her conservative upbringing. Hutchinson's later works delve deeper into theatrical performance, poetically activating personal and social issues. An illustrated brochure, one of the first published texts on Hutchinson's practice, accompanied the exhibition.

THE ARTIST'S DREAM: Works of French Symbolism

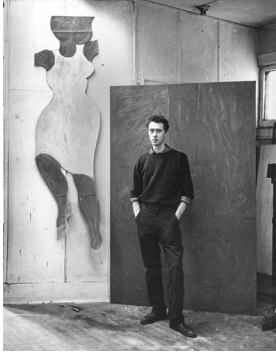


In their quest to visually express subjective ideas, Symbolist artists drew inspiration from dreaming in the development of their imagery and style. This exhibition explored dreaming as a metaphor for artistic vision in the Symbolist movement in France. It brought together impressive works of French Symbolism from the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection at the Art Gallery of Hamilton alongside loans from collections throughout Canada and the United States.

In addition to exploring the significance of dreaming in Symbolist art, the exhibition examined the personal and professional associations between artists associated with the movement. The representation of women, as well as the influence of music and theatre on Symbolism in the visual arts, was also explored. Special attention was paid to showcasing the important contributions of women artists to the movement.

The exhibition featured works by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Jean-Jacques Henner, Auguste Rodin, Eugène Carrière, Sarah Bernhardt, Jeanne Jacquemin, Camille Claudel, among many others. A beautifully illustrated fold-out accompanied the exhibition.

EARLY SNOW: Michael Snow 1947-1962



The first exhibition to focus exclusively on the Canadian artist's early formative years. The exhibition comprised over 40 works and reflected Snow's broad and diverse creative practice. The exhibition featured an ambitious range of media including painting, sculpture, film, video, and works on paper.

In concentrating on the artist's early work, *Early Snow* demonstrated how the artist's later career can only be fully appreciated when his formative years are examined and understood. As such, the exhibition was devoted to the first fifteen years of Michael Snow's practice. By the age of thirty-three, his work had already undergone many metamorphoses, and this exhibition explored his experimentations and the accomplishments achieved during these crucial years.

RBC ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: Sylvia Nickerson



Award-winning local comics artist, writer, and illustrator Sylvia Nickerson tackled everything from artificial intelligence to Mer-creatures to city encampments during her 18-month-long extended Artist Residency at the AGH.

Launched in March 2020, Nickerson's original aim was to develop content for a new fantasy graphic novel exploring the future of artificial intelligence. As the residency evolved, it coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. The artist deftly adapted her residency in response to the widening social, economic and cultural divides that plagued Hamilton as a result. Addressing issues of houselessness, displacement and social power dynamics, Nickerson brought awareness and empathy to the very issues that were affecting so many peoples lived experienced during the pandemic.

HIDDEN: Sharing the Stories of Ontario's Young Carers



Young Carers are defined as any young person caring for a family member who has a life-threatening or chronic illness, a disability, is experiencing mental illness or addiction, or has a language barrier. *Hidden* was a profoundly moving photographic portrait that profiled the stories and faces of 24 Young Carers from across Ontario and showcased the significant challenges these young people face and the immense personal cost of their caring responsibilities.

2020 EXHIBITIONS

The Artist's Dream: Works of French Symbolism

February 1, 2020 - January 10, 2021
Guest Curated by Dr. Amy C. Wallace

Early Snow: Michael Snow 1947-1962

February 8 - January 3, 2021
Guest curated by James King

The Contemporaries

February 8 - May 24, 2020
Curated by Tobi Bruce

Hidden: Sharing the Stories of Ontario's Young Carers

March 14 - May 3, 2020
Curated by Tor Lukasik-Foss
Supported with financial contributions from George Weston Limited, Mackenzie Investments, TD Securities Underwriting Hope, and the McColl Early Foundation

In Residence: Sylvia Nickerson

April 18, 2020 - March 28, 2021
Curated by Melissa Bennet
Presented by RBC

Online: Declaration: Hamilton Student Art

May 9 - June 21, 2020
In collaboration with AGH Youth, Hamilton secondary school
Art instructors, and young Hamilton artists

Nora Hutchinson

September 19, 2020 - January 3, 2021
Curated by Melissa Bennett

Women's Art Association of Hamilton: 125th Anniversary Exhibition: Celebrations!

December 5, 2020 - March 7, 2021
Organized by the Women's Art Association of Hamilton

Sandra Meigs: Imaginal Worlds

October 24, 2020 - December 2021
Curated by Melissa Bennett

Online: The Flash Forward Incubator Program: It's a Plastic World

June 15, 2020 - September 30, 2020

ACQUISITIONS

DONATIONS 2020

Leonard Hutchinson

(Canadian 1896-1980)
Burlington Bay, c.1934
colour woodblock print
37.8 x 37.7 cm
Gift of Al Rain

T.R. MacDonald

(Canadian 1908-1978)
Still Life with Eggs
oil on canvas
42 x 57.5 cm
Gift of David Hill

Ken Danby

(Canadian 1940-2007)
Bleached Yoke, 1967
egg tempera on board
35.6 x 50.8 cm
Reflecting the Mill
1979, watercolour on paper
21.6 x 30.5 cm

The Goalie
1972, lithograph on paper
ed. 33/100, 58.4 x 45.7 cm
Gifts of Paul and
Joyce Chapnick

Philip Pearlstein

(American b. 1924)
*Two Female Models on
Stool and Rocker*, 1974
sepia-wash on paper
22.5 x 30.5 in; 57.2 x 77.5 cm
Gift from a private collection

Oviloo Tunillie

(Kangiat, NWT 1949-2014)
*Woman transforming to
Angel / Eagle*, c.1989
serpentine stone
35.6 x 38.1 x 22.9 cm
Gift of Marvin and
Lorraine Cohen

Paul Duval Archives

10 banker boxes,
2 accordion files,
Gift of Alexandra Ochitwa

Panchal Mansaram

(Canadian 1934-2020)
Aldershot Neighbourhood
2000 coloured Xerox paper
on plywood, 157.4 x 71.1 cm
Gift of the artist

Carole Condé

(Canadian b. 1940) and
Karl Beveridge
(Canadian b. 1945)
23 works from various
series colour photographs
printed from 4x5 negative
onto Kodak paper,
various dimensions,
Gift of Milton Winberg

Maud Lewis

(Canadian 1903-1970)
Horse and Sulky, oil on board
24.8 x 19.7 cm

*Nova Scotia, Winter Scene
with Bridge*, oil on board
41.9 x 36.8 cm

untitled (cat)
oil on Digby clam shell
17.7 x 17.1 x 7.8 cm

untitled (house and garden)
oil on Digby clam shell
14.2 x 17.1 x 6.1 cm
Gifts of Susan Murray, 2020

Ottile Palm Jost

(Canadian 1878-1961)
Dorfstrasse, crayon on paper
10 x 7 in; 25.4 x 17.8 cm
Gifts of Alec Murray and
Susan Murray, 2020

Bend in the River
watercolour on paper
8.75 x 10.75 in; 22.2 x 27.3 cm

Sketch of Tall Trees
charcoal with white highlights
on paper, 20.5 x 13.5 in;
56.4 x 34.2 cm

Study for Figure of Jesus
(draft for wall mural St. John's
Lutheran Church, Hamilton),
graphite with white highlights
on paper, 18.25 x 12.5 in;
46.3 x 31.8 cm

Hotel St...
charcoal with colour highlights
16 x 10 in; 40.6 x 25.4 cm

Josef Jost

(German 1875-1948)
Bavarian Cottage, 1925
watercolour on paper
7 x 10.75 in; 17.8 x 27.3 cm

Bavarian Garden
watercolour on paper
10.75 x 7 in; 27.3 x 17.8 cm

Design for a Monument, c.1910
ink wash on paper
7.25 x 5 in; 18.4 x 12.7 cm

Waterwheel in situ, c.1928
watercolour on paper
12.25 x 9.75 in; 31 x 24.8 cm
Gifts of Barbara Mitchell

Michael Snow

(Canadian b. 1928)
Study for January Jubilee Ladies, 1961, gouache and paper collage on board
28.5 x 34.5 cm, Gift of Linda Frum

Joseph Drapell

(Canadian-Czech b. 1940)
untitled, 1994
acrylic on paper
33 x 20 in; 83.8 x 50.8 cm

untitled, 1994
acrylic on paper
20 x 32 in; 50.8 x 81.3 cm

Marcel Barbeau

(Canadian 1925-2016)
Qui s'éclipse la nuit no. 8, 1974
acrylic on paper
26 x 20 in; 66 x 50.8 cm

Un soir, 1986
acrylic on paper
18 x 24 in; 46 x 61 cm
Gifts of Richard Corso

Dianne Bos

(Canadian b. 1956)
Trenches, Canadian National Vimy Memorial, Vimy, France 2014, pinhole negative with darkroom manipulation
71.8 x 72.2 cm (image)

Poppies Near Ploegsteert, Belgium, 2014
pinhole negative with darkroom manipulation
74 x 73.7 cm (image)

Field, Passchendaele, Belgium, 2014, film negative with darkroom manipulation
54 x 50.2 cm (image)

Flanders Fields 2 Galaxy, Belgium, 2014
pinhole negative with darkroom manipulation
46.4 x 46.7 cm (image)

Vimy Crater and Flowers, Vimy Memorial Park, 2014
film negative with darkroom manipulation
49.7cm x 49.7cm (image)

Studio, Still life with jug, Montecastello Di Vibio, Italy 2010, chromogenic print; darkroom print from pinhole camera negative ed. 4/5.
30 x 30 in; 76.2 x 76.2 cm (image)

Pantheon. Rome, 2008
chromogenic print; darkroom print from pinhole camera negative ed. 5/15.
18" x 18 in; 45.7 x 45.7 cm (image)

Rapallo, Italy, 2007
chromogenic print; darkroom print from Holga plastic camera negative ed. 5/25
28 x 28 in; 71.2 x 71.2 cm
Gifts of the artist

PURCHASES 2020

Christina Sealey

(Canadian b. 1973)
Transitions 1 (self-portrait)
2001, oil on linen
101.6 x 76.2 cm, Funds provided by the Women's Art Association of Hamilton

Svava Thordis Juliusson

(Canadian b. Iceland 1966)
Blue Bundt, 2020
plaster, blue pigment
9 x 16 cm

Bryce Kanbara

(Canadian b. 1947)
selection of 16 works
mixed media on paper

PROGRAM & EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

2020 started optimistically enough, with *Early Snow* and *The Artist's Dream* informing such programs as Michael Snow in concert, performance art responses from (f)NOR collective, and an eclectic series of contemporary and vintage French cinema delivered in partnership with Centre Francais. Educational programs were just resuming their rhythm after job action within the school boards had slowed them down.

And then the Pandemic occurred. It rendered the AGH inaccessible for much of the year, and when it did re-open, gathering restrictions made the resumption of tours or any kind of on-site programs impossible. Despite that, and thanks to some preliminary work on an AGH digital strategy, as well as very nimble thinking from our marketing department, we were able to quickly launch digital programs to serve most of our core areas.

AGH at Home, a suite of programs delivered through a central page of our website was launched in March, and clustered digital tours, magazine articles, YouTube videos in the form of weekly workshops, storytime videos, artist interviews and other content. It allowed us a vital means to build connection between a range of audience and our exhibitions. AGH at Home was also used to promote Camp in a Box, our substitute for Summer Camp, which combined an art-kit and online studio sessions. This program was instantly popular, sold out for each of its 4 weeks.

Education Programs digitized their delivery, relying on a combination of asynchronous pre-recorded instructional videos, exhibition tours, and live sessions through Microsoft Teams that would pair artist instructors in real time with individual classes. This allowed us to follow through on Artist Led Projects (formerly knowns as AGH In Class) which engaged over 3500 students, deliver customized alt-ed programming, and accommodated over 60 digital school visits. The AGH also administered a successful partnership with both school boards supporting three online Summer camp programs: HWDSB Camp Power (2 weeks), HWDSB Closing the Gap (1 week) HWCDSD - Summer Learning (3 weeks). These programs combined offered 6 weeks of camp instruction, employed 17 artist instructors, served over 500 participants. By digitizing quickly, the AGH enjoyed an opportunity to hit the 20/21 school year with entrenched trust in our digital program.

Our film program was equally nimble in switching from cinema-based to online programming. An online film series featured 20 films between March and July, with a total paid attendance of over 500. Photophobia ran from August 6-8 and was an opportunity to test the streaming platform (Eventive) used to deliver the 2020 AGH Film Festival (October 16-25), one of only a few Canadian film festivals which occurred during 2020. It ran fully online and screened over 60 award-winning feature and short films from 21 countries in 17 languages online across the province. Furthermore, the streamed nature of the festival allowed its reach to extend throughout the province, expanding our audience by 15%.

Wellness activities were initially curtailed by pandemic restrictions, but the pandemic allowed us time to explore digital delivery and program extensions including a pilot project for youth with autism, adults with Schizophrenia. By year end we had submitted a major Dementia Strategy grant with the Federal Government (it would prove successful in 2021), as well as cement partnerships with Autism Ontario, Sheridan College, St Josephs Hospital, and McMaster University. A pilot 7-week virtual tour and studio program for youths 14-21 who have autism, and the resumption of on-site Yoga in the gallery near the end of the year, all marked the continued expansion of our Wellness potential.

It was a bumpy year for sure, but being able to offer a full range of digital activities allowed us to stay connected to our public, and to our many community partners. Perhaps most vitally, we were able to discover all kinds of new potential for digital programs to extend reach, cultivate access, and expand the capacity for our programs.



REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE



The Art Gallery of Hamilton completed a very difficult year in 2020 with the onset of the global Covid pandemic. The gallery closed to the public on March 15th 2020 and did not reopen till July 16th 2020 and closing once again December 21st 2020.

The Volunteer Executive regrettably cancelled the May 2020 Annual General Meeting.

The gallery reopened in July with many restrictions which impacted volunteer activities. Notably the following changes were made to gallery activities which reduced or eliminated the need for volunteers:

Special Events - number of events were reduced along with the maximum number of guests reducing the need for volunteers.

The Gala and Art Sale were changed to online events.

The Film Group offered films online and ran a very successful Film Festival online as well.

As a result of the reduced activity, recruitment of volunteers was curtailed for the year.

The Gift Shop and Front Desk resumed activity in July although the gallery hours of operation reduced the need for a full complement of volunteers. These areas operated through third and fourth quarters.

The following are the volunteer hours posted in 2020 by area:

Education (Docent/Library) | 832
Film and Performance | 73
Retail | 52
Special events | 41
Visitor and Member Services | 332
Volunteer Committee Executive | 149
Recruitment Committee | 38
Total | 1517

The total for 2020 at 1517 hours compares to 6257 hours in 2019.

A dramatic change due to the pandemic.

Education was very busy during 2020 re-imagining itself with an ongoing slate of new and improved activities. On line tours were offered to the schools on their return to studies. Towards the end of 4thquarter the department instituted online gallery tours in a "Fridays at Four" format. This format continued to grow in popularity into 2021 with attendees from all over the world.



The Volunteer Committee continued to publish a newsletter during the pandemic. Volunteers were encouraged to submit comments, suggestions and activities they were doing during the shutdown.

Kay Steel, our Recruitment Chair, decided to resign in August due to personal reasons.

The following volunteers received long service recognition at the 2021 Annual Meeting:

5 Years | Lucille Kim, James Elhert, Sandra Ammendolia, Alma Lotcheris, Wendy Fennema, Elizabeth Dubec, Lynn Tomasek, Sharyn Hall, Linda Woolfrey-Cooper, Ashmita Chopra, Linda Cihocki

10 Years | Diana Gordon, Guy Stanley, Kay Steel, Brian Winer, Franca Marazia

15 Years | Susan Kilby

35 Years | Carol Stanton, Margaret Fong

50 Years | Helen Hadden

The Executive also recognized the following volunteers and the awards achieved:

The Ruth McCuaig Volunteer of the Year Award | *Asmita Chopra*

The Outstanding Customer Service Award | *Julia Adjandi*

The Ann and Bill Manson Outstanding Docent of the Year Award | *Fiona Ellis*

The Jean Keogh New Initiatives Award | *The Friday at Four Docent Team*

I would also like to mention two additional ongoing activities that our volunteers are active in which have been temporarily suspended due to Covid – The Archive Project and The Library.

The Archive Project – Four very dedicated volunteers – Marilyn Hollick, Sylvia Laidman, Ann Manson and Brian Winer have been working on consolidating cataloging and organizing historical documents related to the Volunteer Committee Executive. These include minute binders and 16 scrapbooks documenting AGH/VCE media coverage from the 1950s through the 70s. Pre-pandemic work was done onsite in the library. At present, special Hollinger boxes have been secured and are waiting the next phase of storing all the scrapbooks once regulations allow.

The Library – The AGH Library benefits from the support of two dedicated volunteers and in particular Helen Hadden who has contributed over 20 years of service to the library. Helen organized the library collection using the Dewey Decimal System which one library volunteer noted was “a mammoth task by any standard”. The result is a treasure trove of rare books, catalogues, artists files and related information used by researchers staff and visitors.

At the end of 2020 the executive put together a subcommittee to rewrite the Volunteer Manual to better reflect the current organization. In addition, the subcommittee will review the role of the current Recruitment Chair and its function for inclusion in the manual.

As of this writing, my tenure as Chair of the volunteer committee and member of the AGH Board ended in June 2021. I was replaced by Margaret Fong who takes over the role of Chair and board member. We are absolutely delighted to have Margaret assume the role of Chair and are sure she will do an excellent job representing the volunteers as we continue to move slowly back to post pandemic operations.

To the VCE, my thanks for making my second and final year as Chair so enjoyable. I’m grateful for all the time the volunteers donate not only to the committee but to their regular volunteer commitments as well. They are truly amazing and much appreciated.

I’m optimistic that the pandemic will pass and the gallery will return stronger than before the pandemic. The gallery will once again rely heavily on its core of excellent volunteers to put forward programs in full support of the community in all its artistic endeavours.

Respectively submitted by
Cam Theroux

BY THE **NUMBERS**



61

ACQUISITIONS



27

EXHIBITIONS



43%

NORMAL DAYS OPEN



281

ARTISTS
FEATURED



3

SIGNATURE EVENTS
PIVOTED ONLINE



115

VIRTUAL PUBLIC
PROGRAMS



4672

STUDENTS
PARTICIPATED
IN DIGITAL
EXPERIENCES



650K

VIRTUAL
VISITORS
IN 2020

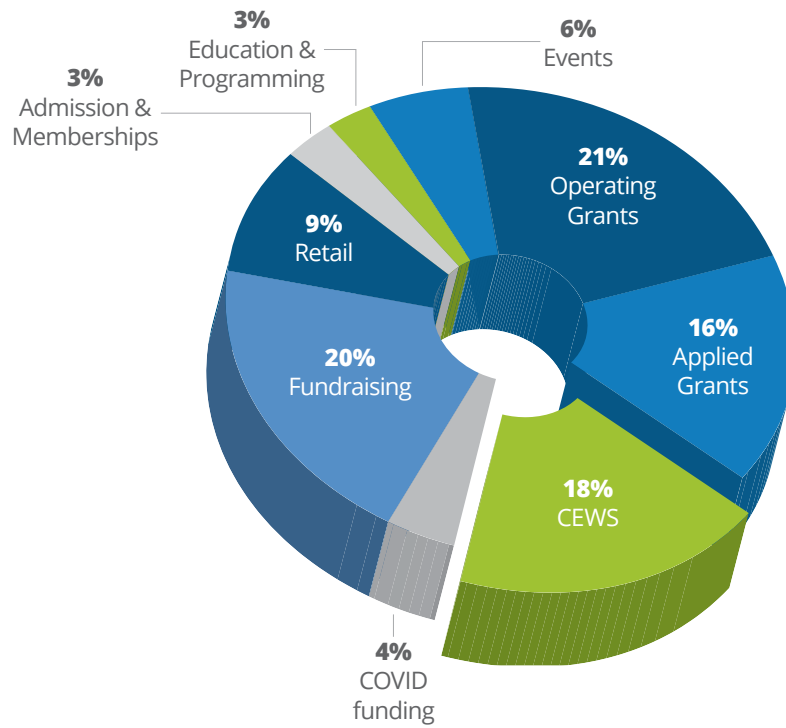


2060

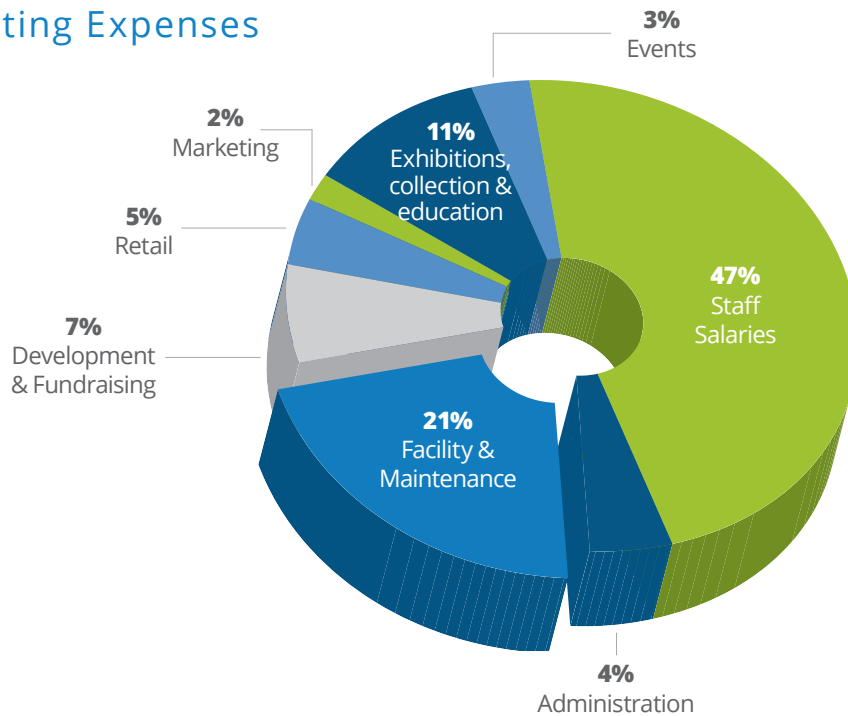
HOURS VOLUNTEERED
BY **16** BOARD
MEMBERS AND
123 VOLUNTEERS

OPERATING ACTUALS

2020 Operating Revenues



2020 Operating Expenses



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Women's Art Association of Hamilton WAAH

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Image credits:

Cover page: Michael Snow with a jumping figure cut-out and Green in Green. 1962. Courtesy of Michael Snow.

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Page 5: (top to bottom): Nora Hutchinson at work, c. 1990s. Courtesy of Building Cultural Legacies Hamilton

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Sylvia Nickerson, Photo: Eileen Reilly, Max Alexander, Louisa, 2019, digital photograph

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Installation images by: Robert McNair