



ART GALLERY OF MISSISSAUGA
ANNUAL REPORT | 2017

COVER IMAGE:

Breaking Down Borders:

This community map was created at one of the Border Crossings community workshops. Participants mapped out elements of importance to them, as well as journeys across space and geography.

Cartographers:

Anu Radha Verma, Delroy Gordon Jr., Devon Ross, Kyo Stephens, Navpreet Singh, Sara Singh, Cierra Andrews.
Image Courtesy of Cierra Andrews.



MISSION

The AGM provides platforms for engagement, exhibitions, collections and experimentation in contemporary culture with a renewed focus on under-represented communities in Mississauga.

The AGM seeks to foster community, transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries, and ensure safe spaces where diverse modes of being and seeing are supported and activated in tangible ways.

The AGM supports socially engaged art practise that aims to create social connections and or political change through collaboration between individuals, communities and the institution.



VISION

As a public gallery with a strong community connection, the AGM addresses challenges, makes connections and increases a sense of belonging for many. Projects that engage our community and reflect their awareness of contemporary and relevant cultural topics and issues are of particular interest. The gallery offers a wide range of FREE tours, talks, and workshops for learners of all ages and abilities, as well as innovative youth programmes for schools, universities and community groups.

SUPPORT

The AGM is generously supported by the City of Mississauga, the Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Enterprise Partners, private citizens and its members.

MANDATE

As a centre for community building, the gallery is envisioned to energize the cultural producers of Mississauga and beyond. The AGM is proud to admit people free of charge, serve communities, and provide positive visual art experiences for all visitors.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Art Gallery of Mississauga acknowledges and gives thanks to the land on which we have the privilege of operating on. This land is the present day territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and the traditional homeland of the Wendat, Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee nations. We are thankful to the many First Nations, Inuit, Métis and global Indigenous peoples who call this region home.

The AGM firmly believes that the arts have an important role to play in addressing the critical issues of our time, particularly to breaking down social barriers and forging connections. Recommendation 83 of The Truth and Reconciliation Report highlights the importance of the arts in conversations for the future of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations. The AGM is committed to recognizing and incorporating diverse Indigenous perspectives within engagement and exhibition programming, by engaging with Indigenous artists and cultural producers as an indication of our commitment to and actions in support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

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Thirty years of excellence in the visual arts

1,797

Number of hours gallery/exhibition space open to the public annually

22

Total number of Exhibitions organized and curated in 2017

116

Number of artists supported through exhibitions, programming and art auction

04

Exhibitions co-produced in partnership with Visual Arts Mississauga, Royal Ontario Museum, YTB and Y+ Contemporary

22

Number of film / media screenings

383

Total volunteers who contribute their time, expertise and passion as ambassadors and supporters during exhibitions, for community engagement and outreach, exhibition interpreters, and board members

4000

Total number of volunteer hours!



3,244

Facebook Followers



5,751

Twitter Followers



1,045

Instagram Followers

26,000

Website Visits

Figures as of December 31, 2017.



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD EXECUTIVE

The next item of business is the Executive Committee's Report which is written on behalf of the AGM Board by the Secretary and Treasurer. They will both report on board level activities during the year and, following the formal business part of the meeting, Mandy Salter will bring you up to date on the achievements of the gallery in the artistic field, exhibitions, community engagements and her vision for the future.

One of the greatest assets any organization can have is not just the staff but the members of the Board. In 2017 and 2018 added very strong members to the Board of Directors as the

AGM moved into its 31st year of excellence in programming and community engagement. These new Board members include David Wojcik, Zainub Verjee, Catherine Hale and Councillor John Kovac.

David Wojcik, the current President and CEO of the Mississauga Board of Trade, has helped further solidify partnerships and ongoing plans for gallery expansion through his connections as a business leader. You may not know this about David, but he is an avid music buff and plays guitar and is also studying the piano. He has a special affinity and understanding towards artists and not just another business guy.

We also added Zainub Verjee, who is also the Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Art Galleries (OAAG). She is an accomplished leader in the art and culture sectors and has shaped cultural policy at all levels of government. She was the inaugural Director of the Office of Arts and Culture for the City of Mississauga which led to the City's Culture Master Plan. She has numerous other accomplishments, and her insights and leadership is a real asset for the Gallery.

We are lucky to have Catherine Hale, Curator of the Creative Campus Galleries at Sheridan Campus. Dr. Hale holds a Ph.D. in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University. She brings forth fresh and new ideas as the Gallery starts expanding its vision.

Councillor John Kovac, Ward 4 Mississauga (Ex-Officio City Liaison). He was born and raised in Mississauga. Elected to City and Regional Council in a by-election in April 2015, John also currently sits as Ex-Officio on the Living Arts Centre Board. He is also Chair of Mississauga's Arts, Culture & Heritage Ad-Hoc Committee. His commitment and knowledge of the art and cultural scene in Mississauga and his ties with the City and communities have been invaluable.

I'd like to thank our retiring Board members, Puneet Kohli and Stan Zigelstein our past chair for their years of dedicated service to the Art Gallery both of whom resigned from the Board this past year. I would also like to thank our current Board member, Penelope Mathieson for her dedication.

Mandy Salter, Director/Curator of the Gallery, joined us in June 2015 and has brought a strong vision and voice to the Gallery. Those of you who have met Mandy know that she has a vibrant enthusiasm for the arts and a vision for the role to be played by the Art Gallery of Mississauga and it really showed in 2017 and 2018. Mandy spearheaded the AGM's newfound First New Next strategy for programmes and growth. In case you don't know what First. New. Next is. It is the AGM's visions of a focus on artists and cultural producers from

Indigenous, newcomer and youth communities through exhibitions, educational program and critical dialogue. All the exhibitions at the AGM are free of charge to anyone that would like to attend and we welcome you at any time.

This past year, the gallery was awarded the prestigious Ontario Association of Art Galleries for the second year in a row by the Ontario Association of Art Galleries for ***Thematic Exhibition of the Year, under \$20,000 category for the CANADIAN BELONGING(S) exhibition curated by guest curator Elyn Walker which was described by the OAAG Awards Peer Jury as follows:*** CANADIAN BELONGING(s) examines national identity from the perspectives of artists from Indigenous, settler and new Canadian backgrounds, with largely photo-based works that are, in this group configuration, “taking a nuanced look at expressions of nationalism’ that are at once disarming and impactful.” The Gallery also took home the same award last year for the exhibition *Change Makers*.

AGM & SERVING COMMUNITIES & OUTREACH

I just want to talk a little about how the AGM has developed and served the communities of the City of Mississauga. First, the Gallery has developed partnerships with industry organizations. Thanks to Mandy’s leadership and her team including Kendra Ainsworth, Sadaf Zuberi, Laura Carusi, Sharada Eswar, Melanie Lowe, Jessica Palada and Anu Radha Verma, the AGM has strengthened existing and developed new partnerships with industry organizations such as:

- the Ontario Museums Association
- The Ontario Association of Art Galleries
- Sheridan College Creative Campus Galleries and Department of Art, Animation and Design
- U of T at Mississauga

Second, the Gallery has developed new community partnerships with the following:

- Peel Aboriginal Network
- Six Nations Tourism
- Afgan Womens’ Association
- QTBIPOC (Queer Trans, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) along with the Peel Newcomer Center
- Square One Shopping Centre Oxford Properties
- Whole Foods
- Ecosource
- Chartwell Senior Residences
- Additional interest being expressed by several property developers regarding the future development of the AGM and their interest in helping with alternative and additional space for the AGM exhibitions.
- The AGM worked with Greg Taylor, Director and General Manager, Oxford Properties Group - SQUARE ONE to have SQUARE ONE once again be the Platinum Sponsor for the Art Gallery of Mississauga annual Benefit Art Auction, which they would host for the first time. The

Auction took place in The Grand Rotunda of the Luxury South Fashion Wing on Thursday April 26, 2018 and Oxford provided a beautiful pop up gallery space for the week leading up to the auction.

Third, we also continue discussions on our gallery expansion project with enthusiasm and strong support from the City of Mississauga and the community at large. The gallery, in conjunction with the City, continues discussions on several potential and exciting sites to help it expand and strengthen ties with the community. We would like to thank Paul Mitcham, Commissioner of Community Services and Paul Damaso, Director, Culture Division.

Last, the gallery has exhibited world class emerging & established artists with the Gallery from various disciplines, backgrounds and communities. We would like to thank the artists who graced the AGM the past year with their stunning and thought provoking exhibitions curated by Kendra Ainsworth, Mandy Salter and our guest curators, Ellyn Walker and Deepali Dewan, whom, without which, we would not have been able to have such successful exhibitions. Highlights of the past year's exhibitions include:

- Urban Iroquois artist and curator Jeff Thomas
- Emerging artist Nafesh Emadmostofi
- Dana Claxton
- Nalini Malani
- Lisa Myers
- Sumaira Tazaeen
- Libby Hague – one of Canada's foremost print artists
- 40 emerging and established Visual Artists in Ontario in the AGM's presentation VAM40, Visual Arts Mississauga's 40th Annual Juried Show of Fine Arts.
- Couzyn van Heuvelen when the AGM collaborated with Sheridan College for the 2017-2018 Temporary Contemporary Project
- Featured the works of female indigenous artists in the exhibition "niigaanikwewag" guest curated by Rhéanne Chartrand, Curator of Indigenous Art, McMaster Museum of Art
- Currently, the AGM is exhibiting "*seeping upwards, rupturing the surface*", a Featured Exhibition for the CONTACT Photography Festival curated by Kendra Ainsworth and *Mariam Magsi: Jahez / Dowry* curated by Laura Carusi.

Mandy, staff and guest curators will be discussing these exhibitions and the Gallery's initiatives and accomplishments further.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of the Board, I would like to conclude by saying that we are proud of the progress that the Board and staff have made in the past year in putting the gallery back on a firm foundation from which it can grow in the future.

David Wojcik, Treasurer and Vandana Taxali, Secretary

DIRECTOR'S REPORT | 2017

2017 has been a memorable year for the Art Gallery of Mississauga. We had much to celebrate as we reached our 30th anniversary. We focused on three areas aligned with our Strategic Plan priorities:

1. To engage communities by establishing sustainable art-focused relationships; 2. To connect experiences by consistently demonstrating the social value of art and by ensuring varied conduits of access to our programmes; 3. To be constantly assessing the relevance of our institution in relation to the diverse and under-represented communities of Mississauga.

This year we engaged with local community, national and global audiences to discover new art, artists and ideas, as a means of deepening connections and heightening our relevancy. The Gallery presented over 22 exhibitions and engagement projects, had one of the highest attendance years to date, increased engagement with our QTBIPOC and LGBTQ2 communities, and developed multilingual and multidisciplinary collaborative projects. Thank you to our members and visitors for sharing our milestone year with us.

To launch this special year, we enthusiastically continued our 30 year partnership with Visual Arts Mississauga in the presentation of their Annual Juried Show of Fine Arts, a demonstration of our strong commitment to local creatives. Next on the roster was the highly anticipated exhibition *Ken Lum: A Matter of Life and Death*. This significant exhibition featured two new bodies of work and the exhibition was particularly emotionally resonant with our Mississauga audiences. In May, the AGM once again hosted two Featured Exhibitions for the



Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival. The first, in partnership with the Royal Ontario Museum, presented *The Family Camera: Missing Chapters*. The exhibition showcased a stunning photo installation work by acclaimed Vietnamese artist Dinh Q. Lê, as well as work by students of OCAD University and contributions from AGM visitors. The second exhibition for CONTACT presented new work by Sobey Award long-listed artist Annie MacDonell. During the summer, AGM Curatorial and Collections Coordinator Laura Carusi worked with noted artist Jeff Thomas to develop an intervention with

the AGM's collection of George Hunter photographs and the ROM's collection of Edward Curtis plates. One of the new works created for this exhibition, *What Happened to the Mississauga's?* was then generously donated to the AGM's permanent collection. Summer presented a new community-engaged project, *border crossings*, which engaged the communities of Peel Aboriginal Network, Syrian Newcomer Centre and QTBIPOC sauga – collectively creating over 500 stories of personal border crossings which became the creative material and inspiration for the evolving exhibition alongside the group exhibition *walking across, talking through*. Our final exhibition of the year was a major solo exhibition by prolific Canadian artist Libby Hague. This unconventional retrospective was critically and publically well received. As always, we continued our support for regional artists: the AGM exhibited projects by five emerging artists in our RBC Foundation sponsored XIT-RM project space in 2017, and partnered with three arts community organizations.

Our fresh and relationally inclusive public engagement programmes inspired audiences and engaged visitors through activities that ranged from multidisciplinary and interactive studios, artmaking workshops, panel discussions, artist and curator talks, and other gallery activities. Our OTF Seed Funded engagement programme *border crossings* took the form of an interactive community engagement lab, where visitors were invited to share their stories and experiences with crossing borders: physical; metaphorical; geographical;

linguistic; spiritual and personal. The Gallery was animated by activity stations, workshops, community-built installations, and facilitated by the AGM's Community Activator Sharada Eswar and artist Sonja Rainey. For a period over seven weeks, *border crossings* created space for forging connections and sharing experiences across the diverse communities that make up Mississauga and gathered close to 500 stories in over twelve languages. The *Recipe Placemat Project* engaged with over 85 participants, from 18 different countries, speaking 13 different languages, telling 74 different stories in one art project and was featured in an article in the *Toronto Star*.

The AGM's commitment to our queer and trans communities in Mississauga saw us revisiting our scheduling of the successful On the Queer Screen event. We continued to experiment with new ways to encourage learning by positioning ourselves as a centre for rigorous discussion and storytelling, with the AGM's Tot Spot continuing to be a big hit with our tiny neighbours at the City Daycare, visiting us regularly and enthusiastically for a robust roster of multidisciplinary storytellers.

Our collection also grew in numbers, adding works by Jeff Thomas and Annie Pootoogook. We are proud of our recent catalogue raisonné publications. In addition to presenting and promoting innovative exhibitions and programming we continue to work diligently toward the goal of increasing our level of self-generated revenues. In 2017, we enjoyed the continued support of our sponsors, and with the help of our Board and staff, we raised over \$50,000 in support of public programming. We enjoyed an excellent year of supporters for the Gallery's growing exhibition sponsorship program and my gratitude is extended to these organizations, as well as all members and visitors. With the support of project partners which have included The Family Camera Project presented in partnership with the ROM and Deepali Dewan as Guest Curator; Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival; ImagineNATIVE Film and Video Festival and Trinity Square Video, the AGM brand has been enhanced and our presence in the region has grown by giving greater visibility to a diversity of artists and projects, earning us our second prestigious Exhibition of the Year Award from OAG for *Canadian Belonging(s)* guest curated by Elynn Walker with jurors commenting that this exhibition takes, "a nuanced look at expressions of nationalism that are at once disarming and impactful. This exhibition examines perspectives on national identities."

Numerous private donors and sponsors are to be thanked for their endorsement of our exhibitions, engagement initiatives and events: Square One Oxford Properties continued their Gold Level Sponsorship of our Benefit Art Auction. The Community Foundation of Mississauga sponsored *Art of Words / Words of Art*, a collaboration with Ink Movement while the City of Mississauga's project grant provided funds in support of *UNMASKED*, an AGM PAC Intervention at the Mississauga Central Library, curated by Laura Carusi, AGM's Curatorial and Collections Coordinator.

We were also grateful and honoured to receive a 10.5% increase from Ontario Arts Council for excellence in organizational effectiveness and artistic programming. One good thing to come out of the major restructuring of funding to the visual arts—and by restructuring I mean massive funding cuts beginning in the 1980s to all public sectors—is that art galleries were forced to pay attention to their audience. As a result, there has been a shift to involve public programming, but also marketing, earlier in the process of exhibition planning. In view of this, the idea of 'the public program' as a curatorial practice has seen a demonstrable change in public galleries, evidencing a commitment to foregrounding their expertise in public engagement.

We take our position as a leader in our community very seriously; these votes of confidence, strong media response and awards from our peers are important to us. We find ourselves in a unique position and a thrilling moment in our gallery's history. As I reflect back at our 30th anniversary celebrations, I am filled with pride for our long history, as well as our newfound creative trajectory and relevancy as a recognized progressive leader

in the local, national, and international art worlds, challenging systems and stereotypes long perpetuated by the public gallery.

I want to thank especially the community, artists and the individuals and organizations that support us in all we do. A special thanks to our professional staff, volunteers and Board of Directors with special gratitude to those leaving the Board this year with the completion of their terms. Even as I reflect fondly on the past year, I look ahead to an exhilarating future. With the community's continued support at every level, the AGM has a bright future ahead.

ACCOLADES AND APPOINTMENTS

The AGM has worked closely with the Mackenzie Art Gallery and Two Rivers Gallery, as Research sites and collaborators for Professor Jen Budney's doctoral thesis, *Establishing Value within a New Museum Model*. These three organizations were recommended to Professor Budney by colleagues across the country as the ones to watch (along with Musée des Beaux Arts in Montréal, which was too large for the project purposes). This research suggests there is a generational shift that is exciting, and that the AGM is part of this shift, with younger directors looking at new ways of doing things in an effort to make their organizations more impactful within their communities. It is also suggested that in our efforts to build better public value, The AGM has intentionally disrupted the traditional art museum and management model and positioned a new world model for a new world audience.

The AGM was also bestowed the prestigious OAAG Award for Exhibition of the Year for *Canadian Belonging(s)*, guest curated by Ellyn Walker. The second such award the AGM has been honoured with in just under two years! It is a true honour to be granted these important measures of peer recognition. The amazing AGM team of Board members, staff, volunteers, exhibiting artists and commissioned writers participating in the Gallery's programming are to be congratulated for these exceptional achievements.

This past year, it has been an honour for me to serve as a continuing trustee to the City of Mississauga's Arts and Culture Ad Hoc Committee, and the AGM and Culture Division Expansion Feasibility Study Committee, where I will continue to champion the relevancy of the sustainable roles of all galleries and creative venues in Mississauga.

A very special thank you to the outgoing President of the Board Stan Zigelstein and Vice Chair Puneet Kohli for their contributions of time and generosity of spirit. A heartfelt thanks to Terry Jenkins Bricel for her support as Interim Director during my surgeries this past year and to the incredibly committed, talented and generous AGM staff, Sadaf Zuberi, Operations Manager; Laura Carusi, Curatorial and Collections Coordinator; Melanie Lowe, Marketing and Communications Coordinator; Sharada Eswar, Community Activator, Education and Programmes, Anu Radha Verma Community Curator for Social Change; Kendra Ainsworth, AGM Curator of Contemporary Art and Jessica Palada, Gallery. And as important, the community, members and funders, we are grateful for your continued friendship and support in 2018 and beyond as we work towards the AGM's exciting future growth.

Mandy Salter
Director | Curator

EXHIBITIONS

The AGM spent 2017 presenting and growing our powerful, engaging, and accessible exhibitions and programs, reaching out to new partners and constituent communities as part of our continued commitment to relevant, responsive and world-class work. The AGM's programming thematic of 2017 – Artist as Interpreter - formed the connecting thread through a year of powerful exhibitions featuring work by Canadian and International artists both emerging and established. After opening the year with our continued partnership with Visual Arts Mississauga in the presentation of their Juried Show of Fine Arts, our long deferred exhibition with internationally renowned artist Ken Lum | *A Matter of Life and Death* began our programming year proper. Featuring two new bodies of work by this impressive artist, the exhibition was particularly emotionally resonant with our Mississauga audiences. In May the AGM again hosted two Featured Exhibitions in the Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival. The first in partnership with the Royal Ontario Museum, presenting a chapter of their *Family Camera Project* Exhibition. We were able to showcase a stunning installation work by acclaimed Vietnamese artist Dinh Q. Lê as part of this exhibition, as well as work by students of OCADU and contributions from visitors. The exhibition had excellent visitor numbers and a strong response from the many diaspora communities of Mississauga, who shared similar experiences of family memories lost during migration. The second presented new work by Sobey Award long listed artist Annie MacDonell. During the summer, AGM Curatorial and Collections Coordinator Laura Carusi worked with artist noted Jeff Thomas to develop an intervention with the AGM's collection of George Hunter photographs and the ROM's collection of Edward Curtis plates.



Image credit: *The Family Camera: Missing Chapters* installation view, May 4 – June 18, 2017, Art Gallery of Mississauga, in collaboration with the Royal Ontario Museum, photo by Toni Hafkenscheid

One of the new works that Thomas created he subsequently generously donated to the AGM's permanent collection! Due to an artist suffering an injury, we had to postpone our fall solo exhibition with Bonnie Devine to 2018, and instead showed a group exhibition *walking across, talking through*, and a new community-engaged project, *Border Crossings*. Our final exhibition of the year was a major solo exhibition by noted Canadian artist Libby Hague. This unconventional retrospective was critically and publically incredibly well received. As always, continuing our support for regional artists, the AGM exhibited 5 emerging artists in our RBC Foundation sponsored XIT-RM project space, in 2017 through partnerships with 3 arts community organizations.

January 12 – February 18, 2017:

- *Visual Arts Mississauga 39th Annual Juried Show of Fine Arts*
Opening Reception January 12, 2017
Main, Freeman and XIT-RM Galleries

- Highlights from the Permanent Collection: *The Gathering Place / A Tribute to the Matriarchs of Visual Arts Mississauga*
PAC Artists: Shirley Erskine, Lila Lewis Irving, Eileen Oswald and Doreen Renner
Curated by Rheanne Chartrand
Resource Room

March 2 – April 16, 2017

Opening Reception March 2, 2017

- Ken Lum / *A Matter of Life and Death*
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
Main and Freeman Galleries

- Nam Phi Dang | *Somewhere Else*
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
XIT-RM

- Highlights from the Permanent Collection: *Art of Words / Words of Art*
Collaboration with Ink Movement
Ink Contributors: Abirami Sudharshan, Diya Jhuti, Jordan Currie, Sonya Zhang
PAC Artists: Carol Martyn, Kim Adams, Paul Fournier, Bobs Cogill Haworth
Curated by Rheanne Chartrand
Resource Room

May 4 – August 27, 2017

Opening Reception May 4, 2017

- *The Family Camera : Missing Chapters*
In Partnership with the Royal Ontario Museum and the Family Camera Network
Artists: Dinh Q. Lê
Featured Exhibition of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival
Main Gallery

Guest Curated Deepali Dewan, Senior Curator at the Royal Ontario Museum, and a curatorial team including Thy Phu, Julie Crooks, Sarah Bassnett, Jennifer Orpana, Sarah Parsons, and Silvia Forni

May 4 – June 18, 2017

Opening Reception May 4, 2017

- Annie MacDonell | *The Levellers*
Featured Exhibition of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival
Freeman Gallery
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
- Vivek Shraya | *Trisha*
XIT-RM
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
- Highlights from the Permanent Collection | *Views of the North*
PAC Artist: George Hunter
Resource Room
Curated by Laura Carusi

June 29 – August 27, 2017

Opening Reception June 29, 2017

- Jeff Thomas | *A Necessary Fiction: My Conversation with George Hunter and Edward Curtis*
Freeman Gallery
Curated by Laura Carusi
- Nafiseh Emadmostofi | *Burning Desire*
XIT-RM
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
In partnership with UTM and Sheridan Art and Art History Program
- Highlights from the Permanent Collection | *Beyond Hunter's Lens Re-capturing Inuit Life*
PAC Artists: Annie Pootoogook, Pitaloosie Salla
Resource Room
Curated by Laura Carusi

September 7 – October 22, 2017

Opening Reception September 7, 2017

- *walking across, talking through*
Artists: Dana Claxton, Nalini Malani, Lisa Myers, Sumaira Tazeen
Main Gallery
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
- *Border Crossings : A Community Engagement Lab*
Freeman Gallery

Artist: Sonya Rainey
Curated/Coordinated by Sharada K. Eswar and Sonya Rainey

- Hiba Abdallah | *Souvenir Shop*
XIT-RM
Guest Curated and in partnership with Y+ Contemporary
- Highlights from the Permanent Collection: *TRANSCENDING SIGNS*
PAC artists: Ken Lum, Panchal Mansaram
Resource Room
Curated by Laura Carusi

November 1, 2017 – January 1, 2018

Opening Reception September 7, 2017

- Libby Hague | *the past is never over: a retrospective exhibition*
Main and Freeman Galleries
Curated by Kendra Ainsworth
- Jennifer Laiwint | *The Pick Up Artist*
XIT-RM
Guest Curated by Humboldt Magnussen and presented in partnership with YTB Gallery
- Highlights from the Permanent Collection: *TRANSCENDING SIGNS*
PAC artists: Ken Lum, Panchal Mansaram
Resource Room
Curated by Laura Carusi

Satellite Exhibitions | Permanent Art Collection

- *The Gathering Place: A Tribute to the Matriarchs of Visual Arts Mississauga at VAM*
AGM Permanent Art Collection
Margaret Squire, Joan Spavins, Faye Sproule
Location: Visual Arts Mississauga
Curated by Laura Carusi and Rheanne Chartrand
January 12 – February 18
- *UNMASKED: PAC intervention at the Mississauga Central Library,*
Featuring: Ted Fullerton (PAC), Ella Cooper, James Yeboah, and Tau Lewis + Jeffrey Bierk
Location: Central Library
Curated by: Laura Carusi
November 8, 2017 – January 15, 2018
- *George Hunter*
AGM Permanent Art Collection
Location: C Café
October 2012 – present

Publications

Annie MacDonell | *The Levellers*

Libby Hague | *the past is never over*

XIT-RM Project Space Artist Profile Brochures (Funded by RBC Foundation):

Nam Phi Dang | *Somewhere Else*

Vivek Shraya | *Trisha*

Nafiseh Emadmostofi | *Burning Desire*

Hiba Abdallah | *Souvenir Shop*

Jennifer Laiwint | *The Pick Up Artist*

Programming in support of regional artists:

The AGM is committed to supporting regional artists, and has furthered this goal in 2017 through a number of platforms:

Curator 30 Minute Fridays

The AGM continues to run its popular Curator 30 Minute Fridays appointments with the goal of building a series of social networks and support mechanisms with the local community. The sessions, which run quarterly, deploy a conversational format for artists, writers and other cultural producers to meet, discuss and get feedback on their work, proposals, or grant writing with AGM Curator of Contemporary Art Kendra Ainsworth.

OAC Exhibition Assistance Recommender

The AGM is a recommending institution for the Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Assistance Grant. In order to encourage and support the development of professional artists in Mississauga and the 905 region, the AGM only accepts applications for recommendation from artists living and/ or working in the 905. These artists are eligible, upon AGM recommendation and successful award of the grant, for up to \$1500 to defray the cost of mounting an exhibition. In 2017 the AGM recommended received 12 applications for funding, and were able to fund 7 artists, for grants totaling \$5000.

XIT-RM Emerging Artist Project Space

The AGM, along with its funding partner the RBC Foundation, continues to support the development of emerging artists in Mississauga and the 905 and Peel regions. The XIT-RM project space provides an opportunity to artists from the region who have not yet had a significant solo exhibition to present new work in a professional context alongside established national and international artists.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION & PROGRAMMING

Community has been at the centre of all that we do at the Art Gallery of Mississauga (AGM). Following the success of the *Recipe Placemat Project* in 2016, the AGM launched *border crossings: a community engagement lab*. Stemming from a desire to connect and deepen our relationship with the diverse communities of Mississauga, we applied to the Ontario Trillium foundation for a seed grant. Through workshops facilitated by Sharada Eswar, Nikki Shaffeullah, Sonja Rainey and Anu Radha Verma, we engaged multiple communities including the Afghan Women's Organization, Peel Aboriginal Network, Broadening Horizons, QTBIPOC Sauga and INK Movement. Visitors and community members wrote, made collages, mapped and shared their experiences and stories of border crossings through video recordings. Over a period of 7 weeks, we gathered close to 500 stories, some of which are being published as a graphic novel designed by artist Miranda Sharp.

The *border crossings* project came close on the heels of a successful culmination of the *Living Waters* project that was offered in collaboration with Corsair Public School's 700 bilingual student and facilitated by environmental and teaching artist, Christopher McLeod.

Our commitment to the queer and trans community of Mississauga saw us revisiting the scheduling of our On the Queer Screen event series. AGM Tot Spot continued to be a big hit with our tiny neighbours at the City Daycare and we were joined by several guest storytellers. Our summer interns (funded by Young Canada Works) Kat and Helen along with volunteer Annika kept the gallery youthful and musical with Coffee House on Thursday evenings when the AGM is open until 8 PM. The summer also saw the AGM collaborate with Celebration Square for Art on the Square programming.



Image credit: Where We Are At Panel with Rosina Kazi and Lynx Sainte-Marie, moderated by Anu Radha Verma, hosted by the AGM at the Glass Pavilion on June 8, 2017.

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

- Canadian Museums Association
- Catholic Cross-Cultural Services
- Chartwell Seniors Residence
- City of Mississauga, Culture Division and Celebration Square
- Ecosource
- Holy Name Catholic School
- ImagiNATIVE Film Festival
- Ink Movement
- Jumblies Theatre
- Mississauga Arts Council
- Mississauga Central Library
- Mississauga Gives
- National Film Board
- Ontario Arts Council
- Ontario Museums Association
- Peel Aboriginal Network
- QTBIPOC Sauga
- Regional Diversity Roundtable
- Royal Ontario Museum
- Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival
- Sheridan's Creative Campus Galleries
- Sheridan College Faculty of Animation, Arts and Design
- Square One
- Syrian Newcomers Association
- Trinity Square Video
- Visual Arts Mississauga
- YMCA
- Young Syrian Alliance
- Younger than Beyoncé (YTB) Gallery
- Y+ Contemporary



Image credit: XIT-RM: *border crossings: a community engagement lab*, Sept 7 – Oct 22, 2017, Art Gallery of Mississauga, photo by Toni Hafkenscheid

PERMANENT ART COLLECTION | 2017

Through its Permanent Collection (PAC), the Art Gallery of Mississauga aims to reflect the rich cultural diversity of the community, and showcase works by Canadian and Indigenous artists which examine the inter-relationship between personal heritage and regional or national culture. The Gallery aims to set the stage for Mississauga's artistic reputation, acquiring works by emerging and established artists of a diverse background, supporting acquisitions by artists who identify with those communities which have not traditionally been represented in western art institutions, collections and curation.

On the heels of the 2016 Storage Wars project, funded by the Museum Assistance Programme of the Department of Canadian Heritage, the AGM continues to strive for maintenance and preservation of the AGM PAC through employing best practices and due diligence regarding the monitoring of storage conditions through our HOBO system, heightened security measures and ease of physical access to the entire collection.

ACQUISITIONS

In 2017 the AGM was fortunate to acquire two works by internationally renowned Indigenous artists Annie Pootoogook and Jeff Thomas. These works are in line with the AGM's mission: First. New. Next., and contributes to a growing number of Indigenous artists within the Permanent Collection, including Rita Letendre, Robert Houle, Jane Ash Poitras, Carl Beam, Norval Morriseau, and Pitaloosie Saila.

Annie Pootoogook

(b. 1969, Cape Dorset; d. 2016, Ottawa)

Composition (Mother Knitting), 2006

Colored pencil, pencil & ink

Collection of the Art Gallery of Mississauga

Annie Pootoogook was one of the most notable Inuit artists in Canada, born into a family of accomplished Inuit artists. Pootoogook began drawing in 1997 under the encouragement of Kinngait Studios in Cape Dorset. She quickly developed a preference for drawing scenes from her own life, and became a prolific graphic artist in the intervening years.

This work is one of Pootoogook's renowned domestic interior scenes, depicting a woman knitting on the couch as she watches over her young child. Pootoogook depicts modern Inuit life as she saw it, rather than producing the traditional scenes that people in southern Canada have come to expect. There is tradition in Pootoogook's work, however – it is conveyed through the Inuit concept of *sulijuk*, meaning when something “is true or real.” Described as a chronicler, Pootoogook comments that her work is based on “emotional” or “difficult” incidents that she seeks to represent. Realized with coloured pencil on paper, her stark images reveal Inuit life as it adapts to accommodate southern culture within a still relatively closed society.



Jeff Thomas

What Happened to the Mississauga's?, 2017

Pigment print on archival paper

Collection of the Art Gallery of Mississauga

Donated by the artist

Jeff Thomas is focused on creating an image bank of his urban Iroquois experience, while fostering a conversation between the past and present. He is deeply concerned about the invisibility of Indigenous peoples in urban spaces and wants to tell their stories and reflect their real world experience. Thus, through the narratives constructed and revealed in this work he addresses the erasure of a culture and history. This panel is significant and captivating due to both its style and content.

What Happened to the Mississauga's? is a composite photographic work of four images, illustrating a way of arranging and displaying multiple images to communicate a variety of messages. This work is representative of Thomas's signature style, and other examples of such works have been commissioned by institutions such as the Royal Ontario Museum and Art Gallery of Ontario.

At the far left, the viewer is invited into Thomas's journey to seek historical markers representing the Mississauga people, and like him, to take the exit off the QEW into Mississauga. The trace of the artist is visible in this panel, as he scrawls "TRIBE" in blood-red, dripping letters, directly under the word Mississauga on the highway sign.

The next image is of a plaque that commemorated the "band of Mississauga" (Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation) who had a settlement on that site from 1826 to 1937. The plaque was located by the Mississauga Golf and Country Club. This photograph is a treasure as an important historical record since the plaque is no longer there and its current whereabouts unknown. The plaque speaks to a shameful point in the City's history, and evokes a larger national trend of assimilation and colonial genocide.

Moving from left to right, the plaque is juxtaposed with a historical photograph of Maun-qua-daus (alias George Henry), born-ca 1807—the original chief of the Objibwa Nation of the Credit (Upper Canada), taken from Library & Archives Canada. His name means "the great hero" or "courageous," and he was a Mississauga (Ojibwa) interpreter, mission worker, herbalist and performer.

In the final photograph on the far right, Thomas has created a dramatic image reflecting the past and present. In the background of the photo is an industrial site on the border of Mississauga and Oakville. To this setting Thomas adds his iconic figure – Chief Red Robe – a figurine that has been part of his *Indians on Tour* series since 2000. He constructs this image as a way to imagine what the sight must have looked like 200 years ago with the visible presence of Indigenous people.

Jeff Thomas's *What Happened to the Mississauga's?* serves as a reminder that the Indigenous history of this city must not be forgotten, and in fact should be reinvigorated, especially within this highly symbolic and problematic sesquicentennial year.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION | AGM RESOURCE CENTRE

Beginning in 2016, and thanks to the generous financial support of the Pendle Fund at the Community Foundation of Mississauga, the AGM presents selections from the permanent art collection in the Resource Centre. Changing with each exhibition period, these thematic groupings are accompanied by educational resources and activities. With this space, the AGM hopes to provide opportunities for deeper engagement between visitors, art and the community.

THE GATHERING PLACE: A TRIBUTE TO THE MATRIARCHS OF VISUAL ARTS MISSISSAUGA

The Gathering Place acknowledges the contributions of four senior female artists – Shirley Erskine, Lila Lewis Irving, Eileen Oswald and Doreen Renner – in developing the Mississauga arts community over the past 30 years. At times the student, the teacher, the board member, the "Artist of the Year" or the recipient of other similar accolades, each woman has – through her artistic practice – helped to grow and elevate the Mississauga arts scene.

In particular, their artistic and professional contributions to growing Visual Arts Mississauga (VAM) as a platform for presenting and promoting Mississauga-based artists have not gone unnoticed. Their notable vivaciousness suggests that creating art has helped to keep them young in spirit, and that in spite of rapidly evolving artistic tastes, they have shown tenacity and adaptability by harnessing new mediums and techniques.

ART OF WORDS | WORDS OF ART

Art of Words / Words of Art, a permanent art collection (PAC) intervention, grew out of the longstanding relationship between the AGM and Ink Movement – Mississauga Chapter. Four participants from this year's Ink Movement Youth Anthology competition were asked to engage with the AGM's collection and select a work that best reflected or spoke to their submitted piece of poetry or prose. The resulting exhibition displayed their written works alongside their selected PAC work with a brief description on the youth participant, their writing, and the AGM artwork. The visual and verbal dialogues created between the two forms of artistic expression reveal that the creative mind has no limits in the connections it can make, and that interpretation is in the eye of the beholder.

From over 65 submissions, the top written works were selected based on theme, language, impact and originality. The following four youth participants – Jordan Currie, Diya Jhuti, Abirami Sudharshan and Sonya Zhang – submitted outstanding work and were selected to participate in the AGM's PAC intervention.

VIEWS OF THE NORTH

George Hunter (1921-2013) is an acclaimed Canadian documentary photographer who spent seven decades capturing the lives of people on film. Hunter cited two trips to the High Arctic in 1946 on behalf of the National Film Board of Canada as his most memorable assignment.

The five photographs presented in exhibition represent just a few of the many photographs Hunter took during his time in the North. Capturing Inuit daily life, familial interactions, and human curiosity, Hunter's images beg the question: how has the southern gaze impacted perceptions of life in Canada's north, and in turn, how has this impacted Inuit self-perception? In posing this question, this PAC intervention intends to spark dialogue about the effect of southern perceptions of Inuit life as encapsulated in the photographs of George Hunter.

Views of the North lays the conceptual and imagic groundwork for urban-Iroquois photo-based artist Jeff Thomas' critical response to a different selection of photographs by George Hunter in the AGM's permanent art collection, with the intent to recontextualize said historical images of Inuit life from an Indigenous perspective.

BEYOND HUNTER'S LENS: RE-CAPTURING INUIT LIFE

This Permanent Collection intervention presents two works, one by the late Annie Pootoogook (1969–2016), acquired by the AGM just this year, and one by Pitaloosie Saila (1942–). Though markedly different in their artistic approach, both Pootoogook and Saila come from accomplished families of Inuit artists based in Cape Dorset (Kinngait), Nunavut. Moreover, at varying points in their careers, both women worked out of Kinngait Studios, an art space that, since it first opened in the 1960s, has made Cape Dorset the capital of Inuit Art in the North.

Beyond Hunter's Lens: Re-capturing Inuit Life positions the work of Pootoogook and Saila as visual reclamations of representation; both women honestly capture Inuit life in ways that complicate common perceptions, and in the process, reveal layers of both beauty and hardship to life in the North. Their work also speaks to the importance of the intergenerational transmission of cultural, spiritual, and artistic knowledge to the continued thrivance of Inuit life and art.

Beyond Hunter's Lens: Re-capturing Inuit Life responds to the AGM's previous Permanent Collection intervention, *Views of the North*, which presented photographs of Inuit taken by George Hunter during his time in the north during the 1940s.



Image credit: Installation view of *TRANSCENDING SIGNS*, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Resource Centre, September 7, 2017 – January 1, 2018.

TRANSCENDING SIGNS

The artists in this Permanent Collection activation utilize the strategies of humour and satire to explore the complexities of the diasporic experience and its implications for identity formation. Humour allows for a communication with the audience that is both immediate – such as the surprise of discovering plaza signage hung in an art gallery – and subtle, stemming from the juxtaposition of image and text, such as a witty title. Both works deal with the flattening of identity experienced in the contemporary context, in relation to instances of stereotype and the world of advertising.

Panchal Mansaram's *Holy Cow* (1994) quite literally combines the sacred and the profane to present a light-hearted treatment of reverent subject matter that doubles as a commentary on the fusion of East and West. Ken Lum calls upon the viewer of *Kings Mall* (2009) to see the work as a portrait for a community where the livelihoods of individuals from a multitude of cultures exist side-by-side – perhaps disjointed, but all too familiar in a local context. Both works present signifiers that immediately call up references to various cultures, but in subverting their easy reading, ask questions about who we are and how we reflect ourselves to the world.

OFF-SITE PAC EXHIBITIONS

UNMASKED

Mississauga Central Library

Ella Cooper, James Yeboah, Jeff Bierk & Tau Lewis

November 7, 2017 – January 15, 2018

Thanks to the generous support of the City of Mississauga's Culture Division Project Grant, the AGM mounted the first of a two part exhibition series which explore the history and stories of the Permanent Collection, through the inclusion of diverse contemporary voices.



Image credit: Installation view of *UNMASKED*, Mississauga Central Library, November 7, 2017 – January 15, 2018

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

To spark a discourse during Canada's highly symbolic sesquicentennial year, the AGM commits to providing a platform for those voices who have been excluded, and to spotlighting the problematic voices that have for too long been cherished and protected within the walls of the institution.

The contemporary artists presented within this exhibition have responded to selected works held within the AGM's Permanent Collection, and work to reclaim agency over their representations. They aim to expand upon and subvert a dialogue that was so rigidly enforced and perpetuated by problematic historical images, aesthetics and politics. For over a century people of colour, and the cultural objects they have created, have been positioned as a tool by western artists to convey a more "simple" and "pure" culture. These peoples and their aesthetics have been romanticized and even fetishized in an attempt to indicate an idealized independence from the problems that plagued "civilized societies" — while their own cultures were being annihilated under European colonialism.

The aesthetic of art produced within colonized nations has been and continues to be appropriated and misrepresented to further these ideas — bringing great wealth and status to artists and institutions who did so, while the works of Black artists have historically been plundered and relegated to the vitrines of natural history museums. Even in Canada, the history of collections and collecting practices is fraught with violence and erasure.

This exhibition aims to bring to light the fact that not only do these attitudes still persist, they are maintained literally and symbolically within galleries and museums. The AGM commits to unmasking these harmful and persistent ideologies, and to highlighting alternative voices in order to actively decolonize the Permanent Art Collection.

MEMBERSHIP | SPONSORSHIP

Individual memberships and corporate sponsorships play a large role in funding exhibitions and community programming at the Gallery. The AGM has a dedicated base of members who continue to donate at both personal and organizational levels enabling us to enhance and deepen our work within the community which is at the heart of everything we do.

During 2017, the Gallery remained in a strong financial position and was able to meet its operational costs and to bring in collaborative exhibitions through partnerships with the Royal Ontario Museum, the Family Camera Network, the YTB Gallery and Y+ Contemporary. Unfortunately in 2017, the plan to host an off-site exhibition sponsored through Oxford Properties, Square One Shopping Centre at their location could not be actualized. Conversations are in progress to look at other collaboration avenues in the new year.

Quick Facts:

Active Memberships	167
Members	275
Patrons & Donors	24
Sponsors, Advertisers & Corporate Members	12

AUCTION

The AGM's 14h Annual Art Auction continued a strong annual tradition of celebrating Canada's established and emerging artists while generating important operating revenue in support of the Gallery's exhibitions and programmes. A big thank you as well to all Oxford Properties, Square One Shopping Centre that came onboard as Gold Sponsor, contributing artists, the Committee, advertisers, art collectors, and volunteers, who generously gave of their time and money; resulting in a net contribution of approximately \$46,000 to the Gallery in 2017.

By The Numbers	
\$30,000	Approximate gross art sales from the fundraiser.
31	Total number of Artworks included in the auction
100%	Number of artworks Sold
31	Total number of artists who donated and participated in the fundraiser
5	Number of days where buyers can preview artworks included in the auction
364	Total number of people who participated during the Preview and Auction Night



Image credit: Photos from the 2017 Auction night featuring Jazzmin Bond, Mayor Bonnie Crombie, and Jay Mandarino. Photos by Yasmin Said of iCapture Photography.

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 Penelope Mathieson | Co-chair
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 Yvonne Monestier
 Sanjiv Purba
 Bob Tattersall
 Anju Virmani

Artists | Live Auction

Bonnie Devine
 Charles Pachter
 Chih-Chien Wang
 Claire Scherzinger
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 Erin Loree
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 Fausta Facciponte
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 Peter Adams
 Robin Hollingdrake
 Soheila Esfahani
 Tamara Thompson
 Warren Hoyano
 Youngo Verma

Gift in Kind

Art Toronto
 C-Banquets

Artists | 30th Anniversary Limited Edition Works

Andrew McPhail
Howard Podeswa
Libby Hague
Panchal Mansaram

Edward Jones
Saint Jimmy's Coffee
Robinson Event Rentals Inc.
New Concept Art
Steam Whistle
Charisma Florists

Acknowledgement

Jay Mandarino
Stephen Ranger (Auctioneer)

The Art Gallery of Mississauga would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their financial support.

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Victoria Nader
Vikas Kohli
Yoon Jin Jung
Yuen Ling Au Yeung
Zainub Verjee

SELECT MEDIA COVERAGE | 2017 EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMING

Our exhibitions and programming were featured and/or reviewed by the following media and publications.

Jennifer Laiwint: The Pick-Up Artist | *Canadian Art* | Heather White | January 22, 2018

What We Want to See in 2018 | *Canadian Art* | January 4, 2018

Libby Hague | Terence Dick's 2017 Hit List | Terence Dick - Akimblog | January 3, 2018

This artist created an alter ego to infiltrate the shady online world of pick-up artists | *Toronto Life* | Courtney Shea | December 20, 2017

She infiltrated the world of pick-up artists, and this art show is the result | CBC Arts | Leah Collins | November 16, 2017

Art in the Retrospect | *The Medium* | November 6, 2017

Must-Sees This Week: September 14 to 20, 2017 | *Canadian Art* | September 14, 2017

The Fine Line Between Personal Narratives | *The Medium* | September 11, 2017

History 2: The Family Album | Terence Dick - Akimblog Views | July 2017

Must-Sees This Week: July 27 to August 3, 2017 | *Canadian Art* | July 27, 2017

Must-Sees This Week: June 29 to July 5, 2017 | *Canadian Art* | June 29, 2017

PODCAST: FAMILY PHOTO OR PIECE OF HISTORY? | *The New Family* | Brandie Weikle | June 26, 2017

10 things to do in Mississauga for June 16 to June 18 | *Mississauga News* | June 16, 2017

Upcoming Event Aims to Amplify Marginalized Queer and Trans Voices in Mississauga | *Insauga* | June 7, 2017

What Family Photos Reveal About National Identity | *CityLab-The Atlantic* | Jessica Leigh Hester | June 2, 2017

ANNIE MACDONELL: The Levellers at the Art Gallery of Mississauga | Review | Terence Dick - Akimblog | May 31, 2017

Found photos left behind by fleeing families on display at AGM | *Mississauga News* | May 25, 2017

CONTACT Photography Festival looks inward for Canada 150 | *Globe and Mail* | May 5, 2017

Must-Sees This Week: May 4 to 10, 2017 | *Canadian Art* | May 4, 2017

Building community for Mississauga's racialized queer and trans residents | *Mississauga News* | March 20, 2017

Mississauga mayor tabbed as honorary chair of AGM art auction | *Mississauga News* | March 15, 2017

How do you want to be remembered? | *The Medium* | March 13, 2017

Video installation with 'powerful message' earns top spot at VAM show | *Mississauga News* | January 18, 2017

Local artists comment on global issues | *The Medium* | January 16, 2017

AGM VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME



Image credit: AGM Volunteers Caitlin Anderson and Devon Ross at the 3rd Annual V-Oscars

The AGM's volunteer team is made up of a diverse and dedicated group of individuals, offering skills and knowledge in several areas. The AGM Volunteer Programme includes Ambassador, Docent and Intern positions, and opportunities to assist with special events and projects. The Gallery makes the greatest effort to align these individuals with tasks that utilize and maximize their skill sets and interests. In 2017, our team grew with 44 new recruits, performing 4000 hours of service.

Our volunteers play an important role in the operation, mission and success of the gallery, making it possible to run numerous programmes, exhibitions and events free of charge to the people and communities of Mississauga. In recognition of their efforts and commitment, the AGM held a Volunteer Appreciation event in December where volunteers enjoyed lunch and a trip to the Blackwood Gallery. For the first time this year, the AGM was thrilled to nominate two outstanding volunteers for the Volunteer MBC, V-Oscars event.

"My initial intention to volunteer at the Art Gallery of Mississauga was to complete my high school volunteer hours in order to graduate. During my time here as an Ambassador, not only has my perception of art changed, but I have developed an interest in the arts. Also, because my role requires me to speak to the public, I have developed my social skills and have gained personal confidence having always been a shy person." – Syed Asif, Saturday Ambassador



Image credit: AGM Volunteer at the opening of *The Family Camera: Missing Chapters*

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