



## **Annual Public Meeting**

**Monday, December 9, 2013**

**Ottawa, Ontario**

**Remarks by Michael Tims**

**Chair of the Board of Trustees**

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Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening and welcome to the seventh Annual Public Meeting of the National Gallery of Canada. I am Michael Tims, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada.

The Annual Public Meeting provides an opportunity for the Gallery to report on its activities during the last fiscal year and to engage the public and our stakeholders. It offers an opportunity for us to highlight the Gallery's financial picture, and its programs, and to touch on future plans. My brief presentation will be followed by

that of Marc Mayer, our Director and CEO. We will be very happy to take any questions following Marc's presentation.

To begin, I'd like to introduce my colleagues on the Board of Trustees, beginning with:

- our newest appointee, Nezhat Khosrowshahi from Vancouver.
- Please welcome Harriet Walker of Toronto, a long-serving member of the Board, who was named Vice-Chair this past April.
- Paul Baay and Howie Kroon join us from Calgary;
- Liza Maheu and Allan Benoit from Winnipeg;
- and of course, from this area, we have Jean-François Béland from Gatineau, Québec;

I extend regrets on behalf of three Trustees: Marsha Sobey, a new Trustee from New Glasgow, Nova Scotia; Linda Hutchison from Kentville, Nova Scotia; and Guy Bourgeois from St-Bruno, Québec, who were not able to be with us tonight.

On behalf of my Board colleagues, let me say how delighted we are to be back in Ottawa for this Annual Public Meeting, having held the 2012 event in Quebec City. We always appreciate the opportunity to visit and interact with regional stakeholders from the visual arts across Canada. Similarly, we thoroughly enjoy our time in Ottawa, in this wonderful building.

As Marc will soon tell you, 2012-13 proved to be a year of important successes and great challenges for the National Gallery.

The Gallery distinguished itself in its presentation of *Van Gogh: Up Close*, which captivated audiences and achieved critical acclaim, both nationally and around the globe. The success of Van Gogh ranks as the Gallery's highest attended exhibition in the last 14 years and the fourth most visited in its history.

Equally impressive, the Gallery expanded Canada's national collection through the acquisition of outstanding works of art. Generous gifts, coupled with well-considered purchases by our curators, strengthen the national collection and reinforce the Gallery's standing as the country's premiere collecting and lending institution.

Consistent with our national mandate, the Gallery expanded its exciting *NGC@* partnership model, launching the National Gallery of Canada at the Winnipeg Art Gallery in January of 2013.

Through this innovative arrangement, the Gallery has presented some exceptional works from the national collection – including *Forty-Part Motet*, *Louise Bourgeois*, and Christian Marclay's fascinating work *The Clock* - in the famously lively artistic community that is Winnipeg. The Gallery will continue to explore other *NGC@* partnerships, enabling even more Canadians to experience their national collection where they live.

Stewardship of this exceptional building, now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, soared to new heights – literally - with the launch of the Great Hall window and roof replacement project. This multi-million dollar initiative - the most complex and costly since construction of the facility - is set to be completed in January of 2014, on budget and with only a minor delay.

The past year was not without its challenges. Longer-term financial sustainability necessitated the difficult decision to reduce staff levels and restructure key sectors of the organization this past February. My Board colleagues and I believe that this decision, albeit arduous, has better situated the Gallery for the future.

I mention with sadness the tragic and untimely death of Mr. Conrad Lafrèniere, an employee of Lafleur, who died accidentally while working on the Gallery's grounds. The Board of Trustees

and the entire institution extends our sympathies to the family, friends and colleagues of Mr. Lafrèniere.

In closing, and on behalf of the Board, I congratulate and thank our Director, his management team and all staff for their hard work and dedication to the Gallery. Our deep gratitude also goes to the National Gallery of Canada Foundation, and to all of our patrons and corporate partners for their generous support.

Special thanks to our cadre of volunteers, who give so willingly of their time and talent on our behalf.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Department of Canadian Heritage, and to our government partners for their ongoing support and collaboration. This year, we particularly note two Ministers – the Honourable James Moore, now the Minister of Industry, and our new Minister, the Honourable Shelly Glover.

On a personal note, please accept my best wishes to you and your families for a happy and healthy holiday season.

Thank you very much for your time. We will be please to respond to your questions after Marc Mayer's presentation.