



Annual Public Meeting
Monday, December 8, 2014
Ottawa, Ontario
Remarks by Marc Mayer
Director & CEO

Good evening ...

- Tonight, I will speak about the last fiscal year, 2013-2014.
- This year's Annual Report was tabled in Parliament in October by our Minister, the honourable Shelly Glover, and is now available in print and on our website.
- First, I would like to introduce our senior management team:
- Our Deputy Directors...
 - Julie Peckham, Chief Financial Officer
 - Paul Lang, Chief Curator
 - Jean-François Bilodeau, in charge of Advancement and Public Engagement
- And our Directors :
 - Matthew Symonds, in Corporate Secretariat and Ministerial Liaison
 - Sylvie Sarault, in Human Resources
 - Yves Théoret, in Exhibitions and Research
 - Stephen Gritt, in Conservation and Technical Research
- I'd also like to introduce Karen Colby-Stothart, CEO of the NGC Foundation.
- The National Gallery has a mandate to collect and maintain works of art, both Canadian and international, historic and contemporary.
- We also have the mandate to make the collection accessible to all Canadians and get them to further their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of art.
- For the last fiscal year, the Gallery identified three strategic priorities.
- The first one is Raising the Gallery's National Profile.
- We can achieve this goal partly through excellence in the management of our collections, judicious acquisitions, and outstanding exhibitions, programming and scholarship.
- But we must strive to be recognized for our ability to engage Canadians not only here at the Gallery, but also in various other venues across the country as well as online.
- We have succeeded in raising the national profile of the Gallery...
 - Through our innovative partnerships with other museums and academic institutions across the country,
 - By disseminating our exhibitions,

- By participating in those of others,
 - Or by contributing to conferences and publications.
- I will discuss a little later the details of our travelling exhibitions and distance education programs.
- The second priority is Investing in Infrastructure.
- In making investment in infrastructure a priority, we sought to ensure that the Gallery's facilities, systems, business tools, partnerships and networks continued to support the delivery of programs and services expected of a leading national institution.
- Our most significant infrastructure project, of course, was the renovation of the Great Hall and the replacement of its 1,500 windows.
- And because we are the Gallery we could not proceed with such major repair without attempting to integrate art into it. We covered the exterior of the Great Hall with *Iluliaq*, a monumental work of art featuring an iceberg, by Greenlandic artist Inuk Silis Høegh.
- The third priority is Diversifying Revenues.
- The museum wanted to establish at all levels an entrepreneurial culture, contributing to its financial sustainability and growth.
- We created an Advancement and Public Engagement department with ambitious goals to increase and diversify attendance, and to maximize operating revenues.
- We have invested new resources in partnership development, marketing and improving the visitor experience.
- Each year, the Gallery acquires new works for the national collection, in varied media and from various countries and periods.
- 2013–14 was no exception, as the Gallery acquired 338 works of art, 153 of which were donated as gifts. That's almost half.
- Here are some highlights.
- In Canadian Art: *Swamp with Logs*, by David Francis Thomson, a painting which predicts the work of Tom Thompson.
- This is a gift of the Council for Canadian-American Relations, through the generosity of Pamela and David Howard, of Walpole, New Hampshire.
- In International Contemporary Art: *Das Mißverständnis [The Misunderstanding]* of German artist Daniel Richter – a painting that illustrates a misunderstanding between humanity and nature ...
- In Contemporary Canadian Art: Althea Thauberger's video, *The persecution and assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as performed by the inmates of the Charenton Asylum under the direction of the Marquis de Sade as performed by the Prague-based experimental theatre company Akanda for the patients and staff of the Bohnice Psychiatric Hospital...*
- In European, American and Asian Art, Paul Henry's painting, *Thatched Cottages with Lake and Mountains Beyond*, from 1933–1935.
- Paul Henry was one of Ireland's most renowned landscape painters. He depicted the country's rural landscape at a time of growing nationalist sentiment.
- This was a purchase made with funds from the Estate of Philomena Rabbet, of Montreal, who left her entire estate to the Gallery with the proviso that we would purchase a work by an Irish artist.

- In European Drawings and Prints, the drawing of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, *Céphisa Aiming Her Arrow at her Lover in the Italian woods as Cupid Sleeps*, 1796
- The work is a preparatory drawing for *Cephisa Shoots Cupid's Bow*, a painting that is already part of the museum's collection.
- In Indigenous Art, a rather spectacular Hunting Coat made by a Naskapi Artist around 1840. The Naskapi are Innu from northern Quebec and Labrador.
- This is an exceptional example of a traditional painted caribou-hide coat – one of only about 140 known to exist.
- In Photographs, Ed Burtynsky's *Verona Walk*, Naples, Florida, from his Water series, which explores our use of water throughout the world.
- This is one of several works from the series that we acquired through purchase or gift.
- In international Photographs, South African photographer Guy Tillim's *Traders Jump off the Bridge*.
- Tillim's photography addresses the historical, social and political tensions of sub-Saharan Africa.
- This is a gift of Lewis Auerbach, of Ottawa, a member of the Photographs Collectors' Group, which donated several photographs.
- Of our 338 acquisitions, almost half are gifts. And here are two exceptional gifts ...
 - A painting by Christopher Pratt: *Argentia: The Ruins of Fort McAndrew: After the Cold War ...*
 - It portrays the abandoned American base of Fort McAndrew, Newfoundland used during the Cold War.
 - The painting of the Newfoundlander artist was purchased through the donations of a Torontonians group of philanthropists.
- Another gift, donated by Spring Hurlbut, from Toronto, and made by her partner, the late Arnaud Maggs, is *The Complete Prestige 12" Jazz Catalogue*, made in 1988 — one of Maggs's most famous and widely exhibited works.
- It consists of 828 photographs of four-digit cataloguing numbers of all the jazz albums released by the Prestige Record label.
- In typical Maggs fashion, it is displayed in a grid occupying an entire gallery wall.
- We presented some ground-breaking exhibitions in 2013-2014.
 - *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*,
 - *And Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890-1918*.
 - Both of these were ambitious, critically acclaimed exhibitions that will have a lasting impact on our understanding of art history.
 - We also presented Rubens, Van Dyck, *Jordeans*, as part of the Masterpiece in Focus series...
 - ...as well as *John Ruskin: Artist and Observer*,
 - *Michel Campeau: Icons of Obsolescence*:
 - *Robert Burley : The Disappearance of Darkness*;
 - And Charles Edenshaw

- One aspect of our mandate at the Gallery is to make known throughout Canada and internationally our collection of works of art.
- To this end, we presented in 2013-14 26 exhibitions in 21 Canadian and international sites.
- The outstanding exhibitions and travelling installations of the year are:
 - *40-part Motet* by Janet Cardiff, at the Cleveland Museum of Art, The Cloisters at the Metropolitan Museum, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery.
 - *The Paradise Institute* by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, at the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland.
 - *Gabor Szilasi: The Eloquence of the Everyday*, a partnership production with the Musée d'art de Joliette, presented at the Ryerson Image Centre.
 - *And Beautiful Monsters: Beasts and Fantastic Creatures in Early European Prints*, presented at the Kamloops Art Gallery.
- Among our 26 travelling exhibitions were the ngc@ collaborations with the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto, the Winnipeg Art Gallery and Art Gallery of Alberta.
- Since 2010, we have been working in partnership with these three museums to develop original exhibitions in their galleries with works from the national collection.
- These collaborations help us to achieve our strategic priority of raising our national profile.
- Among our ngc@ collaborations last year were:
 - *David Cronenberg: Through the Eye*, at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art;
 - *Misled by Nature: Contemporary Art and the Baroque*, which was originally conceived in partnership with the Art Gallery of Alberta and shown at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art last year;
 - and *Keith Haring* at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.
- Every two years the Museum participate in the Venice Biennale, an activity that supports the presence of Contemporary Canadian art on the international scene.
- In 2013 we staged in Venice the Toronto-based artist *Shary Boyle: Music for Silence* exhibition. More than 2250,000 visitors viewed the exposition.
- This outreach project was produced in partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts, and with the generous support of RBC Wealth Management, AIMIA and a community of enthusiastic philanthropists from across the country.
- Sponsorship efforts were very successful.
- Major support was secured for *Sakahàn* from the RBC Foundation, CN and First Air.
- Heffel Fine Art Auction House sponsored the *Artists, Architects and Artisans* exhibition.
- The *Charles Edenshaw* exhibition was presented by TD Bank Group, which also continues to support the Gallery's TD Internship program.
- The Canada Pavilion at the Venice Biennale was generously supported, as I said, by RBC Wealth Management and AIMIA.
- And Bell renewed its support for the Audioguide program.
- To better reach Canadians across the country, the Museum has developed a new online educational program for the student population.

- Using the adobe Connect technology, we conducted 16 webinars in cooperation with the educators, reaching 400 students from elementary to university levels.
- Have a look at this short video.
- Increasingly, as part of our efforts both to raise our national profile and engage new audiences, we have turned up the heat on our new media and social media activities.
- The Gallery launched its new online *NGC Magazine* in December 2012.
- And now, after only two years of operation, we have won a prize.
- Last month *NGC Magazine* received the gold award for Best Corporate Website at the Canadian Online Publishing Awards ceremony in Toronto, alongside the *Globe and Mail*, *Walrus* and other media stalwarts.
- In 2013-2014, *NGC Magazine* averaged almost 20,000 hits per month, which is a 65% increase from the previous year and five times the number of readers we were able to reach with our print magazine *Vernissage*.
- We have been able to expand our readership exponentially with the online magazine, partly because we can now use social media to point people directly to magazine articles.
- As you can see, combined attendance – in all venues that presented exhibitions produced by the NGC – totaled over one million, which represents a 20% increase over the previous year.
- This was largely due to the success of the Biennial exhibition in Venice and the works of art of Shary Boyle.
- However, local attendance is down. This was largely expected, as we had to engage in major renovations in the Great Hall, which reduced our ability to host events.
- Also, we were affected by major construction work on Sussex Drive that, at times, created serious accessibility issues for visitors.
- The number of visits on the Gallery's website has decreased in 2013-2014.
- But this underachievement is in fact explained by the huge success of the *Van Gogh: Up Close* exhibition in 2012-2013.
- The use of our websites is closely linked to the information needs of our visitors.
- Primarily, people are looking for opening hours and other practical details related to exhibitions.
- As you can see, however, web traffic increased compared to 2011-2012.
- So we are quite happy with these results.
- Total resources available to the Gallery include Parliamentary appropriations, self-generated operating revenues, contributions (which include donations and memberships) and sponsorships.
- In 2013–14, Parliamentary appropriations for operating and capital totaled 41 million dollars, or 86 % of the Gallery's total revenue.
- What you see on this slide is the remaining, self-generated revenue.
- Overall, the Gallery achieved almost 5 million dollars in self-generated revenue in 2013–14.
- The largest piece of the pie you see in the chart is Sponsorships and Contributions, representing 2.5 million dollars, or 34 % of revenue.
- Sponsorship efforts were up over the previous year.

- As for the contributions, the NGC Foundation, which is the Gallery's largest financial contributor, provided more than a million dollars.
- Several projects have been developed to attract new members and increase revenue.
- The promotional campaign with Groupon raised over \$21,000.
- A fundraising appeal to support the acquisition of a period frame for Benjamin West's *The Death of General Wolfe* raised over \$70,000.
- The second largest pie piece you see is revenue generated from the Bookstore and Publishing, which totaled 1.6 million dollars.
- ShopNGC achieved an all-time high in 2013-2014.
- The Gallery had total expenses for the year of almost 54 million dollars, which represents an almost 7 million-dollar decrease over the previous year.
- A significant portion of this decrease was a result of reduced preparation costs for *Sakahàn* compared to Van Gogh, especially in professional services, advertising, insurance and bookstore expenditures.
- Salaries and benefits continue to be the most significant cost for the Gallery, representing 39% of total expenses.
- We have had great success in 2013-14.
- This was a pivotal year in which we learned a lot, and we are better prepared for the future.
- Here is a glimpse of the great projects that we have in store for the coming years:
 - *Alex Colville*, next spring and summer;
 - Monet: A Bridge to *Modernity*, a focus exhibition that will be presented next fall in Ottawa only,
 - The first Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun retrospective, to be presented during the summer of 2016, in cooperation with Réunion des musées nationaux, Grand Palais, Paris, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
 - The 2017 celebrations and the renewal of the Canadian permanent collection galleries.
- I'm very proud of our staff...
- I'd like to thank them all, as well as...
 - the Government of Canada...
 - specifically the Department of Canadian Heritage,
 - our Minister, the Honourable Shelly Glover
 - our Board of Trustees,
 - our volunteers,
 - our sponsors,
 - our donors,
 - our members,
 - and especially our visitors.
- Thank you very much.
- Michael...

