



Speaking Notes
Marc Mayer, Director and CEO

National Gallery of Canada
2015 Annual Public Meeting and Reception

Monday, September 14, 2015 at 6:00 pm
Ferdinand Eckhardt Hall, Winnipeg Art Gallery

Good evening...

- It's a pleasure to be here this evening to talk about the past year at the National Gallery of Canada.
- The most recent Annual Report has not yet been tabled in Parliament, but we have copies of last year's report available.
- First, I would like to introduce our senior management team:
 - Julie Peckham, Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer;
 - Paul Lang, Deputy Director and Chief Curator;
 - Jean-François Bilodeau, Deputy Director, Advancement and Public Engagement;
 - Matthew Symonds, Director of Corporate Secretariat and Ministerial Liaison;
 - Sylvie Sarault, Director, Human Resources.
 - Unfortunately, Stephen Gritt, Director of Conservation and Technical Research, could not be here.
- The National Gallery has had a successful year, with a number of achievements we're proud of...
- We continue to work diligently to fulfill our mandate, an essential element of which is to collect and maintain works of art, both Canadian and international, historical and contemporary.
- To this end, each year, the Gallery acquires new works for the national collection.
- Some of the highlights of the past year are...
 - for our European collection, six works by Gustave Doré, including the magnificent landscape painting *Souvenir of Loch Lomond*...
 - and the bronze sculpture, *Fate and Love*, a gift from Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison of Minneapolis, Minnesota, where Mr. Harrison is a past Chair of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.
 - Both were major works of the summer exhibition *Gustave Doré: Master of Imagination*.
 - Also in European Art Jules Dalou's splendid terracotta, *A Young Mother from Boulogne Feeding her Child*.
 - Another spectacular gift to the Gallery last year, for our collection of Canadian art, was Jack Bush's *Pink with Border*, which was donated following the Bush retrospective exhibition.
 - For our collection of Indigenous art, we received a long-term loan of over 200 Inuit sculptures and works on paper, from the American Friends of the National Gallery, which in turn received them as a gift from the Burke Family of Chicago.

- The Gallery presented some ground-breaking exhibitions in 2014-15.
 - *Gustave Doré: master of Imagination...*
 - *Jack Bush...*
- Both of these were ambitious, critically acclaimed exhibitions that will have a lasting impact on our understanding of art history.
- We also presented...
 - *Shine a Light: Canadian Biennial 2014 ...*
 - *The Great War: The persuasive Power of Photography ...*
 - *MC. Escher: The Mathemagician...*
 - The Masterpiece in Focus exhibition, *Tom Thomson: The Jack Pine and The West Wind...*
 - *Charles Edenshaw...*
 - and Vera Frenkel's...*from the Transit Bar...*
- In this current fiscal year, I'd like to mention two successful, ambitious exhibitions held this past summer: BGL's Canadassimo at the Venice Biennale, and Alex Colville in Ottawa.
- Since 2010, the National Gallery of Canada collaborates with other Canadian museums by offering them exclusive access to works in the national collection.
- Together, we develop original exhibitions that are presented in exhibition space at our partner institutions.
- This past year's ngc@ collaborations with the Winnipeg Art Gallery were very successful.
- We presented ...
 - *Ragnar Kjartansson: The End;*
 - *Lynne Cohen: Between Something and Nothing;*
 - *Brian Jungen: Vienna;*
 - and on view now, *Ron Mueck.*
- These collaborations help us to achieve our strategic priority of raising our national profile.
- We also presented exhibitions in association with other institutions:
 - *From the Forest to the Sea: Emily Carr* in British Columbia, with the Dulwich Picture Gallery;
 - at the Canadian War Museum, *Transformations, A. Y. Jackson and Otto Dix;*
 - and *Morrice and Lyman in the company of Matisse*, at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec and at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario.
- A number of very successful partnership projects were launched:
 - Contemporary Conversations, with the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa and the U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies program. This series featured live conversations with artists Mary Watt, Nick Cave and most recently Eric Fischl.
 - a partnership with the Toronto International Film Festival, which featured narrated presentations of films whose subject is related to our mission such as *Watermark, Art and Craft*, and *Finding Vivian Maier*.
 - the Curatorial Studies Pilot Program, in collaboration with Carleton University;

- Other more longstanding partnerships continued:
 - the exhibition devoted to the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts, in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts;
 - the series of exhibitions of photographs from Library and Archives Canada;
 - and partnerships with the Music & Beyond festival, Chamberfest, RBC Bluesfest, the Ottawa International Animation Festival and the Walrus Foundation.
- The importance of social networks has increased significantly in recent years as we make efforts to raise the Gallery's national profile and attract new visitors.
- The number of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube followers increased by over 50% compared to the previous year.
- And after only two years in operation, 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.
- Combined attendance – in all venues that presented exhibitions produced by the NGC – totaled over 586,000 for the last fiscal year.
- Our attendance for December 2014 was the highest for that month in 8 years, and our January attendance was the highest in 12 years.
- Attendance figures have continued to exceed expectations; over 113,000 people saw the Alex Colville exhibition this summer.
- In 2014–15, Parliamentary appropriations totaled 50.6 million dollars: 10.2 million for acquisitions (which included unused acquisitions funds carried over from the previous year), and 40.4 million for operating and capital.
- Overall, the Gallery achieved 5.8 million dollars in self-generated revenue in 2014–15.
- We finished the year with a modest surplus of \$400,000.
- The National Gallery Foundation, which is our most significant donor, had a busy and successful year.
- Thanks to a major donation by the Donald R. Sobey Foundation, the Canadian Artists in Venice Endowment Fund was established to support our representation at the Venice Biennale.
- In recognition of the donor, a major Gallery space was named the Donald R. Sobey Family Gallery.
- Since this time, we have been able to name two other spaces in honour of donors: the Audain Gallery; and the Michael and Sonja Koerner Atrium.
- Sponsorship efforts were very successful.
- Among our most important sponsors were...
 - RBC Foundation,
 - RBC Wealth Management,
 - Enbridge,
 - Heffel Fine Art Auction House,
 - TD Bank Group,
 - AIMIA
 - and Bell.
- Other great exhibitions will soon be featured at the Gallery:
 - in October, *Monet: A Bridge to Modernity*, a focus exhibition that will be presented 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;
- Eugène Delacroix for summer 2018;
- and in 2019, Paul Gauguin.
- 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 sponsors, donors, members, volunteers and visitors.
- Thank you very much.
- Michael...