



ANNUAL REPORT/2021

THE ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN GALLERY



Contents



Image from A Night at the RMG, 2021 Members Event.

Land Acknowledgement	2
RMG Vision and Mission	4
Message from the Board Chair	5
Message from the CEO	6
Highlight of Statistics	7
Curatorial	10
RBC Artist Incubator Lab	20
Community + Digital Engagement	25
Learning + Engagement	34
Visitor Engagement	41
Supporters + Donors	45
Staff	53
Board of Directors	54
Strategic Plan Development	55

Land Acknowledgment



Mary Ann Barkhouse, Grace, bronze, 2007 in front of the Robert McLaughlin Gallery.

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is in the treaty lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. This land has been the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg since 1700; before that time, it was stewarded by various communities belonging to the Haudenosaunee and Wendat confederacies. It is covered under the Williams Treaties and the Dish with One Spoon Wampum.

This area continues to be home to many Indigenous people from across Mishiike Minisi. We recognize the sovereignty of all Indigenous nations and are grateful for the opportunity to learn, live, and work on this land.

We acknowledge that the RMG is in treaty land, and respect our collective responsibility to protect and nurture the land. We also recognize the continuing impacts of colonialism and our responsibilities to redress the ways this has helped shape our organization. We are committed to working to address structural inequities and to centering Indigenous voices in the gallery.

VISION

Art cultivates connected and caring communities.

As an artist-centered and community-oriented public art gallery in Durham region, we bring people from diverse backgrounds together to engage with art that inspires new perspectives, generates meaningful conversations, and creates a sense of belonging.

MISSION

We build relationships with diverse artists and communities through art.

The RMG works in collaboration with artists, partners, and audiences to present dynamic and inspiring collections, exhibitions, and programs in an inclusive and equitable environment.

"This is an important and much needed initiative. Art history and creation has been much neglected in our schools. Thank you for working to restore it's place and enrich our Durham students of all ages."

**Friday Frames Comment on
Facebook**

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Carrie Williamson
Chair, Board of Directors

2021 was a year of re-imagining at the RMG.

Our community connected in new creative ways.

At times, we visited the gallery spaces; we discovered new artists, we experienced thought provoking exhibits, we learned about our community history and the Painters 11. Those times at the gallery were some of my favourite memories of 2021. The RMG holds a special place in my heart, and I was so grateful to be able to visit again and participate in the special members events.

At times, we went online and experienced an interesting artist or curator talks; I enjoyed the flexibility of virtual platform program offerings. I was always so impressed with how the RMG team could offer and deliver such rich hybrid experiences.

When our CEO started to wonder if summer camp could be possible, the RMG created Durham's Camp in a Box program. It was so amazing to see our community partners come together to ensure children enjoyed summer activities.

In person, at home, or online, we connected for our love of art, artists, and our community. We came together and reimagined new possibilities. In doing so I like to think, we have deepened our connections.

In 2021, we also took a very collaborative approach to our strategic planning process. Thank you to RMG staff, the Board of Directors, our community partners, the public, and PROCESS consultants.

We are committed to the vision, mission, and values and look forward to the future.

I would like to take the opportunity to express endless gratitude to our members, donors, community partner organizations, and volunteers for your continued support. Thank you to our major funders the Canada Council for the Arts, City of Oshawa, Ontario Arts Council, and Ontario Trillium Foundation for their important and ongoing support.

To our truly remarkable CEO, Staff and board of Directors. Your experience, expertise, insight, passion, and dedication to the RMG and our community is inspiring; it shines in all that you do, every day in every way. Thank you.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Lauren Gould Chief Executive Officer

Another unexpected year of operations at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery; another year of creativity, connection, and care. We all became accustomed to the constant change with openings, closings, and reopenings. It became more important than ever to support artists and our community.

We embarked on a number of ambitious projects and programs throughout 2021, and I hope you'll enjoy reading about them as you explore our Annual Report. I want to highlight a few that made me feel truly proud:

- To bring a summer camp experience to children in need across the Region, the RMG conceived of and led Durham's Camp in a Box program partnering with 20 partner organizations and reaching 500 families.
- We continued to find success in offering hybrid arts experiences. Many exhibitions in the gallery were also available as a virtual tour or online component to provide access for all.
- Programming began onsite again with summer camps, homeschool groups, and a member's tour. Virtually we welcomed participants to artist talks and panel discussions, Indigenous film series, and art workshops for seniors in long-term care.
- We made exciting acquisitions within our defined collecting priorities focusing on purchasing works from equity deserving groups currently underrepresented in the Permanent Collection.
- Community partnerships continued to expand with the ethos of 'nothing about us, without us' in our collaborations with Camp Rainbow Phoenix, Community Development Council Durham, Durham College, Oshawa Youth Council, Tangled Art + Disability, amongst others.
- Our RBC Artist Incubator focused on developing hybrid residencies and found unique opportunities for developing deeper relationships because of longer timelines due to the pandemic[LG1] .

Amidst our programming the RMG also developed our new strategic plan for 2022-2024 – Connected, Creative, Caring with PROCESS consultants, continued to foster organizational sustainability, and undertook capital improvements and maintenance.

I am grateful to work with a staff team that embodies our values. They are the core of the RMG, vital to achieving our vision and mission. We are fortunate to have a committed, engaged Board of Directors. Thank you to our two chairs as we transitioned our leadership from Cheryl Blackman to Carrie Williamson in June 2021.

Thank you to our members, donors, and major funders including the Canada Council for the Arts, City of Oshawa, Ontario Arts Council, and Ontario Trillium Foundation. The sustained support of the RMG is what allows us to build relationships with diverse artists and communities through art.



39,500+

WEBSITE VISITORS

1,700+

LIVE DIGITAL
PROGRAMMING
ATTENDANCE

1,300+

PRE-RECORDED
PROGRAM VIEWS

ONLINE EXHIBITIONS

3,600+ visitors engaged with
Virtual RMG

L+E PARTICIPANTS

764 onsite participants in
learning activities

DIGITAL AUDIENCE

Live program attendance for
virtual programs tripled

We had **2,005** onsite visitors in 2021 and were closed from January to July, 2021
due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

INSTAGRAM

4,531 followers

TWITTER

5,152 followers

FACEBOOK

5,155 followers

E-NEWS

1,921 subscribers

TIKTOK

42 followers
+ over 6.6k views

All percentage increases are based on comparison between 2020 and 2021 data. All results as of December 31, 2021. Content stats are based on data collected at the end of December 2021.

“Always a great stop while in downtown Oshawa. Relaxed atmosphere and the exhibits change often so it's a new experience every time.”

Google Review





CURATORIAL



"Ron Eccles: Primary Structures" at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2021. Documentation by Toni Hafkenscheid.

CURATORIAL



"Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it" at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2021. Documentation by Toni Hafkenscheid.

Due to the lengthy 2021 lockdown, the Curatorial department extended 2020 exhibitions Will Kwan's *Terra Economicus*, *Aberrations: Photographs* from the Permanent Collection, and Rolph Scarlett: *Inner Vision* in order to give visitors more time to experience them. Once we reopened in August, we welcomed the community back with four new exhibitions Ron Eccles: *Primary Structures*, *Recent Acquisitions: Abstraction*, *Community Connections*, and Jaspal Birdi: *Can I Play Outside?*.

Bowmanville-based artist Ron Eccles has had a prolific career spanning more than five decades. His exhibition *Primary Structures* featured new work produced within the last decade, including his latest series *White Line Compositions* that explored memory and nature through his structured abstract paintings. To compliment Eccles' more geometric abstracts, simultaneously we had *Recent Acquisitions: Abstraction*, a Permanent Collection exhibition that included abstract acquisitions from the past five years. Included were recent acquisitions of works by Painters Eleven, early examples of important Canadian modernism, and contemporary abstract paintings. *Abstraction* is an important part of the RMG's story, and this exhibition highlighted our efforts to expand and strengthen this part of our history.

In the fall, we installed two exciting contemporary exhibitions *Undeliverable* and *Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew* | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it. *Undeliverable* was a continuation of artist Carmen Papalia's curatorial practice that envisions curation as a form of care. Together, the artists Vanessa Dion Fletcher, Chandra Melting Tallow, Jessica Karuhanga, *jes sachse*, Aislinn Thomas, and Carmen Papalia with Heather Kai-Smith created new work that centered disability experience in a collective effort to re-envision the museum around the demands and desires of the disabled bodymind. Presented across two spaces – *Tangled Art + Disability* and *The Robert McLaughlin Gallery* – the exhibition features ambitious new work that challenges institutional structures and centres mutual accountability.



Image from *A Night at the RMG*, 2021 Members Event.

Curated by Missy Leblanc and organized and circulated by TRUCK Contemporary Art, the exhibition *Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew* | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it celebrated and centred Indigenous language revitalization and ways of knowing. Featuring artists Joi T. Arcand, Richelle Bear Hat, Susan Blight, Tsēmā Igharas, Michelle Sylliboy, and Alberta Rose W./Ingniq, the exhibition gave space back to those artists whose practices deal with Indigenous languages in each of their visibilities, vulnerabilities, and regional voices. *Mamanaw Pekiskwewina* | *Mother Tongues: Dish With One Spoon Territory* was presented alongside the exhibition and developed in consultation with the local Indigenous community. Region-based Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language teachers, and educators from Indigenous Nations and organizations across Durham Region including from Alderville First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Black Duck Wild Rice, Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Community Circle, the Indigenous Education Office at the Durham Catholic District School Board, Indigenous Programs at Carea Community Health Centre, the First Peoples Indigenous Centre at Durham College, and Indigenous Education and Cultural Services at Ontario Tech University helped inform the project's design. With their input, we commissioned two community-informed murals by Indigenous artists with ancestral ties to the region, as well as held a two-part conversation series on the importance of Indigenous languages with local speakers.

In Gallery A, we presented three emerging artist exhibitions, Jaspal Birdi's *Can I Play Outside?*, *fervid surfacing* by Joy Wong and *How to Give Ghosts a Sunburn* by Florence Yee. The RBC Emerging Artist Residency program continues to produce exhibitions that are innovative, collaborative and experimental.

EXHIBITIONS

Painters Eleven: January 10, 2020 – August 16, 2021

Journeys: July 28, 2020 – June 19, 2022

Aberrations: September 5, 2020 – June 7, 2021

Will Kwan – Terra Economicus: October 2, 2020 – August 22, 2021

Rolph Scarlett – Inner Vision: November 14, 2020 – March 28, 2021

Jaspal Birdi – Can I Play Outside?: August 3, 2021 – September 5, 2021

Recent Acquisitions: Abstraction: August 3, 2021 – November 17, 2021

Ron Eccles – Primary Structures: August 3, 2021 – December 5, 2021

Community Connections: August 3, 2021 – December 5, 2021

Joy Wong – a fervid surfacing: September 14, 2021 – October 24, 2021

Undeliverable: September 18, 2021 - February 27, 2022

Florence Yee – How to Give Ghosts a Sunburn: October 30, 2021 – December 5, 2021

Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachihew | Like the winter snow kills the grass, the summer sun revives it: November 27, 2021 - April 17, 2022

Mamanaw Pekiskwewina | Mother Tongues: Dish With One Spoon Territory: November 27, 2021 – April 17, 2022

Complete Freedom: December 11, 2021 – June 5, 2022

Perspective/Prospective: December 11, 2021 – June 5, 2022

VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS

Brilliant Impressions: February 2021

Snapshots, Striving, and Silver Linings: Zines by the Oshawa Youth Council: March 2021

Water Signs: Echoes of Lake Ontario: April 2021

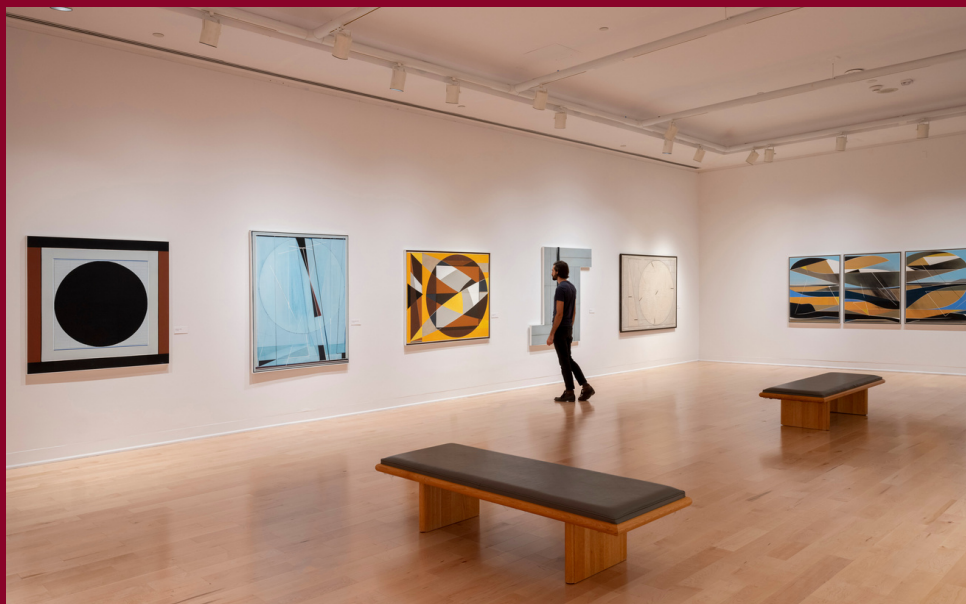
Christina Leslie – The Album: May 2021

Roaring 20s in Oshawa: June 2021

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT

RON ECCLES: PRIMARY STRUCTURES

This exhibition of Bowmanville-based artist Ron Eccles' abstract painting focused on a series of recent work called "White Line Compositions" and included additional works created within the last fifteen years. Eccles' abstract paintings draw inspiration from his frequent drives along the shoreline of Lake Ontario from Bowmanville to Port Hope, enjoying the patterned farmland, weather changes, and seasonal colours. His reflections on time, geography, and light manifest in his geometric and structured abstract paintings.



"Ron Eccles: Primary Structures" at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2021.
Documentation by Toni Hafkenscheid.



EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT

UNDELIVERABLE

Co-presented by Tangled Art + Disability, *Undeliverable* was a continuation of artist Carmen Papalia's curatorial practice. Envisioning curation as a form of care, the exhibition brought together six artists from the Mad, Deaf and disability community; Vanessa Dion Fletcher, Chandra Melting Tallow, Jessica Karuhanga, jes sachse, Aislinn Thomas, and Carmen Papalia with Heather Kai-Smith. The exhibition was a collective effort to re-envision the museum around the demands and desires of the disabled body/mind.

"Undeliverable" at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 2021. Documentation by Toni Hafkenscheid.

Each artists' contribution was a response to an invitation to produce work that they either have not previously had the support to realize or could not realize due to the limited context for disability culture and artistry within the wider contemporary art landscape. Together, their offerings center disability experience in its wholeness and serve as an invitation to, as disability artist and curator Eliza Chandler says, "dwell with disability."



15

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT

TASKOCH PIPON KONA KAH NIPA MUSKOSEYA, NEPIN PESIM ETI PIMACHIHEW | LIKE THE WINTER SNOW KILLS THE GRASS, THE SUMMER SUN REVIVES IT

JOI T. ARCAND, RICHELLE BEAR HAT, SUSAN BLIGHT, TSĒMĀ IGHARĀS, MICHELLE SYLLIBÓY, AND ALBERTA ROSE W./INGNIQ

CURATED BY MISSY LEBLANC, ORGANIZED AND CIRCULATED BY TRUCK CONTEMPORARY ART



This exhibition featured six Indigenous artists who create work in an Indigenous language from each of the major geographic regions of what is now known as Canada—Anishinaabemowin, Nēhiyawēwin, Nitsiipowahsiin, Tāttān, Uummarmiutun, and Komqwejwi'kasikl. Taskoch pipon kona kah nipa muskoseya, nepin pesim eti pimachichew celebrated and centred Indigenous language revitalization and ways of knowing by addressing and initiating discussions of how Indigenous languages intertwine with Indigenous epistemologies and how the dormancy and extinction of Indigenous languages leads to a hinderance of culture and knowledge. The exhibition brought together emerging and established Indigenous artists working across so-called Canada, giving space back to those artists whose practices deal with Indigenous languages in each of their visibilities, vulnerabilities, and regional voices.

ONLINE EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT

Pickering-based artist, Christina Leslie's online exhibition *The Album*, was a featured exhibition of the 2021 CONTACT Photography Festival. The online exhibition featured a new body of work exploring the question of how to memorialize the past when few images of it exist. Leslie's father was born in Jamaica in 1950, and only three images of his childhood remain. It was not until he immigrated to Canada at the age of 19 that there began a substantive photographic record of his life.



Images from Christina Leslie online exhibition, "The Album"



The artist's mother, on the other hand, also born in 1950, grew up in Canada with English/Canadian parents and her childhood was recorded at every stage. In the form of a collaged family photo album, Leslie's *The Album* memorializes her parents' individual and shared histories. Its pages are filled with images of their childhoods, marriage, and now 48-year relationship together and points to the slippery and permeable nature of memory and identity.



ACQUISITIONS

Deanna Bowen

Rupert Lanes (After Wall) 2019

chromogenic print on dibond

Edition 1 of 3

67.3 x 102 cm

Purchase, 2021

Teri Donovan

Alexandra Luke, Push/Pull 12017

oil, watercolour, collaged prints on inkjet film,

pencil, sand, collaged print

on paper, double-sided tape, on Mylar

177.8 x 213.4 cm

Gift of the artist, 2021

Teri Donovan

Isabel McLaughlin, Designing Nature 2017

oil on Mylar

203.2 x 182.9 cm

Gift of the artist, 2021

Aaron Jones
 Advantage Over 2019
 paper collage
 35.5 x 17.8 cm
 Purchase, 2021

Aaron Jones
 Energy Restoration 2019
 paper collage
 28 x 50.8 cm
 Purchase, 2021

Aaron Jones
 Untitled 2017
 paper collage
 40.9 x 28.6 cm
 Purchase, 2021

Shellie Zhang
 The Ties that Bind 2018/2021
 Edition 1 of 3
 117 x 122 cm
 Purchase, 2021

ACQUISITIONS



Teri Donovan, Push/Pull 12017, oil, watercolour, collaged prints on inkjet film, pencil, sand, collaged print on paper, double-sided tape, on Mylar 177.8 x 213.4 cm Gift of the artist, 2021



RBC ARTIST INCUBATOR LAB



Installation view of a fervid surfacing, Joy Wong at the RMG.

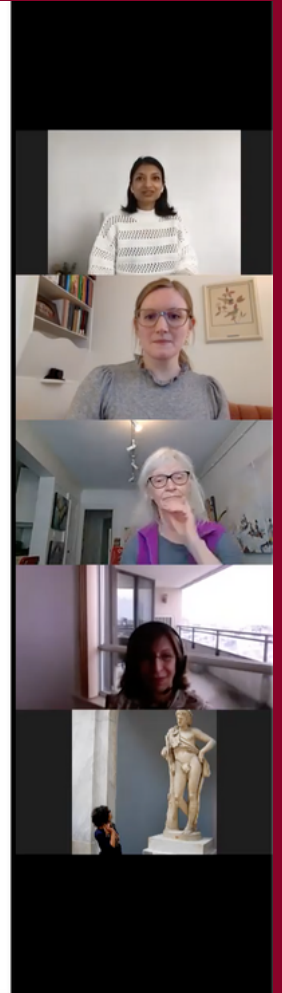
RBC EMERGING ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Since 2019, the RMG has supported emerging artistic practices and professional development for artists through the RBC Emerging Artist Residency program. In the program's third year, closures brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic curbed access to the residency's dedicated studio, so our support for artists moved online.

As our first virtual artists in residence, Joy Wong and Florence Yee were encouraged to create new work, experiment with bold ideas, and make meaningful connections with our visitors and community from their home studios. Wong explored new techniques and materials, using kombucha fermentation to create a sprawling installation of nets, structures, and SCOBY skins. During their residency, Yee produced a large text-based piece using photography and embroidery to recontextualize a personal memory and unpack monument-making as a social practice. By the fall, the RBC artist incubator lab was reopened for our third residency of the year. While in-residence, Laura Grier developed a new woodblock print series in a hybrid onsite/offsite residency. The work explores their relationship to Sahtúgot'ıne Kede (the Bear Lake Language) and objects from their daily life as an urban Dene person.

At every stage of the artists' residencies, we provide mentorship to help them grow in their practice and gain professional skills for the future. Audiences get to know the artists through storytelling videos published online and virtual studio visits. The residencies conclude with a fully-supported solo exhibition in Gallery A. We were delighted to present three thoughtful bodies of work in 2021 including Jaspal Birdi's *Can I Play Outside?*, which concluded her 2020 residency, as well as a fervid surfacing by Joy Wong and *How to Give Ghosts a Sunburn* by Florence Yee.

Over the past three years, the RBC Emerging Artist Residency has become a robust and sustainable program. In addition to supporting the creation of new work, it allows artists to connect with our team and audiences and to take the next steps in their careers. As we reflect on the success of the program so far, we look forward to deepening our support for emerging practices and generating more opportunities for the regional arts community to thrive.



ARTIST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

With the support of the RBC Foundation through the Emerging Artist Project, we host an ongoing series of free professional development workshops that are open all artists in the region. In 2021, we hosted a photography workshop on documenting artwork and a three-part series called connector that covered topics from networking to social media management.



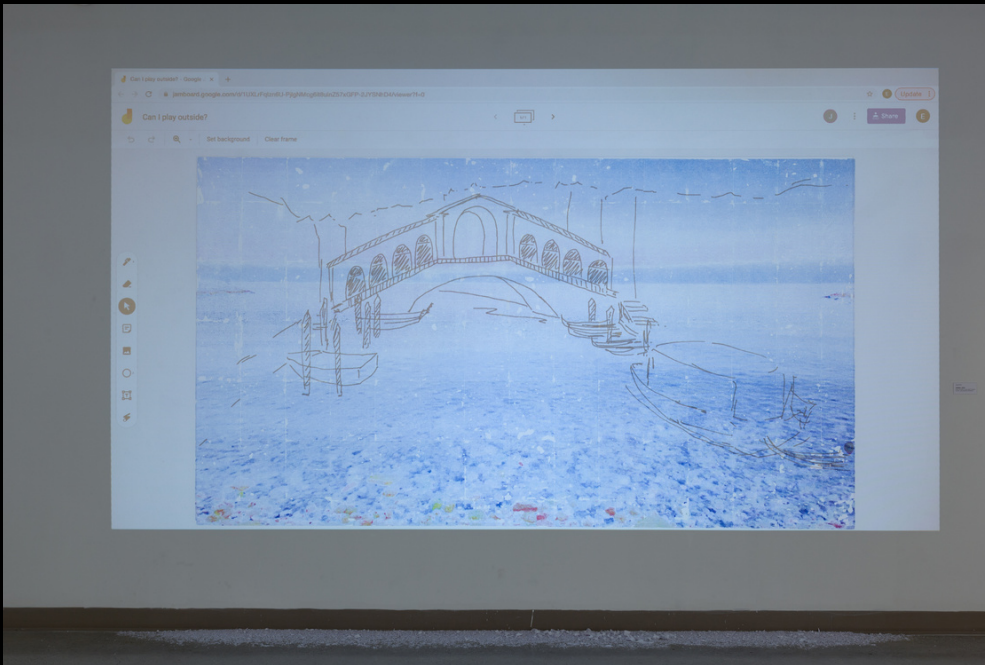
Foundation

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

- How to Document Your Artwork: March 4, 2021
 - connector part I: Add Contact – A Virtual Networking Event for Artists: May 12, 2021
 - connector part II: Social Media 101: May 26, 2021
 - connector part III: Storytelling and Audience Engagement: June 16, 2021
-



Florence Yee, *Please Do Not Touch*, 2021, hand embroidery on inkjet-printed cotton voile, polyester fringe, 30 embroidered thread circles.



Jaspal Birdi, *19h08m*, 2020, photo-transfer on wall, paper remains on floor, and projected whiteboard.



COMMUNITY + DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT



PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Positive Messages, crowdsourced project: February 16, 2021

Nourishing Ourselves, Nourishing the Land, panel discussion: February 18, 2021

Virtual Artist Talk and Drawing Event with Jaspal Birdi: February 24, 2021

Stories Behind the Art Part I, Culture Chats @ Lunch: March 12, 2021

Virtual Tour for Will Kwan - Terra Economicus: April 15, 2021

Stories Behind the Art Part II, Culture Chats @ Lunch: April 30, 2021

Christina Leslie Artist Talk + Q&A: May 13, 2021

Virtual Open Studio with Florence Yee, open studio sessions on Zoom: May 13 + 27, June 10 + 24, and July 8, 2021

Emerging Visions Artist Talks with the Durham College Thesis Class: June 14, 2021

Indigenous Film Screening: Viewing the Land Through the Lens of Fourth Cinema: June 1-30, 2021

Roaring 20s in Oshawa, lecture with Oshawa Public Libraries: July 28, 2021

Layers of Love x RMG, virtual interactive collage project: July-August 2021

Ferment: An Artist Talk + SCOPY Demo with Joy Wong, October 2, 2021

Welcome to the Studio and Residency Check-in, Instagram Live Studio Visits with Laura Grier:
October 16 and November 23, 2021

Current Exhibitions, Culture Chats @ Lunch: October 29, 2021

Minor Monuments: An Interactive Artist Talk with Florence Yee: November 9, 2021

In Conversation with Ron Eccles: November 25, 2021

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Virtual celebration with CDCD for the exhibition, Community Connections: February 17, 2021

Camp Rainbow Phoenix – Workshop 1: Collecting ALL Histories: July 20 and August 17, 2021

Camp Rainbow Phoenix – Workshop 2: Joy, Community, and You: July 21 and August 18, 2021

Exhibitions tour for seniors from Chartwell Retirement Residence: September 22, 2021

Perspective/Prospective Exhibition Presentation with Durham College: September 24, 2021

Exhibitions tour for students from the Fine Arts program at Durham College: November 9, 2021

Accessibility Advisory Committee Durham Region: Joint Forum presentation on Undeliverable: November 23, 2021



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) teamed up with Community Development Council Durham's (CDCD) Community Connections Program to highlight the experiences of newcomers and immigrants in Durham Region. This community project is part of an ongoing effort to address gaps and omissions in the Thomas Bouckley Collection, and to celebrate the community in its entirety.

The CDCD is a not-for-profit organization that has focused on enhancing the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities in Durham for more than 50 years. CDCD's Community Connections Program gives opportunities for new immigrants to Canada to practice English in conversation circles, learn about their community, meet new friends, and enjoy social events celebrating equity and inclusivity. Together, the RMG and the CDCD developed a community project aimed at giving participants an understanding about the history of their new community, as well as making them feel connected and a part of it. The participants were tasked with taking photographs that capture their lives in their new community, and consider their important role within it. Their contributions were celebrated in both an online and onsite exhibition, and their photos will be added to the Thomas Bouckley Collection, upholding Bouckley's vision to collect images that reflect the continued evolution of Oshawa.

A virtual celebration was held in February where participants enjoyed food from immigrant-owned Durham Region restaurants and shared their experiences and stories. When able to gather, participants joined curator Sonya Jones for an in person tour and tea. The RMG would like to thank all the participants for their incredible enthusiasm and willingness to share these important images of their lived experiences.



Images from partnership with Community Development Council Durham



INDIGENOUS FILM SCREENING

As part of Bawaajigewin Aboriginal Community Circle's slate of digital programming celebrating National Indigenous History Month, the RMG hosted on its website a month-long virtual film screening featuring works by Indigenous artists from across Turtle Island. The screening featured shorts films from a variety of genres including comedy, experimental, and documentary, with all the films relating somehow to Indigenous conceptions of land and nourishment. The digital program gave us an opportunity to introduce community members who might have been unfamiliar with Indigenous filmmaking to the fascinating world that is "fourth wave" cinema.



A Still from Karahkwenhawi Zoe Hopkins' 2009 short film *Tsi Tkahehtayen* (The Garden), which is entirely in Kanyen'kéha (Mohawk language)

FILMS SHOWN

LAKE

BY ALEXANDRA LAZARAWICH

WAITING FOR THE ICE TO MELT

BY DARLENE NAPONSE

THE PATIENT STORM

BY DANA CLAXTON

TSI TKAHÉHTAYEN

BY KARAHKWENHAWI ZOE LEIGH HOPKINS

THE GIFT

BY GARY FARMER

GATHER

BY SANJAY RAWAL

SOCIAL MEDIA #DIGITALRMG

We continued to use our social media channels in new and familiar ways during the pandemic. 2021 began with the gallery remaining closed, encouraging us to find new avenues to connect with our general audience, and with the artists that we support and engage with. As our programming and events remained online, we tied them all together with the hashtag, #DigitalRMG. Once the gallery reopened in August, many of our events, programming, and exhibitions existed in hybrid spaces. We continued to enrich our online space and shared content that was relevant to our digital and in-person audiences.

We began this year with our first ever Instagram artist takeover by Kosisochukwu Nnebe, one of the artists in the Made of Honey, Gold, and Marigold exhibition, which was on display at the RMG in 2020. We continued to share our digital space with artists and organizations, such as Womxn of Colour Durham Collective (WOCDC) and Aislinn Thomas, throughout the year through Instagram takeovers. We continued to share our collection with RMG Staff Picks and monthly themed Instagram Story polls. Over the year, we continued to integrate video into our online spaces by using Reels, posting on TikTok, and creating long and short form videos for artist talks and exhibition tours. Our online following continues to grow as we publish our own content and content from others. We continued to use our online channels to invite people back to the RMG upon reopening and develop our community connections.



Aislinn Thomas's Migraine Pain Scale that documents a personalized measure of the degree of migraine pain

AISLINN THOMAS INSTAGRAM TAKEOVER

In August 2021, we invited Aislinn Thomas to takeover our Instagram page, alongside her participation in our special exhibition co-presented with Tangled Art + Disability, Undeliverable. Aislinn Thomas is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice includes video, performance, sculpture, installation, and text. She culls material from everyday experiences and relationships, creating work that ranges from poignant to absurd, and at times straddles both. Her recent works explore the generative nature of disability while pushing up against conventional access measures.

Paired with her sculpture work in the exhibition, Aislinn's takeover supported the RMG's goal to implement a fragrance-free policy. The content posted consisted of her experiences with chronic pain, the research behind MCS (Multiple Chemical Sensitivity), the conceptual foundations of her work, and the first steps in becoming fragrance-free. As a part of an exhibition centered on accessibility, we included descriptive and alt text with all posts.

Aislinn shared multiple sources of information on MCS, fragrance research, and how to start living fragrance-free. This takeover sparked a conversation with our audiences, who appreciated an open dialogue about chronic pain and MCS.

**ongoing,
collective
effort
and
learning**

ONLINE HIGHLIGHT



LAYERS OF LOVE X RMG #LAYERSOFLOVERMG

One of our major social media projects we accomplished this year was Layers of Love. Layers of Love is a digital artist project created by Khadija Aziz and Laura Kay Keeling. It is an interactive collage-making website, created by Sheeza Aziz, which allows members of the public to explore their creativity and experiment with the medium of collage. Using digital layers made by Aziz, Keeling, and fellow artists kaya joan, Nicole Krstin, and Yahn Nemirovsky, the public are invited to use the website to create new images through trial and error and to trust in their own ability to see and create.

Brought together by the hashtag, #LayersofLoveRMG, we created a social media aggregator through curator.io that created a gallery of submissions. Through the submission process, the RMG and the artists that were a part of this project selected and featured these collages on our social media. It was also important to us and the Layers of Love team that the content posted was accessible. We included alternative text to all of our posts that described the layers used in each collage. This project encouraged our community to use the Layers of Love website and create collages for the chance to be featured on an artists', or Instagram page, ours.



LEARNING + ENGAGEMENT



LEARNING + ENGAGEMENT

Much like last year, 2021 proved to be a year of new engagements, collaborations and opportunities. The goal for 2021 was to offer both onsite and digital programs that aligned with established learning models and complied with COVID-19 onsite guidelines. The intent was also to gradually reintroduce onsite programming to allow participants to actively engage in looking at original artworks and enhance their experiences with hands-on studio projects.

With elementary field trips on hold due to COVID-19, like many galleries, the RMG relied on digital platforms to connect art with students. Two packaged programs were offered starting at the beginning of the year. In January 2021, pre-recorded, 30 minute virtual learning videos. Each of three professionally produced videos featured multidisciplinary interactives which could be combined with an interactive studio component for a nominal fee.

Later in the year, those videos and accompanying studio lesson plans were made available free on the website as a complete packaged resource for teachers. Secondly, Friday Frames, 30 minutes live streamed webinar programs were offered to teachers as a way to animate Permanent Collection artworks in facilitated discussions directly with an RMG educator. These programs were geared to specific age groups and were offered on a weekly rotation. It was immediately successful, reaching audiences of upwards of 130 participants, and averaging 50 participants per session. In total, 27 sessions were offered to over 800 participants. The most popular program was the Grade 4-6 programs that featured Indigenous artists and their work. There were lots of great feedback including a comment posted on Facebook. "This is an important and much needed initiative. Art history and creation has been much neglected in our schools. Thank you for working to restore its place and enrich our Durham students of all ages." In the fall, these sessions were generously supported by presenting sponsor Mendum Wealth Management and supporting sponsor Ontario Power Generation.



Image of RMG Summer Camp

Ontario Power Generation also generously sponsors OPG Sunday events. These free monthly events encourages families to create art together. In 2021, the events were held either as pre-recorded or live streamed sessions throughout the majority of the year. In September, the Learning and Engagement department delved back to onsite events. The events required registration with limited capacity and were planned with an outdoor art making component. OPG Sunday events are generous sponsored by Ontario Power Generation.

Other community education programs for 2021 included adult and children's art classes and camps. In the spring, past summer camp families were surveyed to measure the type of camp experience they might be looking for this summer. In the end, The Learning and Engagement department decided to offer two full day, onsite camp settings for Ages 5-7 and Ages 8-12 year olds. Two Young Canada Works (YCW) students were hired, one as a Head Learning Activator and the other as a Learning Activator. The RMG also secured two Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Learning Activators were hired to take on the task of ensuring energetic, lively, and COVID responsible camps. In total, 97 campers (95% of capacity limit) were able to take part in 7 weekly camps which took place in the Studio, the Lookout, in the exhibition spaces, and outdoors. In the end, 92% of surveyed parents indicated they were satisfied overall with Summer Camp and 100% of surveyed parents felt that the fine art projects in the camps added value to their child(ren)'s artistic education. The Learning and Engagement team took on a partnered Durham Camp in a Box initiative spearheaded by CEO, Lauren Gould. There were 20 partnering agencies that produced 500 boxes for families in need and were distributed in early July.

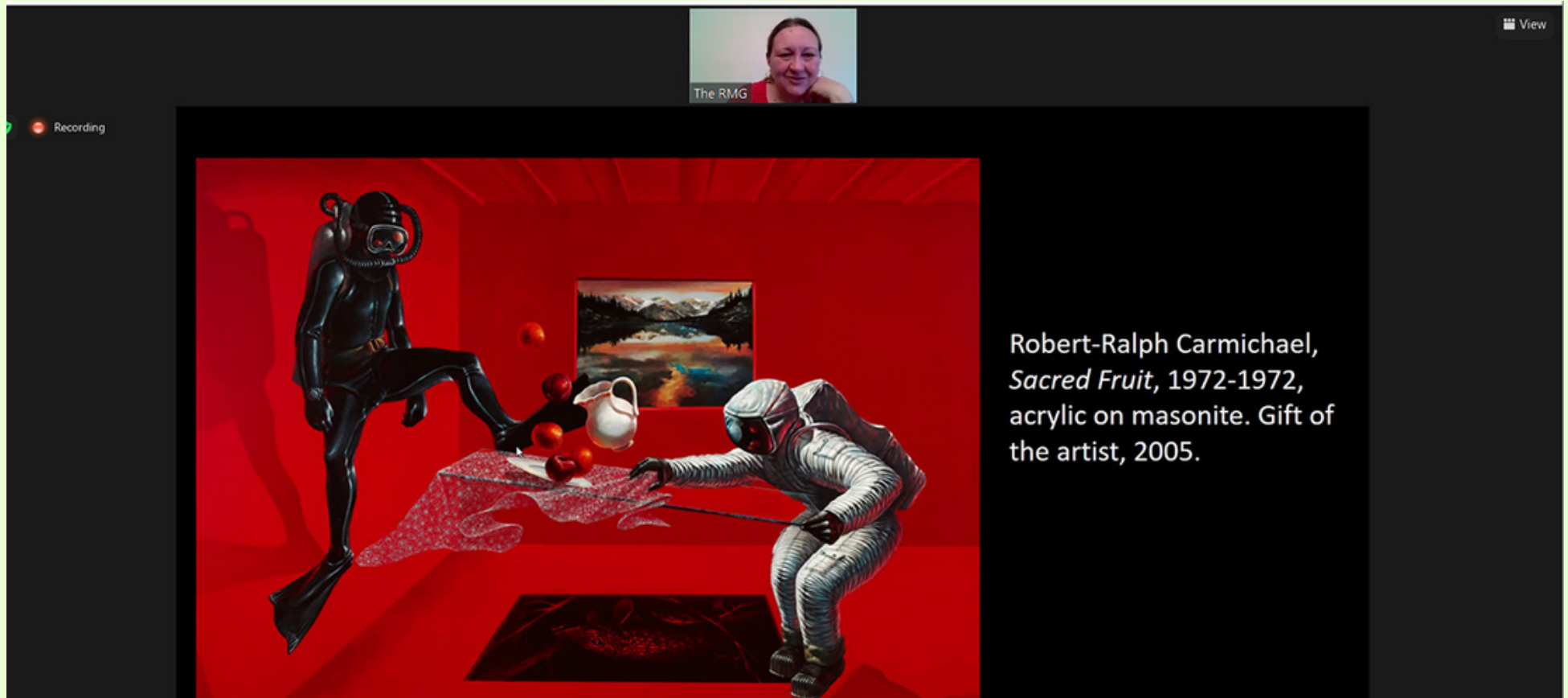
In the fall, the ongoing focus on community partnerships continued with Durham Homeschool Associations, Community Resource Support Services (CRSS), and two senior residences. All programs were well received with interest in continuing or expanding partnerships in 2022. The fall also brought a two new partnerships, Parkview Place and Sunrise Seniors Place, with support of a New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant, featured free art making workshops for seniors who faced isolation while sheltering in place. All surveyed participants expressed how they looked forward to the sessions and found them helpful as the pandemic continued to prevent social engagement opportunities elsewhere. In 2021, the Learning and Engagement department fulfilled programming needs through onsite and virtual platforms with continued support of fellow staff, artist instructors, volunteers, our audience and partners.



Image of artist facilitator Jen Morrison leading hands-on workshops for seniors in long term care.

LEARNING + ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- 27 Friday Frames sessions with 849 participants
- OPG Sunday programs with 212 participants
- 58 total participants for children programming (Spring and Fall)
- 97 campers in 7 weeks of Summer Camp
- 500 Durham Camp in a box program with 20 partners





DURHAM'S CAMP IN A BOX

As summer 2021 approached, it was clear that the ongoing pandemic would affect the enjoyment of children and youth across Durham Region. The RMG took a leadership role and brought together 20 other non-profit organizations to provide a unique camp experience for underserved families. Through collaboration with arts, culture, heritage, environment, and sports focused groups, we assembled 500 camp boxes to provide essential support distributed by Feed the Need Durham to their agencies. Raising over \$37,000, the project also provided much-needed financial support to charities who participated.

We are grateful to the participating organizations and donors for helping to make this project happen!

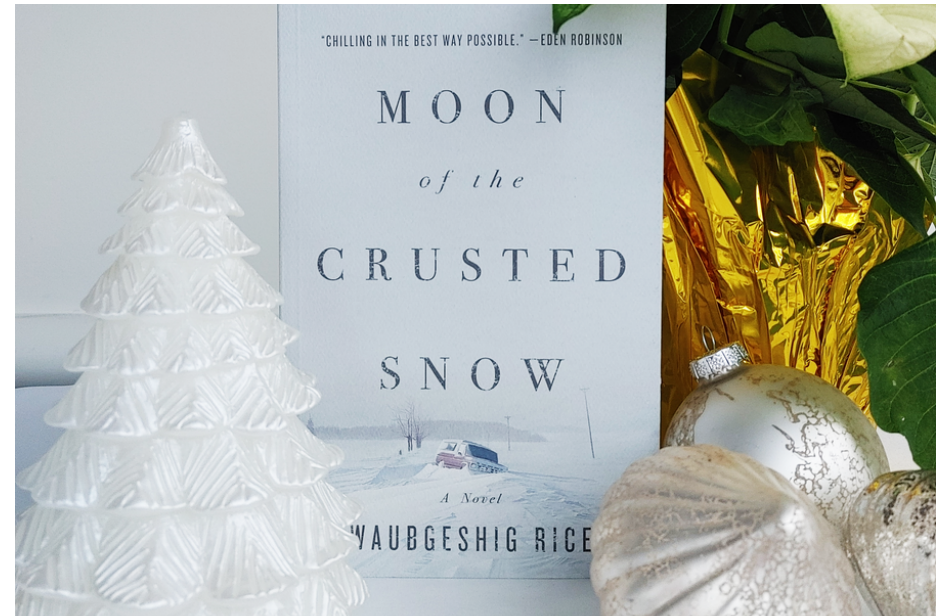
“The boxes were a fantastic way to help encourage new clients to come out to the program. Each family was able to not only receive the camp box, but also was connected with ongoing supports.”

-CAREA Community Health Centre

We are grateful to the participating organizations and donors for helping to make this project happen!



VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

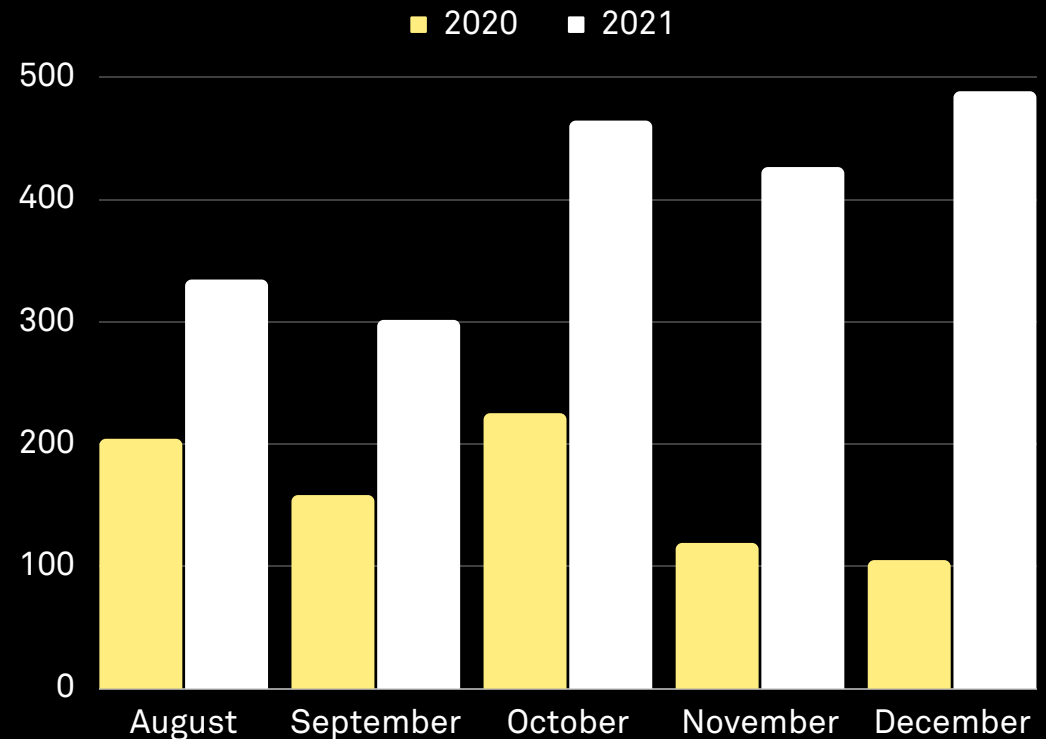


2021 VISITOR STATS

The RMG closed on December 21, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and reopened on August 3, 2021. In the time between reopening and the final day before we closed for the 2021 holidays, approximately 2,005 people visited the gallery, representing a 60% increase compared to the same time frame in 2020.

Daily attendance fluctuated throughout the year, however a few trends were apparent. Though we don't keep hourly statistics, the hours between 12:30-3 pm on weekends were the busiest. Saturdays were our busiest day of the week in 2021, with an average of 27 visitors every Saturday; on these days we noticed more families and groups coming through the gallery, whereas weekdays saw more individuals and couples. Our busiest day of the year was Saturday, December 18th, when 54 guests visited the Gallery.

The COVID protocols developed in 2020 were further augmented in 2021 in order to ensure the continued safety of staff and visitors. These additional protocols included a more thorough sign-in process that allowed us to facilitate contact tracing and to ensure that all visitors were fully vaccinated before entering. The vast majority of visitors were more than happy to follow these guidelines, and instances of potential guests neglecting to adhere to our COVID policies were extremely rare.



THE RMG SHOP



Restless Native Product images from the Shop Holiday Gift Guide

While sales were no doubt affected by the 7-month long shutdown in 2021, the RMG Shop made strides in developing its online presence, drafting process and training documents, and producing unique merchandise. Once the Gallery was allowed to welcome visitors in August, Shop sales spiked and remained high through the end of the year; the Shop even posted pre-pandemic revenue totals in October and November.

Two new vendors joined the RMG Shop in 2021: local roaster Aves Coffee, and purveyor of wool toques and gloves Fuzzycakes Knitwear. Additionally, loveJACK, the company that designs products based on the works of Jack Bush, returned its wares to the Shop, giving our visitors another way to appreciate and show their love for the prolific P11 member.

THE RMG SHOP

This year the RMG Shop also developed its first piece of merchandise using a work from the collection, producing a limited run of tote bags emblazoned with a reproduction of Eric Nasmith's 1976 woodcut Black Capped Chickadees. The bags were received by Shop staff in early August and were sold out by early November. With the knowledge that demand exists for RMG branded products as well as a thorough understanding of the product development process, 2022 ought to see the release of more in-house designed inventory.



Final "Chickadees" print on product tote bag.



Original print of "Chickadees" from the gallery collection.

Instagram was the primary way the Shop continued to connect with customers during the shutdown. Consistently posting photos of products allowed us to share with customers when new products were brought into the Shop, and to continue using our platform to highlight local vendors. On several occasions, there was a direct correlation between social media posts and online order being placed for the product advertised. In addition to the twice weekly posts, a weekly story series was developed to further encourage audience engagement, helping our following grow by 38% in 2021.



SUPPORTERS + DONORS





Staff welcome visitors upon reopening August 3, 2021.

2021 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Madison Armstrong
Shashi Bhatia
Cheryl Blackman
Adrienne Briggs
Anara Dorfman
Kevin Dougherty
Lory Drusian
Georgia Fullerton
Tristan Keller
Sasha Kilian-Searle

Sasha Kilian-Searle
Philip Marmina
Taba Merrikh
Aleksi Moriarty
Donna Moriarty
Gerard O'Neill
Annie Pinet
Mary Simpson
Carrie Williamson
Kegan Winters

2021 ACTIVE MEMBERS

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery is grateful to its many members, community supporters, corporate and foundation donors, sponsors, and government agencies for their donations. This support was particularly meaningful during 2020, which was a struggle for so many charitable, arts, and culture organizations. Our sincere thanks.

Painters 11 Circle

Peter & Virginia McLaughlin

Abstracts

Lauren Gould

Carrie Williamson

Lance Wilson

Upstarts

Shannon Winterstein

General Members

Andrew Amyot

Zelda Armstrong

Roberto Arruda

Luigia Ayotte

Barbara Barrett

Patricia Bayus

Marjatta Beasley

Samuel Bernier-Cormier

Michelle Betlem

Shashi Bhatia

Amberlea Black

Cheryl Blackman

Nesrin Blair

Stuart & Barbara Blower

Douglas Boyce

David Brandy

Marina Brenke

Jessica Bright

Elizabeth Brighton

Donna Brittain

Lee-Ann Brodeur

John Brooker

W. Brooks

Joanne Brown

Bruce & Helen Brown

Barbara Brown

Anne Marie Campbell

Kim Carnegie

Sarah Casey

M. Christine Castle

Gillian Churchill

Merle & Mary Ellen Cole

Sandra Collins

Molly Cross

Stephen Cruise

Tiffany Dawe

Roger Mullin & Diane Van Dusen

Émeraude Domingos-Mbuku

Maria Drazilov

Michael Drolet

Lory Drusian

Peter Dusek

Stanley Epstein

Michael Guzzo-Foliaro

Christy Ferencz

Ava Electra Fernandez

Jordan Forsey

Ingrid Forster

John Foster

Shelley Foster

John Foster

Lydia & Shawn Fowle

Mary Fowler

2021 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Marion & Tyler Fraser	Toni Hamel	Younes Bounhar & Amanda Large	Nadia Molinari
Ann Galbraith	Xin He	Sasha Lavoie	Christine Monod
Tara & Geoff Gallagher	John Healey	Brent Lawrence	Megan Moore
Jennifer Gardner	Janet Hendershot	Sydney-May Legault	Sarah Moore
Faith Garner	Philip Hulaj	Timothy Lindman	Lora Moore-Kakaletris
Andrew Gawrys	Brianne Hunte	Amanda Mackenzie	Donna & Aleksi Moriarty
Derek Giberson	Heekyung Hur	Joni MacLean	Ella Morton
Hedore Gionet	Judy Jaeger	Mary Marcon	Wendy Moses
Alino Giraldi	Hua Jin	George Marlow	Elliot & Violet Moyo
Elizabeth Glenney	Sonya Jones	Philip Marmina	Nancy Mueller
Natalie Goulet	Hannah Keating	Diane Marven	Varun Muriyanat
Marta Grabkowski	Crystal Keiller-Vardy	Rose Mary Mason	Todd Murrison
Ezra Graham	Monica Kendel	Donna Mayer	Isaac Musial
Roanna Green	Irja Ketola	Richard Mazar	Tyler Muzzin
Gary Greenwood	Chad Kirvan	Stuart McCall	Janis Newell
Loreen Greer	Ray & Cathy Kissel	Alan McCord	Mike Newman
Stephen Gregory	Margit Koivisto	David McDonald	Jaclyn Oldham
Branko Gregov	John Krasinski	Brendan McGowan	Rowan Palleske
Sean Guernsey	Heidi Krohnert	Sylvia McVicker	Marcia Parker
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Lydia Hallard	Deb Ladd	Erin Messier	Olivia Petrie
Bob Hambly	David Lamb	Nancy Miller	Karen Pikoulas

2021 ACTIVE MEMBERS



Image from A Night at the RMG, 2021 members' event.

Annie Pinet
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 Frank Politano
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 Andrew Popov
 Cynthia Postma
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 Susan & Todd Powless
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 Karyn Recollet
 Joanne Reeson
 Lola Reid Allin
 Ken Reinhardt
 Catherine Richards
 Aislinn Richardson
 Tom Ridout
 Arianna Righetti

Jameka Riley
 Stephen Rowlands
 Rebecca Salim
 James Dawson & Sally Jurcaba
 Eric Sangwine
 Fred Schaeffer
 Isabelle Seaborn
 Frank Seber
 Malicious Sheep
 Kathleen Sherba
 Darryl Sherman
 Carolyn Shilton
 Peter Simon
 Mary Simpson
 Suzanne Snyder
 Marjorie Sorrel
 Alex St. Germain
 Winston Stairs
 Joyce Stocker

Ron Stuart
 Erin Szikora
 Sage Szkabarnicki-Stuart
 Leila Timmins
 Marjorie Sorrell & Paul Upshall
 Raul Varillas
 Richard Vincil
 Helen Viveiros
 Anthony & Debra Waker
 Jennifer Welch
 Jess Wheelock
 Vanessa Whitely
 Sally Wildman
 Megan Wilk
 Amber Williams
 Kegan Winters
 David Wysotski
 Colleen Zavrel
 Yubin Zheng

DONORS + SUPPORTERS

Individual Donations

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Cheryl Blackman
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Ian Briggs
Sarah Chate
J. Doris Cherkas
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Émeraude Domingos-Mbuku
Gordon Dowsley
Lory Drusian
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Lauren Gould
Nick Graham
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Samantha Mogelonsky
Judith Morison
Marcia & Richard Parker
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Ted Rundle
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Jocelyn Shaw
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Elizabeth Stewart
Debbie Waker
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Ted & Elena Monchesky
Gerard O'Neill

Monthly Giving Circle

Judge & Mrs. Donald B. Dodds
Kevin & Pat-Vale Dougherty
Lory Drusian
Roanna Green
Nancy Miller
Aleksi Moriarty

Donations to the Permanent Collection

Teri Donovan

Corporate Donations

Community Development Council Durham
Harvey McKinnon Associates
Jim Dawson Photography
Peacock Lumber Ltd.
Pflag Canada - Durham Region
Region of Durham

Corporate Sponsors

Mendum Wealth Management
Ontario Power Generation
RBC Commercial Financial Services
TD Ready Commitment

Foundation Supporters

The Andrew Foundation
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
The Greenbriar Foundation
Ontario Arts Foundation
RBC Foundation

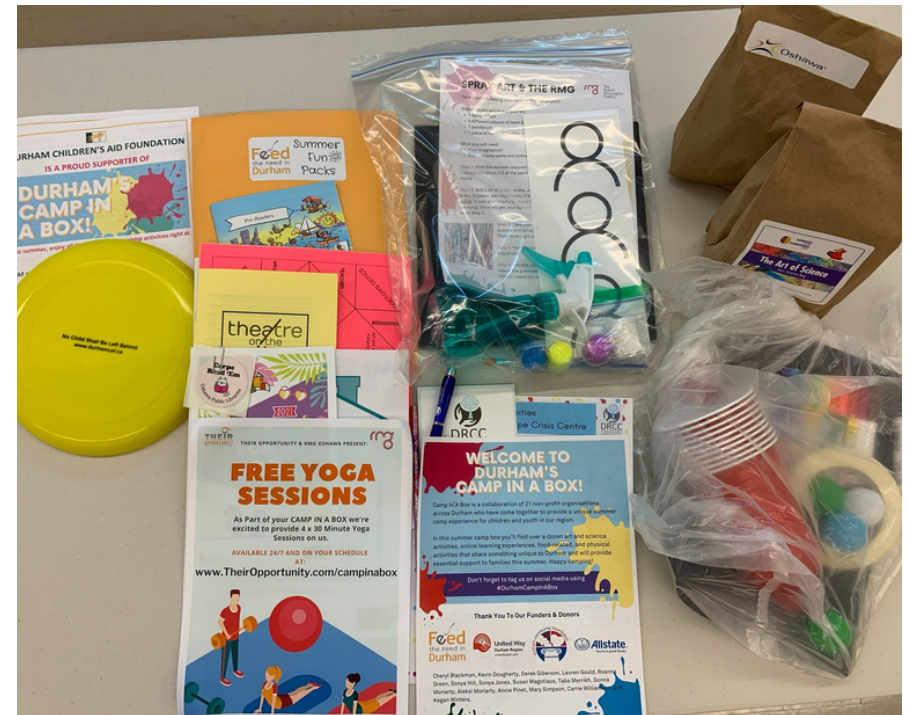
CAMP IN A BOX SUPPORTERS

Individual Donors

Cheryl Blackman
 Kevin & Pat-Vale Dougherty
 Derek Giberson
 Lauren Gould
 Roanna Green
 Sonya Hill
 Sonya Jones
 Susan Magotiaux
 Taba Merrikh
 Donna & Aleksi Moriarty
 Annie Pinet
 Mary Simpson
 Carrie Williamson
 Kegan Winters

Corporate & Foundation Supporters

Allstate Insurance
 Durham Community Foundation
 Region of Durham
 United Way
 Feed The Need Durham



Summer Camp In A Box 2021 participants' activity box.

DONORS + SUPPORTERS

Government Supporters

Canada Council for the Arts

Canadian Museums Association - Young Canada Works

Government of Canada

Department of Canadian Heritage

Employment and Social Development Canada

Ontario Arts Council

Ontario Trillium Foundation

The City of Oshawa

Preferred Partners 2020-2021

All or Nothing Brewhouse

Berry Hill Food Co.

Brew Wizards

Isabella's Chocolate Café

Spicy Affairs Indian Cuisine

This recognition list is accurate to June 1, 2022, and to the best of our abilities. If you notice any errors or omissions, please contact memberships@rmg.on.ca.



Conseil des Arts
du Canada

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for the Arts



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

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Permanent Staff

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Ingrid Forster, Manager, Communications + Digital Engagement

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Roanna Green, Director, Finance + Operations

Brianne Hunte, Social Media + Marketing Assistant

Sonya Jones, Curator of Collections

Victoria Karakian, Visitor Engagement Assistant

Hannah Keating, Associate Curator, Public Programs

Émeraude Domingos-Mbuku, Development + Membership Lead

Brendan McGowan, Security + Facilities Coordinator

Erin Messier, Visitor Engagement Assistant

Rowan Palleske, Visitor Engagement Assistant

Samuel Powless, Manager, Visitor Engagement + Facilities

Leila Timmins, Senior Curator

Jennifer Welch, Learning + Engagement Lead

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TJ Edger, Support Preparator

Valérie Frappier, Curatorial Assistant

Heather Riley, Curatorial Assistant

Erin Szikora, Assistant Curator, Indigenous Projects

Learning + Engagement Support Staff

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Melanie Close, Learning Facilitator

Marta Grabkowski, Head Learning Facilitator

Jameka Riley, Learning Facilitator

Lauren Shervill, Learning Facilitator

Nichole Tanashian, Learning Facilitator

Communications/Marketing Support Staff

Geann Gamboa, Communications Assistant

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Aleksi Moriarty

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Annie Pinet

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Councillor Derek Giberson

Ex-Officio

Lauren Gould, Chief Executive Officer



Staff and community partners walk along Lake Ontario, March 2021

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT 2022-2024

CONNECTED, CREATIVE, CARING

With the RMG's current plan, Forging Change Through Creativity, coming to an end in 2021, the team embarked a collaborative approach to develop our new strategic plan with PROCESS consultants. At the onset, the RMG and PROCESS prioritized critically thinking about incorporating equity, inclusion, accessibility, and justice within both the planning process and the final plan. We engaged the full staff team and Board of Directors, completed a public survey, and led a focus group with community partners.

Connected, Creative, Caring

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024



The strategic planning process was conducted with support from PROCESS, an urban and cultural planning and strategy studio.



The RMG's values of care; artist-centered and creative; equity and justice; relationship-based and collaborative; accessible and inclusive; accountable and open; led to a vision and mission that resonate with the team, and we hope, our community.

