
For Information

REPORT TITLE: Peel Art Gallery, Museum, and Archives Annual Update

FROM: Gary Kent, CPA, CGA, ICD.D, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To share the achievements of the Peel Art Gallery, Museum, and Archives (PAMA) over the past year.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- PAMA was closed to the public beginning in March 2020, reopening in April 2022 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - In 2021, PAMA presented three outdoor banner exhibitions and ten virtual exhibitions.
 - Virtual exhibitions garnered over 11,000 visitors in 2021.
 - In 2021, PAMA received or was awarded over \$1.7 million in Federal and Provincial funding to support vital upgrades, support community programming, and fund young worker programs.
 - PAMA started a critical upgrade and retrofit of collection storage facilities in 2021, which includes the replacement of the environmental controls systems (HVAC) that service the Museum and Archives collection storage vaults.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

Since the re-opening of the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA) in 2012, PAMA has enriched the Region of Peel and supported a Community for Life by safeguarding, sharing, and promoting arts and culture across Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga.

PAMA exists to share the stories of Peel by providing diverse opportunities for creative exploration and discussion to help build cohesive communities. ‘Nothing About Us, Without Us, our guiding principle ensures direct participation of communities represented in our exhibitions and programming.

As the “Cultural Hub” for the Region of Peel, PAMA has demonstrated leadership in community engagement through partnering to deliver local, national, and international content and experiences that resonates with residents.

PAMA was closed to the public beginning in March 2020, reopening in April 2022 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the closure, PAMA continued to provide artistic, cultural, and archival services to the Region of Peel through digital programming, online exhibitions,

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outreach, collections stewardship, digitization, and education programs. Virtual exhibitions garnered over 11,000 visitors in 2021.

Total virtual visitors were tracked as follows in 2021:

• Virtual Presentations / Events; Community partners	930
• Virtual Workshops and Outreach	1,647
• Archives Reference Requests	1,153
• Virtual Exhibition Visitors	11,617
• Web page views	163,782

2. COVID-19 Response

PAMA remained closed to the public in 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In efforts to continue community engagement and support, PAMA launched a variety of initiatives to support the mental health and well-being of the community during a difficult year. As part of our Creative Care Packages program, we delivered 135 creative kits to isolated seniors, with the help of community partners that included Brampton Meals on Wheels, Caledon Meals on Wheels, the Seva Food Bank and ICNA Relief Canada.

The *Peel Time Capsule* project was developed to showcase images, video, and documents crowd-sourced from the community during this unprecedented time.

The *Meditation Moments* series launched on April 10 in recognition of Slow Art Day and Stress Awareness Month. The series led both staff and external participants through guided meditation, which complimented beautiful artworks from the PAMA collection. *Meditation Moments* continued throughout 2021 and has been planned for 2022.

Staff continued to work in a hybrid model, both on site at PAMA and remotely throughout 2021 to ensure appropriate care of collections and the continuance of environmental controls systems (HVAC) construction activities.

3. Exhibitions

While pandemic restrictions continued to limit in person visitation, focus shifted to outdoor and virtual exhibitions. In 2021, PAMA presented three outdoor banner exhibitions and ten virtual exhibitions, including the following:

Outdoor Banner Exhibitions

- Aman Chahal: *9:30 pm at Harmandir Sahib* (in celebration of Sikh Heritage Month)
- Sara Angelucci: *Botanica Colossi* (in partnership with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival)
- Katherine Takpannie: *One*

Museum Exhibitions

- *Our Voices, Our Journeys*
- *Peel Time Capsule*
- *Inspiring Stories of Women in the PAMA Collections*
- *Stories of Service and Sacrifice*

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Partner Exhibitions

- *Morphology*: 360° virtual tour launched in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation Foundation and Lakeview Community Partners (an update to *Morphology*)
- *Photovoice: A Newcomer's Journey*, created in partnership with MOYO Health and Community Services (MOYOHCS)
- *2SLGBTQ+ Digital Artist Residency* create by The Arts, Culture and Creative Industry Development Agency (ACCIDA) and MOYOHCS

4. Programming

As a place of learning, PAMA continued to foster dialogue that explored themes of belonging, home, and displacement. On Canada's first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, PAMA mounted a live art installation on the front lawn. *Hope and Healing Canada* by Tracey-Mae Chambers depicted the artist's personal journey of reclaiming her Indigenous identity. It was an inspiring representation of many of the challenges that members of our Indigenous communities face due to colonization and systemic displacement.

In August 2021, artists of all skill levels were invited to take part in an exciting day of creativity and to enter their work to win one of three People's Choice awards made possible by John Cutruzzola's PAMA Arts Endowment Fund. Artists, working in their preferred medium and style, were asked to interpret any of the natural areas, streetscapes, buildings and/or people from across Peel Region. The event was a great success, with forty artists taking part and more than 3,000 community members voting for their favourite artwork.

PAMA continued to support local schools during the closure through the addition and distribution of digitized learning resources in support of online learning.

PAMA established its first PAMA Youth Council, with the goal of supporting and empowering local youth in 2021. Youth Council members were provided with opportunities to share their stories and build community connections through exhibitions and programming created for youth by youth.

Interactive virtual workshops were developed in absence of senior's outreach programming to ensure that PAMA continued arts and historical engagement for seniors in long-term care centres.

5. Program Area Highlights

a. Art Gallery

In 2021, the Art Gallery team expanded PAMA's permanent art collection with over one hundred acquisitions. Key acquisitions included:

- Artist, psychiatrist, and long-time Brampton resident, Dr. Z.R. Mech's donated 50 architectural renderings of private houses and quaint images of "old" Brampton.
- A large-scale donation by an international collector of etchings by Caroline and Franklin Armington.
- The purchase of photographic works by Nigerian-born, Toronto-based Bidemi Oloyede, with the financial assistance of the David Somers Works on Paper

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Endowment Fund. This fund allows PAMA to proactively seek out works that add to the diversity of the collection.

b. Museum

Several long-term projects to preserve and increase access to the artifacts in the Museum collection, including transitioning to a new digital asset management system took place in 2021.

The PAMA Museum team was awarded a Healthy Communities Initiative Grant, funded by the Community Foundations of Canada. This grant will support opportunities for PAMA staff to host meaningful conversations with members of Indigenous communities who have connections to Peel.

The Museum staff assessed and packed over 13,000 artifacts to be moved off-site for cleaning and remediation during the closure.

c. Archives

While PAMA was closed to the public in 2021, the Archives team focused on several critical projects aimed at preserving our collections and developing our archival program. Key accomplishments include:

- Transfer of a letter and an original hand-coloured sketch, *Sundance Ceremony*, drawn by noted Lakota leader and artist Standing Bear, to the Oglala Lakota College, Woksape Tipi Archives and Tribal Repository in Kyle, South Dakota.
- Launch of a feasibility study to identify long-term needs and business requirements related to staffing, collections expansion and processing, storage needs and future building requirements.
- Relocation of the entire archival collection to a temporary storage facility in support of HVAC construction and upgraded storage vaults.
- Response to more than 1,100 complex archival inquiries.

PAMA Digital Asset Management

In 2021, the Archives, Art Gallery, and Museum staff focused attention on improving the management of digital assets with the introduction of a new collections management system (CMS). The CMS gives greater power to collections and curatorial staff to catalogue, research and monitor PAMA's permanent collections. Throughout 2021, staff were focused on data cleaning, updating information, and adding images to CMS records to aid internal research and in preparation for the launch of an online public access catalogue (OPAC). Set to launch in 2022, the OPAC will allow members of the public to search for artworks, documents, and objects in any of PAMA's collections.

6. Grants and Funding

In 2021, PAMA received or was awarded over \$1.7 million in Federal and Provincial funding to support vital upgrades, support community programming, and to fund young worker programs. Of that amount, PAMA was awarded \$1.6 million in funding for a new HVAC system to improve the year-round visitor experience and to preserve our collections of art, artifacts, and documents.

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Through the generosity of the Brampton and Caledon Community Foundation, PAMA received financial support to distribute 224 Creative Expressions instructional kits across five schools located within the Region of Peel. The Creative Expression program offers art workshops for adults and children with mental or physical challenges.

7. Care of Collections and HVAC Upgrades

PAMA started a critical upgrade and retrofit of collection storage facilities in 2021, which includes the replacement of the HVAC that service the Museum and Archives collection storage vaults.

The new HVAC system will greatly improve PAMA's ability to preserve the collections by providing increased control of temperature, humidity levels and airflow.

Mould abatement of the Museum collection continued through a third-party vendor. Artifacts will be returned to PAMA upon completion of HVAC construction in early Autumn 2022.

Staff will continue to identify required and ad-hoc maintenance work as part of routine building upkeep and capital planning to ensure a good state of repair.

The deaccessioning process will be utilized to remove duplicate, hazardous, unsalvageable, and irrelevant items for the Museum collection to reduce storage needs in future.

CONCLUSION

PAMA is a well-established and trusted cultural institution serving Peel residents through dynamic exhibitions, programs, and quality experiences that foster inclusivity, connectivity, and collaboration. PAMA will continue to work on objectives that support a Community for Life, including upgrades to the facility which will provide an environment in which visitors feel safe to explore, learn and connect.

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