

**CITY OF SASKATOON
PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT
2015 & 2016**

Overview

The City of Saskatoon Public Art Advisory Committee and Public Art Policy C10-025 were established by City Council at its March 31, 2014 meeting as the successor to the Visual Arts Placement Jury effective January 1, 2015. The PAAC is based on a renewed commitment by Council to widen and deepen citizen engagement in developing the role and presence of public art in Saskatoon in its contribution to the strengthening of our community and our quality of life.

The two years since the inception of PAAC have seen a number of major achievements in the growth of public art in Saskatoon, which this report highlights. For members of the Committee it has been a privilege to have been part of these achievements and be able to support this most important aspect of our civic life.

We have been encouraged by the increase to the PAAC's 2017 budget and also by the growing impact of the City's commitment to incorporating public art into civic capital projects as a percent for art. We are fully confident that the citizens of Saskatoon will appreciate the value of this initiative. We are also equally confident that this will help stimulate interest in the private sector and encourage its members to make their own investments.

The Committee's work is an ongoing learning process as we explore the many ways in which we can provide opportunities for members themselves and the public at large to be exposed to and excited about the prospects for a widening range of what public art can be in Saskatoon.

The PAAC is submitting its annual report on its activities to City Council via the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services in accordance with its Terms of Reference. The PAAC met a total of 12 times in 2015 and 2016.

Terms of Reference

- to adjudicate public art on behalf of the Administration and City Council for placement in open space, civic facilities and other City- owned property, with the exception of the Mendel Art Gallery/Remai Modern Art Gallery of Saskatchewan;
- to provide advice to City Council on the purchase and donation of works of art,
- to provide advice to Administration concerning the de-accessioning of artworks;
- to assist in promoting public awareness of the City's Public Art Program including the education of artists and community groups regarding the program.

Status of Appointment

Total Membership: 7. Appointed by Council: 7.

Committee members are residents of the City of Saskatoon with at least four members being able to demonstrate a level of competency in one of the following areas:

- Visual arts
- New media
- Performing arts
- Arts administration
- Aboriginal art and culture
- Architecture
- Landscape architecture

- Design
- Arts education

The Advisory Committee reports to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services.

Membership

- Mr. Jeremy Morgan – appointed January 1, 2015 to the end of 2016; reappointed to end of 2017.
- Ms. Joan Borsa – appointed January 1, 2015 to end of 2016; reappointed to the end of 2017.
- Mr. Ian Grove - appointed January 1, 2015 to the end of 2016; resigned July 2016.
- Ms. Anahit Falihi – appointed January 1, 2015 to the end of 2016; reappointed to the end of 2017.
- Mr. Don Gallo – appointed January 1, 2015 to end of 2016; resigned June 2015.
- Ms. Anne McElroy – appointed January 1, 2015 to end of 2016; resigned August 2016.
- Ms. Barbara Stehwien - appointed March 23, 2015 to the end of 2016; reappointed to end of 2017.
- Ms. Gale Hagblom - appointed November 23, 2015 to the end of 2017.
- Ms. Muveddet Al-Katib - appointed January 1, 2017 to end of 2018.
- Ms. Tamara Rusnak – appointed January 1, 2017 to the end of 2018.

Placemaker Program

One of the major responsibilities of the Committee is to work with the City's Urban Design department in support of the Placemaker Program and in particular to assist in the renewal of the program and

to adjudicate artists' applications to the program. For the period of the Report, the Committee has participated in two Placemaker competitions as follows:

The 2015 program competition celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Placemaker Program:

Jinzhe Cui in collaboration with Andrea Desroches, Jeff Chief and Jaipei Wang, *66 Physiognomies*.

The 2016 program:

Birido, *River Reflection*;

Craig Campbell, *Priscilla, Queen of the Prairies*;

Heike Fink, *Catch YOUR Dream*;

Cate Francis, *The Paper Wildlife Conservancy*;

Jason Gress, *Coming Soon*;

Daren Gowan, *Untitled*;

Josh Jacobson, *Habitual Synthesis*; and,

Jeremy Tsang, *An Easter Dream of the West*.

Members of the Committee joined with the artists, civic officials and members of the public in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Placemaker Program at a well-attended and enthusiastically received ceremony at the Main Branch of the Public Library. The highlight of the event was the launch of the 20th Anniversary catalogue produced by Jinzhe Cui and her colleagues featuring the 66 works of art that are in the Program.

The Committee also supported a number of successful events organized by City staff that provided opportunities for engagement between the public and artists whose work is in the Program.

The bus tour of the existing Placemaker projects was a useful means of becoming directly familiar with the works in the program and their physical conditions and in understanding their cultural and geographic locations.

The Placemaker Program is also an important opportunity for the Committee to engage with representatives of the City's Business Improvement Districts and to share ideas and perspectives on the role that public art plays in their districts.

Truth and Reconciliation

In the spirit of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Committee participated in the selection of the *Murdered and Missing Aboriginal Women* commission awarded to First Nations artist Lionel Peyachew and scheduled to be unveiled in 2017. This commission was a partnership involving the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Saskatoon Police Service.

In the same spirit, as the year ended the Committee was anticipating the Canada 150 project *Where our Paths Cross* sponsored by the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the City of Saskatoon.

The Calls to Action of the Commission Report will be a constant presence with the Committee and an important consideration in its deliberations.

Partnerships

In September 2016, the PAAC participated in the return visit of noted Houston artist Rick Lowe, founder of Project Row Houses, who held public talks and an engagement process centered in the Riversdale community.

In this project PAAC partnered with the ICCC Urban Change Working Group at the University of Saskatchewan, PAVED Arts, AKA Artist-Run and Great Places.

The community and media interest in the project reinforced the Committee's perception of the general interest in public art and the importance of artist-community engagement. It is the Committee's intention to initiate other forms of artist-community engagement which will be finalized in 2017. One element of this will be the opportunity for Saskatoon artists to gain exposure to a wider variety of public art practices as well as increased public awareness.

Public Art Projects and Events

Paul Reimer's work *Spheres of Confluence* was the winner of the Central Avenue Public Art 'one percent for art' competition following preliminary assessment by the Committee, a public open house for the three finalists and then final selection by the Committee.

The City's permanent art collection was further enhanced by a number of acquisitions: donations by Tony Stallard of his *Land of Berries* and *Dream Maker* by Floyd Wanner; and the purchases of *Piano Forte* by Leslie Potter, *Cougar* by Kevin Quinlan and of Paul Reimer's *Open Book*.

The Committee also participated in the adjudication of painted signal boxes and the 2016 Culture Days bike tour of selected pieces of public art and the Pamana Filipino Mural initiative, a partnership with Mendel Murals, Downtown Business Improvement District and the Filipino community.

In Summary

The decision by City Council to establish the Public Art Advisory Committee has enabled a significant increase in citizen involvement in public art and facilitated the continually growing engagement of citizens in the public spaces of our community. Along with its willingness to increase investment in public art, Council has taken tangible steps to enhance the sense of community and neighbourliness that the art can bring to our shared spaces.

As a community we continue to expand our ideas of what constitutes public art and the benefits it brings to all of us.

The Committee wishes to recognize the contribution of city staff in supporting the Committee in its service to the people of the City: the staff of the City Clerk's Office, Genevieve Russell, Alejandro Romero and Kevin Kitchen. Without their professionalism, expertise, dedication and cordial advice we simply could not have done our job.

We also want to thank former Committee members Anne McElroy, Don Gallo and Ian Grove for their contributions to the Committee's deliberations and their commitment to the enrichment of our community through public art.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Morgan, Chair, on behalf of the PAAC