

06 Committee Reports 2023

Note from our Chair, Julia Redgrave: Any of ARCAC members can join committees and would be most welcome! In particular: Fundraising, Building & Maintenance (and ad-hoc yard clean up people!), HR.

Membership & Volunteer Committee (Julia Redgrave, Flora Hall)

Strategic goals & outcomes: ARTSPLACE will have sufficient staff, supported by volunteers, to manage organisational activities effectively without overload; The membership base will provide the Board and committees with skilled human resources.

Membership:

Early 2023, the committee conducted a phone campaign aimed at members yet to renew from 2019 - 2022. Following this, direct mailers were sent to the postal addresses on the same list. In the lead up to the March AGM, newsletter emails paired renewal reminders with notifications related to attending and voting during the AGM.

We saw typical spikes in renewals around deadlines and calls for submissions – e.g. at the beginning of the new calendar, when registrations for Paint the Town open in the spring, when artists submit for the members' show in the summer, or when the calls for gallery submissions open in the late summer/fall.

In 2023, we continued to offer workshops and rental spaces at a discount to members, along with a reciprocal discount to members' of Visual Arts NS.

By year's end, membership topped 200 for the first time in several years. 2023 memberships totalled 208, including 34 lifetime and 174 annual members. This represents a 7% increase over 2022 membership of 195.

It has been determined that we need to increase membership and to retain the members that we currently have. The committee is in the planning stages of how to achieve this, which will form part of a 3-year plan from 2024.

Volunteers: Volunteers contribute much to functions and events at ARTSPLACE and we express our sincere gratitude to them. Efforts were made in 2023 to regain some pandemic losses with regards to volunteers. A concerted effort was made to make sure there was adequate staffing for gallery sitting and events in 2023. A supporter appreciation event was scheduled for early 2024, this is something that hadn't happened since 2019.

Human Resources Committee (Julia Redgrave, Susan Tooke, Ted Lind) Strategic goals & outcomes:

Strategic outcomes: "to maintain and grow the human resources needed to ensure capacity to continue our activities with excellence"

Part of the HR job is creating and implementing up-to-date policies, as well as the creation of onboarding material for staff and volunteers. It is also important to maintain an overview of what happens day-to-day at ARTSPACE, as well as assessing staff and volunteers. The committee will engage in research of up-to-date policy and procedures.

Facilities / Maintenance Committee (Randy Swigart, Julia Redgrave)

2023 started with regular gallery maintenance for cleaning, filling and painting the walls of all four galleries. Angelika Waldow was hired to maintain the beds during the spring/summer season and Blair Fox continued with lawn maintenance.

Building condition issues identified: replacing the shingles of the front facing wall, a new roof for the Chapel Gallery, the filling in of the window space in the Library Gallery and replacement the footings to the Mym gallery.

Research was conducted into the heritage status of the building (town) and staff met with the Town of Annapolis Royal, to find out what restrictions, if any, would be imposed as we considered ARTSPACE and its future. The initial idea was to delay the maintenance, to see if we were able to reconstruct the facade as part of a wider accessibility plan (potentially creating a one-level programming space). However, it was determined that we are bound by the heritage restrictions, and will replace like-for-like and look to a future plan for a programming space. It was decided that we would apply for general maintenance grants for the facility when available (likely 2024).

Fundraising Committee (Julia Redgrave, Elaine Bergen, Staff, Board as required)

Strategic goals & outcomes: To generate sufficient revenues to achieve our mandate in a sustainable way.

Lisa Villeneuve, a Strategic consultant, was employed as part of a grant program to review Paint the Town and if it could be expanded and what to concentrate on, if so. This gave the board a full report on the event, currently an annual fundraiser for ARCAC. The artist attendance for Paint the Town was back to pre-Covid levels; there were areas that were identified as needing further improvement.

During the process with Lisa, we were introduced to Cathy Mann, from The Fundraising Lab. She works almost exclusively with nonprofit organizations to help with fundraising initiatives, small or large. Cathy will be a contact for 2024 as the board determines fundraising goals.

ARTSPACE was one of the recipients of a significant donation from the Harris Estate trust. The details can be found in the financial report, and statements. It was determined that the funds would replenish depleted operating contingency funds, and the remainder would be put into longer term GIC's to be used for general operations and where needed.

PR/Marketing Committee (Sophie Paskins, Terry Drahos) with Peter Mansour as external contractor & in-kind contributions

Strategic goals & outcomes: To increase ARTSPACE profile, visibility, revenue and engagement through improved communications, marketing, and advocacy

We have invested more in PR, engaging Peter Mansour to apply his experience and knowledge to the look and message of ARTSPACE (and ARCAC). He works closely with the Gallery Director to ensure that printed and web materials are clear and consistent.

The PR and Marketing continued with an increased social media presence, as well as the setting up of a YouTube channel in 2023.

Programs Committee (Ted Lind, Julia Redgrave, Susan Tooke, Elaine Bergen, Becky Thompson) & Exhibitions Committee (Ted Lind, Terry Drahos, Bonnie Baker, Sophie Paskins) *Strategic goal: To ensure programming that integrates artistic endeavor and regional life, supporting professional artists and providing creative opportunities for individuals and communities.*

2023 enabled ARTSPACE to continue to present in-person public programs, with any COVID-19 restrictions thankfully in the past. Programs focused on enabling participants to connect with artists and provide opportunities for artists to highlight their work in a public setting.

In the winter, artist-in-residence, Ken Flett, gave an art talk and led a workshop focused on 'stop motion filming'. Additional workshops offered during the year included: stained glass (Yolanda Marsolais), eco printing (Kathleen Bunin), abstracting nature with ink (Lorna Mulligan), lumen printing (Bonnie Baker), networking for artists (Sarah Maloney, with Visual Arts Nova Scotia), 'zine' making (Delilah Brae), social media for artists (Garth Laidlaw, held at the Innovation Lab at the Public Library), and large scale self-portraits (Terry Drahos). Whenever possible, public presentations were offered with the artists exhibiting the main gallery. These presentations were recorded and can be made available on ArtSeen (the digital platform powered by ARTSPACE). Art talks were presented by the Z'otz* Collective, Racquel Rowe, and Brandt Eisner.

The exhibition of work in the fall by renowned folk artist, Harold Cromwell, provided an opportunity to host a community forum with family members and people who interacted with him during his lifetime. Folk art specialist, Ray Cronin, facilitated the conversation, and also wrote an essay for a catalogue of Cromwell's art, published in collaboration with Moose House Publishing. The Cromwell show was supported by the development of an online teaching resource, a Zoom-generated educators workshop, and guided school tours. A special family program was also offered, focused on 'family memories'.

In the late fall, the exhibition, Altered Vision/Altered Sound, (Susan Tooke and Dillon Tonkin) provided an opportunity for presentations/workshops: introductory presentation, altered image (discovering the abstract within the landscape), altered sound (discovering the abstract within field recordings), and an audio jam session.

On-going art talks were hosted at ARTSPPLACE during 2023. Ted Lind presented an illustrated exploration of portraits in the spring. Ceramicist Deb Kuzyk and Bernard Burton with the World Craft Council presented the story of their recent visit to England to view an international exhibition of crafts. Artist Elaine Bergen presented a noontime series in the fall: fashion illustration, rural life in art, and still life. ARTSPPLACE artist-in-residence Felicity Hauwert led a 'photo walk' of Annapolis Royal in the fall, leaving from H'Arts Artists' House.

The spring exhibition, For the Love of Lichens and Old Forests, provided an opportunity to host a number of programs: Joy, Art, Science and Activism - A Conversation, Poetry Reading with shalan joudry and Basma Kavanagh, and an art talk (Kindred Spirits: How Art Transformed Ways to Appreciate the Natural World, with Ted Lind).

With a renewed commitment to films, ARTSPPLACE screened a range of films during 2023. A documentary created by the Art21 Film Society, William Kentridge: Anything is Possible was presented early in the year. Matt Dubois curated a series of animated films from the National Film Board of Canada. For National Canadian Film Day in the spring there was a screening of 3 films. A film and talk also took place in the spring: Sharkwater, with a talk by Zoe Lucas on Sable Island Sharks. Filmmaker, novelist and drummer Andrew Tolson offered commentary for a screening of the film. Let There Be Drums! An Art21 film screening premiere took place in the fall: Bodies of Knowledge.

Also in the fall ARTSPPLACE screened Toronto International Festival ((TIFF) short films. The start of classic anti-war films concluded the year, curated by Concordia film graduate, Christopher Ward.

ARTSPPLACE continued to provide art making programs for young people: March break series, summer art camp, and a new pilot after school series with artist Becky Thompson.

Artist Elaine Bergen continued to coordinate life drawing sessions in a fun, welcoming, non-teaching environment in the ARTSPPLACE studio. A series was offered in both the winter/spring and fall.

ArtSeen, the digital initiative funded by the Canada Council for the Arts culminated its 3-year development with a public launch in December. Considered to be almost like a '5th gallery at ARTSPPLACE" this final year included the production of artist profiles (Phillip Bailey, Susan Tooke, Miya Turnbull, Lorne Julien, Ken Flett, and Deb Kuyzk & Ray Mackie. The profiles were produced by filmmaker Andrew Tolson, who also created a short documentary to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council. A new committee was established to define the direction that ArtSeen will go now - priority being the use of digital resources to strengthen the role of contemporary art and artists in our community. Other arts centres/galleries in the maritime provinces have provided digital content for ArtSeen.

Exhibitions. Visual arts are central to the mission of ARCAC/ARTSPPLACE. Supporting artists at all levels of their careers and development, representing a wide range of visual arts disciplines is key to our decision-making. Many of the additional programming decisions grow from the exhibitions.

We showed a variety of artists, ranging from professionals to school students. With four galleries and an outdoor program, we were able to present 33 exhibitions (including 5 juried/fee paid shows, 10 members'

shows, 1 school show, as well as exhibitions in the library gallery and 3 artists installations in the gallery grounds).

The exhibitions committee met in 2023, to review proposals for 2024/25. They programmed 2024 and 2025 exhibitions for the main gallery (fee paid, supported by the Canada Council for the Arts).

The other gallery spaces were reviewed by the gallery director and exhibitions committee, these were programmed for 2024, with the submission process opening up for 2025, in mid-2024.

2024 programs and exhibitions can be reviewed in the *Looking Ahead* section.

Visitors and program attendee stats for 2023:

workshops, open studios: 11 (life drawing and still life were multiple sessions, for this purpose the series' are counted as 1)

children and youth programming: 6 workshops (art camps and after school program had multiple dates, for this purpose the series' are counted as 1)

school visits: 10 (AWEC, Middleton, Champlain, Digby)

exhibitions: 33 (Juried, members, other, rentals)

residencies: 2

screenings: 10

Artist/Art talks: 14

Other events: 2 (seminar, ArtSeen Launch)

Overall visitor numbers: approx. 4302 (does not include visitors for the OpenSpace outdoor installations in the gallery grounds).