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**FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: BURNABY ART GALLERY SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS PROJECT**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT Council approve the use of Gaming Reserve Funds in the amount of \$300,000 (plus HST, PST, GST or equivalent applicable tax) for a three year special exhibitions project which represents an expenditure of \$100,000 for each of 2013, 2014 and 2015 (plus applicable taxes).

**REPORT**

The Finance and Civic Development Committee, at its meeting held on 2012 October 25, received and adopted the *attached* report providing an analysis and plan for special curatorial program funding for the period 2013 to 2015 inclusive.

Since 2009, four years of special project funding has enabled the Burnaby Art Gallery (BAG) to plan and deliver significant new and diverse curatorial projects that include exhibitions, educational programs, special presentations and publications. The special projects have also enabled the BAG to attract financial support from granting bodies, other governments, foundations, and individual donors, thereby enhancing the gallery's ability to deliver even more programming and services. Gifts to the permanent collection have increased as the gallery's reputation has grown in the community, province and Canada as a whole.

The Committee recommend Council approve the use of Gaming Reserve Funds in the amount of \$300,000 (plus applicable taxes) for the Burnaby Art Gallery Special Exhibitions Project for the period of 2013 to 2015 inclusive.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston  
Chair

Councillor C. Jordan  
Vice Chair

Councillor P. McDonell  
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Director Parks, Recr. & Cult. Services Director Finance
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2012 October 15

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION &  
CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: BURNABY ART GALLERY SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS PROJECT**

**PURPOSE:** To present an analysis and plan for project funding.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** Council approve the use of Gaming Reserve Funds in the amount of \$300,000 (plus HST, PST, GST or equivalent applicable tax) for a three year special exhibitions project which represents an expenditure of \$100,000 for each of 2013, 2014 and 2015 (plus applicable taxes).

**REPORT**

In 2011 Council received a report on the success of the three year Burnaby Art Gallery (BAG) curatorial project and a request for new project funding for three years. Council resolved to provide Gaming Reserve Funds for a period of one year ending 2012 December 31.

This is a presentation of a new three year special curatorial program and a request for funding for the period 2013 to 2015 inclusive.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2008 Burnaby City Council approved the use of \$315,000 (inclusive of GST) of Gaming Reserve Funds for a three year special exhibitions pilot project at the Burnaby Art Gallery. The funds were applied at \$105,000 per year over the years 2009, 2010 and 2011. In 2011 a review of the special exhibitions project included an analysis of the three years and a request for a renewed three years of special project support for new innovative curatorial programs. Finance and Civic Development Committee recommended the three year renewal, and Council approved a one year renewal.

Since 2009, four years of special project funding has enabled the Burnaby Art Gallery to plan and deliver significant new and diverse curatorial projects that include exhibitions, educational programs, special presentations and publications. The special projects have also enabled the BAG to attract financial support from granting bodies, other governments, foundations, and individual donors, thereby enhancing the gallery's ability to deliver even more programming and services. Gifts to the permanent collection have increased as the gallery's reputation has grown in the community, province and Canada as a whole.

## **ANALYSIS**

In 2012 a new initiative was established to monitor and assess the 2012 special curatorial program and to report on progress using meaningful measures. Greater analysis is included in the document "Business Case: Curatorial Project Support-Burnaby Art Gallery". In summary the business case has illustrated the benefits of the special project support as follows:

### **Benefits**

- Ability to develop more complex curatorial projects: Additional resources provide for more time for research and identification of art objects for assembly, display and often for tour for projects such as retrospectives (J.C. Heywood, Gordon Smith, Ann Kipling, and Takao Tanabe).
- Development of more outreach projects: Extra project aid has allowed the gallery to grow the outreach program for a larger sector of the community. This includes participation in Culture Blast (2011) – performance art projects by Peter Morin, Rebecca Belmore, Kristina Lee Podesva and Heidi Hegertahl, Culture Days (2010-2012) – artist talks and LinoFest (artist talks and demonstrations), expand the library exhibition program (four to six exhibitions/annum), and Holly Schmidt's 2012 Moveable Feast project in Deer Lake Park.
- Ability to leverage grants from other funders: By being recognized nationally, by peers, as an important Canadian art museum the resources provided through the gaming reserve fund have induced additional outside financial contributions. The British Columbia Arts Council (BCAC) has increased our operating grant by 30% over the past five years (10,000 – 13,000); we received an Innovations Grant for the Moveable Feast project by the BCAC (10,000); support from the Museums Assistance Program (MAP) for the J.C. Heywood and Takao Tanabe projects (65,000 and 78,000 respectively), local support from the Vancouver Foundation (10,000), Audain Foundation (5,000) for the BC Landscape project. These contributions have assisted the Burnaby Art Gallery in developing more diverse, expansive and engaging exhibition projects while allowing for greater community engagement initiatives including hands-on activities, talks, symposia and school programs (in house and classroom outreach).
- Ability to leverage loans from other institutions: Loans from other galleries and collections have increased because of the enhanced credibility of the curatorial program resulting in a local benefit. Our exhibition development partners, over the past four years, have included the Vancouver Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Surrey Art Gallery, Simon Fraser University Art Gallery and Carleton University Art Gallery. Adding quality works of art from other collections in conjunction with works from the gallery's permanent collection provides an enhanced experience for visitors and research possibilities for scholars.

- Increased partnerships with other Canadian art museums: Combining fiscal and human resources with other galleries has expanded the knowledge base of curatorial program development and implementation. Over the past four years we have partnered with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (Sybil Andrews exhibition), Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery (Chance Operations exhibition), Medicine Hat Art Gallery (Chance Operations – essay contribution), and the McMaster Museum of Art (Takao Tanabe retrospective exhibition and essay contribution) to bring a higher caliber of exhibition experience for Burnaby Art Gallery visitors, program participants and school groups.
- Increase in quality art donations to the permanent collection: Individual collectors have increased the number, range and quality of gifts of art to the gallery due, in part, to its enhanced reputation in the local and Canadian art scene. As one of the few art museums in Canada dedicated to paper and print culture we have become a natural repository for works of art on paper (prints, collages, water colours, drawings, etc). Over the past four years the gallery has encouraged donations from leading collectors. To that end we have increased historical holdings (prints) by nearly 10% (Bergman, Fitzgerald, Smith, Tanabe, and Schmidt).
- Uptake in travelling exhibitions: The gallery has cooperated with several other institutions to tour shows originating in Burnaby. Over the past four years a concerted effort to expand our connection with audiences has lead to an increase in developing travelling exhibitions locally, regionally nationally. This includes the J.C. Heywood retrospective (Art Gallery of Mississauga, Glenhyrst Art Gallery of Brandt, and Grimsby Art Gallery); Takao Tanabe retrospective (McMaster Museum of Art, The Reach, and Nanaimo Art Gallery); Ann Kipling’s Solitudes of Place exhibition (Nanaimo Art Gallery); and Arnold Shives (Simon Fraser University Art Gallery)
- Increase in artist monograph and group exhibition publications: Capacity for documentation of exhibitions has been enhanced. Publications are a legacy of a curatorial project and represent documents for artists, scholars, museums, libraries and the public to consult and reflect upon for future projects. Over the past four years the Burnaby Art Gallery has contributed to the history of Canadian art through the publication of monographs on Takao Tanabe, Gordon Smith, Ann Kipling, Davida Kidd, Aganetha Dyck, Marianna Schmidt, Robert Young, Torrie Groening and Doug Biden. Group publications include: I-Dent, Our Changing Landscape, and Inuit Dolls of the Kivalliq. A copy of each work is housed at the National Archives in Ottawa.

## **Measures**

In addition to the above, the gallery’s special project successes are measured in many ways. Attendance at gallery exhibits is an important mean in which to gauge the success of a project. Attendance varies, depending upon the specifics of a particular exhibition, its resonance with audience members and tourism trends.

A balanced historical and contemporary program ensures that many different audiences are served and that outreach programs within alternate spaces within the community and through the library program reach the local community in various ways. Volunteer support has increased steadily.

As a result of the special curatorial project assistance the Burnaby Art Gallery has tracked a number of key areas of its operation including the following:

- School and public program participation has increased by 300%. The Burnaby Art Gallery provides the community with a multitude of public engagement opportunities year-round including hands-on art classes for all ages (preschool to seniors), artist talks, Lunch BAG Days, Free Family In the BAG Sunday's, symposiums, workshops and special interactive community events such as participation in Culture Days. Our school education program provides access to original works of art and hands-on workshops through in-house programming for K-12 audiences that are related to the exhibition(s) on display, BAG in a Box workshops for teachers (three week classroom projects), and Outreach Workshops (programs that go into the classroom with an instructor for 1-3 hours).
- Community engagement has increased by 75%. Prior to curatorial project funding support the majority of the gallery's curatorial program was based on works from the permanent collection. Funding has allowed the gallery to expand its presence in the community through participation in Culture Days, Culture Blast, an expanded outreach exhibition program in the libraries with more public programs and offsite projects such as Holly Schmidt's Moveable Feast.
- Investment from outside sources has increased by 20%. Diversifying revenue streams within the Burnaby Art Gallery's budget continues to be a challenge as we cannot provide charitable tax donation receipts, however over the past four years the gallery has forged new and strengthened relationships with the Vancouver Foundation (support for Tanabe and Landscape projects), Audain Foundation (Landscape project), the Museums Assistance Program (Tanabe and Heywood projects) and garnered financial donations from artists and publishers (who wish to remain anonymous).
- Diversity of the program has increased by 70%. Prior to project funding the gallery was relying heavily on its collection to develop exhibition projects. With increased funding the gallery has been able to reach out to First Nations artists and curators (Peter Morin, Terrance Houle, Daina Warren), Inuit artists (Inuit Dolls of the Kivalliq), increased our historical contemporary ratio to approximately 50/50 thereby allowing for emerging, mid-career and senior to be exhibited.
- Critical recognition of the program has increased by 50%. The Burnaby Art Gallery's exhibition program is routinely reviewed in the Georgia Straight (Spring and Fall Arts Preview along with specific reviews of exhibitions), monthly articles in the Burnaby NewsLeader, quarterly articles in Preview Magazine, bi-annual reviews in Galleries West, and national coverage on CBC and CBC Radio Canada (Tanabe and The Gaze - collection show local artist with Elizabeth MacKenzie).

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From: Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services  
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- Investment in artists and artistic production has increased by 400%. Through increased curatorial investment the Burnaby Art Gallery has been able to engage contemporary artists to develop projects that function on their own (exhibition and publication) or as part of larger group projects (exhibition, publication and public engagement opportunities). We have been able to pay living artists fees to exhibit their work as defined by CARFAC (national artist association) and publish companion books or brochures. These legacy documents provide artists greater opportunities to develop their practice, obtain future exhibitions and build their careers. Prior to this investment the gallery had a difficult time paying artist to exhibit their work and develop meaningful companion pieces for them to utilize.

## **FUTURE PROJECTS**

The establishment of a renewed three year period of special project assistance will enable the gallery to continue to pursue the themed approach to programs and exhibits. This will expand on the diversity and appeal of the gallery's offerings to local audiences and contribute to projects with broader appeal as well. The project planning cycles in the discipline take many years of activity from concept to completion, requiring as well a sense of stability and predictability in the resources to be assigned.

A thematic approach to exhibition development over the next three years (*The Culture of the Artist: ideas, concepts and representation*, *Visual Culture: the printed image as symbol*, and *Contemporary Expressions: the role(s) of diverse constituencies in the art museum*) reflects one direction that the gallery could embark upon. It provides the Burnaby Art Gallery with opportunities to demonstrate its leadership within the art gallery/museum field, create new audiences, critically engage artist's work, continue its work in presenting artists' work within a web-based context, provide art gallery/museum visitors/patrons/school groups/fine art program participants with interactive and challenging programs and to sustain the gallery's growing popularity and continue to lever resources from other institutions, agencies and individuals. The business case reflects the creative energy being applied by gallery staff into developing thematic approaches to curatorial projects that would not otherwise be possible to pursue given the gallery's limited resources and to allow the gallery to build its curatorial capacity and apply that to developing engaging and thought provoking community engagement initiatives (public and school based).

The Burnaby Art Gallery's business case is in strategic alignment with the gallery's mandate, core values and curatorial objectives. The business case also addresses issues presented in the recently adopted Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy including: *Strategic Priority #3: Getting Involved*, *Strategic Priority #5: Enhancing Neighbourhoods*, and *Strategic Priority #5a: Help to attract people to neighbourhood and larger-scale gathering places*. Discussions are underway as well into the potential for satellite gallery development in the town centres of Burnaby, possibly using third party resources, as a method to reach more people in the community nearer to where they live, work and play.

## **IF FUNDING IS NOT REINSTATED**

The impact of such a dramatic reduction in funding to the art gallery's curatorial program will have far reaching affects throughout the entire institution and would include:

- a) Decline in institutional credibility – adversely affect loans, publications and partnerships with sister institutions, artists, curators, and community groups.
- b) Decline in donations – with no active, advanced curatorial and collections program gifts of significant works of art on paper will diminish and falter
- c) Reduction in granting opportunities – with fewer resources to support the curatorial program obtaining matching grants is virtually unattainable
- d) Truncated exhibition program – there would be fewer curatorial options within the institution, resulting in a collection based curatorial program only; thereby limiting connection to community and engagement with artists
- e) Staff layoffs – with a reduced curatorial program collections staff (assistant curator and/or collections assistant) will not necessarily be required. This would include a reduction in assistant curator hours, the elimination of the collections assistant position and curatorial aide position (funded in part by Young Canada Works)
- f) Re-alignment of resources – reduction in outreach and community curatorial programs including the library exhibition program in order to support minimal curatorial standards and levels of achievement within the main galleries.

## **CONCLUSION**

The increase in capacity and reach of the gallery and its programs is sustained by additional Gaming Reserve Fund resources and those that are levered from other partners. The benefits of the investments are evident in the gallery's ability to develop more complex curatorial projects, develop more outreach projects, increase the institution's ability to leverage grants from other funders, leverage loans from other institutions, increase curatorial partnerships with other Canadian art museums, seek to increase quality art donations to the permanent collection, enhance uptake in travelling exhibitions, and to produce artist brochures, monographs and group exhibition publications.

The Gaming Reserve Fund is used for arts and cultural projects as well as for heritage, environment and public safety. Positive results have been achieved from the special projects supported to date and a positive consideration of a new project term is recommended.



Dave Ellenwood  
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

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