

**The Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade**  
Wednesday, December 6, 2017

**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk** (*Chair*): You say there are 6,000 articles. Basically paintings and some sculptures. Right? Where are they housed and how?

How do the missions determine some of that criteria? Because that's some of the feedback that we had originally from one of our members about how we display and who makes those decisions.

**The Chair**: Well, I think 6,000 is, again, an issue of where are they and how are they housed? They're part of Canada. Canadians own that. It's within the Department of Foreign Affairs — or Global Affairs, now — but it should be a valuable asset and we need to know what it is and how it's being handled and displayed.

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**RESPONSE**

The visual art collection program manages a collection of over 6500 cultural assets intended for display abroad. The collection portfolio is spread across 113 locations including chanceries, official residences in representational areas at Headquarters and GAC offices in Ottawa and Gatineau. More than 85% of the collection is on display in representative areas of Chanceries, Crown owned or Crown leased Official Residences. Depending on availability, art from the collection is also displayed at Headquarters (125 Sussex, 111 Sussex and 200 Portage buildings) in public and representational areas, and in offices of Assistant Deputy Ministers and above. Artworks that are not on display are located in GAC fine vault located at 45 Sacré-Coeur, Gatineau for examination, conservation, re-framing, or temporary storage for collection circulation.

The visual art collection program in coordination with the Interior Design Services refurbishment cycle, reviews chancery fine art collections every 10-15 years, and official residence fine art collections every 12 years. Ambassadors may be consulted during new building projects or renewal of fine art plans to discuss the appropriateness of certain works for display in their host country as well as how the works promote mission objectives in the region.

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**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk (Chair):** Are we maximizing or are we jeopardizing, in some cases? I know that there are missions where you wouldn't want to take certain pieces because of the humidity and deterioration. I have seen some of them that have deteriorated.

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**RESPONSE**

The visual art collection program manages a collection of over 6500 cultural assets, valued at over \$35 million dollars<sup>1</sup> both in Canada and in Canada's diplomatic missions abroad. The program acts as a centre of expertise that maintains standard museological practices for the acquisition, documentation, display, loans, preservation and de-accession and disposal of artworks; as well as risk management, sound stewardship and due diligence practices dictated by directives on *Management of Movable Heritage Assets* and *Materiel Management* as per the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

It is important to understand that the main purpose of the collection is exhibition/ display for cultural promotions, as well as to enhance the environment and representation of Canada abroad. The collection is a working collection, displayed in office and residential properties without museum standard environments. High value pieces such as historic artworks are generally only assigned category 1 diplomatic missions (Diplomatic missions in G7 nations such as the U.S, United Kingdom, France, and Germany etc.). The program takes care to assign artworks to locations with as minimal environmental risk to the artwork as possible. In the past, the collection has transferred fragile and high valued artworks to the National Gallery of Canada. Fragility, care and long-term maintenance are points of discussion for artworks recommended for acquisition consideration by the Fine Art Advisory Committee.

- Visual art collection program staff of subject experts provides highly-skilled, professional asset management expertise, including:
- Curatorial services in selection and interpretation of art for mission briefing binders and publications;
- Cataloguing and documentation of all art pieces;
- Management of professional conservation and framing services to museum quality standards;
- Inventory control for location, condition and copyright is managed using Multi Mimsy museum collections management database;
- Packing and shipping standards and control;

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<sup>1</sup> Approximate collection value provided by Daniel Sharp, former program manager, based on appraisal reports from Heffel& Gibbs, International Fine Art Appraisers (2010) and collection purchase value.

- Assignment of art pieces to missions abroad, working with architectural, interior design services and project teams;
- Liaison with missions for all aspects of art asset management;
- Fine art asset management policy and advice.

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**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk** (*Chair*): If you have the criteria in written form in would be valuable to the committee.

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**RESPONSE**

Documents attached:

- QMS-QP-225E – Program policy, outputs and responsibilities for acquisition, inventory management, conservation, framing and shipping;
- QMS-W502 - Committee membership, roles and responsibilities;
- Material Management Manual - Chapter 14 – Fine Art;
- Material Management Manual - Chapter 16 – Gifts of Fine Art and Heritage/ Valued Assets to the Crown;
- EXT2070 HOM Fine art agreement – roles and responsibilities;
- Policy on deaccession and disposal;
- Policy on project artwork commissioning.

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**Senator Bovey:** Another follow-up though with regard to who approves what money: Have you considered or would you consider the idea of discipline-based peer juries so that the decisions are made for who gets what are made by people who know the field as opposed to people who are put in a position not quite knowing what's what? I'd suggest that might be something you would want to look at. They, of course, would do it based on the criteria that you are going to forward to us.

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**RESPONSE**

The visual art collection program is governed in its activities by the advice, guidance and recommendations provided by the Fine Art Advisory Committee, particularly as related to the selection, acquisition and disposal of artworks. The Fine Art Advisory Committee (FAAC) is composed with internal members and external subject matter experts to recommend the purchase of works of art. The FAAC members are:

- Global Affairs Canada, Chairperson, Assistant Deputy Minister of the International Platform Branch;
- Global Affairs Canada, Director of Professional and Technical Services Division;
- Global Affairs Canada, Interior Design representative;
- National Gallery of Canada representative;
- Canada Council for the Arts representative;
- Optionally and as required, project management advisors invited by the Chairperson
- On occasion, Ambassadors will be asked to review and comment on proposals or commissions; however they do not sit on the committee.

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**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk** (*Chair*): Before we go to second round, I'm going to permit myself a few questions. I want to understand exactly what you do within and what your parameters are, because my problem of being inside Foreign Affairs a long time ago was to determine what I could do with the limited amount of resources. There were more competing demands of how you could translate our culture, our brand — whatever it was — in the communities we were serving. It was always a dilemma of how to do that, because you've got some broad guidelines and that was it.

On the other side, I was bombarded with requests. There is a group coming in from small-town Saskatchewan who are coming through with students who happen to have a choir, and they want to highlight them and showcase them with young people in Kenya, say. How do you choose between two symphonies, et cetera?

How do you make those selections, because you're going to offend someone and reward someone, and it really is a difficult issue? You're going to have funds, but you will still have the old dilemmas. Is that still a problem in your sphere today?

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**RESPONSE**

The Global Affairs visual art collection program acquires artwork by emerging and mid-career artists annually. The program collects works from different regions of Canada on a rotating basis. The program also recognizes and celebrates the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples through their visual art and fine craft. The program acquires in a range of media including photography, fine craft, fabric art, and sculpture, in addition to prints, drawings and paintings.

Acquisition requirements are triggered by collection development for regional representation, as well as major and minor capital project requirements. The program manager and curator reaches out to provincial, university and independent curators for recommendations of work by professional artists working in Canada and abroad. Artworks are brought before a Fine Art Advisory Committee consisting of internal GAC membership and external advisors from the National Gallery of Canada and the Canada Council for the arts for recommendation on the artistic merit and appropriateness for display in Canada's diplomatic missions abroad. For large projects, such as the recent Paris project, external curators and museum directors were invited to participate in a 3 day thematic review, which guided the fine art plan and selections for commissioning and acquisition consideration.

The GAC visual art collection program does not have a quota or guideline on the number of works by emerging or mid-career artists, or for Indigenous or non-Indigenous artists to be acquired on an annual basis. Rather, the program purchases reflect specific major and minor capital building project requirements for fine art plans, as well as regional review and strategies to acquire works for the general

collection that are assigned to fine art renewal projects. The program regularly tries to make cultural connections with the host country by presenting fine art plans with a mix of artists from across Canada, medias and themes that connect with the mission's objectives. The program also strives to include examples of Canadian artists' work who were either born, studied or spent a part of their career in the host country.

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**Senator Atuallahjan:** What needs to be implemented in our missions to ensure Canadian art and culture become known abroad in a significant way?

Do we need any measures in place to assess the success/failure of these programs?

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**RESPONSE**

The Global Affairs Canada visual art collection program supports major and minor capital project initiatives through the provision of artworks for display in Canadian diplomatic missions abroad on an ongoing basis.

The program supports Canada's diplomatic missions with fine art asset management, inventory tracking, and artwork exchanges. The program reports annually on the number of artworks acquired, shipped, conserved, and re-framed.

The visual arts collection program was last reviewed in 1999 by an external cultural consultant for recommendations on areas for improvement.

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**Senator Bovey:** What outreach have you done across Canada who is itching to get out beyond our national borders? There are lots of artists that don't get funding because they don't qualify.

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**RESPONSE**

The visual art collection program mandate is to collect living, emerging and mid-career artists. The benefit is two-fold; first, the program is able to promote works by artists abroad in a period when Government support would most benefit an artists' career. Second, the program is constrained by the Government of Canada procurement limits for goods, and is therefore more readily able afford the work of artists during their early and mid-career phases.

The collection began in the early 1930s with regular acquisitions of living artists starting in the 1950s and 1960s. As a result, the GAC collection has examples by major Canadian artists that the program would not be able to collect in today's art market.

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**Senator Bovey:** As an institutional director I would get an annual visit from a member of GAC that helped to plan up to five years out. Have we done these kinds of consultations?

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**RESPONSE**

In recent years, the program has made a point to meet with provincial, university and independent curators to discuss artists working in regions across Canada. Many of these recommendations and discussions have informed regional acquisitions and representation of artists from across the country. The collection has also worked with Canadian art galleries to loan pieces for display in exhibitions both in Canada and abroad.

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**Senator Bovey:** My question is: What about training? What kind of ongoing training do you have for staff who are in the various missions and have to contend with a singer or an artist, or do we like or don't we like? What kind of training programs are there in hand? Are there needs or other organizations that might be able to help in that training?

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**RESPONSE**

Canadian cultural officers deployed throughout Canada's Global Mission Network abroad receive comprehensive training on the role of the collection program, as well as policy resources and guidelines available.

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**Senator Bovey:** Is the collection on-line? With the minister's interest in digitization, I would suggest if the collection was online, that could be very useful for not only work going into missions but for those art writers, art historians and galleries that might want to borrow or publish it. Publishing it helps that profile. That's one follow-up thought.

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**RESPONSE**

The London Canada House Collection is online on the High Commission's website; however the remainder of the Global Affairs Canada visual art collection is not currently available on-line.

When new Canadian missions open, promotional products are produced for the purpose of promoting Canadian visual artists' work to embassy visitors.

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**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk** (*Chair*): That brings me to the whole point of modern technology, and I think Senator Bovey brought it up. You have a collection of 6,000. People should know about it and have access to it. It's virtual travel now.

We don't have to go to museums or art exhibitions. We can log on and see them. I don't think we're utilizing that as much in Foreign Affairs as we could across the world. We are now connected, and so we should be offering a lot. It would be a minimal cost, and you can plug into so many things now, where before you had to either have the paper or the person, as we used to say. Now you don't.

Plus, of course, all the technologies that I don't even understand. I'm still struggling with Tweets and Facebook, but I hear about these other concepts. To what extent are we supporting, in the cultural, the new technologies and the new use that new artists are using?

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**RESPONSE**

The Global Affairs visual art collection program has worked with artists on individual artists for copyright licenses for online projects and promotion of exhibitions for special projects on Twitter. The program has recently started collecting new media artworks for display abroad.

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**Senator A. Raynell Andreychuk Gold (The Chair):** I understand there was a Cultural Industries Sectoral Advisory Group on International Trade at Global Affairs. Does that still exist, and has it been evaluated on any key outcomes of it?... I would like to know historically how it came about and what ties to Foreign Affairs it had.

### **RESPONSE**

The Cultural Industries Sectoral Advisory Group on International Trade (SAGIT) was one of a series of SAGITs created to advise the Department on issues related to international trade, particularly in light of the negotiations of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement (or the Uruguay Round). Specifically the Cultural Industries SAGIT was in place to advise both the Department of Canadian Heritage and Global Affairs Canada on cultural industries and policies and the effect on trade agreements. It fell primarily under the leadership of Canadian Heritage which is responsible for Canada's cultural policy framework. This SAGIT no longer exists although its recommendations from 1999 are available on the [Department's website](#), both for historical context and to provide background for current policy development.

In its place, Canadian Heritage, with Global Affairs Canada, established in 2013 the Ad Hoc Cultural Sector Advisory Group on International Trade (Group) composed of a broad range of industry representatives across Canada. The objective of this Group is to provide Canadian industry stakeholders with direct updates on various international trade issues, including ongoing trade negotiations (e.g. NAFTA).

In addition to the formal consultation process through Canada Gazette notices, Canadian Heritage together with Global Affairs Canada continue to engage in consultations to seek the views of stakeholders in the creative sector on international trade agreements commitments.

Information pertaining to the Ad Hoc Cultural Sector Advisory Group on International Trade has not yet been made public. Canadian Heritage and Global Affairs Canada are currently considering this option.