McMichael
CANADIAN ART COLLECTION D'ART CANADIEN

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April 27, 2021

Christopher Tyrell
Clerk of the Committee
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A2

Dear Mr Tyrell:

We have received your letter requesting a response to the Value-for-Money Audit of Museums and Galleries for the McMichael Canadian Art Collection referencing the 2020 Annual Report of the Auditor General.

Attached please find our update on the McMichael's action plans and timetable for addressing the Auditor's concerns.

As requested, this report is being submitted in electronic format by April 30, 2021.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Regards,

Ian A.C. Dejardin

Ian A.C. Dejardin
Executive Director

CC: Taras Natyshak, MPP, Chair of the Committee
Bonnie Lysyk, Auditor General

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McMichael Canadian Art Collection

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #1 So that the provenance and authenticity of acquisitions is established to the fullest extent possible, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Update its collection policies to clarify the procedures that should be undertaken to establish provenance and authenticity; and • Develop and implement a process to ensure that these procedures are followed.		Response Recommendation #1 Action and Timing • Update Collections Policy to describe processes for verification of authenticity, and required documentation of same: Jan-Jun 2021 • Present to Art Advisory Committee for input: Oct 2021 • Approval by Board of Trustees: Nov 2021 In Progress Draft template/format for reports to AAC on proposed acquisitions developed, incorporating Acquisition Criteria from *Collections Management Policies and Guidelines* and areas of focus from *An Acquisition Plan for the Future*, 2019: format needs to be approved by Chief Curator and Executive Director prior to presentation to Art Advisory Committee in May 2021
Recommendation #2 So that the Art Advisory Committee members have the necessary information to make acquisition recommendations to the Board of Trustees that enhance the strength of the collection, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Recirculate the acquisition criteria in its collection management to the committee members • Format its reports justifying the acquisition of items to specifically address the criteria; and, • Specifically indicate for each proposed acquisition which criteria are met and which are not		Response Recommendation #2 Action and Timing • Recirculate acquisition criteria and confirm role of the AAC: May 2021 • Create rubric for acquisition relevance to the collection and present to AAC: May 2021 • Include justifications in reports on acquisitions as they enter the collection: Ongoing

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Recommendation #3 To ensure that it can achieve its collection priorities, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection develop realistic short, medium, and long-term acquisition goals		Response Recommendation #3 Action and Timing • Define short-, medium- and long-term goals for acquisition: Jan-Nov 2021 • Present to Art Advisory Committee for review: Oct 2021 • Approval by Board of Trustees: Nov 2021
Recommendation #4 So that the items in the McMichael Canadian Art Collection are secured, we recommend that management: • Segregate the responsibilities for deleting records, approving the deletion of records, and accessing McMichael's vaults; and, • Periodically review the list of deleted items records and ensure that item records were deleted only for authorized purposes.	Response Recommendation #4 Process has been implemented as of end of March 2021 • At the end of each quarter the Head of Collections/Registrar will submit to the Chief Curator a list of those object records recommended for deletion from TMS along with any loan, exhibition and constituent records recommended for deletion, and the justifications for the proposed deletions. No records will be deleted until the Chief Curator has signed off on the deletions. • McMichael IT will be asked to compile a report at the end of each quarter of records deleted from TMS during that quarter: these will be reconciled with the list submitted to the Chief Curator and any discrepancies noted and addressed.	

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<u>Recommendation #5</u> So that McMichael knows the complete financial value of its collection and can assess whether its insurance coverage is sufficient, we recommend that it: • Review artworks that do not have a value assigned to determine which artworks should be valued; • Put in place a process to periodically update the valuation of its most valuable artworks; and • Assess the risks of potential loss of its collection and obtain the level of insurance deemed necessary based on the updated valuation of the collection. <u>Recommendation #6</u> To ensure that research and other important information is accessible and remains part of an artwork's permanent record, preserving the heritage and history of each item in its collection, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Put in place policies and procedures to establish thorough and consistent standards for recording information about artworks; and • Allocate time and resources to catalogue all artworks as fully as possible according to its policies and procedures	Response Recommendation #5 Action and Timing • Consultation regarding required process for appraisal of collection: Jan to Mar 2021	<u>Response Recommendation #5</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Review selected artworks that do not have assigned value: Jan to Oct 2021 • Review insurance coverage: Sep-Nov 2021 • Develop a policy for collection valuation and insurance coverage: Sep 2021-Feb 2022 • Present policy to AAC for approval by Board: Nov 2021 • Implement selective appraisal of most valuable artwork : Jan 2021- Jun 2022 <u>In Progress</u> A proposal course of action has been developed for approval by senior management and the AAC. <u>Response Recommendation #6</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Review information for selected artwork for inputting into TMS: Apr 2021 – Dec 2022 • Document polices and procedures for cataloguing: Mar -Aug 2021 <u>In Progress</u> Research undertaken on permanent collection objects for exhibitions will be incorporated into collection records moving forward: 66 objects in *Early Days* have had new label text and/or attributions and/or dates added to their records, along with 19 new artists' biographies. 83 works from *A Like Vision* have had new label text added to their records, along with 10 new artists' biographies. It is anticipated that *Uninvited* will result in additional research and documentation added to the records for McMichael works included in the exhibition.

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Recommendation #7 To safeguard the items in the collection, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Establish a policy for carrying out inventory checks that include the frequency and methodology for such checks; • Perform inventory checks in accordance with this policy; and • Resolve issues identified during inventory checks on a timely basis.		Response Recommendation #7 Action and Timing • Consult with colleagues to identify best practice: Jun-Sep 2021 • Establish policy for inventory checks: Sep-Oct 2021 • Implement policy for inventory checks: Nov 2021 In Progress Proposed course of action has been developed for approval. Permanent collection objects being considered for exhibition or loan are "inventoried" as they are checked for condition and display requirements by collections staff. Moving forward this process will be documented in the collection database. In addition, both Security and Guiding staff perform daily inventory checks of those works on exhibition in the galleries. On a quarterly basis staff from Finance and Accounting select at random a number of objects which location must then be identified and confirmed or corrected. It is proposed that these counts include between 10 and 20 objects, and that the process be documented within the collection database. Full collection inventories for works not in off-site storage will be undertaken on a regular basis, the next one scheduled prior to any planned move of the collection for the purposes of gallery (re) construction. This process will be undertaken by Registration staff with additional staff resources as required.

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Recommendation #8 So that the collection of items is appropriately safeguarded, and to monitor and preserve its condition, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Update its collection policies to include a requirement to make periodic visits to its off-site storage facilities; and • Review the items stored off-site to determine if storage at an off-site location is appropriate based on the condition and care requirements of the items.		Response Recommendation #8 Action and Timing • Update Collection policy to include off-site storage visits: Jan-Mar 2021 ▪ Included above in process for approval of updated Collection Policy In Progress Draft text has been developed for inclusion in *Collections Management Policies and Guidelines*, under "Collection Programming, Care, Documentation and Access: Care and Maintenance" —to be approved by Art Advisory Committee in May 2021.

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Recommendation #9 So that artworks that require restoration receive appropriate conservation treatments, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection put in place processes to assess and document the condition of items before and after exhibiting and lending them.	Response Recommendation #9 Action and Timing • Build an agreed assessment process and schedule into the planning procedures for exhibiting and lending works from the collection: Ongoing (Apr 2021+) • Document condition of items for loan or exhibition: Ongoing (Apr 2021+) There already exists an assessment process both for outgoing loans and works selected for exhibition onsite, which will be augmented with further documentation. **Outgoing Loans**: All outgoing loans are already accompanied by Condition Reports that must be completed by each institution borrowing the work: these reports are then returned to the McMichael with the objects at the end of the loan. Once the condition of the returned objects has been reviewed and any changes noted on the returned reports, they are now signed off by the Conservator and added to the Conservation records for those objects. **Works considered for exhibition onsite**: Assessments prior to exhibition will now be documented within the collection database. In addition, all objects will be condition-reported at the end of exhibition and prior to rehousing, with this final reporting also documented within the collection database.	

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Recommendation #10 To enhance the strength and value of its collection, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection revise its deaccessioning policy, and review the artwork in its collection to identify items for deaccessioning that are underused and could be sold or gifted to another institution Recommendation #11 So that it meets the needs of Ontarians for access to its collection, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Review and assess the sufficiency of the access it provides to its collections; and • Take corrective action to improve access.	Response Recommendation Action and Timing • Review Deaccessioning policy for consideration by AAC in May: Feb - May, 2021	Response Recommendation #10 Action and Timing • Identify items for potential deaccession to other public institutions May 2021 – Mar 2022, following review In Progress Deaccessioning Policy will be reviewed at the May 2021 meeting of AAC. A collection review with an eye to identifying items for deaccessioning will be undertaken at senior levels. Response Recommendation #11 Action and Timing • Upgrade to fibre cable to improve bandwidth: Jan-Jul 2021 • Upgrade digital imagery available on eMuseum: Ongoing (as funding allows) • Improve physical access to collection through long-term capital renewal (TBD) In Progress • Bid for fibre has been awarded. Expected completion date for installation is early July 2021. • Upgrade to existing eMuseum is underway; images are added as works enter the public domain or permission is acquired to include them; new images are added as they become available.

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Recommendation #12 To improve access to its collection for Ontarians, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection identify opportunities to better publicize its art lending program to other institutions in Ontario.		Response Recommendation #12 Action and Timing • Publicize lending program on website: Feb 2021 • Develop criteria and language for "key lender" status to be incorporated into loan agreements: Mar 2021 • Continue to digitize collection, depending on financial means to do so: Jan 2021+ In Progress Text for publicizing our art lending program on our website has been drafted and awaits approval/revision and posting.
Recommendation #13 So that it designs and selects exhibitions that best meet its goals and attract visitors to the gallery, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection establish selection criteria based on industry best practices and use these criteria to assess and select the exhibitions it will display.		Response Recommendation #13 Action and Timing • Consult with colleagues to identify potential selection criteria: Sep-Dec 2021 • Develop written criteria to use in assessment and selection: Jan-Mar 2022

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<u>Recommendation #14</u> To improve the cost-effectiveness of its exhibitions, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • establish targets for attendance, revenues, costs and the profit or loss it expects each exhibition to achieve; and • Where targets on exhibitions are not met, analyze the results to identify the reasons, and apply lessons learned to targets set for future exhibitions.		<u>Response Recommendation #14</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Develop template for targets for exhibitions, adapting to scope and aim: Sep 2021 • Document pre-and post-analysis of exhibitions: Dec 2021+
<u>Recommendation #15</u> To enhance the effectiveness of its exhibition in increasing the public's understanding of a given subject and improving visitor experience, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Evaluate all key exhibitions, including their design and the early stages of their implementation; and • Put in place processes to review lessons learned from evaluations of past exhibitions and apply them to plans to select and design exhibitions in the future.		<u>Response Recommendation #15</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Create template for evaluation with metrics to track: Sep 2021 • Prepare evaluation reports for review by Leadership: Sep 2021+

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<u>Recommendation #16</u> So that its education programs meet their goals and the learning expectations of those who participate in them, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Put place a policy that defines when programs should be evaluated and the method by which they should be evaluated; and • Produce evaluation reports on its individual education programs that can be used to identify and address areas that need improvement.		<u>Response Recommendation #16</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Develop Evaluation Policy: July 2021 • Produce evaluation reports on individual programs: Sep 2021 • Produce quarterly evaluation overview and annual report: Dec 2021 <u>In Progress</u> • Incorporated quarterly Evaluation Report for all the programs within our regular Board Reports (two last reports) • Developed an annual Department Evaluation Schedule for specific programming streams including calendar of reports, feedback sessions and evaluation meetings. • Reviewed current evaluation forms and platforms used such as Microsoft forms, Survey Monkey etc. • We are currently in conversation with Survey Monkey about an upgrade of our current package
<u>Recommendation #17</u> To help increase its revenues and sustain its operations, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection compare its attendance revenue generating initiatives with those of other museums and galleries to identify and implement promising attendance revenue generating initiatives.		<u>Response Recommendation #17</u> <u>Action and Timing</u> • Conduct comparison of revenue-generating initiatives: Jul-Sep 2021 • Implement appropriate initiatives: Dec 2021+

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Recommendation #18 To help meet its targets and increase membership sales, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection: • Collect data from its members on their demographics and interactions with the gallery; and • Review its strategies and implement changes that can help improve their effectiveness in increasing membership sales.		Response Recommendation #18 Action and Timing • Create annual survey of members including demographics: Sep 2021 • Conduct digital marketing campaign for membership: Sep-Nov 2021 • Conduct annual survey of non-renewing members: Dec 2021+ • Implement appropriate changes: Ongoing In Progress • Annual survey has been scheduled for Sep 2021 • Digital marketing campaign has been budgeted for fall 2021
Recommendation #19 To monitor and improve the effectiveness of its staff, and meet the requirements of the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, we recommend that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection review and strength its procedures to ensure that it evaluates the performance of all of its staff.		Response Recommendation #19 Action and Timing • Complete all performance evaluations and conduct annually thereafter: Feb 2021 In Progress • 80% completed as of March 15, 2021. Gallery closures due to Covid have delayed completion • Remainder will be completed once the gallery reopens in May or June 2021.

As of April 26, 2021