



ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS

Nurturing the arts in all forms is an important part of our cultural mission as a nation. For 125 years, the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts has celebrated the achievements of innovative visual artists across Canada and encouraged new generations to pursue the 20 diverse disciplines that fall under its umbrella. The works of these painters, sculptors, architects, printmakers, filmmakers, photographers and graphic artists have enriched the culture of our country and served to promote our artistic excellence to the rest of the world. Their accomplishments not only reflect the diverse traditions of our nation, they also powerfully capture and convey emotions and ideas that engage us as a society.



I am extremely proud of the work done by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts to enhance the visual arts as a vibrant part of our cultural life. I wish the Academy continued success in its important mission.

Adrienne Clarkson

Patron:
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson
C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.
Governor General of Canada
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WHO ARE WE?

We are the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (RCA), one of Canada's most enduring cultural institutions. Celebrating 125 years in 2005, today's Academy is composed of over 500 established professionals working across Canada in 20 visual arts disciplines; from painting and sculpture to architecture, design, fine craft, photography and filmmaking. The RCA continues to consider new forms of visual expression as they emerge. From the beginning, members have been elected to the Academy in mid-career by a jury of their peers. The RCA is unique in that it recognizes the many innovators on the national arts scene in Canada.

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

Through exhibitions and special events, we **celebrate** the achievements, the innovation, and the vision of Canada's visual artists.

Through scholarships and mentoring, we **encourage** and support emerging visual artists from across the country.

We seek to **facilitate** an understanding by all Canadians of the importance of the visual arts as an aspect of our national identity, as cultural expression, and as a source of social capital in our culturally diverse country.

The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts seeks to honour distinguished artists in all fields of creative endeavour in the visual arts. To be an RCA member not only recognizes the value of your gift to the country but also brings you, through RCA activities in close participation with your peers, broad and necessary acquaintance with the creative fields across our vast country.

Arthur Erickson cc, RCA

WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

Encouraged by Canada's Governor General, the Marquis of Lorne, the RCA was founded in 1880 by 26 of the country's most accomplished painters, sculptors and architects. Determined to foster the visual arts in their young country, these artist-pioneers laid much of the foundation of Canada's visual arts heritage, including the founding, in 1880, of the National Gallery of Canada, with a requirement that each newly elected Academician deposit a work, thus forming the nucleus of the Gallery's Canadian collection. Today, many Canadians are surprised to learn that this practice continued until as late as 1976. The story of those early beginnings is housed in the National Archives and, along with the RCA's own records, provides indispensable research material to scholars and historians.

The RCA is at its best as it exists now, fulfilling its dual role as a guardian of tradition and a supporter of innovation. The wide spectrum of the visual arts to which RCA devotes its energies and recognition as well as the immense wealth of talent among its members, are clear indications of its great worth to this country.

David Silcox, Art Historian, Trustee, RCA Foundation

WHO HAS BELONGED TO THE RCA IN THE PAST, AND WHO ARE ITS MEMBERS TODAY?

Perhaps you will know some of them...

Think of painters from the very early years – Lucius R. O'Brien, first President of RCA, 1880, Napoléon Bourassa, first Vice President of RCA, 1880, Paul Peel, and Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté.

Well-known Academicians elected in the last century include David Blackwood, printmaker; Charles Gagnon, painter; Lawren P. Harris, painter; Gershon Iskovitz, painter; Norman Jewison, filmmaker; Yousuf Karsh, photographer; William Kurelek, painter; Michael Snow, artist in multi media; Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, landscape architect; John C. Parkin, architect, and Frederick Varley, painter.

Today the RCA counts amongst its members Douglas Cardinal, architect; Atom Egoyan, filmmaker; Vera Frenkel, artist in new media; Geneviève Cadieux and Thaddeus Holownia, photographers, Reinhard Reitzenstein, sculptor, and David Urban, painter.

The list goes on. There are many more whose works collectively make up a history of art and design in Canada and a Who's Who of the national scene in contemporary visual creativity.

The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts is a window into the heart of our nation. Inclusive of the diverse entities which contribute to our cultural makeup the Academy provides a forum for the voice of our creators, past, present and future. Through its recognition and support of outstanding original work it functions as a reservoir of identity, an estimable resource for those within and without the organization alike.

Mary Anne Barkhouse RCA

AND HOW DOES THE RCA PURSUE ITS VARIOUS ACTIVITIES?

Three ways:

- through the **RCA Trust Fund** which provides grants to public galleries across Canada to purchase and exhibit works of living Canadian artists,
- through the **RCA Scholarship Fund** which provides financial assistance to young Canadians for post-graduate study in the visual arts, and
- through the **RCA Programme Fund** which mounts exhibitions, produces publications and other public activities aimed at strengthening Canadians' appreciation of the historic context of art and design and the work of their contemporary visual artists.

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

The RCA Secretariat is in Toronto and members meet at the RCA Annual General Assembly (AGA), held in a different Canadian city each year. Their task is to set policy and to plan for the coming year. The Annual General Assembly invariably generates new energies and new ideas as well as new connections. The AGA also offers members the opportunity to link with regional educational institutions and to collaborate in a variety of programs and events, presented for both members and the public.

HOW DO WE GOVERN OURSELVES?

The Governing Council of the RCA is composed of delegates from all parts of Canada. It is made up of members and non-members recruited for their dedication to the visual arts and for their special skills in management and administration.

The **Friends of the RCA** was founded in 1985. Its members are a source of indispensable assistance and advice for activities ranging from RCA exhibitions to public relations and fundraising. Annual dues entitle "Friends" to receive RCA publications and invitations to various activities including the annual President's Reception and Dinner.

WHO PAYS FOR THIS?

Since its inception the RCA has relied primarily on members' annual dues, contributions of individuals and "Friends" and the occasional corporate partnership. The newly established **RCA Foundation** is attracting individual pledges, endowments and corporate contributions. The objective is to generate funds which would increase the Academy's ability to develop more extensive annual programming.



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ACADÉMIE ROYALE
DES ARTS DU CANADA
401 Richmond Street W, Ste. 375
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3A8
Tel/Tél 416 408 2718 Fax/Télex 416 408 2286
rcaarts@interlog.com www.rca-arc.ca