

President's Message – August 2016

Members of the University community,

During his tenure as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Regina, Dr. David Barnard said: “The campus should be a place that enriches us not only intellectually but also aesthetically. Of course, the two are related – in places where there is aesthetic richness, we are encouraged to exercise our intellects.”

Like Dr. Barnard, I appreciate that sentiment and recognize that one of the chief ways the aesthetic is realized on our campus is through the President’s Art Collection, which contains 418 works of art in a variety of media. Select pieces from the collection are displayed in public spaces across campus, helping advance the University’s mission of providing a beautiful, thought-provoking and culturally rich learning and work environment.

The President’s Art Collection is just one part of a rich University of Regina tradition in visual arts dating back to 1914 when the University’s predecessor, Regina College, offered art classes in painting and drawing. In 1936, the art program at Regina College got a big lift when Regina lawyer Norman MacKenzie bequeathed to the college his entire art collection and enough money to establish the gallery that still bears his name.

Over the years, the University’s visual arts program has featured such notable instructors as Ken Lochhead, Art McKay, Joe Fafard, Jack Sures, Jack Cowin and Vic Cicansky. Today, you’ll find the names of those artists and many more on the artwork in the President’s Art Collection.

The collection was enhanced in 2014 when local patron of the arts and philanthropist Dr. Jacqui Shumiatcher committed to donate more than 1,000 pieces (98 of which are currently in the President’s Art Collection with more to come) from the collection she built with her late husband, Dr. Morris Shumiatcher. Included in the donation is one of the largest private collections of Inuit artwork in Canada.

The acquisition of Aboriginal artwork at the University dates back to the 1970s and that tradition continues to this day. Among the Indigenous art in the collection is a painting by one of Canada’s most important Indigenous artists, Norval Morrisseau. Fittingly, the powerful canvas will soon grace a wall of the Office of Indigenization in the Research and Innovation Centre. On the north side of campus, close to the bike path, sits *The Four Directions*, a large sculpture by Lionel Peyachew, a Cree artist from the Red Pheasant First Nation and a direct descendent of the great chief Big Bear. As well, tapestries by Bernice Runns, Marjorie Yuzicapi and Martha Tawijaka from Fort Qu’Appelle’s Standing Buffalo First Nation hang in the Dr. John Archer Library. Those are just a few examples, but there is much more to the collection.

On a wall adjacent to Common Ground in the Riddell Centre, you will find a collection of paintings by the Regina Five, the most influential and recognized group of painters in Saskatchewan art history. North of the Administration-Humanities Building and beside Wascana Lake is the massive Joe Fafard sculpture, *Le Jardin de L'esprit*, which was donated to the University in 2005 and is used for local solstice celebrations. In the courtyard between the

Riddell Centre and the Education Building sits the large red metal sculpture *Callooh-Callay*, by famous Canadian artist Françoise Sullivan.

The collection is overseen by the President's Advisory Committee on Art, which makes recommendations for the acquisition of art for the collection. Since early last year the collection has been curated full-time by Alex King. Alex, who is from London, England, was curator at the Estevan Art Gallery and Museum and curatorial assistant at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. She has also held positions at Annely Juda Fine Art and Sotheby's, London. She holds an MA in International Museum Studies from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden and a BA in Visual Culture from the University of Brighton, UK.

Alex ensures the longevity of the President's Art Collection by documenting, researching, conserving, preserving, framing, storing and displaying works. She also coordinates the loan of artwork across campus, and particularly aims to exhibit significant items for the enjoyment of those who live, work and visit here. Faculty and staff may inquire about displaying artwork in their offices or work areas by contacting Alex at art.collection@uregina.ca. I encourage you to do so, because it is a way for all of us to help contribute to what Dr. Barnard called the "aesthetic richness" of our University.

The President's Art Collection brings an important visual element to our institution. Every day as we walk the halls or stroll around campus, our lives are enriched by the art on display.

Have a great August, and I hope you find some time to take advantage of our beautiful weather by getting outside and enjoying one of our outdoor art installations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor