

Boards, Acquisition Committees and your Collection

BOARD GOVERNANCE and LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS and PITFALLS: Creating a Healthy and Supportive Board

Michael Maynard, PhD

President of the Board, Art Gallery of Northumberland



Art Gallery of Northumberland | (AGN)

- The AGN is located in Cobourg on the traditional territory of the Mississauga;
- The AGN was founded in 1960 as the Cobourg Art Gallery, one of 10 public – collecting – art galleries in the province;
- Renamed the Art Gallery of Northumberland in 1983 to reflect its regional outreach and the County's seven diverse – yet complementary – municipalities;
- This mandate is reflected in our new logo and branding.



Art Gallery of Northumberland | (AGN)

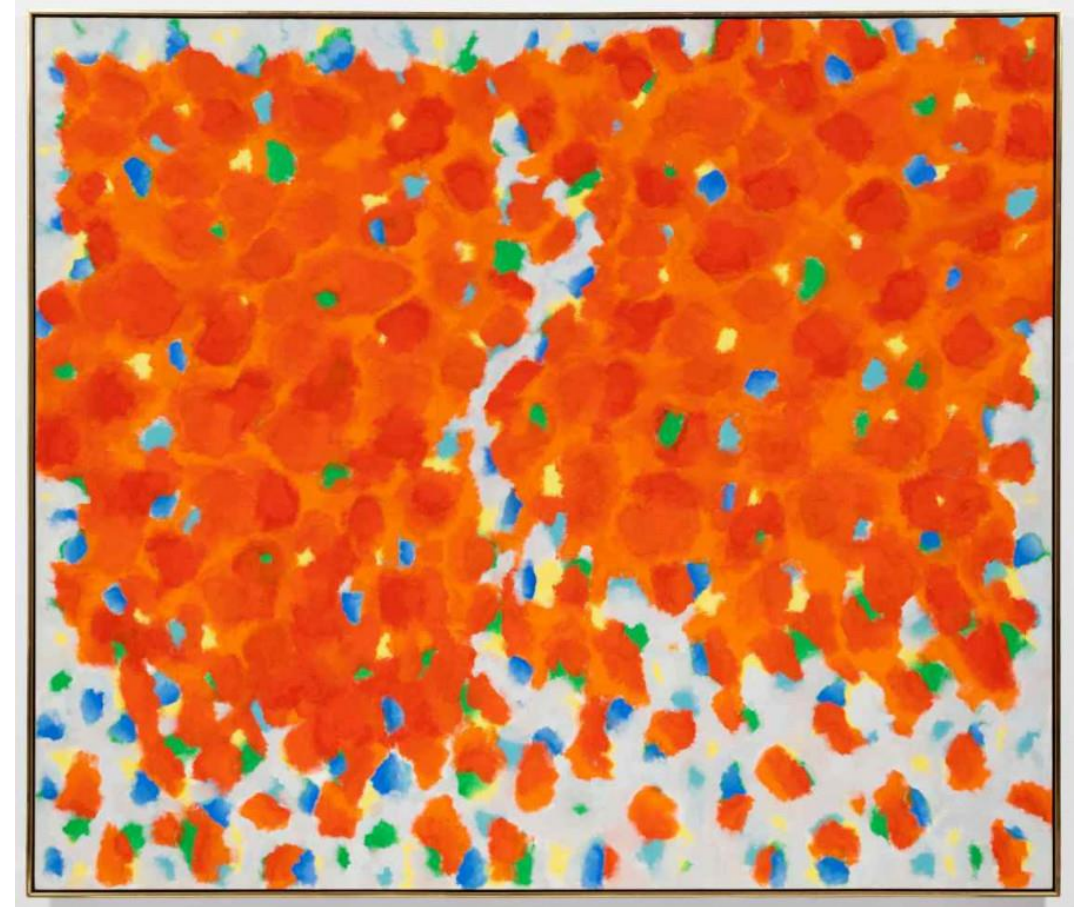
- Our vision is focused on providing superior opportunities for growth and engagement in the arts and culture sector of our communities.
- Originally located in the Cobourg public library, in 1977 the AGN moved into historic Victoria Hall, with 2,300 sq ft of exhibition space, an art storage vault and environmental controls.



Victoria Hall (opened 1860), West Wing, Third Floor

AGN | Permanent Collection

Highlights: **A.Y. Jackson** **Molly Bobak**
Jane Eccles **Edwin Holgate** Carl Beam
A.J. Casson **Rita Letendre** **David Milne**
Josef Albers **Carl Schaeffer** **Bruno Bobak**
Tony Urquhart **John Singer Sargeant**
Harold Town **Paavo Airola** **Peter Haller**
Frances Marie Gage **David Blackwood**
Evan Penny **Anne Meredith Barry**
Gershon Iskowitz ...



Gershon Iskowitz (1921-1988)

"October #1," 1976

Oil on canvas

197 x 232 cm

Purchased, 1982

Board of Directors | Responsibilities

- To work with the Executive Director to establish the AGN's mission, vision and values, and its strategic direction, which is renewed regularly;
- To set governance policies and procedures;
- To work with the Executive Director to ensure sufficient organizational resources;
- The Board is responsible for legal and financial management of the organization, but is not involved in day-to-day AGN operations.

AGN Board | Relationship with Executive Director

- Regular and open communication and a mutually respectful working relationship between the Board President and the AGN Executive Director is key to the successful management of Gallery operations and initiatives;
- The Executive Director is responsible to the Board;
- The Executive Director manages AGN staff, operations and initiatives.

Board of Directors | Membership

- Board membership features the following skill sets:
 - Financial and accounting experience
 - Legal practice
 - Experience with not-for-profit organizations
 - Knowledge of the culture sector, and/or professional practice in the visual arts
 - Fundraising/Engagement
 - Communications and public speaking

Board of Directors | Membership

- The Executive Director, President and Chair of the Board's Nominating Committee should consistently be identifying and researching possible new Directors;
- The Nominating Committee oversees formal nominations;
- AGN Development and Curatorial Departments can advise on possible candidates;
- Board membership should also reflect AGN social and cultural priorities: gender balance, age, inclusivity and cultural diversity

AGN | Recent Success Stories

- The AGN's long-standing accumulated deficit has been eliminated, and fiscal integrity restored;
- Community engagement in programming and exhibition visits is growing (over 2,300 visitors to the Gallery during 2020, in spite of pandemic lockdowns);
- Inclusivity and diversity are now priorities for the AGN – in Board membership and staffing, in collection acquisitions, and curated exhibitions.

AGN | Highlights

- The AGN is an important cultural resource, supporting the Town of Cobourg's Cultural Master Plan by providing a hub of artistic and cultural energies through inspiring educational experiences, for all audiences;
- The AGN is a downtown destination for visitors and tourists, located within Victoria Hall, which is a National Designated Site – we are a museum within a Museum.

Board of Directors / AGN | Works-in-Progress

- Establishing stable and appropriate organizational funding;
- A new 4-year Memorandum of Understanding is being negotiated with the Town of Cobourg;
- A renewed 2-year Strategic Plan is being developed, led by external consultants and involving Board members and the Executive Director;
- The AGN will continue to emphasize the relevance of the Gallery and its programming to the quality of life – both cultural and economic – in Cobourg and communities throughout Northumberland County.



60 Year

Thank you!

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