

The Politics of Funding:  
The Impact of Federal and Corporate Funding  
on the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario

by

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### **Abstract**

This thesis critically examines the influence exerted by both the federal government and corporate sponsors on arts institutions in Canada. Focusing on the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Ontario, the author outlines the historical influence of federal funding. The role that corporate sponsorship has come to play in offsetting a lack of financial support from the Government of Canada is also critically examined within the scope of this thesis. The author argues that gallery administration attempts to mimic the language used in the Government of Canada's federal policy for museums in order to appeal for more substantial federal support. At the same time, the author also contends that gallery management also utilizes the language of corporate mission and vision statements in order to appeal to alternate sources of funding, such as corporate sponsors.

**For my late grandmothers, Doris Flowers and Helen Korpan**

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## Introduction

The emergence of art galleries in Canadian cities was due to the significant cultural development that was the result of rapid growth and urbanization during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>1</sup> These fledgling institutions were founded and funded by groups of local citizens in order to foster a greater appreciation of the arts within their respective cities, amongst other reasons. As municipalities continued to grow, many of these museums also expanded both in terms of their physical space and the scope of their collections. As the “rise of different public and private funding mechanisms began to diminish the dominant role of local elite patrons and municipalities”, art museums outpaced the funding available to them through private donation.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, this shortage forced the administration to develop more creative operating methods.<sup>3</sup> This included seeking out potential revenue sources such as the government and the corporate sector in order to continue building gallery collections and sustaining programs. This thesis will explore the historical impact of the shift in funding and the influence of alternate funding sources on two Canadian art galleries – the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Ontario – focusing on the financial support of the federal government and the corporate sector. I argue that without the monetary assistance of these two entities, gallery administrations would be unable to sustain operations.

While museum management began to seek out different sectors for funding, scholars started to view the museum as something other than a sacred space for the collection and preservation of

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn D. Lowry, “A Deontological Approach to Art Museums and the Public Trust,” in *Whose Muse?: Art Museums and the Public Trust*, ed. James Cuno (Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2006), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Stefan Toepler, “Caveat Vendor? Museum Merchandising, Nonprofit Commercialization, and the Case of the Metropolitan Museum of New York,” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17, no. 2 (June 2006): 102.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Alberta, “A Dialogue with Alberta's Arts Sector – Alberta Culture and Community Spirit” (Edmonton, 2011), 5.

art. In the twentieth century, museums began to be analyzed as sites that were instrumental in the shaping of civic capacities – such as through the critical examination of how the space of the museum influenced visitors, as described by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his study, published in 1990.<sup>4</sup> Bourdieu stated that the etiquette demanded by the museum setting dictates a restrictive code of behaviour that forces viewers to act and speak in a particular manner while within the boundaries of the institution.<sup>5</sup> This code is exemplified by the stigma of using guidebooks within the museum, which the author argues signifies a patron who lacks the education that would allow that individual to possess enough institutionalized cultural capital to function unaided in the museum space.<sup>6</sup> More educated patrons, according to Bourdieu, prefer using a tour guide as an aid or relying on personal knowledge.<sup>7</sup> Gordon Fyfe furthers Bourdieu’s argument by noting that cultural capital is an “asset that has been acquired: it enables people, collectively, to generate relations of distinctions which are instituted as social or status hierarchies” that aid in reinforcing the strata of the museum setting.<sup>8</sup> Bourdieu’s study details the exchange of capital that occurs when museum management receives financial support. The gallery’s administration gains economic capital, while the donor – whether government or corporation – receives an increase in cultural capital, elevating the status of the organization. I will delve further into this transfer in the second and third chapters of this thesis through an in-depth analysis of case studies at each gallery.

American art historian Carol Duncan further explored the elitism of museum culture with her

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<sup>4</sup> Tony Bennett, *Making Culture, Changing Society* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2013), 48.

<sup>5</sup> See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> Bourdieu, *The Love of Art*, 52.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Gordon Fyfe, “Reproductions, Cultural Capital and Museums: Aspects of the Culture of Copies,” *Museum and Society* 2, no. 1 (2004), 48.

1995 publication, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* by critiquing the underlying political function of the art museum and the subsequent impact of the museum on the public. Duncan argues, “public art museums are important, even necessary, fixtures of a well-furnished state”, highlighting the close relationship between government and gallery since museums were founded as the means to a political end.<sup>9</sup> Governments fostered the development of museums as a way to develop a national identity. According to Duncan, a primary reason for state sponsorship of museum development was due to the fact that “such public institutions made (and still make) the state look good: progressive, concerned about the spiritual life of its citizens, a preserver of past achievements, and a provider for the common good” by offering all social classes the opportunity to better themselves through engaging with the visual arts.<sup>10</sup> Duncan notes, “public museums are, by definition, accessible to everyone, they can function as especially clear demonstrations of the state's commitment to the principle of equality” even though the institution does not embody the concept of equality that the government attempts to portray.<sup>11</sup> This is exemplified by contemporary museum practices, such as admission fees and membership tiers, which will be further examined in chapter two. For some visitors, the museum is inaccessible due to the capital – both economic and cultural – that one must possess in order to visit. While both of the galleries analyzed within this thesis offer free admission on specific days, there is arguably a distinction between those who inhabit the space of the museum regularly (such as members) versus those who rarely frequent the gallery. The concept of elitism within the museum is integral to understanding the influence of both corporate and government donors upon the gallery’s administration. While both appear to contribute to the gallery as an act of

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<sup>9</sup> Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 88.

<sup>10</sup> Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 93.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



public goodwill, the funding provided continues to reinforce the hierarchy that exists within the gallery space. Donations go towards sponsoring exhibits and programs that will enhance the prestige of the institution (and subsequently, the image of the donor), which does not necessarily improve the visitor experience for those patrons who are outside of the privileged sphere.

British sociologist Tony Bennett's extensive body of work on museums in the United Kingdom, Australia, and North America assesses the function of the museum in relation to key issues such as its historical influence on the social and the contemporary implications for visitors, government, and art.<sup>12</sup> Bennett declares that two political demands have been placed upon the museum.<sup>13</sup> The first is that all groups should be represented equally within the institution and secondly, all groups should have equal access to museums. While these claims align with the argument that "art and culture were envisioned as means for bringing about changes in working-class ways of life of museums" by making the museum accessible to all classes, the issue of elitism is not taken into consideration.<sup>14</sup> The utopian concepts of equal representation and access outlined by Bennett are in direct conflict with other studies – such as those by Bourdieu and Duncan – which view the gallery as an elitist institution whose primary function is to increase the prestige and status of the government.<sup>15</sup>

While making "the state look good: progressive, concerned about the spiritual life of its citizens, a preserver of past achievements, and a provider for the common good"<sup>16</sup> was a primary function of arts institutions in the nineteenth century, a secondary purpose was to provide a place

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<sup>12</sup> See Tony Bennett, "Acting on the Social: Arts, Culture, and Government," *The American Behavioral Scientist* 43, no. 9 (2000) 1412-28.

<sup>13</sup> Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> Bennett, "Acting on the Social," 1420.

<sup>15</sup> Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 88.

<sup>16</sup> Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 93.

where the lower classes could aspire to emulate the middle class and steer away from less desirable pursuits.<sup>17</sup> Bennett furthered this concept in his 1995 book, *The Birth of the Museum*, in which he stated, “culture, in coming to be thought of as useful for governing, was fashioned as a vehicle for the exercise of new forms of power” particularly in terms of shaping civilian minds.<sup>18</sup> Using cultural institutions such as the art museum, governments hoped to influence everyday citizens.<sup>19</sup> Bennett argues, “culture comes to be imbricated within government programmes directed at transforming the mental, spiritual, and behavioural attributes of the population” in order to align the population’s beliefs closer with government ideologies.<sup>20</sup> These studies and others in the field of critical museum studies were integral in informing my own analysis of the museum due to their focus on the influence of the government – through both funding and policy – on museum administration and the subsequent impact of the art institution’s environment upon visitors.

Andrea Witcomb’s critique of Bennett’s theories provided my research with a different perspective on the relationship between government and gallery. While Witcomb agrees with Bennett that the “role of the museum is to provide a pedagogical space that supports the governmental aim of civic reform”, she states that Bennett’s interpretation of culture is limited.<sup>21</sup> According to Witcomb, Bennett’s writing on the government’s role in the arts reduces all cultural practices to an effect of government, resulting in “an inability to conceive of the museum

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<sup>17</sup> For more information on the social strata of museums, see Pierre Bourdieu’s study *For the Love of Art*.

<sup>18</sup> Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 19.

<sup>19</sup> See Tony Bennett, “Useful Culture” in *Representing the Nation: A Reader, Histories, Heritage, and Museums*, eds. David Boswell and Jessica Evans (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> Bennett, “Useful Culture,” 83.

<sup>21</sup> Andrea Witcomb, *Reimagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum* (London: Routledge, 2003), 85.

as an institution that may not always be concerned with relations of power”.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, I disagree with Witcomb’s argument. Based upon my own findings, I assert that all relationships between gallery administration and the government are based upon power dynamics. This is particularly evident in the relationship between the government as a donor and the museum’s management as the receiver of funding. In this scenario, the organization providing financial backing wields the power in the form of economic capital.

Within the scope of my research, I have also had to contend with the power shift due to the modern corporatization of the arts. As the primary funding sources have transferred from being provided primarily by government to the private sector, art institution management has adopted a corporate mentality in regards to shaping museum policy. Taking into account corporate entities such as the mission and vision statement, this thesis has been informed by writings on the corporatization and commodification of the museum experience, such as Maurice Berger’s 2004 paper on “The Corporate Museum”. This essay by the U.S. cultural and art historian frames the art gallery as an “institution creating programs and capital projects to maximize income and attendance”,<sup>23</sup> which differs from previous studies of museums – such as the aforementioned works by Bourdieu, Duncan, and Bennett – that focus on the museum as an institution for social reform via the education of the lower classes. Further writings on corporatization such as Joseph J. Cordes and C. Eugene Steuerle’s 2009 book *Nonprofits and Business* enhanced my understanding of the museum as a business, as well as the subsequent relationship with corporations that developed due to the exchange of capital. This work was particularly useful in demonstrating the benefits for each party in partnerships between cultural institutions and

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<sup>22</sup> Witcomb, *Reimagining the Museum*, 17.

<sup>23</sup> Maurice Berger, “The ‘Corporate’ Museum” in *Museums of Tomorrow: A Virtual Discussion*, ed. Maurice Berger (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 2004), 65.

corporate entities. The article “Consumer Perception of Corporate Donations: Effects of Company Reputation for Social Responsibility and Type of Donation” by Dwane Hal Dean published in the 2003/2004 issue of the *Journal of Advertising* aided me in drawing parallels between the intentions of government and corporations, both of which “contribute financial and human resources to the community, and help to improve the quality of life in the community” through patronage of the arts.<sup>24</sup> *Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause* – written by U.S. professor of marketing Phillip Kotler and social marketing professor Nancy Lee in 2004 – furthered the analysis of the effect of corporate support on arts institutions by introducing Craig Smith’s concept of new corporate philanthropy, which signalled the shift of corporate management towards making long-term commitments to specific issues and initiatives that aligned with the company’s values.<sup>25</sup>

My research in critical museum studies and corporatization has led to questions such as what role does funding play in shaping the museum, particularly in terms of its ability to act on the social through exhibits and programs?<sup>26</sup> Is there a differentiation in value between the funding provided by the government and the monetary support of corporate donors? How does the financing provided by government affect the donations made by corporate sponsors and vice versa?

Using information gleaned from audited financial statements and annual reports to the community from both galleries, this thesis examines the impact of federal funding on two cultural institutions in Edmonton, Alberta and Toronto, Ontario starting with the initial donation

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<sup>24</sup> Dwane Hal Dean, “Consumer Perception of Corporate Donations: Effects of Company Reputation for Social Responsibility and Type of Donation,” *Journal of Advertising* 32, no. 4 (Winter, 2003/2004): 92.

<sup>25</sup> Phillip Kotler and Nancy Lee, *Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2005), 7.

<sup>26</sup> Bennett, “Acting on the Social”, 1412.

made by the Canada Council for the Arts to the Edmonton Art Gallery in 1970. My focus is on the relationship that has developed between the Government of Canada with both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario, particularly in terms of federal funding. These two galleries differ greatly from one another. One is a ward of the provincial government and therefore receives continuous financial support, while the gallery's administration also seeks out additional corporate and private sector support. In contrast, the other is an independent non-profit, whose management depends on all three levels of government for funding, as well as on private and corporate donations. Through a comparison of each gallery's administration funding stream, I seek to analyze the influence of both federal and corporate support on contemporary art galleries in Canada.

As neither institution can be sustained by federal support alone, I also take into consideration the impact of corporate sponsorship on both galleries' management, which plays a significant role in offsetting the lack of federal funding. I argue that the government and corporate sectors are dependent upon one another to support the arts. The government needs the financial backing of companies in order to provide adequate funding, while corporations desire the connection to government – through supporting non-profit organizations, such as the arts – in order to appear socially responsible. For the gallery's administration, a delicate balance needs to be maintained in order to satisfy the needs of both corporate and government donors. Accepting funding from multiple sources forces the gallery's administration and board of directors to constantly adjust its interests in order to appeal to a variety of both current and potential sponsors. These adaptations include constantly comparing its own mission and vision statements to those of gallery supporters (particularly government agencies and corporations) in order to ensure that the gallery's values align with those of the organizations that provide funding. As a result of the shift

towards funding sources other than government support, the administrations of arts institutions have also changed in terms of the language that is used to communicate the gallery's purpose. At the government level, this includes factoring in policy in order for a gallery to be potentially more appealing in terms of federal financial support. Gallery management has also adopted corporate language – such as the aforementioned vision and mission statement – in order to better align with the practices and purse strings of corporate donors. This thesis argues that gallery administration attempts to mimic the language used in the Government of Canada's national museum policy in order to appeal for more substantial federal support. I contend that gallery management also utilizes the language of corporate mission and vision statements in order to appeal to alternate sources of funding, such as corporate sponsors. For both corporate and government sponsors, successful partnerships with art institutions are ones in which the corporation and non-profit organization's goals, values, and mission are aligned with those of the funding agency.<sup>27</sup>

In the first chapter, I begin with a brief history of each gallery in order to provide a fuller understanding of the two institutions. Through a historical examination of how both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario – formerly the Edmonton Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Toronto, respectively – came into being, I seek to establish a framework that will allow me to analyze the financial state of each art museum, focusing on the impact of government and corporate funding. This includes assessing the development of each institution's twenty-first century expansion and exploring the significance of major funding sources. I seek to ponder the implications of each gallery's administration accepting significant financial assistance from the government. While my primary focus is on federal funding, I acknowledge the impact

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen Adler, *Cause for Concern: Results-Oriented Cause Marketing* (Mason, Ohio: Thomson/South-Western, 2006), 21.

of monetary support from the provincial and municipal levels of government on each museum's capital campaign funding, as these donations make both galleries' administrations less dependent upon federal finances. At the same time, I also evaluate the impact that accepting funding from all three levels of government has upon each gallery's administration. Tony Bennett argues,

The range of demands placed on museums on behalf of other political constituencies as the space of the museum has been subject to a constant process of politicalisation in being called on both to expand the range of its representational concerns...and/or to exhibit familiar materials in new contexts to allow them to represent the values of the groups to which they relate rather than those of the dominant culture.<sup>28</sup>

Within my own research, I consider the range of demands that have been placed upon art gallery administrations by various donors. The second chapter shifts from examining all three levels of government to a primary focus on the impact of funding from the Government of Canada through agencies such as the Canada Council for the Arts. Founded in 1957, the Canada Council continues to be the primary financial sustainer of the arts. Within chapter two, I trace the historical implications of each gallery's dependence upon federal funding. My focus then shifts to examine the methods of each gallery's management for offsetting the lack of government funds. Through my examination of alternative funding sources, I contend that monetary support from the national government is not sustainable. In the 1980s, the Edmonton Art Gallery's administration introduced two measures in order to try and make the gallery financially stable – admission fees and a tiered membership system. These attempts at financial self-sustainability are still employed today, along with an aggressive corporate sponsorship campaign. The Art Gallery of Ontario's management utilizes similar strategies including admission fees, stratified memberships, and different levels of corporate sponsorship. I will assess these methods and

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<sup>28</sup> Tony Bennett, "The Political Rationality of the Museum," *Continuum* 3, no. 1 (1990): 50.

determine the impact that each one has had upon the financial situation of each gallery's administration.

In the third chapter of this thesis, I will unpack the implications of federal funding, with a focus on the national museum policy. First published in 1985, this policy continues to inform how Canadian culture will be displayed and interpreted by institutions and audiences alike. Through a comparative analysis of the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario, I question the influence of this archaic federal mandate on each gallery, focusing particularly on the written language of each institution's management. Through the critical analysis of each gallery's vision and mission statements in relation to the national museum policy, I argue that the administration of both galleries attempt to align themselves with national funding bodies (such as the Canada Council for the Arts) in order to secure a consistent stream of federal revenue.

Since their inceptions in the early twentieth century, both the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario have undergone radical changes, particularly in terms of how each gallery is funded. I believe that a comparative analysis of these two galleries and the funding that each receives from the federal government will create a fuller understanding of how art museums in Canada operate and how they function in relation to different sources of funding. Elizabeth Crooke argues, "when national or local government sets an agenda, its priorities will shape museum policy and practice", which is what I aim to continue exploring in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.<sup>29</sup> By critically examining the funding sources of both art galleries, I will try to determine to what extent the government and corporation each influence the administration of each gallery, and subsequently, one another.

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<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 64.



## Chapter One: The Emergence of Art Funding

The museum movement began to take in the nineteenth century when arts institutions began to open across the nation. The first Canadian art galleries included the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (which began as the Art Association of Montreal in 1860) and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, founded in 1880.<sup>30</sup> The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' administration organized the first exhibit in the gallery's new space in 1879.<sup>31</sup> More arts institutions emerged during the early twentieth century, including the Art Museum of Toronto – which would be renamed the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1919 before assuming the current moniker of Art Gallery of Ontario in 1966 – a brief history of which will be given here. The historical overview of both this institution and its comparison organization, the Art Gallery of Alberta (which was known as the Edmonton Art Gallery until 2005), will be informed by Tony Bennett's idea that museums are understood as “machineries that are implicated in the shaping of civic capacities” as the collections, exhibits, and programs of both galleries have arguably been influenced by the support of all three levels of government.<sup>32</sup> As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, gallery management has a history of accepting and subsequently, being influenced by government funding. Bennett observes that the way in which cultural forms – such as the art gallery – express the politicization that comes from accepting financial support from the government “are matters which emerge from, and have their conditions of existence within, the ways in which those forms and activities have been instrumentally fashioned as a consequence of their governmental deployment for specific social, cultural, or political ends”.<sup>33</sup> The funds provided by the

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<sup>30</sup> “Pre 1900,” *National Gallery of Canada*, Jan. 5, 2017, <https://www.gallery.ca/en/about/pre-1900.php>.

<sup>31</sup> “History,” *Montreal Museum of Fine Arts*, Jan. 5, 2017, <https://www.mbam.qc.ca/en/history/>.

<sup>32</sup> Bennett, *Making Culture*, 48.

<sup>33</sup> Bennett, “Useful Culture,” 390.

government have considerably impacted both galleries' administrations, as the financial support gives the management funds in order to carry out each gallery's purpose. At the same time, however, the monetary support arguably gives the government leverage in terms of influencing exhibitions and programs. In turn, the government is able to utilize these functions of the art gallery in order to bolster its own agenda. This can best be exemplified by how both galleries acquired the name of the provincial government. The Art Gallery of Ontario became a ward of the government in 1966, whereas the Art Gallery of Alberta's management changed the institution's name due to a significant donation from the province in 2005. This increased the economic capital of the galleries while also increasing the social and cultural capital of the government. The impact of government donations is highlighted in the historical overview of each gallery, which critically examines the development of each institution with a particular focus on the monetary resources that have been donated to each gallery's administration since its inception.

The Art Museum of Toronto was founded in 1900 under the provisions of Chapter 211 of the Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1897, which was also known as the Benevolent and Provident Societies Act.<sup>34</sup> This act was established for the purpose of “the cultivation and advancement of fine and applied Arts by means of the establishment and maintenance of a building...devoted to and used for and in connection with such Arts...and generally, by any lawful means, to encourage, promote and further Art interests in the Province of Ontario”, which essentially laid the groundwork for the new art museum to establish itself as a provincial centre for the visual

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<sup>34</sup> “Ontario Society of Artists Archives,” *CCCA Canadian Art Database*, Oct. 2, 2015, <http://ccca.concordia.ca/history/osa/english/1900-1924.html>.

arts in the province's capital city, Toronto.<sup>35</sup> This legislation emerged after lobbying from the Ontario Society of Artists, which had formed in 1872 with the intention of establishing both an art school and museum in the city.<sup>36</sup> The society's goal of establishing a gallery was bolstered by the interest of local philanthropists, who hoped to establish an art museum similar to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which had been founded in 1870. Further influences on the fledgling institution included art galleries in Dresden and Leipzig, Germany that were assessed by James Mavor, a professor of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, while travelling through Europe.<sup>37</sup> James Montgomery's visit to American museums and universities such as the United States National Museum and Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the Harvard University Museum in Cambridge Massachusetts, and Yale University in New Haven Connecticut further developed the concept of the modern museum that was emerging in Toronto during the early twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> Using elements from these institutions – such as tiered memberships – to develop a model for an art gallery in Toronto, the society began to draft a proposal and raise funds through subscriptions in 1900.<sup>39</sup>

Three years later, the Art Museum of Toronto had its incorporation confirmed by special provincial legislation. This was significant as “it gave the museum expropriation powers” even though it was not a ward of the Government of Ontario at this time.<sup>40</sup> Powers of expropriation were essential to the growth and development of the Art Museum of Toronto. Privileges that

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<sup>35</sup> “The Art Gallery of Toronto: Legislation and By-Laws 1927,” *QSpace: Queen's Research and Learning Repository*, Oct. 2, 2015, <https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/bitstream/1974/11772/1/legislationbylaw00artg.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks: The Toronto Trail from a Comparative Perspective, 1870s to the 1930s,” *Urban History Review* 30, no. 1 (2001): 11.

<sup>37</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 8.

<sup>38</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 9.

<sup>39</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 11.

<sup>40</sup> Mark Osbaldeston, *Unbuilt Toronto 2: More of the City That Might Have Been* (Tonawanda, NY: Dundurn Press, 2011), 185.

came with the new legislation enabled the Art Museum of Toronto's administration to have the ability to receive both money and land by bequest, borrow money, and mortgage property, which would allow the museum's administration to increase the likelihood of establishing a permanent space for the new art institution.<sup>41</sup>

The Grange, which was the Toronto estate of Professor and Mrs. Goldwin Smith, was initially promised to the Art Museum of Toronto's administration in 1900. Mrs. Smith – born Harriet Elizabeth Mann Dixon – had brought the property into her marriage, intending to later donate the home for a public purpose.<sup>42</sup> The bequest intended for the six acre estate to serve “in the public interest and to the citizens of Ontario” by providing a dedicated space for the display of the visual arts.<sup>43</sup> Prior to the donation of The Grange, exhibits were held in spaces such as the Public Library Building and on the University of Toronto campus. Following the death of Professor Smith in 1910, The Grange was turned over and plans were drawn to convert the estate into an art museum, which officially opened in 1913. The power of expropriation that was granted a decade earlier enabled the Art Museum of Toronto's management to expand as needed throughout the rest of the twentieth century. This included the museum's management signing an agreement with the City of Toronto to have The Grange's gardens turned into a public park. In exchange, the municipal government would make an annual contribution towards the gallery's maintenance.<sup>44</sup> To accommodate its rapidly growing art collection – the vast majority of which was acquired through private donation – the Art Museum of Toronto underwent a series of smaller renovations in order to expand its galleries throughout the early twentieth century.

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<sup>41</sup> “AGO Legal Identity Fact Sheet,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Oct. 2, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/name-legal-identity>.

<sup>42</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 11.

<sup>43</sup> “Ontario Society of Artists Archives,” *CCCA Canadian Art Database*.

<sup>44</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 12.

Gradually, the museum pushed outside the boundaries of The Grange and onto the land surrounding the original gallery site that had been purchased by the city for expansion purposes. By 1925, the Art Museum of Toronto had added on two new wings as well as a sculpture court. The gallery's emerging identity was also reconstructed and the Art Museum of Toronto formally changed its name to the Art Gallery of Toronto in 1919 to "avoid confusion with the Royal Ontario Museum", which had been founded in 1912.<sup>45</sup>

The donation of The Grange is significant because it was made by an individual citizen. This stands in stark contrast to the Art Gallery of Alberta site, which was gifted by the City of Edmonton. The city's donation to the Edmonton gallery will be discussed later in this chapter. While this thesis does not delve further into the influence of private donations, the offering of The Grange is worth examining. Without the property, the Art Gallery of Ontario's growth would have been severely stunted, despite the special powers granted to the administration by the Benevolent and Provident Societies Act. The initial donation of The Grange property provided the gallery's management with a base upon which it could expand, both in terms of the gallery's physical size and art holdings. In their essay, "The Art Gallery of Ontario Sixty Years of Exhibitions, 1906-1966", the gallery's chief librarian Karen McKenzie and deputy librarian Larry Pfaff further stress the importance of private donations during the Art Gallery of Ontario's fledgling years, stating that "the Gallery relied heavily on the resources of private collections for loans to temporary exhibitions and to fill out the hangings of its own permanent collection" as well as provide additional funds for the museum's expansion projects.<sup>46</sup> Francois Colbert – a professor of marketing at HEC Montreal business school in Montreal, Quebec – contends in his

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<sup>45</sup> Mark Osbaldeston, *Unbuilt Toronto: A History of the City That Might Have Been* (Tonawanda, NY: Dundurn Press, 2008), 188.

<sup>46</sup> Karen McKenzie and Larry Pfaff, "The Art Gallery of Ontario: Sixty Years of Exhibitions, 1906-1966," *RACAR: Canadian Art Review* 7, no. 1 (1980): 62.

article “Consumer Perception of Private Versus Public Sponsorship of the Arts” that private sponsorship of the arts can be considered “indispensable on the grounds that artistic production cannot survive on public funding alone”, which is true in the case of the Art Gallery of Ontario.<sup>47</sup> Despite currently being supported primarily by the provincial government, the gallery’s management would not have been able to advance without the financial backing of individual patrons such as the Smiths. Unlike the Art Gallery of Alberta’s administration, which received land from the municipal government on which to build the gallery space, the Art Gallery of Ontario’s management was not provided with government support at the outset. It was only due to the donations of private patrons that the Art Gallery of Ontario’s predecessor, the Art Gallery of Toronto, was established in the early twentieth century.

During the 1970s, the Art Gallery of Ontario underwent a series of significant renovations in order to enlarge the current facility and upgrade the existing galleries. The first phase of the gallery’s expansion opened in 1974, followed by a second phase in 1977. At the opening of the Phase I expansion, Ontario Premier William G. Davis stated, “A very accurate measure of the health of a society is its culture and the public interest and involvement in it”, which highlighted the need for the gallery’s continuous expansion in order to keep up with the public interest – and subsequently, public investment – in the gallery and its collections.<sup>48</sup>

These remarks were also noteworthy as six years earlier the Art Gallery of Toronto had again been rebranded, this time as the Art Gallery of Ontario. At this time, the gallery became a partial government agency under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Sport. Along with garnering public interest – particularly in terms of funding and acquisitions – the gallery’s

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<sup>47</sup> Francois Colbert, “Consumer Perception of Private Versus Public Sponsorship of the Arts,” *International Journal of Arts Management* 8, no.1 (2005): 50.

<sup>48</sup> *Art Gallery of Ontario 1975: The Official Opening of the Art Gallery of Ontario* (Toronto: The Gallery, 1975).

administration now also had the permanent support of the provincial government. Following its merger with the Government of Ontario, the Art Gallery of Ontario adopted the government's mandate to "cultivate and advance the cause of the visual arts in Ontario", which shifted the focus of the gallery away from serving the interests of the urban municipality of Toronto to attempting to provide a meaningful museum experience for all of the citizens of Ontario.<sup>49</sup>

In 2002, the Art Gallery of Ontario's management received one of the largest private donations in the gallery's history. The Thomson collection consists of over two thousand works of art spanning Canadian art and First Nations objects, European art, and ship models.<sup>50</sup> This acquisition was significant as it not only added to the gallery's already extensive holdings of art, but also increased the gallery's cultural capital as an institution. Through the Thomson bequest, the administration of the Art Gallery of Ontario further enhanced its status as a gallery by acquiring one of the largest private art collections in the country. To house this collection – and further emphasize the gallery's status as a Canadian art institution – architect Frank Gehry and his firm, Gehry International Architects, was brought in to design a new wing to accommodate the Thomson collection and other new acquisitions of the gallery. Called Transformation AGO, the project increased the building's overall size by twenty percent, allowing for more gallery space as well as additions on spaces such as the gallery café and gift shop.<sup>51</sup>

The expansion was also ambitious in terms of its funding. All three levels of government – the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the City of Toronto – provided economic capital for the Transformation AGO project. The federal government supplied twenty-

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<sup>49</sup> Clive Robertson, *Policy Matters: Administrations of Art and Culture* (Toronto: YYZ Books, 2006), 241.

<sup>50</sup> "The Thomson Collection," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Oct. 5, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/thomson-collection>.

<sup>51</sup> "Transformation AGO Project Fact Sheet," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/transformation-ago-project-fact-sheet>.

four million dollars in funding, which was only surpassed by the Government of Ontario's contribution of thirty-nine million dollars. Both donations were made in support of the Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program, which commits federal funding to building infrastructure in the province of Ontario.<sup>52</sup> These donations represented a substantial portion of the Art Gallery of Ontario's funding goal of two hundred and seventy-six million dollars for the gallery's transformation in 2008.<sup>53</sup> These donations are important for several reasons. The contributions made by the both levels of government arguably provided much needed funding for the Transformation AGO project, which aided the gallery's administration to reach its goal of expanding the existing gallery space. This not only enlarged the physical size of the Art Gallery of Ontario, but also subsequently increased its cultural capital – due to the expanded gallery space, which in turn allows the gallery's administration to host more exhibits and display works from the gallery's own collection – and potential economic capital due to the additional revenue that could be brought in by the larger galleries and renovated amenities, such as the café and gift shop. With the expansion, the Art Gallery of Ontario's management had the potential to attract more visitors, which in turn could lead to bring in new donors. The donation made by the government led to additional funding from other sources.

The contributions made by the different levels of government to the project are significant not only in terms of the financial support, but also in the implications that such donations have upon the gallery's administration. For the Art Gallery of Ontario, accepting such sizable donations from multiple levels of government reinforces the argument that governments seek to use culture

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<sup>52</sup> “Momentum builds for Transformation AGO Campaign achieves \$254 million goal,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/momentum-builds-for-transformation-ago-campaign-achieves-254-million-goal>.

<sup>53</sup> “Campaign Surpasses \$276 Million Goal as Transformed AGO Opens to the World,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/campaign-surpasses-276-million-goal-as-transformed-ago-opens-to-the-world>.



to advance their own agendas while putting arts institutions at the mercy of government policy. For the various branches of government, it appears that the reasons for financially contributing to the Art Gallery of Ontario are twofold. Tony Bennett contends that “the belief that ways of life can be acted on through the governmental deployment of artistic and cultural resources still informs the practices of...cultural institutions as well as the policy agenda of governments”, which in turn impacts the funding provided to the gallery’s administration.<sup>54</sup> This theory can be supported through the examination of the Weston Family Learning Centre, which opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2011. Funded by the Toronto-based W. Garfield Weston Foundation on behalf of the Weston family and the George Weston Limited food company, the centre aims to enable “visitors to experience the power of art to transform how we understand our world and ourselves” through courses, workshops, and special events.<sup>55</sup>

Through the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund – a temporary funding source that was intended to bolster the economy by supporting both new infrastructure and rehabilitating existing projects nation-wide – the federal government provided funding for half of the project’s expenses.<sup>56</sup> The Art Gallery of Ontario’s management was tasked with raising the remaining balance.<sup>57</sup> By providing the majority of funding for the gallery’s expansion, the federal government supports Bennett’s claim that governments seek to influence the general population by funding the arts. The chief executive officer of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Matthew Teitelbaum, maintained this argument further in his own remarks on the opening of the Weston Family Learning Centre.

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<sup>54</sup> Tony Bennett, “Acting on the Social,” 1420.

<sup>55</sup> “About the Weston Family Learning Centre,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Mar. 1, 2017, <http://www.ago.net/weston-family-learning-centre>.

<sup>56</sup> “Other Programs – Infrastructure Stimulus Fund,” *Government of Canada*, Mar. 1, 2017, <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/prog/other-autres-eng.html#isf-fsi>.

<sup>57</sup> “Art Gallery of Ontario Unveils the Weston Family Learning Centre,” *Infrastructure Canada*, Mar. 1, 2017, <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/media/news-nouvelles/2011/20110927toronto-eng.html?pedisable=true>.

Teitelbaum stated that the investment made by the Government of Canada “underlines its commitment to cultural infrastructure and encourages civic engagement in the arts” by supporting the educational programs offered by the Art Gallery of Ontario.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, however, the donation also embodies Carol Duncan’s theory that the primary motives for contributing to arts institutions are a desire for prestige at the international level.<sup>59</sup> In the case of the Weston Family Learning Centre, the government and the Art Gallery of Ontario’s management released a joint statement about the funding.<sup>60</sup> This statement subsequently garnered significant media attention.<sup>61</sup> Both the press release and news articles framed the government’s contribution as being made for the good of both the economy – by injecting money into the arts, which would supposedly help boost the local economy – and for citizens, who could then use the new facility at the Art Gallery of Ontario to further their art education. However, it must be said that the federal government deliberately chose to donate to the Art Gallery of Ontario construction (and later release a statement about it) in order to enhance its own image. By providing funds for the project, the Government of Canada exchanged economic capital for an increase in social capital. Not only would this potentially endear the government to the nation’s citizens, but it would also elevate the status of the federal government at the international level by acknowledging the role of federal funding in the Weston Family Learning

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 93.

<sup>60</sup> “Government of Canada Invests in New Art Gallery of Ontario Learning Centre,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Mar. 1, 2017 <http://www.ago.net/government-of-canada-invests-in-agos-weston-family-learning-centre>.

<sup>61</sup> Several newspapers reported on the federal funding once the Government of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario’s management released a joint statement. See articles such as James Bradshaw, “AGO Gets \$7.5 Million from Ottawa,” *The Globe & Mail*, Mar. 1, 2017, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/ago-gets-75-million-from-ottawa/article1365149/> and Murray Whyte, “School’s in at last at AGO,” *Toronto Star*, Mar. 1, 2017 [https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/2011/09/28/schools\\_in\\_at\\_last\\_at\\_the\\_ago.html](https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/2011/09/28/schools_in_at_last_at_the_ago.html).

Centre's development.

Around the same time as the Art Gallery of Ontario was experiencing Transformation AGO in 2008, a second Canadian art institution, the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta was also undergoing a dramatic change. The gallery launched its Light It Up campaign, which encouraged local citizens and corporations to support the construction of the gallery's new building, which came at a cost of eighty-eight million dollars. Of this funding, the three levels of government contributed a combined total of sixty-eight million dollars to the project.<sup>62</sup> The new Art Gallery of Alberta building, which was begun in the spring of 2007, replaced the institution's original permanent building. The gallery had initially opened as the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association in 1924 in order to "bring culture to the people of Edmonton through exhibitions of Canadian and international art" as well as to support local art organizations and offer art classes for children.<sup>63</sup> Until 1969, the Edmonton art gallery did not have a permanent location that it could use in order to fulfil its goals. For the first forty-five years, the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association moved between spaces such as rooms in the Hotel Macdonald and Secord House, a historic mansion that had been purchased by the City of Edmonton in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>64</sup> Secord House – which was located in what is now Edmonton's downtown, at 98 Avenue and 105 Street – became the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association's first permanent residence in 1952.<sup>65</sup> This initial transient existence arguably hindered the development of the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association. Without a permanent space for its collection and

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<sup>62</sup> "New Vision Timeline," *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.youraga.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/New-Vision-Timeline.pdf>.

<sup>63</sup> Edward Burtynsky, *Art Gallery of Alberta: Randall Stout Architects*, ed. Catherine Crowston (Edmonton: Art Gallery of Alberta, 2011), 161.

<sup>64</sup> "AGA History," *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Aug. 30, 2015, [http://www.youraga.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/AGA\\_History.pdf](http://www.youraga.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/AGA_History.pdf).

<sup>65</sup> "Secord House," *Edmonton's Architectural Heritage, Edmonton Historical Board*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.edmontonsarchitecturalheritage.ca/structures/secord-house/>.

exhibitions, the organization was not able to establish itself at the same rate as other institutions and therefore lacked the growth seen in other art galleries, which appeared to acquire both properties – such as The Grange, which was bequeathed to the Art Museum of Toronto – and donations both sooner and at a greater rate after their incorporation. In contrast to the Art Museum of Toronto, the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association did not initially focus on collecting art, due to the organization’s limited funds. In 1975, the Edmonton Art Gallery received its largest bequest from Ernest E. Poole.<sup>66</sup> The Poole collection’s focus on Canadian art influenced the collection of the Edmonton Art Gallery, pushing it towards focusing on works by Canadian – and more specifically, Albertan – artists.

Despite the significant contributions of patrons such as the Smiths and Thomsons in Toronto and the Pooles to the Edmonton Art Gallery, this thesis will not focus further on the influence of individual donors, whether monetary – provided through donation or the establishment of an endowment – or of a collection. This is due to the vast number of individuals who have contributed to each institution, which would make this thesis much too lengthy. The contributions of these three families were mentioned in this introduction due to the historical significance of their donations. Without the Smith donation, for example, the Art Gallery of Ontario would not exist in its current location, while without the collections of Thomson and Poole, both galleries’ collections would decrease in terms of cultural and economic capital.

In 1964, the City of Edmonton donated a parcel of land to the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association intended for the construction of an art museum. Five years later, a permanent gallery was finally erected in the city’s downtown core to provide a space for not only art exhibitions but also for the growing art collection of the Edmonton Art Gallery. This came forty-five years after

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<sup>66</sup> Burtynsky, *Art Gallery of Alberta*, 163.

the inception of the gallery, which had since changed its name from the Edmonton Museum of Arts Association to the Edmonton Art Gallery in 1964. The new art gallery was designed by local architect Don Bittorf in a Brutalist style, which echoed the trend towards modernism that was present in the local art scene at the time of the gallery's construction.<sup>67</sup> The low concrete building – with its focus on texture, clean lines, and open spaces – was later expanded in 1978 to increase the capacity of the facility's existing structures, which included galleries, a theatre, and classrooms.<sup>68</sup>

By the new millennium, the Edmonton Art Gallery began to look for ways to renovate or replace its now aging building. The original building was no longer sufficiently equipped to host exhibits from other institutions due to its lack of a climate-controlled environment. After rejecting a twelve million dollar renovation proposal in 1998, the gallery's board of directors sought more extreme measures in the form of a brand new gallery building. In 2005, the provincial government announced a fifteen million dollar donation to the Edmonton Art Gallery as a centennial gift to the people of Alberta.<sup>69</sup> The funding provided by the Government of Alberta enabled the Edmonton Art Gallery to begin raising additional monetary support in order to build a new gallery. Following an international design competition, Los Angeles architect Randall Stout, who had trained under Art Gallery of Ontario architect Frank Gehry, was awarded the commission. The new building's design sought to define the Art Gallery of Alberta as a signature building for the city of Edmonton. The construction of the new gallery was divided into three phases, which included the construction of an offsite storage facility and development of an

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<sup>67</sup> "AGA History," *Art Gallery of Alberta*.

<sup>68</sup> "Edmonton Art Gallery," *Edmonton's Architectural Heritage, Edmonton Historical Board*, Aug. 30, 2015, <http://www.edmontonsarchitecturalheritage.ca/structures/edmonton-art-gallery/>.

<sup>69</sup> "New Vision Timeline," *Art Gallery of Alberta*.

interim art gallery at the University of Alberta's downtown Faculty of Extension campus. These two project phases enabled the Art Gallery of Alberta to maintain a presence within Edmonton during the construction of the new art gallery. At the same time, it enabled the institution to properly store and display its existing collection.

With its New Vision Capital Campaign, the Art Gallery of Alberta raised a total of eighty-eight million dollars through a combination of corporate, private, and government donations. Each of the three levels of government made significant pledges to the Art Gallery of Alberta. In total, donations from the federal, provincial, and municipal governments accounted for just over seventy-seven percent of the capital campaign's donations. The Government of Canada made two key financial contributions. The federal government donated ten million dollars in January 2005 as a centennial gift to the people of Alberta. Additional funding of ten million dollars under the Building Canada plan followed the initial donation two years later.<sup>70</sup> This donation was significant as the National Gallery of Canada, located in the nation's capital city of Ottawa, was provided with a satellite location at the Art Gallery of Alberta. This permanent exhibit space enabled the National Gallery's administration to continue hosting exhibits of works from its collections, which further enhanced the already substantial influence of the existing loan program. In turn, this allowed the gallery to continue extending its influence on Canadian art beyond the borders of the national capital.

In comparison, the provincial government – which initialized the funding campaign with its original donation of fifteen million dollars – granted the Art Gallery of Alberta an additional twelve million dollars in funding through the Major Community Facilities Program, which is a lottery-funded endeavour to help municipalities and aboriginal communities plan, maintain, or

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<sup>70</sup> "Building Canada Plan," *Infrastructure Canada*, Aug. 31, 2015, <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/prog/bcp-pcc-eng.html>.

build major public facilities. This donation brought the province's financial support of the gallery's reconstruction to twenty-seven million dollars. As previously mentioned, these donations altered the identity of the gallery, renaming it the Art Gallery of Alberta – from the previous Edmonton Art Gallery – in recognition of the province's support of the arts. The name change and subsequent shift in the gallery's identity will be explored more in my third chapter, which delves further into the issues surrounding sponsorship, such as naming rights.

The final government donation to the Art Gallery of Alberta was given by the City of Edmonton. The municipal government initially provided the Art Gallery of Alberta with a donation of six million dollars in 2005, but increased its contribution to a total of twenty-one million dollars in 2007. To recognize this donation, the outdoor terrace on the gallery's third floor was named the City of Edmonton Terrace.

The exchange of recognition in the form of space for monetary contributions at the Art Gallery of Alberta is worth examining in order to establish grounds for analyzing the impact of federal government funding on the Art Gallery of Alberta. It does not appear that financial contribution necessarily equals the space that each level of government was given when the gallery reopened in 2010. In the hierarchy of the gallery, the federal government's National Gallery at the Art Gallery of Alberta – located on the gallery's first floor – is more prominent than the third floor City of Edmonton Terrace.<sup>71</sup> The gallery provides the federal government with the opportunity to send travelling exhibits from the National Gallery of Canada, which not only increases the cultural capital of Art Gallery of Alberta patrons but also the social capital of the federal government, as it was given the opportunity to reach out to a broader audience. Until 2014, the space enabled the National Gallery of Canada to showcase a series of pre-packaged

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<sup>71</sup> “National Gallery embarks on new partnership with the Art Gallery of Alberta,” *National Gallery of Canada*, Aug. 31, 2015, <http://www.gallery.ca/en/about/237.php>.

travelling exhibits that were designed to appeal to a broad audience. These installations saved the National Gallery's management from having to invest in the exhibits being held at the Art Gallery of Alberta, as the exhibits has previously been on display at the National Gallery of Canada and not curated specifically to display at the Art Gallery of Alberta. For the Art Gallery of Alberta's management, the benefit is twofold. Presenting the travelling exhibits gave the Art Gallery of Alberta's administration a boost in cultural capital due to the fact that the exhibits were from the National Gallery of Canada. At the same time, mounting shows that were already pre-packaged saved the Art Gallery of Alberta's management the overhead costs of putting together an exhibition. For the Government of Canada, being able to promote and display the National Gallery of Canada's collection allows the government to increase its own status while appearing to enrich the lives of Albertans with exhibits from the national collection. However, it must be said that the majority of exhibits hosted in the National Gallery of Canada space at the Art Gallery of Alberta between 2010 and 2014 were designed to appeal to a broad audience that likely does not know much about art. This is exemplified by the exhibit "19<sup>th</sup> Century British Photographs from the National Gallery of Canada", which was displayed at the National Gallery from February 4 to April 17, 2011.<sup>72</sup> The exhibit was later mounted in the National Gallery of Canada space at the Art Gallery of Alberta from June 29 until October 6, 2013.<sup>73</sup> While the Art Gallery of Alberta's curatorial staff attempted to add to the exhibit by bringing in nineteenth century photography equipment from the Royal Alberta Museum to complement the photographs on display, the exhibit still lacked appeal for many visitors who were more interested in traditional mediums and less enthused about the technical aspects of the photography process.

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<sup>72</sup> "19<sup>th</sup> Century British Photographs from the National Gallery of Canada," *National Gallery of Canada*, Mar. 3, 2017, <https://www.gallery.ca/en/see/exhibitions/past/details/19th-century-british-photographs-from-the-national-gallery-of-canada-53>.

<sup>73</sup> "19<sup>th</sup> Century British Photographs," *National Gallery of Canada*.



As demonstrated by my analysis of government donations to the Art Gallery of Alberta, the gallery's recognition of each donor does not coincide with the funding provided by each level of government. In comparison, the City of Edmonton donated more to the Art Gallery of Alberta's Capital Campaign than the federal government, yet the terrace named after the city is located on the third floor and is not usable during Edmonton's cold winters. The space is only functional from May until October and is generally off-limits to the public, due to its popularity as a wedding ceremony and cocktail party venue. In addition, the installation on the terrace has not been changed since 2011, despite the gallery stipulating that the winning installation from the design competition held for the terrace is kept on display for only five years<sup>74</sup>. This stands in stark contrast to the National Gallery space on the first floor, which installs new exhibits from the National Gallery of Canada's collection based on a quarterly exhibit rotation schedule. The display of each sponsor's name is also contentious, as the National Gallery of Canada's name is prominently displayed at the entrance to the first floor gallery while the City of Edmonton boasts only a small plaque beside the doors to the terrace. While I will analyze the significance of naming rights further in chapter three, it bears mention here that there is a disparity between the funding provided by each level of government and the recognition that each receives in turn from the gallery's management.

Since the inception of the Art Gallery of Ontario and Art Gallery of Alberta in the early twentieth century, both galleries have developed based upon the resources made available to their respective administrations by government, corporations, and private donors. While private donations aided in establishment of both galleries, government funding has played a significant

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<sup>74</sup> "AGA and AFA Announce Winning Project in Sculpture Commission," *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Aug. 29, 2015, <http://www.youraga.ca/media-room/aga-and-afa-announce-winning-project-in-sculpture-commission/>.

role in further developing both arts organizations. While this chapter mentions the contributions of all three levels of government, in the following chapter, I will delve further into examining the relationship that evolved between each gallery's management and the federal funding agencies, particularly the Canada Council for the Arts. I will investigate the impact of the national museum policy on each arts institution, using Tony Bennett's argument that policies set forth by the government are embedded in gallery operations to frame my analysis.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> See Tony Bennett, *Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity: Mapping the Political Domain* (Belgium: Council of European Publishing, 2001).

## **Chapter Two: The Canada Council for the Arts and Alternative Funding Sources**

While both of the art galleries being analyzed in this thesis were founded without financial assistance from the federal government, the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario's administrations have both come to rely upon the federal government and its agencies for monetary support. This chapter will explore the facets of the Government of Canada – such as the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage – that provide funding to each gallery's management, with a focus on analyzing the impact that the government's support has upon each institution. I argue that by contributing to the arts, the federal government provides some relief from what Tony Bennett refers to as the increasing fiscal pressure on the arts, yet the government also benefits from the positive perception of the federal government that emerges from its support of the arts. Within my analysis, I will particularly concentrate on the Canada Council for the Arts and its historical influence on both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario. This examination of government donations includes not only assessing the funds awarded by the Canada Council for the Arts and the subsequent impact of federal funding, but also examining the measures taken by each institution's Board of Directors – in conjunction with gallery management – to supplement federal funding. These strategies include seeking out corporate sponsorships as well as selling memberships and implementing a paid admission model.

Founded in 1957, the Canada Council for the Arts is the third oldest national arts council established in order to provide funding to the arts.<sup>76</sup> At the time of its formation, the Canada Council was the largest federal organization dedicated to supporting the arts through government funding. The Canada Council for the Arts was made possible by the revenue generated by an

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<sup>76</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, "Moving Forward: Strategic Plan 2008-2011: Values and Directions," (Ottawa, 2007), 13.

endowment fund created by the estates of two Canadian millionaires, Sir James Dunn and Izaak Walton Killam.<sup>77</sup> Initially, the Council focused on what was considered to be high culture at the time when providing funding for the arts.<sup>78</sup> The concentration on the performing arts – such as opera, ballet, symphonic music, and theatre – highlighted the desire of government to elevate its status by initially supporting specific fine arts practices instead of making the Council’s funding available to all disciplines. Carol Duncan contends that reasons such as “vanity and the desire for social status and prestige among nations and cities” are motives for governments to contribute to art museums.<sup>79</sup> While the Canada Council for the Arts did not provide monetary support for museums at the outset, Duncan’s theory also applies to the Council’s support of what its members initially deemed the fine arts, as the organization has arguably sought to enhance its own status by only financing specific disciplines that were seen as higher art forms. This allowed the Council’s members to concentrate on elevating its status and build a reputation as a funding body. In his article “Culture and Scholarship: The First Ten Years of the Canada Council”, Canadian historian J.L. Granatstein assessed the large contributions continuously made by the Council to three ballet companies – The National Ballet Guild of Canada, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and Les Grandes Ballets Canadiens – highlighting the Council’s efforts to assist specific art forms in order to “improve the level of the country’s cultural life”, which floundered despite a plethora of orchestras and theatre groups, as well as burgeoning national organizations such as

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<sup>77</sup> Brian Flemming, “Keep Funding at Arm’s Length,” *Globe & Mail* (Toronto, Ontario), Mar. 28, 2007, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/keep-arts-funding-at-arms-length/article722317/>. Accessed Apr. 3, 2017.

<sup>78</sup> Anna Rosser Upchurch, *The Origins of the Arts Council Movement: Philanthropy and Policy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 166.

<sup>79</sup> Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals*, 93.

the National Film Board.<sup>80</sup> The mediums chosen by Granatstein emphasize the federal government's initial interest in only developing specific art forms.

The Canada Council for the Arts did not begin supporting other forms of art – including visual artists and art organizations – until 1959 through appropriations provided by the Canadian Parliament to increase the Council's funding.<sup>81</sup> At this time, the Canada Council only awarded funds to galleries, societies, and other art associations<sup>82</sup> although the Council's 1958-59 annual report noted that “a number of policies designed first to give the creative artist an opportunity to produce new work, and secondly to bring his work before the public” were being implemented by the Canada Council.<sup>83</sup> These commissions were the first indication of individual artist support by the Canada Council for the Arts, although these awards were given to institutions in order to recognize and assist<sup>84</sup> Canadian artists, therefore fostering what the annual report refers to as the “triple play”.<sup>85</sup> This setup was conceived to ensure artists, arts institutions, and the public all benefitted from the Council's funding. The play was set up by the gallery's administration receiving funds from the Canada Council for the Arts to award a commission to a Canadian artist. The artist then gained recognition by having his or her work displayed by a nationally recognized gallery. In turn, the Canada Council contended that the public would also benefit because of its exposure to Canadian art.

In recent years, the Canada Council for the Arts has taken a backseat as the primary means of federal funding for both artists and arts organizations. Other federal bodies – such as the

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<sup>80</sup> J.L. Granatstein, “Culture and Scholarship: The First Ten Years of the Canada Council”, *Canadian Historical Review* 65, no.4 (1984): 453.

<sup>81</sup> “The Evolution of the Canada Council's Support of the Arts,” *Canada Council for the Arts*, Nov. 2, 2015, <http://canadacouncil.ca/council/about-the-council/the-evolution>.

<sup>82</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “1958-59 Annual Report,” (Ottawa, 1959), 15.

<sup>83</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “1958-59 Annual Report,” (Ottawa, 1959), 20.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

Department of Canadian Heritage – are increasingly moving into the arena of arts funding. In its report *Moving Forward: Strategic Plan 2008-2011*, the Council noted that its budget is now just a “small fraction of the total invested in the arts annually by the federal government. Arts councils or arts funding programs now exist in all provinces and territories and many municipalities, and their combined budgets easily exceed that of the Canada Council”.<sup>86</sup> Nonetheless, the Canada Council for the Arts continues to be a primary agency that disburses federal funding to both artists and arts institutions across Canada.

The founding of the Canada Council for the Arts ensured that “federal support was made available to non-federal institutions. Canadian public art galleries and some museums were able to apply for grants for such activities as extension programs, exhibitions, and support for scholarship”, which provided arts organizations financial support from the federal government.<sup>87</sup> Cultural institutions now have access to funds from several federal departments instead of relying primarily on one governmental body to provide the majority of federal funding. Canadian art museums may also receive funding from federal departments outside of the Canada Council, such as the Department of Canadian Heritage and the National Trust for Canada. Individual federal funds – like Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage, the Canada Cultural Investment Fund, the Canada Arts Training Fund, Museums Assistance Program, and the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund – that are administered by the Department of Canadian Heritage also funnel Government of Canada monies to arts institutions.

In his book *Policy Matters: Administrations of Art and Culture*, Canadian curator and cultural critic Clive Robertson notes that the desire of arts organizations to have access to multiple

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<sup>86</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “Moving Forward,” 4.

<sup>87</sup> Communications Canada, “Challenges and Choices: Federal Policy and Program Proposals for Canadian Museums,” (Ottawa, 1988), 36.

funding sources “coupled with a desire to bypass the financial limitations of the Council” means that many “arts organizations have been easily wooed to access direct political monies from departments of federal and provincial governments” instead of going through arm’s length organizations such as the Canada Council for the Arts.<sup>88</sup> For institutions seeking government support, appealing to government agencies such as the Canada Council requires more effort for less reward, as the Council does not offer as much monetary support as other facets of the federal government. The Canada Council offers a variety of funding options including grants, prize, and strategic funds that attend to specific issues within the arts community. While this system offers institution management a myriad of potential options, it is also limiting to organizations whose administrations are attempting to collect as much federal government support as possible. For art galleries such as the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario, the Canada Council for the Arts places restrictions on the amount of monetary support the Council will provide as the administration of institutions that receive operating grants – identified by the Council as core funding – are only allowed to apply for two additional project grants each year which has a potential impact on both the quality and the number of exhibits (as well as other projects, such as educational programs and special events) that the institution’s management can offer to gallery patrons.<sup>89</sup> Gallery management must therefore seek out alternative sources of federal funding. These funds offer administrations the ability to pay for projects such as hosting travelling exhibitions, improving gallery facilities, and enhancing institutional infrastructure.

In order to access monetary support from the Canada Council, grant applicants are not only subjected to a general application process, but also must undergo a peer assessment to determine

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<sup>88</sup> Robertson, *Policy Matters*, 114.

<sup>89</sup> “Annual Application Limits,” *Canada Council for the Arts*, Mar. 3, 2017, <http://canadacouncil.ca/funding/grants/guide/apply-to-programs/annual-application-limits>.

if funding will be given.<sup>90</sup> The peer assessment process seeks to legitimize the Canada Council as an arts funding body as well as create a direct connection between the federal agency and the arts. By involving artists and arts professionals in the decision making process, the Canada Council for the Arts also gives the primary responsibility of deciding which organizations receive monetary support to individuals outside of the Government of Canada. While proponents of the Canada Council for the Arts argue that this “arm’s length” system enables the arts to exist outside of government control, this method also ensures that the Government of Canada is partially removed from any potential criticism of what the Council funds (or chooses not to fund). The federal government, however, still distributes and receives public recognition for providing funding to artists and arts institutions.

The description of the Canada Council for the Arts as an arm’s length agency of the Canadian federal government must be further explored due to the impact that its status has upon the funding the Council provides to the arts. When first established, the Council was a “hybrid of the private foundation and the arm’s length model of government support” due to the establishment of the organization using privately endowed funds.<sup>91</sup> As the Canada Council became more established as a funding body, however, it was imperative that the Council shifted to acting as an arm’s length agency as to not allow private interest to influence its funding. The Council’s strategic plan from 2008 notes that its status as a “Crown Corporation at arm’s length from government has allowed it to change with the times without compromising artistic freedom”<sup>92</sup> as the government determines “how much aggregate support to provide, but not which organizations or artists should receive support” from the Canada Council for the Arts on behalf

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<sup>90</sup> “How We Make Funding Decisions,” *Canada Council for the Arts*, Mar. 3, 2017, <http://canadacouncil.ca/funding/funding-decisions>.

<sup>91</sup> Upchurch, *The Origins of the Arts Council Movement*, 131.

<sup>92</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “Moving Forward,” 13.



of the Government of Canada.<sup>93</sup> This is particularly significant as it moves the funding of the arts – and subsequently, arts institutions and their activities – outside of the federal government’s realm of control. This ensures that the federal government cannot inflict its own values or belief systems on the art that is produced or exhibited in Canada.

The federal government still “exert considerable influence on what gets funded, by how much, and how what gets funded is classified” despite the cultural policies established at the federal level to maintain an arm’s length between the Government of Canada and funding for the arts.<sup>94</sup> Such policies include the federal policy for museums, which will be further assessed in the third chapter of this thesis. Other policy elements developed by the Government of Canada that relate to museums include federal guidelines such as the Museums Act, which was first passed in 1968. This legislation – which was the first official national museum policy in Canada – saw the unification of the country’s national museums (such as the Canadian Museum of Natural History, the National Museum for Human Rights, and the National Gallery of Canada) under a single administrative structure, which was controlled by the National Museums of Canada Corporation.<sup>95</sup> Using the corporation, the Government of Canada “sought to establish more dynamic leadership and expand the role of museums nationally in order to achieve such objectives as attracting more private-sector funding” for the arts.<sup>96</sup> The fact that the federal government was already seeking alternative methods of funding the arts is noteworthy as it demonstrates that the Government of Canada has been dependent upon the corporate sector to

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<sup>93</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “The Arm’s Length Principle and the Arts: An International Perspective: Past, Present, and Future,” (Ottawa, 1985), 10.

<sup>94</sup> Bennett, *Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity*, 37.

<sup>95</sup> Marie-Claude Langlois, “Background Paper: Canada’s National Museums,” *Parliament of Canada*, Apr. 3, 2017, <http://www.lopparl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2013-06-e.htm>.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

offset government support of the arts since it began playing an active role in providing monetary support to the arts and culture sector through the Canada Council for the Arts. The National Museums Act of 1968 was formalized four years later with the implementation of the National Museums Policy. This legislation outlined the government's plans to manage and fund cultural institutions, including providing funding for museums to purchase artifacts develop more complex exhibits, and increase the capacity and capability of facilities.<sup>97</sup> This begs the question of how the government planned to donate to galleries and other arts organizations. Were there government funds available or were corporate sponsors sought out by the National Museums of Canada Corporation to provide financial aid? While I could not find published records from the National Museums of Canada Corporation, it is likely that any corporate donations were absorbed by the National Museums conglomerate and redistributed as government funding. Whether donors received any form of recognition is unknown.

In 1990, the Museums Act dismantled the National Museums of Canada Corporation, which marked the end of the funding provided under the National Museum Policy. There has not yet been a federal policy implemented to replace the dismantled National Museums of Canada Corporation.<sup>98</sup> The nearly thirty years old Museums Act is the most recent piece of major federal legislation on museums. The act states that national museums must fulfil specific criteria in order to meet government and Crown standards, which likely plays a role in the funding received by each national arts institution. With regard to national museums, the federal government:

(a) Plays an essential role, individually and together with other museums and like institutions, in preserving and promoting the heritage of Canada and all its peoples throughout Canada and abroad and in contributing to the collective memory and sense of identity of all Canadians;

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

and

(b) Is a source of inspiration, research, learning and entertainment that belongs to all Canadians and provides, in both official languages, a service that is essential to Canadian culture and available to all.<sup>99</sup>

The Museums Act demonstrates the federal government's considerable impact on both the creation and exhibition of art, as the Canada Council's own policies must comply with those established by the federal government in order for the Council to receive continuous funding for the arts. While the institutions being analyzed in this thesis are not part of the national museums network, the administrations of these organizations are arguably also held to the standards set by the Museums Act. The management of museums that operate at lower levels (such as at the provincial level of the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario) also strives for their institution to fulfil the resolution of the Museums Act. This includes attempting to strike a balance between education and entertainment in order to continually attract patrons, which in turn will aid management in potentially bringing in funding from both the public and private sector.

Similar to the changes to the federal funding model, corporate sponsorship of the arts has also evolved over time. This development will be briefly addressed here, due to the impact of private funding on government support. As federal funding of the arts decreases, gallery administrations become more reliant on the private sector. McNicholas identifies a three-stage shift in the evolution of corporate sponsorship of the arts, arguing that arts sponsorship shifted from being a marketing approach for corporations to morphing into a relationship between company and

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<sup>99</sup> "Museums Act," *Government of Canada*, Apr. 3, 2017, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-13.4/page-1.html>.

institution.<sup>100</sup> During this shift, corporations scaled back on donations, which were often mass distributed to a wide range of charitable causes with little attention paid to how the values of the two organizations aligned with one another. This shift is evident in the literature from the Edmonton Art Gallery. In 1981, A.S. Olsen – who was serving as the president of the Board of Directors – stated that private sector funding must be increased by encouraging corporate appeal.<sup>101</sup> While Olsen does not go into detail about what corporate appeal may have constituted for the Edmonton Art Gallery at the time, the issue was obviously one of utmost importance. At the time, the Edmonton Art Gallery management began to expand its programming, offering exclusive events such as the art fair Art for All and the Holly Ball, a ticketed event meant to raise funds for gallery operations. These more exclusive events were likely developed to appeal to potential corporate donors. By the publication of the 1986 annual report, Board of Directors President W.A. Weir noted that, for the first time in the history of the Edmonton Art Gallery, the “listings of exhibitions and the corporate sponsors who made them possible” were included in the gallery’s report.<sup>102</sup> This is significant as it demonstrates the gallery’s increasing dependency on non-government sources of funding and the administration’s desire to align itself with other financial backers to further develop the gallery’s exhibits, programs, and collections. It also highlights the gallery administration’s need to promote its corporate sponsors as partners in the arts. By saying that exhibits and other gallery programs would not have been possible without corporate support, the board’s president is appealing to the egos of those who decide to which non-profit organizations that a particular company will donate. In turn, this may aid the gallery’s administration in receiving continuous funding from corporations that already support the

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<sup>100</sup> Bernadette McNicholas, “Arts, Culture, and Business: A Relationship Transformation, a Nascent Field,” *International Journal of Arts Management*, 7, No.1 (2004): 58.

<sup>101</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, “1981 Annual Report,” (Edmonton, 1981), 1.

<sup>102</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, “1986 Annual Report,” (Edmonton, 1986), 1.

Edmonton Art Gallery or potentially interest new donors who are attracted by the gallery's promotion of corporate sponsors.

The shift towards private sponsorship emerged due to the restructuring of the Canada Council for the Arts, which resulted in significant cutbacks in funding for arts organizations. The changes made by the Canada Council for the Arts forced gallery administration to look for alternative funding sources to make ends meet. In the 1985 annual report, the Edmonton Art Gallery's Administrative Director reflected upon the restructuring of federal funding. Peter Carter stated that the policy change to Canada Council funding damaged many Canadian galleries due to a shortage of operational funding as institutions across the country scrambled to make up for the unanticipated loss of federal financial aid.<sup>103</sup> Carter's use of the word "damaged" is key to understanding the shift caused by the changes to the Canada Council funding structure, as it emphasizes the gallery's dependency upon government funding. Without the government's backing, the Edmonton Art Gallery was dealt a financial blow from which it is arguably still trying to recover by seeking both corporate sponsorships and private donations. In 1985, The Edmonton Art Gallery saw its federal support drop from \$191,000 to \$59,000 in the span of a single year due to the change to a quarterly project-by-project granting system.<sup>104</sup> Previously, the gallery had been awarded an annual grant that provided operational funding assistance, including mounting exhibitions and maintaining the gallery space. With the new project based system, the Edmonton Art Gallery's administration only received funding through applying for monetary support for individual projects. While the archival resources I encountered did not mention the Government of Canada or Canada Council for the Arts sponsoring a specific project, it is likely that federal government funds went towards hosting exhibitions and related programs. In more

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<sup>103</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, "1985 Administrative Director's Report," (Edmonton, 1985), 2.

<sup>104</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, "1985 Annual Report," (Edmonton, 1985).

recent annual reports to the community, for example, funding from the Canada Council for the Arts was credited with sponsoring a lecture, *Indigenous Architecture, Design and Spaces Series* with architect Douglas Cardinal on March 29, 2012.<sup>105</sup> The trend of decreased federal support continued throughout the rest of the decade. In 1989, the Council's funding to the Edmonton Art Gallery hit a low of eighteen thousand dollars.<sup>106</sup> This caused the Edmonton Art Gallery's administration to state in its annual report that it needed to increase internal funding – such as private and corporate donations – as opposed to government grant spending, as depending upon the government as a primary source of financial support was no longer a sustainable option.<sup>107</sup>

In contrast to the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Art Gallery of Ontario's reports to the community lists the federal funding it receives under Government of Canada, as both the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage provide financial support. Having diverse federal funding sources has enabled the Art Gallery of Ontario's management to receive continuous funding. This arguably has given the Art Gallery of Ontario an advantage, as its administration did not likely suffer the same extreme cutbacks at the federal level as the Edmonton Art Gallery did in the 1980s. To compensate for the shortfall in Canada Council donations, the province or other government sources likely assisted the gallery's administration in making up the lost funding. The Art Gallery of Ontario has also implemented membership fees as well as charged admission to non-members, which has enabled its administration to sustain operations. The tactic of a tiered membership system has been employed by the Art Gallery of Ontario's administration since the gallery's inception (as the Art Museum of Toronto in the early nineteenth century) in order to entice people to donate to the gallery. Unlike

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<sup>105</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, "Report to the Community 2012," (Edmonton, 2012), 14.

<sup>106</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, "1989 Annual Report," (Edmonton, 1989).

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

contemporary art gallery memberships, however, the original memberships offered by the Art Museum of Toronto lacked any sort of tangible benefits. Instead, patrons who chose to support the museum by purchasing a membership sought to either enhance or cement their social status. Thomas Adam asserts, “philanthropy was a behavioural pattern that was used by...social elite to complement their economic success with social recognition” that came from supporting local institutions such as hospitals and museums.<sup>108</sup> For early benefactors of the Toronto Art Museum, one’s status was linked to the level of gallery membership, which ranged from five thousand dollars for a Founder membership to an Annual Member at the cost of ten dollars a year.<sup>109</sup> The Edmonton Art Gallery also initially offered a basic membership at the cost of five dollars a year. In the 1980s, the Edmonton Art Gallery also shifted to a similar membership system in order to offset a lack of federal funding. However, the gallery’s Board of Directors attempted to incentivize members by offering a variety of benefits that appealed more to economic capital, such as exclusive events and discounts.

Without financial assistance from the federal government to help offset its operating costs, the administration of the Edmonton Art Gallery was forced to change its own financial structure. In 1983, the gallery’s administration had introduced two new methods for potentially increasing revenue. The first initiative was implementing admission fees for non-members who visited the Edmonton Art Gallery. Prior to this policy change, the Edmonton Art Gallery had been free to visit for all patrons, regardless of whether that individual had a gallery membership. Instead of having a positive impact on the gallery, introducing admission fees was detrimental to both the gallery’s image and budget, as it deterred local citizens from visiting the gallery. While memberships to the Edmonton Art Gallery had existed since its inception, they now served as a

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<sup>108</sup> Adam, “Philanthropic Landmarks,” 5.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

divide between the people who could afford to support the gallery by paying annual membership fees and those who could (or would) visit the gallery only if admission were free. The issue of charging non-members for admission is one that continues to plague the Art Gallery of Alberta as the institution's administration strives to balance between offsetting operational costs with being financially accessible to all patrons. In March 2017, the Art Gallery of Alberta began to offer complementary admission for all students, teenagers, and children. This initiative was made possible due to municipal funding, as the City of Edmonton government awarded the gallery's administration a \$250,000 grant in order to pilot a free admission model that the management hopes will regenerate interest – and subsequently, membership sales and donations – in the gallery.<sup>110</sup>

Along with the aforementioned municipal funding, corporate sponsorship is currently helping to address the issue of free admission at the Art Gallery of Alberta, but companies have thus far only provided monetary support for specific gallery events. While I will address corporate sponsorship in more detail in my third chapter, the concept will be briefly discussed here to highlight the shortage of federal funds that are being compensated by other sectors. Since the opening of the present building in 2010, the Art Gallery of Alberta's administration has offered one free admission evening a month, courtesy of financial institution Servus Credit Union. Servus Night – which provides free evening admission on the last Thursday of each month – exemplifies Kotler and Lee's concept of cause promotion, in which a corporation provides funding or other forms of support for a specific cause.<sup>111</sup> In the case of Servus Credit Union and the Art Gallery of Alberta, the financial group not only funds a monthly free admission night, but

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<sup>110</sup> “Art Gallery of Alberta Rolls Out the First in a Series of Admission Changes,” *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Apr. 4, 2017, <http://www.youraga.ca/free-for-children-students>.

<sup>111</sup> Kotler and Lee, *Corporate Social Responsibility*, 23.



also supplies its own staff to host gallery patrons. On Servus Credit Night, Servus employees act as volunteers, performing tasks such as greeting patrons and tracking gallery capacity. Having employees assist a non-profit organization that is financially supported by the corporation demonstrates cause promotion as Servus Credit Union's management goes beyond simply making a financial contribution. By establishing a partnership with the Art Gallery of Alberta that promotes Servus Credit Union's support of and involvement in the arts, the financial institution's administration attempts to demonstrate that it is invested in the community.

As well, Servus Credit Union offers its own patrons incentive to visit the Art Gallery of Alberta. Clients who possess a Servus Credit Union bank or credit card are entitled to a discount at ShopAGA. This cross-promotion between the corporation and gallery benefits both institutions. In exchange for the economic capital that is invested with Servus Credit Union, bank customers are given special privileges at the gallery, which in turn may potentially increase their social and cultural capital. For the Art Gallery of Alberta, this has dual benefits, as Servus customers who visit the gallery in order to take advantage of the shop discount (or visit the exhibits on Servus Night) are potential members or donors. At the same time, patrons who support the Art Gallery of Alberta may be enticed to invest financially with an institution that also aids the arts. Using marketing tools – such as banners and buttons worn by staff – along with the naming rights for free admission nights, Servus Credit Union's administration develops a direct association between the financial group and the arts. This sets up the potential for a reciprocal relationship in which both the gallery's administration and the bank's management benefit from the partnership, as both administrations draw upon the patrons attracted by the other in order to support its own endeavours.

Like the relationship that has been developed between the Art Gallery of Alberta and Servus

Credit Union, the Art Gallery of Ontario's management team has also developed a free admission model based upon corporate support. Using funding provided by the Bank of Montreal, the Art Gallery of Ontario's administration offers a program called Free Wednesday Nights, which allows patrons to enter the galleries at no charge. Like the Art Gallery of Alberta, free admission at the Art Gallery of Ontario is limited to only a few hours; however, the sponsorship from the Bank of Montreal ensures that the Art Gallery of Ontario is made financially accessible to the public on a weekly basis, as opposed to the monthly sponsorship of Servus Credit Union at the Art Gallery of Alberta. Another difference lies in the commitment of the financial institution's management to its partnership with gallery administration. There is no evidence that the Bank of Montreal engages in anything more than cause promotion, as neither the gallery or bank's websites mention any additional involvement, such as bank clients receiving additional perks or Bank of Montreal staff members volunteering at the Art Gallery of Ontario on Free Wednesday Nights.<sup>112</sup> This type of sponsorship is more reflective of a corporate relationship – as opposed to a partnership – between the corporation's management and the Art Gallery of Ontario administration. In this case, the gallery's management benefits from the injection of funding, while the financial institution receives name recognition within the community for its support of the arts.

The second concept that the Edmonton Art Gallery's administration introduced in an attempt to offset funding shortfalls was tiered individual memberships. While a basic membership – at a cost of five dollars a year – had existed since the gallery's founding, the administrators of the Edmonton Art Gallery sought to offer a more exclusive membership that targeted wealthy patrons and local companies. The President's Circle was an elite gallery membership developed

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

by Board of Directors member Sandy Mactaggart that cost significantly more than a standard membership to the Edmonton Art Gallery. Dr. Bernard Snellen, then the president of the Board of Directors, stated that he hoped it would attract more individual and corporate members to the gallery, likely due to the membership's exclusive nature and additional benefits, although there were no records regarding the incentives of joining the President's Circle.<sup>113</sup> The successor of the President's Circle membership is multilayered and more complex. There are currently two upper tiers offered by the Art Gallery of Alberta, which are the Curator's Circle and Director's Circle. In 2017, membership in the Curator's Circle costs \$1,500 per year for benefits such as discounts on gallery amenities and services, complimentary tickets to events, partner admission to select galleries across Canada, and the member's name displayed on both the gallery website and the donor wall at the gallery.<sup>114</sup> Director's Circle members enjoy even more benefits – such as a private exhibit tour, opportunities to mingle with exhibit curators and artists, and complimentary meals and room rentals – for an annual fee of \$5,000. There is a similar system in place at the Art Gallery of Ontario, where the individual memberships range in cost from forty-five dollars a year for a student up to twenty-five thousand dollars for Curators' Circle – Benefactors' Circle membership.<sup>115</sup>

The tiered membership system is both beneficial and problematic for galleries. The tiers allow patrons who are willing and able to spend more to support the gallery to provide additional financial support. From an individual perspective, members – particularly those who pay for the top tiers – are rewarded for their benevolence towards the arts as they enjoy the various perks of membership, particularly those benefits that increase their own social or cultural capital.

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<sup>113</sup> Edmonton Art Gallery, "1983 Annual Report 1983," (Edmonton, 1983), 2.

<sup>114</sup> "Curator's Circle," *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Apr. 16, 2016, <http://www.youraga.ca/support-us/curators-circle/>.

<sup>115</sup> "AGO Membership," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Jul. 27, 2016, <https://support.ago.net>.

However, the tiered system also creates inequality between patrons. Tony Bennett argues that museums “function as socially exclusive institutions in which their habitués accumulate marks of distinction by virtue of the social distance that participation in the art museum establishes for those whom it includes from those whom it excludes”.<sup>116</sup> In the case of tiered memberships at the individual level, there are many ways that gallery administration can create barriers between different patrons, despite the fact that both patrons may be members. One such example is by giving upper level members access to exhibit previews, while those who have a lower tier of membership are only invited to the exhibit’s opening, which is far less exclusive. This creates a hierarchy based upon the economic capital that is donated to the gallery through membership.

This chapter sought to examine the historical significance of federal funding on both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario. In doing so, I also took into consideration the impact of alternative funding sources. Private sector revenue streams such as corporate sponsorships and memberships have become essential to the financial health of both galleries. However, these sources do not carry the same clout as government funding. The economic capital gained by the galleries’ administrations provides both the gallery and the federal government with additional capital. For the galleries, having the support of the Government of Canada not only gives the administration a sense of stability that comes with receiving economic support, but also may attract other donors who want to be associated with the social capital provided by government funding. This concept will be further examined in chapter three in relation to the aforementioned corporate sponsorships.

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<sup>116</sup> Bennett, “Acting on the Social,” 1424.

### Chapter Three: The Language of Funding

British sociologist Tony Bennett contends that gallery administrations must adhere to cultural policies developed by the various levels of government in order to sustain operations. He further argues that government policies developed for the cultural sector are “embedded in the operating routines of cultural institutions, funding agencies, and granting bodies”, which then try to model their own mandates after those of the government.<sup>117</sup> For the management of Canadian cultural institutions, this would include adhering to national policies such as the Museums Act as well as taking into consideration the federal museum policy, which was introduced in the second chapter of this thesis. While the federal policy for museums is primarily meant to guide the activities of Canada’s national museums, the management of institutions such as the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario also take these policies into account when developing gallery policies, including the gallery’s vision and mission statements. Both of these statements will be analyzed later on in this chapter in a further assessment of the impact of government policy – as well as corporate influence – on the policies developed by cultural institutions. This chapter will critically examine both government and corporate influences on gallery policies, with a particular focus on mission and vision statements. I contend that both the federal government and corporate sponsors wield significant influence on the mission and vision statements created by these institutions, as the administrations attempt to mimic the language used by donors in order to attract continuous funding.

Tony Bennett further argues, “public museums are largely, and probably entirely, the administrative creation of national, municipal, or local governments or private organizations” as various levels of government strive to impress their own ideologies about culture upon individual

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<sup>117</sup> Tony Bennett, *Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity*, 37.

arts institutions.<sup>118</sup> For Canadian art museums, this influence at the level of national government on exhibits essentially starts and ends with the federal policy for museums, which was published by the Minister of Communication in the 1988 discussion paper “Challenges and Choices – Federal Policy and Program Proposals for Canadian Museums”. This policy states that the purpose of Canadian museums, including art galleries, is to “foster public awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of Canada's human and natural heritage through the collection, preservation, research, presentation, and interpretation of significant and representative collections of that heritage”.<sup>119</sup> The federal policy for museums acts as both a vision statement and a mission statement. Not only does it emphasize what the administrations of Canadian museums are currently striving to accomplish through exhibitions and programs, but it also highlights the goals that all Canadian galleries’ administrations should be attempting to achieve in order to receive continuous federal support.

For art gallery administrations – particularly those whose institutions are full or partial government agencies, such as the Art Gallery of Ontario – meeting the standards of the federal museum policy directly links to securing adequate funding from the federal government. Gallery administrators must aim to host a variety of exhibits that not only contribute to fostering a greater understanding of art in its visitors, but also works to connect gallery patrons to Canadian art in order to comply with the Government of Canada’s museum policy. Exhibits hosted by the two galleries that showcase Canadian artists best exemplify this argument as they highlight the need of galleries to promote Canadian art in order to comply with the federal policy for museums. Between 2012 and 2014, for example, the Art Gallery of Alberta’s administration hosted two

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<sup>118</sup> Tony Bennett, “Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture,” in *Museum Frictions*, ed. Ivan Karp (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 47.

<sup>119</sup> Communications Canada, “Challenges and Choices,” 67.

exhibits dedicated solely to the Group of Seven, an internationally recognized group of Canadian landscape painters from the early twentieth century. “A Story of Canadian Art: As Told by the Hart House Collection” was exhibited in 2013 followed by “Lawren Harris and A.Y. Jackson: Jasper/Robson 1924” the next year. It must be noted that the 2014 exhibit was a duplication of an earlier exhibit, as the original “Lawren Harris and A.Y. Jackson: Jasper/Robson 1924” exhibit was held at the Edmonton Art Gallery in 1999. This repetition displays not only what the Art Gallery of Alberta’s management believes will most likely draw in patrons with minimal effort on part of the gallery staff, but also what the gallery recognizes as the Canadian canon of art. Canadian museum theorist Anne Whitelaw argues that the National Gallery of Canada’s collection of Canadian art plays a significant role in shaping the country’s identity in the visual arts, which has in turn impacted the collections and practices of other Canadian art institutions. In her essay “Whiffs of Balsam, Pine, and Spruce: Art Museums and the Production of a Canadian Aesthetic”, Whitelaw contends that the National Gallery has organized its own collection around “particular conceptions of “Canadian” art and “Canadian” identity, conceptions that are seen to be epitomized in the paintings of the Group of Seven”, which in turn influenced curators at Canadian institutions in terms of their understanding of what constitutes “Canadian” art.<sup>120</sup> Even after the dissolution of the Group of Seven, Whitelaw notes that the artists “continued to dominate exhibitions and to be held up as arbiters of Canadian artistic production” due to the National Gallery of Canada’s support, including organizing travelling

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<sup>120</sup> Anne Whitelaw, “Whiffs of Balsam, Pine, and Spruce’: Art Museums and the Production of a Canadian Aesthetic,” in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art*, ed. John O’Brien (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007), 175.

exhibits of Group of Seven works and developing a reproduction program that would enable gallery patrons to purchase Group of Seven prints.<sup>121</sup>

In contrast to the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Art Gallery of Ontario's curatorial team has mounted only one temporary exhibit dedicated to a single Group of Seven artist, which was "The Idea of North: The Paintings of Lawren Harris" in 2016.<sup>122</sup> In addition to exhibits focusing on Canadian art, the institution's management prides itself on the display of its extensive Canadian permanent collection, which it states is "one of the premier collections of work by Tom Thomson, the Group of Seven (and their contemporaries)" in the world.<sup>123</sup> The ability of the Art Gallery of Ontario to display its permanent collection – due to the physical size of its space – gives the institution what French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu refers to as national cultural capital.<sup>124</sup> According to Bourdieu's theory, the cultural capital in the instance of the Art Gallery of Ontario would stem from the objectified state of the works on display, which convey not only a sense of cultural importance due to their material presence, but also hint at the economic value of the gallery's collection which further increases the cultural capital of the gallery.<sup>125</sup> The monetary value of the collection signifies economic capital donated to the gallery through government funding and private bequests while also symbolizing the cultural worth of the gallery.

The concept of what constitutes Canadian art is rooted in the tradition of landscape painting, as developed by the Group of Seven in the 1920s. This concept of what constituted Canadian art

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<sup>121</sup> Anne Whitelaw, *Spaces and Places for Art: Making Art Institutions in Western Canada, 1912-1990* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 113.

<sup>122</sup> "The Idea of North: The Paintings of Lawren Harris," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Apr. 5, 2017, <http://www.ago.net/the-idea-of-north-the-paintings-of-lawren-harris>.

<sup>123</sup> "Canadian Collection," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Nov. 10, 2015, <http://www.ago.net/canadian>.

<sup>124</sup> Bourdieu, *The Love of Art*, 36.

<sup>125</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1986), 248.



was further cemented by the National Gallery of Canada's reproduction extension program, which was launched in 1927. This was the first time that the gallery focused on reproducing artworks from Canadian artists. Joyce Zemans noted that the reproduction extension program was "constructed in such a way that...it would validate Canadian art by locating it in its rightful context within that history" by ambitiously aiming to have prints of Canadian works displayed in every home and school across the nation.<sup>126</sup> The popularity of the prints – which included by the 1930s works by Tom Thomson, Arthur Lismer, and J.E.H. Macdonald – helped to cement the Group of Seven as the culmination of tradition in Canadian art due to the aesthetic construct developed by the National Gallery of Canada that was centred around landscape paintings of the Canadian wilderness.<sup>127</sup>

The vast array of Group of Seven works owned by the Art Gallery of Ontario arguably elevates the gallery's reputation as a stronghold of Canadian art, both nationally and at the international level. In addition to its extensive Group of Seven holdings, the Art Gallery of Ontario boasts several other major collections and thousands of works. This starkly contrasts with the collection at the Art Gallery of Alberta, which is less significant in terms of both size and status. The Art Gallery of Alberta also lacks the physical space to display its permanent collection on a regular basis, therefore forcing its administration to rely on the rotation of exhibitions – both travelling and from the permanent collection – to cement the gallery's reputation as a top institution for the display of Canadian art. The displayed alignment of both galleries with widely recognized Canadian artists such as the Group of Seven highlights the desire of the administration of both galleries to not only adhere to, but to exemplify the

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<sup>126</sup> Joyce Zemans, "Establishing the Canon: Nationhood, Identity and the National Gallery's First Reproduction Programme of Canadian Art," *Journal of Canadian Art History / Annales d'histoire de l'art Canadien* 16, No. 2 (1995): 11.

<sup>127</sup> Joyce Zemans, "Establishing the Canon," 17.

requirements of the national museum policy, which is set by the Government of Canada. In turn, both this alignment with the federal museum policy and cohesion to the understanding of what is Canadian art arguably had the potential to further increase their chances of receiving federal funding.

The 2009 mission statement of the Art Gallery of Alberta – which remained in place until a new mission statement was published in 2016 – declares, “The Art Gallery of Alberta is a museum dedicated to excellent and innovative practice in programming, stewardship and presentation of visual arts in Western Canada and across the nation” thereby highlighting the gallery’s desire to be recognized as a key Canadian cultural institution.<sup>128</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, I am choosing to examine only the Art Gallery of Alberta’s mission statement from when the gallery’s administration first opened the new building, as this was the mission statement that has shaped the development of the new Art Gallery of Alberta. Through the affirmation of its mission statement, the Art Gallery of Alberta’s management arguably seeks to highlight its commitment to adhering to the cultural policies set forth by the federal government as well as the goals outlined by the Canada Council for the Arts in its most recent strategic plan, *Strengthening Connections: Strategic Plan 2011-2016*. *Strengthening Connections* seeks to continue building the foundation that was laid in the Council’s previous strategic plan, *Moving Forward: Strategic Plan 2008-2011*.

*Moving Forward* states that the following are necessary in order for the culture of a city to foster growth and allow artists and art institutions to flourish:

For sustainable professional arts practices, a community needs excellent individual artists, excellent arts organizations that support, employ, present, exhibit, publish, or provide other resources for artists, engaged audiences, a supportive public, an enlightened funding and policy environment, and facilities for the practice of art. Together, these positive forces

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<sup>128</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, “Report to the Community” (Edmonton, 2012), 2.

provide the basis for a sustainable arts sector, which in turn creates the foundation for the community's cultural life and shared values.<sup>129</sup>

To compare this to each of the galleries, the mission statement from both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario must be analyzed to see how the goals of each institution align with the goals of the Canada Council for the Arts. At the same time, the language of the corporate sector is also taken into consideration. Marketing researcher Jeffrey Abrahams analyzes both the vision and mission statement in his book, *The Mission Statement Book: 301 Corporate Mission Statements from America's Top Companies*. Abrahams defines the vision statement of an organization to be “a concise word picture of the organization at some future time, which sets the overall direction of the organization. It is what the organization strives to be.”<sup>130</sup> While the vision statement highlights the aspirations of a corporation, the mission statement focuses on what Abrahams explains is “an organization's purpose or “reason for being.” It is the primary objective toward which the organization's plans and programs should be aimed” as it provides the framework for an institution's daily operations.<sup>131</sup>

The Art Gallery of Alberta's former vision statement declares “The Art Gallery of Alberta creates a welcoming and engaging environment where people are motivated to transform their understanding of the world by connecting with the visual arts”.<sup>132</sup> This statement directly correlates with the Canada Council's goal of nurturing positive forces that support the continuous growth of the arts through community engagement.<sup>133</sup> The language used by the Art Gallery of Alberta's administration clearly echoes the tone set by the Canada Council for the

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<sup>129</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “Moving Forward,” 11.

<sup>130</sup> Jeffrey Abrahams, *The Mission Statement Book: 301 Corporate Mission Statements from America's Top Companies* (Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 1995), 16.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, “Report to the Community 2012,” 2.

<sup>133</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “Moving Forward,” 11.

Arts. However, the Art Gallery of Alberta's vision statement does not explicitly state how the institution intends to create a sphere in which people are able to better connect with the arts. There is no explanation of how the gallery intends to motivate its visitors to engage with the exhibits and correlating. The statement is also problematic as it does not specify who the Art Gallery of Alberta's management means by people. Does the gallery hope to attract more patrons in order to increase its traffic (and potentially, its membership numbers)? Does it hope to engage more artists or museum professionals in order to elevate its status as an institution by forging a better connection with the arts community? Tony Bennett notes that the "publicness" of museums "has been a largely a civic and governmental one", which emphasizes the desire of the management of the not-for-profit Art Gallery of Alberta to connect to its patrons in order to potentially attract not only a wider audience, but also more government support.<sup>134</sup> By embracing the community-based approach of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Art Gallery of Alberta's management is attempting to echo the language of the Council's policies in order to form an association between itself and the federal government.

During my time researching at the City of Edmonton Archives, I did not come across anything that resembled a vision statement from the Edmonton Art Gallery's inception in 1924 to the end of the archives' records in the late twentieth century. The first instance of a vision statement made available for analysis occurs in the 2009 Report to the Community, when the Art Gallery of Alberta's administration began publishing a vision statement alongside the gallery's mission statement. Creating a distinction between the two enables the gallery's administration to highlight its objectives for future growth in addition to stating its current goals. From a corporate standpoint, including a vision statement is imperative to the success of the institution as it shapes

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<sup>134</sup> Bennett, "Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture," 50.

both the gallery and its potential relationships with other organizations. Ultimately, the vision statement serves as “the symbolic representation of what the organization hopes to achieve in the future and how the organization will be affected by this change” as the administration works towards its long-term goals.<sup>135</sup> The first separate vision statement published by the Art Gallery of Alberta administration in 2009 reads, “The Art Gallery of Alberta creates a welcoming and engaging environment where people are motivated to transform their understanding of the world by connecting with the visual arts”.<sup>136</sup> While the statement is grandiose and makes the gallery’s management appear ambitious, I found that it does not actually give any indication of what the Art Gallery of Alberta’s administration is looking to accomplish in the future. The vision statement does not provide any real detail about how the gallery’s environment is going to be altered in order to be more accessible to patrons. How does the Art Gallery of Alberta’s administration anticipate making the gallery environment more engaging? In order to revamp the overall environment of the Art Gallery of Alberta – perhaps by offering different programming, a greater variety of exhibits, or shifting focus more towards marketing to the consumer – the gallery’s administration will require more funding from both the public and private sector.

The vision statement from 2009 correlates with the gallery mission statement from the same year, which iterates, “The Art Gallery of Alberta is a museum dedicated to excellent and innovative practice in programming, stewardship and presentation of visual arts in Western Canada and across the nation”.<sup>137</sup> Together, these two statements attempt to convey to stakeholders what the gallery’s management – which would open its new building in 2010, completing its rebranding as the Art Gallery of Alberta – would be striving for under its new

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<sup>135</sup> Jamie Grady, *A Simple Statement: A Guide to Nonprofit Arts Management and Leadership*, (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 2006), 10.

<sup>136</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, “Report to the Community” (Edmonton, 2009), 2.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

moniker. However, the mission statement also does not convey any actual information to patrons. Instead, it gives an overarching view of the lofty ambitions of gallery management. Together, these two statements outline the Art Gallery of Alberta administration's desire to appeal to patrons throughout Canada, making the federal government potentially more interested in providing financial aid. By supporting a gallery whose administration seeks to connect Canadians and international visitors alike to the visual arts through its exhibits and programs, the Government of Canada is likely to be seen as a generous benefactor of the arts and arts institutions across the nation. If the federal government did not support the Art Gallery of Alberta and its ambitious vision of connecting Canadians with the visual arts through its programs and exhibits, it would not reflect favourably upon the government. Sponsoring the gallery administration's initiatives can be "seen as a way to fund the arts, but its main purpose is enhancing the government's image" through promoting the Government of Canada as a major partner of the Art Gallery of Alberta.<sup>138</sup>

The Art Gallery of Ontario's mission statement is "We bring people together with art to see, experience, and understand the world in new ways".<sup>139</sup> This mission statement also utilizes the wording of the Canada Council for the Arts through highlighting the notion of creating a sense of community. The Art Gallery of Ontario's mission statement, like the Canada Council for the Arts' strategic plan, uses language to communicate its interest in encouraging people to both help develop and support the arts. However, this mission statement also does not specify how the gallery connects people with art. Does it draw people in using exhibits? How do the gallery's programs factor into creating a new way for patrons to experience art? Both galleries' management teams also must look at how the Canada Council defines a "sustainable arts sector"

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<sup>138</sup> Colbert, "Consumer Perception," 48.

<sup>139</sup> "Our Mandate," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Jul. 30, 2016, <http://www.ago.net/mandate>.

and potentially work to incorporate practices that adhere to this policy, particularly if the two institutions are looking to continue receiving federal funding from the Canada Council for the Arts.<sup>140</sup> The phrase “sustainable arts funding” as used by the Canada Council presumably refers to funding that is not entirely government dependent, but utilizes a variety of donors in order to provide monetary support for the arts. As the Canada Council for the Arts – and by association, the federal government – cannot be depended upon to be the primary funding body for arts institutions, it is crucial that the administration of arts organizations find ways to sustain their operations. At the same time, the values of corporate sponsor must also be taken into consideration. If the administration solely focuses on adhering to the federal museum policy, they risk alienating a second source of revenue.

The Art Gallery of Ontario’s website broadcasts the gallery’s vision statement, which states, “We will become the imaginative centre of our city and province. We will be welcoming to our visitors, inspiring for our audiences and innovative in the ways we gather people together to create community through art. We will become a preferred cultural partner for artistic visionaries from all over the world”.<sup>141</sup> This statement seeks to position the gallery as a cultural institution that appeals to people throughout the province – as the gallery is a ward of the Province of Ontario – particularly those who live in the Greater Toronto Area, as these patrons are the most likely to support the gallery by becoming members and making donations. The language of the Art Gallery of Ontario vision statement, however, fails, to incorporate the discourse of the national museum policy. Instead, the Art Gallery of Ontario’s administration seems to desire the approval of the corporate sector, as it alludes to the concept of being a cultural partner.<sup>142</sup> The

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<sup>140</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, “Moving Forward,” 11.

<sup>141</sup> “Our Mandate,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

use of the phrase “preferred partner” echoes Bernadette McNicholas’s argument that the ideal relationship between gallery and corporation is that of a partnership. She states that the new focus in relationships between the arts sector and corporate sponsors is on corporate image, as well as the mission statement and vision of both organizations.<sup>143</sup> For the Art Gallery of Ontario’s management, focusing on relationships with potential corporate sponsors is arguably more profitable than attempting to appeal to the federal government. Unlike the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Art Gallery of Ontario is already – as previously mentioned – under the umbrella of the provincial government, while also receiving substantial municipal funding. There is far less of a monetary incentive for the Art Gallery of Ontario to try and appeal to the interests of the Government of Canada and its funding bodies.

An integral part of the mission statement for both institutions is highlighting the commitment to Canadian art. For the Art Gallery of Alberta, however, a clear distinction must be made between Canadian art and works created by artists residing in Alberta. While it arguably lacks diversity in terms of displaying Canadian art, the Art Gallery of Alberta has a strong tradition of supporting local artists. Since its inception, the Edmonton Art Gallery had a close working relation with local artists, particularly those employed in the Department of Art & Design at the University of Alberta. Presently, the connection between the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Edmonton arts community is evident in the RBC New Works Gallery. Opened in 2010, the second floor exhibit space is dedicated to showcasing the work of up-and-coming artists who practice within the province. The RBC New Works Gallery, which was named in recognition of a donation from the Royal Bank of Canada, gives the Art Gallery of Alberta the ability to champion local artists. It is interesting that this space, which promotes local art, was not

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<sup>143</sup> McNicholas, “Arts, Culture, and Business”, 59.



endowed by government funding. Instead, a private corporation donated funding to ensure that local artists are continually being exhibited at the Art Gallery of Alberta. This exemplifies a “shift in arts funding from governments to the private sphere and increased interest on the part of governments in spreading the load” of funding, particularly to institutions that do not fall under the umbrella of government.<sup>144</sup> Through corporate support, gallery administration is able to continue introducing new exhibits – such as those in the RBC New Works Gallery – to its public, while the government, corporation, and institution all benefit from the sponsorship. For the corporation, donating to the arts has the potential to increase its public recognition for more than its business practices, although there was no published evidence that the Royal Bank of Canada’s management has any curatorial control over the RBC New Works Gallery. Instead, the bank’s administration provides the financial backing while the Art Gallery of Alberta’s management maintains creative control of the space. Schiller states that sponsoring the arts is a “relatively inexpensive way of demonstrating corporate good behaviour and general concern for the public interest” by funding museum expansions, sponsoring exhibits, and providing services such as free admission.<sup>145</sup> Providing funding for the arts also provides the corporation with access to a new audience through advertising its support of the arts through gallery publications and events.

The Royal Bank of Canada’s management also provides substantial funding to the Art Gallery of Ontario, although it has not procured the same level of naming rights that the bank possesses at the Art Gallery of Alberta. In the reports from the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Bank of Canada is listed multiple times, as various branches of the financial institution – including RBC Wealth Management, RBC Financial Group, RBC Dominion Securities Ltd., and

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<sup>144</sup> McNicholas, “Arts, Culture, and Business,” 57.

<sup>145</sup> Herbert Schiller, “Corporate Sponsorship: Institutionalized Censorship of the Cultural Realm,” *Art Journal*, 50, No.3 (1991): 58.

the RBC Foundation – all appear to consistently make substantial financial contributions to the annual campaign of the Art Gallery of Ontario.<sup>146</sup> This starkly contrasts with the bank’s sponsorship of the Art Gallery of Alberta, which only appears to receive funding from the RBC Foundation. The RBC Foundation supports community and sustainability initiatives, while each separate branch of the Royal Bank of Canada – through the RBC Financial Group – also commits to contributing to the “cultural fabric of communities through donations, sponsorship and employee involvement”.<sup>147</sup> The financial institution also appears to be more actively involved with the Art Gallery of Ontario, as it is listed as a Lead Sponsor on several major exhibitions in addition to providing multiple streams of continuous funding.

For the management of the Royal Bank of Canada’s various organizations, it is arguably more beneficial to sponsor exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario. In the 2010-2011 annual report, the gallery’s administration boasted that the institution had over 72,000 members.<sup>148</sup> By the time the 2013-2014 report was published, the gallery had over 93,000 members.<sup>149</sup> This is significant compared to the 7,000 total memberships to the Art Gallery of Alberta in the same year.<sup>150</sup> However, the contrast is not entirely accurate as the two galleries’ administrations count memberships in different ways. The difference in how membership is tallied creates an issue for potential sponsors, as it does not give a complete view of how many members there actually are, particularly at the Art Gallery of Alberta. This is best demonstrated by examining family memberships at both galleries. While the Art Gallery of Alberta counts the number of memberships, the Art Gallery of Ontario tallies the number of members. For example, a family

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<sup>146</sup> Art Gallery of Ontario, “Year in Review, 2008-2009” (Toronto, 2009), 13.

<sup>147</sup> “Arts and Culture,” *Royal Bank of Canada*, May 7, 2017, [http://www.rbc.com/community/rbc\\_community/causes/arts/arts.html](http://www.rbc.com/community/rbc_community/causes/arts/arts.html).

<sup>148</sup> Art Gallery of Ontario, “2010-2011,” 2.

<sup>149</sup> Art Gallery of Ontario, “2013-2014,” 2.

<sup>150</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, “Report to the Community” (Edmonton, 2014), 4.

membership at the Art Gallery of Alberta can be used for up to six individuals – two adults and four minors under the age of eighteen – yet it is counted as a single membership.<sup>151</sup> In contrast, a family membership at the Art Gallery of Ontario accommodates up to seven people – two card-holding adults and up to five youth – with both adult cardholders counting as members.<sup>152</sup> From a corporate sponsorship standpoint, it is more appealing to sponsor exhibits and programs at a gallery whose administration counts its card-holding members individually rather than counting the number of memberships, as it provides a more accurate picture of how many members the corporation may attract by financially supporting the gallery. In my research, I was not able to find any published information about how each gallery’s administration determines how to calculate its total membership. There also does not appear to be a standard for how each cultural institution’s management counts the number of members. A likely explanation for the difference may be based on alternate (and more substantial) sources of funding who require memberships to be calculated in a specific way in order for an institution to qualify for funding.

In addition to varying types and levels of individual memberships, The Art Gallery of Alberta’s development department offers multiple levels of corporate membership, with a variety of benefits at different price points. These range in price from five hundred dollars for a non-profit or small arts membership to ten thousand dollars for a corporation to be listed as a Leader in the art gallery’s annual report to the community as well as on both the sponsor wall (which is located on the main floor of the Art Gallery of Alberta) as well as on the gallery website. Purchasing a membership is a form of strategic philanthropy, particularly for larger companies, as it allows the corporation to support a local charitable cause while also benefitting from the

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<sup>151</sup> “Membership,” *Art Gallery of Alberta*, Jul. 15, 2016, <http://www.youraga.ca/join-us/membership/>.

<sup>152</sup> “Family Membership,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Jul. 15, 2016, <http://www.ago.net/family-membership>.

sponsorship. Wulfson argues that corporate giving serves dual purposes as it provides needed funding for charitable causes while also benefiting the corporate bottom line and increasing the company's legitimacy in the community.<sup>153</sup> By having a corporation's name prominently displayed showing support for the art gallery, the company's executives reap the benefits of being recognized as community partners, including having an increased public presence at the local level. The corporation further benefits from the "ability to use its affiliation with the non-profit organization to achieve certain specific marketing objectives and to garner economically valuable good-will that leads to increased sales and profits that offset the cost" of paying for a corporate membership or providing other forms of sponsorship, such as subsidizing gallery events – like free admission days – or underwriting the cost of an exhibit.<sup>154</sup> The advertising that comes with marketing a corporation's sponsorship of the art gallery is of a greater value to the company than the financial investment that is made by providing funding to the gallery's administration.

An example of the symbiotic partnership between the corporate sector, the arts, and the government is the funding provided for the Art Gallery of Alberta's Travelling Exhibition (TREX) program. While the project does receive some government backing, monetary support also comes from a corporate sponsor, the Canadian oil company Syncrude Canada. Kotler observes, "Museum leaders have recognized that corporate sponsorships and partnerships are a vital means of support as costs increase and government support declines", which is highlighted

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<sup>153</sup> Myrna Wulfson, "The Ethics of Corporate Social Responsibility and Philanthropic Ventures," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 29, No.1/2 (2001): 141.

<sup>154</sup> Joseph J. Cordes and C. Eugene Steuerle, *Nonprofits and Business*, (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 2009), 9.

by the Art Gallery of Alberta's continuous need for private financial support.<sup>155</sup> In the case of the TREX program, Syncrude Canada's initial three-year sponsorship (from 2009 to 2011) enabled the Art Gallery of Alberta to develop and display exhibits focusing on aboriginal art throughout the province.<sup>156</sup> In 2011, Syncrude Canada's patronage of the TREX program was renewed for three additional years. This sponsorship was arguably essential to both the gallery and the government, as it allowed the Art Gallery of Alberta to facilitate the program, providing other communities in the province with the opportunity to display its travelling exhibits.

Securing renewed funding from a corporation highlights how the Art Gallery of Alberta is attempting to develop what Andrea Witcomb's book, *Reimagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum*, refers to as a closed loop, which is a "set up in which initial investments by government are designed to attract an even greater amount of investment from private investors which will then keep feeding itself" instead of relying on the government for funding.<sup>157</sup> This situation is ideal for both the government and the Art Gallery of Alberta as it provides a completely separate stream of continuous financial support – outside of the funds provided by the foundation – for the gallery.

An article published by *Maclean's* magazine in 2010 questioned the increasingly high cost of admission at Canadian institutions, including both the Art Gallery of Ontario and Art Gallery of Alberta. At the time of the article's publication, the Art Gallery of Ontario was charging adult visitors an admission fee of eighteen dollars.<sup>158</sup> By 2017, the Art Gallery of Ontario's cost of

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<sup>155</sup> Neil G. Kotler, *Museum Marketing and Strategy: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 224.

<sup>156</sup> Art Gallery of Alberta, "Report to the Community 2012," 11.

<sup>157</sup> Witcomb, *Reimagining the Museum*, 29.

<sup>158</sup> Anne Kingston, "Are Admission Prices Too Expensive?," *Maclean's Magazine*, Feb. 3, 2010, <http://www.macleans.ca/culture/are-admission-prices-too-expensive/>.

admission for an adult has increased to nineteen dollars and fifty cents.<sup>159</sup> The rising cost of admission aids the gallery's management in covering the extensive costs of renovations – such as the 2008 expansion designed by architect Frank Gehry – and operations.

To further offset its expenses, the Art Gallery of Ontario's management has also reached out to corporate sponsors. Based on the information provided by the Art Gallery of Ontario website, the gallery's management enjoys financial backing from a myriad of corporations. The Art Gallery of Ontario's website currently lists several categories of corporate sponsorship with a clear division between membership and partnership. This separation is important as it distinguishes corporations based upon the economic capital that the company management is willing and able to give. Similar to the different levels of individual membership offered by the Art Gallery of Ontario, corporate management can opt to buy in at either the member or partner level. Within these distinct classes, there are several tiers that continue to segregate donors based upon donation amount. Corporate membership is divided into five categories, including one that is marked as being available to small businesses only. The separation between large corporations and small businesses highlights the corporate need to be seen as a “member” of society, with attendant moral and social obligations” to the rest of the population.<sup>160</sup> For even the smallest company, purchasing a corporate gallery membership could reap rewards such as increased marketing potential, which in turn could expose the company to both prospective clients and future employees who are attracted by the company's support of the arts. From a corporate marketing standpoint, this type of publicity is invaluable as it provides exposure to a market that the corporation may not have otherwise been able to access. Unlike memberships, corporate

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<sup>159</sup> “Admission,” *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Apr. 16, 2016, <http://www.ago.net/admission>.

<sup>160</sup> Victor Brudney and Allen Ferrell, “Corporate Charitable Giving,” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 69, No. 3 (2002): 1205.

partnership information is only accessible by directly contacting the Art Gallery of Ontario. For potential corporate sponsors, this gives the potential partnership a sense of exclusivity, as the information is not available online. It also provides the potential for the corporation and gallery administration to work together to develop a relationship in order to ensure that both parties benefit from the partnership.

The gallery's administration markets partnership opportunities as a chance for corporations to create an "image-building profile, a unique experiential platform, brand awareness, business-to-business and employee engagement opportunities" by investing in the Art Gallery of Ontario.<sup>161</sup> This type of transactional alliance elevates the corporation as it invokes a sense of good will towards the community.<sup>162</sup> In *Audiences and the Arts: Communication Perspectives*, Lois Foreman-Wernet supports this argument by stating that corporate partnerships provide "funding and promotion for arts institutions, and it also sets the stage for the transfer through association of the "high class" image of the arts to the sponsoring corporation".<sup>163</sup> Sociologist Davina DesRoches furthers this concept by arguing that museum sponsorship allows corporations to create partnerships with institutions that advocate for the public good.<sup>164</sup> By providing economic capital, corporations gain both social and political capital. Providing funding to the arts not only endears corporations to the wider population, but also gives companies a new connection to the government. By sponsoring the arts, corporations are easing the strain on government coffers. This creates new relationships between companies and the government, as the government may be more likely to work with corporations with similar values and interests.

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<sup>161</sup> "Partnership," *Art Gallery of Ontario*, Apr. 16, 2016, <http://www.ago.net/partnership/>.

<sup>162</sup> Cordes and Steuerle, *Nonprofits and Business*, 155.

<sup>163</sup> Lois Foreman-Wernet, *Audiences and the Arts: Communication Perspectives* (Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2010), 23.

<sup>164</sup> Davina M. DesRoches, "The Marketized Museum: New Museology in a Corporatized World," *The Political Economy of Communications*, 3, No. 1 (2015), 10.

While corporations attempt to frame their charitable donations to the arts as acts of goodwill, it must be argued that the root cause of financial support is self-serving. One such example of this is the issue of naming rights. At the Art Gallery of Alberta, for example, spaces are named for significant donors. In the basement of the gallery, for example, is the Ledcor Theatre. Named for the Ledcor Group of Companies – which donated over a quarter of a million dollars to the Capital Campaign – the theatre serves as a source of free promotion for the corporation. Additionally, the construction company was awarded the contract to facilitate the construction of the Art Gallery of Alberta building. This exemplifies the concept of symbiotic partnership as Ledcor's donation to the Art Gallery of Alberta likely led to the gallery's management selecting the company to be the primary contractor for the construction of the new building. Not only did Ledcor benefit from being awarded the construction contract as it likely recuperated the cost of its donation through construction fees, but Ledcor continues to profit due to its ongoing association with the Art Gallery of Alberta through naming rights. Schiller argues that this type of partnership demonstrates the “foolproof means of achieving long-lasting corporate hegemony” in the cultural sector.<sup>165</sup> Until the Art Gallery of Alberta's administration seeks to expand further, the Ledcor Theatre will continue to serve as free advertising for its sponsor. Burton notes, “there appears to be a growing trend for corporations to ask for and get public naming rights in exchange for the dollars they are investing in non-profit organizations”, as naming rights give the corporate donor more prominence.<sup>166</sup> There is prestige associated with a donor having enough capital to have a space named for their contribution.

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<sup>165</sup> Schiller, “Corporate Sponsorship,” 59.

<sup>166</sup> Terry Burton, *Naming Rights: Legacy Gifts and Corporate Money* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2008), 73.



In addition to donating to the Art Gallery of Alberta's construction, Ledcor also previously sponsored free public tours of the gallery. These complementary tours were provided daily by trained interpretative staff, with each tour focusing on a specific exhibit. While the gallery's administration did not make a formal announcement about the reason for why the funding ceased in 2014, it aligns with what marketing researcher Carmen Camarero refers to as the corporate need for greater accountability for funding and evidence of project viability.<sup>167</sup> It is possible that the institution's administration did not reach the goals set by the corporation – either separately or in partnership with the gallery's management – resulting in the termination of the funding. Sociologist Victoria D. Alexander reasons that the loss of corporate support for cultural institutions such as the Art Gallery of Alberta is due to the fact that corporations prefer audiences who consume resources that validate funding.<sup>168</sup> In the case of the public tours, patrons would be encouraged to engage with the art (therefore “consuming” it), but not in a way that would justify Ledcor's financial support. For the interpretive staff, this involved tracking tours to see how many people attended and how engaged patrons were based on factors such as how long people stayed on the tour and if attendees were involved in discussion. Prior to breaking off the partnership with the Art Gallery of Alberta, Ledcor provided monetary support for a free public tours program, which was run by the gallery's interpretive staff. With the loss of funding from Ledcor, the interpretive department was shuttered and volunteers were trained to give tours, but only on free admission nights and weekends. In turn, this makes tours less accessible to the general population, particularly those who visit during the week.

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<sup>167</sup> Carmen Camarero et al., “How Cultural Organizations’ Size and Funding Influence Innovation and Performance: The Case of Museums,” *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 35 (2011), 252.

<sup>168</sup> V.D. Alexander, “From Philanthropy to Funding: The Effects of Corporate and Public Support on American Art Museums,” *Poetics* 24 (1996), 98.

The loss of free public education hindered the Art Gallery of Alberta. Davina DesRoches notes “museums are expected to be places of both education and entertainment, to be visitor-focused while still making efforts to expand their collections and conduct research, and to serve local communities while also competing for international audiences and sponsorship”.<sup>169</sup> The pressures placed on museum management that DesRoches outlines were evident at the Art Gallery of Alberta, as the administration was forced to restructure its departments and reduce complementary public programming. Structured gallery tours are still available for private bookings, but at a cost. The result of this change is that corporations are the primary entities that book private tours. This creates a distinction between gallery patrons based upon economic capital. While corporate sponsors are able to afford to pay for private tours for employees and clients, there has not been a company willing to replace the funding cut by Ledcor. This goes against the corporate claim of sponsoring the arts as an act of social responsibility. Instead, the lack of interest in funding public tours emphasizes the corporate need to profit from sponsoring the arts as opposed to making a purely philanthropic gesture.

As illustrated in the discussion of both government policies – such as the federal policy for museums – and corporate statements in this chapter, language is essential to the economic success of an institution. Both the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario’s administrations take into consideration the wording of federal policies while also utilizing the wording of corporate mission and vision statements in order to appeal to corporate donors, along with offering naming rights. By doing so, both galleries’ managements seek to secure a variety of continuous sponsors which will aid the gallery’s staff in fulfilling its mandate. As illustrated by the case studies in this chapter, cultural institutions such as the Art Gallery of Alberta and the

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<sup>169</sup> DesRoches, “The Marketized Museum,” 10.

Art Gallery of Ontario would not be able to continue fully operating without the additional financial aid from corporate sponsorships, which offsets the lack of government funding.

## Conclusion

This thesis examines the influence of federal funding on the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Through a critical analysis of the influence of the Government of Canada and its agencies on arts institutions, I contend that the arts cannot be sustained without monetary support from the federal government. At the same time, I have taken into consideration the impact of donations from the corporate sector, as this financial support plays a significant role in supplementing government funding.

The first chapter of this thesis provided a historical overview of the evolution of both art institutions, with a focus on how each gallery was initially funded. This included assessing the contributions made by other supporters, including both the provincial and municipal governments as well as private donors. While these alternative methods of financial backing were not the focus of this thesis, they were imperative to the establishment of both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

In the second chapter, I paid particular attention to the financial contributions made to both galleries by the federal government. With a primary focus on the funding provided by the Canada Council for the Arts, I argued that the Government of Canada provides monetary support to arts organizations in exchange for social and cultural capital. This concept – which was developed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu – provided a framework for the second chapter through which I could critically examine the transactional relationships between the galleries' administrations and the government.<sup>170</sup> This chapter also took into consideration the impact of each management's efforts to fill the void left by federal funding cuts to the arts, including seeking out corporate sponsorships and developing new hierarchies of membership. While these

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<sup>170</sup> See Bourdieu, *The Love of Art*.

sources provide an alternative source of revenue, I contended that they do not carry the same clout for galleries as receiving financial assistance from the government.

As gallery management shifts to run art institutions more like corporations, the language of the mission and vision statements – which originated in the corporate sector – is changing to appeal to private donors. In turn, these statements look more corporatized instead of mimicking the language of the federal policy for museums in order to appeal for funding. This shift was critically examined in my third chapter, in which I argued that both federal government and corporate sponsors exert significant influence on both the mission and vision statements created by arts institutions. Through my analysis, it became clear that the administrations of both the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Art Gallery of Ontario attempt to mimic the language used by donors in order to attract continuous funding.

The corporate interest in donating to the arts not only benefits the gallery by providing much-needed monetary support, but also allows the corporation to emphasize goodwill towards the community through sponsoring the arts. For the federal government, corporate support of the arts enables the Government of Canada to remain a primary patron of the arts while allowing the funding provided by federal agencies to be supplemented by other donors. The balance between corporate and government sponsorship is delicate, but ultimately must be maintained in order for institutions such as the Art Gallery of Alberta and Art Gallery of Ontario to survive in the contemporary museum field.

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