



## **2022-23 BUSINESS PLAN**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2021/22 continues to be a challenging year due to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic but there is reason for hope and optimism. On Monday, November 23, 2020, the museum closed temporarily as the City of Toronto was moved to Lockdown stage by the Government of Ontario. After eight months of temporary closure, on July 21, 2021, the AGO re-opened to the public with a summer blockbuster, several new exhibitions, a new AGO Bistro patio – and a lot of excitement. Despite the ongoing challenges, the mission of the AGO remained strong and true – to bring people safely together in-person or virtually with art to see, experience and understand our world in new and exciting ways. The museum has worked closely with artists, governments, communities and corporate partners to become one of the world's leading art museums, known for its world-class exhibitions, unique collections and innovative outreach and educational programming.

The health and safety of our employees, volunteers, visitors and our extended AGO community is always our top priority. The AGO continued to share its remarkable Collection with the public as well as a series of special exhibitions in a safe and capacity controlled environment. Major and special exhibitions include:

- *Andy Warhol* (July 21 – October 24, 2021)
- *Picasso: Painting the Blue* (October 6, 2021 – January 16, 2022)
- *Fragments of Epic Memory* (September 1, 2021 – February 21, 2022)
- *Robert Houle: Red is Beautiful* (December 3, 2021 – April 17, 2022)
- *Matthew Wong: Blue View* (August 13, 2021 – April 18, 2022)

Total operating revenues for 2021/22 are approximately \$54.9 million; total operating expenditures are approximately \$54.6 million before net amortization.

As part of the province wide effort to mitigate and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the AGO closed temporarily effective Wednesday, January 5, 2022, until further notice.

For 2022/23, subject to provincial reopening guidance, the following exciting exhibitions will bring works from around the world to the AGO:

- *I AM HERE: Home Movies and Everyday Masterpieces* (April 16, 2022 – August 14, 2022)
- *Faith and Fortune: Art from the Former Spanish Empire* (June 11 – Oct 10 2022)
- *Denyse Thomasos: Dismantle* (October 8, 2022 – February 19, 2023)
- *Leonard Cohen* (December 3, 2022 – April 9, 2023) (confidential: still to be announced)

With our robust and diverse programming, the AGO is ready to play a strong role in the recovery of our cultural tourism sector and to contribute to a strong year of events for Ontarians and visitors in 2022/23.

Total operating revenues for 2022/23 are projected to be approximately \$59.7 million; total operating expenditures are projected to be approximately \$59.4 million before net amortization.

The Government of Ontario is a vital partner to the AGO, providing annual operating support of approximately \$21 million. This support is always critically important to our operation, but has become absolutely essential during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. A long-term and stable base of government support sustains many of the non-discretionary costs required for the AGO to fulfil its legislated mandate: protecting and preserving the AGO Collection; managing a safe and secure environment for storage and public display; and making the AGO an accessible and attainable destination for the people of Ontario.

The AGO was grateful to receive capital repair and rehabilitation support from the Government of Ontario in the amount of up to \$815,000 for three (3) projects in 2021/22. The museum is very mindful that parts of its physical plant were built as early as the mid-1920s (1820, in the case of its historic house, The Grange). Ensuring the ongoing safety of visitors, employees and volunteers is paramount. As an art museum, the AGO must also keep current with recent developments in security systems and temperature/environmental controls to safeguard its significant Collection.

This year, the museum also received \$215,435 from Celebrate Ontario to support blockbuster *Picasso: Painting the Blue*. This funding initiative will help strengthen Ontario's profile as a strong cultural destination and contribute to legacy development.

The AGO is well prepared to lead by example; we will showcase and role-model innovative business approaches that will be entrepreneurial and creative to build consumer and cultural confidence. The museum shares a commitment to providing public access to our programming and collections onsite and online. We have the opportunity for a greater economic impact and to lead the recovery with stimulus funding ranging from programming support to infrastructure projects.

The challenge of unpredictable consumer and corporate revenues due to COVID-19 makes the ongoing stability of government support even more critical. We understand and support the Government of Ontario's decision to address the immediate health and well-being of Ontarians and we are committed to do our part. While the impact of the pandemic has been immense, with stable and enhanced funding the museum would be well positioned to lead and support the province's economic and cultural recovery, and to welcome the eventual return of tourists from across Ontario, Canada and around the world.

The AGO looks forward to continuing to work in strong partnership with the Government of Ontario to enable Ontarians to fully benefit from the museum's many programs and resources.

## MANDATE

As cited in the *Art Gallery of Ontario Act*, the objectives of the AGO are:

- (a) To cultivate and advance the cause of the visual arts in Ontario;
- (b) To conduct programs of education in the origin, development, appreciation and techniques of the visual arts;
- (c) To collect and exhibit works of art and displays and to maintain and operate a gallery and related facilities as required for this purpose;
- (d) To stimulate the interest of the public in matters undertaken by the Gallery.

## MISSION STATEMENT

### Mission

We bring people together with art to see, experience and understand the world in new ways by presenting great ART, facilitating LEARNING and engaging our AUDIENCE.

### Vision

The AGO will lead global conversations from Toronto through extraordinary collections, exhibitions and programs and by reflecting the people who live here.

### Values

- Lead with quality
- Be inclusive and accessible
- Lead with contemporary relevance
- Be adaptable and flexible
- Achieve financial equilibrium

## SUPPORTING MINISTRY OBJECTIVES

The AGO is proud to support the priorities of the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries by:

- Building economic and cultural tourism recovery post COVID-19.
- Being accessible and attainable to visit for Ontarians.
- Promoting the arts and the creative economy.
- Bringing world-class exhibitions and programming to the province.
- Encouraging active participation in arts and culture activities.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

### External Factors:

- COVID-19: This ongoing pandemic and the uncertainties of potential future waves and variants and social restrictions may force the museum to scale back or shut down operations again with short notice. The AGO is temporarily closed as a result of provincial restrictions announced on January 3, 2022.
- Visitor leisure spending: the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and the unpredictable visitor leisure trends continue to make it difficult to accurately predict revenues from admission and visitor spending. The AGO relies on tourists to visit each year, particularly in the summer. Tightened borders and other restrictions resulted in an extremely limited tourist season in 2021/22.
- Private sector support: COVID-19 has had a deep and prolonged impact across the economy, and private sector support is becoming a less stable source of revenue, making it more difficult to project future year budgets.
- Government support: The AGO is committed to fiscal prudence and maintaining a balanced operating budget. With the effects of COVID-19, stable and predictable funding from the government will enable the museum to deliver a safe and welcoming environment for employees, volunteers and visitors.
- Public awareness: Growing competition to be “top of mind” for leisure activity is driving increased investment in communication and marketing strategies.
- Growing consumer use of digital technologies: Digital technologies provide a wider and more versatile spectrum of vehicles to connect with audiences, both on-site and virtually.
- Insurance for major travelling exhibitions: Rapidly increasing values of artworks are dramatically increasing insurance costs for major travelling exhibitions. *The Canada Travelling Exhibitions Indemnification Act* sets a per exhibition indemnification limit of \$600M. This covers less than half the value of some of our major exhibitions. The AGO must purchase commercial insurance to cover the remaining value of the exhibition.

### Internal Factors:

- Protection/preservation of art: The AGO’s primary asset is its Collection of more than 120,000 works of art. We must continue to invest resources to ensure that security control systems, temperature/environmental control systems and management protocols provide the optimal protection and ongoing preservation of this asset.
- Investment in future programming: An ongoing challenge to allocate funds to major exhibitions and other programs that require multiple years to plan and develop.
- Digital and information technology: These applications have the potential to be our most effective tools in reaching larger, more diverse audiences. We are seeking avenues of support to develop these significant and sustainable links with the public. Many of our existing systems are aging and no longer provide us with adequate support. It is critical to have the technology that will allow us to reach our audiences

through digital means. Online programming also offers the opportunity to reach far more Ontarians than onsite.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The AGO is in the fifth year of a ten-year strategic vision (2018–2028) that will provide a clear path forward to grow the museum as an ambitious, innovative, forward-looking and impactful organization.

The strategic vision is centred on five key objectives and four drivers that are embedded in, and cut across, the entire plan. Our vision confirms a dynamic programming direction to guide our planning over the next ten years and includes an ambitious fundraising campaign.

The ambitious plan is supported by the following values:

- We will lead with quality.
- We will achieve financial equilibrium.
- We will be adaptable and flexible.
- We will lead with contemporary relevance.
- We will be inclusive and accessible.

### Driver #1: AUDIENCE STRATEGY:

- Simplified pricing with affordable and attainable options
- Break down financial barriers to visiting
- Make the AGO a habit
- Foster a stronger relationship with visitors

### Driver #2: CONTENT AND PROGRAM:

- Generate and present vital and relevant exhibitions and programming
- Lead the global conversation from Toronto with contemporary relevance
- Provide programming that creates a hub for conversation in the City of Toronto
- Partner with global peer museums

### Driver #3: BRAND STRATEGY:

- Boldly convey our purpose: Art, Audience and Learning
- Memorable brand that resonates with our target audiences
- Inclusive and welcoming, smart and accessible, conversational

### Driver #4: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

- Visitors see themselves reflected in the diversity of the AGO Collection, exhibitions and programming, finding relevance in how it is interpreted and presented
- Actively welcome new audiences and ensure they feel a sense of belonging
- AGO employees, staff and volunteers reflect the diversity of Toronto, Ontario and Canada

The museum will continue to invest in its people as one of the important assets and enablers, it will leverage technology and make key capital investments to support all four strategic drivers. This vision will be integrated into its operational plans and budgets over the ten-year period to ensure the successful completion of the plan. Now, more than ever, this strategic direction and vision will see the AGO leading global conversations from Toronto through extraordinary collections, exhibitions and programs, and by reflecting the communities we serve. Looking beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, this strategic direction will enable the museum to develop deeper connections with existing visitors, reach new audiences with similar interests, and strengthen and grow the AGO Community.

## ACCESS STRATEGY

Art is for everyone. With the introduction of the Annual Pass program in 2019, admission for visitors 25 and under is free – all year, anytime. For visitors over 25, the Annual Pass provides unlimited admission for a year for \$35.

As an important cultural asset of Ontario, the AGO is committed to presenting world-class exhibitions and engaging public programming in an affordable, attainable, safe and welcoming environment for all Ontarians. This landmark admission initiative improves access for our youth and families and leads to an even stronger cultural sector for Ontario. The museum is also seeing marked increases in the diversity of visitors by age, as well as geographic, ethno-cultural and socio-economic background. We believe this strategy will continue to strengthen our relationship with visitors, grow our membership base, foster our position as a cultural and tourism leader and contribute to our long-term financial equilibrium.

The AGO is proud to celebrate Ontario and Canada by sharing our history and stories in an accessible and attainable way for families across our province. This initiative would not be possible without the generosity of our donors and supporters, and the steadfast support of the Ontario government. The AGO looks forward to working with the province to share our learning and to explore further collaboration and partnership. By working together, we can deliver transformative experiences for Ontarians, reduce barriers and improve access for everyone, and rebuild our position as a global cultural leader in a post COVID-19 economy.

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES – 2021/22

The AGO reopened its doors to the public on July 21, 2021 at 50 per cent capacity, with a summer blockbuster, several new exhibitions and a new AGO Bistro patio. Visitors needed to book timed-entry tickets in advance on the AGO ticketing website prior to their visit. This enabled the museum to limit the number of people in the museum at any one time to allow for physical distancing.

Other initiatives where the AGO enhanced, met, and often exceeded provincial requirements for health and safety during the pandemic:

- Carefully managed capacity when open
- Wearing of mask or face covering while visiting the museum

- Social distancing measures
- Increased cleaning schedule and disinfecting high touch and high traffic areas multiple times a day
- Efficient HVAC system
- Hand sanitizer stations throughout the museum
- Stairwells were marked with directional guidance to avoid close interactions.
- Before entering the museum, everyone was asked a series of health screening questions.

The AGO continues on its mission to bring people together with art in 2021/22. The guiding principles of Art, Audience and Learning remain the foundation for our exhibitions, programs and activities.

Despite ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic, and the requirement to remain closed to the public for the first four (4) months of the 2021/22 fiscal year, the AGO forged ahead with planning and progress behind the scenes until the very special moment we could safely reopen to the public.

Highlights of the AGO's major exhibition program include:

- *Andy Warhol* (on view from July 21 to October 24, 2021) was a career spanning retrospective, reconsidering the personal, social and political backdrop that influenced Warhol's groundbreaking art. Featuring loans from museums and private collections in Europe and North America, *Andy Warhol* spanned all four decades of the artist's career. This exhibition was organized by Tate Modern, London, in collaboration with Museum Ludwig, Cologne, and the AGO. This exhibition expanded well over the typical footprint for such exhibitions, as the AGO sought to provide a spectacular experience for visitors, while honouring social distancing requirements.
- *Picasso: Painting the Blue* (on view from October 6, 2021 to January 16, 2022) is a landmark celebration, and the first exhibition in Canada to focus on the early works of the modernist master Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881-1973). While this exhibition had originally been scheduled to appear in our Zacks Pavilion, COVID-related schedule changes meant this project was re-envisioned in our Level 1 suite of European Galleries. Many of our collection galleries were taken off view to make room for this once-in-a-lifetime exhibition. Concentrating on the years 1901-1904, the exhibition tells the story of how Picasso, then a fledgling painter in his late teens and early twenties, formulated his signature Blue Period style as he moved back and forth between the cities of Paris and Barcelona. At the heart of *Picasso: Painting the Blue Period* is new scientific and art historical research undertaken by the AGO and The Phillips Collection on the three Blue Period paintings in their respective collections. Laboratories dedicated to conservation science provide audiences the opportunity to explore the underlying layers of three Blue Period canvases. The exhibition features more than 100 objects from 15 countries, including paintings, sculptures and works on paper by Picasso as well as works by artists the young Spaniard is known to have studied before and during the Blue Period. *Picasso: Painting the Blue Period* is co-

organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto and The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC.

- *Fragments of Epic Memory* opened September 1, 2021 and will run to February 21, 2022. The exhibition invites visitors to experience the multiple ways of encountering the Caribbean and its diaspora, from the period following emancipation through today. The first exhibition organized by the AGO's new Department of Arts of Global Africa and the Diaspora, it blends historical and contemporary narratives, presenting more than 200 photographs from the AGO's Montgomery Collection of Caribbean Photographs alongside paintings, sculpture, and video works by modern and contemporary Caribbean artists that show how the region's histories are constantly revisited and reimagined through artistic production over time. The project features a new commission by Canadian artist Sandra Brewster and works by Ebony G. Patterson, Frank Bowling and Manuel Mathieu to name just a few.
- *Robert Houle: Red is Beautiful* opened December 3, 2021 and will run to April 17, 2022. It is centred around one of the most influential First Nations artists to break into the contemporary art world. Houle's work blends abstraction, modernism and conceptualism with First Nations aesthetics and histories. Houle went from residential school to art school to museum boardrooms and on to the art world stage as an artist, curator and writer. The exhibition consists of over 90 large installations, paintings and drawings created between 1970 and 2021. Themes in the exhibition include his Residential School Years and Sovereignty, among others. This exhibition is a walk through fifty years of what matters to First Nations and Settler relations today with an artist who was always ahead of time. This AGO organized exhibition will go on to three other venues following its presentation in Toronto.
- Under the umbrella of our Department of Modern and Contemporary Art, the AGO opened *Matthew Wong: Blue View* on August 13, 2021. Expressing wonder and melancholy, *Blue View* is the first museum exhibition dedicated to the short-lived but brilliant career of Toronto-born Chinese-Canadian artist Matthew Wong. The exhibition features more than 40 paintings from the artist's Blue Series, made between 2017 and 2019.
- Following the close of *Picasso: Painting the Blue Period*, our European, Modern and Canadian galleries on the AGO's Level 1 will be reinstalled with additional new works over the months of January and February 2022.

In addition to the major exhibitions noted above, the AGO also created the following Collection installations:

- The European Department of Art opened *Meditation and the Medieval Mind* featuring manuscripts, ivories and meticulously made prayer beads. During the run of *Picasso: Painting the Blue Period*, the Leonard Gallery has been reinstalled with highlights from our European collection. In preparation for the *Robert Houle: Red is Beautiful* exhibition, our curators of European Art positioned Houle's *Paris Ojibwa* in a gallery of

European art, in dialogue with collection works by Delacroix. Following the close of the Picasso exhibition, the full suite of galleries dedicated to European Art will be freshly installed, bringing out many visitor favourites, interspersed with some lesser known works from our Collection. This will help broaden the dialogue around the AGO's European collection, to better examine complex histories of Settler and Indigenous relations.

- The Department of Arts of Global Africa and the Diaspora (launched in 2020) initiated two prominent sculpture installations in 2021/2022. Thomas J. Price's *Within the Folds, II*, was installed at McCaul and Dundas Streets in July 2021, and provides a thought-provoking experience to visitors passing by. The AGO also commissioned prominent artist Zak Ové to design and fabricate *Moko Jumbie* – which towers over visitors in Walker Court. In November 2021, the AGO's African Gallery of Art was reopened following extensive renovations. The new installation centres on works by Congolese-Canadian artist Moridja Kitenge Banza in a beautiful exhibition entitled *Et La Lumiere Fut*.
- The Department of Prints and Drawings presented *Ben Woolfitt: Rhythm and Series* – featuring the work of local Modernist and Post-Modernist painter Ben Woolfitt. In January 2022, works from Delacroix's Faust series will be put on view, and in March 2022, visitors will enjoy a dynamic pairing of two artists originating from the Caribbean: Joscelyn Gardner and Andrea Chung.
- The Indigenous and Canadian Curatorial team has had a tremendously busy year. *Shuvinaí Ashoona: Beyond the Visible* opened in July 2021, and features the work of one of the best known Inuit artists of our time. *Kim Ondaatje: House on Picadilly Street* also opened in July, and provides visitors the opportunity to get to know more about the work this often overlooked but critically important Toronto-based artist. In October 2021, many of the galleries within the McLean Centre for Indigenous + Canadian Art were reinstalled, including works by Shelley Niro, Meryl McMaster, Suzy Lake and Lori Blondeau. A special presentation by Kaniien'kehá:ka, Hodinöhsö:ni' artist Greg Staats entitled *in constant return* centres around some of the tenets of the Hodinöhsö:ni' worldview. In December, the AGO will open special installations by multimedia artist Alan Michelson and contemporary Inuit sculptor Bill Nasogaluak.
- In December 2021, the Department of Photography presented the works of Jamaican-Canadian photographer Jorian Charlton in *Out of Many*. Charlton's dramatic contemporary portraits are positioned alongside family photographs taken by her father in Jamaica, New Jersey and Toronto. Opening the same day will be presentation by Haitian-Canadian artist Esery Mondesir in *We Have Found Each Other*. Motivated by his own diasporic experience, Mondesir's films draw from collective memory, official archives, vernacular records, and the everyday to explore migration and exile as sites of identity formation as well as cultural resistance.

The AGO remains committed to presenting thoughtful, inclusive and diverse presentations, connecting the AGO's visitors to artwork and ideas from across Canada and beyond.

In 2021/2022, the AGO's Travelling Exhibition program remains strong, despite the ongoing challenges triggered by the global pandemic. *Anthropocene* remains on view at Tekniska Museet (Stockholm, Sweden) until January 9, 2022. *Diane Arbus*, centred around the AGO's world-class collection of the artist's photographs, will begin its three-venue tour at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Denmark) in March 2022.

With the reinvigorated desire to share our collections with more of Ontario's public, the AGO arranged for an iteration of our 2020 exhibition *Mary Wrinch: Painted from Life* to travel to the Art Gallery of Sudbury. This is a pilot in a series to tour small and mid-sized exhibitions to sister institutions within the Province.

The active virtual schedule of education and public programming in 2021/22 and will continue for the 2022/23 year, including online talks, virtual school programs, courses, workshops, performances, access programs as well as events and workshops for seniors.

New this year, due to COVID-19 related restrictions, Family Day and April Break offered online experiences and resources for families and children including maker activities and performances. As permitted, the museum continued with our successful partnerships with other cultural institutions such as Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Royal Conservatory of Music, Small World Music and Soundstreams Toronto to perform in-gallery with limited audiences, based on new COVID-19 capacity regulations. The season's line-up of programs for all ages offers talks, virtual events and courses, in addition to the Gallery's successful Virtual School Programs.

#### Virtual School Programs

Designed to complement the Ontario curriculum, the AGO's Virtual School Programs continue every Monday to Friday through June 18. Open to parents, teachers and caregivers everywhere, AGO Virtual School Programs is excited to partner with fellow cultural institutions such as the Canadian Opera Company, The National Ballet of Canada, Toronto History Museums, and Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) to explore intersections in visual arts, music, architecture and dance. Sessions are offered three times a day, tailored to students in JK to Grade 3, Grades 4 to 8 and Grades 9 to 12, with uniquely age-appropriate discussions. Sessions are organized thematically and draw on artworks and objects from the AGO Collection, from partners, and they feature discussion and other mini-activities.

#### Portraits of Resilience

An open call for artists of all ages to participate in an online exhibition of art showcasing moments of emotion and resilience in everyday life, Portraits of Resilience launched on March 15, and has already received more than 650 submissions from the community. Select works will be presented in 2022.

### April Break

Families were invited to spend the April Break enjoying five days of free, online programming courtesy of the AGO, the Canadian Opera Company and the Vancouver Art Gallery. Mixing artmaking with performance and behind-the-scenes highlights, kids of all ages logged on daily from 2 to 5 pm EST, Monday, April 12 to Friday, April 16, for a cross-country arts break. Led by art educators and specialists, each day's programming offered themed artmaking activities and moderated discussion. No registration was needed and sessions were live streamed on AGO.ca.

### AGO X RBC Emerging Artists Program

In 2021, thanks to the support of RBC, the AGO presents a trio of exciting digital programs designed to celebrate and support early career artists. Programmed and presented online, they include three paid artist residencies, three paid research residencies and a series of free mentorship workshops.

- Currently in its tenth year, the AGO x RBC Artist-in-Residence program hosted an open call for submissions in the winter of 2021. After receiving more than 200 submissions, the jury has selected Alvin Luong, Nada El-Omari & Sonya Mwambu, and Timothy Yanick Hunter. As part of these paid digital residencies, each artist or duo will have the opportunity to showcase their work publicly. Launched on April 7, the AGO X RBC Emerging Artists Exchange welcomes applications for three paid digital research residencies. Open to artists in the early stages of their careers, details about the program and how to apply are available at AGO.ca.
- Recognizing that mentorship is an integral part of artistic success, the AGO X RBC Emerging Artists Workshop presents a series of free online mentorship sessions this spring, offering practical advice and tips from professional artists. Open to artists of all ages.

### Talks

Committed to leading global conversations from Toronto, the AGO spring season includes talks by emerging and established artists, students and authors.

A robust suite of public programming – special talks and events, fun family programs, as well as great courses and workshops will be presented around a number of exhibitions including:

### AGO Camps

- Camps shifted to an online model of courses and programs for children in addition to a robust schedule of adult studio programs

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STRATEGY

The AGO is committed to providing platforms for artists who are voices of change in our culture and to better reflect the diversity of our community. The AGO supports a culture of inclusion and diversity. Discrimination should never happen to anyone at the AGO, or anywhere else. Started prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum is developing a strategy, via an inclusive process, that will reflect this commitment.

## OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF ONTARIO

On December 7, 2020, the Auditor General of Ontario released her Annual Report, which includes a section on the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, and specifically the AGO, the Royal Ontario Museum and the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. This value for money audit was conducted between December 2019 and November 2020 and the final report made 19 recommendations for the AGO. The museum will continue to review and work with the ministry on these recommendations and in the context of the broader recovery of the sector.

## REDUCED CAPACITY AND TEMPORARY CLOSURE

During the first reopening phase between July and October 2021, the museum operated with controlled capacity in accordance with provincial guidance. As a result of the emergence of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, the province introduced new public health and workplace safety measures on December 18, 2021, and a 50 per cent capacity limit in indoor public settings.

As part of the province wide effort to further mitigate and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the AGO closed temporarily effective Wednesday, January 5, 2022, until further notice. The museum is following provincial guidance and will continue to monitor and adjust operations where required.

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES – 2022/23

The health and safety of our employees, volunteers, visitors and our extended AGO community is always our top priority. The AGO will continue to be guided by the advice of local, provincial and national public health officials, consider all government recommendations and will make decisions as needed regarding any additional measures.

Planning is underway for a very exciting 2022/2023 year.

Highlights of the AGO's major exhibition program include:

- *I AM HERE: Home Movies and Everyday Masterpieces* will be presented from April 16, 2022 to August 14, 2022. This project examines how from the earliest cave paintings to selfies on Instagram, humans have always found creative ways to document their day-to-day lives. It provides a revealing look at our universal need to be captured, share and cherish everyday life through art. Featuring home movies, diaries, celebrated artworks by the likes of Patti Smith, Andy Warhol, Arthur Jafa and Mary Pratt, letters, photo albums and posts from social media, *I AM HERE* brings together a broad range of personal records spanning different time periods and cultures to explore this shared human impulse. This is an exhibition that is guaranteed to resonate with almost all our visitors.
- *Faith and Fortune: Art from the Former Spanish Empire* will be presented June 11 – October 10, 2022. Centred around a major loan from the Hispanic Society Museum and Library, it will include key artworks by Spanish and Hispanic artists made between

1492 and 1898. From its centre in Spain, the empire included islands in the Caribbean, lands in Central and South America, and the southeast Asian archipelago today called the Philippines (ruled by Spain 1565-1898). The exhibition's scope, from the origins to the end of an empire, allows us to study the mechanisms of colonization. The constellation of objects presented will allow audiences in Canada to learn about these complex histories that still inform our lived present today. Through portraits, maps, textiles, and many other objects, we will trace the histories of many people living on many lands.

- *Denyse Thomasos: Dismantle* will be presented October 8, 2022 – February 19, 2023. The powerfully singular oeuvre of Trinidadian-born artist Denyse Thomasos (1964–2012) has left an indelible, yet frequently overlooked, mark on Canadian and American painting. *Dismantle* is the first-ever retrospective for Thomasos, positioning her as one of Canada's finest painters to emerge in the 1990s. A special focus is placed on her vibrant, mural-scaled paintings. Spanning the breadth of her career, these expansive works address themes of movement, migration, and hybridized identities. They also embody the artist's dedication to social justice, injecting references to global histories of oppression and to her own experiences of displacement.
- Confidentially, the AGO is currently developing a special exhibition centered around the music, poetry, archives and personal effects of Leonard Cohen. The exhibition will run from December 3, 2022 to April 9, 2023. It will also feature some artworks by contemporary Canadian artists, responding to Cohen's legacy. Like other presentations centred around Cohen's work in other major cities, we expect this to resonate with many, many visitors.

Complimentary to our special exhibition programs, many plans are underway for a myriad of small and mid-sized projects to enrich the AGO experience for our visitors and further diversify our offerings.

- *Blurred Boundaries: A Glimpse of Queer Art from Canada* will be presented in our McLaughlin Gallery starting in April 9, 2022. This group exhibition assembles works by various Canadian artists, mostly from our Collection, whose practice and/or identity is inspired by queer culture and lifestyle.
- *Kananginak Pootoogook* will open April 15, 2022. An accomplished printmaker, Kananginak Pootoogook (1953–2010) produced drawings and prints for the Kinngait (Cape Dorset) graphic arts program since the late 1950s. His work was included in almost every annual collection since that time until his passing in 2009. As a prominent community leader, Pootoogook was instrumental in the formation of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative graphic arts program and served for many years as President of its Board of Directors. Pootoogook was highly skilled at representing Arctic wildlife in his work, especially the many species of birds that frequent the North.

- *Zun Lee: Fade Resistance* will open in late April or mid May 2022. It will be centered around a 2018 acquisition entitled the *Fade Resistance* collection – an extraordinary group of Polaroids documenting African-American family life from the 1970s to the early 2000s, assembled by award-winning Canadian photographer, physician and educator Zun Lee.
- In Spring 2022, an area adjacent to the Moore Centre will be reinstalled, integrating smaller works by Moore with those of his contemporary Barbara Hepworth.
- *Ningiukulu Tevee* will open in the Fall 2022. Ningiukulu is one of the most versatile graphic artists to emerge from the Kinngait Studios. She has a comprehensive knowledge of Inuit legends and a fine sense of design and composition. These elements that have made many of her prints highly sought after by collectors. Ningiukulu has had numerous solo shows of her bold and resplendent drawings and some of her work has been featured in exhibitions in major public galleries and museums.
- *Ed Pien: Present: Past, Future* will open in June 2022. In this focus exhibition, the Toronto artist explores the perception of time through conversations initiated with elders in San Agustin, a suburban neighbourhood of Havana (Cuba), since 2014. The multimedia installation combines audio, video, photography, and furniture components to create an environment that poignantly weaves stories shared by the elders and moments captured by Pien during his visits, twice a year.
- Also in June 2022, the AGO will present *Ken Lum: Death and Furniture*. This project will feature several new series as well as some of the Canadian artist's better-known works.
- *Canada Now Photography* will open in Fall 2022 and will feature works by Canada's brightest upcoming photographers.

Planning is underway for smaller exhibitions and mid-sized exhibitions, and the AGO looks forward to sharing more with the Province as our plans crystallize.

The AGO's Travelling Exhibition program is looking ahead to a very robust year.

- Following its close at the AGO in April 2022, *Robert Houle: Red is Beautiful* will go on to Contemporary Calgary, Winnipeg Art Gallery and the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC.
- Following its presentation in Denmark, *Diane Arbus* will continue on to Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and Contemporary Calgary.
- *Anthropocene* will open at Museum Helmond in the Netherlands in April 2022.
- *Denyse Thomasos: Dismantle* will go on to at least two other Canadian Institutions following its close at the AGO in February 2023.
- We are in exploratory discussions the Art Gallery of Windsor to present the AGO's *Mary Wrinch: Painted from Life* exhibition.

A robust suite of public programming – special talks and events, fun family programs, as well as great courses and workshops will be presented around a number of exhibitions including:

### Access and Learning

Talking Back and Together: Workman Art Partnership

Third Friday of the month: January 21, February 18, continuing from the fall  
11 am free on Facebook Live

The AGO and Workman Arts are partnering to empower artists to share their personal artwork and artistic practice. By creating a series of artistic videos premiering on AGO's Facebook page, they are taking up themes of mental health awareness and advocacy in art galleries and museums.

### Multisensory Museum videos

Multisensory Museum videos that shared verbal descriptions and multisensory translations of artworks in our collection.

### Virtual School Programs

Designed to complement the Ontario curriculum, the AGO's Virtual School Programs continue every Monday to Friday through June 2022. Open to parents, teachers and caregivers everywhere, AGO Virtual School Programs is excited to partner with fellow cultural institutions such as the Canadian Opera Company, The National Ballet of Canada, Toronto History Museums, and Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) to explore intersections in visual arts, music, architecture and dance. Sessions are offered three times a day, tailored to students in JK to Grade 3, Grades 4 to 8 and Grades 9 to 12, with uniquely age-appropriate discussions. Sessions are organized thematically and draw on artworks and objects from the AGO Collection, from partners, and feature discussion and mini activities.

### Close Looking Series

January 3: Visual Description of Picasso

January 24: Artist Files

February 7: Visual Description of *Fragments of Epic Memory – Zak Ové, Moko Jumbie, 2021*

February 14: Natalka Husar's *Torn Heart*

February 28: Delacroix's *Faust*

March 7: Meryl McMaster

March 14: Visual Description of Robert Houle March 28: Derek Sullivan's large-scale drawings

April 11: I AM HERE visual description

April 18: Anna Boberg, *Sunlight and Showers*

### Seniors Social

Second Friday of the month: January 28, February 25, March 25, April 22.

Free on Zoom

## Courses

The 2022 spring season brings an exciting array of courses for adults, youth, children and families. If you are new to the studio, try our introductory courses in painting, portraits or drawing. There's something for everyone as we combine artmaking with art conversation in intimate virtual classroom settings, providing a fun way to meet new people, share ideas and learn new skills. Courses for child, youth and adults.

## Youth

### Inner Space

Monthly video released starting January 2022

Free on AGO Youth Instagram, AGO Socials and website

Inner Space is a new monthly web series co-curated by the AGO Youth Advisory – an online group of youth ages 16-25 from across Canada – and AGO staff that invites emerging artists from their communities to give personal tours of their studios. Giving a platform to youth curators Inner Space aims to make visible and legitimize a new generation of diverse, Canadian artists, while creating authentic youth-led digital content for youth audiences.

## AGO X RBC Emerging Artists Program

Thanks to the support of RBC, the AGO presents a trio of exciting digital programs designed to celebrate and support early career artists. In 2022, artists will respond to the theme of “Friendship Near and Far,” and the possibilities in which we can bring people together online in a caring, embodied way, each Artist in Residence will be invited to show their work publicly upon completion of their residency. Programmed and presented online, they include three paid artist residencies, three paid research residencies and a series of free mentorship workshops.

## Indigenous Education and programming

### We Are all Treaty People with Maurice Switzer

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Learn how Treaties have impacted the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. Maurice Switzer, Bnesi is a citizen of the Mississaugas of Alderville First Nation. He currently serves with the Indigenous Reconciliation Working Group of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Nipissing University's Indigenous Council on Education, and the North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.

### Mohawk Language Nursery Songs [collaboration with family programs]

#### Music & Song

Monthly Indigenous language lessons starting in February

## Exhibition Focused

*Matthew Wong: Blue View: August 13 – April 18, 2022*

- Programming includes:
  - Keynote talks by leading artists and scholars on Matthew Wong's work
  - Online pop-up drawing course offered in Mandarin

*I AM HERE: Home Movies: Spring 2022*

- Programming includes:
  - Keynote talks with artists and curators
  - Specialized virtual school program focused on select photographs from the exhibition

*Robert Houle: Red Is Beautiful: December 2021 – April 2022*

- Programming includes:
  - Teacher event with Robert Houle
  - Course: Art and Ideas (inspired by Houle's *Red is Beautiful*)
  - Manual on pertinent subjects included in the exhibition

*Et La Lumiere fut (And there was light): November 2021—November 2022*

- Programming includes:
  - Talks, close looking, course offering

## STRENGTHENING STRATEGIES GOING FORWARD

The AGO is more than just a place where art is preserved and promoted, it is also a space of learning, inspiration and a place that leads global conversation. At a time when many people are separated from one another, arts and culture can bring us together. The importance of cultural content and accessibility for the public is clear – it contributes to mental health and well-being of our society. The AGO offered a range of digital content prior to COVID-19 and we have further revamped and expanded our programming available to the public. From AGO Virtual School programs to Zoom talks, Facebook and Instagram live events, online courses to digital collections content, we are striving to be more resilient, resourceful and innovative in this unprecedented time.

Despite the multiple challenges of the current pandemic; support for staff and volunteers, maintaining financial and operational stability, protection and preservation of our collections, the museum has continuously stayed engaged with our public and the broader AGO community. The museum is pleased to do our part in contributing to our society and inspiring Ontarians in this difficult and uncertain time. The AGO has swiftly and creatively responded with ways to serve our communities and to carry out our missions and mandate. Some changes might be short-term while others, such as Virtual School Programs, will be successful strategies that become permanent. It is critically important to have sustained support to maintain our infrastructure during and after COVID-19 is over as long-term effects of the pandemic may yet to be fully realized.

The museum has discovered new audiences and new opportunities to expand the AGO community. Some operational procedures and programming may be refined and reinvented but our commitment striving to serve our public remains the same.

The AGO believes in the power of art to bring people together. Looking ahead to the next decade, the AGO will harness the energy of Toronto and Ontario to become among the great global museums that generate and present vital and relevant exhibitions and programs. The gallery is exploring the possibility to create additional exhibition space for our growing Modern and Contemporary collection to better reflect the cultures represented in Canada.

## RESOURCES NEEDED TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The AGO's annual operating revenues come from three main sources:

- **Government funding:** The Government of Ontario is a vital partner in the AGO's operation, providing annual operating support of approximately \$21 million, Financial support from other levels of government includes an annual operating grant of approximately \$660,000 from the City of Toronto and an annual programming grant of \$490,000 from the Canada Council for the Arts. All other government funding is project based. In 2021/22, support from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program is projected to be approximately \$4.9 million. CEWS has been instrumental to the museum in order to maintain as many staff as possible through the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Self-generated revenues:** Admissions, food and beverage, retail and program sales represent approximately 16 per cent of total operating revenues. It is expected that self-generated revenues will be seriously impacted due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the relevant operational restrictions.
- **Private sector revenues:** Memberships, individual/corporate giving, sponsorships and fundraising events represent approximately 26 per cent of total operating revenues. It is expected that private sector revenues will be critically impacted due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

The combination of public, self-generated and private sector revenues provides a strong and diversified revenue base for the AGO's operation. A number of external factors, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, can and most likely will negatively impact self-generated revenues and private sector revenues, ranging from economic instability to increased competition for leisure activities and world issues/events that interfere with normal tourism and local consumer activity. For this reason, the base operating support from the Government of Ontario provides the AGO with a level of stability that is particularly critical during times when other sources of revenue are unpredictable.

The AGO's most essential resource is the AGO Collection of more than 120,000 works of art. The AGO is constantly challenged to maintain the most modern and innovative systems to protect works of art. Theft prevention systems must be kept at the most current and secure levels. Temperature and environmental control systems must also be continually upgraded to prevent deterioration to the works. Any shortcoming in either system could result in theft or damage to the works, ruining the AGO's reputation as a top calibre art museum and compromising its ability to compete for international travelling exhibitions.

The AGO must also ensure that visitors who come through our doors each year are provided with a safe and accessible experience. The museum must provide our staff and volunteers with a safe and accessible work environment. With areas of the AGO's building dating back to the 1920s, (and in the case of The Grange house – a national heritage building – back to 1820) unscheduled capital repairs are an ongoing challenge. Provincial capital renewal funding is a key resource for the AGO to respond to capital repairs in a timely fashion, and keep our security and environmental control systems up-to-date.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

In 2022/23, the AGO plans to operate with staffing level of approximately 550 people. Due to the pandemic, the AGO volunteer program is currently on pause pending further review based on the evolving pandemic situation.

During these changing and unprecedented times, the gallery will continue to monitor staffing requirements and work closely with our union partners to implement timely and responsible action to ensure the long-term health and financial strength of the organization.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The AGO is committed to the following performance measures that reflect our guiding principles of Art, Audience and Learning:

- Access to art: The AGO will make great works of art available to the public on an ongoing basis, through installations of the AGO Collection and temporary exhibitions of works from private and public collections from around the world.
- Protection and preservation of the AGO Collection: The AGO will continue to maintain its high standards of excellence to protect the Collection and preserve it for future generations.
- Access to learning: The AGO will provide programming that will enable audiences of all ages to engage with and learn about art.
- Visitor satisfaction: The AGO will continue to monitor the satisfaction level of our visitors.
- Staff satisfaction and engagement: The AGO will continue to monitor the satisfaction and engagement levels of its staff.
- Fiscal prudence: The AGO has a proven track record of responsible and disciplined fiscal management. The museum aims to maintain a balanced operation.

## FINANCIAL BUDGET

In 2022/23, the AGO will manage an operating budget of approximately \$59 million

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND DATA ANALYTICS PLAN

Technology is a key enabler to achieve the goals of the museum's strategic vision. The priorities for Information Technology focus on the following areas to shape our content and grow our audiences.

### Digital Content Strategy

In response to the pandemic, the AGO has developed an organization-wide content strategy to engage the province at home. The plan includes:

- Online programming focused on our collection, exhibitions, artists and the role the arts play in shaping our culture.
- Digital learning activities and live virtual classrooms that connect the AGO Collection with schools and at-home learners.
- Leverage innovative technology and digital media to help visitors engage more deeply with the AGO at home and in the museum.

### Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

Develop a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, beginning with the creation of an integrated customer data platform that will support:

- Customer journey mapping
- Lifecycle management customization by segment and communication channel
- Integration of data across all visitor-facing touchpoints for better data capture, personalized and customer experience.

### Technology Upgrades and Improvements

The AGO is actively engaged in updating its technology systems for staff and visitors to simplify processes and create efficiencies. These improvements include:

- The launch of digital cards in early 2021 for AGO members of all levels.
- Internal system upgrades in our Food & Beverage outlets, Retail store and Human Resources department.
- The release of the AGO's Content and Collection Management System (CCMS), as part of the Canada Council for the Arts Digital Strategy Fund grant program, enabling other museums to leverage the AGO's technology investments to engage their visitors.

## INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

The AGO partners with other art museums to bring exhibitions to the AGO – either as a borrower of an exhibition organized by another art museum or as a co-organizer. These partnerships are carefully defined by contractual agreements that clearly specify the responsibilities and deliverables of each institution.

The AGO also partners with organizations and individuals to develop and deliver programs. Written agreements signed by all parties define responsibilities and deliverables of each partner.

Partnerships with individuals and corporations who commit financial support towards AGO exhibitions, programs and capital initiatives are also defined in detail with written agreements.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The AGO runs a year-round operation, with an ongoing schedule of collection displays, exhibitions, programs and activities for the public both onsite and virtually. The 2022/23 year also includes the implementation of the following strategic initiatives:

- Diversity & Inclusion is one of the museum's key strategic drivers. The AGO will develop and implement strategic initiatives that explicitly address equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility both internally for staff and volunteers and externally in our programming.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that ensures the AGO speaks with one voice to all of our audiences
- Maintain and strengthen the various affordable options to visit the museum both onsite and virtually

## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The AGO maintains ongoing communications with the public about its programs and activities through the following mechanisms:

- The weekly *AGOinsider* e-publication is sent to over 214,000 subscribers, highlighting stories that reinforce the AGO's brand and highlighting a range of arts and culture programs from AGO and beyond
- The biweekly *What's On* newsletter is sent to over 214,000 subscribers, listing exhibitions, programs, events and activities both inside and outside the museum
- A *Members' Magazine* is produced two times a year and mailed to all AGO Members.
- The AGO website ([AGO.ca](https://ago.ca)) provides comprehensive information about the AGO, including history, how to plan your visit, current and upcoming exhibitions, programs, events and stories

- The AGO regularly issues press releases, listings and PSAs and cultivates close working relationships with members of the media (TV, radio, print, social media) to ensure media coverage of the AGO's exhibitions, programs and activities, as well as to promote AGO as a key tourism and leisure destination in local, national and international media
- Advertising campaigns using print, TV, radio and social media for major exhibitions
- Social media: the AGO operates a Facebook page (over 138,000 followers), a YouTube channel (over 4,100 subscribers), Twitter (over 314,000 followers) and Instagram (over 165,000 followers) accounts. A variety of blogs are active through the AGO website.