

TMC



TEXTILE MUSEUM OF CANADA
ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016



Watercolour, July 14 - July 17, 2015

ART IN LIFE

TEXTILE MUSEUM OF CANADA

The Textile Museum of Canada plays a key role in the ecology of cultural institutions – locally and beyond. The TMC connects its permanent collection of historic and ethnographic objects to contemporary creative expression, as well as to new and established Canadian experiences. Internationally diverse populations are included in programs and exhibitions that position art forms from around the world with accessible, inclusive interpretation that speaks to diverse cultures and places, connecting audiences to their own experiences, to each other, and to the world we live in. As articulated in the strategic plan, it is of great significance that the TMC connects a global collection to established and emerging boundary-pushing contemporary art, craft and design practices that speak to real life experiences. The TMC is a centre of excellence with a unique engagement in art and culture that is confidently reaffirmed and renewed at all stages as we participate in and give new shape to museum culture.

Throughout 2015–16, the TMC's 40th anniversary year, the TMC continued to build cultural understanding as an internationally renowned creative incubator and dynamic social space. This operating year has been one of expanded profile and community engagement through dynamic artistic and educational programs, along with increased operational capacity through improvements to infrastructure, collection storage and building automation, as well as new investment and business streams.

ARTISTIC PROGRAM

In 2015–16, exhibitions, public programs and educational activities presented opportunities to view historical artifacts from around the world while offering local, national and international contemporary artists an engaging platform for the dissemination of their work. One programming highlight was *Watercolour* – a significant commission from the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan American Games, produced with the support of the Toronto Arts Council, where we involved 41 international artists – one from each of the participating countries – in celebration of diverse cultures and artistry. Their graphic designs animated sailboats on Lake Ontario with a rich visual presence – a perfect complement to the Museum’s 40th anniversary celebrations. Our Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan American Games project, *Watercolour*, took place July 14-17, 2015. Harbourfront Centre Sailing and Powerboating provided the instructors who crewed the boats over the four evenings. We received live coverage on City-TV followed by the *Toronto Star* and *Metro News*.

Throughout the year, the TMC focused on expanding and advancing the field of textiles. For instance, in the summer of 2015 we presented the exhibition *Frida Kahlo: Through the Lens of Nickolas Muray*. Demonstrating the significance of regional Mexican costume to Kahlo’s self-identity and self-portraiture, Muray’s photographs were complemented by vibrant textiles from the Museum’s collection of traditional Mexican dress, bringing to life Kahlo’s international renaissance in revelatory ways that are uniquely connected to the Textile Museum of Canada’s vision. Similarly, the significance of textile design in the history of modern and conceptual art was brought forward through the high profile exhibition *Artist Textiles: Picasso to Warhol*. Rare textile prints by artists such as Pablo Picasso, Raoul Dufy, Salvador Dalí, Henri Matisse, Sonia Delaunay, Marc Chagall, Henry Moore, Fernand Léger, Andy Warhol and others traced a parallel art history of 20th century creative practice. Public programming included tours by London’s Fashion and Textile Museum curator Dennis Nothdruff; “The Inside Story: The Art History of Artist Textiles,” a lecture by University of Toronto’s Dr. Elizabeth Legge; and a fundraising evening with Dr. Blake Gopnik (NYC), whose talk “Andy Warhol and the Art of Textiles” was presented to over 150 patrons, members, arts and textile aficionados.

Home Economics: 150 Years of Hooked Rugs was yet another major exhibition of over 100 hooked rugs from the TMC’s première archive of Canadian material. The social contextualization of hooking traditions provided solid ground for the inclusion of seven contemporary artists whose practices extended the exhibition narratives of the evolution of art, craft and design. With the support of a private donor, a comprehensive printed catalogue was produced, and with recent funding received from the Museums Assistance Program (Department of Canadian Heritage), *Home Economics* will tour to at least three Canadian sites over the next two years as sesquicentennial programming for our partner institutions.

In conjunction with *Home Economics*, and with new institutional emphasis on social outreach, the TMC launched a creative workshop program in partnership with Toronto non-profit agencies ArtHeart Community Art Centre, Jumblies/MABELLEarts, Sistering, SKETCH, and Workman Arts. This important initiative highlights longstanding connections between craft, social enterprise and community development at the heart of traditional practices such as rug hooking. Encouraging creative expression and skill-building for individuals from at-risk and underserved communities, participants learned to adapt the techniques of rug hooking under the guidance of three



Home Economics: 150 years of Canadian Hooked Rugs, September 24, 2015–February 8, 2016

contemporary artists. The project culminated with an exhibition of the clients' rug hooking and celebration of this multi-faceted partnership. This workshop program would not have taken place without the generous contribution of Ruth Mandel - WHO GIVES Fund, complemented by the Private Giving Foundation, TD Wealth. Community-engaged rug hooking workshops were facilitated by ArtBridges in partnership with local agencies.

Thematically dovetailing with the social outreach extended through *Home Economics*, the exhibition *Eutopia* was curated by emerging professional Farah Yusuf, whose curatorial residency at the TMC was supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. In this exhibition, contemporary artists addressed conditions of our global ecology through the idea of textiles as a primary form of communication. The exhibition foregrounded art, activism and education through the work of artists who are known for reaching beyond the confines of the gallery to directly engage communities and personal causes. Working locally and globally, with elements of playfulness as well as deep cultural critique, the exhibition asked visitors to consider a multiplicity of perspectives across complex issues such as gender identities, contested political terrain and racial oppression to express their own unique 'eutopia' that reasserts the site of the TMC as a place where all are welcome.

Senior Ontario artist Lyn Carter's solo exhibition of new site-specific textile sculptures opened to the public in the fall. Based on a two-year research residency in the Museum's archives, Carter responded to physical characteristics and cultural significance of textile stripes in complex sewn garment



Lyn Carter: 11th Line, October 21, 2015 – April 17, 2016

construction as well as the formal colour and material composition of global textiles. Her sculptures, drawings and digital video are poetic responses to the natural landscape and vernacular architecture of her rural home environment, informed by her 30-year engagement with textiles as conceptual touchstone. Post-secondary partner institutions (OCADU, Ryerson, Sheridan, George Brown and U of T) enthusiastically engaged *11th Line* through tours, critical writing assignments, sketching and drawing, and analytical curatorial interpretive assessments as the precision of the artist's digital textile prints makes contact with the compelling exactitudes of the hand crafted elements of the installation. The exhibition was the TMC's contribution to this year's TODO (Toronto Design Offsite Festival), and it was animated with a rich gallery conversation between the artist and invited guest AGO curator Andrew Hunter, as well as artist, curator, and docent-led tours. The exhibition will tour to the Art Gallery of Peterborough in 2017.

In 2015-16, we built on the success of the previous year's *Conscious Consumption* program under the title *Crafting the City*, continuing the exploration of the primacy of craft and its relationship to habits of consumption and contemporary DIY culture. With the generous support of the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and the K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation, keynote speaker Rebecca Burgess gave her lecture "100 Mile Fashion Footprint" to a sold-out audience in the TMC's auditorium. This social activist's commitment to sourcing her garments entirely within 150 miles of her California home is the epitome of the "slow fashion" movement.

EDUCATION

The TMC continues to welcome over 3,000 students through school visits programs. While students of all levels participate in programs that make connections between textiles and fashion, visual arts, math and science, 2015-2016 saw an increase in the number of post-secondary students, in addition to day camp groups and a range of additional community organizations. An active team of volunteer educators continues to support the facilitation of these programs, as well as lead family drop-in programs that are regularly offered during March Break and throughout July and August; over 250 people participated in these offerings. The opportunity to display student art projects continues to be appreciated by local educators; student exhibitions during 2015-2016 included historical garment reproductions by fashion students from Ryerson University, and custom made dresses printed and dyed by grade 11 students at Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School.

The TMC served as a venue for visitor research as part of the Museums and Their Publics course offered in the Masters in Museum Studies program at the University of Toronto. An evaluation strategy and appropriate instruments were developed to study public engagement in the interactive website *Narrative Threads: Crafting the Canadian Quilt*. Students invited members of the public, TMC volunteers and fellow students to explore the website before it launched to the public, providing invaluable insight into public engagement and accessibility, allowing the TMC to develop effective strategies for promoting and engaging new audiences. A bilingual resource guide was created as a teaching tool for teachers and students in the classroom, a key audience identified through this visitor research project.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS

Ongoing curator's tours of in-house and travelling exhibitions, as well as tours of the 4th floor archives were conducted for groups of scholars, artists, designers, students and members of the public. Behind-the-scenes seminars on Chinese and Guatemalan textiles as well as Canadian hooked rugs were conducted by staff curators, when objects from the collection were made available for visitors to study and handle. The TMC's Friends of Oriental Rugs membership group held six meetings this year.

Over the course of the year, three interns were trained in the collections database, artifact handling, registration, travelling exhibition documentation, conservation practices and environmental monitoring, and two interns were trained in preservation of archeological textiles and mounting traveling exhibitions. Work continued through regular meetings of the Collections and Acquisitions committee, with 133 artifacts accepted to the collection. Among the highlights of these new acquisitions are a significant collection of Canadian hooked rugs and a grouping of Papua New Guinea aprons, shoulder bags and ankle decorations.

EXHIBITIONS

Artist Textiles: Picasso to Warhol

May 2 – October 4, 2015

Organized and circulated by the Fashion and Textile Museum in London UK.

Frida Kahlo: Through the Lens of Nickolas Muray, with traditional Mexican costume from the Textile Museum of Canada

June 10 – September 7, 2015

Curated by Sarah Quinton and Roxane Shaughnessy

Watercolour

July 14 – 17, 2015

Presented by the Textile Museum of Canada in conjunction with the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan American Games with the support of the Toronto Arts Council

Home Economics: 150 Years of Canadian Hooked Rugs

September 24, 2015 – February 8, 2016

Curated by Shauna McCabe, Natalia Nekrassova, Sarah Quinton, Roxane Shaughnessy

Presented with the support of the William R. and Shirley Beatty Charitable Foundation

Exhibition catalogue is made possible by Carole and Howard Tanenbaum

Lyn Carter: 11th Line

October 21, 2015 – April 17, 2016

Curated by Sarah Quinton

Presented with the support of the Anne Angus Contemporary Program Fund

Eutopia

February 24 – May 29, 2016

Curated by Farah Yusuf with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts

Artists: Christi Belcourt, Coco Guzman, Happy Sleepy, Radiodress, Nep Sidhu, Christina Zeidler, with selections from Daisuke Takeya's Field Trip Project

TOURING EXHIBITIONS

Ancestry and Artistry: Maya Textiles from Guatemala

The Reach, Abbotsford, BC (January 22 - April 19, 2015)

Marimekko with Love

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (February 7 – May 3, 2015)

Battleground: War Rugs from Afghanistan

Peterborough Museum and Archive (July 12 – September 19, 2015)

From Ashgabat to Istanbul: Oriental Rugs from Canadian Collections

Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (March 6 – June 5, 2016)

REVENUE DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2015-2016, the Textile Museum of Canada initiated a number of development and fundraising opportunities that engaged our long-term supporters and also reached out to new partners in the community.

The TMC was a host to several development events, including a special reception hosted by members of the board, a reception for faculty members of the University of Toronto as well as a special evening with University of Toronto School alumni and staff. We had the pleasure to welcome Dr. Blake Gopnik for a special installment of our speakers' series in June 2015. Mr. Gopnik delivered a lecture on Andy Warhol in conjunction with Artist Textiles exhibit, and was a guest of honour at a special development dinner attended by TMC patrons and supporters.

Last year was a busy events year with opening evenings for six new exhibitions and other receptions. In recognition of the TMC volunteers' work and commitment, the Museum held two Volunteer Appreciation events – a board-hosted event in April at Scotia Plaza, followed by a staff-hosted reception at the Textile Museum in the fall. As in previous years, the TMC also organized several reciprocal weekends for Gardiner and ROM members.

Through special events, tours and receptions the Museum welcomed a number of community partners, such as the Toronto Friends of Visual Arts, the YWCA, Match International, Sistering, Artheart, the Canadian Women's Foundation, and others. In response to the expressed need for a public venue in Toronto to provide a platform for the making of handmade objects for new refugees,

the TMC undertook a partnership with the organization 1000 Stitches for Syria, welcoming over 60 knitters and sewers, including members of Toronto's Syrian community, to create objects including hats, mittens, scarves and blankets. In partnership with the TD Wealth Private Giving Foundation and a longstanding patron, the TMC held a special series of events and workshops in conjunction with the Home Economics exhibit followed by a reception and launch of *HOOKED!* at the Textile Museum's student gallery.

The TMC's fifth annual reDesign fundraiser was held in November 2015 at the Knoll Textiles showroom in Toronto. Approximately 180 guests attended the event, sponsored by BMO Financial Group and supported by a number of community partners and suppliers including Peroni, Havana Club, The CDR, blogTO, AZURE, Designlines and the Drake General Store. Design partners included Cate & Levi, Hoax Couture, totem bags, Donna Wilson, among others. Funds raised were directed towards the TMC's exhibitions and education programs.

Friends and colleagues of our late member and supporter Melissa Levin generously contributed to the Melissa Levin Emerging Artist Program. This specially designated fund is a reflection of her passion for mentoring young artists in all disciplines and will support a program of research at the TMC, including access to the library and our permanent collection, exposing emerging artists to new worlds of inspiration through materiality and design.



The Textile Museum of Canada would like to thank our dedicated patrons, volunteers and members as well as the following partners and funders who generously supported the TMC's operations and programs in the past year: the William R. and Shirley Beatty Charitable Foundation, Carole and Howard Tanenbaum, the Anne Angus Contemporary Program Fund, Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation, The BMO Financial Group, Stonefields Foundation, TD Wealth, The Charles H. Ivey Foundation, The. K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Consulado General de Mexico, Ruth Mandel WHO GIVES Fund, The Philip Smith Foundation, Nancy's Very Own Foundation, The Harbinger Foundation, Emerald Foundation, Elinor Gill Ratcliffe C.M., O.N.L., LLD (hc), Jackman Foundation, The Cole Foundation and the David and Susan Hodges Fund.

Programming. TOP: *Eutopia* BOTTOM: *Home Economics*

PROJECTS AND DIGITAL INITIATIVES

Organizational activities for 2015-16 aligned with the TMC's stated strategic objectives with several new areas of investment that advanced our operational goals to build capacity and raise profile in the community, and developing high-impact programs and partnerships along with new online initiatives and a new corporate website.

Making Makers – makingmakers.ca, a digital map of Canada's makerspaces, was launched in September, 2015. Produced by the TMC with the support of the Community Investment Program of the Canadian Internet Registration Authority, *Making Makers* takes a grassroots approach allowing users to locate maker spaces, skills, materials and social and knowledge-building opportunities across the country. The launch event was hosted by Mozilla Hive Toronto with representatives from Community Relations for the CIRA in attendance from Ottawa. Since the launch the TMC continues to connect with maker networks through online forums and events such as Maker Festival events in Toronto and Ottawa to promote the site and encourage user-generated content. The *Making Makers* received a MUSE award at the American Alliance of Museums conference for its impact on digital communities. The category recognizes online social spaces, moderated and hosted by cultural institutions around the world that offer a virtual space for people to gather around a common experience, exhibition or interest.

Narrative Threads: Crafting the Canadian Quilt – narrativethreads.ca was launched as a fully bilingual and accessible web site in November 2015. This project was funded by the Virtual Museum of Canada program now facilitated by the Canadian Museum of History. Users have contributed 48 entries to date, which join the original 175 curated objects from the TMC and our institutional project partners – the Western Development Museum, Niagara Historical Society Museum, Delta Museum & Archives, Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, and the Manitoba Crafts Museum & Library. The site has had nearly 10,000 users to date. French and English resource guides have been distributed to Canadian teachers and are available for public use on the TMC's website. A pilot workshop to engage senior users in partnership with Mississauga Libraries is set for December, 2016.



Greater Toronto: New Artist Textiles, May 6-8, 2016 in New York City

The Textile Museum of Canada holds a rich collection of hats from different cultures around the world. The core of the collection is a group of beautifully constructed Chinese children's hats, which number over 260. One of the Museum's treasures, this collection is among the earliest acquisitions of the Museum and is very popular with visitors. Made from satin silk, often embroidered and decorated with appliqué, metal thread, tassels and beads, the hats feature animal imagery that was believed to bestow health, courage, wisdom and wealth to the children who wear them for the New Year celebration and other festive occasions. The Department of Canadian Heritage Museums Assistance Program provided funding which allowed us to make significant upgrades and improvements to the care and access to the collection of over 200 Chinese children's festival hats. Special mounts were created to house and display the hats. This project was showcased at the Canadian Association for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works joint conference that took place in Montreal in May 2016.

Launched in April 2015 the new corporate website *textilemuseum.ca* highlights the visual dimensions of the Museum's activities and gives us control over content management, assuring greater flexibility and responsiveness. Visitors to *textilemuseum.ca* can now make donations online, purchase memberships, register for programs and events, and shop our online store which features more than 100 unique items. The library catalogue has also been brought online and integrated within our new corporate website.

The Museum secured funds from the Toronto Arts Council's Open Door initiative to commission and produce textiles by Toronto artists, showcasing them in two international design showcases - the New York Design Fair and London, England's Design Festival. Our project, *Greater Toronto: New Artist Textiles*, involved local visual artists in textile design including Kim Adams, Jaime Angelopoulos, Gary Taxali, Bill Burns, Bonnie Devine, Tazeen Qayyum, Anu Raina, Lyn Carter, Ed Pien and Seth.



Eutopia, February 24, 2016 – May 29, 2016

OPERATIONS, MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Membership is still the most effective way to support the Museum in its mission to promote an understanding of human identity through textiles. We gained 189 new members during the fiscal year with 15% of our renewing members choosing to upgrade to the next level. We are continually striving to improve our membership program by cultivating partnerships with local businesses to provide discounts and reciprocal arrangements with local galleries and museums. Our reciprocal weekends with the ROM and the Gardiner Museum were very well received by members of both institutions. In addition, the TMC supports local charities by donating complimentary memberships for their fundraising events. Over 30 different charities received this support in 2015-2016.

The TMC Patrons' Circle welcomed several new members during the year, making significant contributions to the Museum's yearly operations. Last year also marked the sad departure of a number of TMC's long-time members and patrons, among them Arti Chandaria, Sheila Hodge, Audrey Hozack, Av Isaacs, Peter Oliphant and Ed Safarian. We miss their longstanding enthusiasm and support.

The dedication and support of our volunteers is critical to the continued success of the Museum. The funds raised during the year, combined with membership support, represents over 10% of our overall operating revenues. TMC volunteers work year-round on our behalf in visitor services, education and outreach, collections and research, among other areas, donating an impressive amount of time that is the equivalent of more than eight full-time staff. The special fundraising sales have now moved to a new location as a result of the loss of the parking lot, closed permanently for the construction of new law courts.

Fiscal 2015-2016 has been the most profitable year for the TMC Shop to date. Sales revenues rose by more than 50% reflecting an increase in customer satisfaction and visitorship. Facility rental revenues continue to be strong, increasing by more than 26% over the previous fiscal year. This is due largely to the successful retention of previous renters and the increase in consecutive rental agreements.





Home Economics: 150 years of Canadian Hooked Rugs, September 24, 2015–February 8, 2016

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Delta Museum & Archives, Delta, BC
Western Development Museum, Saskatoon, SK
Manitoba Crafts Museum & Library, Winnipeg, MB
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**to all of the Textile Museum of Canada's
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