

**Varley  
Art Gallery  
of Markham**

# **Art Acquisitions**

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## **1. About the Varley Gallery**

The Varley Art Gallery is a municipal art gallery within the City of Markham. Art works acquired through the Varley Art Gallery are owned by the City of Markham to be used by, housed at and cared for by the Varley Art Gallery. The Varley Art Gallery has a category A designation from the Department of Canadian Heritage which regulates museums in Canada. This designation means that the Gallery meets best professional practice for administration and for the safety and security of the art in its care.

## **2. Our Collecting Mandate**

According to its Collection Policy and Procedures, the Varley Art Gallery of Markham “may accept donations or otherwise acquire works by F.H. Varley, library and archival materials pertaining to his art, works by artists who influenced Varley and/or were influenced by him, and other works by Canadian artists, provided they are iconic to the communities that the Gallery serves and are of outstanding quality.”

## **3. Works We Are Interested in Acquiring**

1. Works by F. H. Varley in all media
2. Works by William Berczy in all media
3. Works by Tom Thomson and other members of the Group of Seven, including later members Edwin Holgate, L.L. Fitzgerald and A. J. Casson.
4. Works by other peers and contemporaries of F. H. Varley, e.g. Emily Carr, David Milne, etc.
5. Works by artists who had an important relationship with F. H. Varley, be that as teacher, colleague, friend, student, or person of influence in his life, (e.g., J.W.G. “Jock” Macdonald, Philip Surrey, Jack Shadbolt, Vera Weatherbie, etc.). Such works will ideally be from the period of the relevant artist’s interaction with Varley.
6. Works which may illuminate some aspect of F.H. Varley’s life or practice –e.g. portraits, landscapes, images of people, places and things important to Varley
7. Works by significant contemporary artists in Canada which:
  - a) link thematically to the Varley Art Gallery permanent collections
  - b) have resonance for Unionville, the City of Markham, York Region, the GTA and the diverse communities who live here
  - c) can be stored adequately and cared for appropriately

The Varley may also acquire:

- Works by figures important to the history and practice of art in Canada
- Works which may have resonance with pieces already in the permanent holdings
- Works offered in a grouping such that they may:
  - form the basis of an exhibition, alone or in combination with other works in the permanent collection
  - support an existing Varley program, such as Education.

## **4. The Acquisitions Process**

The Varley Art Gallery acquires works of art primarily through donation. The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham also purchases works of art on behalf of the Gallery. The steps of the acquisition process are as follows:

i). A donor/vendor approaches the Varley Director or Curator. The donor supplies as much information as possible about the work on offer, including: artist, title, date of execution, medium, dimensions, provenance (history of ownership) and a digital image when available.

ii). Gallery staff make an initial assessment as to whether or not the work meets the Collecting Mandate. If it does, Varley staff will request that the work be viewed in person so its physical condition may be assessed.

iii). The Varley-McKay Art Foundation of Markham acts as an Advisory Committee for the Gallery. The Foundation also convenes the Art Acquisitions Committee to approve art acquisitions for the Gallery. Once Gallery staff determines that a work on offer is appropriate for the permanent collection, the Director or Curator writes an acquisition brief for the work and brings it to the Art Acquisitions Committee. The Committee adjudicates the work based on the following criteria:

- a) relevance to the collecting mandate of the Varley Art Gallery of Markham
- b) art historical significance
- c) aesthetic quality
- d) condition
- e) legal title
- f) provenance (history of ownership)

### For Donations

iv). If a work offered for donation is approved by the Art Acquisitions Committee, it is then brought by the Committee's Chair to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation Board for final approval.

v). Once approved by the Foundation Board, the Gallery draws up two copies of a deed-of-gift form to be signed by the donor. One signed copy is retained for the donor's records, the other is returned to the Gallery.

vi). On receipt of the signed deed-of-gift, our Collections Manager arranges for the work to be shipped to the Gallery (if not already here).

vii). The Gallery arranges for an arm's length appraisal of the work's "Fair Market Value for donation purposes" to be executed by a professional appraiser. The Gallery then arranges for the City of Markham to issue a tax receipt to the donor in the amount of the appraised value of the work.

viii). Depending on its significance, Varley staff, in consultation with the donor, may opt to submit the work to the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB) for certification as cultural property. Such certification may provide an enhanced tax benefit to the donor.

ix). Recognition: When donors sign the deed-of-gift form, they indicate the format of the credit line by which the gift will be acknowledged, e.g.:

- Gift of Jane Doe, 2016
- Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Doe in memory of Mr. Smith, 2016
- Anonymous gift, 2016

The Varley undertakes to use the donor's credit line in perpetuity, each time the work is displayed at the Varley Art Gallery, exhibited while on loan elsewhere and reproduced in publications, both traditional and online.

#### For Purchases

x). If a work offered for purchase is approved by the Art Acquisitions Committee, it is then brought by the Committee's Chair to the Varley-McKay Art Foundation Board for final approval and for release of the purchase funds.

xi). On approval by its Board, the Varley McKay Art Foundation remits payment to the vendor.

xii). On completion of the above transaction our Collections Manager arranges for the work to be shipped to the Gallery (if not already here).

## **5. Timing of the Acquisitions Process**

Potential donors and vendors should note that, given the foregoing, the acquisitions process can be quite lengthy, requiring anything from a minimum of several months to up to a year for completion.

Donors who wish to receive a tax receipt in a specific year, ideally should offer their artwork to the Gallery no later than September of that year to ensure all the necessary steps may be completed on time.

**For more information please contact:**

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