Western
McIntoshGallery



Annual Report

2025-2026

Vision

To cultivate inclusive spaces where diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences are celebrated through transformative encounters with art, ideas, and one another.

Mission

Our mission is to unleash the power of art to transcend boundaries and ignite change. McIntosh Gallery is a catalyst for dialogue, discovery, and connection where contemporary and historical perspectives converge to inspire mutual care, cultural understanding, and a deeper appreciation of the world we share.

Table of Contents

Director's Report	4
Collections	6
Acquisition	8
Exhibitions	9
Essays & Publications	16
Around Campus	17
Impact & Outreach	18
Programs & Events	19
Marketing & Communication	20
Donor Report	24
Art & Travel Commitee	24
Gallery Advisory Committee	24
McIntosh Gallery Team	25

Director's Report

As I reflect on 2025-2026, I'm filled with gratitude for our campus community, regional partners, donors, volunteers, and dedicated staff. This year marked a significant milestone as the work for our new strategic plan was completed, and will be ready for release in the coming months. Through conversations with artists, scholars, students, and thought leaders, we explored the evolving role of art and cultural institutions within our university and beyond. Together, these discussions helped shape a renewed sense of purpose and direction for McIntosh Gallery in support of Western's strategic priorities.

This year saw the launch and advancement of several exciting programs, projects, and exhibitions. Among them was *Art Thrive*, a creative wellness initiative presented at five locations across campus. Supported by the Office of Western Sustainability and Student Health & Wellness, the program combined video art and artist-led activities to foster creativity and help students address feelings of eco-distress.



Students participate in *Art Thrive: Water|Fluidity*.

Connecting to Collections, a multi-year initiative focused on collection review, student experiential learning opportunities, policy development, exhibitions, and public engagement, continued to advance on schedule. At its core is an exploration of what it means to be a collecting institution today. To date, the project has generated two exhibitions, three public lectures, student internships, and professional development opportunities through Western's co-curricular program.

Work continues to address the lengthy waitlist for inclusion in the ArtShare program. With over six hundred and seventy pieces from the collection installed around campus, the program is being reimaged to function as curated, satellite exhibition spaces bringing the collection to our campus community where they work and study.

We also strengthened connections between art and research through a partnership with the Canadian Severe Storms Laboratory in Western's Faculty of Engineering. Two exhibitions highlighted the intersection of artistic practice and climate science while encouraging cross-disciplinary collaboration. *Atmospheric Shifts* explored climate anxiety, resilience, and responsibility to the land, while Andrew Maize's interactive installation *(s)twerH* challenged audiences to consider uncertainty, chance, and our desire to control natural forces.

With the support of students, our Marketing and Outreach initiatives achieved significant growth and increased impact. Awareness of the gallery grew through campus engagement, conference participation, and the installation of a new outdoor billboard. Following its installation, daily foot traffic increased by 33 % compared to the same month the previous year. Social media engagement, visitor attendance, and class tours also continued to grow.



Billboard with *Art Thrive* program.

It was an energizing year filled with new ideas and initiatives, meaningful partnerships, and important groundwork for the future. Together, we advanced ambitious goals while strengthening our impact across campus and beyond. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this work. As we move forward with a bold sense of purpose, we remain committed to serving our communities through creativity, care, and meaningful social engagement.

Lisa Daniels
Director

Collection Report

Significant progress has been made this past year on the collection audit and review. This multi-year project began in January 2025 in response to several years of reduced gallery capacity due to challenges related to Covid-19 and staff turnover. This work advances the goal of positioning the collection as an accessible resource and cultural touchstone for students, faculty and the broader community.

Alongside the audit, a series of exhibitions, programs, and educational initiatives have been developed to strengthen engagement with the collection among students, faculty and the public. Work to address the ArtShare waitlist continues, as does the reimagination of the program. We anticipate the ArtShare waitlist to be completed in the next fiscal year.

A key component of the collection review is updating the collection's valuation. A certified Art Appraiser was engaged to conduct an updated appraisal of the collection. Following an initial collection-wide assessment to identify priority works, a second phase began this spring focusing on detailed market research and updated valuations for our high-priority objects. Completion of the appraisal process is anticipated in the 2027-2028 fiscal year.

The audit has also helped identify conservation priorities. While no major concerns were identified, a conservator inspected select artworks to ensure that they were not actively deteriorating or causing harm to other pieces in storage, and to ensure works were in good condition for inclusion in exhibitions or to go out on loan.

Four works by Greg Curnoe were loaned to the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery for a group exhibition entitled *Auto-Biography: Vehicles of Identity, Community, and Globalization* which ran from September 20, 2025 – January 4, 2026. Several research requests were handled for both works in the collection and for resources held in the Curatorial Study Centre.

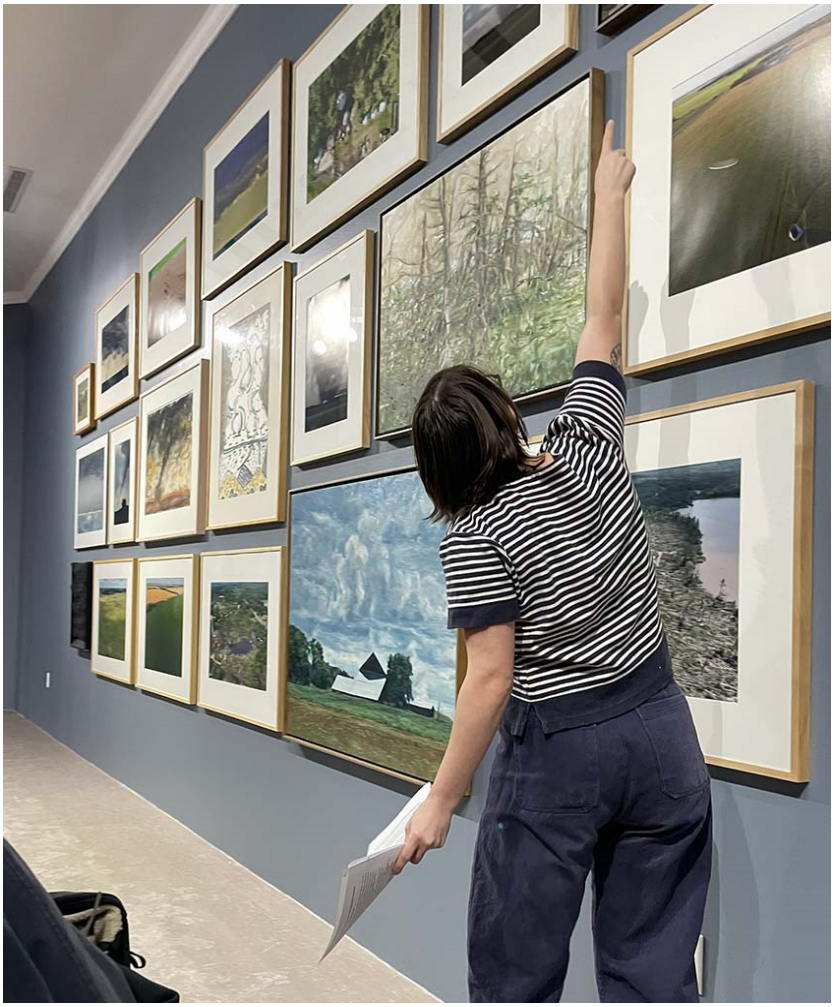


Collections Assistant Emily, and Collections Volunteer Kath work in the vault.

Except for significant works, acquisitions remain on pause during the audit and review. This year, there were two additions to the collection: *Amauti* (2018), a photograph by Katherine Takpannie donated by Shelli Cassidy-McIntosh and Mike McIntosh, and *Aeternum* (2025), by David Spriggs which was created for the exhibition *Atmospheric Shifts* and donated by the artist.

Over the coming year, the collection audit, the internal and external collection reviews, and the second phase of the appraisal process will near completion. Work will also advance on the *Portraits of Record* project, engaging student interns and volunteers in the curatorial process of online exhibition development. Preliminary content development will be conducted by a team of student interns and volunteers beginning this fall and will be integrated into coursework as part of the Master of Public History course, HIST9808B: Digital Public History, in the winter term. During this term, the gallery will host a new three-part workshop series to support collection-focused professional development opportunities for students from across the university.

Rachel Deiterding
Curator, Collections & Special Projects



Curator of Collections Rachel Deiterding discusses work from the collection as part of the *Let's Talk Collections* lecture series.

Acquisitions



Katherine Takpannie
***Amauti*, 2018**
Archival pigment print
91.5 cm x 137.2 cm
Gift of Shelli Cassidy-McIntosh & Mike McIntosh



David Spriggs
***Aeternum*, 2025**
Acrylic, acrylic paint on layered acrylic sheets, LED light box
101.6 cm x 101.6 cm x 27.4 cm
Gift of the Artist

Exhibitions



Opening reception for *Atmospheric Shifts*, Wally Dion, Lisa Hirmer, and David Spriggs, 2026, McIntosh Gallery.

The 2025-2026 exhibition program focused on animating a key strategic direction to support and contribute to education, research, and knowledge creation. In addition to presenting two student thesis exhibitions, four exhibitions were mounted that provided creative opportunities for students and faculties to engage with the gallery, the art, and the artists in different ways.

Building on last year's focus on environmental stewardship and the importance of ecological research and care, we strengthened our commitment to substantive collaborations with other departments and faculties across campus. Of note were *Atmospheric Shifts* and **(s)twerH*, the winter exhibitions developed in collaboration with Western Engineering's Canadian Severe Storms Laboratory and the WindEEE Dome Research Facility.

Through this collaboration, we were able to offer a five-week artist residency during the winter term, as well as to provide financial support to three of the participating artists to develop new work for the exhibition, one of which has been donated to the university. In February, Western Engineering hosted the Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race, which brought Engineering students from approximately twenty different universities to campus. Over three hundred Engineering students toured the exhibitions over the course of the day.

To animate the collection audit and review, two collection-focused exhibitions were designed to make the process transparent. The exhibitions were accompanied by the *Let's Talk Collections* lecture series, as well a series of three collections management workshops offered through the Western Co-Curricular Record program. Forty students participated in the workshop series, providing an opportunity for hands-on collections management experience.

Helen Gregory
Curator



Documentation from Wally Dion, wind dancers, WindEEE Dome, 2025.

Student Thesis Exhibitions

Providing opportunities for the next generation of artists and curators to acquire knowledge and develop skills, two student thesis exhibitions were mounted. Working with professional curators, preparators, and marketing staff, selected graduating students were provided with an exceptional experiential learning opportunity where they gained first-hand knowledge working with a professional public art gallery towards mounting their thesis exhibition.



June 12 - July 11, 2025
Aryen Hoekstra: In Storage

Researching from the perspective of an academic, an artist, and a gallerist, Aryen Hoekstra's thesis exhibition examined the way that art objects are handled and traded. *In storage* delved into the under-examined logistics of the art business, the storage and shipping of artworks, their care and circulation.

July 28 - September 5, 2025
Tia Bates: Through and From the Looking Apparatus

With *Through and From the Looking Apparatus*, the Gallery became a vivarium where the substance of filmic light inhabits space—an environment where the viewer is invited to wander and discover cinematic curiosities.

Referencing the cinematic experience as a sensorial interaction with light, *Through and From the Looking Apparatus* was both an installation of light and body and a habitat that cultivates human encounters with cinematic light.



April 5 - July 11, 2025

Holding Patterns: the short view—recent acquisitions from the McIntosh Collection

The first in a pair of exhibitions illustrating the collection audit and review process, *Holding Patterns: the short view* began by looking to the recent past, focusing on a selection of artworks collected since 2020 to understand recent collecting priorities. Audiences were invited to consider collecting across institutional and personal contexts, and to question assumptions of permanence that underpin museum collections.

The exhibition was accompanied by the first lecture in the *Let's Talk Collection*'s series. *What's Up with the McIntosh Gallery Collection*? was hosted in collaboration with the Art Dealers Association of Canada's *Canadian Art Hop* event. It presented the story of collecting at Western University and McIntosh Gallery since the 1920s and reflected on how this history has informed recent acquisitions.

September 25 - December 6, 2025

Holding Patterns: the long view—a look inside the McIntosh Collection

Holding Patterns: the long view examined the McIntosh Gallery collection through the lens of collection data—the information that is recorded to describe, organize, and preserve knowledge about each artwork. Through a curatorial approach that centred data, the selected artworks presented a proportionally accurate overview of the 4,350 artworks in the gallery's care. They made visible trends in collecting activity, artistic approaches, and how information has been categorized to offer insights into the collection's purpose and evolving priorities.

Among the many stories the data tells is a century-long history of collecting, the who, what, when of the collection since its inception in the 1920s. Yet data is not neutral. Equally present are the stories that are missing from the data, the gaps and inconsistencies that leave us with more questions than answers and inform what we ask next.
Reflecting on decades of collecting, the exhibition situated data as both a historical and a future-oriented tool, highlighting how its insights and omissions shape the questions we ask about the collection and how we imagine its future.



The second lecture in the *Let's Talk Collection*'s series, *Where Art and Data Intersect*, was presented to a full house in October. Throughout the Fall term, the three-part professional development workshop series offered through the Western Co-Curricular Record program, *Into the Vault: Building Collections Management Skills*, was oversubscribed. A second series of workshops was added to accommodate most of the waitlist.



Natalie Scola demonstrates object handling as part of *Into the Vault: Building Collections Management Skills.*

January 15-May 16, 2026
**(s)twerH*

**(s)twerH*, an interactive kinetic installation took the form of a laboratory/studio where Maize worked as artist-in-residence for five weeks as he further developed a body of work that considered the fundamental nature of indeterminacy. Inspired by the work of climate scientists on the complexity of turbulence and the increased prevalence of severe storms, **(s)twerH* challenged the scientific impulse to understand and control chaotic forces associated with weather systems and questioned what we might learn by embracing indeterminacy and chance.



Andrew Maize and engineers from the Canadian Severe Storms Lab.

While Maize was on site, he engaged in conversation and art making with over nine hundred students and faculty. A free mobile workshop for the general public was held in downtown London at TAP Centre for Creativity. Thirteen participants, including Western staff, faculty, students, and the general public explored the work of Alexander Calder, the history of mobiles and kinetic sculpture, and discussed the physics of mobiles.

In a collaborative performative event, *a space of cloud/not cloud*, Maize and artist Lisa Hirmer brought together kites, wind catchers, and smoke bombs to conduct experiments documenting transitory and ephemeral moments with(in) local wind and weather conditions on Western's University College Hill.



A space of cloud/not cloud with Andrew Maize and Lisa Hirmer on UC Hill.

January 15-May 16, 2026

Atmospheric Shifts: Wally Dion, Lisa Hirmer, David Spriggs



Atmospheric Shifts considered the role of climate change in increasing severe storm events through an exploration of climate anxiety, vulnerability, resilience, and responsibility to the land. The exhibition was presented in collaboration with the Canadian Severe Storms Laboratory, a research group in Western's Faculty of Engineering and the WindEEE Dome. The partnership supported the production of new work and programs that encouraged interdisciplinary research and collaboration both financially and creatively. These new works were placed in conversation with art from McIntosh Gallery's permanent collection, public and corporate collections, and material culture derived from research conducted by the Northern Tornadoes Project, the Northern Hail Project, and the Northern Mesonet Project in Western University's Faculty of Engineering.

Artists participated in a thought-provoking panel discussion in partnership with the Department of Visual Art's *Art Now! Speakers Series* with support from the Faculty of Arts & Humanities. A second panel discussion, *The Reciprocal Benefits of Interdisciplinary Collaboration*, featured some of Western's most creative, boundary-pushing thinkers from across disciplines ranging from the Institute for Earth and Space Exploration to the Faculty of Music.



Installation images from *Atmospheric Shifts*, with Emily Hiemstra's quartet performing *Didsbury.*

Essays & Publications



Art Thrive: Elemental Forces

Curated by: Imogen Clendinning

Programmed by: Tia Bates

Printed brochure with curatorial essays to accompany *Art Thrive: Elemental Forces*, a series of programs pairing curated video art screenings with thematically related art-making activities.

Holding Patterns: the long view – A Look Inside the McIntosh Gallery Collection

By Rachel Deiterding

Essay accompanying *Holding Patterns: the long view*; published on McIntosh Gallery website.

Holding Patterns: the short view – Recent Acquisitions from the McIntosh Gallery Collection

By Rachel Deiterding

Essay accompanying *Holding Patterns: the short view*; published on McIntosh Gallery website.

Boundary Layers and Boundary Objects
*Atmospheric Shifts & *(s)twerH*

By Helen Gregory

Essay accompanying *Atmospheric Shifts* and **(s)twerH*; published on McIntosh Gallery website.

Around Campus



Art Thrive: Fire | Futures with work by Rah Eleh pictured, and lantern painting activity.

September 11 - December 10, 2025
Art Thrive: Elemental Forces

Art Thrive: Elemental Forces was an interactive art series that combined moving image screenings and art-making sessions to reflect on the animacy of water, earth, wind, and fire. The project supported developing coping strategies to help combat eco-distress.

Developed and delivered in partnership with Student Health & Wellness and the Western Student Recreation Center, and supported by an internal grant from the Office of Western Sustainability, seven sessions were held in five social spaces across campus from September to December 2025. A total of four hundred and fifty nine students, staff, faculty and members of the community took part. A publication was produced documenting the project.

February 25 - May 1, 2026
Art of Creation

Art of Creation is an innovative interdisciplinary arts-based research program and education initiative where complex biological science has been woven together with arts-based communication and public educational programming. It is an arts-based knowledge translation program that was designed to convey the biology of early life development to the public. A collaborative research and communication initiative between McMaster University and the Art Gallery of Hamilton, McIntosh Gallery worked with the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry to present the *Art of Creation* at Western. The project included an art exhibition and a series of presentations and workshops delivered to Western students.



Art of Creation exhibition in Weldon Library.

Impact & Outreach

McIntosh continued our commitment to deepen our presence across campus. In 2025-2026 we developed, partnered, and participated in over twenty-two events and initiatives from *Art & Green Walking Tours* that explored public art on campus, to offering engaging tours to children through Western Engineering's Discovery Western summer camps, to participating in the Ontario Art Teachers Conference in April. In addition, the McIntosh had a presence at four University Outreach events including: the Health & Wellness Fair, Volunteer Fair, Move your Mood Wellness Fair, and Ontario Art Educators Association Conference.

Through these initiatives, the groundwork to expand our student volunteer and internship program was strengthened and diversified, and new connections began to emerge with a wider range of faculties across campus.

Encouraged by the level of interest and engagement from students, we posted four volunteer positions through the Western Peer Leader Program for the 2026-2027 academic year, attracting thirty-one student applications from across faculties (with a further fifteen students on a waitlist). Two applications for student internships were received for the 2025-2026 school year and increased to six applications for 2026-2027. New co-curricular programs are in development in response to student interest and feedback.



Art & Green campus tour with McIntosh Gallery and Western Sustainability.

Programs & Events

a space of cloud/not cloud

Art & Green Walks

ArtHop

Artist In Residence: Andrew Maize

Art Share

Art of the Mobile Workshop

McIntosh Gallery and Art Now! presents: Atmospheric Shifts and Turbulent Times

Art Thrive: Elemental Forces

Art & Travel Committee Trips and Lectures

Curious by Nature: Riverfest

Digital Humanities Day – Holding Patterns: the long view

Exhibition Tours

Health & Wellness Fair (World Mental Health Day)

Into the Vault: Building Collections Management Skills

Let's Talk Collections Lecture Series

Mindful Mondays

Move Your Mood Wellness Fair

Ontario Art Education Association Conference: Make it Matter

The Reciprocal Benefits of Interdisciplinary Collaboration Panel

Student Internships

Student Volunteers

Summer Camp Tours





Left: World Mental Health Day Fair. Right: Mindful Mondays in *Holding Patterns—the long view*.

Marketing & Communications

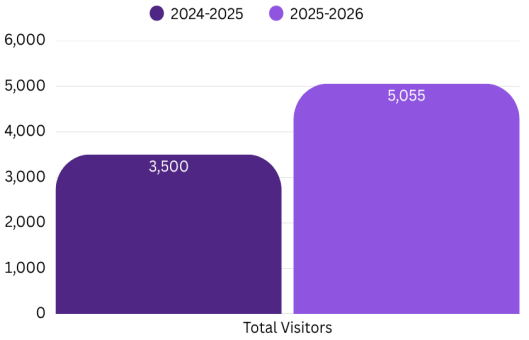
2025-2026 marked a significant change in our communications strategy, with renewed attention being paid to community outreach, better signage, and more frequent content presented in different formats to engage a variety of audience interests. We took the first steps towards our goal of developing a comprehensive and dynamic marketing and communication strategy, starting with the promotions plan for the *Art Thrive* program. We have begun to collect more data about our audiences: who they are, how they hear about us, and why they are coming to the gallery and our events. The result of which has helped lead us to our current multi-channel strategy.

The *Art Thrive* communications plan was developed with input from Wellness and Well-being, and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives - designed to reach a range of students as our primary audience. We ended up presenting a successful outreach program to help reach students at a variety of campus locations. Many students participated in more than one *Art Thrive* event, and it became a program that future gallery visitors mentioned as something they enjoyed engaging in.

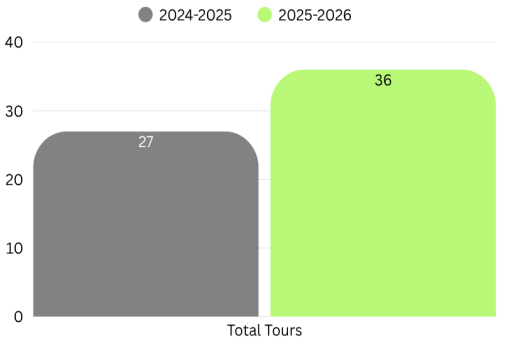


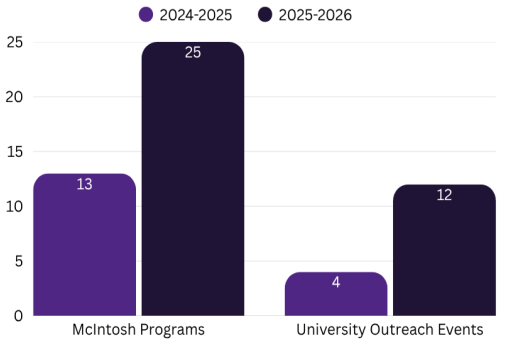
Events and Communications volunteers Humay and Niloofar make buttons and distribute catalogues at the Ontario Art Educators Association Conference.

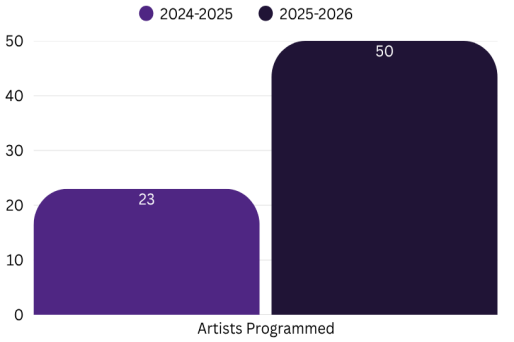
Overall, the increase we have seen in engagement can be attributed to an exhibition program that connects with other campus departments, an increase in tours and events, direct outreach to people and groups, and an increase in visibility on campus.



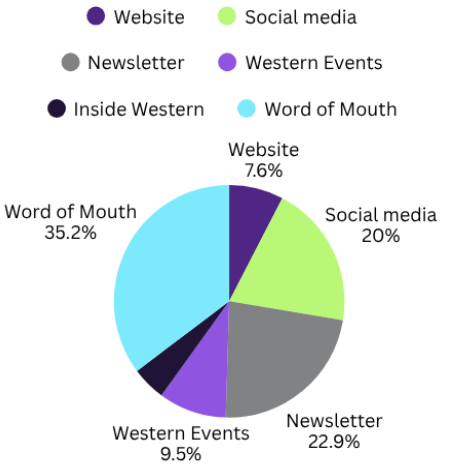
In 2025-2026, we increased our exhibition attendance by 31%, our tours by 25%, and our events by 54%.



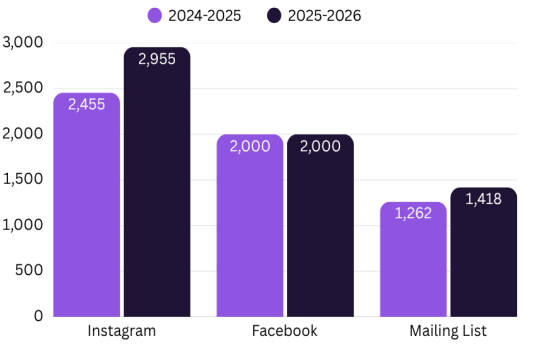




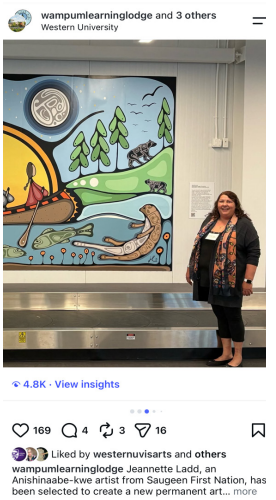
We engaged a large number of artists this year, through exhibitions, and programming, including forty artists being highlighted in the *Art Thrive* video series.

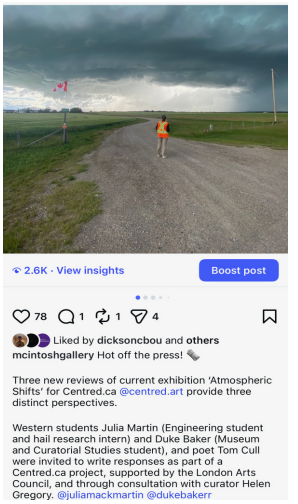


Our events visitors are hearing about us from a variety of sources which highlights the need to continue to promote through a multi-channel approach. Both our enews subscribers, and Instagram followers have grown this past year.



We have grown our Instagram audience significantly, and with help from monthly social media strategy meetings, we have stayed in the loop with significant changes to the algorithm, testing out content with a range of formats and designs, and the creation of a number of high-performing posts in the past year. Other units have had success with student ambassadors, and while we did have occasional event volunteers who helped with content in 2025-2026, we are very excited to be engaging student social media ambassadors for 2026-2027 through the Western Peer Leader program to start creating content for us to better appeal to student audiences.





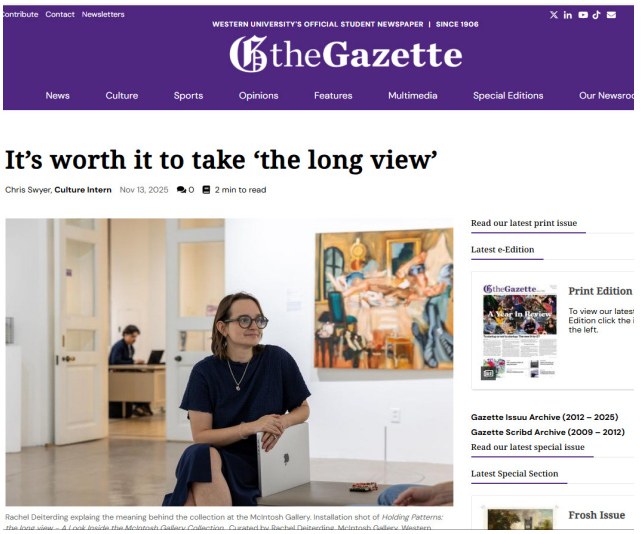
We have developed an understanding of Western's connection to the media, and the process of pitching, and have built connections with staff at Western Media since January 2026, who are helping us promote across Western and to local media.

McIntosh Gallery was in the following media in 2025-2026:

"Laura Moore: Memories of the Future", Autumn 2025, Matthew Ryan Smith, ESPACE Art Actuel.

"It's worth it to take the long view", November 13, 2025, Chris Sawyer, Western Gazette.

"Learning Behind the Scenes", April 30, 2026, Duke Baker, Centred.ca



McIntosh Art & Travel Committee

Supported by Alumni Affairs, the Art & Travel Committee is an enthusiastic group of volunteers that organizes Art Trips to various locations. All proceeds from the trips are donated to the Gallery to acquire new work.

This past year the committee organized two trips. One to Windsor that included a visit to Willistead Manor, the Coach House, Paul Martin Gardens, and Art Windsor-Essex. And another to Toronto to take in *Joyce Wieland: Heart On* at the AGO, and *Saints, Sinners, Lovers and Fools: 300 Years of Flemish Masterworks* at the ROM, with a stop at the Distillery Winter Village.

Stefan Andrejicka
Kathleen Brown
Mary Lake Collins
Susan Henderson
Catherine Littlejohn
Sandra March
Mary Redekop
Louise Sabourin
Sophie Skaith
Gabriella Sterescu
Wilda Thomas
Viola Weil
Nancy Wright

2025-2026 Donors

In 2025-2026 McIntosh gratefully accepted $70,784.94 in donations from monthly and annual donors. These donations are essential to our operations and support our exhibitions, programs, collection work, and cross-disciplinary student experiential learning opportunities.

Thank you to our 2025-2026 donors.

Lydia Abbott
Anonymous (x 6)
Mrs Daphne Bice and Mr Kevin Bice
Mr. John Cernik
Ms. Di Coates
Mrs. Mary Lake Collins & Mr. Robert Collins
Catherine Elliot Shaw
Dr. Joel Faflak
Ms. Joyce Garnett
Prof. Sheila Macfie
Mr. Douglas McAndless
Professor Jan Shepherd
McKee & Reverend Keith McKee
Dr. Linda Miller & Dr. Chris Lee
Mr. John Murphy
Mrs Heather Peterson
Dr. Nancy Geddes Poole
The Schulich Foundation
Mr. David Spriggs
Dr. Florentine Strzelczyk
Ms. Wilda Thomas
Mr. Ian Tripp
Mrs. Viola Weil
Dr. Rod Willis & Mrs Faye Willis

Gallery Advisory Committee

Linda Miller, Faculty, Past Chair
Catherine Elliot Shaw, Past Curator/Acting Director, McIntosh Gallery
Joel Faflak, Faculty Arts & Humanities (on sabbatical)
Lindsay Bell, Faculty Associate Professor, Sociocultural Anthropology
Lyn Purdy, Faculty Ivey Business
Ruth Skinner, Staff SASAH
Geoffrey Little, Vice Provost & Chief Librarian
Shelli Cassidy-McIntosh, Alumna; Co-Owner/Director Olga Korper Gallery
Richard Nixon, Alumni; Partner DLA Piper Law Firm; Art Collector
Karam Kaur Bhuee, Student, Arts & Humanities/SASAH
Rawan El Moghrabi, Student, Engineering Computer Science
Patrick Mahon, Artist

Ex-Officio

Florentine Strzelczyk, Provost & Vice President
Christy Bressette, Vice-Provost & AVP Indigenous Initiatives
Alena Robin, Chair Department of Visual Arts
Lisa Daniels, McIntosh Gallery Director
Heather Carey, Recording Secretary

McIntosh Team

Staff

Lisa Daniels, Director
Heather Carey, Gallery Operations Officer (Administration & Engagement)
Helen Gregory, Curator
Rachel Deiterding, Curator Collections & Special Projects
Aaron Guravich, Gallery Operations Specialist (Collections, Exhibitions, Facility)
Emily Henry, Administration Assistant, Collections (YCW Building Careers in Heritage, One Year)
Dickson Bou, Preparator (Casual)

Work Study Students

Kaltoum Al Karout
Karam Bhuee
Momin Khan
Nyanasoundari Lourdsamy
Shayma Masaud-Wahaishi
Sara Papasodaro
Angela Ryoo
Fatima Saeed
Melanie Van Schaick

Volunteers & Interns

Duke Baker
Araminta Neog Bharali
Eric Alan Cameron
Niloofar Ejraei
Kath Goodhue
Shebora Kamara
Peter MacDonald
Humay Majid
Arisia Qarri
Densika Ravindiralingam
Xue Sha

Thank you for your support

Western University · Canada

Canada Council for the Arts | Conseil des arts du Canada

Ontario Arts Council
Conseil des arts de l'Ontario
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Ontario

Western Arts&Humanities

Ontario Arts Foundation | fondation des arts de l'Ontario

CSSL
Canadian Severe Storms Laboratory

windEW