



May 31, 2013

To all OCC members,

We are just under a week away from our Annual General Meeting and I'd like to take this opportunity to personally invite you to join us. I realise that distance makes this challenging for many, but if you are within a manageable proximity of Toronto we'd love to see you in person. If you can't join us it's still very important that we receive your ballot proxy, if you've not yet completed yours I encourage you to send it in today. All AGM details, including a link to the proxy form can be found on our website [HERE](#).

For those able to join us, we'll be sharing our past activities and talking about our future vision, looking at fiscal information and most importantly electing our new board. We're excited this year to add a fabulous gallery reception, artist talks and a members gathering to the evening. You'll get to meet other makers and network with staff, board members, volunteers and patrons of the OCC.

OCC Member wine and cheese reception with special exhibition presentation

Wednesday, June 5, 2013, 4:00 – 5:45 pm

The Al Green Gallery, 64 Merton Street, Toronto

Ontario Crafts Council Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, June 5, 2013, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Taking place at Grano, a short 10 minute walk from The Al Green Gallery

Grano, 2035 Yonge Street, Toronto

Followed by a gathering featuring a delectable selection of Grano's antipasto, 7:00 – 8:00 pm. Cash bar.

I'd like to thank Lindy Green, The Al Green Gallery and Roberto Dante Martella, Grano for their generous support of the Ontario Crafts Council.

Now onto other topics, and it would seem I have a lot to communicate with you. I'll see if I can keep this to a manageable length.

Let me start by sharing the fantastic news that we were successful in a recent application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a 12-month project on Craft Export Readiness. The funding will allow us to hire staff, conduct research into e-learning platforms, online engagement strategies, and export information. All export related information will be compiled into an up to date, easily accessible Craft Export database. The database will include information on retail and wholesale shows, galleries and buyers, along with brokerage, shipping and imperative export related information. The job posting for the Research/Project Manager has recently been circulated and we're hoping to kick-start the project by mid-to-late June. Keep an eye out for updates in upcoming issues of Craftfl@sh.

A reminder that today is your last chance to voice your thoughts on the Strengthening the Sector project! The Ontario Crafts Council has partnered with CARFAC Ontario (along with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Artist-Run Centres and Collectives of Ontario, Media Arts Network of Ontario and Ontario Association of Art Galleries) on Strengthening the Sector: Resources and Codes of Practices for the Visual, Media and Craft-Based Arts Sector. This is a multi-year project focused on researching and developing resources and tools for the visual, media and craft-based arts sector. The following goals guide the project:

1. Building on-line resources to support relationship-building and professionalization across the sectors among all stakeholders
2. Establishing industry standards through the development of codes of practices in the visual, media and craft-based arts sector

If you'd like more information on the project visit CARFAC's website, [HERE](#).

The survey is your chance to provide input into this project, and I strongly encourage those who haven't yet completed it to quickly hop online and do so. A big thanks in advance. **Please complete the survey, [HERE](#).**

Partnerships are very important for the OCC, they allow us to maximize our efforts and leverage strengths that exist between like-minded organizations. In addition to our above-mentioned partnership with CARFAC Ontario, we're also a provincial partner to WorkInCulture's Creative Business Hub and the Collaborative Network project. This project will look at local skills, needs and training gaps; share existing resources and information on business skills training for the creative community; share best practices; provide peer-to-peer mentoring across the group; and foster partnerships in developing and delivering new programs and resources where needed. Over the past 6 months we've played an advisory role in the development of this project and have participated in WIC's research and discovery sessions; we look forward to continuing this partnership over the next few years and to updating you on future developments.

Now let's talk about insurance. It may be an area of your craft practise that you're not excited about, but it's an imperative piece of any business – and a craft business is no exception.

This year we're pleased to have formed a relationship with Actra Fraternal Benefit Society (AFBS) and their Arts & Entertainment Plan. It has always been a priority of ours to bring our members a health insurance program that consists of dental, extended health care, prescription drug, travel, and life insurance benefits and we've tried on numerous occasions to put an affordable program in place. Why are we so happy with the Arts & Entertainment Plan™? Because it's a program designed by and for artists. AFBS is a member-owned and governed insurer that provides specialized healthcare and insurance programs for its members and does so with compassion that can't be matched by traditional insurers for whom health is just a business. We've signed an agreement with AFBS to bring this plan to you, our members. More information can be found on our website, [HERE](#).

Through AFBS, and their partner provider Hub International, we've made sure all your additional insurance needs can also be covered – whether it be home and auto insurance, or commercial and professional liability insurance.

We're very excited to announce a brand new insurance program that we've just finished negotiated on your behalf, the Craft Show Exhibitor Insurance Program. This program, provided by Hub International,

offers craft show exhibitors a hassle-free online application, payment and policy that provides the following:

- Property and liability coverage for multiple shows all under one annual policy, whether you participate in 1 show or 100 shows this singular policy will protect you;
- \$2,000,000 - \$5,000,000 general liability (depending on the limit requested) and \$25,000 property insurance for the duration of your time at the show;
- Included in this are sublimits of \$2,500 per item/\$25,000 per loss for Jewellery and Fine Arts; and extra property insurance coverage can easily and affordably be purchased;
- Your property is covered for "all risks" while at the show and while moving to and from the show;
- Efficient claims handling through Travelers Canada's 24 hour claims hotline;
- A program that meets the insurance requirements of most show organizers; and
- Confidence: HUB HKMB has been insuring show exhibitors for over 15 years.

You must be a member on the Ontario Crafts Council to access these specially negotiated rates. Pricing starts at just \$125. Visit Hubs website to learn more, [HERE](#).

I'd like to make sure the Craft Awards program is front and center in your mind. The submission deadline is **Friday, June 14, 2013, 6:00 pm EDT**.

We've been busy making some great changes this year, including increased award amounts and an easier application system. The Craft Awards program takes place annually, and consists of two components: awards by nomination and awards by application. All nominations and applications are due mid-June, at which point a jury of seven established professionals working in the field of craft and design will review and select the final recipients. In mid-August applicants will be notified of the jury decision, and the names of those selected for an award will be publicly announced. The final announcement of who has won which award will not take place until the Craft Awards ceremony in the first week of October. During the ceremony winners will receive their awards, and we'll wrap everything up with a terrific celebration. Updates will be posted on the website and published through Craftfl@sh. Find out more and apply today, [HERE](#).

To wrap this letter up I'd like to update you on staffing changes. We will start with good-byes. We are very sad to bid adieu to two fabulous employees; although they're moving on they will always be a part of the OCC family! Paul Wilson, our Accounts and Operations Manager is moving on to other exciting challenges at the end of June. Paul joined the OCC in early 2005. Rob Ridgeway, our Retail Manager at The Guild Shop will be saying his farewell next week, Rob joined the OCC in 2007 just in time to guide the store through its major renovation. Rob will be moving back to the US. Please join me in thanking both Paul and Rob for their incredible service and in wishing them luck in their future endeavours.

We are very happy to do some welcoming too; first, Caitlin Plewes is returning on a part-time basis after a year's maternity leave and we're very happy to have her back. Caitlin will return to a role of Member Outreach so I'm sure you'll be hearing from her very soon. We're also delighted to welcome Meranda MacKenzie who is stepping into the role of Accounting/Office Administrator; she'll be responsible for our financial management, office organization, and member relations. Yusun Ha will be stepping into the role of Interim Manager at The Guild Shop, supported by Matt Karvonen as Interim Assistant Manager.

And finally, we have been successful once again in securing funds to hire two summer students for the roles of Development Assistant and Social Media Coordinator. Interviewing will begin in the next few

weeks and we hope to have them fully in-place by the end of June. Introduction will follow shortly thereafter.

Again, I hope to see you next Wednesday at the AGM. As always, it's a pleasure to continue to work on your behalf. I always enjoy hearing from you so please don't hesitate to contact me at equin@craft.on.ca or (416) 925-4222 ext. 223 if you have any questions.

Kindly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emma". The letter "E" is large and loops around the start of the name.

Emma