



From the Desk of Emma Quin



September 27, 2011

To all OCC Members,

Well, I think it's safe to say that my update is long overdue. It's hard to believe that the summer is now behind us. Here, tucked away in the back of 990 Queen St. West in Toronto, we're in full-swing implementing our fall programming and neck deep in advance 2012 planning.

I did however want to bring you back to the summer and talk about all the changes that occurred on the staffing front. First, Valerie McLean our Member Services Coordinator left her position at the beginning of July and moved on to an exciting position with the Gardiner Ceramic Museum – it's always sad to see people go, but we said a fond goodbye over decadent desserts and a martini or two. We're happy that Val will stay connected to the wonderful world of craft through her new position, and we wish her all the best. With change, we look for opportunity, and thus made the decision to replace Val's position with two, 3 day-a-week part-time roles: Member Services Coordinator and Programs Coordinator. After receiving 200 applications and conducting 20 interviews we found two ideal people to add to our team; I invite you to join me in officially welcoming them.

Grace Donati, takes the reigns as Member Services Coordinator and will be working 3 days-a-week at the office, and 1 day-a-week up at The Guild Shop. Grace is an established ceramics and hair designer who graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design completing her Bachelor Degree in Design with a major in Ceramics. She has years of experience in the professional art world as a teacher, artist, event organizer, coordinator and arts advocate. Aside from passionately working in her crafts she also takes great pleasure in the inspirations gained and given when being a facilitator for the community. Her involvement in the membership role runs parallel with her gregarious philosophy on relationship building and the sharing of ideas. You can email Grace at gdonati@craft.on.ca.

Christine Lawrance, jumped full tilt into the role of Programs Coordinator at the beginning of September, and will be typically working 3 days-a-week at the office (although you'll see her a bit more between now and Christmas, more on that later). Christine received her Bachelor of Arts with a major in Fine Arts from the University of Guelph in 1991. She moved to Vancouver in 1993, where she worked as a curator and arts administrator for various public art galleries in the Lower Mainland, including the Richmond Art Gallery, Community Arts Council of Vancouver and the Surrey Art Gallery. She has been actively involved in community exhibitions, program development,

website and social media as well as curatorial work. In her last position as Communications Coordinator for Circle Craft Co-operative, she had the opportunity to work closely with the crafts community both locally and nationally for the last seven years. Christine is delighted to have returned to her hometown this past year, and is looking forward to her new role here. You can email Christine at clawrance@craft.on.ca.

We also had to say a very sad goodbye at the end of July to our fantastic Southwestern Regional Coordinator, Mary Calarco. Mary worked for 18 months rolling out our regional programming as part of the *Growing Ontario's Craft Community* project. Mary, a huge thank you for your energy, commitment and ideas – and I promise we will continue to work hard to seek and secure new funding to continue the great work you started.

I mentioned above that Christine will be seen a little more between now and Christmas, that's because our very own Janna Hiemstra has accepted a teaching position at Sheridan College teaching the Craft History course. She'll be out of the office on Friday's between now and the end of first term. Congrats to Janna (and her lucky students)!

Our staff play such an integral role in our ability to deliver on our mandate. To those who've left, as well as to those with feet still firmly planted here, I'd like to personally recognize their contribution and say a huge thank you!

Each June, we hold our Annual General Meeting. Every year there's always exciting information and highlights from the year past to be shared, but this year we had some extra special news to impart - for all those unable to attend I'll elaborate here.

First, I had the distinct honour of publicly thanking Joan Chalmers for her incredible support of the OCC, support that has spanned our lifetime, along with years of involvement with our founding organizations. In particular I thanked Joan for her donation of \$35,000 which was put forward in support of our 35th Anniversary this year; this generous amount will act as the founding donation of the newly established *Transformation Fund*. This fund, ear marked to support future planning, strategic growth and the ongoing sustainability of the OCC, will see its official launch at the upcoming 35th Anniversary Gala on October 18 at the Sunnybrook Estates.

I also congratulated the Royal Bank of Canada on its commitment to the development of Canada's emerging artists and thanked them for establishing the new *RBC Emerging Artists Studio Setup Award* through a donation of \$10,000 - \$2500 of which will support the *Awards & Scholarships* program's administration while a whopping \$7500 will go directly to a worthy maker! Without a doubt this award will be an incredible addition to our 2012 A&S program; studio setup costs are one of the greatest obstacles facing any emerging maker and with such limited sources of funding to aid in this area this newly established award will have significant impact. So don't forget to apply!

Now on to more current events! The week of September 12-18 was completely hectic with the opening of three exhibitions, *Question, Answer and the Chaos in Between: Metamorphic Numerals* by

Mark Jaroszewicz (OCC Gallery), *CraftCurrents* (Thunder Bay Art Gallery), and *The Value of Metal* (The Guild Shop). After a hiatus from exhibition programming at The Guild Shop, it's pretty exciting to see media specific showstoppers return to the stage. I can personally attest that *The Value of Metal* is worth a visit (just remember to bring your wallet because it will be hard to leave empty handed – I know I didn't!).

I also had the pleasure of attending the opening reception of the *CraftCurrents* exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. It's always thrilling to see an idea come to fruition, and seeing this exhibition of juried Northern craft displayed beautifully at the TBAG was a proud moment. The exhibition is a diverse collection of fabulous objects, truly representative of Northern Ontario and the talented makers living there. I had the opportunity to meet many of the artists, and a few conversations stood out. Chatting with Paul Beebe, a knife maker, he admitted his work had never been shown in an art setting before, instead showcasing them at hunting and gun shows. Paul's knife can be found on page 8 of the exhibition [catalogue](#); not only does Paul make the knife, but also the sheath and all the tools with which the leather is stamped. In conversation with Kathleen Baleja (page 7 of the catalogue) I was touched by her impression of the OCC, both now and in the years gone by, and the importance she placed on the work we're currently doing in her region. Reassurance from makers within the community is always encouraging. And, I also have to congratulate Kathleen on her delightful handmade wasp paper skirt...you may have had limited movement but you looked fabulous!

Now, while talking about the importance of juried shows I want to strongly bring your attention to the [Ontario Craft '11 call for entry](#). The original deadline was this past Friday, but after receiving far less applications than one would expect for an exhibition that is supposed to celebrate 35 years of the OCC, and set the stage for surveying what's happening in craft in this great province, I've made a decision to extend the deadline. It's a hard call to make, because there are those of you out there who've made a huge effort to meet the original deadline. But I've also heard rumblings that people weren't aware of the deadline or exhibition. This biennale exhibition plays a significant role in celebrating our 35th anniversary, and is a long-standing piece of our history and mandate. The new deadline is **Monday, October 3 at 5:00 pm**, I hope to see your application.

As you're all aware we have a pending provincial election before us. The OCC is an active member of the PASO Coalition (Provincial Arts Service Organizations of Ontario). PASO's Advocacy Committee has been diligently working to establish a positioning statement on its priorities for the Ontario Election 2011; I'd like to share this with you so that you can communicate these recommendations with your community and local MPPs.

PASO Priorities for the Ontario Election 2011

To build on the strength of Ontario's arts sector, Ontario's arts organizations call on all provincial parties to:

- Confirm and sustain funding to the arts through the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Trillium Foundation

- Establish a sustainable arts and culture policy framework that invigorates the *Status of Ontario's Artists Act* and the *Minister's Advisory Council on Arts and Culture*
- Be an advocate for Ontario's artists and arts organization in matters of federal jurisdiction
- Strengthen inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration within the Ontario government to leverage the strength of the arts sector and minimize inefficiencies

How you can get involved:

When you're writing letters to your local MPP or are engaged in public discussions, please feel free to draw upon PASO's key points in your messaging about arts and culture in Ontario.

For more information about PASO and the 2011 Provincial Election, please go to PASO's Facebook page [HERE](#). You can also find PASO on Twitter by following PASOOPSA [HERE](#).

About PASO:

- The PASO Coalition is comprised of 23 provincial arts service organizations in Ontario
- The PASO Coalition formed in January 2007 and has been meeting for the last 4 years since the last election in 2006
- The PASO Coalition is working together on advocacy initiatives to leverage support for Ontario artists and arts organizations

Another thing I'd like to bring your attention to, and encourage you to read, is the Ontario Arts Council report [Tracing Emerging Modes of Practice: Craft Sector Review](#) which provides a deeper understanding of emerging craft practices in Ontario. The report, released this July, examines design-oriented craft practices, the use of digital technologies in crafts, creative collaboration and the DIY (do-it-yourself) alternative craft movement, among other trends and issues. The OAC commissioned Jen Anisef, founder of the Montreal Church of Craft, Toronto's City of Craft festival and editor of Toronto Craft Alert to complete the report. It really is a great read.

Before I put you to sleep, I'm going to sign off. It's always a pleasure to share some news... Wishing you all a highly successful fourth quarter, whether it's through retail shows, exhibitions, professional/career development, or dedicated time for creation. We're here working for you, so as always your ideas or comments are welcome. Please contact me at equin@craft.on.ca or (416) 925-4222 ext. 223.

Kindly,



Emma Quin