

## Inventory of the AGN Permanent Collection: Aug 12-22 2019

Hello, as some of you may know my name is Breanna Brethour and I'm the Collections Manager at the AGN. Last year I had to create a list of projects to complete and one of them is to do an inventory of the permanent collection.

### **What is an inventory?**

*Inventory or audit:* an itemized list of objects, the act of physically locating objects in the collections in order to verify their location and quantity at a given time

Purpose of an inventory: to define the size, scope and location of the collection

### **Before the inventory**

- In planning, a training process involved basic care and handling of the collection and using the excel spreadsheet to record the findings during the inventory
- Created a step by step guide of the process, an inventory tip sheet and a list of photos that needed to be taken

### **The excel spreadsheet**

- Created the excel spreadsheet to use while completing the inventory (generated from the database called File Maker Pro)
- In the excel spreadsheet there were different colour codes that were used:
  - **Purple-** object not in the database/excel spreadsheet
  - **Blue-** has no accession number on the object
  - **Yellow-** errors/missing information in the database/excel spreadsheet regarding the object
  - **Green-** not in the vault but it's in the database/excel spreadsheet
  - **Red-** object has conservation issues (damaged)

### **During the inventory**

Our collection is home to 1,000 works which includes sculptures, drawings, textiles, paintings and ceramics and they are stored in the vault which is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Victoria Hall. The inventory took place from Aug 12-22 2019 and steps for completing the inventory at the AGN included:

- Had to go through each section one at a time starting at the beginning and going straight through to the end
- For each section we had to record measurements, descriptions, locations and conditions into the excel spreadsheet
- Also had to take photos of pieces that are not in the database and create new locations that are simpler

### **Next Steps**

- Updating the changes that we made in our excel spreadsheet to the database
- Editing the photos that were taken and will upload them to the database
- Will create lists of other projects to complete based on the findings (fixing damaged artwork, putting accession numbers on the pieces, placing items into proper storage that's acid-free and not harmful to the collection, creating new labels for all locations and finding a better storage solution for the textiles)

### **Obstacles that we faced**

- Not finding the accession number on the piece, had to interpret the signature of the artist which isn't easy
- Pieces not fitting right, it's like 1 big puzzle, had to use as much space as we could especially on the racks
- Had to plan/discuss every move
- Thought we would be done in a week, took 2 full weeks to complete the inventory

For this project you need to have a lot of patience, time management skills, focus, attention to detail and teamwork.

### **Why do the inventory**

- To know what's in the collection
- To know our priorities
- Make sure the database speak with the files and vice versa
- For the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary a catalogue will be created of 60 works from the collection and there will be an exhibition of those work