



# CURATORIAL TOOLKIT

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CURATORS



Cover image:  
Long March Space - Yanchuan paper  
cuttings, 2004, Shanghai Biennale.  
Photo: Sadira Rodrigues.

## Is this toolkit for you?

This toolkit is designed primarily for emerging curators. Although written mainly for independent curators, a lot of this information is relevant for individuals working within an institution. The toolkit assumes the curator will be working primarily in the non-profit sector with public art galleries, museums and/or artist-run centres in Canada, although the information can also be relevant for contracts within the private sector and with institutions outside of Canada. Characteristics unique to working within the private sector, including with commercial galleries, are not contained in this document.



2010 Legacies Now is dedicated to strengthening arts, literacy, sport and recreation, healthy living, accessibility and volunteerism in communities throughout British Columbia and Canada. As a not-for-profit society, 2010 Legacies Now is creating lasting legacies around the province leading up to and beyond the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

2010 Legacies Now gratefully acknowledges the Province of British Columbia for its ongoing support of initiatives like the Curatorial Toolkit.

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*“Public exhibitions and presentations inspire the imagination of communities. Curators take a lead role in guiding the success of exhibitions and presentations, often collaborating with many people in the art community along the way. By providing this Curatorial Toolkit, the Province of B.C. and 2010 Legacies Now provide a practical roadmap to make the role of a curator easier to follow. We hope this guide benefits all of its users and provides a pathway to success.”*

BRUCE DEWAR,  
Chief Executive Officer  
2010 Legacies Now

**This curatorial toolkit** reflects over 25 years of working in the business as a curator and public gallery director. Although there are many ways to approach the curator’s work, I often describe in these pages my preferred approach based on direct experience working from inside an institutional context and as an independent curator/producer. The toolkit is meant as a recommended practices guide – a suggested framework from which curators may create their own working process.

What follows is a practical guide that does not address the many theoretical issues relating to curatorial practice. The kit is an outline of the complex business of organizing exhibitions and related activities, and is not intended to be comprehensive. Finally, a curator can more effectively do their work if they are aware of all steps in the process and for that reason the kit includes information about related tasks for which the curator would not always be responsible.

**Karen Love**

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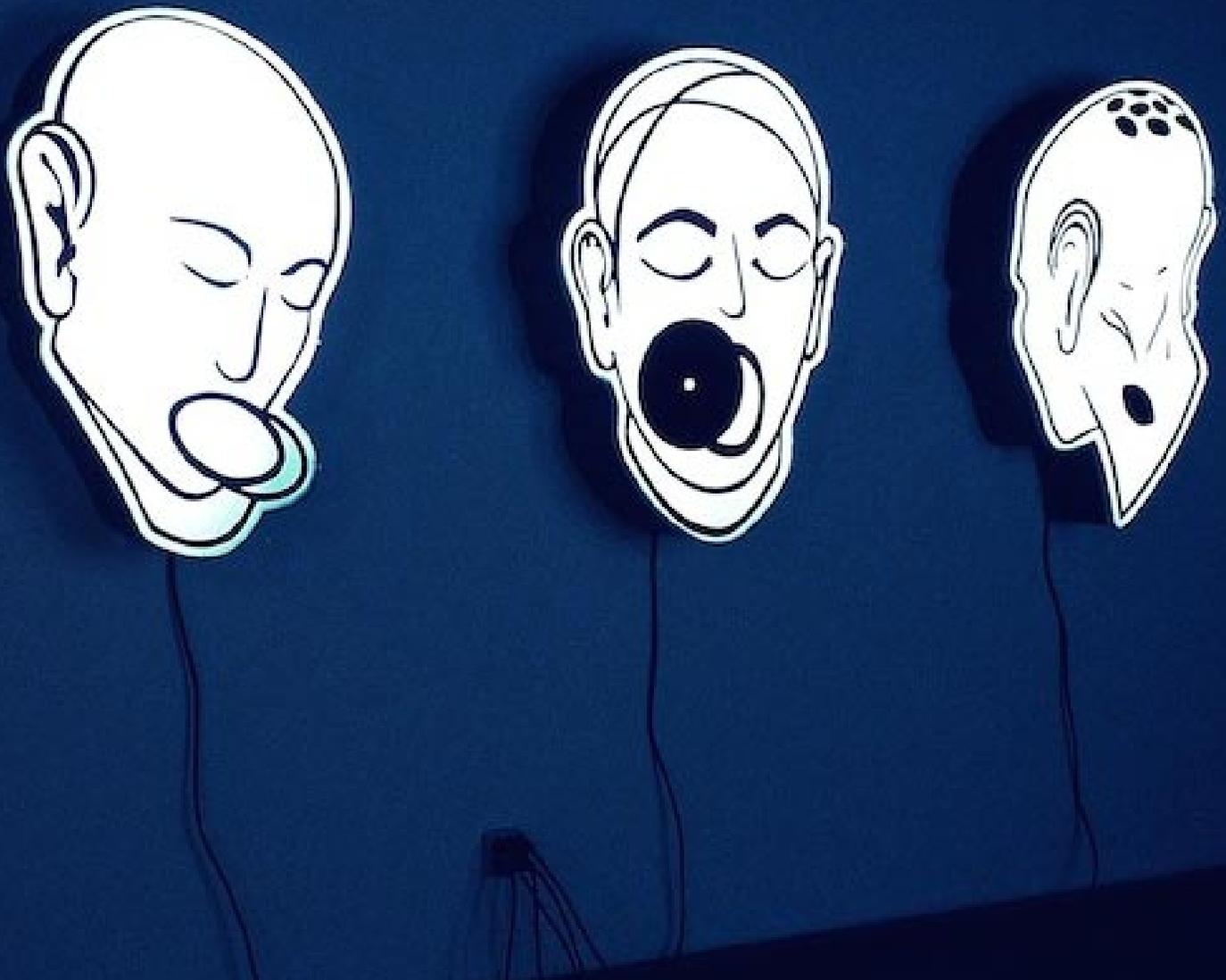
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# 1.0 Curatorial practice – a beginning



Patrick Traer, *falling from afar* (detail),  
1995 - 1997, commercially manufactured,  
shaped lightboxes, screened drawings  
on plexiglass, florescent lights; indoor  
installation, Stride Gallery, Calgary,  
2000. Photo: the artist.

## 1.1 The role of the curator

Historically, curators have been responsible for researching and developing collections within institutions, and exhibitions have been drawn from that context.

Contemporary curators create and contribute to public dialogues about ideas and art strategies that address the world in all its complexities. They also create opportunities for artists. The curator's work is derived in large part from the practice and production of visual artists, but she/he can also draw on intellectual and creative contributions from other disciplines in the arts and from many other areas of exploration in society.

Although there are exceptions, increasingly curators are expected to take on more and more administrative and developmental (funding) responsibilities. The range of tasks that become the responsibility of a curator – even an independent curator contracted to produce a project for an organization – can vary enormously from one situation to another.

### **The curator's role can be described as follows:**

- To articulate the concept for an art presentation and conceptualize the manner in which this art can be presented to the public;
- To organize and implement that presentation, representing the artist(s) and their work;

- To function as a kind of go-between for the presenting institution and the artist, ensuring that all areas of responsibility for the project are being addressed. The curator should have the larger picture in mind and ensure careful attention to the artist's interests while respecting the mandate, needs and priorities of the gallery;
- To provide professional and public access to the project's ideas and art by organizing the exhibition or project itself, by writing various kinds of texts (curatorial, didactic and promotional) and by organizing public presentations associated with the project.

Curators make it their task to be well informed about creative practice, by looking at what is being produced and exhibited by artists and curators, and by reading exhibition catalogues, books and local/national/international periodicals, thereby adding continuously to the mental archive and material accumulation of information on art and life.

**Many useful publications exist that address the role of the curator. Some examples include:**

Anthony Kiendl, ed., *Obsession, Compulsion, Collection: On Objects, Display Culture, and Interpretation* (Banff: Banff Centre Press, 2004)

Carin Kuoni, ed., *Words of Wisdom: A Curator's Vade Mecum on Contemporary Art* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2001)

Victoria Newhouse, *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2005)

Melanie Townsend, ed., *Beyond the Box: Diverging Curatorial Practices* (Banff: Banff Centre Press, 2003)

Catherine Thomas, ed., *The Edge of Everything: Reflections on Curatorial Practice* (Banff: Banff Centre Press, 2002)

Ute Tischler and Christoph Tannert, *Men in Black: Handbook of Curatorial Practice* (Frankfurt am Main: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2004)

Peter White, ed., *Naming a Practice: Curatorial Strategies for the Future* (Banff: Banff Centre Press, 1996)

*Facing History: Portraits from Vancouver*, produced by Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver. Artworks by (right) Jochen Gerz + Esther Shalev-Gerz; (left) Marian Penner Bancroft. At Wharf: Centre d'art contemporain, Herouville St. Clair, France, 2005. Photo: D. Morel.



## 1.2 Some history on advocacy for best practices

Since the early 1980s, Canadian independent curators have met collectively in order to clarify useful working models for their profession, and to develop standard best practices that include the protection of curatorial rights (such as copyright), and principles and schedules for standard curatorial fees. The intention was that these practices would be adopted by institutions hiring curators on contract for project work.

Key meetings of independent curators were held in May 1982 (initiated by Peggy Gale and Renee Baert, and sponsored by Judy Schwartz at Hart House, Toronto); October 1982 (a follow-up meeting in Toronto for 20 curators, funded by the Canada Council); December 1998 (sponsored by Mentoring Artists for Women's Art in Winnipeg and resulting in the LaSalle River Accord, January 1999); and May 1999 (organized by the Toronto Independent Curator's Network and held in Toronto). Useful documents (unpublished) exist from these key meetings in 1982, 1998 and 1999. Of special note are the following:

\* **The LaSalle River Accord:** This includes a recommended fee schedule for professional independent curators (for 1999-2000) which was meant to address serious inequities. It begins with a base fee intended to give acknowledgment and payment for what the curator brings to the initial proposal for the presenting institution (prior to any work being undertaken for the project contract);

\* **Toronto Independent Curators Network Proposed Fee Schedule** (May 1999): This is based on the premise that the curator's fee should not be less than

25 per cent of the total exhibition presentation budget, with additional fees for coordinating the catalogue (five per cent of total catalogue costs), for writing the catalogue essay (\$0.25 to \$1 per word), and for an exhibition tour (20-25 per cent of the exhibition fee charged per borrowing venue, functioning as a royalty payment for the work completed; additional work for the venue presentations are to be paid separately).

[\\* CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF OR SEE PAGES 10-13 TO REVIEW THESE HISTORIC DOCUMENTS.](#)

This important developmental/advocacy work resulted in the adjustment of policies in many institutions. It also provided a carefully considered negotiating strategy for curators, one that more effectively protects their rights. However, curatorial fees still amount to annual incomes that are substantially lower than salaries recommended by the Canadian Museums Association or salary levels in use by most galleries in Canada today.

Although the idea of the formation of a formal association of independent curators has been discussed over the years, there is still no national umbrella organization to ensure the use of a standard fee schedule or to defend copyright and other rights for curators. It is therefore all the more important that independent curators remain in touch to consult on institutional practice toward contract curators, and to share information about resources, opportunities and funding options for the curatorial discipline.

## 1.3 Preparing a curriculum vitae

Every curator needs a document outlining her or his credentials.

A curriculum vitae (henceforth referred to as CV) is required for many scenarios including job applications, curatorial and writing proposals, grant applications and requests from organizations hosting the curator's contribution to their program. CVs are sometimes required on very short notice. Periodic updates can save time and anxiety later on.

Even at the beginning of a career, a CV (one-page) should be prepared that references a history of education, employment and community activities. Listing experiences that are not related directly to the arts field can still be informative as they will indicate transferable skills such as writing abilities, administrative skills that aid in the management of a project, and practical knowledge (such as how to construct a wall or the frame for an artwork, write a grant application or design a poster).

As a career develops, early employment unrelated to an arts career can be omitted from the CV as deemed appropriate. Depending on how far-ranging a curator's activities are, CVs can be fine-tuned and geared to a particular purpose: for work as a curator, work in publishing, work as a consultant; for the non-profit sector or the for-profit sector, etc. (Keep in mind that this multiple CV approach will involve updating more than one document.)

### Here are a few basic principles to consider when preparing a CV:

- **Be concise.** If possible, keep the document to one to three pages. (The Canada Council requires a CV of no more than three pages for their applications.)
- **Be accurate.** Check spelling and include dates and complete organization names rather than abbreviations. Use factual details to “blow your own horn,” not flowery adjectives. Embellishment or exaggeration will be counterproductive.
- **Be consistent.** Order information in each section chronologically, beginning with the most recent activities and moving backwards in time (the most common approach). A list of your own publications should be chronological. In the case of bibliographies, many prefer this information to be chronological. However, articles and publications can instead be organized alphabetically according to the writer's last name.
- **Keep it simple.** The layout should help to make the document easy to read. Avoid multiple font designs and point sizes.
- If part or all of the CV is in narrative form, never write in the third person.

### A curator's CV will usually include the following components:

- Education (post-secondary credentials; can also include post-school studies such as professional courses, workshops, symposia, etc);
  - Professional work (institutional) or employment history in the visual arts, if applicable (not independent projects);
  - Selected curatorial projects (This category can include exhibitions as well as related activities such as the organization of symposia or public art projects and the production of publications; Alternatively, use separate sections for exhibitions, special projects, public lectures, publications, etc; Many projects have several of these categories [an exhibition can also have a tour and a catalogue], hence the argument for condensing items into one listing under "Curatorial Projects," rather than in separate sections);
  - Texts written for publication in catalogues/books/periodicals;\*
  - Bibliography of articles written about your work (if separate from above);\*
  - And some CVs include grants and awards, juries served on, and other pertinent activities.
- \* For notes on formats for publication listings, style and arrangement of entries, see *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) or another standard reference tool for authors and editors.



*Weathervane*, produced by Oakville Galleries/Ottawa Art Gallery. Installing light fixtures for *Fargo* (2004) by Tania Kitchell at UQAM Gallery, Montreal 2006. Photo: K. Love.

**Documents from meetings of independent curators, 1998-99**  
**Organized to determine best practices for the**  
**independent curator/arts institution relationship in Canada**

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**THE LASALLE RIVER ACCORD**

INTRODUCTION

At a meeting of eight curators held [at St. Norbert Arts Centre (SNAC)] in Winnipeg from December 11-13, 1998, sponsored by Mentoring Artists for Women's Art, those present discussed the question of a fee scale for professional independent curators.

In the course of this discussion, the curators referred to the reports of two meetings that were held in Toronto in 1982: a local meeting of eight independent curators, and a subsequent national meeting of twenty independent curators. In these two prior meetings, a model fee schedule had been advanced in line with the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) pay scale for annual salaries of that time. This proposed fee, based on "condensed time" (that is, an approximation of estimated full- and part-time work to be undertaken over an extended time period, condensed to an equivalent consecutive full-time period) was \$150/day, \$500/week, \$2,000/month.

Sixteen years after the Toronto meetings, with no professional association of curators yet formed to protect the interests of independent curators, the eight curators at SNAC tabled the LaSalle River Accord as a proposed fee schedule. This agreement upgraded the fee scale of 16 years ago and introduced the concept of a base curatorial fee, as outlined below.

Those present agreed to adopt a two-part structure for a recommended minimum professional fee scale, consisting of:

1. A base curatorial fee that is independent of time-allocated research and production elements of the fee scale, and is equivalent to one month of salary;
2. A time-based estimate of other work, incorporating variously such elements as pre-production (research and related activities), production, installation, publication, touring.

The base curatorial fee and the time-based estimate of other work were based on a model of \$260/day, \$1,000/week and \$4,000/month. While moderately in excess of the current CMA pay scale, it was noted that institutions do not pay independents such items as vacation pay, pension, health insurance, UIC and other benefits, nor do they supply the ongoing research, administrative and infrastructure resources necessary to professional development and continuance.

As in the previous meetings, it was felt necessary to specify each aspect of the work undertaken for an exhibition or related project, and to set the fee according to those variables. It was anticipated that, in utilizing this fee scale, a mid-size exhibition requiring moderate research, together with installation and catalogue essay, would entail a fee of \$12,000-16,000. That in many instances this would represent a significant increase from many of the fees currently being paid to independent curators was indeed the point.

Those present undertook to meet with other independent curators in their communities with a view to circulating the agreement and, allowing also for changes through these discussions, obtaining signatures by professional independent curators who are in accord with this fee scale. In the absence of a formal association of independent curators, this accord with its signatories constitutes a working professional standard.

**Participants:** Renee Baert, Joan Borsa, Sigrid Dahle, Barbara Fischer, Vera Lemecha, Shirley Madill, Kitty Scott and Diana Sherlock

December 12, 1998

## THE LASALLE RIVER ACCORD

### Recommended Base Fee Schedule for Professional Independent Curators

This 1999-2000 fee scale is for professional fees, independent of expenses. It is intended to be broad enough to apply to any situation for which the independent curator might be contracted including exhibitions, performance series, video screenings, lecture series, symposia and so on.

A. Base Curatorial Fee (\*1): \$4,000

B. Fee scale for Pre-production (\*2), Production (\*3), Exhibition Installation, Post-production (\*4), Publication Production (\*5), Touring (\*6) or other equivalent work:

\$260/day, \$1,000/week, \$4,000/month, plus expenses

This fee is based on condensed time, i.e. an approximation of estimated full- and part-time work to be undertaken over an extended time period, condensed to an equivalent consecutive full-time period.

C. Publication: essay, interview, etc.: \$1 per word, \$1,000 minimum

D. Touring: curatorial residual: 25% of curatorial fee per venue plus, if applicable, installation fee per fee scale, expenses and administration fees

E. Charge for office infrastructure: negotiable

F. Cancellation fee: 50% of base curatorial fee plus research + related expenses

#### \* Appendix

(1) The base curatorial fee is intended to give acknowledgment and payment for what the curator already brings to the initial proposal to the presenting institution (or the invitation to propose/mount an exhibition), and which forms part of the built-in salary for institutional curators. This includes, for example:

- o Professional knowledge (of material practices and conceptual models, of work in the field);
- o Professional experience and intellectual development acquired independent of the institution that benefits the project;
- o Preliminary research in the development of the basic curatorial concept presented to the sponsoring institution (often including travel, studio visits, type [scale and complexity] of exhibition, etc);
- o Professional skills in preparation and production;
- o The office infrastructure that the independent curator supplies.

It is anticipated that the base curatorial fee would be paid in two installments: half in the pre-production phase and half in the production phase. The first installment would constitute a

cancellation fee (together with research fees paid) should the project not proceed to production.

- (2) Pre-production represents the development of this project from its initial concept to its final proposal stage, including research, development of project concept, selection of proposed artists/works, budget development, research travel, the formal written proposal, location of works and loan requirements, etc.
- (3) Production includes the work from the final proposal to the installation of the exhibition, including supplementary research as required by the project or unforeseen circumstances, administration as applicable (loan agreements, shipping, crating, negotiations with artists/institutions/lenders), preparation of didactic materials, etc. It does not include the installation itself, nor public lectures, panel discussions or related activities paid separately.
- (4) Post-production includes press and public relations, press kits, work with docents, public lectures.
- (5) Publication production includes work entailed in such tasks as liaison with designers, writers, artists; proof-reading, liaison regarding translation; organizing biographic and bibliographic materials, documentation and photographic material; editorial supervision regarding other texts and materials, credits and acknowledgements, photo captions, index; negotiation for copyright.

We recommend the institution budget for the services of a professional editor. Minimum of 20 publications [copies] allocated to the curator.

- (6) Touring may include, over and above the curatorial residual fee of 25% (and fees for installation, travel and per diem costs), [work related to] negotiations with receiving institutions, preparation of installation instructions as necessary, involvement in crating, shipping, insurance and related items.

**LaSalle River Accord Signatories:** Renee Baert, Joan Borsa, Sigrid Dahle, Barbara Fischer, Vera Lemecha, Shirley Madill, Kitty Scott and Diana Sherlock

January 25, 1999

This was followed by a meeting in Toronto, May 1999

## **TORONTO INDEPENDENT CURATORS NETWORK**

### **Proposed Fee Schedule**

1. Curator's fee should be not less than 25% of the total exhibition presentation budget.
  - This total does not include a catalogue budget, and does not entail any catalogue duties from the curator.
  - The total presentation budget is calculated by adding together all the following costs:
    - artist and curator fees
    - travel, accommodation and per diems
    - installation materials and supplies
    - technical assistance, equipment rental
    - signage, didactic materials

- framing, conservation
  - production costs for commissioned or site-specific work;
  - photographic documentation.
- This total presentation budget does not include: The gallery's promotional costs, e.g. invitation, opening reception, advertising.
  - Generally a curator's duties would include: research, production/installation, writing of press release and didactic materials (but not a full catalogue-type essay, which is calculated separately).
2. Curator's fee for coordinating a catalogue: 5% of total catalogue cost
  3. Curator's fee for exhibition tour should be 20-30% of exhibition fee charged per guest venue.
    - This fee functions like a royalty for work completed, rather than a fee for new duties.
    - This fee does not include administration/coordination of exhibition tour, which is the responsibility of the institution.
    - This fee does not include installation duties at tour venues, which would be paid for additionally if the curator is to oversee the installation himself/herself.

[\*CURATOR NOTE: The above fee scenario does not include shipping and related costs as part of the presentation budget used to calculate the curator's fee. If the curator is involved in helping to facilitate crating and shipping arrangements, in any way, one might argue that these costs should be included in the calculation. In fact such shipping implies out-of-town and/or out-of-country participation by artists, which usually indicates more complex coordination on the part of the curator and that might be reason alone for including these costs. K.Love, 2007]



*Safety Gear for Small Animals, Bill Burns, Director, produced by Doryphore Independent Curators and 9 public galleries; installation at Saidye Bronfmann Centre Gallery, Montreal, 2005. Photo: Paul Litherland.*

# 2.0 Researching a concept

**Curatorial practice develops mainly out of the examination of artistic practice. General wide-reaching observation over time will evolve into the formation of ideas for exhibitions and other art projects. The impetus may be a particular artist's work, or a certain trend or phenomenon in art making, or a growing interest in an issue (social, political, environmental, historic or other) that the curator sees reflected in the work of visual artists.**

## 2.1 Investigation

Once an idea or point of interest has been defined, curators should investigate further to determine if the project has conceptual depth. They must also assess the project's viability (if artwork is available, etc.).

### **Steps required to undertake this exploration include:**

- Reading books and catalogues on/by the artist(s) and publications that discuss relevant ideas and artwork. It is useful to learn about other exhibitions on the artist or the themes being explored. It would be rare to duplicate exactly a previous project. However, it is best to be aware of any crossovers.
- Conducting Internet research: search information on artists, exhibitions and themes. Some useful websites for Canadian art include:

The Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art/  
The Canadian Art Database website ([www.ccca.ca](http://www.ccca.ca)), which has information on artists, designers, writers (with texts on artists), all types of galleries, artist's sites, and other resources;

The Canada Council Art Bank website ([www.artbank.ca](http://www.artbank.ca)), which provides access to their collection in list form (access to images of selected works can also be arranged);

National Gallery of Canada/Cybermuse website (<http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/>), a research resource about the NGC collection;

- Consulting with colleagues
- Checking listserves, such as Akimbo ([www.akimbo.biz/](http://www.akimbo.biz/)), which provide up-to-date information on exhibitions, artist/curator talks and many other cultural events.
- Visiting studios and galleries (including the artist's dealer) and communicating with key artist(s). Note that a visit to an artist's studio need not be tied to the organization of a particular project as the curator may simply wish to become familiar with the artist's work generally or with a particular project. A studio visit can therefore be focused on information gathering with no expectation of a commitment. Artists will often appreciate constructive feedback about their work or opportunities for public exposure should the curator have suggestions to offer.

- Collecting materials from the artists or galleries including visuals, CVs, existing publications if available (these may need to be secured from publishers), artist's statements, etc. When possible, make copies of any materials that need to be returned (slides, etc.) so that you have the materials to work with while the project is in development.
- Travelling to see relevant exhibitions and/or collections.

## 2.2 Selecting the artists

A positive working relationship with the artist(s) will be important and, of course, can contribute to an energetic and informative discussion about the many options being considered for the exhibition.

If the project is a solo exhibition or involves only a small number of living artists, it is necessary to ask the artist(s) if they agree to the idea of including their work in the project and to the submission of a proposal to one or more galleries.

If the project is a thematic group show, the curator has the option of listing the artists as being under consideration, prior to approaching and confirming those artists. If the project is accepted by a gallery they will ask that the curator confirm all participants within a prescribed period of time. Artists must give approval for their participation in a project, for the particular selection of work, and for the selected gallery that will present the exhibition.

## 2.3. Writing the concept proposal

Start writing down ideas. This exercise helps to clarify the primary intentions of the project and the rationale for assembling this particular selection of artists and/or artworks. Grant application and other deadlines are very useful, as they force an articulation of the project's ideas. Develop a one-page description that identifies the focus of the project, a synopsis of background and relevant ideas, and an overview of the artwork you are considering.

Many curators initially choose a working title to identify the project simply, prior to being ready to select a final title. Be sure this working title is one you feel comfortable exposing to your peers, funders and others. It may not be used as a final title, therefore it's best to state its status by adding "working title" in brackets. Eventually you will want to choose a title that has not been used before, or is at least a variation of an existing title. A search on the Internet can be informative in this regard, but won't necessarily be comprehensive.

### **Questions for consideration:**

#### **What does the project call for intrinsically with respect to its scale and scope?**

If the project is a solo exhibition, identify the focus: new work (still to be produced and exhibited for the first time); a special project such as an intervention in the public realm or via a print or digital publication; a single body of work or a survey of work from a defined period of time or addressing a particular area of interest by the artist over time; or a more comprehensive retrospective.

If the project is a group exhibition based on a theme or representing a historic or contemporary trend or period of time, will it include contemporary or historic work, or both? Will it be concerned with a particular medium (photography, video or painting, for example) or be more wide-reaching? How many artists and works should be included to effectively convey the ideas in the project?

#### **What has already been done on this artist or artists, or this theme, and what is different about your project?**

This is not to suggest that presenting new work is more valuable than work from the past. The best art is of interest indefinitely and in varying ways during different times.

And presenting exactly the same work that has been shown in another centre can be valuable, especially if the work has not been seen at all in the proposed venue's city or has not been seen in recent years. The architectural space and audience of a new venue and a new curatorial presentation of the work can re-position artwork with a fresh perspective and context.

#### **Will the project be appropriate for a single venue producer or require the collaboration of several producers?**

If a project has high expenses in the area of equipment purchase and/or if a substantial publication is appropriate, or if a costly artist commission of new work is envisioned, and no single gallery is likely to have the required resources for the project, bringing in one or more other galleries as co-producers will be very beneficial.

[See section 3 - Finding a Venue].

## 2.4 Funding options for research

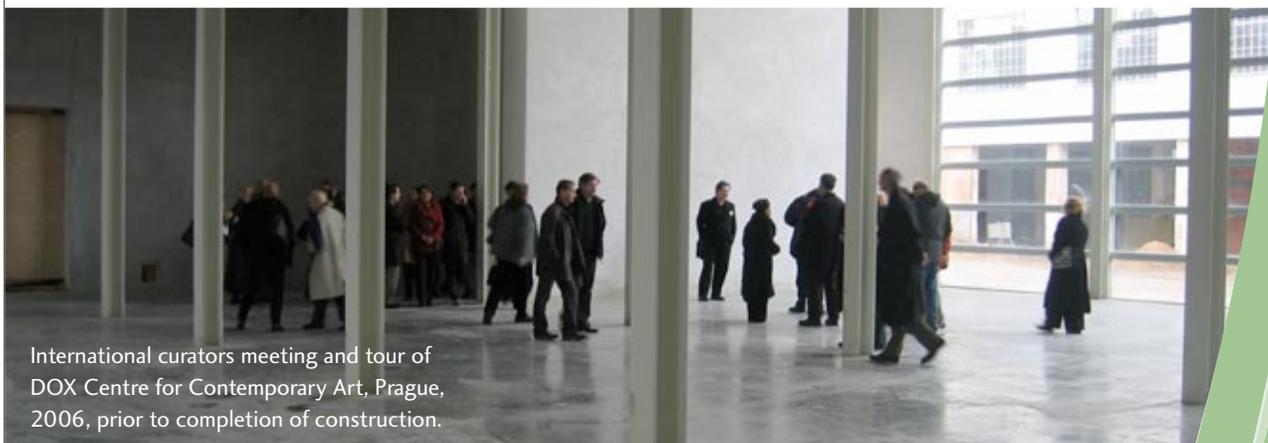
There are very few grant programs that fund research in visual art. Nonetheless, financial support will normally be needed given the time required to confirm artworks, develop texts and find one or more venues for your project, now that the basic thesis, the proposed (or “under consideration”) artists and the rationales for selection have been worked out. If you have an interested venue, they will sometimes contribute financially to research or support grant applications through their institution, where there is access to a wider range of funding options.

Note that some grant programs require information about outcomes and impacts from the project and often this can't be identified easily until after preliminary research is completed. As well, all grant programs have eligibility criteria, and some require that the curator have a track record of a certain size before applying.

Funding programs are always changing and you will need to research the various local, provincial and federal cultural agencies to find out what is available for individual curators, and what the criteria is for applying. Some options for funding are as follows:

### As an individual:

- Canada Council for the Arts ([www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca)) offers research and development grants for professional, independent critics and curators and travel grants. (As of 2007, eligibility criteria: To apply, a curator must have a minimum of three years experience in the field, three public exhibitions or publications).
- Canada Council for the Arts' Audience and Market Development program provides travel grants “to promote knowledge and appreciation of Canadian arts, to enhance the development of Canadian artists' careers nationally and internationally, and to provide ongoing access to professional Canadian artists and their works by both Canadian and foreign audiences.”
- The Canada Council for the Arts' International Residencies Program in Visual Arts is intended for professional artists working in visual arts, fine craft and independent criticism and curating.



International curators meeting and tour of DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague, 2006, prior to completion of construction.

Grants contribute toward subsistence, travel, accommodation and production costs, and residency fees to participate in an international residency (e.g. Paris, London, Berlin and elsewhere).

- The Canada Council also has programs to support curatorial residencies in institutions.
- Since late 2006, the BC Arts Council ([www.bcartscouncil.ca](http://www.bcartscouncil.ca)) accepts submissions from independent curators to their Project Assistance for Visual Artists program.
- Other Canadian provinces have funding programs that may relate to curatorial work. Check websites for provincial arts councils or cultural agencies. Note: If your project involves an artist from another province (not where the curator resides or where the project will be presented), it might be possible to apply to the provincial government where the artist resides for travel, shipping and other financial support, or for the artist to do so on behalf of your project.

- The Banff International Curatorial Institute ([www.banffcentre.ca/bici/](http://www.banffcentre.ca/bici/)) programs encompass a range of public activities including symposia, think-tanks, exhibitions and publications. The Institute also provides research opportunities from residencies to workshops, and training opportunities.

### **As part of a collective or non-profit society:**

- Canada Council for the Arts ([www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca)) offers project assistance. You must apply under the auspices of a non-profit society or collective of artists, curators or producers, and must have a record of production. A collective is three or more professionals who have a clear mandate and a mission to work together to accomplish goals.

Note: The Canada Council offers a Glossary of Council Terms that is useful beyond its relevance for grant applications. (See [www.canadacouncil.ca/help/lj127228791697343750.htm](http://www.canadacouncil.ca/help/lj127228791697343750.htm).)

[See also Section 7 - Fundraising.]

# 3.0 Finding a venue for the project



*Memory Palace [3artists in the library],*  
a collaboration by Doryphore Independent  
Curators, Vancouver Public Library/ Central  
Library and City of Vancouver Public Art  
Program. Aperture banners by Carol Sawyer at  
the VPL, 2008. Photo: Robert Keziere.

**Occasionally independent curators produce all aspects of a project, including renting or borrowing space, undertaking all the fundraising, and exhibition implementation/marketing. Although there are positive aspects to this approach (e.g. complete control over decisions, ability to be more spontaneous and to utilize unconventional spaces), this is an enormous amount of work and could involve liabilities that are difficult for an individual to take responsibility for (insurance, etc).**

There is no doubt that an exhibition (and the curator) can benefit enormously from having an institutional producer or partner. Often a single public gallery, museum or artist-run centre is all that is required, but galleries within cities and in different geographic regions can collaborate on projects for reasons of efficiency and cost-sharing. It is also clear that more ambitious projects (including substantial publications) can be more feasible if two or more co-producing galleries are involved. Funding and labour resources can be pooled to create a larger financial base for the project.

An emerging curator is probably best to get a few single-venue, non-touring projects under her/his belt before venturing into the multi-partner/touring exhibition terrain. For one thing, curatorial funding from government grant programs will not be forthcoming until the curator has a good track record of presenting art projects publicly.

[See section 13 - Exhibition Circulation]

The following text assumes that the curator's project will be produced by a single gallery.

Most galleries make decisions about their exhibition program one to two years in advance in order to have time to fundraise, secure loans, develop public programs and more. Some galleries book exhibitions even further in advance, while artist-run centres occasionally schedule within the year. For a curator, the timeline for most exhibitions from conception to completion is generally one to three years, although more spontaneous projects do also occur.

One thing to consider prior to approaching a venue to produce an exhibition is whether or not the project could tour following the inaugural show. Tour development work – to facilitate the circulation of an exhibition after the inaugural presentation – can often take a year or more.

## 3.1 Rationale

Once the general concept, the scale of the proposed exhibition and potential artists (and possibly artworks) are determined and articulated in written form, the curator should research potential public galleries to determine the preferred venue to produce and host the project. Where would it be appropriate to show this work?

### Questions to consider:

- Is it important that the producing gallery be local (where the curator and/or the artist resides) or within the region?
- Should galleries in other regions of Canada be considered?
- In exceptional circumstances, is there a good reason for approaching a gallery or museum outside of Canada?

For new curators it is often best to think locally.

Develop a preferred gallery list in order of preference. Keep in mind that the first-choice gallery may not work out for a wide variety of reasons.

Occasionally curators will approach two or more galleries simultaneously, either in the same city or in different cities. It is best to state this in the cover letter or verbally in order that galleries understand it is a competitive situation. It is a more common practice, however, to approach galleries one at a time within the same city.

Familiarize yourself with the selected gallery's physical exhibition space, history of programming, current activities and audience base. It is essential to know something about the gallery you are approaching and this will help you to determine if the gallery is appropriate for your project.

### The main points to consider:

#### Gallery mandate

What are the gallery's priorities in terms of exhibitions? Does the gallery specialize in one or more areas? (For example: contemporary art, emerging artists, photography and media arts, the intersection between image and text, regional or international art, art relevant to the gallery collection, etc). Does your project fit the gallery's mandate? Often a gallery's website will provide information on the mission and mandate, previous exhibitions and other programs, and occasionally the gallery floor plans.

#### Institutional context

If the gallery is part of a larger context (a university or art college/institute, a community centre, an architectural complex or cultural precinct of arts organizations), this may offer educational, scholarly or community activity opportunities, or audience demographics which are particularly appropriate for the project.

## Location

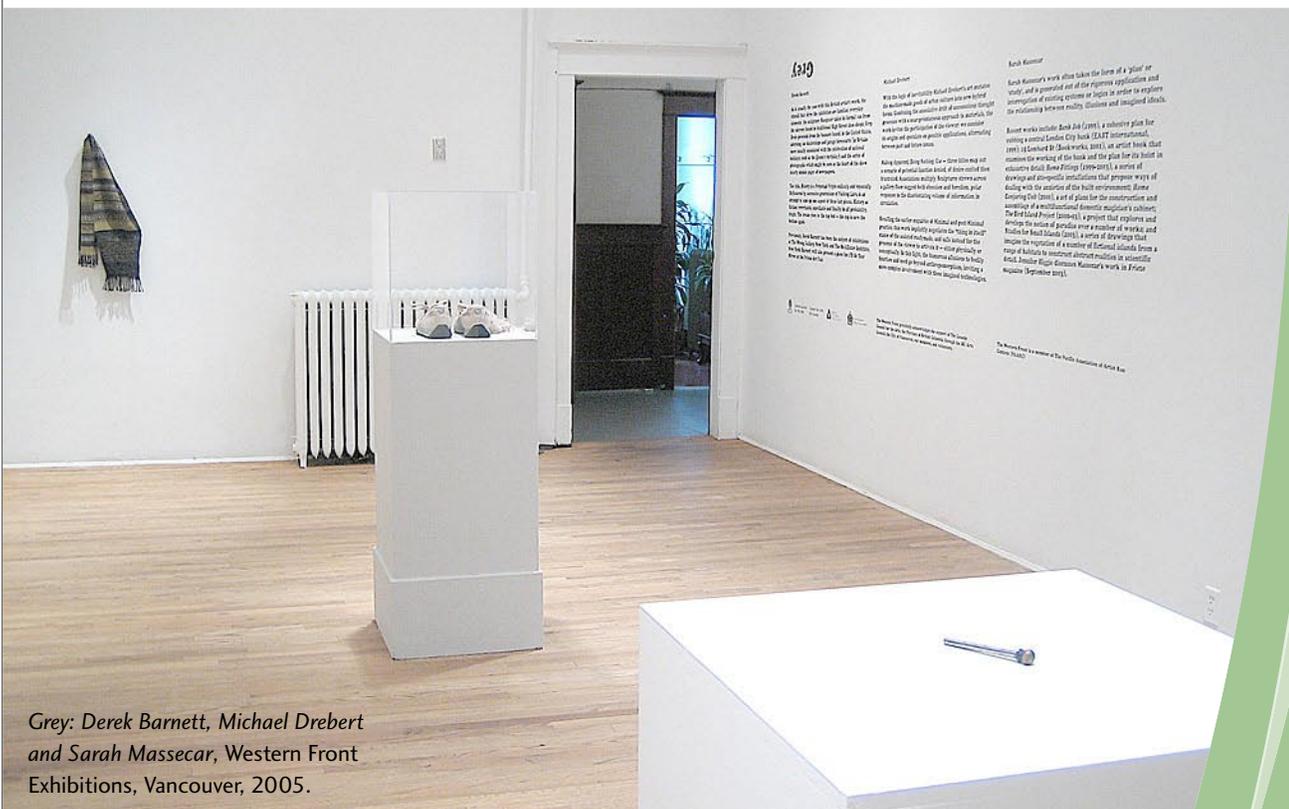
The exhibition theme may be relevant to the gallery's site or community (related to geography, history, current affairs, etc.).

## Space configuration and size

Your considerations will need to include ceiling heights, which for some works are important. Will your exhibition work well spatially in this gallery? Will the space augment or restrict the project concept?

## Staffing and equipment resources

If your exhibition has special staffing or technical needs, you will have to determine if the gallery can accommodate those needs. For instance, film projection requires equipment not often included in gallery inventory and more daily staff time than video/DVD projection, and artworks with security issues will require special staff and/or security equipment/procedures. If you cannot determine this prior to submitting a proposal, these issues can be raised if/when the gallery discusses producing the show with you.



Grey: Derek Barnett, Michael Drebert and Sarah Massecar, Western Front Exhibitions, Vancouver, 2005.



*Jan Peacock: Reader by the Window,*  
1993, Presentation House Gallery,  
North Vancouver. Photo: Robert Keziere.

## 3.2 Exhibition proposal

Review your exhibition proposal. Keep in mind that galleries receive many proposals for exhibitions from artists, curators and institutions. An effective proposal package will capture the reader's attention in the first few moments. The writing should be clear and concise, yet informative and well organized. Do not assume that the gallery contact will know about the artist(s) you are proposing; you will need to include short descriptions on the nature of the work.

### Proposals to galleries should include:

#### Cover letter (350-500 words)

The particulars of the venue and its appropriateness for the project can be addressed in the cover letter (spatial considerations for the works, the relevance to mandate, etc). The letter should highlight, in summary form, the concept for the show and the significance of the artist(s) and/or artist's approach. There is a risk of skim-reading if the cover letter is longer than one to one-and-a-half pages in length.

#### Project description (500-800 words)

This should include a working title, the general concept and a brief discussion of the artist(s). The description can be strictly about the exhibition itself and not refer to the gallery being approached in order that it can be used for numerous submissions. If the project includes a site-specific aspect, the gallery can be referred to generically and not by name. The gallery specifics regarding the site-specific component(s) can be addressed in the cover letter.

#### List of proposed or potential artists (if not a solo show)

#### Brief biographical paragraphs on artist(s)

If no more than three artists are in the exhibition, include a CV for each.

#### One or two published items on each artist, if available

These items can come from catalogues, brochures, periodicals, etc.

#### Visuals for proposed artists

It is critically important to have strong visuals representing the artist's work. Digital files should be high quality (enough to be projected), but not so large that they take too long to load. Visuals should be of work selected for exhibition or related work: a CD of digital images is usually preferred; small photographs, 35 millimetre slides or larger-format transparencies may also be acceptable. Submit a maximum of 10 to 20 images and a numbered list of works including artist, title and dates. (Note: Some funding agencies, such as the Canada Council, will now only accept digital files. The Canada Council provides guidelines on their website: [www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca).)

#### CV of curator and one or two previous essays or publications, if available

Only a CV is necessary. However, other materials can be informative if the curator is not known to the gallery.

[See section 1.3 on Writing a CV]

Note that a preliminary budget is not required at this stage.

## 3.3 Proposal submission and follow-up

### Contact

Direct contact of some kind (telephone or in person) can be very helpful initially. However, sometimes the gallery will want to review the proposal before agreeing to a meeting. If the gallery is in the curator's city of residence, telephone to arrange a brief meeting and/or delivery of the proposal. It is best to find out ahead of time if the gallery is willing to accept a proposal. It is possible they will be unable to accept proposals at that particular time (due to an overload of proposals for consideration, an overbooked program, etc).

If the gallery location is not local for the curator, send the proposal by mail or courier. Be sure that any publications and visual materials are well protected so there is no damage en route. Most galleries appreciate the inclusion of a self-addressed, stamped envelope (S.A.S.E) for the return of the proposal; some will only return this material if you include such an envelope. CAUTION: If the proposal contains materials that you value and would not wish to lose, a courier service should be used.

### Gallery reply

A reply will take a few days to several months. Sometimes if a proposal is of interest but the gallery cannot commit right away, the proposal will be held for many months, even for six to 18 months. Most galleries will eventually respond to a proposal. However, some respond only if they want to discuss the project for their program. If you require an answer within a certain time period, the cover letter should state this very clearly ("at your earliest convenience" or "soon" will not be effective.)

Curators should expect to have to follow up and it is acceptable to request information regarding the status of the proposal after a few months. Be forewarned: A gallery that holds on to a proposal for a long time may still come to a negative decision, but don't take silence, necessarily, as a "no"!

The gallery may request additional information in order to make a decision, and this may include a few financial details. If they are serious about considering the project they may wish to meet with you and/or develop a preliminary budget prior to making a decision.

[See section 6 - Budgeting]

### Rejection

If the gallery declines the proposal, do not take it personally. Programming a gallery is a complex endeavour and there are many factors that a gallery has to take into consideration when doing this job. It is important to remember that a rejection is often in no way a comment on the value of your project, but may relate to gallery scheduling, financial resources, responsibilities to specific communities, existing commitments to artists and others, overall programming priorities and seasonal or annual themes. Keep trying! Move on to the next venue on your list. This is also an opportunity to review your proposal and consider whether it should be more concise or whether key information should be added that might help with a gallery's decision.

# 4.0 Venue confirmation

## Congratulations! Once there is a commitment from a gallery to produce the proposed exhibition, the following activities are recommended:

### 4.1 Follow-up

Send a letter of thanks and confirm your commitment to organizing the exhibition for the gallery. Even though the two parties should already understand the arrangement, the letter should reiterate whether this is a commitment to support research for the development of an exhibition concept (with the focus to be clarified and/or artists still to be selected), or to support the production of an exhibition that is already well-conceived with artists selected (and sometimes specific works). This is not always clear-cut; at times it is assumed the research is part of the primary curatorial fee/contract and not a separate agreement.

Sometimes a curator will be responsible only for core curatorial tasks: concept development, exhibition list, contact information for artists and lenders, curatorial text for the exhibition, and their presence for the installation and opening. The gallery would in this case be responsible for all loan requests, exhibition/reproduction permissions, negotiation of fees, solicitation

of expense quotations, assemblage of all promotional information, etc. Other times, the curator is asked to take on some or many of the latter tasks. Be sure there is as much clarity as possible about areas of responsibility.

The gallery's expression of commitment (verbal or in writing) should include basic procedural information for the curator, including when to expect a contract. The curator should anticipate a contract or letter of agreement, as well as a timeline or critical path, within a few weeks of the gallery's commitment to the show. Some galleries may not do this habitually; the curator is wise to ask for these documents in order to avoid misunderstandings or conflicts in the future.

Most galleries still send contracts in paper form via courier or express post. Others are now sending contracts by email in PDF format (read-only), to be signed and returned in a more expedient manner. Each gallery will have a policy about this.

## 4.2 Curator's contract or letter of agreement and critical path

The commitment to produce a project cannot be considered a certainty until there is a signed agreement between the producing gallery and the curator.

Keep in mind that the contract will be written from the perspective of the institution. It is up to the curator to consider her/his own interests. This may require some diplomatic negotiation. The curator may wish to discuss certain clauses and propose alternative terms or wording. The gallery may or may not be flexible in this regard but should be open to receiving inquiries.

The negotiations can address whether the gallery is willing to support the idea of touring the exhibition and/or producing a publication. Is the gallery prepared to explore potential venues for a tour and/or fundraise for a publication, with the final decision dependent on results? It is helpful to know early on what scale of support the gallery is considering. If these terms cannot be confirmed at this stage, an indication of intent can be requested. A statement of intent may be included in a cover letter rather than in the contract for the curator. Note that many galleries do not normally tour exhibitions or publish catalogues. There is always a first time, however, so it does not hurt to ask. Some galleries will eagerly embrace an ambitious vision for a project.

The document may take the form of a letter of agreement or a more formal contract. The gallery may choose to separate the research component (if there is one acknowledged) from the exhibition (and also the touring and/or publication components), or combine all phases of the work into one document.

### Preliminary research

If the agreement is to begin with preliminary research only, with any further commitment dependent on the results of research, often a simple letter of agreement will be used.

Whether a letter or a contract, it usually includes the following:

- A working title for the project and a brief description of the concept;
- A timeline for research, which may include anticipated travel (if applicable), due dates for an interim report and/or a final exhibition proposal;
- A description of what is required for the completed exhibition proposal, which usually includes a detailed concept description, list of works, logistical information (i.e. technical requirements, location of works to be borrowed) and a detailed budget;
- Agreed-upon fees and expenses and a payment schedule;
- A statement that the gallery's obligation to produce the exhibition is contingent on approval of the final exhibition proposal.



Marianne Nicolson, *Bakwina`tsi: the Container for Souls*, 2006, Artspeak Gallery, Vancouver. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Photo: Scott Massey, courtesy of Artspeak.

## Exhibition production

A more formal contract is generally used to outline the terms for a clearly defined exhibition. The contract will include details about areas of responsibility for both the gallery and the curator.

### The contract should include:

#### Basic information

The contract will include the exhibition title (or working title), public exhibition dates at the gallery (dates may be tentative), and a brief description of the project, along with the type of exhibition (group/solo) and the name(s) of artist(s), if known.

#### Curatorial fee (total)

Clarity around the issue of fees and what is required in exchange is essential. A schedule of curatorial fee payments is usually related to specific results or deliverables (materials required and activities to be completed by certain dates). Sometimes the first installment is paid upon receipt of a signed contract.

[See section 6.2.1 on Notes on Curatorial Fees],

#### Expectations

The contract should include any additional expectations of the curator, such as the provision of a curatorial lecture, gallery tour(s) of the exhibition for gallery staff/docents, text(s) for marketing tools, and more.

If the curator has specific expectations for the exhibition that affect, or depend on, in-house activities, these should be addressed. These might include special considerations regarding didactics (wall labels, introductory statement, etc.), brochures, exhibition design, advertising and public relations, education program, etc., however many of these details will not have been considered at all yet.

## Financial commitments

Any additional financial commitments should be detailed. For example, will the gallery provide administrative funds for the curator's costs such as fax, phone, couriers, copying, image scans or slide duplication, etc. (usually a few hundred dollars)? Will the gallery cover curatorial travel costs if determined to be necessary? (Reimbursement for travel costs is usually provided upon submission of invoices and receipts).

## Critical path or timeline

This can be presented in the form of a chronological list referring to deliverables, with deadlines, anticipated travel and other scheduling points. The gallery may ask the curator to prepare an initial draft for this timeline. (This document is often sent as an addendum with the contract). A deadline will be set for the delivery of a final exhibition list, often calculated backwards from the deadline of the exhibition itself (usually six to 12 months prior to opening date).

[CLICK HERE FOR DOWNLOADABLE PDFS OF TWO SAMPLE CURATOR CONTRACTS, AND CRITICAL PATH OR SEE PAGES 34-40.](#)

## Cancellation terms

Some contracts include a termination fee to be paid to the curator if the gallery must cancel the project. This should be mandatory for large projects as a cancellation results in loss of subsequent revenue for the curator. It also acknowledges that there is a considerable amount of curatorial work done on speculation for many months prior to determining if a project will proceed with the support of an institution, and it will also take some time to develop a new project or find a new partner to fill the gap caused by the cancellation. The contract terms will also address what happens if the cancellation is caused by the curator.

## Guest Curator Contract

Between **[Name of Gallery]** (the Gallery)  
and **[Name of Curator]** (Guest Curator)

**[The Gallery]** agrees to engage the services of **[Name of curator]** as Guest Curator to develop and assemble an exhibition entitled **[title]** to be held at the **[name of Gallery]** for the dates **[exhibition dates]**. The general concept for this exhibition, as proposed by the Guest Curator, has been accepted by the Gallery. It is understood that this concept will not change without approval of the Gallery.

### I. The general responsibilities of the Guest Curator shall be as follows:

**1. Assembling Works:** To provide all necessary information for loans from artists, individuals, or other institutions and to obtain, with the assistance of the Gallery, all necessary permissions and releases for the exhibition and transit period(s). The Gallery will forward loan agreements to artists and institutions as instructed by the Guest Curator.

**2. Installation:** To devise a concept for the installation of the exhibition and provide the Gallery well in advance all technical and material requirements for the installation. To consult with the Gallery on all plans for installation, and to personally supervise the installation of the exhibition. To provide all support material in electronic format for the exhibition such as a didactic panel [# words], labels, artist statements and biographies.

**3. Wall / newsletter Text:** To provide the Gallery with a [500] word text about the exhibition for publication in its newsletter [*title of newsletter*], and/or use as a didactic wall panel, by [date].

**4. Artist Fees:** To forward to the Gallery full names of participating artists, their addresses including postal codes, social insurance numbers where necessary, by [date], so that the payment of artist's fees can be expedited.

**5. Budget:** To keep within the constraints of the exhibition budget and to discuss with both Directors and Curators any potential discrepancies as the project progresses. The Gallery must authorize all expenditures in advance and in writing. Unauthorized expenditures will be the responsibility of the Guest Curator.

**6. Liaison between the Gallery and Artists:** To act as primary contact for artists in the exhibition and to be available at reasonable times for consultation with the Head of Public Programs, who will be responsible for exhibition animation.

**7. Public Programs and Public Relations:** The Guest Curator will assist in developing a promotional plan and will be available for any reasonable requests for press interviews. She/he will also agree to provide information as requested for the Gallery's media release [# words]; brief the Gallery's staff about the exhibition; and assist with research for background material on the exhibiting artists for a binder for the exhibition space.

**8. Ancillary Activities:** Arrangements for any other activities will be made separately. Discussion will take place separately with the Gallery's Head of Public Programs about possible educational and ancillary events.

**9. Return of Work:** To provide the Gallery with relevant information concerning artists and lenders to enable the Gallery to make transportation arrangements for the return of artwork.

**10. Catalogue** [if applicable]: To plan the catalogue for the exhibition, working with staff from the Gallery, and provide a general concept and instructions for design, obtain photographic material and requisite reproduction clearance, artist's biographies in ready-to-publish format, a list of works in the exhibition (metric format), photographic captions, credits and any other necessary catalogue information. To write an essay not more than [#] words discussing the concept, the works in the exhibition, and to provide clean electronic copy of the material ready for publication. The final text of the catalogue must be in the hands of the Gallery on or before [date]. A termination fee of [\$\_] will be offered if the Gallery chooses not to publish the text.

**11. Copyright:** The Gallery commissioned the text from the Guest Curator. The Guest Curator will hold the intellectual property rights and grant reasonable use of the material to the Gallery. Both parties will require permission from the other party if they wish to re-publish the essay in the future. The copyright for photographs used in the catalogue remains with the artists and/or photographers.

**12. Circulation:** Given interest from other galleries in presenting the exhibition, the Guest Curator will provide all necessary text material for use in [funding agency] grant application(s) to help with the circulation of the exhibition and the publication. Should the exhibition tour, the guest curator will be paid a curator's fee, an installation fee, and accommodation, travel and per diem as related to the tour. A specific budget as well as a separate written agreement with the Guest Curator will be prepared in the event of confirmation of a tour.

**13. Fee and Work Schedule:** Provided all anticipated funding is obtained and received as planned, and provided all other conditions herein have been met to their satisfaction, the Gallery will pay the Guest Curator a fee of [\$\_\_\_] payable as follows and following the general work schedule for the project:

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| \$ | 1. Upon signing of contract; for project research [if applicable]     |
| \$ | 2. Upon receipt and approval of final exhibition proposal, due [DATE] |
| \$ | 3. Upon receiving final newsletter text (didactic panel), due [DATE]  |
| \$ | 4. On installation and opening of exhibition                          |
| \$ | 5. Fee for Curatorial talk  |
| \$ | 6. Installation fee/day (not to exceed [#] days)                      |
| \$ | 7. Upon receiving final edited essay for publication [If applicable]  |

**II. The general responsibilities of the Gallery shall be as follows:**

**14. The Gallery** will prepare and send the official loan forms to secure artworks for the length of the exhibition. In addition, the Gallery will arrange for the packing, shipping and return of the works.

**15. Installation:** To provide required technical assistance, preparation, and all other requirements for the installation of the exhibition.

**16. Fees:** To ensure payment of all artist fees and Guest Curator's fees and reimbursements for services and materials according to the budget. The Gallery will ensure payment of travel costs (economy), per diem [\$\_\_\_]/day and accommodations for the guest curator for approved travel.

**17. Promotion:** To be responsible for all promotion and publicity for the exhibition.

**18. Administration:** To provide adequate administrative support to the Guest Curator for the completion of the project and any grant applications.

**19. Catalogue:** To oversee the production of the catalogue from the Guest Curator's concept and materials including working with designers and printers, final editing of material, and proofreading. The Gallery reserves final editorial rights over all accepted written material. The Guest Curator will receive [#] free copies of the catalogue and each artist will receive [#] copies.

**20. Termination of agreement:** This agreement can be terminated with a 60 day notice period by either party for failure to fulfill the terms of the agreement with appropriate payment for work completed. If the agreement must be terminated due to circumstances beyond the control of either party, neither will be penalized nor held responsible.

**21.** If the Gallery terminates the agreement due to circumstances having nothing to do with the Guest Curator, the Gallery will pay for work done according to the schedule of fee payments linked to deliverables, and as well, a termination fee to compensate for loss of subsequent income. [Note: A termination fee is not necessarily common practice but may be requested.]

**21.** In the event of a dispute between any of the parties, the parties all agree that the initial recourse is to seek arbitration rather than taking legal action. A mutually agreeable arbiter would be selected by the parties to conduct the arbitration.

**22.** Both parties agree to carry out all other responsibilities to ensure the excellence and timely completion of the project.

A critical path, Schedule A, is attached and is considered part of this contract.

Signatures:

Signed on behalf of  
**[Name of Gallery]**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**[Name], Director or Chief Curator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**[Name], Guest Curator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

[Gallery name]  
[Gallery address]  
[Gallery contact information]

## Curatorial Agreement

Between **[Gallery name]**,  
henceforth known as the “Gallery”  
and  
Curator under Contract **[curator name]**,  
henceforth known as the “Curator”

**[Gallery name]** intends to present an exhibition of art works entitled **[exhibition title]** and the parties agree together as follows:

**[Curator name]** agrees to undertake research and curatorial duties on **[title]** in relation to the organisation of an exhibition to be held at **[Gallery]** from **[dates]**.

### RESPONSIBILITIES: EXHIBITION

- 1. The Curator** will liaise with Gallery Contact, **[Name]**, regarding works for the exhibition and, as necessary, issues arising from loan requests regarding budget, conservation, photography, equipment, shipping, facility reports, insurance arrangements etc.
- 2. The Curator** will undertake preliminary negotiations regarding all loans on behalf of the Gallery with lending institutions and individuals and will respond to all inquiries regarding selection and suitability of the works. The Gallery will respond to all inquiries regarding practical aspects of packing and shipping, insurance, environment, etc. that are the responsibilities of the institution.
- 3. The Curator** shall, on or before **[date]**, determine all artworks and the conditions of loans that comprise a complete list of all confirmed items to be exhibited in the exhibition. This list of exhibition content must provide titles, media, dates, dimensions (in centimetres; height preceding width preceding depth), and the name, street and email address and telephone number of each lender. These lists will be provided to the gallery in hard copy and digital format.
- 4. The Gallery** will send formal institutional loan requests and forms to all lenders in a timely manner to officially confirm loans. In the case of borrowing work from other institutions, the Gallery will send requests as soon as possible after the curator provides information regarding the artwork to be requested, in order to determine the feasibility of the loan.
- 5. The Gallery** will make appropriate shipping arrangements once all signed loan forms are received.
- 6. The Curator** will advise the Gallery of any special installation or conservation requirements for accepted works.
- 7. The Curator** will discuss the exhibition’s installation considerations with the Gallery Contact at all stages.
- 8. The Curator** will identify and make necessary arrangements with the artists and lenders to obtain the necessary photographs/digital images for web site use and will apprise the gallery of any approximate costs before undertaking final arrangements.
- 9. The Gallery** will provide reproduction quality installation photos for agreed upon works for publication and/or web site and reasonable visual documentation of the exhibition for the curators’ records.

10. [Exhibition title], as proposed, is recognized as the intellectual property of the Curator and the Curator can remount the exhibition elsewhere with appropriate credit for the Gallery as producers of the initial version. If the Gallery is unable for any reason to mount the exhibition as agreed, the Curator can mount it elsewhere. The Gallery will not subsequently produce the exhibition in whole or in part, without the written agreement of the Curator.

[May also include the following item:]

11. **The Gallery** intends to produce a print publication specifically for [Exhibition title] as conceived by the Curator. [Include anticipated publication date, items required from the Curator, and who will be responsible for catalogue coordination.]

## FEES AND EXPENSES

12. In consideration of the satisfactory performance of the terms of this contract **the Gallery** shall make payment to **the Curator** for curatorial work & travel.

### Exhibition Fee

Upon signing of contract	\$
Upon receipt of preliminary exhibition list and project description following research	\$
Upon receipt of confirmed exhibition list and provision of basic PR texts, label info, etc.	\$
Upon opening of exhibition plus installation fees as budgeted	\$
Writing Fee [if applicable] payable upon receipt of curatorial essay	\$

**Total: \$**

### Travel & accommodation

Research travel [if applicable]	\$
Opening & Installation	\$

**Total: \$**

### 13. Travel/Expense

Cash advances for travel to be undertaken can be made available upon the Curator's request to the Gallery, or reimbursement made concluding travel, for receipts for expenses incurred. All travel/administrative expenses require receipts. The Gallery will assume the cost of relevant travel with respect to accommodation, transportation, taxi, meals, etc., provided such travel is authorised in advance.

**The Gallery** will reimburse the Curator for out-of-pocket expenses for long distance calls, couriers, postage, reproducing images, copying and printing associated with the project, according to an agreed upon maximum.

It is understood that the Gallery is not responsible for unauthorised expenditures incurred by the Curator.

### TERMINATION:

It is understood and agreed that this contract shall remain in force unless it is terminated under the following conditions

14. **The Gallery** may terminate the contract if there is sufficient cause for doing so. The phrase 'sufficient cause' means: Failure to comply with any of the conditions of the contract; Inability for any reason to continue the research contracted; Conduct of the Curator, which is prejudicial to the interest of the Gallery.

**15. The Curator** may terminate the contract if the Gallery fails to comply with its contractual obligations in ways that threaten the completion of the project; or if there is an inability for any reason to continue the research contracted.

**16.** Either party may terminate this agreement by giving the other party 14 days notice after which this agreement terminates. If the agreement is terminated prior to term, **the Gallery** shall pay the Curator for services performed in accordance with this agreement within 14 days after the effective date of termination.

**17.** In the event of termination of this contract by **the Curator** or **the Gallery** the fees will be paid as per the completion of the work accomplished to that date under the terms of the contract. If the project is cancelled by the Gallery before completion and due to no fault of the curators, along with the fees due for work, the Gallery will pay a one-time fee for compensation of lost work and opportunity of [ \$\_\_\_\_ ].

**18.** In the event that any part of this agreement on the part of **the Curator** or **the Gallery** shall be prevented by an Act of God, physical disability, the acts or regulations of duly constituted public authorities, strike, civil tumult, war, epidemic, interruption or delay of transportation services or other cause beyond their control, each shall be relieved of their obligations hereunder during the period such prevention exists. It is understood and agreed that there shall be no claim for damages by either party of this agreement;

**19. REPRESENTATION:**

It is understood that the Curator is not an agent of the Gallery with the exception of negotiating loan and photographic agreements with respect to *[Exhibition title]* and has no authority to make other contracts or representations on behalf of the Gallery.

**INSURANCE:**

**20. The Gallery** will provide coverage for the Curator under their professional liability insurance policy for the term of the Curator's work on *[Exhibition title]* for the Gallery.

[Note: More commonly, the Curator is responsible for her/his own liability insurance.]

**21.** It is understood that there shall be no waiver or modification of any of the terms of this contract except in the form of a written amendment, which has been signed by both parties; It is understood that this contract may not be assigned or sublet in whole or in part.

Signatures:

**[Gallery name]**

\_\_\_\_\_

[print name and title]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Curator** under Contract

\_\_\_\_\_

[print name]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[Gallery name]

[Gallery address]

[Gallery contact information]

## Schedule A

### Critical Path

[Exhibition Title]

[Gallery name]

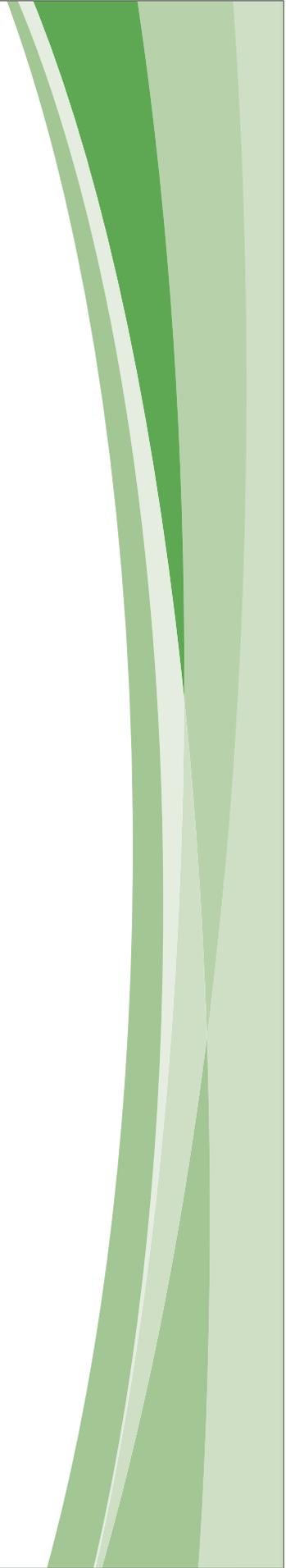
Dates in left column provide a sample timeline for tasks. Time span for tasks can vary substantially. Asterisk items [\*] relate to catalogue; may not be relevant to the agreement.

#### Year One:

January - November	Curatorial research and project development, following confirmation of agreement with Gallery and signing of contract
December 1	Curator to provide final list of works, complete with title, medium, size (in metric) and insurance values; list of addresses of lenders, complete with postal codes and fax/phone numbers; requirements for installation (equipment, spatial needs, etc.)
September 15	Gallery: Grant application(s) for [funding source(s)]

#### Year Two:

January 15	Copy for newsletter [# words] to be provided by Curator. Curator to supply images for newsletter, to be produced by Gallery.
January 30	Gallery issues loan forms Gallery initiates shipping and insurance arrangements
May 1	Images proposed by Curator and copyright negotiated for publication and promotion by the Gallery. Curator and artists' biographical texts provided by Curator
May 1	*Curator's final draft of catalogue text submitted to the Gallery
May 15	*Edited draft submitted to Curator
May 20	*Curator to submit final text with revisions in electronic format; include all photographic material required for publication
June 1	*Final essay and other materials [and translations if relevant] sent to Curator by Gallery. All materials sent by Gallery to designer including photography.
June 15	Shipping arrangements for artworks finalized by Gallery
July	Arrangements made by the Gallery for artists'/curator's travel and accommodation
July	Gallery prepares press release and produces invitations
July 30	Curator submits names and addresses for invitations (with postal codes)
August	Gallery: Invitations mailed
August 15	Gallery: Prepare fee cheques for artists, others
Week of August 15	Arrival of shipped work at Gallery; *arrival of catalogues
Final week of August	Installation of exhibition. Curator will be available this week to talk to animateurs and staff about the project. Date(s) and time to be confirmed with Public Programs
<b>September 2</b>	<b>Exhibition opening;</b> Curator present
September 3	Curator's talk at Gallery
Late Sept/October	Arrangements made for installation photography
November 7 - 9	Dismantlement and dispersal of exhibition



# 5.0 Completing the project concept and artist selection

**Once the curator has confirmed a producing gallery and has received a contract for the work, she/he can proceed with completing work on the exhibition concept and the selection of art. This may take many months.**

Continue doing research and follow-up studio and gallery visits and/or other communications with artists, and review artworks under consideration.

Develop a working timeline based on the critical path (mentioned above) that includes additional curatorial project management tasks with achievable deadlines. Keep the list handy and check it regularly.

Consider the thematic sections of the exhibition that you wish to represent (this can be relevant for a solo show as well as group exhibitions) and what kind of balance you wish to have overall. For group exhibitions, in addition to representing distinct ideas that allow divisions within the exhibition (or another organizing principle – for instance, one that relies on a chronological format to convey the evolution

of an art practice or a historical or social phenomenon), the curator should weigh the representation of genders and cultures, of local/national/international artists (as is relevant to the project), the range of mediums, and other pertinent factors.

[See sections 5.1, 5.2]

The curator will need to secure agreements in principle regarding the loan of artwork, sometimes prior to finalizing the exhibition list or getting the final approval of the gallery. The procedure for this is very similar to making a formal loan request and is best done in writing. The letter should include a statement that the curator is in the process of securing a producing venue and wishes to check on the artist's/lender's willingness to participate, and the availability of the artwork, before finalizing the exhibition proposal.



Makiko Hara, Candice Hopkins installing Lida Abdul exhibition, Centre A, Vancouver, 2008. Photo by Debra Zhou.

## 5.1 The artist – invitations to participate and preliminary loan requests

Artists should be advised of, and approve, the inclusion of their work in an exhibition, even if the work is not coming from them. The curator will do this either informally by telephone, or formally by email or regular mail, to confirm their interest. If the curator is not well known to the artist (or the dealer/agent representing the artist), this communication is often best initiated in written form in order to include information about the curator and the project.

It is essential to treat this initial letter as a proposal in which you are effectively making a case for the artist's participation. The curator's credentials should be concisely stated; this can be done with a paragraph in the letter and an attached professional biography (in paragraph form) or a CV. As well, the producing gallery's details and credentials should be outlined. Artists must carefully consider their decisions for the presentation of their work. Anticipating in advance what their concerns might be will often help secure a positive response.

If an artist does not wish to be included in an exhibition, their decision must be respected, regardless of the fact that alternative loans of their work might be possible.

If the exhibition is a group show it is likely that artists will want to know who else will be included. Indicate in your letter any additional artists who are confirmed or under consideration. This is a delicate matter, as it is not considered appropriate to cite artists' names unless it is very likely or certain they will agree to participate. (Similarly, if the artists on your exhibition list change substantially after securing approvals, the initial artists who agreed should be informed of the changes.)

Obviously if the artist is also the lender of the artwork, a single letter can address both the request for permission for inclusion in the project and the loan of specific work.

## 5.2 Institutions and corporate/individual collectors

Preliminary requests for loans of art will need to be made to public institutions and corporate or individual collectors well in advance (most institutions require a minimum of six to twelve months notice). It is often wise for the curator to make

an informal inquiry regarding availability of artwork (it may be committed to another project during the relevant time period). However the formal loan request should be prepared and submitted by the producing gallery, and consultation with

them regarding your preliminary inquiry is appropriate. Your loan inquiry will need to outline your credentials, in addition to the project's intent. Of particular concern will be the curatorial rationale for including this particular work in the project, as well as issues around context and security and environmental controls for the art.

[See section 8, [Artists Agreements and Loan Negotiations](#).]

Information about the venue will be important, especially if the potential lender is outside of the region in which the venue is located. Providing the gallery's website address can be helpful. Within the letter, a sentence or more highlighting some of the gallery's previous exhibitions will also be informative. Keep in mind that institutional policies are sometimes negotiable!

## 5.3 Responses to loan requests

### A negative response

If the case for a loan was well presented and there is no chance the artist or lender will change his or her mind, the curator should move on to other options.

If a lender (different from the artist) does not wish to lend a work but the artist agrees to be included in the project, the curator may explore the availability of other suitable works. The artist and their dealer(s) will be the best informed individuals to recommend other potential works and sources. Otherwise, Internet searches on museum and gallery websites, and/or communication with those institutions to inquire about works by the artist, may reveal art that will fit the project's requirements.

### A positive response

Once the lender of an artwork agrees to a request, it is advisable to inquire about whether there are any special requirements related to the loan. Put plainly, will there be any costs to the borrowing gallery associated with the loan?

### Some things to watch for:

#### Insurance

High insurance values and/or an unusually high number of artworks may require that the producing gallery secure top-up insurance coverage for the transport and/or presentation of the exhibition. This will be an additional cost for the project budget and can be substantial depending on the value of the art. Some lending institutions will wish to cover the insurance through their own policy and will charge the borrowing gallery for this expense.

#### Crating and framing

Some lenders will already have a crate that can be made available for the artwork and the work may be ready to install (framed or with the necessary mounting device, plinth, etc.). Other lenders will charge for the cost of existing or new framing and/or crating, or ask that the borrower look after arranging and/or paying for these tasks.

## Security

Artworks from larger institutions, especially those works with very high values, may require special security measures such as stanchions, security camera(s)/monitor(s) and/or security guards or staff in the gallery during all public hours.

## Transport of works

Most lenders will insist on a fine art transport company for their work, which is much more costly but generally safer than a regular shipping company. A benefit is that art does not necessarily have to be crated for shipment if a fine art transport company is used (soft-wrapping may be possible). Valuable works sometimes require courier transport wherein the lending institution sends a staff member to accompany the art in transit and oversee its unpacking and installation. This will involve airfare (sometimes business class) or other travel costs, hotel and per diem, and possibly a daily fee for the courier, all of which are costs born by the producing gallery and must be included in the project budget.

## Handling and administration

A fee may be charged for each work in a loan request or for one overall loan request from a lender. Fees may also be charged for reproducing images of the loaned artworks.

The artists/lenders will likely have questions. Will there be a publication? Will the exhibition tour and if so, where to? Although the answers to questions like these are not always available at the beginning of a project, they can occasionally be the deciding factor for potential lenders' decisions. If an exhibition tour is planned, lenders will usually need to see facility reports for each venue.

Once you have worked out a clear plan, a detailed project description with final selected artists will need to be prepared for submission to the producing gallery. This should include a more developed concept and a list of artworks including title, date, media and any specific requirements for the work, as well as lender information. The revised description will form the basis of future required texts.

A final title will need to be selected for the project. Most titles are short yet evocative and somewhat informative with respect to the content of the exhibition. A useful solution is to have a short main title with a subtitle that is more descriptive and concise. For example:

*Luminous Sites: 10 Video Installations*  
(Curators: Daina Augaitis/Karen Henry)

*It Pays to Play: British Columbia in Postcards, 1950s-1980s*  
(Curator: Peter White)

*First Son: Portraits by C. D. Hoy*  
(Curator: Faith Moosang)

*Ghost in the Shell: Photography and the Human Soul, 1850-2000*  
(Curator: Robert A. Sobieszek)

*Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen*  
(Curators: Barbara Maria Stafford and Frances Terpak).

## 5.4 A master list for the project

It is helpful to have a computer or paper document that records the progress of a project's organization. As decisions about participation and loans and many other types of information arrive, these details should be added to the master list appropriately. This will result in a single document that provides an overview and indicates where you are with respect to deadlines, missing information and tasks to complete. The master list might be formatted as a chart, a database or a word-processing document that is continuously updated.

### Suggested information to include in your master list:

- The last name of the artist (in alphabetical order, if a group show);
- Label information for artwork(s), including title, date, medium, dimensions, collection/collector credit line;
- Framed dimensions and notes regarding framing requirements, and other art-preparation tasks to be done;
- Equipment and other technical or installation requirements;
- Insurance value;
- Artist's contact info and instructions (some artists prefer that their assistant or dealer be the contact once they have agreed to the project);
- Lender's contact info (if different);
- Shipping details, e.g. pick-up location, contact info, crating required, etc.

Columns can be added for entries indicating completion of certain tasks, for example:

- ✓ artist's approval;
- ✓ loan approval;
- ✓ art prepared for show (framing, etc);
- ✓ visuals received;
- ✓ bio/CV received,
- ✓ fees paid, etc.

[CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF FOR A SAMPLE MASTER LIST CHART AND MASTER LIST TEXT VERSION OR SEE PAGES 47-49.](#)

The curator should also begin a list of people to whom acknowledgments will be given at the launch of the project and possibly in a publication. As the project develops, continue to augment this list with information on all participants and those who assisted with research and production activities.

As well, the curator's mailing list for exhibition invitations should be assembled, to be provided to the gallery well in advance of the exhibition opening. Check with the gallery to confirm how many addresses they can accommodate.

MASTER LIST for [Title of exhibition/producing gallery name/dates for exhibition/current date of document (update each time new entries)]

Lender	Artist name list of works per artist	# works in loan	Insurance value	visuals rec'd	bio info	Framing/ other prep	loan request approved	shipping arrangements	shipped	credit info rec'd	Comments
Name of lender of artwork (artist, collector, institution, dealer), phone number and email address; if institution, list contact person		#	\$	# of visuals, type, date rec'd	Type of info						Special fee requirements; special handling or installation requirements.  Communications of note.

# Master Planning List

As of [date – be sure to update with each revision]

[**Title of Exhibition**]

[Name of Gallery]

[Dates for exhibition]

Organized according to artists in the exhibition in alphabetical order

Note: For dimensions, height precedes width precedes depth

**For each artist, record:**

**ARTIST NAME**, [Place of residence]

**For each artwork, all of the following should be noted:**

- Title and date
- Medium (if video/film, etc., include b/w or colour, length - # of minutes, and whether there is sound)
- Dimensions (stipulate image size if work is framed, or frame size if it is the only dimension available)
- Credit line:  
[e.g.: "Courtesy the artist," or "Courtesy the artist and [name of dealer or collector or loan institution, etc.]
- Insurance value: \$  
[It is assumed that this figure is current market value unless otherwise noted. Sometimes replacement value is used but must be clearly stated as such – in the case of photographs, for example. If the value is many years old, include the date of value; it may need to be updated].

Loan approved: [record date; approved by whom]

**CONTACT INFORMATION** (may be different for each work by an artist, or all the same):

Artist:

For artist, include street address, email address, telephone/fax

If artist is deceased, include contact info for artist's spouse or representative of the estate

Lender:

As above, or Lender's name (if different), include all contact info

[When appropriate]

Artist's dealer, all contact information

(Even when not the lender; often information for the artist is gathered via the dealer).

**Be sure to clarify where the loan form is to be sent.** Sometimes the work is owned by, and permission must be secured from, an individual who is different from the person who currently holds the artwork and will provide it for the exhibition.

**ARTIST'S FEE:**

Note any special agreement regarding the artist's exhibition fee and/or reproduction fees, including any payment requirements such as bank transfers to a foreign account (will need to supply banking information for such transactions). If the art work selected is media art, the lender may be the artist's distributor, in which case the artist fee may be determined by, and is to be paid directly to, the distributor.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ART:**Shipping:

Pick up/return address and contact information

Via what mode of transport?

*Be sure to note:*

- Framed or requiring framing or other presentation mount?
- Special installation or handling requirements; special needs regarding equipment (If possible be very specific about level of equipment required – some artists ask for very high-end projectors, DVD decks, sound equipment, and/or complex room construction) .
- Note any anticipated costs related to the above (e.g. for video work, Gallery may be expected to cover cost of producing new DVD copies or transferring from videotape to DVD, sometimes in multiple formats, if the exhibition will be on for a long time or will travel).
- Whether artist or representative must be present for installation.
- Space required, if not obvious from dimensions.



Fastwurms: DONKY@NINJA@WITCH,  
Contemporary Art Gallery,  
Vancouver, 2008.

# 6.0 Budgeting

## 6.1 Developing a preliminary project budget

In some situations the curator is not required to develop a project budget at all and will never see the producing gallery's budget.

At other times a preliminary budget is required, and when a curator is fully responsible for project production this is essential. Regardless of the curator's duty in this regard, knowledge of the budgetary process is important for a full understanding of curatorial work. The budget should include all known expenses and a contingency dollar figure (to cover unexpected expenses in any area). It should include the number of artists and amounts for fees as confirmed by the producing gallery, requirements for framing/equipment/wall construction, etc.

The extent of budget detail required will depend partly on the stage the curator is at with project development, and this will influence the degree of speculation present in the budget. If the exhibition works have been selected the budget will be more accurate, but even prior to this, a reasonable ball-park budget can be determined based on informed speculation.

The exhibition budget should be as detailed as possible for the benefit of both the curator and the gallery. This will aid in securing appropriate revenues for the project. It is also a very good exercise for the curator, as it helps to articulate the project in concrete ways. Anticipation of all costs early on will reduce the risk of unpleasant financial surprises later, which

may have serious repercussions (including postponement or cancellation!). If some costs cannot be determined at this early stage (this is normal), it is helpful to at least list the types of costs that might arise with a question mark – for example wall construction, shelves or plinths, media equipment – to indicate to the gallery what types of costs should be anticipated. Try not to overestimate or underestimate substantially – that is why the budget includes a contingency dollar figure. And if you cannot locate the required information, consult with the producing gallery to benefit from their experience.

Sometimes the curator will provide a list of potential sources of revenue. This is not always essential; however, it can contribute positively to the situation if you have some useful ideas. In most cases covering the cost of a project is entirely the responsibility of the producing gallery, although you may be asked to participate in developing material for grant applications.

[See section 7 - Fundraising Development].

Galleries generally use a project budget that is based on a zero bottom line. That is, revenues equal expenses. In some cases this will include in-kind expenses and revenues; if these are to be entered at all they must appear on both sides of the budget. It is the gallery's responsibility to take your provided

project budget, augment the expenses as appropriate, and fill in the revenues side according to their usual process. They may wish to include in the expense list, for instance, such in-house costs as didactics, brochure, wall paint and preparation materials, in-house and/or casual installation or gallery monitoring labour, advertising and public relations expenses, education program expenses, etc.

Some galleries, especially the larger institutions, do not include revenues in project budgets but record these separately.

Be sure to date each budget document, including each revision, as this will save confusion as you get deeper into the project.

[CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF FOR A SAMPLE EXHIBITION BUDGET OR SEE PAGE 63-64.](#)

## 6.2 Budget components

A discussion of some of the key components of an exhibition budget follows.

**Note:** Refer to the budget template (see Section 6.1 above) and other toolkit sections for elaboration on additional costs such as marketing and promotions. [See section 10 - Media Relations] [See section 13 - Exhibition Circulation].

The budget template (see above) does not include costs for exhibition circulation, publications, media relations or educational programs, apart from public events directly related to exhibitions such as artist's talks.

### 6.2.1 Fees

#### Artists' fees

In Canada, it is considered mandatory practice for public galleries and artist-run centres to pay fees to artists in exchange for the public presentation of their artwork. Since 1968, a standard fee schedule has been provided by the non-profit corporation CARFAC (Canadian Artists Representation/le Front des artistes canadiennes). Galleries use this schedule, updated on a yearly basis, as a guideline. It is generally accepted that fees should be, at minimum, the recommended CARFAC amount. Some galleries are able to pay higher amounts. ([www.carfac.ca](http://www.carfac.ca); See "Membership Services" for fee schedules)

Each gallery determines their own policy about fees. Most funding agencies state that in order to qualify for financial support, galleries must pay professional artists' fees. The curator should use the CARFAC artist fee schedule when constructing a budget. However, galleries may adjust these figures according to their own fee policy.

Institutions are often not obliged to pay artists' fees for the presentation of artwork from their collection and this can extend to loans of these works. However, it is appropriate to consider paying fees to the artists regardless, and many curators and galleries have a policy of doing so.



Jeff Ladouceur: *Floater*, 2008,  
Vancouver Art Gallery. Photo:  
Una Knox, Vancouver Art Gallery.

Established artists who are well known internationally may request a fee that is much higher than the CARFAC recommended fee. They may or may not be willing to negotiate a reduced fee for this project. However, in many cases, if asked to accept the same fee being paid to others, the artist will agree.

An artist from another country may not expect an artist's fee because it is not common practice (or not done at all) in their country of residence. Nonetheless, all artists being exhibited in Canada should be offered the appropriate fee according to the gallery's policy. It is best to be consistent.

In the case of a deceased artist the fee may go to the artist's spouse or estate, and any information (such as the terms requested by the estate and contact information) will need to be supplied to the gallery. The gallery should undertake any negotiations with an artist's estate. Most galleries have a policy about whether or not they will pay artists' fees to estates. CARFAC recommends doing so.

### Curatorial fees

There is no standard fee schedule for curators, although meetings have been held over the years to discuss this issue and attempt to define standard practices.

[See section 1.2 - [Advocacy for Best Practices, which includes historic documents from 1998/99.](#)]

One source of information is the National Compensation Survey, 2001, available from the Canadian Museums Association through their website ([www.museums.ca](http://www.museums.ca)).

Galleries may strongly support curatorial research and offer fees for initial project development. Such a fee might be \$1,000 to \$5,000 or more, depending on the scope of the project.

Alternatively, a gallery might assume the main research for a project has been completed prior to confirming their participation and they will not expect to provide a research fee or cover other research-related costs.

Their commitment in this case will be to fund the production of an already well-conceived project, with the curatorial fee relating to the work required to assemble art and organize it for public presentation.

For a single-venue exhibition, the curatorial fee can start at \$2,500 and continue upwards to perhaps \$15,000 or \$20,000. It should be noted that the higher fees are less common and generally provided to well-established curators. The fee depends enormously on the experience and profile of the curator, their ability to negotiate their fee, and on the budget and policies of the producing gallery. Most importantly, the larger and more complex the project, the higher the fee should be since the amount of time required by the curator will increase accordingly. However, even a solo exhibition can be quite labour intensive, especially if there are many loans required from separate sources.

Often the curator is paid a separate fee for writing a catalogue essay or for their work in compiling/editing/managing that publication. The curator should not assume a separate fee will be paid, however, as some galleries expect this work will be included in the main contract for the project. Clarity around the issue of fees and related requirements is essential.

For an exhibition that will tour, there are two options for fees that are separate from the inaugural curatorial fee: a single curatorial fee that covers the work related to the whole tour (for a maximum number of venues and with the understanding that a fee for subsequent venues will be negotiated), or a curatorial fee per venue.

A per-venue fee for a small to medium exhibition might range from \$300 to \$1,000; a larger survey or group exhibition might bring a per-venue fee of up to \$5,000 depending on the curator's responsibilities for venue presentations. Note that these amounts reflect selected documented fees from 2002-2006. The curator is generally involved in program development and exhibition installation concept/implementation at each venue.

### Public programming fees

There are standard fee rates for lectures, artist's talks, symposia or panel discussions and other public programs. [See CARFAC website: Membership Services/Fee Schedules]. Amounts can vary a lot from one gallery to another, as each gallery will have its own policy regarding public programming fees. The curator is usually paid separate fees for any public talk or the organization of a symposium or other activity, unless these activities are related to their overall curatorial fee. Do not make assumptions about such fees.

**Caution:** Do not assume that participants in the project (artists, speakers, others) will accept the fee that the gallery expects to pay. As with the curator's fees, the financial terms for services from artists and other participants should be clarified at the point of hire to ensure there are no misunderstandings. Sometimes a certain amount of negotiation is required and the gallery may ask the curator to do this on their behalf. Usually it is best that the gallery undertake the task.

### Installation fees

Curators and artists are generally paid an installation fee for their on-site work installing the exhibition. See CARFAC fee rates for artists: these can be used for the curator as well. Galleries do not necessarily apply this rate, but will indicate their policy regarding installation fees as well as the number of days they are prepared to cover. Note that some galleries do not normally pay installation fees but may be willing to negotiate this point.

Technicians or gallery preparators that are required to install the exhibition will usually be gallery staff and should not need to be included in the budget prepared by the curator. The gallery may choose to add casual labour brought in specifically for installations. If special technical expertise is required that is unlikely to be available in-house, these additional fees should be anticipated in the project budget.

### Reproduction fees

The gallery will also need to consider potential costs for the reproduction of artists' works in advertising, catalogues, posters, cards and other materials. CARCC (the Canadian Artists Representation Copyright Collective Inc.) was established in 1990 to license and administer copyright for visual and media artists in Canada. For artists who are registered with CARCC, any use of their artworks in reproduction (in catalogues, books, posters, cards, newsletters, etc.) will require the payment of fees. CARCC will invoice the gallery directly on behalf of the artist and retain a small administrative fee. ([www.carcc.ca](http://www.carcc.ca))

### Museum loan fees

A gallery or museum may charge a fee for lending an artwork for your project.

## 6.2.2 Travel costs

The gallery will sometimes cover travel costs related to project research and/or the exhibition installation and events. It is normal for the curator to be present to install the exhibition and open the exhibition but, again, this should be made clear early on. The budget should also anticipate the cost of any artist whose presence is required for the installation of their art or any participants that will be invited to play a role at the opening or at a public programming event. In a perfect world all artists in an exhibition will be present for an opening!

### Travel costs include:

- Airfare (economy)/train/bus, or car rental or mileage for personal car.
- Per diem for the curator and artists attending the installation/opening or public events. Rates can vary (currently between \$40 and \$75 per day), depending on the gallery budget and/or the local cost of living.

The per diem should be paid for travel days as well as work days. It covers the cost of meals and incidentals (sometimes this can include local and/or trip-related taxis). The per diem may be lower if accommodation includes kitchen facilities. If the artist/curator is asked to travel for events that have a number of non-work days in between, the gallery is obliged to pay a per diem (and accommodation) for those days.

- Usually the gallery will cover taxis from/to airports, and related local transport, separate from the per diem.
- Accommodation: This is usually in a hotel but will occasionally be in a colleague's residence (billeting) or a gallery residency space. The gallery is responsible for any room rental charges and taxes, but usually not incidentals such as phone calls or room service. (Food is covered by the per diem).

## 6.2.3 Installation costs

The curator will need to anticipate in detail the installation requirements for the project. The artist(s) should be able to outline in full what is required for their work. If the artist is not available or would benefit from advice (on audio visual equipment, for example), an experienced installation technician can be consulted. The technical staff at the producing gallery will advise on issues regarding the installation and on the gallery's equipment and other inventories.

The curator may need to secure quotations for some of these costs. In some cases the artists will do this research (regarding framing costs, for instance), and they may be in a position to undertake the building of a plinth or the framing or crating of the art themselves (usually charging the gallery for this work). All such costs will need to be approved by the gallery in advance.

### Installation costs can include:

- Framing or other mounting mechanisms for two-dimensional art;
- The building of support mechanisms for three-dimensional art (e.g. shelving units, free-standing plinths, vitrines built into the wall);
- The construction of walls or other architectural components;
- The installation of curtains, doors or other light- or sound-blocking devices;
- Paint and related items;
- Exceptional lighting fixtures/bulbs;
- Special electrical augmentations to the existing system (e.g. European voltage);
- Security devices (stanchions, individual alarms, surveillance cameras, etc., as needed);
- Special installation hardware or features required for outdoor artworks (guarding against theft and providing durability against weather and vandalism);
- Licenses or permits as required for outdoor art installations or temporary events (performance art, etc.), according to municipal regulations;
- Other special requirements for the presentation of the art;
- Any labour fees associated with these tasks.

Equipment, e.g. for video/film/sound and other media installations, can result in a substantial expense. Many galleries own some audio/visual equipment (projectors, screens, video/DVD, other playback decks, speakers and other sound equipment). However, technologies are changing rapidly and equipment that was top of the line two years ago may no longer meet the artist's needs. This may necessitate new purchases for the exhibition or the loan or rental of equipment. Keep in mind that rental over a period of numerous weeks can be more expensive than actually purchasing the equipment, so the gallery is wise to get cost quotations for both options. As new equipment will benefit future projects, often the gallery will agree to allocate only a portion of the purchase cost to the project at hand.

### Who covers costs?

The question may arise as to which component of an artwork should be the responsibility of the artist and which should be the responsibility of the gallery. For some artwork (e.g. robotics), the artist may provide all equipment. For others, such as video or film projections, often the gallery must supply the equipment. It is wise to clarify expectations well in advance, as often this arrangement is vague and can create problems. Generally decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. This relates as well to the framing of two-dimensional artwork. Some galleries ask the artist to provide wall work ready to hang, while others anticipate framing costs for a project.



*House of Oracles: Huang Yong Ping, A Retrospective; installation of the exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 2007. Photo: Tomas Svab, Vancouver Art Gallery.*



Installation, Shanghai Biennale, 2004.

## 6.2.4 Crating and shipping

Usually the gallery will take responsibility for the planning and implementation of all crating and shipping.

### Crating

If a crating quotation is required, the curator will need to supply the following information: the artist's name, the title of artwork, the medium and exact dimensions of the work, information on which works are to go together in a crate (or which works must be packed individually), and the due date. Often those who provide fine art shipping can also do framing and crating, deal with customs brokers and arrange international shipping. Others who have fine carpentry skills can also offer crating services (e.g. technicians, carpenters, framing businesses).

### Shipping

To secure quotations for shipping, similar information must be provided to the shipping company, whether it specializes in fine art transport or regular shipping. The company will need the artist's name, the medium and dimensions of the art as packaged (whether crated, bubble-wrapped, etc.), the value of the work, the destination and required delivery date.

Most galleries have certain companies they work with regularly. If the curator needs to locate a shipper, she/he should seek recommendations from colleagues.

### Insurance

Most commonly, arrangements will need to be made for continuous insurance coverage while the art is in transit. The gallery's insurance policy will cover the insurance while the work is on the premises and often this policy can cover work while in transit as well. However, if in-transit insurance is not available automatically or if the artwork has an especially high value, additional coverage may be required. Shipping companies can sometimes provide insurance. For especially high-value exhibitions, usually of historical work, galleries can apply for federal government indemnity coverage (through a Canadian Heritage program).

### Customs brokerage

Galleries that have a history of transporting art across international borders will likely have a regular customs broker and may have a special arrangement regarding fees.

Requests for service quotations should be made in written form (email is fine), and one should ask to receive the quotation in written form. The company or individual may provide an estimate only, if the quote is being requested many months or years prior to the actual crating or shipment date.

## 6.2.5 Visual documentation

Ideally every project installation should be documented visually in still photography and/or video form, either digitally or in analogue format. Strive for high quality images that will be informative and attractive in reproduction. Video documentation is very useful if the art itself is media-based, interactive or involves movement.

Installations and large works must be documented on site in the gallery; sometimes the work will only exist in this context. Once the exhibition is taken down, there likely will not be another opportunity for photography, unless you require only visuals of the work itself and not the context in which it was presented. In this case, smaller works can be photographed in a photographer's or artist's studio.

Even if there are no plans to publish at the time of producing the project, good visuals may be required for media reviews, or for an unexpected future publication (new money does emerge sometimes). The artists will value having this documentation for future use and may choose to pay for the photography themselves. Galleries, too, will benefit from good documentation for their archives and future use and should agree that this task is their responsibility.

A professional photographer of fine art is a particular breed of expert, skilled in the matter of lighting, materials and perspective, and generally fully equipped

with the necessary high-end photography tools. Fees for a single, carefully-planned photograph range from \$150 to \$1,000 or more, depending on the complexity of the object, the situation, the cost of photo materials and whether travel outside the photographer's studio is required. If you are sending work to the photographer's studio to be documented, you will need to expect transportation costs. Arrangements for special insurance coverage may be required (ask the photographer about their in-studio insurance coverage).

Keep in mind that the reproduction of an artist's work requires the artist's permission. Usually they will agree with no charge. However, some might argue that the inclusion of installation photography in any printed item requires the payment of a reproduction fee. Be aware the issue might be raised. Note also that the copyright for a photograph can reside with the photographer as well as, or instead of, the artist.

[See section 6.2, Budget/Reproduction Fees].

# Exhibition Budget

[*Title of Exhibition*]

[Name of Gallery] [Dates for exhibition]

[Date budget prepared; followed by dates for any revisions]

## FEES

Artist fees [# artists x standard fee]

Artist fees – special projects  
(may include site specific installation or commissioning of a new work)

Screening fees, for video/film works  
(standard fees charged by artist's distributor, or directly by artist)

Artist installation fees (daily fee x # days x # artists)

Artist talk fees

Curatorial fees:  
    research fee (if applicable)  
    exhibition fee  
    installation fee  
    lecture fee (and/or moderator fee, etc., for public events)

Public program participant fees (for lectures, panel discussions, etc.)

Loan fees – rental or administrative fee charged by institutional lender of artwork(s)

Special permission or license fees (for public art, other)

Copyright fees (for use of historic photos, other)

Audio-visual technician for installation (additional to in-house staff)

Non-gallery staff/installation technician fees

SUBTOTAL FEES [TOTAL \$]

## TRAVEL

(Each item includes airfare/other transport, accommodation, per diem, miscellaneous costs)

Advance site visit for artist (e.g. for special project or complex installation planning)

Artist travel costs for exhibition installation and programs, opening events

Scholar (or other public program participant) travel

Courier for museum/collector loan from (city name) – may include courier wage [\$/day]

Curatorial travel:  
    Research  
    Installation and opening  
    Public programs

SUBTOTAL TRAVEL [TOTAL \$]

**INSTALLATION**

Framing

Crating or packing

Shipping

(Note the location of loan works and shipping estimates for each shipment)

Customs brokerage

Special costs

(i.e. production of photographic prints from archival negatives)

Installation expenses

(i.e. paint, shelf/plinth/wall construction, etc.)

Equipment rental or purchase

Didactics (labels, wall texts, often prepared in-house)

Photographic and/or video documentation

(of installation and individual works as required)

SUBTOTAL INSTALLATION COSTS

[TOTAL \$]

**PROMOTION**

Printed promotional items:

(costs include design/image, scanning/printing for invitation, brochure, poster, and/or newsletter)

Distribution: postage for mail-out, postering

Advertising: design of ads, plus costs for ad placements

Artist's reproduction fees (CARCC)

SUBTOTAL PROMOTION

[TOTAL \$]

**ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES**

Curator's administration costs:

(long distance telephone/fax, postage, courier, copying, slide duplication, CD or DVD production and other required materials)

Insurance top-up

(if insurance value of show is exceptional)

Security costs

(not typical but can include surveillance camera, security staff)

SUBTOTAL ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES

[TOTAL \$]

**Contingency**

[10% of budget is standard]

**TOTAL EXHIBITION EXPENSES**

[\$ TOTAL]

NOTE: This budget does not include any writing fees, publication or website development costs, or costs related to education programs for students.

# 7.0 Fundraising development

**In general, the producing gallery determines where to secure the funds for a project. Sometimes they can cover costs solely through existing operational and annual programming funding, and no additional fundraising is required. At other times special funding is required for the exhibition. The gallery may wish to discuss funding options with the curator and may also request some assistance in the preparation of grant applications.**

## 7.1 The curator's role

The curator may be asked to supply the gallery with basic information for use in grant and sponsorship proposals, to be prepared by the gallery.

### **This material usually takes the following form:**

- Concise project description (500 words maximum);
- Biographical paragraph(s) on artist(s) (150-300 words each) and/or a full artist's CV if there is only one or two artists;
- Curator's CV and paragraph-form biography for varying uses;
- Project budget.

[See section 6 - Budgeting]

Occasionally the gallery asks that the curator prepare one or more grant applications in full. If so, this labour should be a component of the work for which the curator is being paid, with appropriate consideration for fundraising assistance.

### **Some things to remember when writing a grant application:**

- Read the guidelines carefully. Be clear about what information is asked for and be sure you address these items.
- Be concise. Adhere to any restrictions on the length of grant materials. If not, you risk the possibility of some pages of text or support materials not being submitted to the adjudicators.
- Do not assume the reader will understand through implication or have prior knowledge of the subject. Find clear language to say what you mean and try to anticipate what the adjudicators will need to learn from your proposal.
- Leave enough time after writing the application to sleep on it and review the next day, and/or have others review it for accuracy and clarity. If you are submitting the application on behalf of a gallery or team of individuals, ensure they agree with the written proposal and allow time for revisions.

- Carefully check for spelling mistakes and typos.
- Leave some time to prepare support materials. It always takes longer than you think!

Include visual materials that represent the artist's work in the strongest way possible. Poor visuals can work against your proposal, making it difficult for jurors to see the artist's intentions clearly. It is better to have a few good images than many poor ones. Be certain not to duplicate images. Each image should provide different information.

Slides and other visual materials must be clearly labeled with numbers corresponding to the slide (or other format) list. If using slides, coloured dots with numbers should be placed in the bottom left hand corner of the slide. Labels should state the name

of artist, title of the work, date of the work, medium, and dimensions (height precedes width precedes depth). Increasingly, CDs of digital images are preferred over slides (e.g. the Canada Council will no longer accept slides.) In this case, a list of images can be included right on the disc but also include a paper copy. A DVD can be effective for showing work that is audience-interactive or excerpts of film or video works, or in documenting an installation of media, robotics or other moving components.

Never send original slides or other original documentation. Materials can be lost or damaged. Some funding agencies retain support materials if the grant is approved, although most will return publications if requested.



*Tim Lee: Remakes, Variations (1741 -2049),*  
exhibition view at Presentation House  
Gallery, North Vancouver, 2008.  
Photo: Erik Hood.

## 7.2 Funding opportunities

### Grants and sponsorships

Several sources may be required to cover project costs, including:

- Federal, provincial and municipal government grant programs;
- The Canada Council for the Arts;
- Foundations and other private funding organizations;
- Corporations and businesses;
- Individual donations.

It is important to start early in planning grant applications and corporate approaches, as it can take three to 12 months from submission to receipt of the decision. Information about a wide range of funding sources is available on the 2010 Legacies Now website ([www.2010legaciesnow.com](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com), click on Explore Arts and then Resources).

### In-kind donations

Some costs can be covered by securing in-kind donations from companies that can provide materials or services at no

cost or (more often) at a discount. Some areas with good potential for such support include: hotel accommodation for visiting artists/curators/speakers; food and drink for receptions; building materials or paint for installations; printing of promotional materials and/or publications; and digital scanning of visuals. Any such proposal for in-kind support is more likely to be successful if the producing organization and/or the curator have a positive, ideally long-standing relationship with the company, and/or if there is a likelihood of future business with the company. However, every relationship must have a beginning, so harness earnest optimism for those first approaches.

### Fundraising events

Fundraising events such as special screenings or art auctions are also an option for the producing gallery. However, a gallery will usually organize these events to raise funds for ongoing operational/general programming costs and not for specific exhibition projects.

# 8.0 Artist agreements and loan negotiations

**Artworks for an exhibition usually come from five categories of lenders: the artist, the artist's private (commercial) gallery, a public gallery or museum that owns the work, a corporate/business collection, or a private collector.**

**The curator is responsible for obtaining agreements in principle regarding the loan of artwork. The gallery will then make formal requests based on information provided by the curator. Note: the loan agreement is between the artist or lender and the producing gallery.**

## 8.1 Letter of agreement or contract

In Canada, living artists expect to receive a formal, written agreement confirming the details of the exhibition and the specifics of their work selected for the exhibition. This may be a letter of agreement which requests their written consent, or a formal contract for signature by both parties (artist and gallery). Although the curator will generally be responsible for confirming the artist's consent regarding their work in the show, it is the responsibility of the gallery to prepare and follow up with formal written agreements with the artist. Often there is a loan agreement form (if the work comes from the artist) in addition to a letter or contract for the artist.

[See section 8.2 regarding loan agreement forms].

**The letter of agreement or contract with the artist should state the following:**

- Title of exhibition and name of curator;
- Name and address for producing gallery/ venue;
- Dates for the exhibition and opening event;
- Title of artist's work selected for the show and date, if request is for only one or several artworks. If the request is for many works, refer to the list in the loan form (if attached) or to a selection to be determined. (Ask artist(s) to confirm label information, including any credits, and provide missing contact information);
- Amount of artist fee and anticipated payment date (often the week of installation);
- Responsibilities of the gallery, including payment of an artist's fee; payment of travel costs, installation and lecture fees, if applicable; framing/crating, if applicable;

shipping; insurance coverage; installation; promotion of the show; provision of promotional materials, including invitations/newsletters, to the artist; if applicable, production of a publication (stating how many copies the artist will receive); and any other relevant information affecting the artist and their work;

- Responsibilities of the artist, including provision of complete and accurate information on their art, including dimensions; visual materials for use in promotion of the exhibition and possibly for reproduction in a publication; mailing list for invitations (if requested); up to date biographical material and curriculum

vitae. The artist may need to undertake the installation of the work and participate in any public programs if requested; at the least, the artist must provide very specific installation instructions for their work, especially if the work is complex.

Note: Once the letter of request has been received by the artist or lender, there may be additional information requested by them or a negotiation of terms may be required. The person being approached may need to be persuaded. Prompt attention, courtesy and precise factual information can go a long way to securing a “yes.” Also, the artist may suggest a change to the selection of work for the project.

## 8.2 Loan agreement

The loan agreement form will include only the specifics about the work itself and loan arrangements for the show. It can be used for all categories of lenders. Almost without exception, the producing gallery will be responsible for sending out loan forms. They will need the curator’s exhibition list, with detailed information on the works and lender contact information, in order to prepare the forms.

Institutions, especially larger organizations, will often prefer to use their own contract or loan agreement form and will, upon agreeing to a loan request, state that they will send the loan

form directly to the producing gallery.

The loan agreement form usually requests that the lender provide the insurance value of the art.

Note: Often the curator never sees the completed, signed loan forms. She/he is well advised to discuss a process in which the gallery relays pertinent information from the form to the curator. It is essential that the curator see any corrected/updated information on the artwork and this should be entered onto the master list.

[CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF FOR A SAMPLE LOAN FORM OR SEE PAGES 72-73.](#)

[Logo of gallery]

# Loan Agreement

Between [Gallery name] and [lender name]

**Title of exhibition:** [Title]

**Location of exhibition:** [Gallery name and full address]

**Exhibition dates:** [Dates]

**Duration of loan:** [dates from pick up to return of artwork]

**Number of works related to this loan:**

## 1. Lender

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Exact form in which the lender's name is to appear in the catalogue and/or exhibition label:

---

## 2. Description of the artwork

Name of artist:

Title:

Date:

Medium:

Dimensions (height x width x depth; unframed): [specify centimetres or inches]

Framed?: [if yes, please describe, include dimensions]

*Attach separate list if more than one artwork.*

## 3. Condition of artwork

Briefly describe the condition of the artwork:

Describe any special handling required:

*It is understood that the artwork will be returned in its original state unless other arrangements are made in writing.*

**4. Reproduction**

Can you supply reproduction quality photographs or digital scans of the work?

If not, will you provide permission for the work to be photographed, if required?

[The Gallery] will have the right to reproduce the image from this loan in the media, advertising, the gallery website (low-resolution), and in the exhibition catalogue. Lender credit with reproductions will be the same as noted in #1 unless the Gallery is otherwise advised.

**5. Insurance**

Insurance value of the artwork(s): \$

**6. Transportation**

Address for collection and return of work:

Contact for pick up/return of work:

Does the work have an existing crate? If yes, dimensions (height x width x depth):

Are there any special transportation requirements?

*The work will be returned to the above address (Item #1) unless otherwise instructed*

**Signatures** indicating acceptance of the conditions of this loan as stated above:

**Lender** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**For [Gallery name]:**

**[Name]** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:**

The Gallery may also include a sheet with "Conditions of Incoming Loan" that states general policies regarding the handling of art on loan (the same degree of care used as the Gallery uses with work from its own collection); right to remove the work from the exhibition if deemed necessary with assurances of notification to lender; insurance policy held by the Gallery; other).



Damian Moppett, artist's talk at Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2005.

# 9.0 Public programming

## Exhibitions and other art projects should be promoted actively to the public in order to ensure as large an audience as possible. Different types of galleries have different constituencies and priorities. Artist-run centres, for instance, have a declared primary responsibility to the art community.

Nevertheless, all organizations receiving public funding have a responsibility to provide and encourage public access to their programs. Most galleries take a proactive role in the area of art education and public dialogue about art by organizing public events as well as activities for students and school groups. Curators are sometimes asked to contribute to the latter. However, this is the responsibility of the gallery.

Exhibitions are often accompanied by public events and activities that animate the exhibition theme and the artist's ideas and/or techniques, and provide additional information and insight for the viewer. These events offer important opportunities for public debate as well as peer-networking, and can serve to introduce out-of-town participants and community members to each other.

## 9.1 Programming ideas

The curator is often involved in preliminary discussions with the gallery regarding the development of public programs in association with the exhibition. The gallery generally takes the lead, coordinating arrangements with the participants of this program, confirming fee amounts and making travel arrangements when appropriate. Less commonly, the gallery may contract the curator to develop and arrange for the public program. Fees should be paid to contributors for all public programming events.

### Events can include:

- Artist's lectures, public conversations (between an artist and a moderator or curator) and walking tours of exhibitions;
- Panel discussions or symposia;
- Workshops;
- Related film and video screenings;
- Presentations from other disciplines that will resonate with the exhibition, including poetry or literary readings, musical performances and lectures or walking tours by relevant specialists (e.g. geologist, anthropologist, meteorologist, scholar in cultural studies, urban planner, etc.);
- Education programs for students and other targeted groups.

## 9.2 Community Consultation and Collaboration

Sometimes a project will benefit from some form of community consultation. A particular constituency (e.g. local residents, youth at risk, people involved in urban planning and debate, writers, social service counsellors, seniors, local artists, historians) will be able to contribute useful ideas towards the development of a public program and/or aspects of the exhibition itself. If brought in at the very early stages of a project and embraced as part of a concept development project team, these collaborators can greatly expand the scope and focus of the project and help to shape the resulting outcomes in ways that are most meaningful to the community.

Consider carefully the people you choose to involve. Do not be shy about asking for advice from colleagues, including people you do not know (yet). If your project will include community consultation or collaboration, set up a committee or group which includes a range of perspectives and skills. Start early and be prepared to commit lots of time to the endeavour.

For information on the community collaboration process see Dierking, Lynn D., John H. Falk, et al., *Collaboration: Critical Criteria for Success* (Seattle: Pacific Centre and Science Centre, 1997) pp. 11-21. Courses and seminars are available on the theory and practicalities of community collaboration.

## 9.3 Scheduling

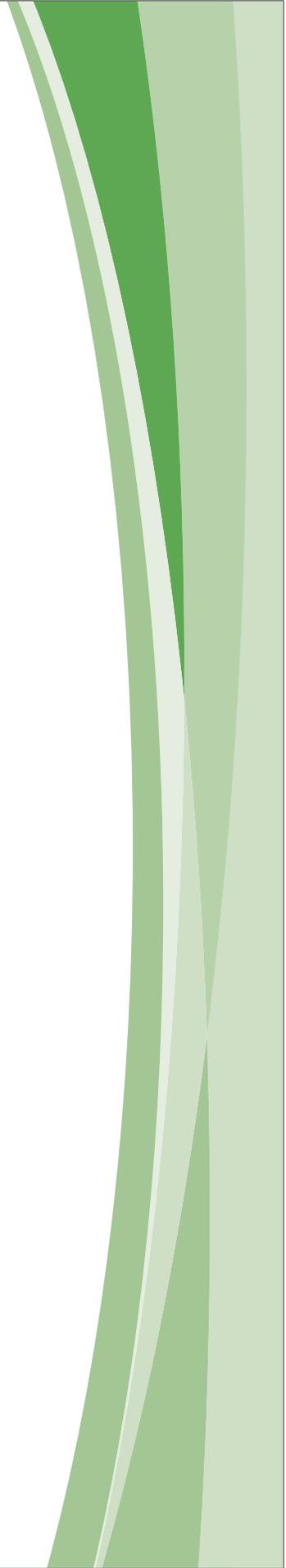
Consider the pacing of dates/times for program activities and the potential for public attendance. To avoid conflicts with other activities in the community, it is useful to check public programming schedules organized by local arts groups. However, some overlap will inevitably occur. Sometimes coordinating events with another gallery in the same vicinity, for the same evening, can be beneficial if timing is considered.

It is sometimes feasible to condense travel requirements for program participants. For instance, an artist can be present for the installation of their work, for the opening reception and to give an artist's talk, all in

the space of a week or less. However, the question must be asked: can the gallery draw an audience for events held two days in a row? It might be wiser to have the artist present a short talk at the beginning of the opening reception or stay longer in order to separate the two events by more than a day or two.



Szuper Gallery, *The Extras*, performance produced by Western Front Exhibitions at the Vancouver Public Library, October 16, 2005. Photo: Scott Massey.



# 10.0 Media relations and audience development

**An important aspect of audience development is marketing and media relations. Generally the producing gallery is fully responsible for this activity, but they may ask the curator to contribute to certain components.**

## 10.1 Working with a designer

The gallery and/or the curator will work with a designer to develop the public image of the project, which will be reflected in the promotional materials. This design approach should be used consistently for all materials. The selection of the designer is almost always the gallery's decision but a curator can make a suggestion if there is someone they value working with. This is especially important with regard to any publication, especially if the curator will be very involved in the compilation of catalogue materials and overseeing the content sequencing and design.

Note: The curator is not always involved in such work.

[See section 14 on publications]

Gallery staff must carefully proofread the design layouts for all promotional materials, including advertisements, to catch and correct typographical and other errors. Sometimes the curator is asked to do some of this proofreading, a step which is beneficial to the gallery since the curator is the one who is most familiar with the details of a project (e.g. the spelling of artists' names).

## 10.2 Promotional materials

Promotional materials are intended for short-term use. The curator should ask for multiple copies for her/his archive.

### Gallery newsletter

These publications are often seasonal and the copy for an article or short announcement is required one to six months prior to the exhibition opening. The text is usually derived from the curator's basic exhibition statement, which will have been supplied to the gallery. It should be written/revised by the curator and/or approved by the curator if drafted by gallery staff. Often one or more visual images will be required to accompany this text.

### Media release

A media release briefly announces the project, its major points of interest and the participating artist(s), with pertinent details about the event (where, when). This will be sent to a broad list of media contacts, including newspaper and magazine editors and reviewers of art (and other specialist writers depending on the issues addressed in the project), as well as television and radio arts programs. Media releases should ideally be no longer than one page and must include partnership, sponsor and funding credits, gallery hours and contact information at the end. They are sent on gallery letterhead, by fax, regular or electronic mail.

### Public service announcement (PSA)

A PSA is a non-commercial advertisement, usually about 30 to 50 words long, aired on radio and television or placed in newspapers and magazines (often in preview sections announcing current or upcoming events). PSAs should be prepared on gallery letterhead and are usually sent well in advance, via regular or electronic mail. A PSA should contain only necessary words that nonetheless convey some excitement about the project.

### Exhibition invitation or flyer

The invitation is sent to the gallery's membership and professional contacts, as well as all project artists, the curator's professional mailing list and the artist's professional mailing lists (usually with a limit on how many addresses can be supplied).

### Brochure

A brochure can be produced for public distribution within the gallery or more broadly, in order to provide more detailed information about the project. It will often contain a brief curatorial statement, biographical paragraph(s) on the artist(s), and information on the public programs for the project.

### Poster

A poster can be distributed both indoors and outdoors throughout the city or neighbourhood, as a mailer to other galleries and the art community, or for sale or free inside the gallery. Most cities have poster distribution entrepreneurs who will post an item for a specified rate per 100 (or 50) items.

## 10.3 Paid advertising

The gallery will determine the budget for advertising an exhibition and will undertake this work. Paid advertising can be very expensive. With a limited budget, a gallery must be very selective about where it places these dollars and some galleries must depend largely on public service announcements and editorial coverage to get the word out about their project.

The appearance of the advertisements can relate graphically to the other materials being produced for an exhibition (the invitation, poster, etc.). However many galleries use a basic template for all of their ads.

Most public galleries have contracts with art magazines to advertise in each issue (often three or four times a year). These ads will

promote either individual exhibitions or a season of exhibitions. The space in an ad is often limited so the information must be concise. As with all promotional materials, advertisements should include the title of the show, artist's name, curator's name, dates and location for the show, partnerships/funders and the gallery's website address. Some galleries are also able to advertise in local or national newspapers.

The gallery will need to seek artists' permissions for reproducing their artwork on any printed or digital promotional items. Often this permission is requested at the beginning and is part of the artist's contract with the gallery. In some cases, reproduction fees will be required (see CARCC website [www.carcc.ca](http://www.carcc.ca)).

## 10.4 Media follow-up

The gallery should follow-up with the media by making phone calls to inquire if they would be interested in a tour of the exhibition, if additional visuals/information are required, and/or if they would like to interview the artist(s) and/or curator (by telephone or in person). The reviewer should not feel pressured to respond. However, a personal touch (a telephone call or informal email note) can be effective.

The gallery will normally look after media communications and will usually only contact

you if an interview has been requested. If the curator has a good relationship with an art reviewer and wishes to approach this person about writing about the exhibition, it is best to consult with the gallery first.

For an excellent source of information about marketing, visit the 2010 Legacies Now website ([www.2010legaciesnow.com](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com), click on Explore Arts, then Resources, and select the Arts Marketing Resource, which provides many links to marketing-related websites.)



*Facing History: Portraits from Vancouver*, Presentation House Gallery, Vancouver, 2001. Photo: Robert Keziere.



# 11.0 Mounting the exhibition

**Although the curator will not be responsible directly for all tasks related to the installation and opening of an exhibition, she/he is responsible for ensuring that the work, and the exhibition itself, is presented to the best of everyone's abilities and in a manner that is beneficial for the artists and for each work of art. Careful planning and attention to detail will help achieve this goal.**

## 11.1 Planning for installation needs

The curator must ensure the gallery has all information required for installing the exhibition. This information will include necessary equipment loans or rentals, technical support, wall construction, colours of paint, etc. The curator will have discussed installation details with the artists

well in advance of the installation. A list of requirements for each artwork (those more complex than two-dimensional framed work) and a floorplan with a preliminary layout will allow the gallery to anticipate what is needed. This should be sent many weeks or months in advance.

## 11.2 On site to install the project

In consultation, the gallery and curator will have determined how many days are required to install the exhibition. Usually galleries will set aside five days minimum for the change-over of exhibitions. If the project is larger than usual or has a lot of complex requirements, be sure to discuss whether extra installation days and/or more staff are needed. Since galleries finalize their exhibition dates six to 12 months or more in advance, it is essential to think about this early on.

The curator should calculate how many days her/his presence is required. If expected to be present for only the final days of an installation, she/he should provide a list

of tasks for the gallery to undertake. For instance, the building and set-up for a video projection room or the set-up of other equipment in a designated space can be done in advance. Certainly all painting and other preparation work in the space can be completed before the curator appears, and artworks can be uncrated and placed in their tentative locations (if this makes sense for the exhibition).

While unpacking the work, gallery staff will often photograph the process so the art can be repacked in the same manner and to establish the condition of the art on arrival.

Condition reports should be done for the artworks as soon as the objects are unpacked



*Weathervane*, produced by Oakville Galleries/Ottawa Art Gallery: Installing a work by Lawrence Weiner at UQAM Gallery, Montreal, 2006.



Anita Dube installing her work for *Resonance: Contemporary Art from India*, Anita Dube and Subodh Gupta, Centre A, Vancouver, 2004. Photo: Alice Ming Wai Jim.

– recording whether or not there has been any change to the condition since noted when the works left the previous location(s). If there are any changes or damage to a particular artwork, the owner of the work must be contacted immediately to discuss the next steps (for repair, return of the work or another approach). The gallery will normally look after contacting the owner. The gallery is responsible for the preparation of condition reports.

Once present, the curator must assess the appearance of the artwork *spatially* in the gallery and determine if the preliminary layout works well. If at all possible, major changes (ones that require movement of walls, for instance) should be avoided at this juncture and are often not an option due to time or labour restrictions. For solo exhibitions the curator will usually work very

closely in a collaborative manner with the artist to determine the design and layout of the exhibition. If the exhibition layout is a conceptually inherent aspect of the artistic vision, the design may be developed primarily by the artist. For group/thematic exhibitions, the design is determined by the curator.

The curator and gallery staff are charged with the task of presenting the art and the project ideas in the most visually effective, professional and respectful way possible, and sometimes extra effort is essential. Artwork must be presented as the artists intended. Long hours of work may be required. A positive problem-solving approach, determination and humour, and sometimes a boost of adrenalin, are required! Inevitably, the show is accomplished in time for the opening reception, even if only moments before the door opens.

## 11.3 The opening reception and public events

The curator should be present at the exhibition's opening reception and for some or all of the public programs that are organized in connection with the exhibition. Often the curator will be expected to say a few words about the project at the opening reception and will be introduced to the audience by the gallery's director or other staff member. This is one opportunity to acknowledge the work of colleagues, artists and others who contributed to the production of the project. The gallery

staff member will acknowledge the project sponsor(s) publicly; if not, the curator should include this credit.

It also makes sense for the curator to introduce an artist's talk, scholar's lecture or other events organized in connection with the show. However, if the gallery is not in the curator's city of residence it will not always be possible. The curator should negotiate these details with the gallery long before the actual events occur.

# 12.0 Wrap-up

## 12.1 Financial tasks

### **Ensuring payment of fees to artists, suppliers and the curator**

This work is undertaken by the gallery, but the curator should provide the information needed in order to complete these tasks. The master list for the project will include contact information for the artists and other participants, to be used for distribution of cheques.

If the project is a group exhibition, it is useful for the curator to send the gallery a separate list regarding fee payments, especially if there are any variations on the artists' fees. For instance, an artist may have negotiated a different amount or asked for their fee to be waived (this is unusual but it can happen). In the case of a deceased artist, the fee may go to the artist's spouse or estate, or none may be required. Normally the gallery negotiates artist fee amounts, however the curator may be asked to communicate this information.

### **Final accounting**

All receipts accumulated by the curator for relevant project expenses should be assembled immediately after the project closes (e.g. travel expenses and administrative costs such as long-distance phone bills, copying and image scanning or duplication costs – as agreed upon in the contract). Final invoices for these expenses, with receipts, should be mailed to the gallery. Be sure to keep copies for your records.

The curator can ask the gallery for information about the financial balance for the project. Did the project remain on target or were there overruns? Often full details will not be provided. However, summary financial information will be required if the curator is responsible for any final reports to funding agencies. If this is an independent, curator-driven project where the curator is fully responsible for the budget and final reports, a full expense report for the project will be essential as well as a list of all relevant revenues.

## 12.2 Project assessment and final reporting

### Collecting media responses and promotional materials

The curator and the artists should be sent a complete package of all printed materials produced for the show and all media reviews. Generally, the producing gallery will do this if asked by the curator.

### Evaluation of the project

It is useful to gather all responses to the project (e.g. reviews, entries in guest comment book), and statistics such as attendance figures for general visitors to the gallery and for spectators/participants at the opening reception, all public programming events and education activities (e.g. visits from school groups). Sometimes an evaluation will be undertaken jointly by the gallery and the curator; more often this will be done independently.

### Some of the questions to consider:

- Did viewers respond positively to the project? If not, what were the criticisms and can these comments be constructive in helping to shape a way of working as a curator in the future? Criticisms are not always valid or useful and do not always require assessment, but they should not be dismissed automatically.
- Was attendance suitable given the nature of the project and the producing venue? If it was much lower than expected, what were the contributing factors? Was there anything inherent in the production of the project that caused reduced attendance (such as an insufficient or poorly

organized media campaign or inadequate signage)? If attendance was much higher than anticipated, what do you think the key attractors were?

- What did you learn regarding the choice of venue for this exhibition? Was it suitable for the type of project you undertook? Was the project selected and organized appropriately, given the venue's spatial facilities? What would you do differently if you could do it over again?
- Were your communications with the artists, gallery(ies) and members of the public timely, constructive and positive?

### Grant reports

All funding agencies that give financial support require a final report with a brief assessment of the project and a final financial statement. If the project contents or activities changed from the original proposal to the funding agency, an explanation of the reasons for the change must be provided. If the project had financial problems (a large deficit, for instance), a note about the reasons for this will be required.

For all grants secured by the curator as an individual or as part of a collective (as opposed to those submitted on behalf of, or by, the producing gallery) the curator must prepare and submit a final report. There are usually specific items of information requested (check the initial letter of grant confirmation) and sometimes a final report form is supplied, as it is with the Canada Council. Sometimes all that is required is a brief letter reporting on the project.

Be sure to address all requirements for information. Be concise and focus on the positive aspects of the project, without avoiding any real issues that may have developed. The point is to have undertaken the project responsibly and with due respect for the artists and the public, and to have learned from the experience. You are not only reporting on this particular project. You are developing a relationship with this funding agency and you will want it to be a positive and honest one.

Final reports for grants and sponsorships for which the gallery applied are the responsibility of that gallery.

### **Distribution of a publication**

If a print catalogue or other material was produced as documentation of the project, include this with all final reports (as above) to funders and sponsors. Copies should be sent to the artists and other contributors to the project. The gallery will determine how many copies each party will receive and they should undertake distribution. Again, be sure the gallery has up-to-date addresses for this task.

# 13.0

## Expanding the audience: exhibition circulation

**Touring an exhibition to additional communities has many benefits, including: the dissemination of an artist's work and the project's curatorial ideas to a much broader audience; the promotion of an artist's work in a way that can create new opportunities for them (artist's lectures, introductions to other artists and curators, future exhibitions, commissions, etc.); and professional collaboration and profile-building for the circulating gallery. A tour can also provide a natural audience and wider marketing opportunities for the exhibition catalogue.**

For an independent curator there are three ways to undertake an exhibition tour:

- To work with one producing gallery that will oversee a tour;
- To work with two or more co-producing galleries who share costs and tasks related to a tour;
- Or to tour a show as an independent curator, alone or with other independent colleagues (as a collective of individuals).

*For the purpose of this toolkit, the first option is assumed. The other options require financial support and organization beyond the scope of this toolkit.*

It is essential that the terms between the producing gallery and the curator, with respect to the tour, are clear and in writing. This may involve a separate letter of agreement or contract if these terms are not part of the contract for curating the inaugural exhibition. From this agreement, the curator should understand the nature of the curatorial fee to be paid for the tour, either as a flat amount (for a designated number of venues) or as a fee per venue.

The curator should also know whether she/he will be sent to install the exhibition at each venue. Some simple exhibitions do not require this, in which case an installation layout plan and other instructions can be

provided by the curator. It is common for the curator to receive an installation fee for installing the exhibition on site (with instructions provided in advance for work to be done prior to arrival). However, sometimes this work is covered by the main curatorial fee for the tour.

If the exhibition tour is developed after the inaugural exhibition opening, additional loan approvals for the tour plans will be required from all artists and lenders to the project.

## 13.1 Economics of a tour

If an independent curator's exhibition is to be toured by a public gallery, it is not normally the curator's responsibility to calculate the project's feasibility. However, the gallery may engage the curator to help strategize the shape and extent of the intended tour. It is important to clarify the precise role of the curator in relation to the tour-related responsibilities. In the case where the curator is responsible for the development and management of a tour, full awareness of a project's budget and the strategies for assembling a viable tour are essential.

Tour budgets can be conceived in various ways. Some will be constructed with a zero-based bottom line (essentially no deficit or surplus). This may or may not include the organizing gallery's in-house labour costs for work done on the tour. Some galleries require that only actual cash-outlay ("hard") project costs (not related to ongoing operational costs such as salaries) be included and covered by project revenues, or that a tour has to make a profit in order to contribute to the general operation of the institution. At the very least, revenues should cover all direct tour costs. The budget template in this section includes solely project-specific costs and a zero-based bottom line (see below).

### Preliminary Tour Budget:

Tour expenses are often difficult to anticipate accurately one to three years prior to the launch of a tour. However, service companies (shippers, framers, etc.) will provide preliminary estimates (as opposed to final quotations) on the understanding they will be updated once

a tour is confirmed. It is best to include a contingency figure in the budget (10 per cent is common) to provide for unanticipated or altered expenses.

Often, borrowing galleries will be responsible for all travel costs for the artist and/or curator, and sometimes for a technician or registrar from the producing gallery to assist with the unpacking, condition-reporting, and/or exhibition installation. These costs include transportation, accommodation and a stated per diem, and may also include installation fees. Such requirements should be part of the contractual agreement with the borrowing venue.

The tour budget will include artist fees and curator fees. [See section 6.2.1, Fees: Curatorial Fees, regarding calculating tour fees for the curator.]

Tour revenues generally consist of:

### Exhibition fees

Charged to the venue by the producing gallery, exhibition fees can vary enormously and are influenced by many factors: size and complexity of the exhibition, number of artist fees to be paid, framing and other installation preparation costs, equipment purchase, crating, etc. Generally the exhibition fee is intended to cover all tour costs except for those related to the shipment of the work. Some galleries also exclude packing/crating/framing and/or conservation, and charge these as additional fees or as part of a pro-rated fee (see following page).

## Shipping fees

There are two standard approaches for calculating a shipping fee charged to the venue:

- Secure shipping quotations for the entire tour, including the return of the art at the tour's end, and add estimates for related costs\*; divide this total equally by the number of venues and you have the shipping fee. This is called a pro-rated shipping fee.

[\*Additional costs may include those related to international borders, e.g. customs broker fees, duties and taxes, and fuel surcharges, plus any human couriers that must accompany artworks and/or security escorts (these are rare, and are used usually in the case of high-value works).]

- Ask each venue to cover the cost of outgoing shipping. In this scenario the initial shipment of art from the producing gallery to the first venue is either absorbed by the gallery or included in the calculations for the exhibition fee charged to the venue, along with the related costs noted in above paragraph.\* The downside to this approach is that venues that are a long distance from the next venue on the tour have to pay an inordinately larger shipping fee than other venues, and this can be considered unfair.

There are many ways to configure fees for a touring exhibition. Note that some galleries will add the shipping fee to the exhibition fee to charge one all-inclusive fee. Others may charge a pro-rated fee which includes all direct tour related costs and charge an exhibition fee which is considered to be payment towards the intellectual property of the project, its initial research and development and/or the gallery's considerable labour investment.

## Grants

Grant funding for touring an exhibition may be necessary. Potential sources for tour funding include:

- British Columbia Arts Council: Touring Initiatives; and similar programs in other Canadian provinces.
- Canadian Heritage/Museums Assistance Program (MAP): Access to Heritage; Exhibition Circulation Fund (for historical touring shows).
- Canada Council: Project Assistance (if the gallery is eligible, they can apply for the touring component of a project).

The number of venues on a tour will often determine its financial viability. The break-even point is reached with a minimum number of venues; additional venues will give the budget more flexibility, making the endeavour more attractive to the organizing gallery. It is useful to sketch out a budget based on one, two, three and more venues in order to clearly understand the project's feasibility and to determine the size of the exhibition fee to be charged to each venue.

[CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF FOR A SAMPLE MULTI-VENUE TOUR BUDGET AND FEASIBILITY CHART OR SEE PAGE 98.](#)

## 13.2 Tour venues

The person responsible for soliciting exhibition bookings and assembling a tour (this will be a producing gallery staff member or the curator) will prepare a list of preferred galleries for the tour. This will be based on the agreed-upon geographic region for the tour, and the mandate, size and architectural appropriateness of the venues. The producing gallery will determine how many venues they can handle for the

tour (limitations may be influenced by staff labour and other priorities).

It is useful to prepare a list or chart of these venues with a record of tour proposal distribution dates, and to track any response activity. Be certain to retain records of the terms under which the exhibition was offered to each venue, as in some circumstances these terms may vary.

## 13.3 Exhibition tour proposal

The gallery will prepare tour proposals for the solicitation of venues. The proposal will include:

### Cover letter

This can be tailored to the venue being approached: Why would this exhibition be good for their program? What is special about it? Write a letter that can be used for all proposals allowing for slight adjustments. A personalized approach can be effective. The letter must be addressed to the specific person who should receive it (the director or curator). Avoid “To whom it may concern” letters.

### Project description

This should be no longer than one page, if possible.

### Tour factsheet

Include basic facts such as: size of the exhibition (number of works), dimensions of works, space requirements, date

availability, costs to venue (exhibition fee, shipping fee, requirements to bring curator and/or artist(s) to gallery to install show), and provision of equipment required. This sheet will also outline what the producing gallery will provide: promotional materials, visuals, curatorial wall text, label info (often on CD), specialized equipment, mounting systems, and installation manual/condition report binder.

### Biographical information on artist(s) and curator

### Key reviews of artist’s work (optional)

### Visual materials

These could include slides or a CD of digital images, or colour laser prints. Note: multiple copies of visuals will need to be prepared.

[CLICK HERE FOR A DOWNLOADABLE PDF FOR A SAMPLE TOUR FACT SHEET OR SEE PAGE 99.](#)

## 13.4 Itinerary planning and confirmation

Ideally a tour schedule will make sense geographically, moving across a region or across Canada (and/or elsewhere), in a manner that avoids criss-crossing. This will economize on shipping costs. However, galleries may not have a lot of flexibility with scheduling and therefore tours cannot always be geographically logical.

In between bookings, allow for plenty of time for shipping as well as de-installation and crating at the closing venue and installation at the forthcoming venue. Allow for unexpected delays. Generally, you will need a minimum of two to three weeks. The size and complexity of the show will also affect this decision. Keep in mind that galleries sometimes cannot store crated works for long.

Educational institution galleries, at a university for example, will often want exhibition bookings for the school semester period, unless the exhibition is more suited to a summer tourist season.

As bookings are confirmed, a tour itinerary document should be prepared and organized chronologically according to requested exhibition dates. Identify gaps in the schedule and, as new proposals are sent out, update the specs sheet to include confirmed venues and highlight available booking dates. Send this as an update to venues that are considering the exhibition proposal.

Advise all venues of the tour schedule once there are sufficient bookings to proceed with the tour. Additional bookings can be added over time, or not, depending on the decision made about the size and duration of the tour.

Venues are to receive an exhibition rental agreement from the organizing gallery. Usually a formal contract, this will outline areas of responsibility for the touring organization and the borrowing venue, including terms regarding fees to be charged and other cost-related items.



Germaine Koh: *Overflow*, Centre A, Vancouver, 2007.

## 13.5 The curator's responsibilities for a tour

Assuming that the producing gallery is responsible for the tour coordination, the curator is usually responsible for the following for each venue on the tour:

- Provision of a basic text for the newsletter, media release, introductory wall panel, etc. Each venue may have specific requirements and may request that the curator edit or revise the text as appropriate for their needs (e.g. for a smaller newsletter space, etc.). It is in the curator's best interest to participate in such editing, to maintain the integrity of the exhibition's interpretation.
- Communications with the borrowing venue's curator (or other designated staff person) regarding the following:
  - Installation of the exhibition in the selected gallery space. This will include overseeing instructions regarding required equipment, wall or room construction, paint colours, etc., and a preliminary installation plan.
  - Curatorial travel schedule (if appropriate).
  - Public programming in relation to the show (curator's talk, artist's talks, etc.). Each venue will determine the extent of their public program (if any) and will usually consult with the curator and make appropriate arrangements with each participant.
  - Distribution by the borrowing venue to the artist(s) and other participants (including the curator), of printed promotional materials and publication(s) for the show. Sometimes this material will be sent only to the producing gallery and/or the curator for distribution.
  - Communications with the producing gallery's staff to keep them informed of the progress of each tour booking and any decisions that affect the overall tour.



## Tour Budget and Feasibility Chart

[Title of Exhibition]  
[circulating gallery]  
[estimated tour dates]

This tour budget is for a solo exhibition organized by a guest curator. Dollar figures represent a modestly budgeted project and are simple, in order to facilitate easy calculation. The chart illustrates how financial feasibility generally improves as more venues join the tour. The break-even point is clearly identified.

Note that the budget here does not provide for in-house labour costs for the circulating gallery. Some galleries prefer to include these, especially if contract staff must be hired to temporarily replace the gallery staff working on the tour (such as a registrar or conservator). Some galleries ensure that all costs for a tour are covered by pro-rated charges; in this case the exhibition fee charged to venues is additional, representing a profit that can support general gallery operations or future exhibition projects.

<b>EXPENSES:</b>	1 tour venue	2 venues	3	4
<u>Fees:</u>				
Guest curatorial fees (\$500 per venue)	500	1,000	1,500	2,000
Artist's fee (\$1,000 per venue)	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
<u>Preparation/shipping costs:</u>				
Framing	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
Crating	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Shipping (includes dispersal at end)	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500
Didactics	200	300	400	200
<u>Promotion/outreach:</u>				
Copying/postage (Gallery)	400	400	500	500
Documentation/promotional materials	100	150	200	250
<u>Other</u>				
Couriers	100	150	200	250
Insurance	400	500	600	700
Phone/fax/Internet (Gallery)	50	100	150	200
Phone/fax/Internet (guest curator)	50	100	150	200
Copying/postage (guest curator)	100	200	300	400
Contingency	200	400	600	800
<b>TOTALS FOR TOUR:</b>	<b>7,400</b>	<b>10,100</b>	<b>12,900</b>	<b>15,200</b>
<b>REVENUES:</b>				
Exhibition fees from venues	3,500	7,000	10,500	14,000
Shipping fees from venues	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>18,000</b>

[Logo of Gallery]

## TOUR FACT SHEET

### **[Exhibition Title]**

[Name], Curator

Organized and circulated by [Name of gallery]

**Number of works:** [For example: 100 framed photographs, colour and black and white; two video works]

**Required space:** [#] running feet/metres [and/or square footage]

**Availability:** [Period of tour; may also include current list of confirmed and/or pending bookings, or a list of booking periods available, e.g. January-March, 2008 or spring 2008, etc.]

#### **Costs for the Borrower:**

- Exhibition fee: [\$\_\_\_] for [#]-week bookings [e.g. 8-12-week bookings]
- Shipping fee or pro-rated fee: [Variable: pro-rated amount to be determined or flat rate pre-determined, or only outgoing shipping cost, etc. Note: this fee often includes other costs related to shipping such as packing/crating, conservation costs and loan fees related to the tour, in-transit security requirements, brokerage fees, etc. The fee amount may or may not be stated on this sheet; alternatively the fee can be estimated or provided as a maximum for this purpose]
- Equipment as needed [i.e. for video monitor or projection installation, etc.]
- Insurance [may include insurance for the exhibition while on the premises and for incoming and/or outgoing shipping; or there may be a pro-rated insurance fee charged by the circulating gallery]
- Installation costs
- Marketing and promotions
- Public programming for the exhibition: [all travel and participation fees for events with artist(s) and other participants]
- May include: Costs for the curator to be present for installation and opening events; lecture fee for curator. [State minimum # of days required; minimum per diem rate, etc.]
- May include: Costs for artist(s) to be present for installation and/or opening events; artist talk fee. [State minimum # of days required; minimum per diem rate, etc.]
- May include: Travel costs/accommodation costs for organizing gallery's registrar and/or lender couriers to be present for opening of crates and installation, and possibly de-installation. [State minimum # of days required; minimum per diem rate, etc.]

#### **The organizer will provide:**

- Exhibition labels and wall text content on disc
- Text copy for media release and other promotional uses
- Shipping arrangements
- May provide: In-transit insurance or complete insurance coverage
- May include: Curator and/or artist and/or registrar travel for installation and opening events
- May include:
  - Posters for promotional distribution locally
  - Brochure for promotional use and distribution within the exhibition galleries
  - [#] copies of the catalogue; additional copies for re-sale at wholesale rate to venue
  - Public programming consultation

**Contact Information:** [staff person name/ producing gallery/ email address/ telephone number].



Jerry Pethick, Time Top Project,  
permanent public art work, Vancouver,  
2006. Photo: Maureen Smith. Detail.

# 14.0 Publication

**The production of a catalogue or larger book documenting a project is a complex, important undertaking. Such a publication may be produced in print or electronic form, and should be conceived as a record of the artist(s) and the curator's production that will be referenced for years to come.**

The role of the curator in the production of a publication will vary enormously. Sometimes she/he will be fully responsible for compiling all materials, working with the designer and overseeing the production – with consultation and final approval by the producing gallery. Other times the curator will supply a final essay for publication and often digital images with some 'back matter' (exhibition list, caption list for images, bios), and all subsequent production is the responsibility of the gallery with the designer.

The curator and the artist(s) are the best possible ambassadors for the publication and the gallery that produced it and, therefore, should receive as many copies as possible. Each gallery will have its own policy in this regard. If the number of copies being supplied is very low and the curator has distribution intentions that will benefit the gallery (i.e. to international or other contacts), it makes sense for the curator to ask the gallery if they will provide more copies gratis. Usually, in addition to the free copies supplied to the curator and the artist(s), the gallery will offer the option of additional copies at a discounted price.

This curatorial toolkit does not elaborate on the tasks required for producing a publication. However, the key areas of work required for publishing are:

- Concept development: form of publication (print, CD or other), preferred contents (number and types of texts, other written materials, number and types of visuals), size (number and size of pages), and general 'look' that is appropriate for the project;
- Assessment of fundraising potential (grant deadlines, etc.) and direct contribution from the producing gallery;
- Preparation of a production timeline;
- Budgeting, including requesting print and design quotations;
- Researching and commissioning of texts from writers;
- Commissioning of photographer(s) for documentation of artworks to be reproduced in the publication;
- Assembling all other visuals for reproductions (usually from the artists, dealers or lending institutions);
- Writing curatorial essay(s);
- Collecting and editing all written materials;
- Commissioning a designer and working with her/him towards the final product;
- Securing final approvals from the gallery for all materials and designs;

- Proofreading the entire document in designed, pre-production form (usually more than once), to be followed by approval of press sheets at the printers during the day(s) of the print run (this is usually handled by the designer or sometimes the primary photographer if they are experienced in press proofing, sometimes in consultation with the curator);
- Ensuring that all participants are sent an appropriate number of copies of the publication (distribution is undertaken by the producing gallery);
- Distribution of the publication, locally, nationally, internationally (depending on gallery contacts, policies and resources and the curator's contacts). This may include a book distributor who would be responsible for getting the publication into book stores (regionally, nationally and/or internationally).



Karen Love works as Manager of Curatorial Affairs at the Vancouver Art Gallery. She was Director/ Curator of Presentation House Gallery from 1983-2001, a full time independent curator and writer from 2001 to 2006, and she continues to produce independent projects. A resident of Vancouver, Love is a member of Doryphore Independent Curators Society and was a founding member of CABINET: Interdisciplinary Collaborations.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to extend her gratitude to the 2010 Legacies Now team, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the individuals listed below who assisted with the development of this document's content and language.

Primary editorial assistance: Karen Henry

Additional consultations: Renee Baert, Liz Bruchet, Sadira Rodrigues, Jordan Strom and Keith Wallace



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