

Tom Thomson Art Gallery

Facility Challenges 2021



Collection Storage

Lack of Storage

- Lack of proper art storage systems
- Lack of space for the current collection
- No room for growth
- Aged HVAC systems that can not create stable environmental conditions on a reliable basis



Lack of Proper Shelving

- The Collection has grown to 2600+ objects
- Despite this only a small selection of the collection is stored on professional grade rolling racks



- The majority of the works are stored in shelving units in areas that are regularly exposed to light



Capacity

- Storage areas are over-capacity



- Works are being stored in closets and passageways



Inability to Receive Donations

- The Gallery may have the opportunity to receive highly significant donations of art, but these donations are jeopardized by the Gallery's inability to store the works

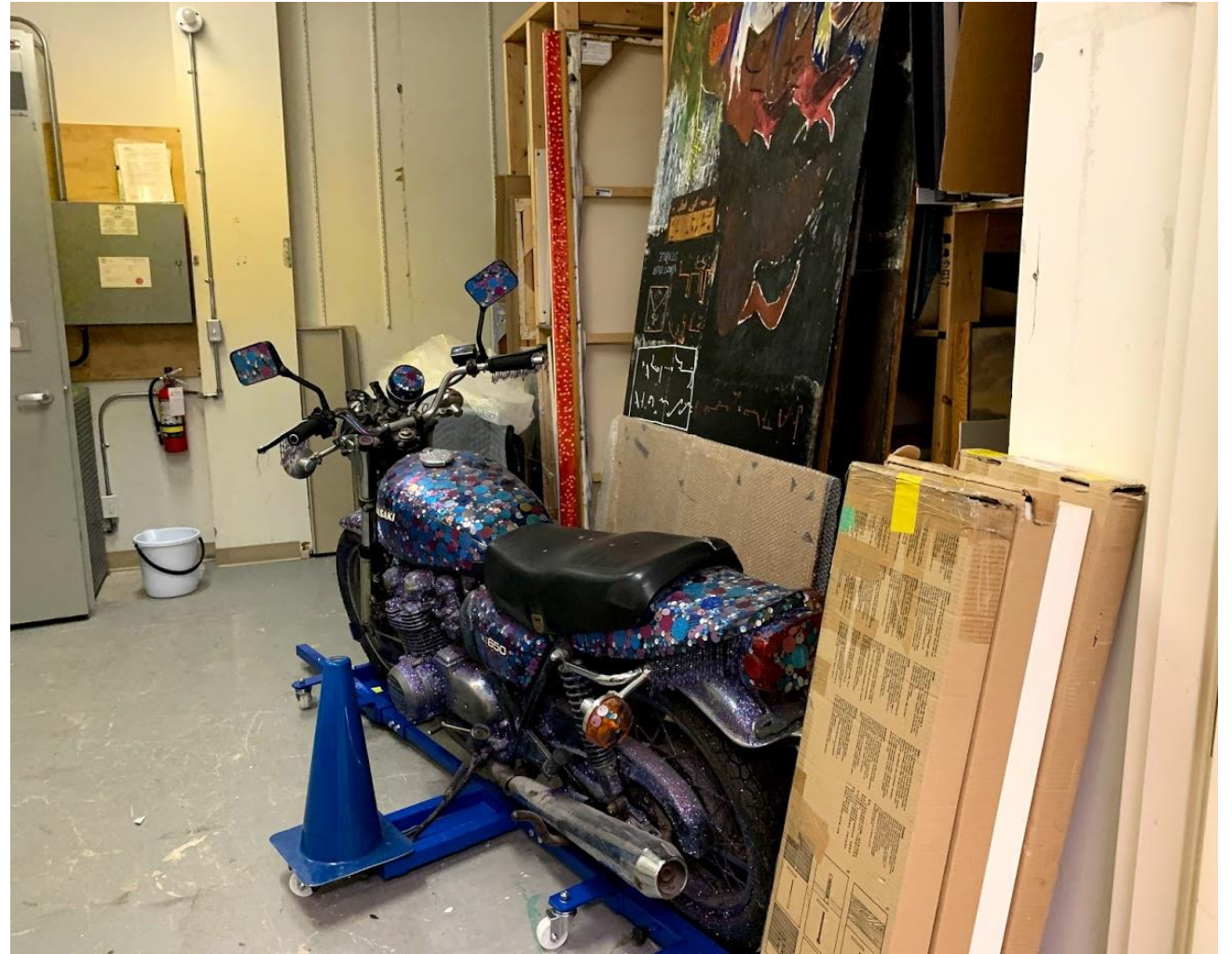


Storage Overflow

- The current collection has grown to the point where the Gallery is allocating part of the Studio to storage



- Some works have been exposed to moisture due to age-related building issues



Staff Work Spaces

Lack of Work Space

- There is a lack of office space for staff
- Staff are working in areas previously allocated to storage



Inadequate Work Space

- Work spaces do not have adequate light or ventilation
- Staff are working in areas originally designated as storage closets
- Staff are doubled-up in small work spaces (especially problematic during the COVID-19 pandemic)



Temporary Workspace

- It has been necessary to establish temporary work stations in the Studio for staff



Exhibition Spaces

Limited Exhibition Space

- The Gallery has limited exhibition space to showcase its collection of over 2600+ works



- Due to a lack of exhibition space, the Studio and the Lower Atrium have frequently been used as exhibition spaces



Thomson Room

- The Tom Thomson Room was converted into exhibition space from open concept offices
- Only a very limited number of works can be displayed at one time
- Space is inadequate for educational and group tours so often requested for Tom Thomson works



Exhibition Lighting

- The current track lighting system in the exhibition spaces is outdated and damaged
- Outdated lighting requires staff to create light attachments in order to display works with correctly



Programming and Event Spaces

Lack of Flexible Space

- Many art galleries are able to offer multi-media events, film screenings, performances, receptions, and other events
- These events take place in attractive and multi-functional spaces
- Having a flexible space contributes to fundraising, community engagement, and dynamic experiences
- The gallery has been forced to convert its small Studio and programming space to art storage and staff work spaces



Lack of flexible space limits the Gallery's ability to offer engaging activities:

- Public projects and programs
- Community collaborations
- Learning opportunities
- Fundraising events
- Receptions
- Lectures/Artist Talks
- Screenings
- Performances



Lack of Kitchen Facilities

- Lack of proper kitchen facilities for events
- There is no staff break/lunch room

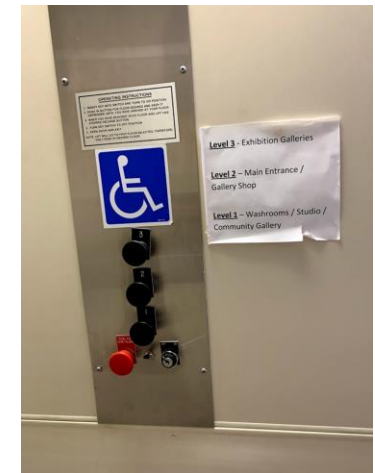


Limited Accessibility

Gallery Lift

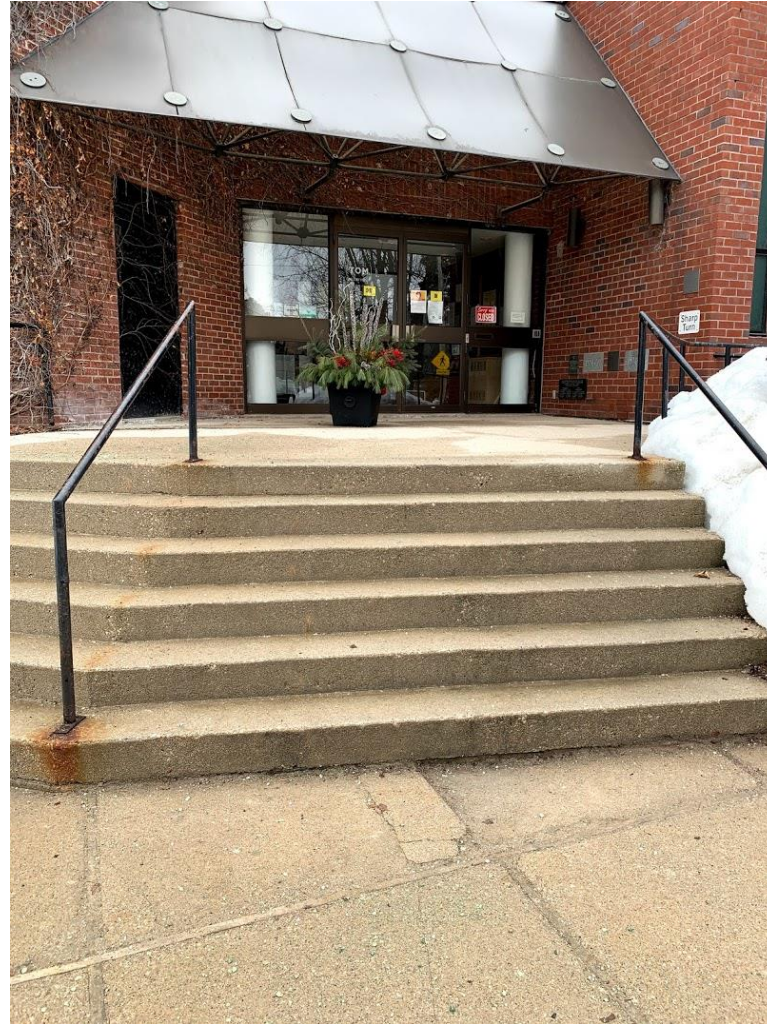
The Gallery's current building offers limited accessibility to our visitors. The lift is:

- outdated
- an open-carriage (posing risks of caught clothing or hair when moving)
- often requires 2 people to operate
- limited to 2 passengers at a time
- requires a key to operate
- difficult to use for those with mobility issues –knobs too high, door not automated, door very heavy and closes too quickly, etc.



Barriers for Entrance

- The Gallery's steep entrance stairs are difficult for some visitors to climb
- Concrete steps are in poor repair with large cracks and tripping hazards
- Lack of lighting for front entrance and stairs



Gallery Ramp

- There is a ramp for visitors unable to climb the stairs to use
- The ramp is extremely narrow and steep making the ramp potentially unsafe for visitors or staff who may be using it
- The cracks and wear to the concrete on the ramp pose dangers for users with manual wheelchairs, pushed devices (ex. walkers), and crutches
- As the ramp is very steep it can be difficult for users to effectively slow-down or maintain safe speed on the ramp as they take the turn
- Handrails are rusted



Accessibility Issues at Front Doors

- Accessibility buttons for operating power doors at entrance are small and hard to use, and are not up to current standards
- There is no accessible door connecting the Gallery to the Library
- Gaps, cracks and uneven concrete makes getting through the front doors difficult for those with mobility issues



General Building Challenges

Water damage

The Gallery's building is currently facing many age-related challenges:

- Leaks
- Water damage from old pipes
- Water damage from burst valves



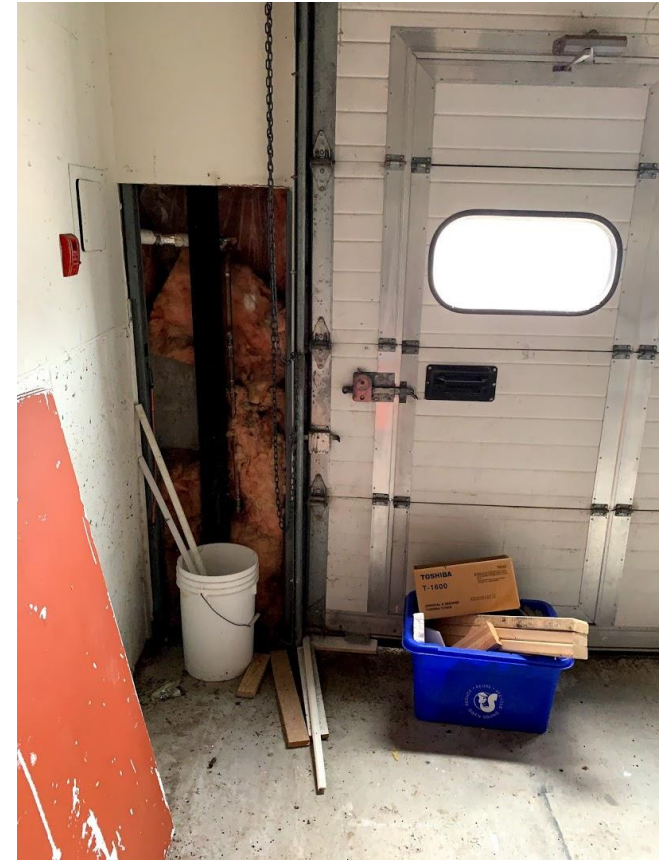
Cargo Lift

- Is outdated and awkward for handling art deliveries and hard to access for large trucks.



Doors

- Gaps and shifts to doors and seals (there are risks for injury, difficulty with pest control, security risks)



Floors

- Concrete floors are worn
- Flooring tiles are worn
- Foundation repairs required



HVAC System

- The HVAC system is at the end of its life and requires constant repairs



Lighting

- Lighting is outdated, inadequate and inefficient



Gallery Exterior

Lack of Street Presence

- The Gallery's current lack of street presence and architecture fail to identify it as one of the most important art galleries in Ontario and Canada
- Being difficult to identify makes the Gallery difficult to locate for tourists
- Gallery signage is aged and outdated



“The expansion of the TOM will enhance its ability to fulfill its role as an economic driver, community hub, and regional cultural and recreation attractions. As an anchor cultural institution, the new TOM can ignite a renewal of Owen Sound in a way that is true to its roots and to Tom Thomson's innovative spirit.”

**- Gail Lord,
Lord Cultural Resources**

