

# The Vancouver Life Drawing Society

## President's Report 2017/2018

For this past year the three things I wish to report on are the negotiations with the City of Vancouver to secure our place at 1011 Main Street, the passing of Randal Cullen our past Vice President and the on going need for volunteers.

The membership may recall last AGM there was discussion around our Society taking up residence under the umbrella of BC Artscape at their proposed location in China Town. At the time many of you expressed reservations about such a move. As it turned out the discussion was a mute point. We had heard nothing back regarding our application and our lease with the City Of Vancouver was coming to term. *When we did eventually learn something via the BC Artscape newsletter, it would seem we didn't even make their short list of preferred tenants.*

In May 2017, the Board commenced what would be eight months of negotiations with the City Of Vancouver and in January 2018, managed to secure a five-year lease with the option for another five years; a total of 10 years. The Board managed to hold the rent increase to \$23/sq ft/year (a dollar less than what the City was asking) with the new lease carried over to September 1, 2017; three months after the last lease ended on May 31, 2017. This is a \$4/sq ft/yr increase from the \$19/sq ft/year rent we had been paying with our 2012 lease; an annual increase of about \$4,400.

We also managed to hold the City at bay when they wanted us to be responsible for the maintenance and repairs of the studio HVAC system. It had been in our previous lease agreements that the City was responsible. When it was argued we did not have the legal reach or access to be responsible for the entire system the City relented.

Another feature of negotiations was for a month's free rent in 2018 to carry out some Tenant Improvements. One area that needed improving was the studio's washroom facilities. In February a small group of volunteers carried out what is hoped to be the first phase of renovations. The Board would like to extend on behalf of the Society an express appreciation to **Alain Boullard, Ron Bijok, Suzanne Saint Pierre, Marlene Van Tassel, James Pool, and Jerimiah Hoeft** for the floor retiling, installation of a new toilet and general organizing of the studio. Still to do is some painting, installation of new ceiling tiles, and shelving. The Board is interested in also making some improvements to the walk in closet for the models and general storage.

To our late VP Randal Cullen, who served on the Board from February 2010 until March 2017 contributed significantly to the running of the Society initiating and managing many programmes such as the Emily Carr student bursary, TD Waterhouse Investments, studio rentals and Corporate ticket sales to name a few. As a volunteer he was a real asset and showed to qualms about taking on added projects.

When he left the Board it was with the understanding he was taking work outside the country and would no longer be available. This was true but unknown to us was the poor state of his health until one of his sisters contacted the Board in late summer informing us he was very ill and in hospital. Members of the Board were able to visit Randal and meet members of his family before his passing in October of 2017. His family graciously donated a couple of items that we might sell to raise money for our coffers. Donated were an elaborate photographer's flash/lighting apparatus for studio work that has since been sold and the traveling painting easel that will be on display for our silent auction at this year's AGM.

In the vein of volunteer appreciation I extend recognition and thanks to all those that have worked to make this Society the success it is by participating weekly and/or making contributions when their time and energies allow. A special thanks to all members of the Board that have worked with me to keep this Society functioning and to Suzanne Saint Pierre who most recently stepped up to be our new VP after the position was vacant for so many months. In particular Nick Jackiw for his tireless dedication as our Treasurer who will be leaving us in August and will be sadly missed.

In closing I wish to echo past calls to all members the importance of participation if we are to keep this Society solvent and thriving whether its helping out or attending sessions and purchasing memberships. It all contributes in one-way or the other to this a very unique Society, our/your Society, otherwise known as Basic Inquiry.