



Ontario College of Art

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ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART

ADDENDA TO THE REPORT ON ART EDUCATION BY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF ART, PREPARED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE STAFF, SETTING FORTH SOME OF THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF THE COLLEGE, AND MAKING SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

To the Council of the Ontario College of Art,

Sirs:

The Report of the Principal of the College giving the results of his trip abroad to study art Education in the various schools has been placed before us, and, as the Council has acceded to the request of the Principal that the responsibility of making suggestions and recommendations should be shared by the Staff, we desire to submit herewith the following as addenda to the report.

We are gratified to observe that the Report as a whole indicates that the Ontario College of Art compares favorably with the old and established Schools of Art of the United States, Great Britain, France, Belgium and Holland, which the Principal has visited, and, having in mind the fact that these Schools are representative of the Art Schools of the world, and, as the Report shows they are meeting with problems of development similar to those we have to cope with, we are encouraged in the belief that the College is developing on the right lines.

The Staff desires to place on record its appreciation of the fact that in the interest of Art Education the Principal has taken this trip to the United States and Europe at his own expense.

It is to be accepted, as the Principal has stated, in his report, that an exhaustive study of the subject could not possibly be made within such a short time as was at his disposal, but we find that a great deal has been done towards the end which he has in view, which is the placing of the scheme of art training in the College on the broadest basis possible. In the policy of progress and expansion, it has been suggested by the Principal and is concurred in by the Staff, that it might well be a part of a definite scheme to encourage the staff, both Instructors and Assistant Instructors, to go abroad for observation and study. We wish here to point out to the Council that the Vice-Principal and three assistants on the Staff have made trips abroad last summer, doing much in the way of observation and study, and one of the assistants has been given leave of absence for study for three months without salary. The result, to the present,

is a very lively interchange of impressions which must lead to very vital improvement in the teaching.

We are pleased to see it recorded in the report that the principle of part time service in art teaching is generally accepted and is in operation in the schools abroad. This has been the case in the Ontario College of Art since its foundation, the object being to secure instructors who are also workers in their special branch of art. We are able to state that each member of the College Staff is a producer in this way, and we fully understand that this is an important essential in the standard of training given.

Concerning the proportion of the numbers of students to the numbers of the staff, the Principal's Report shows that, while there is considerable variation in this respect in Schools of Art which he has visited, the College of Art is very much understaffed compared with these schools. Exact proportions are too complex to be compared, but it would appear that we are below the proper number more than one half, and, in the twelve years since the foundation of the College, in 1912, the instructors on the Staff have been increased from six to eight with the most liberal count, while the number of students have increased from 100 to almost 500. It is true that a number of assistant instructors have been appointed from time to time and there are now six of these, but this does not release the heads of departments from a constant strain to keep in individual touch with the students. The result is too great a spread of the teaching, and, while not lowering the standard in quality, there is a great loss of percentage in quantity which is nearly as detrimental.

For the relief of this state of insufficient staffing, we feel it is our duty to make an especially strong appeal to the Council. We are quite aware that the claims of Art Education have always been lightly regarded and for a time the little advantage which has been gained has served to quiet our demands, but we believe the time has now come when a fuller degree of equality should be granted to the support of Art Education compared with other forms of education, and, that not only adequate staffing should be considered, but also the question of salaries and of retiring allowances.

We must also bring to the attention of the Council the fact that the College premises has, in the three years since its erection, become entirely inadequate for the proper accommodation of the nearly 500 students of last year and the 300 teachers of the Summer School. Various devices, more or less detrimental to the effectiveness of the instruction, have to be resorted to for the classes to be accommodated, and the

class rooms are often used for work for which they are not properly equipped. We are cognizant of the comprehensive plan for the extension of the College building which was prepared by the Principal of the College when the present building was erected. It is not necessary for us to say that we could use so large a building at the present time, but we could use its Library, Lecture Hall, Common rooms, about six of its studios, and some of the studios for the members of the staff which are planned.

In regard to this, and to the great necessity for proper equipment we find that the Report of the Principal shows strongly, however much it is expressed in moderate terms, the great disadvantages under which we work, and, while we share his confidence to the fullest extent in the high standard of our work, as compared with the schools he has visited, we wish to emphasize in this report these very pressing needs as of equal importance with that of more adequate staffing in the College.

It is a very large programme of expansion to suggest, but it is no degree in excess of what we feel to be imperative to keep pace with our growth in numbers of students, and for the development which has now overtaken our ability to cope with. We have confidence that it is only necessary that this statement should be formulated by the Staff as a whole to fully convince the Council of the situation, and that the Council is more than willing to act.

In the meantime, the Staff desires to report to the Council its full loyalty to the College, and to Art Education in Ontario, and to pledge enthusiastic effort to the work of the College in regard to their regular duties and its future development.

With regard to the future development of the College, the Staff learns with pleasure that the Council has appointed a Committee to have that as a special charge. There is much in the way of suggestions for this in the Principal's Report, perhaps the most outstanding is that referring to affiliation with Universities which is becoming a general demand, mostly from within the Universities where the desire for art and art culture is developing. We strongly approve of the proposed closer affiliation with the University of Toronto, which, we understand, only awaits a time when the necessary funds are available to become effective. After that comes, a new era for Art Education in Ontario may dawn when it may be made possible to place the College work, in its true place in the educational field, and to develop the professional and cultural in Art.

Respectfully submitted

on behalf of the Staff,

Principal.