

Dear Dianne Young,

I am writing you today to ask for your support in ensuring that the public art on display at Exhibition Place remains accessible to the public.

Specifically, I would like to draw your attention to “The Garden of the Greek Gods,” an important collection of 20 sculptures by the late Toronto artist E.B. Cox, a noted sculptor whose work is considered to be an important part of Canada’s art history. The collection was donated to the City of Toronto in the 1970s. It is on the City’s inventory of public art, and has been on public display at Exhibition Place since 1979, in a beautiful garden setting where it was enjoyed by children and adults alike.

I understand that in 2003, the Board of Governors of Exhibition Place granted a 20-year lease of the Horticulture Building and its grounds to Muzik Nightclubs. This year, the nightclub expanded its patio, and the entire collection is now behind its fence. The sculptures are jammed in among bars and washroom trailers, and are being used as mere “patio decorations.”

I have recently spoken to the artist’s daughter, Kathy Sutton. She is very concerned about the fact that the entire sculpture garden is now locked away behind the fences of a commercial nightclub, and inaccessible to the public. She told me that some of the sculptures were damaged during construction. Further, it seems that the tenant or his contractor used a “cleaning” process which caused permanent damage to many of the works. As well, many of the sculptures are partly buried in wet sand/gravel and mulch, which will cause more damage over the winter months.

Mrs. Sutton has been actively investigating how Exhibition Place allowed this to happen. She told me that she recently learned that the Board of Governors included the art in its lease to Muzik. In my view, it sets a very bad precedent so see Toronto’s public art included as part of a commercial lease. Who would want to donate art to a city that allows this?

I understand that members of the artist’s family have formed a “Free the Greek Gods” team. This team has recommended that the collection be moved as soon as possible to a suitable location for permanent enjoyment by the public. **I strongly agree with this recommendation, and am asking for your support in this regard.**

Please write me back to let me know what the Exhibition Place Board of Governors intends to do to (a) protect, and (b) relocate Toronto’s Garden of the Greek Gods.

Sincerely,
Ivan Goring
POB 763

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CC: John Tory
Dianne Young, CEO, Exhibiton Place