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November 14, 2014

Tim Wardrop
117 Beatrice Drive
Nepean ON K2J 5A4

Mayor-Elect John Tory
Office of the Mayor
Toronto City Hall,
2nd Floor, 100 Queen St. West,
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Mayor:

While I have long since moved from my fair Toronto (where like you I had the good fortune to attend University of Toronto Schools – UTS), I am delighted to know that you have now become its Mayor. My late father, Terence Wardrop, would also have been proud of your accomplishment, and were he still with us, I am quite certain he'd be writing you this letter! (And this, for you, might have been a more challenging conversation with Dad than discussing, variously, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, his beloved University of Toronto, or the state of nuclear energy in the province / country / world !!).

In any event, on behalf of my late father, I would like to draw your attention to “The Garden of the Greek Gods,” an important collection of 20 sculptures by a truly great friend of his – 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. I share her concern that the entire sculpture garden is now locked away behind the fences of a commercial nightclub, and inaccessible to the public. (Indeed, 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). Mrs. Sutton also passed on that some of the sculptures were damaged during construction. Further, it seems that the tenant used a “cleaning” process which caused permanent damage to many of the works. Finally, many of the sculptures are partly buried in wet sand/gravel and mulch, which will cause more damage over the winter months.

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.**

It would be reassuring to know that you share our concerns in determining exactly what the Exhibition Place Board of Governors intends to do to protect, and relocate Mr. E.B. Cox's and Toronto's famous Garden of the Greek Gods.

I thank you in advance for any assistance you can lend.

Sincerely,

Tim Wardrop
117 Beatrice Drive, Nepean ON K2J 5A4

c. Kathy Sutton;
Dianne Young, CEO, Exhibition Place;
Councillor Mike Layton
Councillor Mark Grimes