

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

Dear Chief Joanne Rogers,

As Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, I am writing to seek your input on a proposal to introduce Indigenous artwork into Ontario's Legislative Chamber. As you may be aware, in 2015 in consultation with Ontario's Chiefs, two Committee Rooms at Queen's Park were dedicated to exhibiting Indigenous cultural expressions and were renamed *Gathering Place*. The goal of *Gathering Place* was to bring forward and honour the experiences of the numerous Indigenous peoples in Ontario, as well as to build a bridge of understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

With the great success of *Gathering Place*, I am once again seeking your help with a new project. For 124 years, Ontario's Legislative Chamber has brought many people of different opinions together to seek consensus. The Chamber has a rich heritage and contains a number of plaster castings and intricate carvings. As beautiful and historically significant as these pieces are, they are not representative of the province's diverse peoples and I would like to include artwork or cultural expressions of those who traditionally have not been heard.

The purpose of seeking these items is to bring an Indigenous voice in the Legislative Chamber, and to continue to renew Ontario's relationship with Indigenous peoples. In addition, the artwork will serve as permanent reminders of the on-going role played by Indigenous peoples in the creation of Ontario.

I have attached some examples of artwork found in Legislative Chambers of other Canadian jurisdictions, but look to your leadership to inform us as to what would be most appropriate for Ontario.

Please contact Trevor Day, Deputy Clerk and Executive Director of Legislative Services at 416 325-3502 / tday@ola.org for more information.

Sincerely/Meegwetch

Honourable Dave Levac
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

cc: Panel Members: Sophie Kiwala, MPP
 Lisa Thompson, MPP
 Gilles Bisson, MPP

Attachment



INDIGENOUS ARTWORK

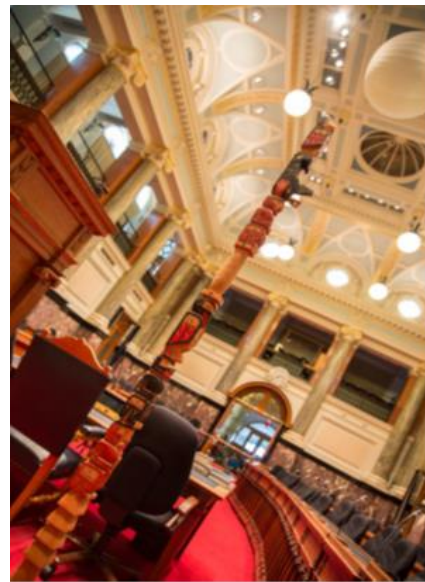
Prepared by: Trevor Day, Deputy Clerk and Executive Director,
Legislative Services
Date: 13 July 2017

Attached are some examples of Indigenous artwork found in Legislative Chambers of other Canadian jurisdictions.

British Columbia

Since 2016 there has been a First Nations talking stick on display in the British Columbia Chamber, carved by the late James Delorme of the Songhese First Nation.

The Talking Stick “serves as a reminder that First Nations and reconciliation should be a consideration in all debates and discussions in the Legislative Assembly.”



Manitoba

The Manitoba Legislative Assembly has a Star Blanket Mace Cushion and a beaded Mace Runner that were gifted to the Assembly in 2010 by the Aboriginal Peoples of Manitoba.

They are used in the Chamber every year on or around May 12 to celebrate Manitoba Day. On all other days, they are on display in the Speaker’s Office.



North West Territories

At the top of the Speaker's chair is a carving titled "Arctic Inhabitants" by Inuvialuit artist Angus Cockney. To the Speaker's left is a carving of loons by renowned carver Sonny Macdonald and to the Speaker's right are a traditional drum, painted with the Northwest Territories Coat of Arms and a traditional birch bark basket.



Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Legislature has a traditionally crafted beaded moose hide runner and beaver pelt cushion that was gifted to the Assembly in 2006 by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. In 2010 it also received a Métis Sash from Métis Nation.



Yukon

In October 2011, the Yukon Legislative Assembly installed two wrought-iron gates to separate the public gallery from the floor of the House. The gates have carved and painted wood panel inserts; one representing the Crow Clan of Yukon First Nations and the other representing the Wolf Clan. The carvings were done by local First Nations carvers – Calvin Morberg and Jared Kane.

