

Carleton's visualization of the climate crisis, hidden in the heart of campus

Carleton University Art Gallery, wedged between the school's residence buildings, collects the work of contemporary artists across Canada. *The Air of the Now and Gone* visually represents the international climate crisis as interpreted by eight artists. Since the exhibition's opening on Jan. 26, it has been hidden from staff and students both promotionally and architecturally, said Heather Anderson.

Anderson, the gallery's curator and interim director, said marketing is an ongoing "challenge in terms of resources and capturing people's attention."

She said the majority of their promotion strategies take place on social media. While this is a budget-friendly choice, "whoever people follow on Instagram or TikTok tends to become their kind of ecosystem," curated to their preferences.

Anderson said the gallery has physical marketing, such as bus shelter advertisements, invitation cards, and campus television ads to promote Carleton's art hub. "One of the goals that we have is to be able to do ads on the train station on campus, but they don't have the ad infrastructure yet."

Carleton students Lucas Hiscocks and Paige Balogh said they had not seen any promotional content around campus. Hiscocks said he only knew about Carleton's gallery because he "lives in Dundas [residence], right next to it."

"I've been once," Balogh said. "I went on a class trip with my social justice class."

Apart from class, they said they have no reason to go again.

"The busiest days are the ones when there ends up being [class] tours," Anderson said. The gallery gains the most attention when Carleton instructors, across many departments, bring their students to walk through.

The Carleton art gallery is open to the public weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on weekends, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, the gallery is closed, but can be opened circumstantially for a class tour.

The gallery advertises its free admission policy in an effort to welcome staff and students in their free time. Regardless, Anderson said she thinks that the "architecture" of the building and the gallery's location discourage people from visiting. "Those double doors are sometimes a bit fortress-like," she said. "I think it sometimes unintentionally deters people."

Sevda Smlatic-Lisiecki is the receipt accounting administrator for Carleton's financial services. She said she sometimes stops in the Carleton University Art Gallery for a quiet walk on her lunch break. "When my day is busy, I like to go to the quiet places," she said.

Smlatic-Lisiecki said she did not know what she was walking into and that "it is very different; something you can't explain."

The exhibition includes a textile installation by Christina Battle, demonstrating Edmonton's poor climate and air quality.

Le dedans de ce qui fuit, by Maude Arès, is a floor-to-ceiling collection of found objects from across the world, enacting the phrase "one man's trash is another man's treasure."

Balogh and Hiscocks delayed their cafeteria trip to see Cynthia Girard-Renard's *Tryphon*. This installation is an interactive, large-scale, papier-mâché depiction of a sperm whale, memorializing a whale that died in 2009 while tangled in crab trap cables.

Balogh said if they had seen promotional content around campus, they would have gone a lot sooner, "especially for that whale."

The Canada Council for the Arts offers grants to provide funding for artists and art organizations. Anderson said they are applying for this year's Artistic Institution grant to hopefully fund marketing resources.