

Subject: Re: District Hall "art" - a horror show

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 2005 19:27:53 -0800

From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

To: James_Ridge@dnv.org

CC: cathyadams@canada.com, managecomm@dnv.org, Council@dnv.org, fonvca@fonvca.org, cagebc@yahoo.com

Dear James,

I too was surprised when I viewed the art display last night. I have always enjoyed the art works at the Hall, but I too feel that this series of paintings is inappropriate for a public building where people are subjected to it without prior knowledge or consent. If the work was displayed in an art gallery then people could decide for themselves if they want to view it. At the Municipal Hall, the public becomes a captive audience. I think Cathy Adams' concerns are well-founded and I wouldn't be surprised if some members of staff are offended as well. The dreaded word "censorship" is likely to arise as a red-herring to counter demands that this artwork be removed. The issue, however, is about that elusive adherence to the "community standard." This might seem rather vague, but the municipality already enforces certain standards with respect to providing a non-threatening work environment, restrictions to public input and even policies for providing links on the DNV web page. Surely the same standards can be applied to art work hanging on the walls outside Council Chambers.

Sincerely,
Brian Platts

cathyadams@canada.com wrote:

>Dear Mr. Ridge

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>While attending a meeting at District Hall last evening, I
>was extremely upset to be subjected to the offensive "art
>display" in the front foyer area of the building. As I
>needed to use the washroom, I had no choice about it.

>

>Who made the decision that this type of material -
>depicting multiple images of guns, most superimposed on
>female forms, most of which are garbed in underwear or
>appear to be naked -is appropriate in as public a setting as
>District Hall?

>

>Several women, including myself, all strongly felt the
>images depict, and perhaps celebrate, violence against
>women. Done in a somewhat erotic fashion.

>

>This type of material is not appropriate in a place where
>people are subjected to it, without warning, and without
>their consent. District Hall is just such a place. People
>will come across it on their way into the mayor's office,
>into council meetings (where it can be viewed from inside
>those meetings), into the clerk's office, and even on their
>way to the bathroom.

>

>And as a parent, I have strong feelings about perhaps
>"running into it" with my nine year old son. I do bring him
>into the hall from time to time. In fact, he has been there
>twice in the last few weeks. I should not have to be
>concerned about going ahead of him, to see if offensive
>materials such as this current display are in view. Surely
>District Hall should be a "safe place" for all our residents.

>

>I want to add that it also offends me, as a Christian, that

>this material is to be on display at District Hall over the
>Good Friday and Easter period. It seems to fly in the face
>of the lovely and meaningful nativity scene on display at
>Christmas!
>
>I would like a fast response from whoever at the hall should
>deal with this. I would like to see these images removed
>immediately. If it takes weeks, and a "political" decision,
>I'll be very unhappy.
>
>I hope I'm not the only person who has taken the time to
>complain about this. I look forward to a reply.
>
>And thank you for your attention to this.
>Cathy Adams
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