



s m i t h e r s

ART GALLERY

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2022 — March 31, 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

"creating community through art"



s m i t h e r s
ART GALLERY

MANDATE

1. Maintain and operate an art gallery to provide access to art exhibitions;
2. Support local and regional artists;
3. Maintain and operate a workshop space to provide visual arts education to children, youth, adults and seniors;
4. Encourage connections and growth in the arts community

CORE VALUES

 guide the vision, creation and delivery of SGA programs and services

1. Accessibility: Financial and physical limitations and other barriers to participation will not limit access to programming
2. Diversity and Inclusion: Striving for equitable access to visual arts and programming for underrepresented artists and diverse audiences
3. Openness & Adaptability: Desire to respond and adapt to the needs, aspirations, challenges and opportunities of our community.
4. Integrity & Respect: Commitment to fair and transparent processes in galleries policies and decision making
5. Sustainability: Commitment to financial stability, quality programming and professional staffing to ensure organization thrives.

Board of Directors 2022-2023

President - Susan Smith

Treasurer - Teresa Wodjak

Secretary – Susannah Lam

Director at Large – Anne Desplanches

Director at Large - Brenda Zantingh/Jo-Anne Goble

Director at Large – Susan Kinkela

Town Representative (non-voting) – Sam Raven

Staff

Manager—Nicole Chernish

Community Engagement & Communications—Michelle Gazely

Gallery Attendant - Aidan Madley

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Susan Smith

The Smithers Gallery Association is pleased to present our 2023 Annual Report which covers the numerous exhibitions and activities and new initiatives that have taken place at the 'Smithers Art Gallery' and 'at Creation Station' as well as our financial position from the past fiscal year of April 2022-March 2023.

We hope that our Annual Report will give our community, our members, and our financial supporters a better understanding of the scope of our organization and the successes and challenges that the organization has experienced over this past year.



On behalf of the board, I would like to give a big shout out to our excellent support staff at the gallery throughout the fiscal year 2022-2023, including Michelle Gazely, Aidan Madley, Brenna Lam Kennedy, Lynne Murdoch, Melina Morin and Isabelle Chernish.

The board of directors is deeply appreciative of our energetic gallery manager, Nicole Chernish, who entered her fifth year in this position during the past fiscal year. Nicole continues to provide strong and dynamic leadership to our organization. Her passion for the Visual Arts and her ongoing efforts towards grant-writing have brought the gallery greater financial stability. Reliable funding allows us to hire additional support staff which in turn supports and further advances key goals including improving accessibility to our community and enhancing inclusivity within our diverse community through expanded programming and supports.

I would also to thank and recognize the many people in our community that support the gallery as gallery volunteers, committee members. The support of local funders including our business community is truly appreciated! We appreciate the Town of Smithers for it's ongoing support and for it's recognition of the value that the Visual Arts contribute to the quality of life in our community. Councillor Sam Raven has been a pleasure to work with in her role as council liaison to the gallery!

In closing I particularly want to acknowledge and recognize those who serve as our Board of Directors, including those who exited the board over the past year. The Board of Directors of a non-profit organization have an important role to fulfill and are essential to the success of the Smithers Gallery Association. I thank you all for your contributions and commitment; you are all truly appreciated!

OPERATIONS REPORT

Nicole Chernish

The Smithers Gallery Association (operating as the Smithers Art Gallery) provides both visual art Educational Programming and access to Art Exhibitions to Smithers, the greater Bulkley-Nechako Regional District as well as the eastern portion of the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District. Approximately 5,600 people live in Smithers and nearly 20,000 live in the surrounding valley and rural communities.

We are the only Gallery and Visual Arts Education provider open year round within a two hour plus driving radius of our locations.

The Gallery has embarked on a trajectory of growth and increased community engagement over the past number of years with our new workshop space acquired in 2018 in addition to our regular gallery exhibition space.

In addition to our full-time manager, we have a second full time position focused on visual arts education programming and outreach and a Saturday attendant.

We hired 2 full-time seasonal staff positions for May - September and an additional 2 full-time staff for July-August.

Total Program participation (exhibition visits and educational programming) was 12,482 from April 1, 2021-March 31, 2022.

VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION

The Smithers Gallery Association is the only non-profit organization offering art education programs in Smithers and the Bulkley Valley to children and youth.

Bursaries are available to provide financial support to anyone who has financial barriers to participate in programming; we are committed to ensuring access to the visual arts for all.

In 2022-23 we offered 40 workshops for all ages, 16 Saturday drop in sessions at the gallery and 7 special event activities in collaboration with other organizations and non profits in the area.

The first part of 2022 still had some reductions in our workshop capacity. Over the year we were able to increase our capacity for both adult and children's programming. Our art activities for families and children returned to in-person for the summer of 2022. We were also able to expand our outreach to providing art activities at all festivals and events in our region.



Secondary location Creation Station (3866 Railway Ave)

On February 14, 2018 we signed a lease agreement with the Town of Smithers for an additional location to run our expanding educational programming. Acquiring this space has enabled the Gallery Association to grow our programming capacity and to be more self-reliant by not having to rely on the availability of other programming space or shoulder additional rental costs.

VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION STATISTICS



In our fiscal 2022-2023 year, our Education Programming had a total of **2709** participants (up from 1,377 in 2021) including 84 from our Adult series, 83 in our after school programming (15 youth and 68 children), 108 at our summer kid's art camps and Spring Break fell outside this fiscal year's reporting. Saturday drop-in free art activities had 1777 participants (1037 adults and 740 children).

Our programs have been made available both in-person and online again this year. Our social media presence (Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) has increased dramatically and we are reaching more of

the community. We also send a newsletter (Mailchimp) to almost 900 people every two weeks and have an open rate of over 52%. With the size of our community we still have a fair amount of foot traffic and we put up posters in shops and venues along Main Street to reach people without computer access. We send out notices to local schools and community organizations to promote our classes and our bursary program.

Our Workshop Series this year had art instructors from Smithers, Telkwa and Hazelton with participants from the same communities and Granisle and Houston.

Kids Summer Art Camps (established 2006)

- 2017 half day program was increased to 3 weeks; 2019 a fourth week of summer camp was added
- 2020 shortened number of instruction days to meet covid protocols and held 6 sessions;
- 2021 PHO allowed 5 children (more if children lived in the same household) per session, increased the number of sessions to 8
- 2022** Resumed our pre-Covid registration to 10 participants per camp with 6 weeks and 12 sessions of programs offered. All but two of the workshops were run at full capacity.

Kids After School Workshops (established 2017)

- 2017 - program initiated with sessions for ages 9-12 and for ages 13-16, 2019 - added a series for ages 5-8 years ; 2021 - PHO capped classes to 5 with a total of 28 sessions and 2 sessions at spring break
- 2022** return to a capacity of 10 participants per session. We added 2 sessions of a "Mini Artist Parented Class" (ages 3-5) 4-6 weeks each, Our "Little Artist Club" (ages 6-8) had 5 sessions of 4-6 weeks each, our "Young Artist Club" (ages 9-12) had 3 sessions 4-6 weeks each and our "Teen Studio Sessions" totaled 3 sessions 4-6 weeks each. Our Spring Break Camp for the two younger age groups is a one week duration with 2 separate sessions.

Drop-In Art Activities (NO COST) (summer activity since 2015)

The gallery resumed in person drop-in art activities for children this year, the past two years had been kits for people to pick up due to PHO.

Adult Spring and Fall Workshop Series

Continuing Art Education for Adults aged 16 and over. In 2020/2021 we held 7 in-person classes and 4 online workshops and demonstrations. This year, 2021/2022 we held our regular Adult series with 17 in-person classes and 1 virtual class and added a 55+ workshop series with 27 in-person classes and drop in sessions. In 2022 we held 14 adult workshops and drop in sessions once a week over 8 months – please see chronological program listing details.

Festivals and Special Events

We hosted art activities at all local festivals/events held by other organizations in 2022. The gallery attended Pride with 198 participants, National Indigenous Peoples Day with 128 participants, Canada Day with 72 participants, Midsummer Music Festival with 96 participants, Kispiox Music Festival with 35 participants, the Multicultural Festival distributing 35 kits, and Family Day with 93 participants.

EXHIBITIONS

The Gallery hosted eight exhibitions, one community exhibition and one curated group exhibition in 2022. We resumed modified opening receptions this past year, while maintaining the production of videos that were released on social media as a way for artists to connect to and engage the community. All exhibitions are also photographed and hosted on our website for those who are unable to come into the gallery in-person.

The Youth Art exhibition, which is always a highlight, was held in January/February of 2023. This exhibition is held every two years and gives local and regional high school students the opportunity to showcase and sell their work through a professional gallery. Young artists from the Bulkley Valley, Hazelton, Kispiox and Burns Lake participated, providing a more regional experience and building on our commitment to providing opportunities to our whole catchment area.

This year we added a component to the Youth Exhibition called “Shine Together”. This was a leadership idea developed by Torbin Shubert through Special Olympics to create an art workshop, music and a gallery exhibition for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) to integrate into the wider community.

Another first for the gallery was the creation of a group exhibition, “Northern Indigenous Perspectives” that was curated by Indigenous artist Stephanie Anderson. This exhibition represented over 15 artists from our region. NIP developed deeper relationships with Indigenous artists to promote diversity, accessibility and inclusion in the gallery and with our community visitors. This exhibition is now a permanent part of our exhibition schedule and will be held every two years.



EXHIBITIONS SCHEDULE 2022 –2023

April 5 - May 7	Laara Cerman/Mary Anne Wettlauffer
May 10 - June 11	Dave Denson/Evelyn Stevenson
June 14 - July 9	Mark Thibeault
July 12 - Aug 6	Northern Indigenous Perspectives
Aug 9 - Sept 3	Leah Pipe/Chris Fraser
Sept 6 - Oct 8	Peter Morin - Her name is Edzudzah
Oct 10 - Oct 15	6x6 Fundraiser/Community Exhibition
Oct 18 - Nov 16	Marie Christine Claveau
Nov 18&19	Wintergold
Nov 22-Dec 24	One of a Kind - Artisan Christmas Market
January	Closed
Jan 24 - Feb 25	Youth Art Show/Shine Together
Feb 28 - April 1	Laurel Terlesky/Katie Kmet

EXHIBITION STATISTICS



Gallery in-person visits over this past year totaled increased to **9773** in 2022 (5,861 2021)including 8997 visitors to our Exhibitions Programming and 31 class visits with 615 students and teachers participating. Starting mid-November through the month of December, we transform the Gallery into a hub where artists from across the region can display and sell their work.

Our revamp of programming in 2020 to include online exhibitions was continued this year and is now an ongoing part of our programming. Online exhibitions resulted in an additional 1803 views for those unable to visit the gallery in person due to Covid-19 and/or rural/remote locations.

ARTIST SUPPORT

Our gallery artisan shop reopened along with the gallery. This space only sells work created by local and regional artists and artisans, providing the community with access to original works and artists with a venue to sell them. Access in a rural, remote community is paramount to the vitality and success of both communities and “vendors” as evidenced by the “Buy Local” campaigns many businesses have adopted over the past three years.

All artists (outside of community group exhibitions) receive fees for displaying their work in our gallery as outlined by guidelines developed through CARFAC. This provides artists with a small fee regardless of whether they sell their work during their exhibition and allows them to qualify for funding through Canada Council and BC Arts Council.

As one of the few galleries in the northern part of BC to pay these fees, it provides a platform for local and regional artists to develop from an emerging artist into a professional artist. This in turn provides the community with a professional visual art gallery and community space with access to a wider variety of media and artists for viewing.

FINANCES

We ended our 2022/2023 year with a surplus of \$1729 which increased our net assets to \$35,757. At the end of the fiscal year, the association has \$220,032 in cash assets (124,792 in deferred revenue from grants and a 60,000 loan to be repaid in 2023. Included in the cash amount is a term deposit of \$12,791.

FUNDRAISING

The Smithers Art Gallery continually strives to organize fundraising events that meet our goals of representing and supporting visual artists in our community, making connections with the broader arts community and providing opportunities for learning about the visual arts.

Our Wintergold and One of a Kind events brought 1851 people through the Gallery this past year.

6X6 resumed after 2 year hiatus. Brought in approximately \$14,000 with about \$3000 in expenses

Wintergold vendor market happened reopened this year. Gallery had 29 vendors and 736 visitors. Brought in \$2753 with expenses of \$250

One of a Kind is the Gallery's artisan Christmas Gift Shop. Sales over the period was \$22,114 which provided \$5528 in commission to the Gallery. We had 952 visitors from November 24 - December 24.

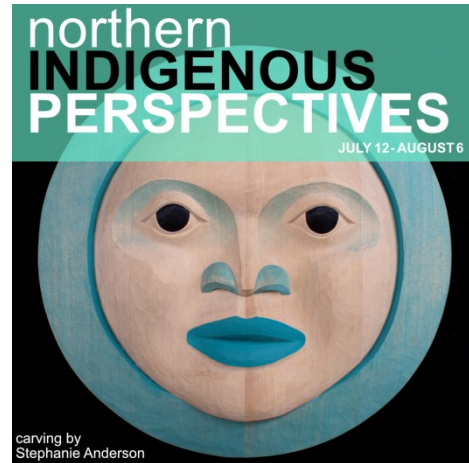
Gallery Artisan Shop is open year round. Sales provide income for local artists while also providing additional revenue to the gallery.



GRANTS

The Gallery Association continues to work towards financial stability for gallery operations through grant partnerships. We have been successful in acquiring the following grants this fiscal year and are deeply grateful for the financial support and opportunities they have provided.

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako - *Grant-in-Aid*
Town of Smithers - *Grant-in-Aid, Creation Station lease & associated tax exemption*
BC Ministry of Finance Community Gaming Grant - *operating assistance*
Bulkley Valley Credit Union - *rolling tables for office*
Canada Summer Jobs HRSD - *summer student funding*
BC Museum Association- *Family Day Program Grant (collaboration with BV Museum)*
BC Arts Council - *Program Grant (Group Indigenous Exhibition), Program Grant (Peter Morin residency/exhibition), Program Grant (Artist Residency)*
Young Canada Works *summer student funding*



our grateful thanks to the following

Corporate Sponsors:

Pretium Resources Inc.	Nature's Pantry	Smithers Lumber Yard
Hy-Tech Drilling Ltd	All-West Glass	Wed'zinkwa Family Medical Clinic
Babine Animal Hospital	LB Paving	Bulkley Valley Wholesale
Re/Max Bulkley Valley	Calderwood Realty	Smokescreen Graphics
Bulkley Valley Insurance Services		

Thanks to these local businesses that continue to offer discounts and special offers to Gallery Members:

Mills Interior Stationery Aquabatics Heartstrings

a HUGE thank you to our volunteers

Our volunteers create the life and soul of the Gallery through the work they do on its behalf and our first thanks go out to all of them for their time and commitment - it is highly valued and appreciated.

One of a Kind—Artisan Christmas Gift Shop, December 2021: *Many thanks to the intake and setup committee volunteers who helped with intake, promotion, gift-shop setup and takedown, and a huge thank-you to all the sitters who ran the gift shop during operation.*

Curatorial Committee: *Who juried and selected show submissions*

Selection Committee Chair: Julie Chaplin, Edith Illes, Facundo Gastiazoro, Emily Klaassen. Katie Kmet, Sarah Gourlay, Shannon Finnegan

Other Thanks: **Mary Davidson & Edmison Mehr Chartered Accountants:** preparing the year-end financials, and bookkeeper **Rene Haehner** for his patience and attention to detail

