

HOST

BONAVISTA
BIENNALE

2023

Impact Report



Couzyn van Heuvelen, *Nitsiit*, 2023, aluminum, resin, steel, stainless steel, pigment, paint, aircraft cable. Commissioned by Bonavista Biennale.



2023 Bonavista Biennale Artists

Born in the North • Ethel Brown • K. Jake Chakasim • Lindsay Katsitsakatste Delaronde • Wally Dion • Jerry Evans • Letitia Fraser • Billy Gauthier • Glenn Gear • Cynthia G. Renard • Erin Hunt • Don Kwan • SK Maston • Shirley Moorhouse • Shelley Niro • Shawn O'Hagan • Mary Ann Penashue • Sarah Prosper • Megan Samms • Anastasia Tiller • Miya Turnbull • Couzyn van Heuvelen • Jessica Winters

2023 Bonavista Biennale Team

Executive Director: Sue Balint

Artistic Director: Rose Bouthillier

Co-Curators: Rose Bouthillier & Ryan Rice

Curatorial Advisory: Janelle Duval, Bushra Junaid, Bethany MacKenzie, Ossie Michelin

Graphic Design: Mark Bennett

Website Developer: Matthew Hollett

Publicist: Lori Morgan

Program Assistants: Josh Jensen & Marco Muller

Installation Team: Jennifer Ackermann, José González, Kym Greeley, Julie Oh, Michael Pittman, Steve Topping

2023 Bonavista Biennale Board of Directors

Andrew Bell, Chair

Margaret Ryall, Vice-Chair

David A. Hood, Treasurer

Cassandra Filice, Secretary

Members: Angela C. Antle, Robert Bradbury, Logan MacDonald, Paul McDonald, James Quinlan,
Luke Redmond, Karen Skinner

Bonavista Biennale gratefully acknowledges that the land on which we gather is Ktaqmkuk, traditional unceded Mi'kmaw territory. We further acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu and Inuit of this province, and the ongoing connections with the past, present and future in our relationships with Indigenous and other peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Anastasiya Tiller, *Symbiosis*, 2023.

2023 Bonavista Biennale at a glance

ARTISTS: 24 artists from across Ktaqmkuk, Nitassinan and Nunatsiavut (Newfoundland and Labrador) and Turtle Island (Canada).

- Projects included five commissions, one made possible through a partnership with the Inuit Art Foundation, Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership: The Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq Project, and Onsite Gallery at OCAD University, the other a co-commission with MOMENTA Biennale de l'image (Montreal).

THEME: *Host*

“Host” provoked different interpretations, from a welcomed guest, to a customer, or an organism seeking sustenance. *Host* explored meeting points and relationships: between people, perspectives, life forms, or locations. Host activated an exchange of time, gifts, stories, resources or energy.

The 2023 Biennale gave consideration to Land and Water as our primary hosts—holders of expansive histories, intricate knowledges, and the foundation for all contact points across the scales of urban, rural, personal and collective.



Cynthia G. Renard, *A Sperm Whale Called Tryphon*, 2023,
installation with multiple works of sewn painted paper,
wooden structure, video, sound, drawings of whales by local students.

2023 Bonavista Biennale at a glance (cont.)

SITES: 20 indoor & outdoor sites throughout the Bonavista Peninsula, covering a 165 km coastal loop

- 16 Site Partners across 10 communities
- Extension of Biennale footprint further south with new sites in Princeton and Lethbridge
- Plus three projects still on view from previous Biennales (by Reinhard Reitzenstein, Jordan Bennett and Marcia Huyer)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: 14 events and additional programs presented alongside installations including:

- Two site-specific land-based performances created to bookend opening and closing weekends (by Lindsay Katsitsakatste Delaronde and Sarah Prosper)
- Three Artist Talks / Panels + artists in attendance on-site with their project during the Saturday of opening weekend
- Three makers' workshops (Kite-making, Origami, an Indigo Social)
- A fossil hike and casting demonstration co-presented with UNESCO Discovery Global Geopark and Memorial University's Paleontology team



Key results: Visitors

*Record-breaking attendance,
momentum is growing*

Total 2023 Attendance: 19,789

2021 attendance: 4,968

Representing a 300% increase



2023 Visitor Origin:

Bonavista Peninsula: 22%

Rest of Newfoundland and Labrador: 50%

Rest of Canada: 21%

USA: 5%

International: 2%

Sarah Prosper, site-responsive performance at The Dungeons, Bonavista.

Billy Gauthier, *The Earth, Our Mother*, 2023, fin whale skull bone, approximately 56.5 x 79 x 22 inches.
Commissioned by Bonavista Biennale.



Renewed publicity strategy drove increased interest in 2023

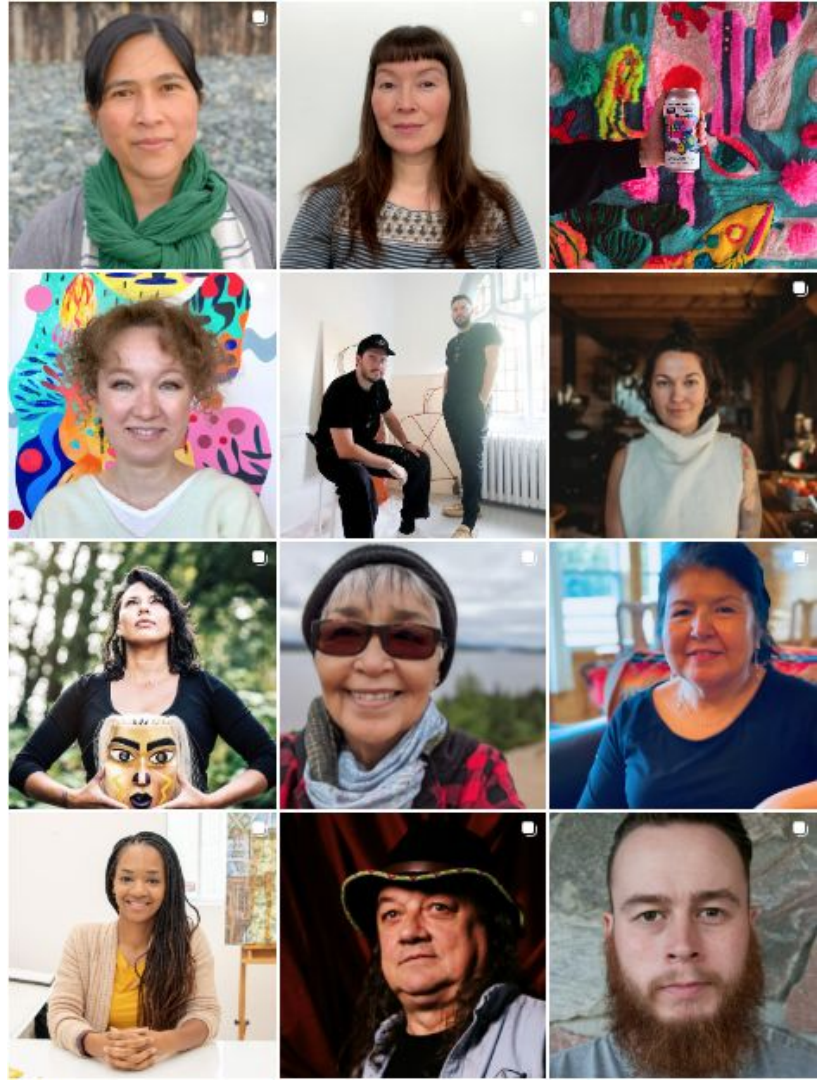
Feedback from artists, locals and visitors confirmed we are now reaching province-wide and national audiences through marketing efforts

- Re-branding & re-conception of Biennale 'look' and printed collateral received positive feedback
- Renewed website design improved user navigation
- Dedicated publicist engaged for the first time
- FAM (familiarization) Biennale tours hosted for several national / international writers
- Riddle Fence (St. John's) special Biennale issue published to coincide with opening weekend, sold out print run
- Advertising spots taken out in print, online and radio outlets including Inuit Art Quarterly, C Magazine, Akimbo, Newfoundland Quarterly and Coast FM.

Strong social media presence created additional 'buzz'

Followers continue to increase year over year

- **Facebook followers** increased by **15%** since program launch spring 2023
- **Instagram followers** increased by **23%** since program launch spring 2023
- **E-newsletter subscribers** increased by **20%** since program launch spring 2023





Born in the North, *Provider*, 2023, latex paint on clapboard.

Key results: spending on the Peninsula

Economic benefits are being felt throughout the Bonavista Peninsula, in both remote and more popular tourist communities

Number of paid jobs: 29

One year-round full-time, One year-round part-time, 27 seasonal / contract workers

Direct spending on the Peninsula: \$ 216,848

Wages, goods and services

New tourist spending: \$ 387,600

Estimated, based on # of visitors who travelled specifically to attend the Biennale

Total economic impact: \$ 574,448

60% increase over 2021

Don Kwan, *This Land is My Land, This Land is Your Land*, 2022, customized pine Muskoka chairs.



Impact on local communities

“There is quite possibly no other single event that could attract such a diverse audience to our small part of this great province. The exposure that the Bonavista Peninsula was given, and the specific community awareness and profile afforded by this world class initiative cannot be bought by any other means.”

- Eugene Holloway, Site Ambassador



K. Jake Chakasim, *Host(age)*, 2023, PVC pipes, plastic pallets, rebar, plexiglass panels. Commissioned by Bonavista Biennale.

Impact on Artists



“As an artist living in rural Newfoundland, being able to connect to a larger community and conversation with my work has felt challenging. This opportunity has been immensely supportive and positive for my practice as a painter. I’ve come away with the confidence to pursue what feels important in my work through a more visceral understanding of what I’m in conversation with (locally, within the cultural fabric of Newfoundland / Labrador, and more broadly this particular time / place in our country).”

...Being in conversation with the landscape of the Bonavista Peninsula is a uniquely nourishing aspect of this event.”

- Erin Hunt, 2023 Biennale artist



Impact on Artists

"I was overwhelmed by the buzz created by the Bonavista Biennale. It was amazing to get to showcase my work for such a large and diverse audience, people who seemed very knowledgeable and interested in art. I felt legitimized as an artist, especially when we were sitting in a restaurant and we could hear the table next to us speaking about the mural I created. I'm very happy I was chosen to participate."

- Jessica Winters, 2023 Biennale artist

Jessica Winters, *Hopedale*, 2023, printed reproduction of painting. Jointly commissioned by Bonavista Biennale, the Inuit Art Foundation, Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership: The Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq Project, and Onsite Gallery at OCAD University.



Impact on Communities

Having a background in community building within the arts, I deeply empathized with the transformative impact the Biennale had on tourism and the local economy. It was inspiring to witness how art could be a catalyst for change, not just aesthetically, but economically and socially. This experience reinforced my belief in the power of art as a force in fostering connections, bridge building and supporting local.

- Bushra Junaid, Curatorial Advisory member

Megan Samms, *a (gentle) reminder*, 2023, linen, Icelandic fleece, hand-made laser cut felt, natural dyes, organic cotton, bone, lumber



Impact on Visitors

"I have made two 4 day trips to the Biennale with friends in tow. We have marveled, laughed, shed emotional tears and expressed wonder at all that we saw.

You have showcased the best of the Peninsula's extraordinary beauty, culture, heritage and people as seen through the eyes of some of our country's most creative contemporary artists.

Congratulations and thank you...for successfully staging the fourth Biennale."

- Anonymous visitor

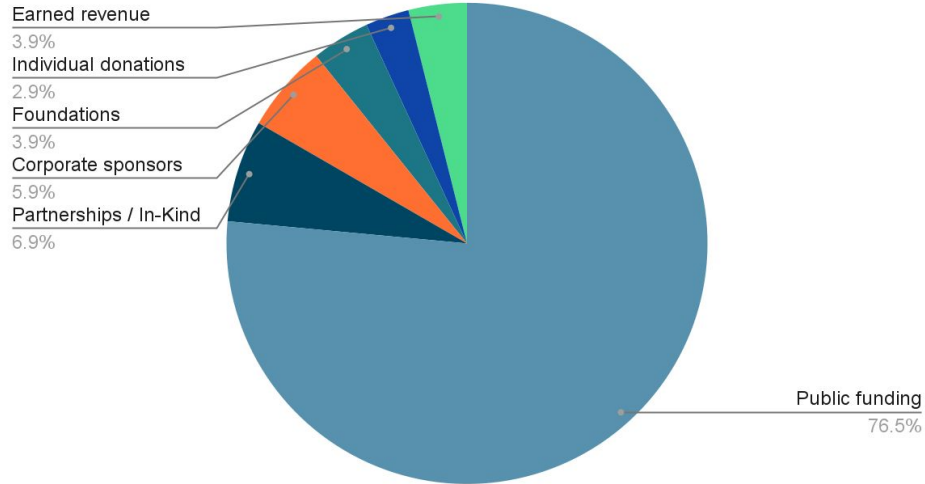


Lindsay Katsitsakatste Delaronde, *Sturgeon Woman Rising*, 2023, performance on Sandy Cove Beach, Elliston. Co-commissioned by Bonavista Biennale and MOMENTA Biennale de l'image, Montreal.

Case for support: public funders remain very supportive

Yet...private revenue sources failed to come through this cycle. The Biennale requires a more diversified revenue stream in order to continue.

Points scored





Mary Ann Penashue, *Shuashem*, 2023; *Dream*, 2023; *Innu Hunter*, 2023, all works acrylic on canvas.

Community and Site Partners

Partnerships & in-kind support from local communities makes the Biennale possible

Former Lethbridge Cash Store (Eugene & Candy Holloway)

Beth's Variety, Princeton

Keels Community Hall, Keels Slate Mine (Basil Power)

Quinton Premises, Red Cliff

Loyal Orange Lodge #4, Bonavista (Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation)

Mockbeggar Plantation, Bonavista (Provincial Historic Sites)

Ryan Premises, Bonavista (Parks Canada)

Durdle's Warehouse, Bonavista

Sandy Cove Beach, South Bird Island Lookout, Maberly Lookout (Town of Elliston)

Salt Fish Plant, Catalina (Nu Tan Furs)

Union House Arts, Port Union

Union Electric Building, Port Union (Coaker Foundation)

Port Rexton Brewery

Fishermen's Protective Union Store, Port Rexton (Town of Port Rexton)

Salvation Army Citadel (Tourism Elliston)

Hiscock House, Trinity (Provincial Historic Sites)

Lester-Garland House, Trinity (Trinity Historical Society)

Impact on Site Partners

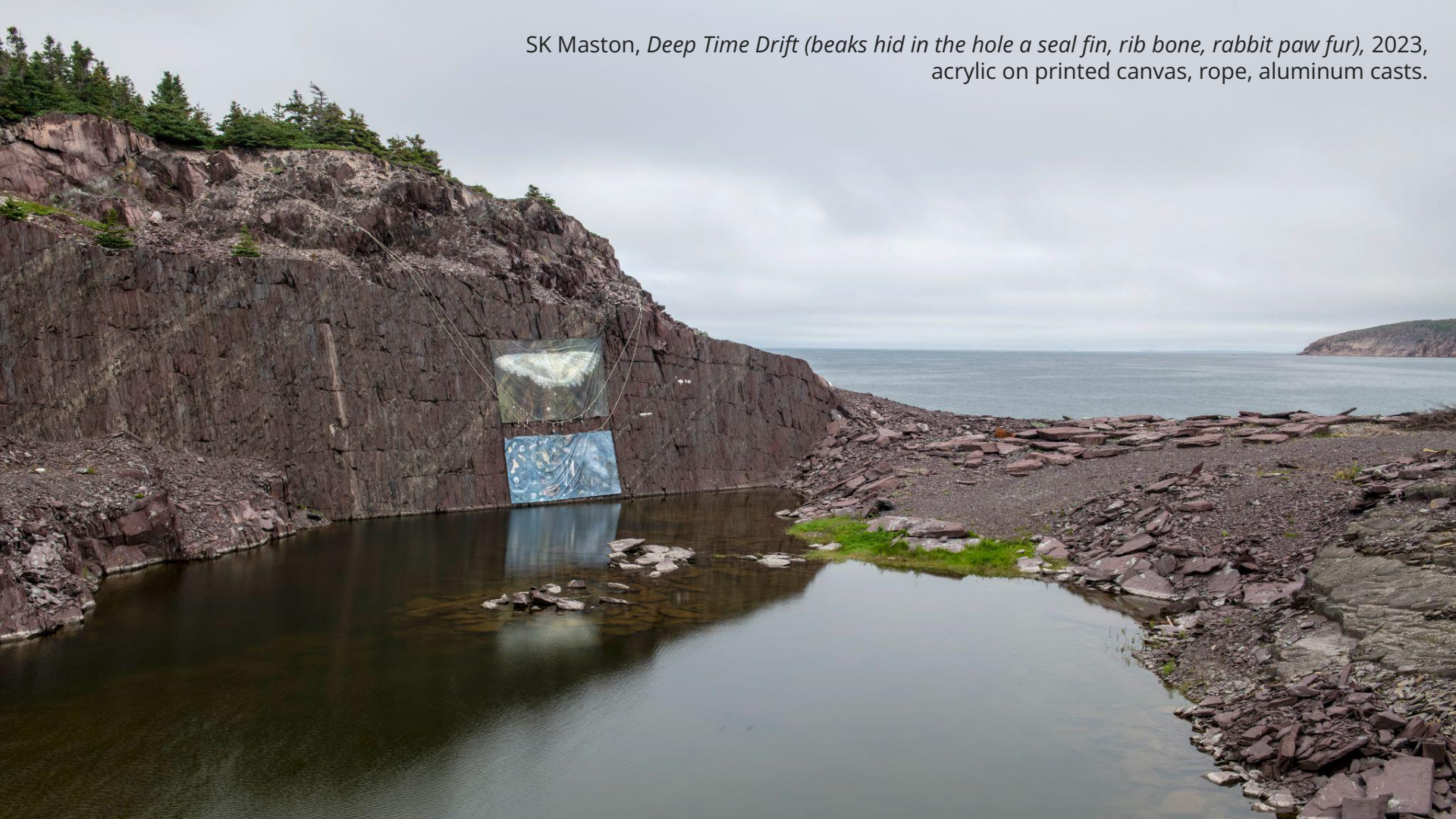
"Having the Biennale on the Bonavista Peninsula and being able to take part in it once again was great, and we look forward to partnering again in 2025. The publicity that the Biennale receives...highlights the landscapes and sites to visitors beyond the hosting year. The event has become an attraction in itself for many and has positive economic impacts for accommodations, gift stores and restaurants."

- Jim Miller, General Manager,
Trinity Historical Society Inc.

Fossil Hike and Casting Demonstration, presented by Bonavista Biennale in partnership with UNESCO Discovery Global Geopark and the MUN Paleobiology Team, Port Union. Photos courtesy Bonavista Biennale.



SK Maston, *Deep Time Drift* (beaks hid in the hole a seal fin, rib bone, rabbit paw fur), 2023,
acrylic on printed canvas, rope, aluminum casts.





Impact on Site Partners

"The Biennale is now recognized as one of the destinations in Atlantic Canada and many of the visitors will tell you that they plan their vacations around this biannual event and that the quality of the event continues to grow and improve...The business community certainly appreciated the influx of money to this area it is a real booster for the economy."

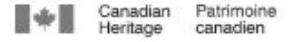
- Anonymous
Site Ambassador

Book reading with Bushra Junaid, *The Possible Lives of WH, Sailor*, as part of opening weekend, Union Electric Building, Port Union.



Wally Dion, *Winter Quilt*, 2023; *Grass Quilt*, 2022; *Fire Quilt*, 2023; *Bison Quilt*, 2023, all works mixed textiles, approximately 10 x 10 feet.

Biennale Funders & Sponsors



ROUND DA BAY INN

CHRISTINA PARKER

Biennale Program & Commissioning Partners





Shawn O'Hagan, *song (now I am listening)*, 2022-2023, 200 pieces of organic cotton naturally dyed with Newfoundland and Labrador plants

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All photographs by Brian Ricks unless otherwise noted.