



s m i t h e r s
ART GALLERY

ANNUAL REPORT

2016—2017



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ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected Positions

President
Vice-President
Art Director
Treasurer
Secretary

Non-Elected Positions

Fundraising Director
Programming Director
Grants Director
Marketing Director

Executive Committee

President
Treasurer
Secretary
Gallery Manager

Employee

Gallery Manager

2016-2017 Board of Directors

President - Susan Smith
Vice-President - Susannah Lam
Art Director - Michelle Gazely
Treasurer - Allan Edie
Secretary - Lauren Bell
Grants Director - Susannah Lam
Programming Director - Shannon Goodhead
Marketing Director - Joanne Campbell
Director-at-Large - Dawn Remington
Director-at-Large (non-voting) - Phil Briennesse

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Smithers Gallery Association continues to use its *Strategic Plan 2015-2018: Creating Community through Art* to guide decision-making and planning. As a board we are faced with the never-ending challenge of delivering quality exhibitions and programming to our community while running the Gallery in a fiscally responsible manner on a limited budget.

Our exhibitions gallery welcomed **8,774 visitors** to view shows in 2016-2017, including 41 separate class visits from local and regional schools bringing just under **1,000 students** to the gallery. Our educational programming for adults and older youth had **132** participants taking art workshops, and our summer art camps and drop-in programs for children had **654** participants. Our end-of-year craft sale, 'Wintergold', and our artisan Christmas gift shop, 'One of a Kind', saw an additional **1,678** people come through the Gallery doors. **In total, over 11,500** adults and children have directly engaged with Smithers Art Gallery in 2016-2017 by visiting exhibitions, coming to opening receptions, attending artists' talks and demonstrations, participating in fundraisers, and taking art workshops. Detailed information on exhibitions and programming from our past fiscal year can be found in the relevant sections in the report.

During the fiscal year, the board was continually challenged to fulfil the ongoing financial needs for the day-to-day operation of the Gallery, while further developing a range of funding streams. Fundraising events continue to be an important part of our funding stream. We host a number of successful events that have become mainstays; however, we still lack a Fundraising Director which makes it impossible to take on any new initiatives. Grant-writing is a very time-consuming endeavour for our Grants Director and Gallery Manager, so being selective in the grants that we apply for is important.



Opening reception, Michelle Stoney exhibition, Oct 2016

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of the Town of Smithers which has created some much-needed stability to our varied revenue streams.

Our Gallery Manager, Caroline Bastable, continues to be the cornerstone in the success of our programming, our exhibitions, our fundraising events, and the day-to-day operations and face of the Gallery. The board is grateful and fortunate to be working with such a capable, professional, and pleasant individual.

As board president, I would like to thank all of our volunteers and financial supporters for the significant role that they have played in the success of the Gallery over the past year. Our volunteers keep the doors of the Gallery open, hang our exhibitions, and play significant roles in the running of our events and fundraisers. Please refer to the detailed 'Thank You' section for further information about our volunteers and contributors.

A big thank-you is also due to our board members for their time and effort. Our board is truly a 'working board', and the Gallery would not be able to offer the level of programming, events and services it does without the dedicated board that we have. It is a pleasure to have them all as fellow board members and friends!

Vice President and Grants Director Susannah Lam put in countless hours and expertise as lead on our various grant applications, sponsorship programs and other projects. Treasurer Allan Edie keeps the board apprised of our financials, and works alongside our gallery manager on our Grant-in-Aid application and presentation to the Town of Smithers. Michelle Gazely brought her positive energy, organization and enthusiasm to the role of Art Director. We were happy to welcome back to our board Lauren Bell, who took on the role of Secretary. Lauren and Joanne Campbell, who joined our board mid-winter, represent the Gallery on the committee for the proposed Arts & Culture Centre. Recently Phil Briennesse, from Smithers Town Council, joined our board as a non-voting board member. With Phil's long-term service to Town Council, he brings valuable perspective to our organisation.

Dawn Remington, who joined our board at our June 2016 AGM as a Director-at-Large, took on a significant role as key organizer for our annual Divas & Friends Variety Show fundraiser. We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to Dawn – as a long-time community volunteer, Dawn has been a wonderful addition to our board and we will miss her positive energy! Shannon Goodhead stepped down from our board part way through the season after being hired full-time as an elementary school teacher! With teaching and her 'It's All Fun and Paints' classes, Shannon is still pouring her creative energy into our community.



Some recent initiatives we have taken on include the development of a bursary for educational arts programming for children, youth and adults. Our 'Art for All Bursary Program' recognises that financial limitations should not restrict access to participation and training in the visual arts. A generous donation from the Bianco family has created the foundation for this bursary; our hope is that we will be successful in generating ongoing financial support from the community to support this program long into the future.

Artists' Talk, Sarah Northcott & Kristin Charleton, Mar 2017

Our board members have been taking advantage of professional development and training opportunities. Michelle Gazely and Joanne Campbell recently participated in the 'Remarkable Experiences Program' through Destination British Columbia. They will be applying their training to the development of a small year-round gift shop within the Gallery beginning in 2018.

Gallery manager Caroline Bastable and board members Susannah Lam and I are currently participating in online training on developing business sponsorship of arts and culture, through 'artsVest BC' training. We will use this training to further develop our sponsorship programs and build sustainable partnerships with local businesses.

In early 2017 I represented the board at the 'Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop for Community Leaders' which was a day-long workshop for the purpose of bringing “diverse participants together to build mutually beneficial relationships and explore pathways to reconciliation including the development of concrete action plans”. This workshop has planted seeds for future arts-based partnerships and initiatives that the Gallery could undertake in our community and region. I would recommend participation in future Reconciliation workshops to anyone who has the opportunity to participate.

The board recognizes that it is difficult to find the time for volunteering; however, the Gallery plays a vital role in our community and its need for additional assistance from volunteers is as important now as ever. Please consider becoming a regular Gallery sitter, a member of the board, an event volunteer or a financial sponsor of an exhibition, workshop or fundraising event. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated and you will be playing a vital role in the success of a dynamic community organization.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Susan Smith
President



TREASURER'S REPORT

The 2016-17 fiscal year ending on March 31, 2017, was a financially rewarding one for the Gallery. Due to a combination of unexpectedly strong art sales and successful fundraising events, plus generous support from our grant providers, we ended the fiscal year with an operating surplus of \$15,491. This operating surplus leaves us with net assets at the end of fiscal 2016-17 of \$23,903. We do not expect results so favourable in the fiscal year 2017-2018 because the 6x6 Auction is a biennial event and will not be held this year and it is our biggest fundraiser, bringing in \$11,000 in October 2016.

Our current financial position is far better than we expected a few years ago. Back in December 2015, it appeared that our operating deficit was likely to result in complete exhaustion of our available funds prior to March 31, 2017. In short, absent additional funding or reduced programming we expected to be broke before now.

The single major reason why we are in so much better shape than we might have been is the generous increase in our Grant in Aid provided by the Town of Smithers. In response to our projected financial problem, the Town increased our grant from \$14,000 in 2015 to \$32,000 in 2016. One quarter of our Grant in Aid is now met by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, and three-quarters by the Town of Smithers. Were it not for this generous support, our financial picture now and in future would be very different. The board is deeply grateful to the Town of Smithers and the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako for coming to our aid when we appeared headed for financial difficulty.



Jeff Wilson exhibition, August 2016

Further to their generous grant last year, the Town also adopted a new policy that annual funding for the Gallery (and other organisations in the same funding category, such as the Bulkley Valley Museum) will now be automatically benchmarked to the 2016 grant amount and increased annually by the Consumer Price Index. This stability in our largest single grant makes a huge difference to our ability to confidently plan operations.

We are also very grateful for important funding the Gallery received from the Bulkley Valley Community Arts Council, BC Ministry of Finance Community Gaming Grant, Wetzin'Kwa Community Forest Corporation, Bulkley Valley Community Foundation, and Canada Summer Jobs. The Gallery also received great support from the local business community. The financial support we receive from our corporate sponsors is invaluable in defraying the costs of advertising and promoting exhibitions, in offering children's art

programs and adult/youth workshops at subsidized rates, and in offsetting the costs associated with our fundraising events.

It has become clear in recent months that the level of programming the Gallery currently provides is too much work for our manager. We have worked hard to identify efficiencies in how programming is delivered, but have concluded that either we need to reduce programming or apply more staff time to the tasks. After careful consideration of this issue, the Board has concluded that the way forward is to hire a part-time assistant for the manager, and we plan to start the hiring process in August this year. Our intent is to cover the extra costs as long as we can with available funds. We hope that by freeing up time for the manager, she will be able to apply her considerable skills to finding new funding sources, and making our existing fundraisers more successful yet, thereby enabling us to keep an assistant hired permanently.

Allan Edie
Treasurer



EXHIBITIONS REPORT

Smithers Art Gallery welcomed a number of exciting exhibitions over the 2016-2017 season. Paintings, fabric art, and photography filled the exhibition space. Over the course of the season the Gallery displayed 16 exhibiting artists, and 4 community group shows.

Exhibiting artists over the 2016-2017 year included: Leslie Barnwell, Michelle Gazely, Simone Benjamin, Mo Hamilton, Jeff Wilson, Mike Ambach, Avi Sternberg, Dave Nehring, Leif Ostlund, Dorothy Giesbrecht, Paulie Haines, Linda Stringfellow, Rene Jaspers, Michelle Stoney, Kristin Charleton and Sarah Northcott. The variety of subject matter and media made for an impressive year of visual art at the Gallery.

Community group shows include 'Fabric as Art', an incredible quilting and fabric art display curated by Rosamund Pojar, the 'Valley Youth Show', an excellent biennial exhibition showcasing young artists (Grades 8-12) from the Bulkley Valley community, the always exciting and successful '6x6 Auction', and our wonderful 'Members Show'.

Dave Nehring and Leif Ostlund held a one-week special exhibition and silent auction. The exhibition was a painting challenge that had been percolating as an idea between Nehring and Ostlund for some time: each artist came up with five different subject matters that both had to paint. The result was 20 stunning interpretations of each subject.

Our talented members produced an impressive array of artwork for the Members' Show, including stained glass, copper sculpture, painting, mixed media and ceramic art. Over 50 members participated with 95 pieces.

Smithers Art Gallery welcomes school and community groups to come in, be inspired by the displays and discuss what they see. The Gallery enjoyed 41 class visits, with just under 1,000 students participating.

We thank our volunteer selection committee and exhibition coordinators for the time and care that they put into liaising with artists, selecting, installing and taking down our shows and organizing our opening receptions.

We are looking forward to the 2017/2018 season with upcoming exhibitions by local artists and artists from across our province.

Michelle Gazely
Art Director

Valley Youth Show 2016



EXHIBITIONS SCHEDULE 2016

Feb-March	Matt Simmons (<i>mixed-media installation</i>)
March-April	Pashan Bassett (<i>oil painting</i>)
April-May	Fabric as Art (<i>quilting/textiles community show</i>)
May-June	Valley Youth Show (<i>mixed-media group show, Grades 8-12</i>)
June-July	Leslie Barnwell (<i>photography</i>) / Michelle Gazely (<i>oil painting</i>)
July-Aug	Simone Benjamin & Mo Hamilton (<i>painting</i>)
Aug-Sept	Jeff Wilson (<i>painting</i>) / Mike Ambach & Avi Sternberg (<i>photography</i>)
Sept 13-17	Dave Nehring & Leif Ostlund (<i>painting - silent auction</i>)
Sept-Oct	Paulie Haines, Dorothy Giesbrecht & Linda Stringfellow (<i>mixed-media</i>)
Oct 18-21	6x6 Auction (<i>community artwork fundraiser</i>)
Oct-Nov	Rene Jaspers (<i>painting</i>) / Michelle Stoney (<i>First Nations painting & sculpture</i>)
Nov 25-26	Wintergold Arts & Crafts Fair
Dec	One of a Kind—Artisan Christmas Gift Shop



EXHIBITIONS SCHEDULE 2017

Feb-March	Kristin Charleton & Sarah Northcott (<i>photography, painting</i>)
March-April	Members' Show (<i>non-thematic mixed-media community show</i>)
April-May	Lynn Cociani (<i>thematic painting</i>) / Andrea Fredeen (<i>painting</i>)
May-June	Annerose Georgeson (<i>logging-themed landscape painting</i>)
June-July	"Canada 150+: What's YOUR Story?" (<i>thematic community show</i>)
July-Aug	Marie-Christine Claveau (<i>painting</i>) / Sherri Rogers (<i>painting</i>)
Aug-Sept	Jo Willems (<i>painting</i>) / Teresa Thomas (<i>painting</i>)
Sept-Oct	Caitlin Ambery, Sophia Mather & Patricia Vickers (<i>paintings, carvings</i>)
Oct-Nov	Perry Rath (<i>mixed media installation</i>)
Nov 24-25	Wintergold Arts & Crafts Fair
Nov 28-Dec 23	One of a Kind—Artisan Christmas Gift Shop

PROGRAMMING REPORT

The Gallery offers a varied schedule of both paid and free art programs throughout the year for children, older youth and adults. Our regular programming includes workshops, artists' talks and demonstrations, kids' art camps, and drop-in arts and crafts in the summer.

Our *Strategic Plan 2015-2018: Creating Community through Art* outlines the Gallery's ambition to expand our programming to include one advanced-level workshop a year led by a professional instructor from outside the region. We made a good start on this in 2015 with a 3-day portrait-painting workshop with Leif Ostlund, and in 2016 we built on this with a 3-day plein-air landscape-painting workshop led by artist Jim Glenn. The April weather may have been a bit chilly for some participants but the feedback on the instruction and the learning experience was very positive.



Our regular programming for adults and older youth consists of our spring and fall workshops series for beginner/intermediate level. Thanks to sponsorship by local businesses, we are able to offer these courses at affordable rates and supply all materials which encourages people in the community to try their hand at something new and makes the workshops accessible to people from all economic demographics. Nearly all of our spring and fall workshops in 2016 were

oversubscribed. We introduced a new element to the workshops series, drop-in Open Studio Nights, for people to bring their own projects to work on in the company of other artists. These sessions are facilitated by an experienced artist.

Because demand from the community for art instruction seems to grow year on year we are expanding our beginner/intermediate-level programming for adults and older youth beyond the regular spring/fall workshops series. In January 2016 we put on a brand new 4-session drawing workshop which was extremely popular and successful, with maximum participation and people on the wait list.

The programming that we offer for children also continues to be hugely popular - once again we had to put on a third week of art camp because we were so oversubscribed, and we anticipate that this will now need to become part of our regular schedule if we are to keep up with demand. Our free Saturday Art drop-in program received over 600 children in 2016 over the course of the summer!

Artists' talks are a great way for the community to get an insight into the work of an exhibiting artist and usually consist of slideshows or demonstrations which are offered free to the public. One of our more unusual artists' talks of 2016 was a live sushi demonstration by chef Avi Sternberg who was the subject of a photo documentary by Mike Ambach that was on exhibition in the Gallery. While rolling, cutting, and serving up sushi samples, Sternberg discussed the photographs on display and offered tricks and techniques pertaining to all levels of Japanese cuisine.



Avi Sternberg, sushi demonstration, August 2016

The Gallery also organises artists' talks specifically for school groups; in 2016 this included two fascinating and inspiring talks by First Nations artist Michelle Stoney to spellbound students from Kispiox Community School and Walnut Park.



Summer Art Camp 2016

Programming Summary 2016-2017

- Mar/Apr 2016: **Spring Workshops Series**—Throwing & Handbuilding with Clay; Painting for Dummies 1; Painting for Dummies 2; Watercolour Basics; Beginning Silversmithing - Hot Connection
- April 2016: **'The Art of Dreaming' workshop** - with Darren & Beth Jakubec
- April 2016: **Plein-Air Landscape Painting** - advanced-level 3-day workshop with Jim Glenn
- Summer 2016: **Saturday Art Activities** - free drop-in arts & crafts for kids every Saturday morning, May-August
- July/Aug 2016: **Summer art camp** - 3 weeks, for ages 5-11 yrs
- June 2016: **'The Art of Dreaming' workshop** - with Darren & Beth Jakubec
- August 2016: **Artist's Talk** - by exhibiting artist Jeff Wilson
- September 2016: **Sushi Demonstration** - by author and chef Avi Sternberg
- Sept-Nov 2016: **Fall Workshops Series**—Watercolour 1; Watercolour 2; Open Studio; Drawing for Dummies; Soap Making
- October 2016: **Artist's Talk** - by exhibiting artist Paulie Haines
- November 2016: **'The Art of Dreaming' workshop** - with Darren & Beth Jakubec
- November 2016: **Artist's Talks** - by exhibiting artist Michelle Stoney
- Jan 2017: **Winter Drawing Workshop** - with instructor Michelle Gazely
- March 2017: **Artists' Talk** - by exhibiting artists Sarah Northcott & Kristin Charleton



Saturday Art 2016

FUNDRAISING REPORT

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. 2016 was an extremely busy and successful year for fundraising.

Our annual spring fundraising concert, **Divas & Friends Variety Show**, was a great success thanks to the enormous amount of time, energy and talent put into the show by organizer (and performer) Dorothy Giesbrecht who receives our deep appreciation for her hard work! Everyone seemed to enjoy the refreshing additions to the concert of the "Truth or Fiction" storytelling sections, and the lobby art show on the concert theme of 'Keeping it Light'. We are grateful to the performers who all donate their time to this fundraiser. Divas 2016 raised \$3,500 for the Gallery!

The **6x6 Auction** fundraiser is without exaggeration a huge community favourite. We hold this fundraiser biennially for two reasons: it takes an enormous amount of organizational time and volunteer effort to pull off; and we want to make sure that the event stays fresh and exciting for the community. If the event continues to grow in popularity we are going to need a bigger exhibition gallery - in 2016 the community responded to our theme of 'Journeys' with an amazing 324 artworks that they donated to the Gallery for us to sell by silent auction, a 34% increase over the previous auction! Some artworks even arrived in the mail from as far afield as the UK, USA, and across Canada, created by people who had heard about and been inspired by the auction. The exhibition of artwork received almost double the number of visitors compared to the previous year, with a steady stream of over 500 people over the four days it was shown, and with an additional 250 people taking part in the final bidding during the Friday evening wine and cheese event. The fundraiser raised \$11,000 for the Gallery.



6x6 Auction, October 2016



Wintergold Arts & Crafts Fair is one of the oldest Christmas craft fairs in Smithers (now in its 39th year!) and is a perennial favourite with the community. The tireless organizing committee of Margaret McDonald, Diane Macaulay, Denny Broza and their army of volunteers raised \$3,400 for the Gallery in November 2016 through this annual fundraiser. We greatly appreciate the hard work they put in every year to make Wintergold such a success.



One of a Kind—Artisan Christmas Gift Shop, Dec 2016

The Gallery's artisan Christmas gift shop - **One of a Kind** - is another success story, almost doubling gross sales and receiving over 50% more visitors to the gift shop compared to the previous year. This success is partly due to the dedication of our volunteers who worked extra shifts so that we could open the gift shop to the public for longer hours, and we also had more artisans selling their work than ever before. The Gallery has worked hard to establish the reputation that the gift shop now has for high quality and affordably priced work by local artisans, and we are

pleased to support our community by providing this opportunity for artisans to sell their work and for people to buy locally made crafts in a gift-shop setting at the premium time of year.

THANK YOU!

Firstly.... A big thank you to our amazing body of volunteers

The Smithers Art Gallery is almost entirely volunteer-run and would not function without the help of the dedicated body of around 80 volunteers who donate their time for everything from opening the Gallery to the public, to organizing fundraising events, to hanging exhibitions and setting up opening receptions, to being on committees, and to joining the board of directors. Our volunteers create the life and soul of the Gallery through the work they do on its behalf and our first thanks are due to all of them for their time and commitment - it is highly valued and appreciated.

Our grateful thanks to the following

Grants

We are deeply grateful to the following for their financial support through grants:

Town of Smithers & Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako *for Grant-in-Aid*
Wetzin'Kwa Community Forest Corporation *for art workshop equipment*
Canada Summer Jobs HRSD *for summer student funding*
BC Ministry of Finance Community Gaming Grant *for operating assistance*
Bulkley Valley Community Arts Council *for operating assistance*
Bulkley Valley Community Foundation *for office equipment*

Corporate Sponsors

For their financial support in defraying the costs of promoting and organizing our exhibitions, programs, and fundraising events:

FYidoctors	Smokescreen Graphics
All-West Glass	Nature's Pantry
Pretium Resources Inc.	Canyon Contracting Co.
Creekstone Press	Babine Animal Hospital
Re/Max Bulkley Valley	Bulkley Valley Insurance Services
Buri, Overstall	Hy-Tech Drilling Ltd
Calderwood Realty	Perry & Co

Memberships

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

SpeeDee Interior Stationery	Beerda's Drygoods Ltd
Heartstrings	Aquabatics

Divas & Friends Variety Show fundraiser, April 2016

A special thank you to Dorothy Giesbrecht who did such an amazing job as organizer and performer, and all the performers, stage hands, MCs and ticket sellers who made Divas such a great success

Dorothy Giesbrecht	Bob Olsen
Wes Giesbrecht	Allan Cormier
Taylor Bachrach	Tom Young
Perry Rath	Janet Walford (Mountain Eagle Books)
Karmen Richter (SpeeDee)	All the talented performers

6x6 Auction fundraiser, October 2016

The volunteers who donated many hours to making the 6x6 Auction run smoothly and be such a successful fundraiser:

Emma Hoffman	Nadine Cunningham
Anne Maclean	Eileen Astin
Poppy Dubar	Kate Kantakis
Elizabeth Zweck	Tenley Dahlie
Paulie Haines	Martha Wertz
Denny Broza	Pashan Bassett
Colleen Sharpe	Irene Vanderstar

Wintergold Arts & Crafts Fair, November 2016

The long-standing and hard-working organizing committee, and the many volunteers who help them make Wintergold the wonderful event that it is:

Margaret McDonald	Diane Macaulay
Denny Broza	

One of a Kind—Artisan Christmas Gift Shop, December 2016

The volunteers who helped with intake, promotion, gift-shop setup and takedown, and all the sitters who ran the gift shop for 4 weeks:

Debbie Courtliff	Bonnie Lear
Virginia Pohl	Kate Kantakis
Nicole Zacharias	Kirsty Leighton
Shirley Mackenzie	Lindy Mayner
Terri-Anne Barge	

Curatorial Committee

Who juried and selected show submissions, installed exhibitions, and organized opening receptions:

Niki Cherewyk	Perry Rath
Leah Macknack	Regina Tworow
Anne Maclean	Rosamund Pojar
Michel Kafer	Liliana Dragowska

Other Thanks

Dr & Mrs Bianco for their generous donation of \$5,000 to support educational programming, including provision for a bursary program which will begin Summer 2017

Rosamund Pojar for her two beautiful quilts that she donated as raffle prizes during the 'Fabric as Art' show, May 2016, and One of a Kind gift shop, Dec 2016

Nature's Pantry, for making the Gallery one of their recipients of their Season of Giving, donating \$1,000 towards children's programs

Mary Davidson and **Edmison Mehr Chartered Accountants** for preparing the year-end financials *pro bono*

Darren & Beth Jakubec for donating their time and all the proceeds from their 'Art of Dreaming' workshops

Grant-writer **June Strachuk** at the **Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako** for her assistance with writing the 2016 Community Gaming Grant

Bookkeeper **Rene Haehner** for his patience and attention to detail



MISSION STATEMENT

*"Creating community
through art"*



s m i t h e r s
ART GALLERY

Smithers Art Gallery

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