



s m i t h e r s

ART GALLERY

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2023 — March 31, 2024

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 gallery policies and decision making.
5. **Sustainability:** Commitment to financial stability, quality programming and professional staffing to ensure organization thrives.

Board of Directors 2023-2024

President - Susan Smith

Treasurer - Teresa Wodjak

Secretary – Susannah Lam

Director at Large - Jo-Anne Goble

Director at Large – Susan Kinkela

Town Representative (non-voting) – Sam Raven

Staff

Manager - Nicole Chernish

Program Coordinator - Alyssa Lebiadowski

Gallery Attendant - Mattias Haehner

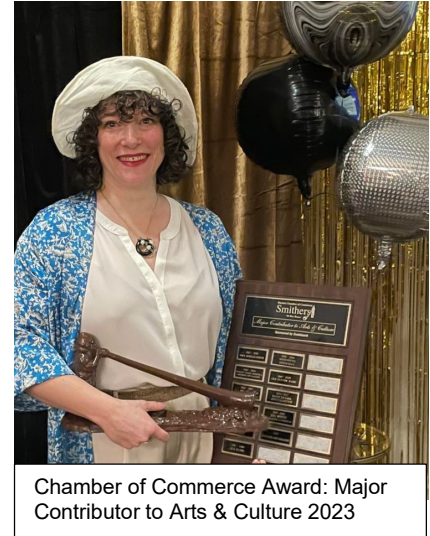
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Susan Smith

The Smithers Gallery Association is pleased to present our 2024 Annual Report which covers the numerous exhibitions, activities and new initiatives that have taken place at the Smithers Art Gallery and Creation Station during the past fiscal year of April 1, 2023- March 31, 2024.

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. Our organization continues to focus on excellence in exhibitions, programming and community outreach.

Firstly, the board of directors would like to recognize the dynamic leadership of our energetic gallery manager, Nicole Chernish, who entered her sixth year in this position during the past fiscal year. Nicole's passion for the Visual Arts and her ongoing grant-writing efforts continue to bring greater financial stability to the organization which allows us to hire additional support staff and further advances key goals including improving accessibility and inclusivity within our diverse community through expanded programming and supports.



Chamber of Commerce Award: Major Contributor to Arts & Culture 2023

Secondly, the board would like to give a big shout to our Program Coordinator Alyssa Lebiadowski, and to our various past and present support staff at the gallery throughout the fiscal year 2023-2024, including Michelle Gazely, Anne Desplanches, Siri Freeman, Lucia Gastiazoro, Laurel Mackenzie and Matthias Haehner.

Our contractors are also very much appreciated including our bookkeeper Rene Haehner, Jen Mio who led our new advanced summer art camp & Isabelle Chernish who steered graphic design projects.

Finally, we would like to show our appreciation and acknowledge the many people in our community that support the gallery as gallery volunteers and committee members. As well, the support of local funders including our business community is truly appreciated! The Town of Smithers and the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako partially fund the Gallery and recognize 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 have 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; your work and commitment are 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 and nearby communities. We are the only Gallery and Visual Arts Education provider open year round within a two hour plus driving radius of our locations. Total Program participation (exhibition visits and educational programming) was 11,423 from April 1, 2021-March 31, 2022.

STAFFING

In addition to our full-time manager, we have a full time position focused on visual arts education programming plus a Saturday attendant. We hired 1 full-time seasonal staff position for June - August and an additional 2 full-time staff for July-August through the Canada Summer Jobs and the Young Canada Works programs.

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, youth and adults.

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.

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 enabled the SGA to grow our programming capacity and to be more self-reliant with stable and secure programming space without additional rental costs. This includes having consistent and organized classroom space and storage for our materials, supplies and equipment.



We have been advised that this space will likely no longer be available for our use as of September 2025. We are currently working with the town and looking into other options for space to ensure we can continue to offer visual arts education programming to the community.

VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION STATISTICS

In our fiscal 2023-2024 year, our Education Programming had a total of **1412** participants including 63 from our Adult series, 33 in our after school programming (our instructor had a baby and was unable to teach), 123 at our summer kid's art camps and Spring Break had 33 (5 youth and 30 children) and - new this year - an additional 39 in daytime/weekend children's workshops. Saturday drop-in free art activities had 1121 participants (528 adults and 593 children).

In 2023-24 we offered 38 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.

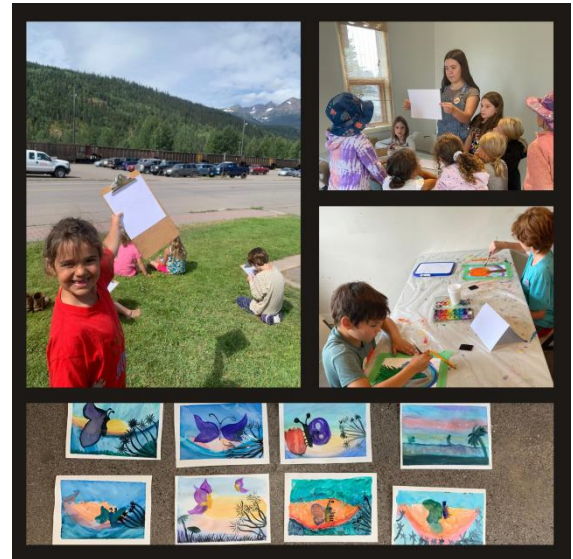
Kids Summer Art Camps (established 2006)

2017-2022

2017 half day summer camp 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 Provincial Health Orders (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

2023

6 weeks of summer camps with 11 regular sessions and 2 advanced art sessions. All sessions were at or near capacity



Kids After School Workshops (established 2017)

2017-2022

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.

2023

fewer after-school sessions happened this year with our instructor out on maternity leave. New programming was developed for day/weekend children's workshops. It was highly successful often filling up on the day of release. Spring break camps were held for 6-8 and 9-12 age groups. Both were at capacity.

Drop-In Art Activities (NO COST)

This highly successful program has been running every Saturday morning from May - August since 2015.

Adult Spring and Fall Workshop Series

Continuing Art Education for Adults aged 16 and over. In 2023/24 we held 12 adult workshops.

Festivals and Special Events

We led art activities at all local festivals/events held by other organizations in 2023. The gallery hosted Pride with 120 participants, National Indigenous Peoples Day with 384 participants, School's Out with 37 participants, Midsummer Music Festival with 145 participants, the Multicultural Festival distributing 35 kits, and Family Day with 103 participants and Dze L'Kant Family Day Hockey Tournament distributing 25 kits.

EXHIBITIONS (no exhibitions in Dec or Jan)

The Gallery hosted eight exhibitions, one community exhibition and one curated group exhibition in 2023/2024.



Our community exhibition was done in collaboration with the BV Museum who brought in a travelling exhibit called BC's Marvellous Mushrooms. Our theme was Fabulous Forests and Marvellous Mushrooms which was a huge hit with over 100 participants, and was held in January/February of 2024.

We were pleased to partner with the Skeena Salmon Festival again this year to tour their juried Art Show. We had a number of local artists participate and receive jury awards. The gallery provided transport for artworks to and from Terrace for this exhibition. We will continue to be involved with the festival as a touring location every two years.

EXHIBITION STATISTICS

Gallery in-person visits over this past year totaled increased to **10,011** (3% increase) in 2023/24 including 8081 visitors to our Exhibitions Programming and 32 class visits with 776 students and teachers participating (26% increase).

Online exhibitions are now a regular part of our programming and resulted in an additional 966 views for those unable to visit the gallery in person.



EXHIBITIONS SCHEDULE 2023 –2024

April 4 - May 6	Lynn Cociani
May 9 - June 10	Poppy Dubar/Joanne Campbell
June 13 - July 8	Patricia Vickers/Charlotte Philtjens
July 11 - Aug 5	Joy Munt
Aug 8 - Sept 2	Sarah Belford/Charise Folnovic
Sept 5 - Oct 7	Suzo Hickey
Oct 10 - Nov 10	Skeena Salmon Show
Nov 17&18	Wintergold
Nov 23-Dec 24	One of a Kind - Artisan Christmas Market
January	Closed
Jan 30 - Feb 24	Marvelous Mushroom & Fabulous Forests Community Show
Feb 27 - Mar 30	Annerose Georgeson

ARTIST SUPPORT

ARTISAN SHOP

Our in house artisan shop 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. This year we have added to the range and number of artworks by Indigenous artists.

EXHIBITIONS

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.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Starting mid-November, through the month of December, we transform the Gallery into a seasonal market where artists from across the region can display and sell their work.

FINANCES



We ended our 2022/2023 year with a surplus of \$12,069 which increased our net assets to \$47,929. At the end of the fiscal year, the association had \$184,989 in cash assets (\$134,884 in deferred revenue from grants). Included in the cash amount is \$12,919 held in an interest-bearing term deposit.

The CEBA (Canada Emergency Business Account) of \$60,000 was paid in full July 2023 allowing the gallery to retain the \$20,000 forgiveness portion.

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 1940 people through the Gallery this past year.

Wintergold Gallery had 29 vendors (including food truck) and 855 visitors (up from 736 last year). Brought in \$3040 with expenses of \$250

One of a Kind is the Gallery's artisan Christmas Gift Shop. Sales over the period was \$23,423 which provided \$5856 in commission to the Gallery. We had 1085 visitors (up from 95) from November 23 - December 24.

Gallery Artisan Shop is open year round. Sales provide income for local artists while also providing additional revenue to the gallery. Sales were approximately \$13,800 (not including our Christmas Market) bringing in an additional \$3470 in commission.

GRANTS

The Gallery Association has worked diligently to secure operational funding through grant partnerships. This fiscal year we were successful in acquiring an operating grant from the BC Arts Council. This funding is fairly stable - it depends on the Provincial Government providing funding to the BC Arts Council. We have received notice that we are approved for funding until 2027.

We want to highlight the amazing grant from the Rotary Club of Smithers. This past year we were selected as the main recipient for the annual Smithers Rotary Auction. Our initial request was for funding to get new plinths, acrylic toppers and a new welcome desk. The community came out in force to support the auction this year and the Rotary presented us with a cheque for \$16,000!!

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. For specific details see the note about grants in our financial statements.

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*

BC Museum Association- *Family Day Program Grant (collaboration with BV Museum)*

BC Arts Council - *Operating Grant - Visual Arts Organization)*

Young Canada Works *summer student funding*

Rotary Club of Smithers *equipment/operating*



our grateful thanks to the following

Corporate Sponsors:

Pretium Resources Inc.

Hy-Tech Drilling Ltd

Babine Animal Hospital

Re/Max Bulkley Valley

Bulkley Valley Insurance Services

Nature's Pantry

All-West Glass

LB Paving

Calderwood Realty

Smithers Lumber Yard

Wed'zinkwa Family Medical Clinic

Bulkley Valley Wholesale

Smokescreen Graphics

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/Selection Committee: *members jury and select exhibiting artists*

Selection Committee Chair: Susan Kinkela, Edith Illes, Melanie Morin, Joanne Goble and Anne Desplanches.

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

