



EXPANDING KINSHIPS/ ELARGIR LES RELATIONS

2024 ICCA
GATHERING & ANNUAL REPORT/
RASSEMBLEMENT & RAPPORT ANNUEL



APRIL 1 2023 TO
MARCH 31 2024

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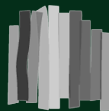
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Message from the Co-Chairs

The 2023–24 fiscal year has been a transformative period for the Indigenous Curatorial Collective (ICCA). We are thrilled to announce that the ICCA has adopted a new model of leadership with the introduction of co-directors. After an exhaustive search, we are proud to have hired Eli Hirtle as the Director of Programming and Liz Barron as the Director of Operations. Their leadership has already made a significant impact on our organization, and we look forward to continuing this journey with them at the helm.

In addition to our co-directors, we have also welcomed Justine Stilborn as our Digital Publications Manager and Melissa Johns as our Office Administrator. Their contributions have been invaluable in supporting our operations and enhancing our digital presence.

This past year, the ICCA completed a comprehensive three-year strategic plan. With input from our membership, we have successfully developed and are now delivering our Delegations program. We also conducted extensive research to create and distribute an Identity Guide for our members and partners, a crucial resource in supporting the authenticity and integrity of Indigenous identities within our network.

Our partnerships have continued to flourish. We maintained our collaboration with the Toronto Queer Film Festival and the Toronto Outdoor Arts Festival. We have continued our partnership with C Magazine and the Indigenous Art Writing Award. With our strong team in place, we were able to establish new partnerships, including with Debaser in Ottawa, the Asinabka Film and Media Festival, and Gallery 101, which featured the exhibition from the curatorial collective “Wolf Babes”. We also formed a partnership with The Bentway and artist Nico Williams, focusing on community outreach and collaboration. In terms of completed projects, we are excited to announce the full redesign of the ICCA.art website, which now better reflects our mission and provides enhanced resources for our community. We also made a significant move, relocating our office just around the corner within the 401 Richmond building, where we continue to be at the heart of Toronto’s vibrant arts community.

Looking ahead, we are excited to invite you to join us in June 2025 in Ottawa as we work with ARCA, Saw Gallery, Gallery 101, Axion07, Association des groupes en arts visuels francophones (AGAVF), Regroupement des centres d’artistes autogérés du Québec (RCAAQ) and others for our annual gathering.

Additionally, in November 2025, the ICCA will be in Saskatchewan, partnering with the Remai Modern in Saskatoon and the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina for a series of impactful events.

As we reflect on this busy and productive year, we extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff, whose hard work and passion drive our success.

We wish to thank our community and institutional members for their ongoing support of the ICCA and more broadly for your support of Indigenous artistic and curatorial practice across the cultural sector. Our members are located at institutions across North America and the Pacific, and we acknowledge the work of those public institutions who have delivered Indigenous programmes and created leadership roles and curatorial opportunities for Indigenous peoples within their organizations.

We also want to thank all the members of the ICCA Board of Directors, all of whom volunteer their time and expertise to this organization. We are incredibly lucky to have the dedication, passion, and skill of so many talented individuals by our side.

We are also grateful for the support of our core funders at the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and Toronto Arts Council, who ensure that the ICCA can continue to serve the needs and support the visionary work of Indigenous arts workers across Turtle Island and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support of the ICCA and for championing Indigenous artistic and curatorial practices across Turtle Island and beyond.

tēnā koutou and chi Miiḡwech for your unwavering support!

Reuben Friend and Lori Beavis

Co-Chairs, Indigenous Curatorial Collective (ICCA)



2024 ICCA Gathering Agenda Day 1 Friday Oct 11

Registration and Welcome Breakfast 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Opening Ceremony 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Partners Panel 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Lunch 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Membership Feedback Session 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Curator's Tour 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Tour of Toronto Biennial of Art 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM





2024 ICCA Gathering Agenda Day 2 Sat Oct 12

Registration and Morning Refreshments 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Welcome and Recap of Day 1 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Delegations Panel 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Lunch Break 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Crafting Circle 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Refreshment Break 3:00 PM - 3:15 PM

Annual General Meeting 3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

Closing Ceremony 4:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Networking Reception 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM



Delegations Panel

Curators from the Delegations Project

Join us for an engaging session where each curator shares insights from the delegations project. With a discussion on key themes and challenges, followed by an interactive audience Q&A.



Lorilee Wastasecoot

Curator of Indigenous Art and Engagement at the UVic Legacy Art Galleries

Linda Grussani

Curator, Aboriginal Art, Canadian Museum of History and NACDI Research Fellow



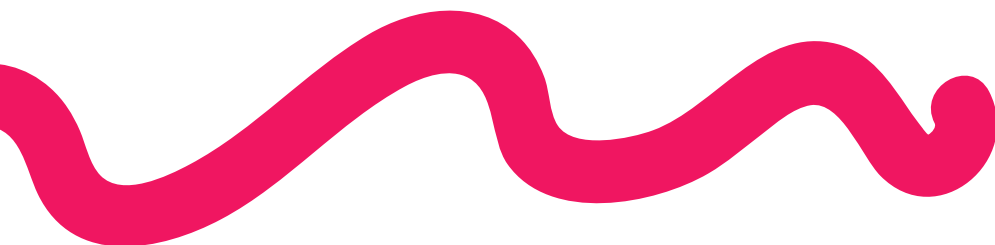
Eli Hirtle

Director of Programs. The Indigenous Curatorial Collective /Collectif des commissaires autochtones



Refreshments

Laureen (Blu) Waters (they/them)
Istchii Nikamoon: Earth Song, Wolf
clan. They are Cree/Metis with
family from George Gordon Reserve.



Refreshments

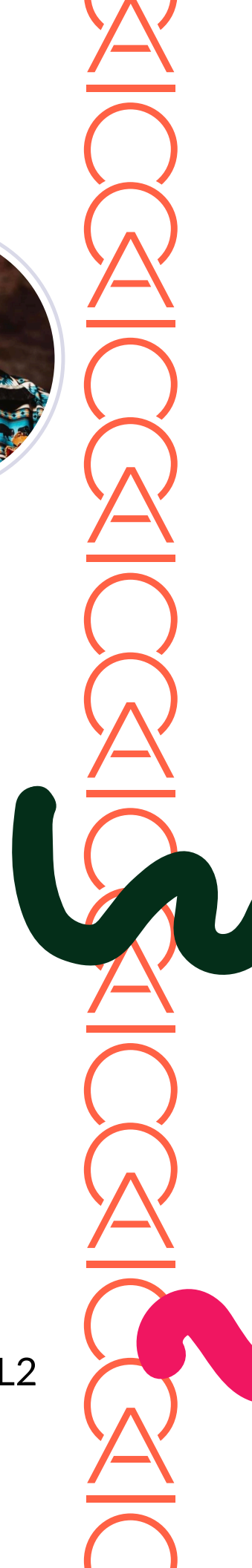
Provided By Hilton Toronto



Event Space

Hosted At Hilton Toronto

145 Richmond Street West Toronto, ON M5H 2L2
Governor General Main Room.



Curators Tour

Curator's Tour of Jean Marshall: Anikoobijikewin

Hosted By Linda Grussani

Onsite Gallery - 199 Richmond St. W

Linda Grussani

Curator, art historian and
former arts administrator



Tour of Biennial

Tour of Toronto Biennial of Art

Hosted By Co-Curator Dominique Fontaine

Contemporary art across Toronto



Dominique Fontaine

Cultural leader, curator,
advisor, and strategist on
innovation in arts and
culture.

Partners Panel

Amplifying Indigenous Arts Together

Celebrate how partnerships between ICCA and organizations like yours have helped elevate Indigenous curators and artists, expanding reach and impact through collaboration.



Jon Petrychyn

Director of Business
Operations at the Toronto
Queer Film Festival

Renee Castonguay
Programming Associate
The Bentway



Ania Harmata,

Operations Manager
Toronto Outdoor Art Fair



Liz Barron
Director of Operations
Indigenous Curatorial
Collective /Collectif des
commissaires autochtones



ICCA Board



Reuben Friend
Co-Chair

Lori Beavis
Treasurer



Maia Nuku
Secretary





Krista Zawadski

Leah Johnson



Jesse King



Aliya Boubard



ICCA Staff



Liz Barron
Director of Operations

Eli Hirtle
Director of Programming



Justine Stilborn
Digital Publications
Program Manager



Melissa Johns
Office Administrator



Membership

Feedback Session

Led by Director of Programming Eli Hirtle

The session opens with a presentation of the Needs Assessment Survey findings on Institutional and Community Membership Programs. Attendees will then break into groups to discuss insights and collaboratively explore ideas for reimagining and improving these programs to better serve both communities and institutions.



Crafting Circle

On day two, following the day-one Onsite tour, attendees can continue the conversation while crafting together or working on their own projects. All materials will be provided, offering a hands-on opportunity to explore beadwork and reflect on the tour's themes.



2023-24 Highlights

Enhancing Operational Sustainability



We are pleased to share that our board has approved a dual leadership model to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the Indigenous Curatorial Collective (ICCA). This strategic decision will enhance our organizational resilience as we continue to meet our grant and funding obligations while increasing our capacity to support Indigenous arts and culture. We remain committed to fulfilling our deliverables and driving impactful initiatives within our community.

New Leadership & Support

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Eli Hirtle as the Director of Programs and Justine "Tini" Stilborn as the Digital Program Manager during this fiscal year. Eli will oversee the Delegations Project and the "Let Wanda Speak" initiative, ensuring that both projects align with our commitment to Indigenous arts and advocacy. Justine will focus on enhancing our publications and archival efforts, furthering our mission to support Indigenous curatorial practices and accessibility in the arts.



Let Wanda Speak

The Indigenous Curatorial Collective (ICCA) launched "Let Wanda Speak" in response to the dismissal of Wanda Nanibush, the AGO's first curator of Indigenous art. Although the initiative did not resolve optimistically, it calls for transparency and accountability from the AGO, highlighting the need for trust within Indigenous communities. The ICCA remains hopeful that the community will unite to create more Indigenous arts spaces and uphold artistic sovereignty.



2023-24 Highlights

Delegations Project

The Delegations Initiative fosters international collaboration and cultural exchange by engaging delegates in strategic global events. Recently, we participated in a delegation to Santa Fe and will travel to Venice at the end of the month, with three additional trips planned for next year. The initiative supports delegates through travel and accommodation, emphasizing professional development and knowledge sharing to strengthen global connections within Indigenous arts and culture.



Publications

The Publications Program is currently advancing the Creative Conciliations project as a digital-only publication. We have exceeded our goals by restoring 31 articles from acc-cca.com, six from aboriginalcuratorialcollective.org, and the entire bibliography from our old sites. Additionally, we have added 13 new pieces of contemporary writing and invite contributions as we expand opportunities for Indigenous writers, curators, and artists.



Archive

The Archive Program is in the consulting phase to establish flexible yet standardized policies that reflect best practices and Indigenous protocols. Our focus includes creating a guide to transition works from publications to the archive, safeguarding Indigenous intellectual property while ensuring accessibility. We are also prioritizing Indigenous Descriptive Catalog Practices to honor the project's legacy and enhance the preservation of Indigenous arts materials.



Mandate

Vision

The ICCA activates Indigenous creative sovereignty, ensuring future ancestors have agency over their own cultures as an Inherent Right.

Mission

Advocates, Activates, and Engages

The ICCA is an Indigenous arts organization that advocates, activates, and engages on behalf of Canadian and international Indigenous curators, critics, artists and representatives of arts and cultural organizations.

Develops and Programs

The ICCA develops and programs curatorial projects, researches Indigenous practices and educates through critical discourses on Indigenous arts and cultures.

Builds Relationships

The ICCA builds relationships for Indigenous artists and curators by supporting equitable collaboration and exchange within larger arts communities.

Increases Opportunities

The ICCA focuses on increasing opportunities for Indigenous artists and curators within established arts institutions and champions the development of new Indigenous-controlled arts spaces.

Collaborate, Challenge and Engage

The ICCA collaborates, challenges, and engages in critical discourse, always viewing the arts through a contemporary Indigenous lens.

Strategic Plan

Honour Statements

We cultivate and nurture Indigenous arts communities to tell our stories on our terms.

We honour our practices of gathering to share collective and cultural knowledge.

We honour many cultural protocols and support the creation of new protocols.

We honour our responsibility as hosts to ensure inclusive and accessible spaces for many people.

Message from the Board

On behalf of the ICCA Board, we are thrilled to introduce you to our 2024 - 2027
Strategic Plan.

As we set out toward a more inclusive and empowering future, we invite you to join us in our mission to activate Indigenous creative sovereignty, ensuring that future generations can exercise agency over their cultures as an inherent right.

We invite you to join us on this transformative journey, standing with ICCA as we work towards a more inclusive, empowering, and vibrant future for Indigenous artistic expressions and cultural preservation. Together, we can bring our vision to life and ensure that future generations have control over their own cultures.

Goals & Objectives

Relationships

GOAL

Establish positive, productive, and sustainable connections with stakeholders who actively contribute to long-term success, growth, and positive impact.

- OBJECTIVE 1: Rebuild strong and lasting connections with our communities, promoting trust and collaboration for mutual benefit.
- OBJECTIVE 2: Connect and collaborate with NASO members for mutual benefit and support.
- OBJECTIVE 3: Create and sustain mutually advantageous partnerships.

Programs and Services

GOAL

Advance Indigenous artistic, curatorial, and cultural knowledge while culturally responsible and sustainable professional opportunities.

- OBJECTIVE 1 Develop and deliver programs and services that effectively address the unique needs of our community.
- OBJECTIVE 2 Promote and facilitate intergenerational knowledge sharing within our organization and community.
- OBJECTIVE 3 Advocate for increased equitable and sustainable funding.

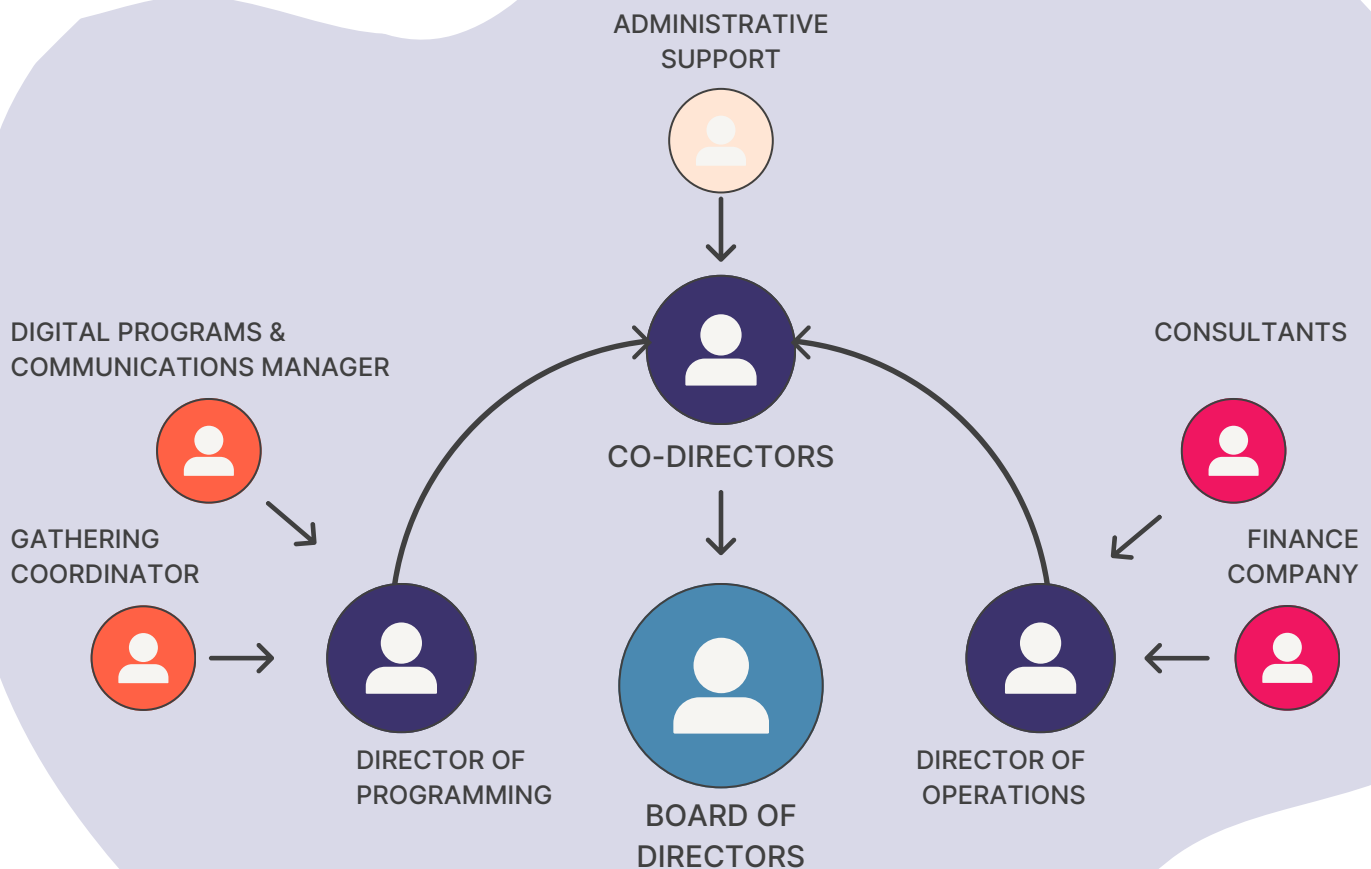
Organizational Sustainability

GOAL

Achieve organizational stability and sustainability.

- OBJECTIVE 1 Implement the co-leadership model within the organization's structure.
- OBJECTIVE 2 Achieve and maintain an efficient and effective organizational structure.
- OBJECTIVE 3 Establish consistent and effective communication methods to reach members and the community.

ICCA Org Chart



Financial Report

The Indigenous Curatorial Collective (ICCA) remains on budget for the current fiscal year, having successfully delivered all planned projects and closed off those that have been completed. This demonstrates our strong project management and financial oversight. We are in a solid fiscal position, and there are no significant changes to report at this time.

For those interested in a detailed financial breakdown, our financial statements are available upon request.

As part of our ongoing organizational development, we are currently transitioning into a new model that includes co-directorship and offsite offices, which will further support the collective's operations and future growth.

Director of Operations Report

March 2023 – April 2024

Overview: This report outlines key accomplishments, developments, and progress made from March 2023 to April 2024, focusing on partnerships, staffing, strategic planning, and our new digital initiatives.

1. Hiring of Director of Programming

In October 2023, ICCA hired Eli Hirtle as Director of Programming. His leadership has already contributed to the successful execution of curatorial mentorships and development of new models for gatherings, featuring Indigenous artists. His role has been pivotal in enhancing the organization's programming and ensuring the inclusion of emerging Indigenous curators.

2. Strategic Plan Development

A key milestone this year was the completion of ICCA's strategic plan, adopted in December 2023. It outlines goals for partnership expansion, increased Indigenous visibility, capacity building, and digital infrastructure development over the next five years.

3. Digital Publications Initiative

In late 2023, ICCA launched a new Digital Publications initiative with the support of Canada Council Cultivate and Library and Archives Canada. This initiative marks a significant expansion of our digital presence, focusing on publishing and curatorial research.

We hired **Justine Stilborn** as our Digital Manager, who has since been instrumental in developing partnerships with publishers and curators. Together, we have successfully posted several digital publications, showcasing Indigenous artists and curators' work.

In addition, we are developing an **archival process** to promote and support **curatorial research**. This will ensure that the digital work produced is preserved and accessible for future reference, contributing to the ongoing development of Indigenous curatorial practices

Community Cares Initiative

Overview

The Community Cares Initiative was launched with the goal of supporting curators, artists, and elders by distributing financial aid, fostering partnerships with governmental funders, and creating new spaces for advocacy.

Key Achievements

1. Distribution of Funds:

- o A total of **\$450,000** was distributed to curators, artists, and elders across Indigenous communities.
- o This distribution was designed to provide financial stability to individuals who continue to play pivotal roles in sustaining and promoting Indigenous arts, culture, and knowledge.

2. Meetings with Funders:

- o The initiative engaged with **municipal, provincial, and federal funders** to secure ongoing support and collaboration.
- o These meetings were essential in discussing long-term sustainability, expanding the reach of the initiative, and identifying further funding opportunities.

3. Establishment of Indigenous Arts Service Organization (IASO) Discord Channel:

- o A **Discord channel** was launched as part of the Indigenous Arts Service Organization (IASO) to provide a virtual space for advocacy, networking, and community building.
- o This digital platform allowed Indigenous artists, curators, and elders to engage in discussions around advocacy, share resources, and organize collective actions in real-time.
- o Key uses of the Discord channel include:
 - **Advocacy:** The channel is utilized to amplify issues facing Indigenous artists and to collectively strategize for better funding and resource access.
 - **Community Building:** It has become a hub for discussions on cultural preservation, artistic collaboration, and mentorship opportunities.
 - **Networking:** Artists and curators can connect with peers and share best practices in a virtual space that promotes inclusion and innovation.

Impact and Outcomes

The Community Cares Initiative has successfully established a foundation for long-term support and advocacy for Indigenous artists. The financial aid distributed has alleviated immediate financial pressures on key community figures, while the relationships built with municipal, provincial, and federal funders have opened doors for sustained engagement.

The implementation of the Discord channel is a key milestone in creating a modern, accessible form of advocacy that bridges geographic and communication barriers. By providing a virtual platform for artists and curators to engage with one another and with funders, the initiative has fostered a stronger, more connected Indigenous arts community.

Recommendations for Future Initiatives

- **Expand Digital Advocacy Platforms:** The Discord channel has proven to be a valuable tool for community engagement. Expanding this platform to include more interactive features like live events, workshops, and virtual exhibitions could enhance its utility.
- **Long-term Funding Models:** The meetings with funders highlighted the need for more predictable, multi-year funding models to ensure the sustainability of the Indigenous arts sector.
- **Cultural Leadership Development:** Future initiatives should consider establishing mentorship programs that connect younger artists with elders, creating a pathway for cultural knowledge transfer and leadership development within Indigenous arts communities.

The Community Cares Initiative has laid crucial groundwork in supporting Indigenous curators, artists, and elders by providing both financial support and advocacy opportunities. Through the distribution of \$450,000, the building of strong governmental partnerships, and the launch of the IASO Discord channel, the initiative has empowered the Indigenous arts community to thrive and advocate for itself in new and meaningful ways. The ongoing success of this initiative will depend on continued collaboration, innovation, and support from all stakeholders.

Conclusion:

From March 2023 to April 2024, ICCA has made significant strides in building partnerships, expanding our digital initiatives, strengthening our leadership team, and setting a clear path forward with our strategic plan. These accomplishments have positioned ICCA to continue its vital work in supporting Indigenous artists and curators, while promoting sustainable growth in the arts community.

Director of Programs Report

As we approach the one year anniversary of my hiring last fall, I'm happy to report on the programming activities that I inherited as I entered the position, and the development of new partnerships and projects that took place in our last fiscal year.

1. Partnerships

Over the past year, ICCA has forged several critical partnerships, fostered collaboration and expanded our outreach to support Indigenous and IndigiQueer curators, artists, and writers. These partnerships include:

- Toronto Outdoor Arts Festival (TOAF)
- Toronto Queer Film Festival (TQFF)
- The Bentway
- Asinabka Film and Media Festival
- Debaser
- Gallery 101
- Indigenous National Arts Service Organizations

These partnerships have strengthened our network, building upon existing partnerships with C Magazine and Centre Clarke, and demonstrates ICCA's commitment to ensuring Indigenous arts practitioners have access to national and international platforms.

2. Advocacy

In December of 2023, we embarked on an advocacy campaign in the wake of Wanda Nanibush's departure from the AGO. After months of discussions with colleagues at other Indigenous-led NASO's and Artist-Run Centres across the country, we sent an open letter to the AGO CEO and Board of Trustees demanding that they "Let Wanda Speak" and release her from a restrictive NDA which had prevented her from talking publicly about the circumstances around her leaving the institution.

Over 500 people signed the letter, which was successful in generating collective momentum towards ensuring that our community members can act and speak freely without fear of reprisal or punishment by the institutions we work with. By collaborating with the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition, Ociciwan Contemporary Art Centre, Urban Shaman, and Primary Colours / Couleurs primaires, the ICCA helped to raise awareness about these issues in our field, and has demonstrated to our membership that we will stand with our community members that are facing harmful or unfair working conditions.

This work was highlighted in a Walrus Magazine article released this past summer titled "Why Did Canada's Top Art Gallery Push Out a Visionary Curator."

3. Membership

As we continue to develop and implement a co-directorship model, one of our priorities is to shift focus from serving Institutional Members with direct contact and services, and to provide our Community Membership with more resources and opportunities for career development. One of the ways that we began to make that shift is with the Digital Publications project, where members are encouraged to submit new or existing writing, so that we can contribute to platforming important critical discourse by and about Indigenous curators.

We are currently working on a Membership Needs Assessment initiative, where surveys were sent out to Institutional and Community members so that feedback can be directly gathered from all of our membership about what they need and want as priority projects and programs to best serve their needs. As we restructure the organization, it makes sense to pause and reflect on what our present capacities, resources, and priorities are, so that we can continue to support the creative sovereignty of our community.

4. Gatherings

Following our previous AGM and Strategic Planning sessions last fall at Daphne Art Centre in Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/Montréal we began to have conversations with colleagues at the MacKenzie and Remai galleries in Saskatchewan about our next National Gathering, which we will be co-hosting along with the Black Curators Forum in both Regina & Saskatoon in November 2025. This convening will coincide with projects that both galleries have been undertaking which aim to bring together Black & Indigenous artists and curators to discuss relationships, histories and practices across the Great Plains region.

We have also partnered with a consortium of organisations in the Ottawa/Gatineau region, including artist-run centres AXENÉO7 and SAW, the Regroupement des centres d'artistes autogérés du Québec, and the Association des groupes en arts visuels francophones to co-host the next Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference (ARCA) from June 11 to 14, 2025. *Against the Current* will be hosted at the NCC River House, the Ottawa Art Gallery's Alma Duncan Salon, AXENÉO7 and SAW, connecting delegates to important cultural and natural sites on both sides of the Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River) while recognizing and honouring the Algonquin land on which we will gather. Over 250 delegates are expected to attend.

Digital Program Manager Report

Name: Justine

Position: Digital Publications Manager

Start Date: March 15th, 2024

Report Date: September 9th, 2024

1. Introduction

I am excited to join the team and contribute to the important work of the ICCA. My first two weeks in the fiscal year have provided an opportunity to dive into the Creative Conciliations publications project and familiarize myself with the organization's goals and ongoing initiatives.

2. Key Activities Undertaken

- **Creative Conciliations Publications Project:** Took over the project management and began reviewing current status, deliverables, and timelines.
- **Initial Team Integration:** Engaged with team members to understand our workflows, priorities, and communication practices.
- **Learning and Adaptation:** I began familiarizing myself with internal processes and systems relevant to digital publications and archival projects.

3. Reporting Approach

I am currently reviewing and aligning my reporting practices with the objectives and metrics outlined in the Cultivate Grant for the publications program. My aim is to ensure that all reports are in line with our team standards and organizational expectations.

I have developed a website traffic dashboard based on the grant's impact measurements, focusing on key metrics such as visitor engagement, contributor growth, and social media reach.

The anticipated impacts, as defined in the grant, include:

1. Producing an annual digital and print publication that showcases Indigenous artistic projects and ideas.
2. Building content that is Indigenous-led and edited, reaching both Indigenous communities and contemporary art audiences.
3. Expanding ICCA's ability to feature more writers, curators, and artists on an ongoing basis.

To measure these impacts, I will focus on tracking:

- The number of contributors published annually and throughout the year.
- Engagement metrics such as user analytics and community interactions on the website and social media.
- Future citations of the work featured on our platform.

I welcome any feedback or guidance on specific areas to emphasize or preferred reporting formats to ensure clarity and effectiveness in communication.

4. Forward-Looking Statements

I am enthusiastic about the possibilities ahead and confident that, with collaboration and a clear focus, we can achieve great things in the coming months. I am eager to contribute to advancing our projects and building on the strong foundation that already exists within the team.

Next Gathering



2025 (Ottawa June 11 to 14th, 2025)
International Gathering

“Against the Current/
À contre courant/
Wàbi mikanàwàn”



Activating Indigenous Creative Sovereignty

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icca.art

info@icca.art

