

# PRESS RELEASE



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OCTOBER 19, 2022

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## MARION SCOTT GALLERY RETURNS TO ART TORONTO WITH A PRESENTATION THAT FOCUSES ON NEW AND OLDER INUIT EXPRESSIONS

October 27-30

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

Booth A25



**Vancouver, BC** — Marion Scott Gallery is excited to announce its participation in the 2022 edition of Art Toronto, October 27-30. Building on the gallery's past presentations at the fair, the 2022 iteration brings together a dynamic range of contemporary and classic images by Inuit artists in a variety of media. The installation's centrepiece is *Help Us*, an innovative body of new sculptural drawings and monumental wall pieces by Kinngait's Shuvinai Ashoona, winner of the 2018 Gershon Iskowitz Prize. Also featured are two collaborative video works and a large-format photographic print by 2021 Sobey Art Award recipient Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory and digital artist Jamie Griffiths, both based in Iqaluit. These expressions in newer media are grounded and further contextualized by a selection of classic sculptures in stone and bone by such well-known Inuit masters as Amidlak, John Kavik, Andy Miki, Nick Sikkuark and Lucy Tasseor, coupled with additional two-dimensional images by Qavavau Manumie, Janet Nungnik and Kananginak Pootoogook. Taken together, these artists make a cohesive and powerful statement about the land and Inuit cosmology.

Produced in Kinngait and Vancouver as a specially commissioned project for MSG, Shuvinai Ashoona's new series of works on paper pushes beyond the established boundaries that have historically determined what contemporary Inuit drawing can be. Collectively entitled *Help Us*, the Art Toronto installation features a floating constellation of the award-winning artist's sculptural drawings against a backdrop of a suite of recent and monumentally scaled works on paper. The sculptures, which range from tiny to massive, take the form of specific geometric shapes—including cubes, pyramids, polyhedrons, and decahedrons—that Ashoona has covered with her fantastical imagery. Visitors to the booth will find themselves immersed in Ashoona's universe, within a dynamic installation that allows them to make a range of discoveries and connections across this extraordinary body of work. At the boundary of the joyful and the apocalyptic, Ashoona's imagery and messages are a warning, presented in metaphorical terms, that time may be running out for humanity amid environmental ruin and other imminent threats.

Also featured are a trio of lens- and performance-based works by Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory in collaboration with Jamie Griffiths. *Timiga, Nunalu Sikulu (My body, the land and the ice)*, a six-and-a-half minute video produced in 2016, explores the deep Inuit connection to the land from a feminist and decolonizing perspective. Set to a lush soundtrack by Chris Coleman and Celina Kalluk, it captures, in intimate stunning detail, the treeless topography and sculpted terrain of Williamson Bathory's northern homeland, ending with images of her reclining on the ice. A second, shorter video work from the same year, entitled *Kiinamit Kiinamut (Face to Face)*, documents Williamson Bathory's process of applying paint to her face as she prepares to perform *uaajeerneq*, a specialized form of Greenlandic mask dancing. The videos are complemented by *Silaup Putunga Iluani* (in English, "inside the universe's hole"), a new large-format photographic print in which a masked Williamson Bathory, attired in black apparel and sealskin mitts, appears in a powerful pose against a backdrop of ice and snow.

The presentation includes several large and small sculptures from the classic era of Inuit art. In many cases, these older images in stone and bone amplify some of the same themes that are reflected in Ashoona's and Williamson Bathory and Griffith's ground breaking pieces. Important works by Kangiqliniq's John Kavik and Arviat's Elizabeth Nutaaraaluk, two of early modern Inuit art's greatest masters, present powerful images of womanhood, while a series of small sculptures by Arviat's Lucy Tasseor featuring families of people etched in stone express ancient Inuit notions of community and connectedness with the land, the minimally worked material having itself emerged directly from the earth in this region. Alongside these works from the Kivalliq is a selection of sculptures from the early 1950s from Inukjuak in northern Quebec picturing hunters with harpoons and their animal prey, reflecting the longstanding spiritual connection between the human and non-human worlds.

Rounding out the installation is a selection of precisely rendered drawings by Qavavau Manumie and Kananginak Pootoogook, both from Kinngait, and a textile work by Qamani'tuaq's Janet Nungnik. The works of all three artists express ideas about the environment and, in the case of Pootoogook and Nungnik, the central roles that women play in Inuit culture.

**Shuvinai Ashoona** (b. 1961, Kinngait, Nunavut) is one of Canada's foremost contemporary artists. Based in the remote northern community of Kinngait on southern Baffin Island, the third-generation Inuk artist has been gaining ever more attention, nationally and internationally, for her drawings and prints, in which she fuses fantastical and everyday imagery. Ashoona is the winner of the 2018 Gershon Iskowitz Prize, one of Canada's top art prizes, and her work is currently featured in *The Milk of Dreams*, the central exhibition of the 59<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, where she received a Special Mention. She has had solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario, The Power Plant, The Vancouver Art Gallery, and ICI Miami. Her work is in numerous private and public collections including the National Gallery of Canada, the Smithsonian, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of Ontario, ICI Miami, Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Remai Modern.

**Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory** is a Kalaaleq (Greenlandic Inuk) performance artist, poet, actor, curator, storyteller and writer. She is known for performing *uaajeerneq*, a Greenlandic mask dance that she infuses with a feminist and decolonizing expression. Based in Iqaluit, Nunavut, she performs internationally, collaborates with other artists and has been an advocate for Inuit artists. In 2017, Williamson Bathory was the recipient of the inaugural Kenojuak Ashevak Memorial Prize, and in 2021 she was awarded the prestigious Sobey Art Award. Williamson Bathory's work has been featured in many exhibitions across Canada, and was recently included in programming associated with the 2022 Venice Biennale. *Naak silavit qeqqa?*, a two-sided video installation produced in collaboration with Jamie Griffiths, is featured in a permanent exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario that opened in July 2022.

**Marion Scott Gallery** is a leading showcase for contemporary Inuit art from the modern era. Founded in 1975 by Marion Scott, the gallery's mission from the outset has been to present fine Inuit art within a contemporary context, often showing it alongside other Indigenous and non-Indigenous forms. In 1989, the directorship passed to Judy Kardosh, Marion's daughter, under whose leadership the gallery began mounting regular group and solo exhibitions, many of which broke new ground by bringing focus and attention to some of Inuit art's most dynamic voices. Now under the directorship of Robert Kardosh, a third-generation family member, the gallery continues to champion the work of artists of Inuit and Indigenous heritage, organizing several exhibitions throughout the year. Active in both the primary and secondary markets, the gallery's programme seeks to celebrate the ongoing evolution of Inuit expression in all media, from its beginnings in the late 1940s and 1950s as a form centred mainly on sculptures and prints, to more recent manifestations encompassing photography, video, performance, sound, painting and large-scale drawings.

**PRESS INQUIRIES:** Please contact Robert Kardosh at [robert@marionscottgallery.com](mailto:robert@marionscottgallery.com) or by phone at 604-685-1934. High-resolution images are available upon request.

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Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory & Jamie Griffiths  
*Silaup Putunga Iluani*, 2022  
inkjet print  
46 x 38 in. / 117 x 96.5 cm.



Shuvinai Ashoona  
*untitled (double-sided polyhedron)*, 2022  
pencil crayon, ink & glitter on paper  
63 x 24 x 24 in. / 160 x 61 x 61 cm.