

November 18, 2020

Gift from the Sobey Family Announced as Gallery Selects Design Team

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Today, Nov. 18, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) announced the team of KPMB Architects with Omar Gandhi Architect, Jordan Bennett Studio, Elder Lorraine Whitman, Public Work and Transsolar as winners of the international design competition for the new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and Waterfront Arts District.

"Congratulations to the winning design team on their outstanding proposal for a new iconic Art Gallery of Nova Scotia," said Premier Stephen McNeil. "As a province, we recognize the importance of inclusive public spaces connected to the arts. Art and culture help tell the story of who we are as Nova Scotians. The new gallery will reflect the importance of art and culture to our lives, our communities and our economy. I also want to thank The Sobey family for their very generous donation to this project."

To celebrate the unveiling of the new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia design, the Donald R. Sobey Foundation, with The Sobey Foundation, announced a \$10 million gift.

"As Nova Scotians, we are exceptionally proud to live in one of the most beautiful and culturally rich places in the world. The role that artists can play in shining a global spotlight on our province will be strengthened by this bold new vision for internationally recognized cultural infrastructure," said Donald R. Sobey. "The Sobey family looks forward to our province's enhanced capacity to welcome the world with this visionary arts district. Our sincere gratitude goes out to all three design proponents and our heartfelt congratulations goes to Omar Gandhi, Jordan Bennett, Elder Lorraine Whitman, Public Work and Transsolar, and KPMB Architects Bruce Kuwabara and Shirley Blumberg for their extraordinary winning design."

The new gallery and arts district, located on the Salter block of the Halifax Waterfront, will be a transformative destination for all to experience. It will inspire and celebrate creativity and imagination, but also challenge the status quo and reshape institutional values. It will be a place created with people, art and culture at its core.

"Today's announcement is an exciting and inspiring look into the future of the Halifax waterfront, and a preview of the immense impact that the new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia will have on our community and regional culture," said Andy Fillmore, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. "This transformational project will bring together all members of our community to share unique experiences and build stronger, more inclusive relationships through art. The Government of Canada congratulates the successful design team and wishes to thank all applicants for their thoughtful and unique designs."

The winning design team's submission outlines a new AGNS that offers an array of accessible experiences. It embodies a vision of a place for all seasons, rooted in sustainability, connecting the city at the water. It's a gathering space where art, learning and community unite.

The landscape design expands and contracts, flexing seasonally from the human-scaled, intimate gathering spaces at the heart of Salter Block to a large gathering space at the scale of K'jipuktuk, the Great Harbour. The design features a striking peaked hat shape at the entrance, an iconic shape which is a symbol of the strength, wisdom, love and power that women hold within Mi'kmaw communities.

"We proposed a sinuous building surrounded by regenerative gardens that will signal a radical new beginning for the AGNS, the waterfront, Nova Scotians and the world of art," said Bruce Kuwabara, founding partner, KPMB Architects. "We want people to experience art in a great setting. We want people to feel welcome and at home. We believe we have created a place for everyone."

The gallery and the province will work with the team and the public to shape a final design that is a meaningful and accurate reflection of the diversity of Nova Scotian communities. Formal public engagement will begin in early 2021. The public can view the winning conceptual design at: <https://artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/artsdistrict> .

Quotes:

"We are tremendously proud and inspired to collaborate with both the winning team and the public to reimagine how our gallery can serve communities, and to demonstrate the significance of culture and art, both at home and abroad. This transformational gift from the Sobey family will shape the path in realizing the dream for the new gallery. Their generosity to the arts in Canada is unparalleled and we are so fortunate to have their support as we revolutionize the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia into a leading Canadian art museum. As we move forward with this talented team, we hope that all Nova Scotians will engage with us as we build a gallery for the people."

Nancy Noble, director and CEO, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

"Social infrastructure - public spaces, waterfronts, parks and a reimagined art gallery can be a touchstone for attracting population and for bringing people together. We believe the new arts district can be a place for everyone - where all people can see themselves and are inspired to participate. To achieve this, we need to build it with everyone, which is easy to say and hard to do. Today is the beginning of the important work to bring people together to co-create our new arts district on the Halifax Waterfront. It's an invitation to join us in making this place for art and community a place where everyone can belong."

Jennifer Angel, president and CEO, Develop Nova Scotia

Quick Facts:

- the selection of the winning team is the result of an international design competition, the first of its size in Nova Scotia
- the three teams who participated in stage two of the design competition were Architecture49 with Diller Scofidio + Renfro and Hargreaves Jones; DIALOG, Acre Architects, Brackish Design Studio and Shannon Webb-Campbell; KPMB Architects with Omar Gandhi Architect, Jordan Bennett Studio, Elder Lorraine Whitman, Public Work and Transsolar
- in April 2019, the Government of Canada announced an investment of \$30 million in the new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia project through the New Building Canada Fund-Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Component, National and Regional Projects

- the Province of Nova Scotia has committed \$70 million to this project

Additional Resources:

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia building website, where visitors can also find the Jury Report, is at: <https://artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/artsdistrict>

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