

**textile
museum**

OF CANADA

**TORONTO
BIENNIAL
OF ART**

MEDIA RELEASE

June 21, 2021

**The Textile Museum of Canada and Toronto Biennial of Art
present the exhibition
Double Vision: Jessie Oonark, Janet Kigusiuq, and Victoria Mamnguqsualuk
February 16 to August 14, 2022**



Toronto, ON...The Textile Museum of Canada (the Museum) and Toronto Biennial of Art (TBA) announce their partnership in the presentation and tour of the exhibition *Double Vision: Jessie Oonark, Janet Kigusiuq, and Victoria Mamnguqsualuk*. Curated by Candice Hopkins, Senior Curator at the Toronto Biennial of Art, the exhibition will be on view at the Textile Museum February 16 – August 14, 2022.

Double Vision will debut at the Museum as a key component of the 2022 Toronto Biennial of Art (March 26 – June 5, 2022). The Museum will partner with TBA to provide free and accessible arts programming across Toronto and surrounding areas during the presentation.

“We are thrilled to launch our 2022 programming with such a significant partnership,” said Emma Quin, the Textile Museum’s Director and CEO. *Double Vision* builds on years of Museum exhibitions and partnerships that have focussed on textiles that reveal deep Indigenous histories while sharing stories of the people who continue to shape textile practices today.”

Double Vision profiles three ground-breaking artists from Nunavut—Jessie Oonark (1906 – 1985) and her daughters, Janet Kigusiuq (1926 – 2005) and Victoria Mamnguqsualuk (1930 – 2016)—and shines a light on a highly distinctive art form called nivingajuliat that developed out of government-sponsored craft programs in the Arctic, beginning with the sewing program in Qamani`tuaq (Baker Lake) established in the 1960s.

Nivingajuliat, or wall hangings, were conceived by the seamstresses of the community. These brightly stitched textiles feature graphic appliquéd images, often enhanced with embroidery, centering on the dynamics and interrelationships between people and animals. Through these artworks, *Double Vision* looks at the matriarchal practice of Oonark and two of her daughters, and how women artists in Qamani`tuaq mentored one another in producing unique aesthetic and conceptual lineages. The exhibition brings together artworks from public and private collections from across Canada and features remarkable examples of nivingajuliat alongside seldom seen drawings by Oonark and Mamnguqsualuk and paper collages by Kigusiuq that relate to both the technique and content of the wall hangings.

“Jessie Oonark has had a profound influence on Inuit textiles although she only began drawing and working with wool after moving to Qamani`tuaq at the age of 59,” said Hopkins. “Her practice is characterized by its symmetry—which has been described as a kind of ‘double vision’. Together, the works of Oonark, Kigusiuq, and Mamnguqsualuk represent a matriarchal practice, one that is explored through the making of nivingajuliat, and how this practice and their kinship informed their collages, prints, and drawings.”

The exhibition and public programming will foreground Inuit knowledge and encourage cultural exchange through artistic, educational, and museum training activities, including a curatorial assistant placement for an Inuk student supported by the Museum’s Institutional Partner, the *Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership: The Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq Project*. Artists who actively create nivingajuliat today and community members from Qamani`tuaq will be engaged in workshops, consultation, and digital programs. The Museum will partner with TBA in activities to take place in indoor and outdoor venues using digital and online platforms, engagement tools, learning resources, and other programs and events. *Double Vision* will extend the TBA’s and the Museum’s commitment to working with Indigenous artists, curators, and communities locally and nationally.

The exhibition and tour are supported by the Museums Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

About the Curator

Candice Hopkins (she/her) is the Senior Curator of the Toronto Biennial of Art (2019 and 2022) and oversees new art commissions, exhibitions, and publications. Most recently co-curator for *Soundings: An Exhibition in Five Parts*, SITE Santa Fe's 2018 Sitelines Biennial and the Canadian Pavilion for the 2019 Venice Biennial, Hopkins has developed major international exhibitions, including *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art* (2013), National Gallery of Canada, *Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years* (2011), Plug In ICA, and, dOCUMENTA 14 in Kassel and Athens (2017). She has been published widely and lectures internationally and is the recipient of the 2015 Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence in Contemporary Art. Originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, Hopkins is a citizen of Carcross/Tagish First Nation.

About the Textile Museum of Canada

The Textile Museum of Canada aims to inspire understanding of the human experience through textiles. They are the only museum in Canada delivering programs and exhibitions dedicated solely to textile arts. The Museum ignites creativity, inspires wonder, and sparks conversation through the stories held within their global collection of textiles and active engagement with contemporary art practices.

For more information, visit: textilemuseum.ca, @textilemuseumofcanada, and #TMCtoronto, on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

About the Toronto Biennial of Art

The Toronto Biennial of Art's mission is to make contemporary art available to everyone. For 10 weeks every two years, local and international Biennial artists transform the city and surrounding regions with artworks, talks, and performances that reflect local contexts and pressing issues of our time. The Biennial's free, citywide programming aims to inspire people, bridge communities, and contribute to global conversations.

The inaugural Toronto Biennial of Art launched in 2019 and was a popular and critical success, welcoming nearly 300,000 local and international visitors to 15 sites that featured 161 artists and performers. The 2022 Toronto Biennial of Art will be presented March 26 – June 5, 2022. The Biennial provides expanded views of contemporary art practices, including significant contributions by artists from Black, Indigenous and POC communities, and is establishing a legacy of free and accessible contemporary arts programming in Toronto, Mississauga, and the surrounding GTA.

For more information, visit: torontobiennial.org, @torontobiennial, and #TObiennial22 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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Image Captions

Left - Jessie Oonark, *Composition (On The Land)*, ca. 1967. Duffel, felt, embroidery floss, 33.75 x 28". Courtesy of Feheley Fine Arts

Right - Janet Kigusiuq, *Untitled (Young Woman and Pack Dogs)*, c. 1990. Duffel, felt, embroidery floss, 53.5 x 54.5". Courtesy of Feheley Fine Arts