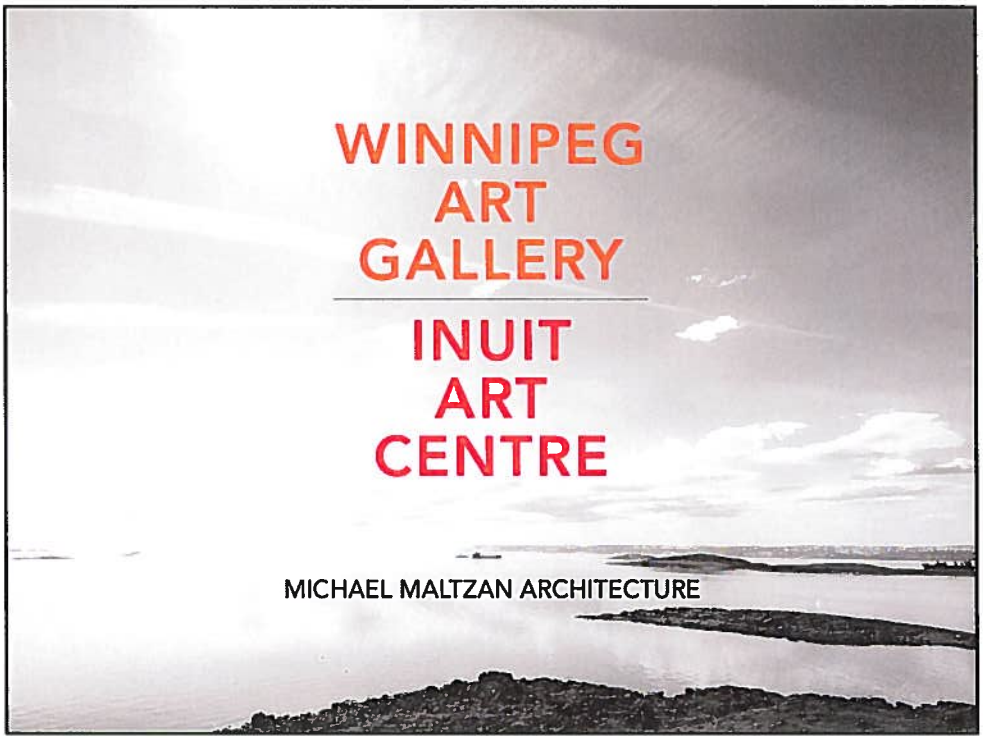
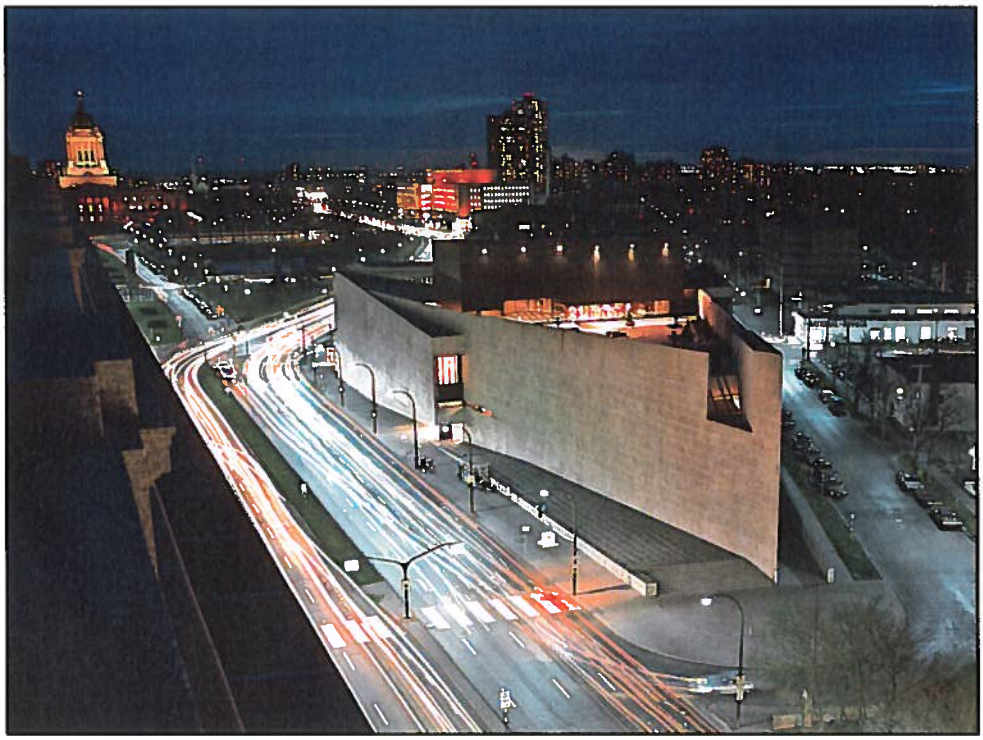


Thank you for the opportunity to present the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Capital Project - the Inuit Art Centre.

I'm Barry Rempel, Chair of the Capital Campaign and with me is Kevin Donnelly, a member of the WAG Board of Governors and Pamela Simmons, Capital Campaign Director.



WAG Director and CEO Stephen Borys could not be with us today. A message from him is included in your packages.

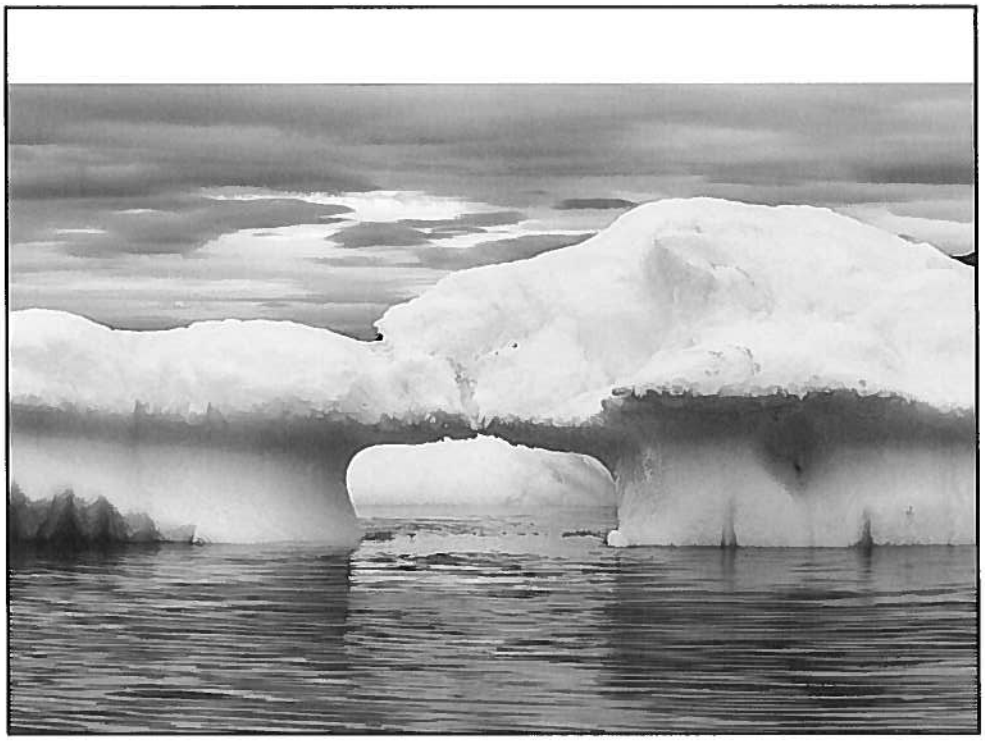
For the past 30 years, the building of an Inuit Art Centre has been a burning concern in the art community. With the success of the WAG's centennial year and the growing interest in bridging cultures and looking Northward economically--- we believe now is the time to make it a reality.

With your support, the creation of the Inuit Art Centre will give a voice and home for the Inuit collection; change how people of all ages understand the culture of an Indigenous group; bridge the South of Canada with the North; encourage ties with the Inuit, their land and traditions; and foster a new cultural dialogue across the country and internationally.

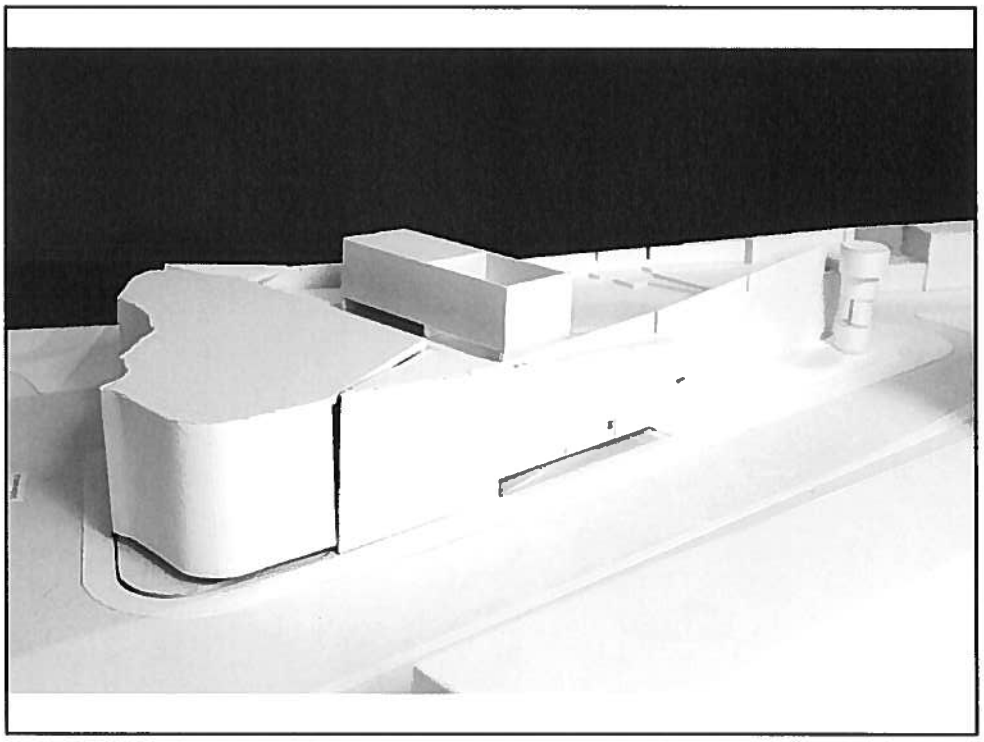


To continue then...

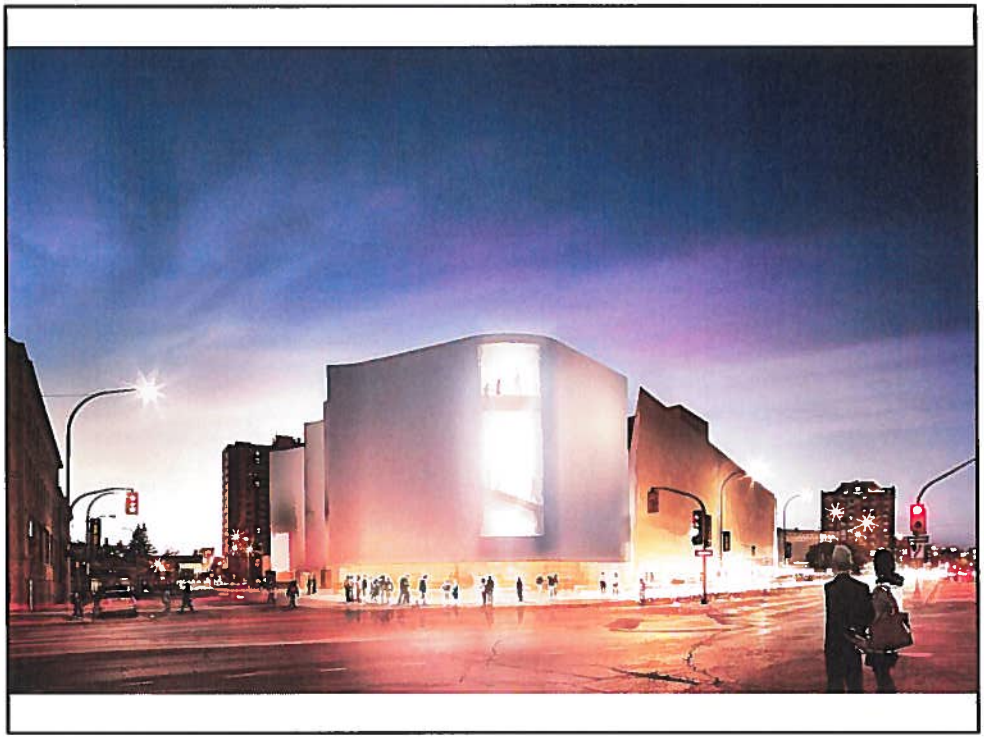
The WAG consulted many people, including Inuit and Aboriginal leaders and artists to help with the planning of the Centre. Stephen and the architects travelled to the North, visited galleries, and listened to both the artists and Inuit community at large. This dialogue has greatly shaped the design of the Centre.



When the WAG building opened in 1971 it was described as icebreaker heading north.

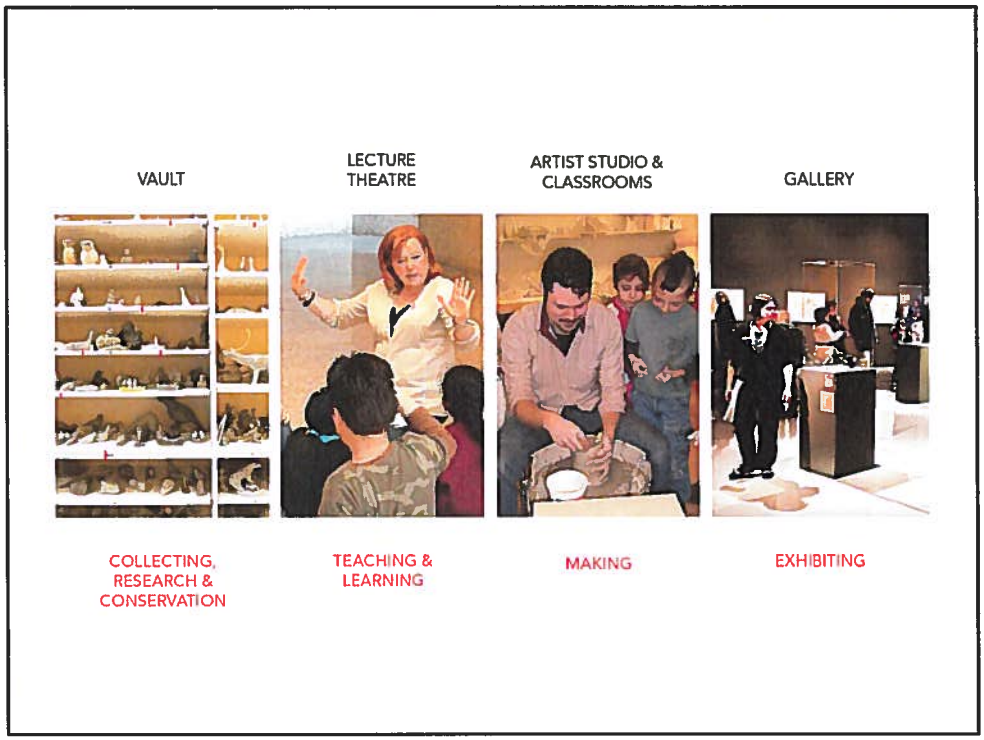


The new design fills in the southern face and creates a new wholeness with graceful lines and monumental weight that recalls elements of the Northern landscape.



After a major international competition, Michael Maltzan Architecture from Los Angeles was chosen out of 65 entrants to design the Inuit Art Centre. The firm's local partner and associate architect is Winnipeg-based Cibinel Architects. The architects saw that the 1970 Guz da Roza structure needed an architectural treatment that would not only complement the existing iconic structure, but that it would also pay homage to the North.

The Centre built adjacent to the Gallery, where the WAG studio now sits, facing south toward the Manitoba Legislature from the corner of Memorial Boulevard and St. Mary Avenue. The schematic design phase will be completed in February 2014 with anticipated breaking ground in Spring 2015 and planned opening in 2017 as we celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary.



At the Inuit Art Centre, a sensitivity to the collection, conservation and exhibition of art will be maintained. The WAG has a tremendous responsibility as a space for the Inuit community and must support both traditional and innovative modes of exhibition, learning and art-making.

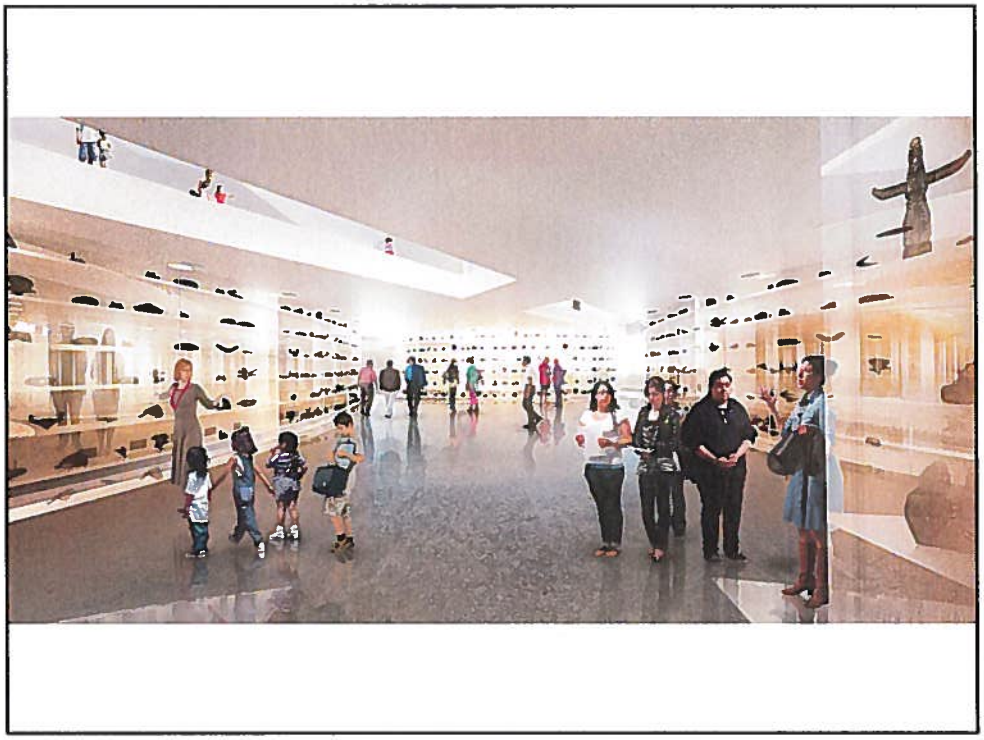
As WAG Director Stephen Borys says:

The new building will act not only as the face of Inuit Art for the province and for Canada, it will also be the face of a new, multi-dimensional WAG that extends outward. The Inuit Art Centre will be a place where people can truly experience the collection. It will rise above the age-old template for art museums, and embrace a non-museum template where the focus is not just on the art, but also the artists, artmaking, and the community while creating a legacy of life long learning, enrichment, and physical and mental well being.

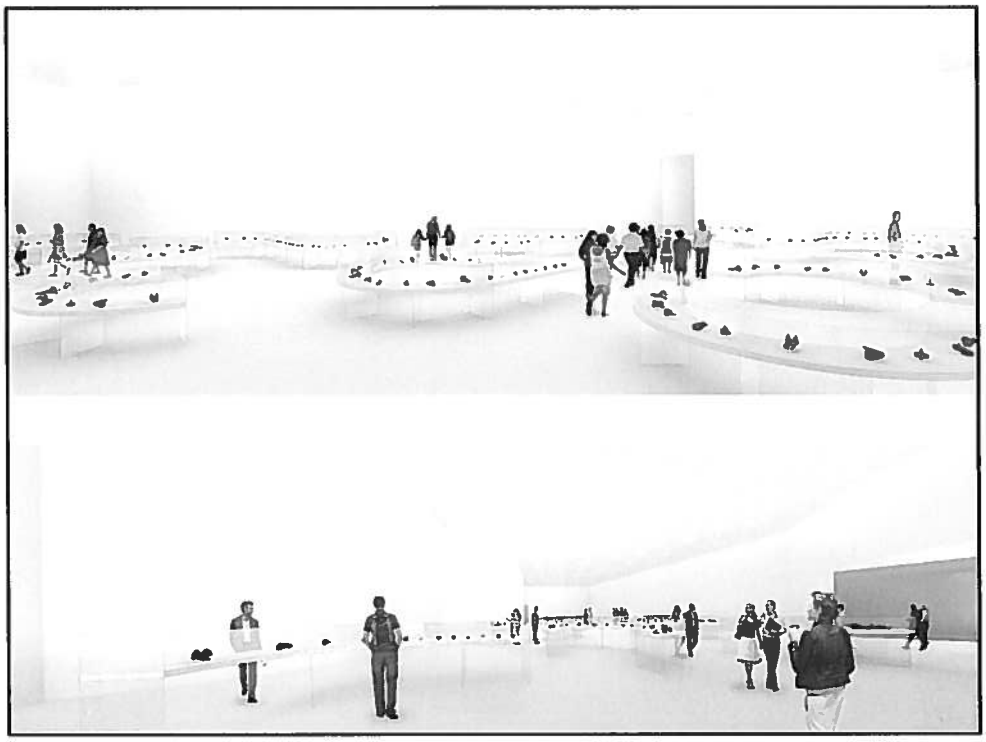


Maltzan's ingenuity of design brings what has previously been hidden out into the open - the treasure of the Inuit art vault. The vault will be visible from many vantage points both inside and outside the building, showcasing more than 7,000 Inuit sculptures for all to see.

The Inuit Scholar Rooms, located in close proximity to the vault, will give scholars of all levels of study the opportunity to enhance their learning experience.



The Inuit Vault Lobby will allow visitors to see within the Inuit vault. The interior vault walls form a plaza that is open to the public, creating a unique space for people to gather.

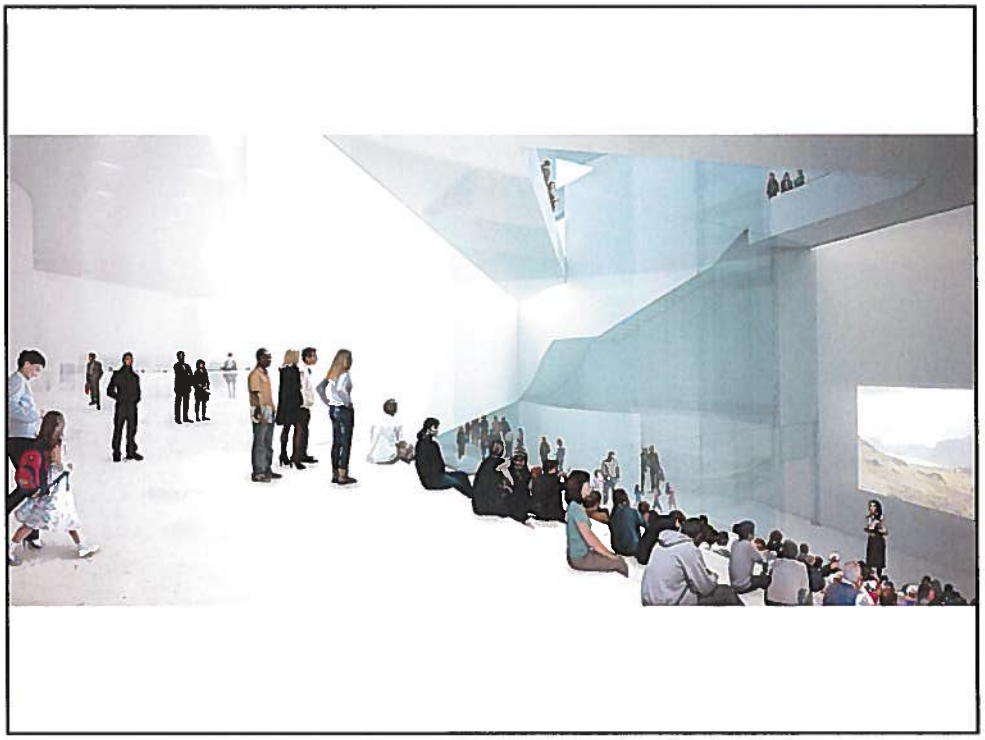


The Inuit Gallery will be a spectacular experience on its own terms. It will be luminous and open, giving a sense of "Northness" with 22 foot ceilings allowing the WAG to showcase pieces that cannot be accommodated in existing galleries. When completed, it will be the largest gallery space in Canada dedicated to showcasing the art of an Indigenous people.

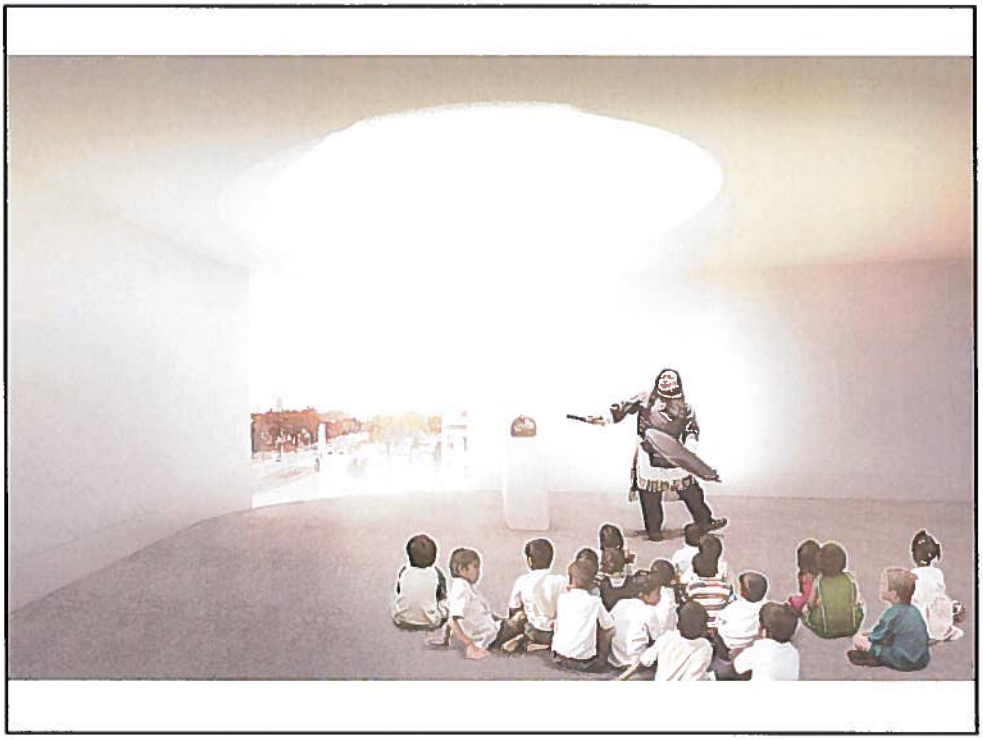


The WAG studio has been delivering art education to Manitobans for 75 years. The WAG's broader relationship with teachers and educators in Winnipeg and Manitoba will allow the art object to lead the exploration and learning experience -- in the same way Inuit have used and embraced their art.

The Inuit Art Centre will provide a home for WAG Studio and bring art and learning together in a new way. There will be 5 studio spaces, all visually connected to the Inuit vault.



A small theatre off the exhibition gallery will host school tour orientations and act as an informal place for visitors to rest, meet or talk in small groups.



Finally, I wish to highlight a unique feature of the gallery level, the Ceremony Room. This space is designed to honour the Inuit and other Indigenous people who have made the WAG's Inuit art collection and gallery possible. With an unobstructed view down the Memorial plaza to the Manitoba Legislature, it will become one of the most memorable images of our City.



The Inuit Art Centre will have the following significant impacts for City:

Tourism: It will be an iconic destination that will attract meeting, conference, and travel planners to our city. It brings a beneficial strategic alignment with other major attractions focusing on the North.

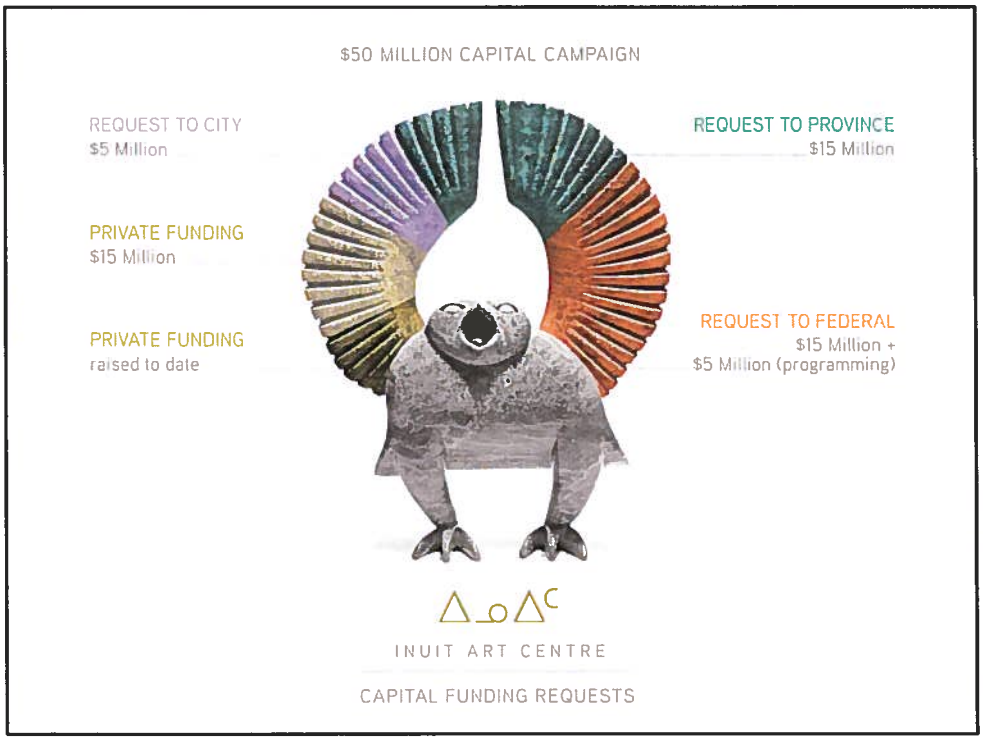
Education: The Inuit Art Centre will make it possible all students to first learn about a culture through an art object.

Visual Arts Hub: Currently, the WAG draws 150,000 people to Downtown Winnipeg annually. The Inuit Art Centre will solidify a new visual arts hub that will draw even more visitors to this area.

Job Creation: The $34.5 million construction of the Inuit Art Centre is estimated to create 260 direct and indirect jobs for Manitobans that significant economic spin offs.

Indigenous Identity: The Centre will act as the face of Inuit art for the City, Province and Canada, housing the largest exhibition gallery in Canada devoted to Indigenous art.

Gateway to the North: The Centre will bolster Winnipeg's claim as "Gateway to the North" and create an international destination as the premier showcase for the Inuit collection. With the opening the CMHR and Northern focus projects and our evolving society, it is our responsibility to value and investigate the art and culture of Indigenous peoples.



For more than 30 years, the WAG has been planning a fitting home for the world's largest and finest collection of contemporary Inuit art.
The time to create the Inuit Art Centre is now.

In this image you can see that the overall fundraising goal is $50 million which includes a $15 million request to the federal government plus 5 million for national programming.

From the Province of Manitoba, we requested $15 million.
Our private funding goal is $15 million. To date, we raised 27% of our private goal.

All we ask of the City of Winnipeg is for $5 million. We are open to discuss how the funding from the City could be provided through various phases over the construction period.

Your commitment to fund the Inuit Art Centre is critical in order for us to move forward. Your civic art gallery is the steward of the world's largest collection of contemporary Inuit Art. As such, we have a responsibility to provide a world class home for a world class collection.

Thank you for your time. We're happy to answer any questions.