

## **FNA 2024 Backgrounders FINAL**

### **Stephanie Anderson**

Witsuwit'en, Terrace  
Crabtree McLennan Emerging Artist

Stephanie Anderson, a member of the Likhsilyu “Small Frog” clan of the Witsuwit'en Nation, has ancestral ties to Kwin Begh Yikh, the “House beside the Fire”. Living on Tsimshian territory in Terrace, BC, she began her fine arts education in 2009 at the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, studying under master carver Ken McNeil. After returning to the school to teach from 2020 to 2023, she has continued her studio practice in Terrace, BC.

Her first totem pole,  *Holding Our Children Close* , was raised in 2021, inspired by the discovery of missing children at Kamloops Residential School. Stephanie also curated Northern Indigenous Perspectives at the Smithers Art Gallery and served on the Skeena Salmon Arts Society board. Through projects like the mural  *At the Heart* , she honours Indigenous culture and lost lives, contributing to public art and reconciliation in her community.

### **Kelly Cannell**

Musqueam, Vancouver

Kelly Cannell has been immersed in art from a young age, working alongside her mother, renowned artist, Susan Point. Starting at just 12, she learned the traditional and contemporary imagery of the Musqueam people, mastering the art of storytelling through her work. Kelly continuously explores and pushes the boundaries of Coast Salish and Musqueam art, blending traditional forms with non-traditional materials and scales.

Her unique pieces are highly sought after, featured in private, corporate, and public collections around the world, including across Metro Vancouver. Beyond her artistic achievements, Kelly is deeply committed to philanthropy, generously donating her time and artwork to support environmental and other causes. With a passion for environmental awareness and the connection between all life forms, she uses Coast Salish visual language to honour her ancestors' teachings and inspire future generations.

### **Andy Everson**

K'omoks, Courtenay

Andy Everson, member of the K'omoks First Nation with Kwakwaka'wakw and Tlingit ancestry, is deeply rooted in his culture, actively participating in traditional potlatch ceremonies as a hereditary chief, singer and dancer. Immersed in art from a young age,

Andy's artistic journey began with repainting Mungo Martin's totem poles, where he was introduced to formline design. His creation of chilkat-style blankets for traditional dance sparked a passion that led to a career spanning over 26 years.

A highly influential figure in Northwest Coast art, Andy skillfully blends ancestral styles with vibrant colors, pop culture, and contemporary themes, engaging new audiences and fostering cultural understanding. His art often serves as a voice for social movements like Idle No More and Every Child Matters. Known for his limited-edition prints and innovative use of media, Andy has also designed coins for the Royal Canadian Mint and explores fashion through Totem Design House, bridging tradition and modernity with profound impact.

### **James Hart, 7IDANsuu**

Haida, Haida Gwaii  
Award of Distinction

James Hart, a renowned Haida artist, carver, and Hereditary Chief from Haida Gwaii, was born into the Eagle Clan in 1952. His artistic journey began as an apprentice to the legendary Haida artist Bill Reid, where he honed his skills in carving, sculpture, and jewellery-making.

Rooted in Haida traditions, James' work explores themes of cultural heritage, spirituality, and the natural world. His monumental totem poles, masks, and sculptures are celebrated for their intricate designs and storytelling, blending traditional Haida art with contemporary perspectives.

Adept in carving, jewellery, and printmaking, James works with silver, gold, and bronze. He is best known for his totem poles, such as *The Three Watchmen* in Ottawa, housed in collections worldwide. Other significant works include *Frog Constellation* at Simon Fraser University, restoring an old Haida pole for the Smithsonian in New York, overseeing the construction of the Haida House at the Canadian Museum of History, the carved wall, *The Scream Too* which stands in the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, BC, and carving the *Reconciliation Pole: Honouring a Time Before, During, and After Canada's Indian Residential Schools*, raised at UBC in 2017.

Beyond his artistry, James is deeply committed to preserving Haida culture and environmental stewardship, making him a respected leader in both the artistic and Indigenous communities.

His achievements have been widely recognized, including receiving the Order of British Columbia in 2003, the Order of Canada in 2023, and honorary doctorates from Simon Fraser University and Emily Carr University of Art + Design. James' contributions have elevated Haida art on the global stage while playing a crucial role in revitalizing and preserving Haida culture for future generations.