

Maureen Gruben

Meet me at the floe edge

September 23 - November 11, 2023

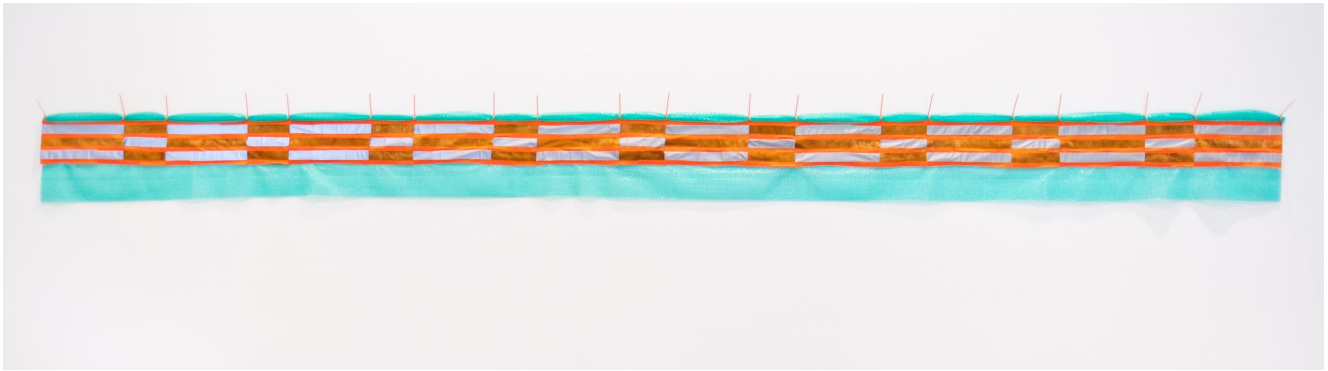
COOPER COLE is pleased to present, *Meet me at the floe edge*, a solo exhibition by Maureen Gruben. This exhibition marks the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery, and will take place in both the gallery's east and west exhibition spaces.

Meet me at the floe edge invites viewers to move towards a Western Arctic perspective. Centering her ongoing engagement with the found and reused, Gruben's latest body of sculptures includes lightly shimmering masks comprised of deconstructed polar bear rugs, suspended from mitt strings made by a community elder; an oversized clear vinyl ookpik stuffed with plastic toys unearthed from the landfill; a well-used girl's parka cover folded and stitched into abstraction; an aged foam bear head with a fibre optic mohawk. The sculptures presented in *Meet me at the floe edge* deftly and playfully embrace mass-produced materials while remaining acutely aware of the increasingly unstable relationship between human consumption and organic life.

In addition to this new body of sculptures, the artist will present a large scale video installation titled, *Nuna* (meaning "land" in Inuvialuk). This installation features the red broadcloth from Gruben's internationally recognized 2017 land-work, *Stitching My Landscape*, in which she used the material to join 111 ice fishing holes in the Beaufort Sea. In the spring of 2022, Gruben sewed the fabric into two 56' x 28' panels. Working closely with Tuktoyaktuk community youth, she brought these fabric panels back out to the sea ice and laid them across one another. Over the two-month period the works were introduced back into the natural landscape, a meltwater pool formed precisely where the fabric was placed, creating a spectacular collaborative effect of human action and the shifting season. The process was captured in drone video documentation, alongside a first-hand experience of the meltwater, filmed on the artist's phone. *Nuna* will be presented as a projection in the gallery with the fabric panels, which are marked by their long interactions with ice, snow, water, wind, and sun. This immersive installation prompts viewers to consider the profound impact of their actions on the delicate balance of our shared ecosystem.

Maureen Gruben (b. 1963, Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada) has a diverse multi-media practice which incorporates organic and industrial materials that are frequently found or salvaged. She was born and raised in Tuktoyaktuk where her parents were traditional Inuvialuk knowledge keepers and founders of E. Gruben's Transport. Gruben holds a BFA from the University of Victoria and a Certificate in Indigenous Political Development & Leadership, En'owkin Centre, Penticton.

Past exhibitions include WAG-Qaumajuq, Winnipeg; the Women's Gallery & Darkroom, New York; Cade Centre for Fine Arts, Baltimore; Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Contemporary Native Art Biennial, Montreal; Cooper Cole; public art installations for The Bentway Skate Trail & Canoe Landing, Toronto; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver; and the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. She was shortlisted for the 2023 Kenojuak Ashevak Memorial Award and long listed for the 2019 Aesthetica Art Prize and the 2021 Sobey Art Prize. Upcoming exhibitions include a solo show at Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2024); and group exhibitions at Museu De Arte De São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil (2023); Bodenrader, Chicago (2023); Rovaniemi Art Museum, Rovaniemi, Finland (2024); and Museum of Contemporary Native Art in Santa Fe, Santa Fe (2024). Her work is held in public and private collections including the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Gallery of Canada, Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Indigenous Art Centre, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. Gruben currently lives and works in Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada.



Maureen Gruben
Delta Trim, 2018
Bubble wrap, reflective tape, Velcro, zip ties, moosehide
19 x 261 in (48.3 x 662.9 cm)
M.Gruben0011



Maureen Gruben
Sila, 2022
Vintage medic vests, metallic ink
19 ft (234 in/594.4 cm)
M.Gruben0053





Maureen Gruben

Meet me at the floe edge, 2023

Mitt strings, polar bear hide, mother of pearl buttons, acrylic paint

32.5 x 11.5 in (82.6 x 29.2 cm)

50 x 9 in (127 x 22.9 cm)

M.Gruben0055







Maureen Gruben

Skipping Stones And Mud Pies, 2023

Clear vinyl, safety gloves, bubble wrap, leather, plastic toys, drum skin

26.5 x 15 x 13.5 in (67.3 x 38.1 x 34.3 cm)

M.Gruben0054





Maureen Gruben
What took you so long?, 2023
Taxidermy foam bear head, optical fibres
15 x 11.5 x 21 in (38.1 x 29.2 x 53.3 cm)
M.Gruben0057







Maureen Gruben
Annivik: Assemblage 2, 2021
Bullets (empty shells), sinew, metal ruler
24.25 x 10 in (61.6 x 25.4 cm)
M.Gruben0006





Maureen Gruben
Tapsi, 2021
Cable, sinew, ookpik
24 x 9.5 in (61 x 24.1 cm)
M.Gruben0007





Maureen Gruben
Atikluq, 2023
Parka cover, acrylic paint, thread
11 x 12.5 x 7.5 in (27.9 x 31.8 x 19.1 cm)
M.Gruben0052





Maureen Gruben

Polaroid, 2023

Packing foam, polar bear fur, suede, pearl pins

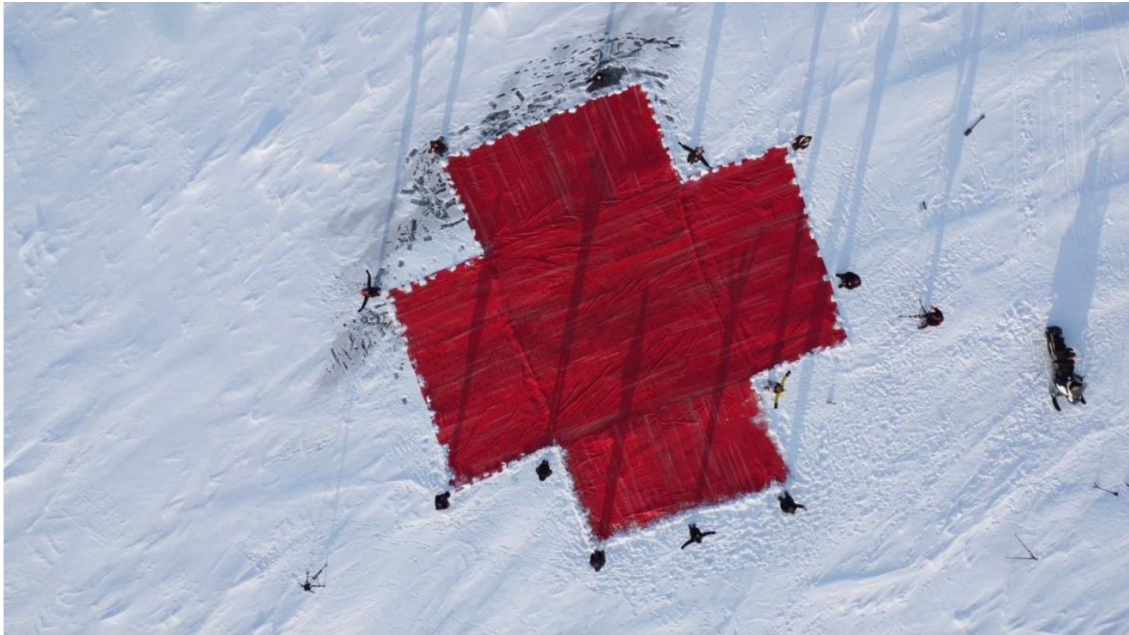
12.5 x 19.5 in (31.8 x 49.5 cm)

M.Gruben0056





Maureen Gruben
Mitqun, 2019
Inkjet print
50 x 33.3 in (127 x 84.6 cm)
M.Gruben0009
Framed



Maureen Gruben
Nuna, 2023
Edition of 3, 2 AP
Video
9:12 min
M.Gruben0050

Maureen Gruben

Born 1963, Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada

Lives and works Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada

Education

- 2012 BFA, University of Victoria, Victoria, CA
- 2001 Certificate in Indigenous Political Development & Leadership, En'owkin Centre, Penticton, CA
- 1990 Fine Arts Diploma, Kelowna Okanagan College of Fine Arts, Kelowna, CA

Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 *Nakataq (A marker to help in finding something again)*, The Women's Darkroom, Brooklyn, USA
- 2021 *Moving With Joy*, Public commission for The Bentway Skate Trail, Toronto, CA
Annivik, Public commission, The Bentway Studio at Canoe Landing, Toronto, CA
Maureen Gruben, Gallery Stratford, Stratford, CA
Consumed, Kootenay Gallery of Art, Castlegar, CA
- 2020 *TUKTUUYAQTUUQ (Caribou Crossing)*, University of Victoria Legacy Gallery, Victoria, CA
- 2019 *Moving with joy across the ice while my face turns brown from the sun*, Fazakas Gallery, Vancouver, CA
- 2018 *Sealskin; Gathered Kelp*, Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo, CA
QULLIQ: In Darkness, Light, Libby Leshgold Gallery, Vancouver, CA
- 2017 *UNGALAQ (When Stakes Come Loose)*, grunt gallery, Vancouver, CA

Group Exhibitions

- 2023 *Coming into Sight: 50th Anniversary Art Bank Acquisitions*, Âjagemô art space, Ottawa, CA
Anaanatta Unikkaarngit: Our Mother's Stories, Kenojuak Ashevak Memorial Award 2023 Shortlist, WAG-Qaumajuq, Winnipeg, CA
- 2022 *Worried Earth: Eco-Anxiety and Entangled Grief*, Gallery 1C03, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, CA
Held open, curated by Marie-Charlotte Carrier, Art Toronto, Toronto, CA
Separate/Together, Cooper Cole, Toronto, CA
Arctic Highways, Organized by Mötesplats Granö and TYP Kulturkapital, Multiple locations in Canada, Norway, Sweden, United States

- Parallax Effect*, Cade Centre for Fine Arts, Baltimore, USA
Still Matter, Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA
Land Back, Biennale d'art contemporain autochtone (BACA) | Contemporary Native Art Biennial, Montreal, CA
2021 *Alakkaajut*, Nordic Lab at SAW Gallery, Ottawa, CA
Art and Environmental Struggle, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, USA
INUA, Qaumajuq, Winnipeg, CA
2020 *Helloland! Art, War, and the Wireless Imagination*, The Rooms, St. John's, CA
Where do we go from here?, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, CA
Extra Tough: Women of the North, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, CA
Dynamic Connections: Threads of Living Memory, Glenbow, Calgary, CA
TIME OF THINGS / The Continuum of Indigenous Customary Practice into Contemporary Art, Comox Valley Art Gallery, Comox, CA
2019 *Abadakone / Continuous Fire / Feu Continuel*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, CA
Subsist, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, CA
Transits & Returns, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, CA
The Non-Human Animal, Uppsala Art Museum, Uppsala, Sweden
Biennale du Lin: Détours et Dérives, Montreal, CA
Yəhaw' Exhibition, King Street Station, Seattle, USA
A Sense of Site, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS
Aiviq and Nanuq: Sea Horse and Sea Bear of the Arctic Ice, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, USA
2018 *Luminocity 2018*, Kamploops Art Gallery, Kamploops, CA
MAKESHIFT Contemporary Textiles Festival, Screening presented in partnership with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, CA
THE TIME OF THINGS: The Continuum of Indigenous Customary Practices into Contemporary Art, University of Victoria Legacy Art Galleries, Victoria, CA
150 Acts: Art, Activism, Impact, Art Gallery of Guelph, Guelph, CA

Bibliography

- 2021 Jacqueline Millner, Catriona Moore. *Contemporary Art and Feminism*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. Pp. 176-17.
2020 *Maureen Gruben: QULLIQ*, ECU Press and Libby Leshgold Gallery

Select Press

- 2023 IAQ, “5 Perspectives on Maureen Gruben’s Connection to Place”, Inuit Art, June 19
- 2022 Meghan Brackenbury, “Interview: Maureen Gruben” Up Here Magazine, September/October (*Forthcoming*)
Lera Kotsyuba, “Portfolio: Maureen Gruben,” Studio Magazine, Vol. 17 No. 2 (*Forthcoming*)
“Artist Project: Moving with joy across the ice while my face turns brown from the sun,” Refract: an Open Access Visual Studies Journal, Vol. 5, Issue 1: “Sensing Place” (*Forthcoming*)
Genesee Keevil, “Arctic Highways” Galleries West, October 14
Joanne Stassen, *Inuvialuit artist connects Toronto's Gardiner Expressway with Arctic landscape*, CBC News, Feb 13
- 2021 Maureen Gruben, Kyra Kordoski, “Slow enough to watch the ptarmigan eating willow buds on tundra” C Magazine, C150, Autumn
Meghan Brackenbury, ‘Inuvialuk artist Maureen Gruben longlisted for Sobey Art Award’ Cabin Radio, May 17
“4 Circumpolar Indigenous Artists Longlisted for Sobey Art Award” Inuit Art Quarterly, May 05
“CBC Arts Gallery Tour, Get an inside look at 3 works from INUA at Qaumajuq the world’s largest collection of Inuit art” CBC, Apr 09
Ian Austen, “Winnipeg’s New Showcase and Meeting Place for Inuit Art and Artists” New York Times, Mar 26
Steve Lambert, “Qaumajuq opens doors in Winnipeg, brings Northern art to the south in a new way” The Canadian Press, March
Élyse Boivin, Joëlle Dubé, “Entre menace, perte et existence: la glace à l’ère des changements climatiques” ESPACE art actuel, Issue 128, Printemps–Été, p. 46–51
Laureline Simon Krichewsky, “Ice Works by Maureen Gruben” Tero Magazine, February
Heather Igloriorte, “Preview: INUA at Qaumajuq” Canadian Art, Winter
- 2020 Noor Bhangu, “Nuit Blanche Toronto goes virtual to change how people see art and public space” The Conversation, Oct 7
Sonya Kelliher-Combs and Maureen Gruben “Shorelines” Inuit Art Quarterly, Issue 33.3:
Jamie Isaac, Maureen Gruben, “Breathing Hole” Inuit Art Quarterly, Issue 33.2: Summer
Madalen Claire Benson, “Stitching the Wound: Land-based Gestures of Healing and Resistance in the Work of Postcommodity and Maureen Gruben Environment” *Space, Place*, University of Minnesota Press, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring), pp. 1-24,
Brian Kowikchuk, “Defying Boundaries” Tusaayaksat, Spring

- Helen Holmes, “Beluga Whale Intestines, Bodybuilders and Outsider Offerings at Independent Art Fair” *Observer*, Mar 6
- 2019 Frances Koncan, “Connection between cultures” *Winnipeg Free Press*, Nov 29
Christine Lalonde, “Interview on Àbadakone” *On The Arctic*, Nov 28,
Tarah Hogue, “Maureen Gruben ❁ Delta Trim” *Garland Magazine*, Nov 28
Maya Wilson-Sanchez, “‘Àbadakone’ Creates Community” *Canadian Art*,
Nov 21
Napatsi Folger, “From an Artist’s Perspective: An Interview with Maureen Gruben” *Inuit Art Quarterly*, Nov 5
Ray Cronin, “Sense Of Site” *Border Crossings*, September
Darcie Bernhardt, “Maureen Gruben, Libby Leshgold Gallery, Vancouver”
Canadian Art, Spring
- 2018 Clint Burnham, Maureen Gruben. “QULLIQ: In Darkness, Light”
ESPACE art actuel, Issue 120, *Psychotrope: art sous l’influence*
Automne, p. 86–87
Britt Gallpen, “Surface Tensions: Maureen Gruben, Sonya Kelliher-Combs
and Joar Nango” *Inuit Art Quarterly*, Summer, Cover
Kevin Griffin, “ART SEEN: Maureen Gruben's materiality ranges from
polar bear bones to bubble wrap” *Vancouver Sun*, Mar 6
“What We Want to See in 2018” *Canadian Art*, Jan 4
- 2017 Maureen Gruben, “I Am” *C Magazine*, Issue 136, *Site/ation*, Winter
Eugenia Kisin, “Scales of Repair: Design Ontologies in Maureen Gruben’s
UNGALAQ (When Stakes Come Loose)” Paper delivered at New York
University *The Gallatin Climate Change Initiative: A Conference*, Sep 15
Erin Donnelly, “An Arctic Installation Marks the End of An Era” *Azure*, Aug 17
Betty Ann Jordan, “Maureen Gruben draws attention to a rapidly
changing Arctic with Stitching My Landscape” *Canadian Geographic*, Mar 15

Grants and Awards

- 2021 Sobey Art Prize, Longlist
- 2020 Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and
Métis Peoples, Canada Council for The Arts
- 2019 Individual Arts Award for Visual Artists, BC Arts Council
Aesthetica Art Prize, Long-list
- 2011 Elizabeth Valentine Prangnell Scholarship Award, University of Victoria
- 1999 Overall Achievement Award, En’owkin Centre
- 1998 Eliza Jane Maracle Award, En’owkin Centre

Collections

Art Gallery of Ontario



Global Affairs Canada

Indigenous Art Collection, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

McMichael Canadian Art Collection

Microsoft Art Collection

National Gallery of Canada

Royal Bank of Canada Art Collection

University of Victoria Legacy Art Gallery

Vancouver Art Gallery