

Heather Igloliorte
(transcript)

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[pause]

00:30 Speaker 1: We now have the lovely Heather Igloliorte who will be speaking. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History at Concordia University where she holds a New Scholar Research Chair in Indigenous Art History and Community Engagement. Heather's research, teaching, and curatorial practices center on native north American visual performance and new media art, the global exhibition of indigenous arts and culture, and issues of colonization, sovereignty and the three Rs, resistance, resilience, and resurgence. I'm really happy to welcome you here today, Heather, and looking... She's always a good speaker. [chuckle] So, I'm looking forward to it. Again.

[applause]

01:20 Heather Igloliorte: Another no-pressure introduction. [laughter] Ulaakut, good morning everyone. I won't repeat all the same thanks as acknowledgements as our colleagues have already done. I think they've done a beautiful job. I wasn't sure if I missed the recognition of Ayumi as our organizer and I just wanted to give her a shout out for doing a wonderful job this weekend.

[applause]

01:45 HI: My name is Heather Igloliorte. I am Inuit from Nunatsiavut, which is the Inuit region of Labrador, it's in the Eastern Arctic. My father is an Inuk and my mother is a Newfoundlander, and I teach at Concordia University now. Today, I wanna talk about the future of Inuit art. In January of 2016 this year, I was invited to participate on a discussion panel called, 'Finding New Markets and Opportunities for Northern Artists' during a session called 'Economic Development in the North' at the Northern Lights Trade Show. Now I assume that most of you don't know what the Northern Lights Trade Show is. It's a very strange event. It is largely... It's a very, very high registration cost, several... It's probably \$700 or \$800 for regular delegates. It is an opportunity for people that are in resource development in the Arctic to get together with energy companies and so on, and they do this high-level conference. But they have this sort of siloed arts conference that happens at the same time culminating in an arts and crafts fair that happens on the last day of this weekend in Ottawa that's every other January. So it happened in 2016, it'll happen again in 2018.

02:55 HI: And it's kind of a strange event that I never want to miss, because Inuit artists from all across the Arctic come down for this event. And so, it's a great opportunity to meet and network and see and share with a lot of people that you want to be around. They have... There's always a huge musical showcase. They do a fashion show. They do spend, invest tens of thousands of dollars in this artistic component. But usually, there's this massive conference happening at the Congress Center in Ottawa. What's the big one that looks like it's from outer space? It's very futuristic. Does

anybody know? Anyway, it's on the [03:28] , that big conference center. And then they have this two rooms where there's a little side conference for people who are working in the arts. And so this past year was the first time that they ever invited some arts people, myself and two colleagues to be in the big conference. So we were invited to the Economic Development at the North Panel.

03:46 HI: I say that like it's a big deal, but actually I was invited to give a six-minute paper, [chuckle] so I was one-third of a 20-minute presentation with two other 20-minute presentations with three people each. So the other panellists were... So in this Economic Development panel, there were... One of the other sessions, all about Parks Canada and Ecotourism. And then there was an arts one that was myself, and Stefan St-Laurent from Ottawa who's a curator, who just did this great show in collaboration with the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association, NACA. And then the last panel was marketing and communications. So it was a strange run in. So in this context to an audience of Inuit artists, but also Arctic movers and shakers, investors and so on, I gave a six-minute presentation. I was the only Inuk on the panel, so I gave an eight-minute presentation. [chuckle] I took it... I knew there was two more minutes. And so, [chuckle] what I wanna do is share with you this six minutes-ish that I gave to them, and then I wanna talk about what has happened since that panel. So keep in mind this is for that audience and not necessarily for this audience.

04:57 HI: We've been invited to speak today about how Inuit art and craft, and how Inuit artists and crafts people have been and may continue to participate in the contemporary art scene and in the art market, which exists in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world. It is undeniable that the arts have played an important role in the four Inuit regions of Canada, while historically some areas have benefited from the arts industry more than others, all of our communities today face similar challenges. Access to high-quality materials, supplies and equipment, the high cost of shipping to and from the north, the need for safety training in equipment, the desire for professional development in education, and the discovery of new markets in a challenging economic climate. I am most personally familiar with the art histories and industries of Nunatsiavut and Nunavut, so I'm gonna speak today primarily from that perspective. I hope I do not overgeneralize in my comments about the arts in Inuit Nunangat, which is all of the four regions in Canada.

06:00 HI: I think that the field of Inuit art and the people supporting the arts industry are already doing many things right. Again, this was for them. [chuckle] And doing the best possible work under a variety of unique circumstances. The Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association for example, NACA, that I just mentioned, has been innovative in developing new training and workshop opportunities for Nunavummiut. Not only in artistic practice, but also in very practical areas, like teaching sewing machine repair and having sewing machine repairment comfort communities, which is a hugely, vastly important service that they provide. They've also done things like develop guidelines on how to price artwork, so artists know how not to undervalue their work. NACA's advocacy, promotion and education activities, which address some of the problems of the North from the North make a valuable contribution to both the economy, as well as to the wellbeing of the artist that they support. Avataq's art secretariat that's in Nunavik, which is Quebec, and officers have been implementing many of their own programs and supports for Nunavik's many talented artists in Nunatsiavut, that's Labrador, we are beginning to develop our very tailored strategies for Labrador Inuit cultural and economic development. Even so, I think there was one major area, in which we could all do better.

07:13 HI: Now, I am by no means an expert in art marketing, that's the title of the panel, but I am

an art historian at a curator of contemporary and historical Canadian aboriginal art and I have interviewed and researched the work of many Northern artists, in particular. And one question that has always vexed me is, "Why don't more contemporary Inuit artists and craftspeople access the same kinds of opportunities that are available to all Canadian artists?" There are so many grants, scholarships, awards, artist residencies, open calls for artwork submissions, many of these things are specifically for indigenous Canadians. First Nations and Metis artists living in Southern Canada regularly access these opportunities, and yet I believe if we had the statistics from our funding bodies, we would find that Inuit are just not applying for these opportunities regularly. Why is this?

08:05 HI: In 2011, while I was undertaking my doctoral research at home in Nunatsiavut, I asked every one of the 60 or so artists and craftspeople I interviewed if they had ever applied for a grant, a scholarship, a residency, etcetera. Only two of more than 60 artists had said yes. Of all those who said no, when asked why not, their responses were I think very revealing. One, they didn't wanna take an opportunity away from someone who needed it more. [laughter] It's like touching and also ridiculous [laughter] like, who needs it more than people who live in the Arctic? I was interviewing artists that broke their dremel and then didn't carve for six months. They don't wanna take money away from people who really need it. Two, they believed that grants were like charity or handouts and they wanted to be self-sufficient. Three, they didn't really know what purpose grants served or how they would go about applying for one.

09:02 HI: Now since 2011, several regions and territories have created more of these opportunities and hired Inuit arts officers who are making a difference in this area and encouraging and assisting more Inuit to apply for these opportunities. We could certainly use a person like Theresie Tungilik, Beatrice Deer, Jesse Tungilik, or Rowena House in Nunatisavut just for this purpose. I think even with these great strides, we still have many artists across the north who aren't aware aware of all the opportunities available to them and what grants are about. Like Beatrice said in her presentation, again, different context. [chuckle] More bilingual and trilingual outreach is needed to give artists specific skills and understanding of what grants are. The first thing the artist needs to know is that the grants are not primarily about financial need, it is not a social assistance program. It is about recognizing good ideas, talent, and hard work, and recognizing the important contributions that artists make to our community, society, and economy.

09:58 HI: There are grants for emerging artists, so they can get the boost they need to become better known, by participating in exhibitions and training programs. There are grants for established artists as well, which can provide Inuit artists with money for living expenses, so they don't have to worry about selling things for a little while and they could just focus on their work. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Inuit arts industry, it's very much a, they call it like, 'gas money' for a lot of artists, is that they are constantly having to produce and sell their work. It's a cycle. So I'm speaking to them.

10:28 HI: There are grants for individuals and groups alike, there are grants for travel, there are grants to help you learn new skills, and to exchange with other groups. There are many, many kinds of grants, I sound a little bit like Dr. Seuss here, there are grants for this, there are grants for that, there are grants that are high, there are grants that are low. [laughter] I think we just need to do a better job of connecting individuals with opportunities and assistance, as well as helping artists dream up projects so they'll navigate the sometimes complicated application process. I didn't wanna scare them away. We'll write your grants, actually, Stefan St-Laurent afterwards was like, "I'll write your grants." [laughter] He's great.

11:03 HI: We could also do more to get more contemporary Inuit art into Canada's vast network of artist-run centers, museums, public galleries, production centers, residency programs, funders and foundations. And to develop innovative new partnerships and collaborations with Southern Canadian circumpolar and global institutions. Major international cultural events like the Arctic adaptation show at the Canadian pavilion of the Venice Architectural Biennale and Sakahan's Indigenous Art Quinquennial at the National Gallery of Canada attest to the wide scope of interest in Inuit art and knowledge in recent years. And these are opportunities that we can build on. We can build more North-South connections, but we can also look to other circumpolar regions and build North to North connections. And finally, if we want to revitalize our arts and secure a diversified prosperous and culturally sovereign future, we need to continue to foster and support Inuit leadership in the arts. Not just in the significant ways that artists and craft people already lead the industry, but also in the writing and curating of Inuit art.

12:10 HI: It is thrilling to see so many Inuit here involved in our regional and territorial government organizations that support the arts, and to see so many Inuit arts officers now in the field. [12:21] [redacted] it's a performing arts group, and other organizations are also significantly Inuit led, and provide valuable educational opportunities for artists. Many Inuit also participate in critical positions on board of directors and on advisories, but there are currently no full-time employees in our national arts or institutions. That's a little bit changed right now. Very few Inuit are art historians, it's really just me. [laughter] Academics, curators, art dealers, art critics, reviewers, museum professionals, gallery directors, archivists, art researchers, museum art educators, etcetera. Right now, Heather Campbell is an Inuk. She is an interim curatorial assistant at the National Gallery in Canada.

13:04 HI: When I started in the field, in 2005 when I was a graduate student, there was another Inuit curator named Juliva [13:08] [redacted] Patsy, he very quickly kind of disappeared from the field. Some people are like, "I remember him." [chuckle] He was great. Heather Campbell and Barry Pottle both worked at the aboriginal art sector in the late '90s. The Kotik Sisters both had a couple of arts organizations positions. Coosy Curly Curtly [13:30] [redacted] works on the Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage SSHRC Grant. That's all the people I can count on one hand who are currently in leadership positions in the arts, and none of them are really at the top level of the tiers. These are just people who are at a position where they are able to facilitate better opportunities for other artists. The problem is that many of these positions require post-secondary university degrees, college program training or equivalence, and of course there are no universities in the Arctic. And I feel like I and my academic colleagues are not doing a good enough job of letting Inuit youth know that they can have a successful secure fulfilling career in the arts, just as they can in medicine, education, law, and the fields that Inuit university students tend to go into. We still only have a 25% high school graduation rate, so when you meet an Inuit university student, they are in a very small percentile of people that go on to university.

14:26 HI: I can assure you the time is now for Inuit success in the arts. University students are desperately needed. Trained professionals, Inuit arts professionals in the arts would fill a critical gap in our workforce and knowledge base. They could get paid to help other Inuit artists and communities that ensure our own self-determined cultural continuity. I get emails all the time. This is where it starts to get ranty. I get emails all the time [laughter] asking me if I could send them some Inuit students to do this museum assistance program, or a curatorial residency, or "We have this great program", or "We have this amazing collection of Inuit art and no one to do anything with

it." I hear that all the time. I'm sure that many of you in Institutions have collections of Inuit art and you don't know what to do with it. [chuckle] I mean I get these emails all the time and people are saying, "Can you send me a student" and the truth is that I can't, 'cause I don't have any Inuit students and I don't know of any Inuit students across the country, really.

15:19 HI: There's certainly no PhD students right now that I have ever met through any of my network of peers, no MA students and a handful of BFA students. And the problem is that because it is such a small field a lot of times we'll attract a student into the field and then they'll get scared away. My former mentor Marybelle Mitchell who recently passed away, she would say to me things like, "You're the future Inuit art," and I'd say, "I think I am." [laughter] Most people would be like, "Go on!" [15:48] [redacted] [laughter] And so, it's a lot of pressure to say "Everyone else in the field is [15:54] [redacted] Qallunaat and you are the Inuit person who is going to change this for all of us." That's a lot of pressure to put on someone small from a little town. [chuckle]

16:08 HI: So I ended my talk with an over dramatic plea, [chuckle] "If you know any young people or anyone who wants to retrain, who are interested in arts and culture and planning on attending a university or who want to work in a museum, who want to find another way to work in the arts, we can help them. Just please tell them to look me up. They can study Inuit art history in Canada. They can get positions that allow them to rise up into the field of museum studies without having to get a post-secondary education and they can find meaningful exciting employment in the arts, not as artists alone but in many other ways. I can't tell you how thrilled I would be to hear from our prospective students and how greatly the field needs to keep growing."

16:53 HI: So, that's what I said, and I was sugar-coating it a little bit. [chuckle] The reality of the situation is that there is a really great disparity between the number of Inuit who work in the arts as artists and those who work in the arts in leadership positions. We actually have the highest demographic population of artists in all of Canada. There are some communities where one in four people makes their living off of art production. That is a crazy stats to have and it's not that we are not working with and very happy to be working with Qallunaat, it's just that we are not in a position to really tell our own stories, because the field is so unbalanced. It's been 60 years now of non-native people being the authors of the books, the creators of the exhibitions, the circulation of knowledge and power and funding, the dealers, the gallerists, the everything. And so, the system really needs to be adjusted in order for it to be an Inuit future.

17:48 HI: Immediately after my presentation I was approached by people who wanted to support the project. I found a lot of people are very keen to do so. They gave me cards, I gave them my card. [chuckle] But then I didn't really think too much about it until about six weeks later when I was invited to the Winnipeg Art Gallery and University of Winnipeg to jointly talk about curating Inuit art in the 21st century, but also really I think I was brought in there to talk about the creation of their new National Inuit Art Center. They have the world's largest Inuit art collection, and they just got an announcement like two days ago that they have just gotten the boost from the Federal government and they're funding their, now 75% over there on their way to having secured the new Inuit Art Center. It's gonna be beautiful, it won't be a new building, it'll be... Or it'll be a new building but it's a part of the WAG.

18:42 HI: So while I was there at that session... So I ended my grant and that was it. And while I was at the WAG, we got to talking and the director and the head of exhibitions were expressing how keen they were to hire an Inuit curator in the position. And they said, "So which of your colleagues

do you think would be really great? We're gonna do a call." And I was like, "Don't do a call, there's no one. If you do a call then you're gonna end up hiring another Qallunaat person and then it'll perpetuate the field, and we're just not in a position yet to do that, you really need to think about how you're gonna find a person and cultivate someone into this career."

19:17 HI: And so I think that they have been really supportive of the idea of trying to help to cultivate someone into this pathway instead of doing an open call and having a failed search, or whatever else would happen if they're looking for someone with what a... You know what museum calls in Canada is like, "a PhD, who's bilingual and like... [chuckle] And not bilingual, Inuktitut-English, but bilingual French-English. And so there's always these challenges in order to find these people, and I said, "They don't exist." And so, I think that they have been really wonderfully supportive in trying to now think about new ways that we could do this.

19:52 HI: I feel a little bit sad now that I came so late to the revelation that I could also be a part of generating more students to come into this field. For a long time, I was just kind of the only student and I had all these other mentors, and I didn't really see myself as the mentor, as that kind of person. And you sort of passively hope that you're going to attract indigenous students, and I have been attracting indigenous students, but not specifically Inuit students. And I think that kind of late revelation is probably also indicative of the way that indigenous faculty are over-burdened at their institutions. Like if you're an indigenous faculty member and you're on 20 committees, raise your hand, right? And so I think that that's a part of it, is like the constant labor of academia when you are an indigenous person.

20:34 HI: But from this time we've sort of grown in this conversation, this is very much the beginning of what we're trying to do now is to think about new ways that we can address the challenges in the field and invite more Inuit into our circles. And so, I have recently been doing some calling in of my non-native and indigenous colleagues to see what else we could really do to support mentorship and networks of people into the fields, and I'm very happy to say that we've and a lot of really positive feedback. We've have friends at organizations like The Inuit Art Foundation and others that don't have any Inuit staff right now. Because if you wanna have an Inuit editor, that person needs to have writing skills and editorial skills and understand the magazine industry. And so, we're just right now at the beginning of developing a project for the future, where Inuit will be able to get into these positions by being trained by people who are like-minded and supportive and are trying to bring them in. Zach Kunuk, the great filmmaker, has said, "The only way for us to be on par is to tell our own stories in our own language." And I hope that it's not another 60 years before we are in a position to do that, I think Inuit future is telling our own stories. Thank you. [21:48] .

[applause]

21:58 S1: You need to give me 10 seconds before I can turn on the mic. Thank you, that was wonderful, and I don't think you should feel bad about not being a good enough recruiter or mentor, because you're doing a lot, and I do think we are all trying to do everything we can be, and so it's gonna happen, so don't beat yourself up over it.

22:24 HI: I'm not. That was like a moment. [laughter] But it's also something that we could all do a little bit better. I think that sometimes we don't recognize that there is an extra set of challenges that Inuit students have coming from the North from really small communities, having never really been

around cities or near cities. And so, I think when you have Inuit students you need to really like... They won't approach you necessarily, but you need to bring them in.

22:53 S1: Are there any questions? If you could please introduce yourself for the record before you ask your question.

23:03 HI: Julie's like, "Never mind, I don't have a question."

[laughter]

23:07 Julie Nagam: Hi, I'm Julie.

23:08 S?: Nagam.

23:09 JN: Nagam, yes. So, I was thinking about... I've definitely participated and have thought lots about what you're thinking. And as an indigenous faculty member and somebody who's situated in Manitoba, those ideas of thinking about why such a high ratio of artists, but then no ratio of cultural workers or staff or any of that thing, so I was thinking about it more so, and maybe it's... I wanna ask you the question, do you think it's more palatable for people to wanna be artists, because they don't actually have to leave?

23:52 HI: Yeah, yeah. I was a little bit conscious at the time, but I think that this is one of the big things is that the kind of opportunities that people need, they need to be Northern focused, they need to be tailored to people's lives. 'Cause if you are... If you're taking care of your parents and your younger siblings all in the same house, you can't go away on a residency for two months at a time. Or if you have a baby that you need to be nursing, you have to travel with that child. If you don't wanna live in a big city, if you like living on the land, how do you develop a career without having those kind of opportunities, or if you can't go to school for long periods of time? And so, I think that one of the things we're... I'm working on another grant, basically. And so, one of the things that we're talking about is developing, not just a mentorship program but also a network of peers, of Inuit across the Arctic who, if we could get them together, then they could become a network of support for each other, then when they go back to their communities, they can do things like be freelance writers, and develop, and organize in their own communities, and still have each other to draw on. So, we need mentors, but we also need a lot of peer-to-peer support.

24:56 HI: In Nunatsiavut, last year we were getting ready for a big community exhibition that I organized, and the Nunatsiavut Government was doing some workshops and training opportunities for artists leading up to the event. They brought some artists to a jewellery studio in Nunavut, which was fabulous. And they did one on carving with hand tools that people wouldn't have to be dependent on electricity, [chuckle] on their power tools. But the last one that they did was a photography workshop. We have five Northern coastal communities and then two communities that are a little bit more Southern. And they brought seven photographers into Goose Bay and met up with a catalogue photographer, and he taught them how to photograph artworks. And so, they were all artists that were photographers who were interested, had their own cameras, didn't necessarily have tripods, and we bought them a tripod, a basic lighting kit, and one-sixth of a roll of backdrop paper. And so, it's great for us for the exhibition, because they learned how to photograph objects, and then we didn't have to travel with the photographer to every community and document the works, but they also learned a skill and got materials.

26:02 HI: All of those photographers are now working regularly, freelance in their communities. It's great for everyone, it builds capacity. We have someone who can, you can call and say, "Hey. I heard there's an event happening today, can you go down and take pictures and we'll send you 250 bucks?" And they'll do it in moment or if you need a portrait of an artist, you don't need to fly someone in. So that's the kinda thing that I really wanna look at that kinda model too, like what can we do for people who don't wanna leave and who are happy to be home in the North? And then, what do we do to support people who do want to leave, but have maybe never lived in Toronto, or Montreal, or whatever. I think we need to be so flexible. Thank you.

26:37 Michael: Thank you, Heather. I'm Michael. Hi. I'm wondering, I didn't hear you mention West Baffin Co-operatives at all in your talk. And I'm just wondering, how they're involved now in networking towards what you're talking about, towards getting people excited of arts administration, to work with artists, and just generally what the role they play now given their historic role.

27:03 HI: The co-operatives are hugely important. They have supported groups of artists on salaries and given them opportunities for a living wage where they can show up somewhere 8:00 AM and draw all day, and then go home, and they've got sustenance based on that production. I know a lot of the co-operatives do a lot of work in terms of training. They all have Inuit boards of directors, and they do a lot of work in terms of training people to become master printers and so on. I think that they are a very specific part of the market. And honestly, I'm like, I know that co-operatives have their own set of challenges, but I'm not that worried about the co-operative, they have a way that works. And I think that, artists that want to be in the co-operative stream can get into it and it works for them. And I'm not trying to meddle in the commercial market.

27:45 HI: What I want us for Inuit artist to have options, so that they can... If they don't want to go the co-operative route, they have another avenue that they can go down. And I think it's just a matter of information, like they don't know that they can apply for a grant that would pay their living allowance for six months, so that they could make work. It was pretty recently, 20 years or so that a lot of Inuit artists would never have seen all of their work in one room. Like, if you're a sculptor, you would make a piece, send it down, make a piece, send it down, and they would have a retrospect to show of your work not bring you in. [chuckle] Or they would bring you in and you'd say, "I've never looked at all my pieces in a room before." Like you read back through all the Inuit art quarterly and you see artists say that all the time that they've never seen all their pieces together. And it's like, how do you develop critically as an artist and see yourself within the trajectory of your work if you don't get to be in a room with all your pieces?

28:35 HI: So for me it's like the co-operatives are doing excellent job and they're doing what they do, and they play a very important role in the art market and then the arts industry. But for what I would like to see is more ways for Inuit artists to be able to choose. It's just really about having opportunities.

28:54 Michael: I guess, just to... I was asking about the potential or the critique of the co-operatives just in terms of working with these new systems like in a more complimentary way that goes to a choice one or the other.

29:07 HI: What do you mean?

29:10 Michael: Can you do the critique then, the critique of the co-ops, if you're setting it up as a choice between working non-commercially, or if it is commercial through your co-ops? Do you follow my query?

29:23 HI: I think I know what you're saying. I think that you want me to give you a critique of the co-ops.

[laughter]

29:28 Michael: Maybe. But I really wanna hear more of the prospects of conversions, I think than... Or if...

29:38 HI: Or like how the co-op could change.

29:39 Michael: Well, yeah, how they can become a more of complementary system as opposed to a more just purely market system?

29:46 HI: The co-op system is, if you understand the history of how they have developed and what they have to do in order to keep themselves sustaining, especially in after 2000... I was thinking about the Cape Dorset at the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative of Cape Dorset, they had... If you look at their print releases every year, leading up to 2008 before the market crashed, the 2008 show was full of just amazing, critical, exciting dynamic work. There was a piece that was an homage to the Beatles. There was a huge piece about Inuit women tattooing. It was really, really exciting. And then after the crash, they had to go back to doing snowy owls, polar bears, like all the sort of myths and legend stuff that Jordan was talking about earlier. They had to go back to doing that, because their market really took a hit and so people weren't buying critical, contemporary Inuit art anymore. They were just buying the sort of typical Inuit art.

30:38 HI: And my concern for the future is only that the market for that work is retiring. They're divesting their collections. They're donating them to museums. Like this older generation, the first collectors, who were so important to the field. Those people are not gonna be around forever and so, for me, it's like the cooperatives... I think the cooperatives need a new and dynamic Inuit art form. They need Inuit photography, which is going to be huge. They need people to expand. We've seen it with drawing. There was a long time that drawings never left the cooperative, because it was so... I could lecture about this all day. [laughter] I'm trying to condense my thoughts.

31:18 HI: But basically, cooperatives have become places now where you can be a graphic artist and just draw and not necessarily do the print making thing. But they specialize in one kind of a thing, and they have to do that, because they are in part of a system that is paying for people's livelihoods and careers. So I think that... I know, it's hard to say and I'm not an expert on co-ops, and I don't really want to delve into that really commercial side of the market, because it's... I think they do something very specific and have a very specific contribution. But it's not always gonna be on the cutting edge because they're so market-reliant. So, I want artists to be able to do other stuff. Why do we always think about sculpture and prints when we think Inuit art and drawings? Why is there more Inuit installation artists and Inuit sound artists? It's because everyone is dependent on this market. And so, until we do more of what our brothers and sisters and First Nations of Metis communities do, and access grants and do that kind of stuff, you can only be so experimental when

you're depending on it for food.

32:23 S1: I think we need to move on.

32:23 HI: I hope that answers your question? I'm skirting it. [laughter]

32:29 S1: Okay, one last question and then we will have our next speaker. We want your first and last names.

[laughter]

32:41 Speaker 5: Hi, [32:41] [redacted] But is the grant system the alternative? Because I just think of an artist that I know who's very good, I ran into him at a gallery and he said, "Oh... ", I said, "How are you doing?". He said, "Oh, I was in depression for five years," and I said, "Why?" And he said, "Well, I kept applying for grants... " This is an amazing artist and unfortunately he has revised himself and [33:08] [redacted] he's good. He said, "Every time I got turned down from the grant for five years, and it was through the Canada Council indigenous program, with indigenous juries. So, is the grant system another reflection of our colonization? Is there another way?"

33:28 S5: And I think about how Doreen Jensen, who was one of my mentors, and Doreen used to talk about how... She was very much about the artists bringing their work into the marketplace. She was unabashed about it, she certainly was, because she saw people like Robert Davidson doing... He started off doing a print and selling it for \$2 and she's saying, "Well, no, no, no, you don't have to do that, there's another way." But Doreen was always talking about, "How can we take our traditional institutions of art practice and put them into a contemporary setting?" So what would that look like, so it would be different in different communities.

34:12 S5: But when I made a film once about artists and I did some research about it and I found out that artists sometimes would be part of secret societies and if someone would ask them to do something then that artist wouldn't have to worry about eating or gathering food, doing the work, they would have to do the other time, because they're doing their art. So, the closest that comes to me in this western idea is sort of like a guaranteed annual income. So, then you got basically artists being able to professionalize and experiment, but not having to worry about the vagaries if you like, or whatever it is, of grants and kind of unequal-ness and certainly we have to accept reality that we are still products of this colonized trauma and we're not always being good to one another. Anyways, that's just my statement.

35:06 HI: No, thank you, and I totally agree. I mean, there is no perfect system for indigenous arts funding, 'cause it shouldn't be funding basis, but people need to eat, right? So, it's like, right now we really just have this kind of isolated, unidirectional art market and we're trying to do different things. I've got two thoughts. One of the things that maybe you've heard of this that we started to do before the Nunatsiavut Community Exhibition is that we've done a couple of years of consultations. And one of the major things that people said was that they had to pay a lot of money to get seal skin and fur and a lot of times, because it was so isolated and it would cost \$100 to have something shipped into the Arctic, a package of seal skin or whatever, that the companies that would send it would sell their crappy quality stuff, because you're not gonna send it back for returns. So you get seal skin and you could maybe get one pair of mitts out of it, and so you pay too much money, but you don't have good quality.

36:01 HI: So one of the things that we've been working with the Nunatsiavut government to do is to do kind of a pooling of resources. So we contacted all these suppliers, [36:10] [REDACTED] Work Warriors that some of you may know and Terry's Tents in Labrador, a couple of other places and we said, "If it's not 50 people buying one or two sales kits each, but one organization buying a 100 sales kits, will you give us 30% off, or will you give us free shipping? Well, you send it to Goods pay, then we'll send it up the coast." And so that's one of the things that we did is, we started working on... We did it for the community show, we spent over \$40,000 of supplies that we gave out for free and it was no obligation that you actually had to put something in the show, we just gave it away. And from that, we've built relationships with these suppliers and we're hoping that this will continue to make it more cost effective and more cost sharing for artists who have to work under these conditions. So that's one thing, it's not a perfect solution, but it's a step.

36:58 HI: The other thing is that, I don't know if you know this, but Inuit, if you control for kids under 12 and elders over 75, something like 96% of Inuit are on Facebook. It's because it is an Internet service that will load even when websites will not load, you could load content without pictures on Facebook, so it works really well in places where they don't have good Internet access, even when you don't have cell phone service, you could still get online with an iPad on Facebook. And so lots of Inuit use it.

37:31 HI: And there's the development of this new site, which is amazing called Iqaluit Auction Bids and it is like a Inuit-run auction site on Facebook that is almost entirely populated by Inuit buyers. And so people put up a pair of comics and then other people bid on it and many of these things go in the hundreds, sometimes up to a \$1000. And so, there is sort of Inuit buying and sharing economy that was not possible before the Internet, because we had no way within the isolation of our communities to know who was making what where. And so now we can actually not only purchase works directly from artists and support artists that way, but Inuit can also see what artists in other communities are doing, and it's really inspiring. So you can see people levelling up in their productions as well. So two imperfect responses, but I think that point to a hopeful future.

38:22 S?: Great.

[laughter]