



## Regional Juried Show History

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In 1982, the first regional juried art show was held in two parts (Fort St. John and Dawson Creek) in response to the request from the provincial government to select visual art from around the province for one BC Visual Art Show featuring the best of BC artists from each region. By 2018, 36 years of visual art competitions have encouraged thousands of emerging artists to show their works, develop their creative talent and hone their skills through exhibits and workshops.

The first BC shows were limited in space in the Robson Square in Vancouver, but in the mid 80's the show and regional selection process came under the umbrella of the Assembly of BC Arts Councils working toward the collective BC show at the BC Festival of Arts. The BC Festival of Arts travelled to various communities over the next 18 years. The BC show became known as Images and Objects and regional artists plus their works were chosen through the Juried Show process to attend the BC Festival of Arts for a week of intensive educational workshops. In 2000, the BC Festival of Arts was held in Fort St. John and over 1600 delegates participating in many genres descended upon Fort St. John. This was a big year for regional artists who were proud to show their artworks in their home territory among the hundreds in the Images and Objects exhibition.

During the 1980s and 90s, the Peace Liard Regional Arts Council developed a well-organized method of delivering the local juried show in each of our communities on a rotating basis. This allowed for every community to seek out new artists to enter the show when it was in their town, and it gave the opportunity for seasoned artists to show their works in other communities as well. When the BC Festival of Arts disbanded in 2002, the Peace Liard Regional Arts Council continued to hold the Regional Juried Show with the help of the Peace River Regional District and what is now called the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. A big thank you goes to the devotion of the Juried Show sponsors, particularly Encana, for their continued support of the Juried Show.

Prior to 2018, the local community arts council where the RJAE was taking place would carry out much of the work under the direction of the PLRAC. In 2018, the PLRAC revised the RJAE Policy Handbook and took on full administration of the program. This now allows the PLRAC's membership to benefit from the exhibit without it placing a burden on their resources. Each year, the local arts council where the RJAE is held (the order of rotation is Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson, and Fort St. John) chooses one piece of artwork to be purchased from an artist for the permanent art bank housed in the Peace River Regional District

offices in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek or, when the RJAE is held in Fort Nelson, the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality office.

Each Fall, the PLRAC books a presentation to the PRRD and invites the artist of the selected artwork to present the piece.

The permanent art collection has become quite extensive and reflects the art movement in the Peace over the past many years. Binders with hard copies of information from past shows, as well as a binder that lists the permanent collection pieces, are available and maintained by the PLRAC. As of 2018, the permanent collection archive is also available online.

By 2018, over 3000 artworks have been shown in our region. More than 2500 artists have been given the opportunity to exhibit their works, take educational sessions, and share their successes and dreams with other artists. Art galleries in our communities are filled with local artworks for sale for residents and visitors.

The Regional Juried Show is a success today, has been successful over the past 37 years, and we plan to keep the opportunity open to emerging artists and those who enjoy viewing art for many years to come.