



Michael Massie: *now and then*

GUEST CURATED BY **Alysa Procida**



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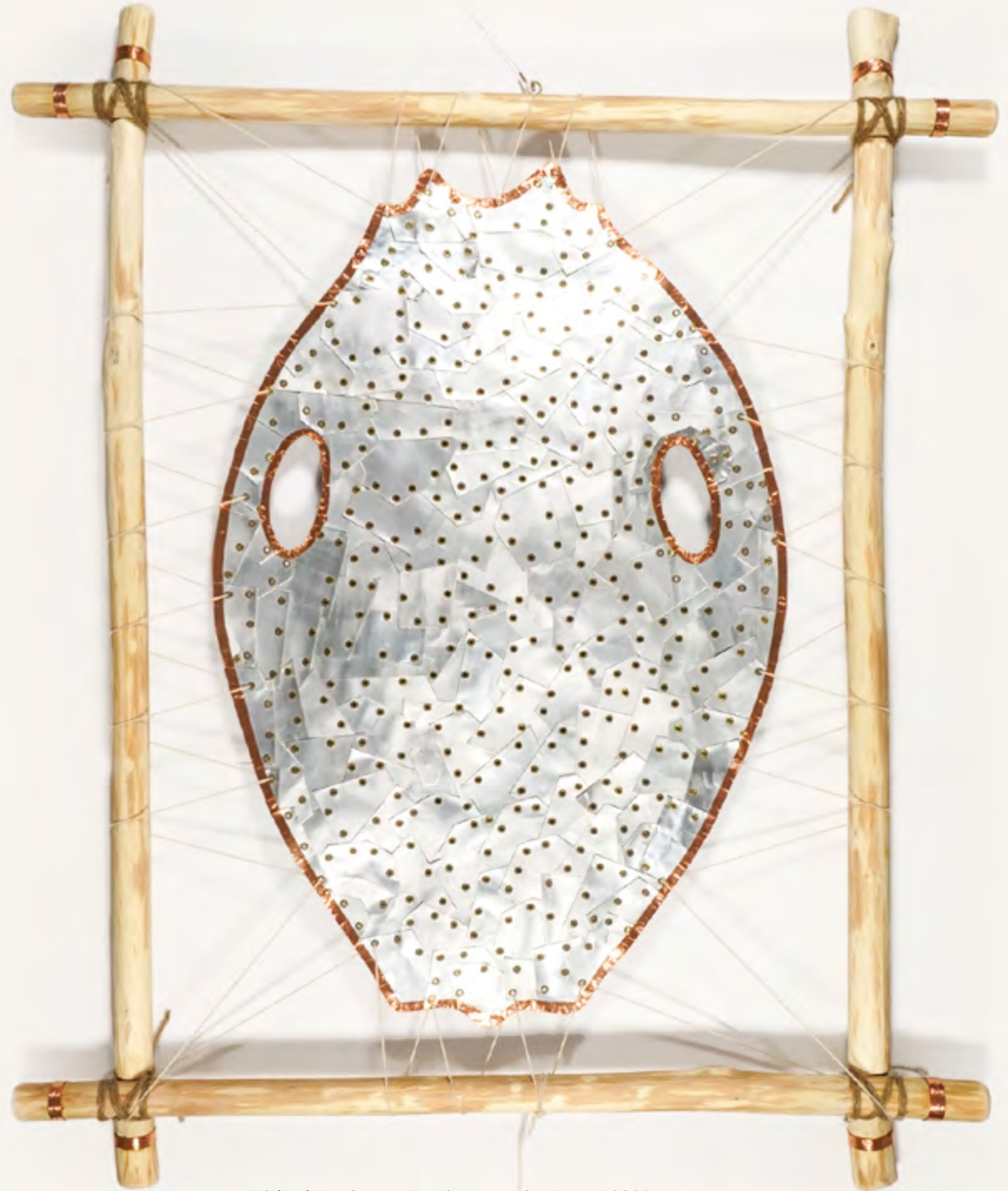
SPECIAL PROJECTS GALLERY

**SEPT 02
→ JAN 30
2026-27**

Michael Massie: *now and then*

BY **Alysa Procida**

While Michael Massie is one of the most well-respected Inuit artists working today, he has always been a rule breaker. Famously, his work caused an uproar when it was featured in the Winter 1992 issue of *Inuit Art Quarterly*, sparking a debate over whether it was “real” Inuit art that lasted several years. Today, his work is much more likely to be celebrated than challenged: he is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art and the Order of Canada, as well as a recipient of an honorary doctorate of design from OCAD University. But even as the rest of the world has caught up to him, Massie has always pushed boundaries, both of what the public expects from Inuit artists and of his own practice. This exhibition celebrates the clear joy he takes in experimentation, from the earliest days of his career to his most recent work.



Michael Massie, “pop” art in suspension, (verso) 2025, aluminum, wood, copper, string/gut. Images courtesy of Fehely Fine Arts, photo by Renzo Fernandez.

Michael Massie, *subtle-tea*, 1997
sterling silver, bird's eye maple,
8.25 x 2 x 10.5 inches. Collection of the
Winnipeg Art Gallery. Gift of the Canadian
Museum of Inuit Art with funds from the
Sprott Foundation, 2017-564.1 and 2. Photo:
Ernest Mayer, courtesy of WAG-Qaumajuq



Massie is best known for his teapots, which he has been making since 1991, initially as a tribute to his grandmother. Throughout his career, he has made over one hundred teapots, never repeating himself when creating inventive new designs. The selection here showcases the broad range of forms and materials Massie has incorporated into

his iconic teapots, including as pieces of the impressive chess set *1771*. This complex work reimagines contact between Inuit and Moravian missionaries as unfolding across a chess board, emphasizing the historic and ongoing agency of Inuit communities in the face of colonial influence.

Massie's practice has taken a remarkable turn in the last several years, clearly challenging himself by expanding into new media. His serious exploration of other media started with a shift to graphic work in 2024, spurred on by an overuse

injury that made working with silver challenging. These pieces offer a glimpse into his process, including *17 tea pots, not made... yet*, which is both an impressive study for new fantastical teapots and a meta-commentary on his practice, emphasizing the endlessly creativity and fascination he has with the teapot form is not complete.

This period of two-dimensional experimentation translated into renewed creativity when Massie returned to sculptural work in 2025. These pieces engage more directly with social and political issues in the North, such as *pop art (in suspension)*, a commentary on food



Michael Massie, *1771*, 2023, bloodwood, wavy birch, copper and sterling silver, 33 1/4" x 33 1/4" x 3". Image courtesy of Feheley Fine Arts.

scarcity in the North, and a *dedication to the missing*, a tribute to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as the importance of community. Massie's continued ingenuity is foregrounded in *many hands make light work*, which reflects on his career by deconstructing a bow drill alongside significant images from his career.

While these new works clearly chart a new direction for Massie's practice, they remain firmly rooted in the hallmarks of his work that stretch back to the beginning of his career. They are all technically masterful and skillfully executed with Massie's signature sense of balance and design, incorporating multiple media seamlessly into new forms. They are all testing the boundaries of his practice and the audience's expectations, demanding experimentation with new techniques and forcefully pushing against any preconceived ideas of his practice. As true now as it was when he began, Massie will upend and surpass expectations at every turn. ■

— **ALYSA PROCIDA**, 2026

Portrait of Michael Massie with artwork *identi-tea*, (100th teapot), 2021, sterling silver and bloodwood, 12 3/8" x 9 5/8" x 4 1/8".
Image courtesy of Fehely Fine Arts.



Michael Massie was born in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and currently resides in Kippens, NL. His artwork reflects his mixed Inuit and Scottish heritage, such as his iconic ulu teapot works. He has been working in sculpture, painting, and drawing for over thirty years and has achieved artistic acclaim in Canada and internationally. His work sits in collections including the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Heard Museum, Royal Ontario Museum, National Gallery of Canada, The Rooms, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Montreal Museum of Fine Art, and the YVR Vancouver Airport Collection. He has been shortlisted twice for the Prix Saidye-Bronfman, an honorary distinction for a Canadian

craftsperson who demonstrates excellence in fine crafts. He was elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 2011 and inducted into the Order of Canada in 2017. Massie received an honorary doctorate from OCAD University in 2024.

Alysa Procida is an arts administrator, curator, and consultant who is passionate about connecting artists with audiences across the world. She is the 2026 International Liaison for the Arctic Arts Summit Secretariat, having previously co-organized the 2022 Arctic Arts Summit in Whitehorse, YK. Previously, she was the Executive Director of the Inuit Art Foundation (IAF) and Publisher of the *Inuit Art Quarterly* (IAQ), Chair of the Magazines Canada Board of Directors, and a mentor on the Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership: The Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq Project. As Publisher of the *IAQ*, Alysa oversaw a full redesign of the magazine in conjunction with the IAF's 30th anniversary in 2017 and the magazine's first National Magazine Award in 2018. In 2019, she was shortlisted for Publisher Grand Prix at the National Magazine Awards, and in 2021 the *IAQ* was awarded Best Arts and Literary Magazine and winner of the Magazine Grand Prix.

Onsite Gallery presents contemporary, Indigenous, and public art and design to advance knowledge creation and stimulate local and international conversations on the urgent issues of our time.

ONSITE GALLERY FREE PUBLIC EVENTS

Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 12:30 - 2 p.m.
Women of Wampum: lecture and workshop
led by artist Katsitsakatste Lindsay Delaronde
 Onsite Gallery

Friday, October 16, 2026, 12 to 3 p.m.
Beaded Rosette Workshop with Rebecca Baird
 Onsite Gallery

Saturday, October 24, 2026, 1 to 3 p.m.
In Conversation | Rebecca Baird and Kenny Baird
with Lisa Deanne Smith and Lilian Radovac
 Onsite Gallery

Wednesday, October 28, 5 to 6:30 p.m.
now and then Artist / Curator Talk: Michael Massie in
Conversation with Alysa Procida
 Onsite Gallery

Friday, November 20, 2026, 12 to 3 p.m.
Bracelet Making Workshop with Rebecca Baird
 Onsite Gallery

Wednesday, December 2, 2026, 5 to 6:30 p.m.
Returning to Ourselves | Curatorial Tour
with Lisa Deanne Smith
 Onsite Gallery

Wednesday, January 20, 2027, 4 to 5 p.m.
Michael Massie: now and then
Curatorial Tour with Alysa Procida
 Onsite Gallery

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Returning to Ourselves:
Rebecca Baird and
Kenny Alvin Baird

A RETROSPECTIVE OF ART AND
 DESIGN BY CREE MÉTIS SIBLINGS

SPECIAL PROJECTS GALLERY

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STREET-LEVEL MURAL
Lost in the Right
Direction, 2026
 REBECCA BAIRD AND
 KENNY ALVIN BAIRD

SEPTEMBER 2, 2026 → JANUARY 30, 2027



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DESIGN: Tom Chaggarris
 © Onsite Gallery 2026

Michael Massie, "pop" art in suspension, (recto) 2025, aluminum, wood, copper, string/gut. Images courtesy of Fehely Fine Arts, photo by Renzo Fernandez.



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