



"Struts Gallery is a model of what an Artist Run Centre can do for the country." - Garry Neill Kennedy

Struts Gallery

an Artist Run Centre

Building Fund Case for Support



Who We Are

Incorporated in 1982, Struts Gallery is a not-for-profit, artist-run centre, and a registered charity operating in Sackville, NB, within the Siksikt district of Mi'kma'ki.

Struts Gallery is a contemporary arts centre with an emphasis on production, supporting the creative practices of local and national artists through residencies, access to specialized film & video equipment, training, and professional development. Struts is a destination where artists at all career stages connect with communities through accessible public programming and outreach activities, including exhibitions, workshops, and performances.

We present free arts programming and outreach activities to underserved rural communities in South-East New Brunswick while providing essential support to artists from across Canada and around the world. Struts is a dynamic centre for diverse communities to congregate, access contemporary art, and fuel their creativity. Every year we support our regional membership, host nationally renowned artists, and welcome thousands of visitors and participants into our space and programs.



What We're Trying to Accomplish

We need your support to conduct an extensive and essential retrofit of our multi-purpose community arts centre. Significant improvements to our facilities are needed to meet the growing needs of our users. We envision Struts Gallery as a modern, inclusive space with accessible galleries, studio space, digital production facilities, a community workshop, archive, and artist accommodations.

Built in 1912, the historic structure will have its original façade and brickwork restored, undergo extensive accessibility upgrades, significant energy efficiency improvements, essential structural repairs, and a selection of exciting enhancements to better experience and produce contemporary art.



Rendering by Goguen Architecture

Project Vision

- Structural work will include comprehensive brick repointing, foundation stabilization, and a standing-seam steel roof.
- Energy efficiency upgrades include a ducted heat-pump system, wall and attic insulation, new windows and doors.
- Reinstate the building's original storefront façade with large picture windows and character elements, enhancing its visual curb appeal.
- Install accessible entrances, washrooms, hallways, and wayfinding to reduce barriers and better accommodate artists, staff, and visitors with diverse abilities.
- Enhance our professional production and presentation facilities with purpose-built galleries, studio spaces, workshop and tool storage, media arts production facilities, and a screening room.
- Develop our capacity to host events and generate rental revenue by creating a functional kitchen space, laundry room, and incorporating versatile architectural solutions into building design.



Rendering by Goguen Architecture

Project Goals

- Meet current standards for an accessible space for staff and the public.
- Reduce our carbon footprint and operating costs while improving the energy efficiency of the building.
- Stabilize and preserve an architectural heritage asset in downtown Sackville.
- Improve the sustainability and long-term economic health of the organization.
- Provide affordable studio space, and services for local and regional artists.
- Contribute to the cultural and economic revitalization of downtown Sackville and its built heritage.
- Create a modern, world-class facility for contemporary art production and presentation.
- Enhance and re-imagine our exhibition space, production facilities, archives, and offices spaces, to better serve the artists and communities we work with.
- Attract and accommodate new audiences, staff and users.
- Continue to incorporate accesibility, equity, diversity and inclusion into our programming, organizational structure, and the planning process.



Why now?

Our board and Staff have been steadily working toward this retrofit since we purchased the iconic downtown heritage building in 2018. 7 Lorne Street is currently safe and stable; however, it is inefficient, deteriorating, and in need of important structural work and improvements. Engineering consultants estimate that these improvements should be conducted within 2-5 years, and much of the proposed work will be necessary within 10. This retrofit is timely and strategic, addressing the region's urgent need for accessible arts infrastructure in rural communities and small towns.

Investing in our facilities will strengthen our capacity to present free and accessible, world-class arts programming to a wider public. These foundational contributions will enable Struts Gallery to increase our energy efficiency while reducing our operating costs and carbon footprint. The retrofit will also help preserve a valuable heritage asset while increasing our ability to support the artists and communities we serve.

The Municipality of Tantramar recently completed the Lorne Street stormwater and flood mitigation project. Our project aligns seamlessly with their revitalization efforts and strategic plan for the downtown core.



Programming Impact

Our activities impact four main user groups:

1) LOCAL & REGIONAL ARTISTS: we provide access to a vast inventory of professional digital media equipment, and offer opportunities for training, exhibition, and professional development. Struts is a unique destination for artists in Atlantic Canada to create, experience, and engage with contemporary art and a network of visiting artists, arts professionals, and communities.

2) NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS: through our residencies, exhibitions, and film and video production programs we offer support for professional artists to experience Sackville, create or present new work, access specialized equipment, and engage with the local arts community and audiences. Struts Gallery and Sackville continue to garner an outsized national reputation by facilitating a dynamic exchange of ideas and viewpoints across demographics and geographies.

3) AUDIENCES & COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS: our presentation and outreach programs include exhibitions, offsite projects, screenings, workshops, and performances which are offered free to the public throughout the year. We work with participating artists to tailor our outreach efforts, regularly partnering with other organizations and community groups like The Owens Art Gallery, CHMA 106.9FM, Open Sky Cooperative, SappyFest, Sackville Community Garden, and Mount Allison University. Struts Gallery is a gathering space for community to participate and engage with working artists through an accessible and dynamic program of events.

4) STUDENTS, YOUNG ARTISTS, AND YOUTH: Struts Gallery has been an entry point for countless local youth to engage with creative practices in rural, Atlantic Canada. Through workshops, the student-run Start Gallery, internships, and employment or volunteer opportunities, young artists gain meaningful experience and training in the arts sector. We fold mentorship into our daily operations, offering a range of professional support for emerging artists.



History of Struts Gallery

Struts Gallery has been active since 1975, incorporating as a not-for-profit organization in 1982 and a registered charity in 2014. We launched our Open Studio artist in residence program in 1996, a series of five-week residencies for visiting artists and in 1999 expanded our support to include media arts production facilities, offering artists and the community affordable access to specialized equipment and training. Struts Gallery has a 40+ year history of sound financial management with stable, long-term, core funding support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the New Brunswick Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, and the Municipality of Tantramar.

We are fortunate to be part of and partner with a dynamic and vibrant local arts community that includes the Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University Fine Arts department, and SappyFest amongst others.



Historical Significance of 7 Lorne Street

7 Lorne Street is a distinctive brick building in downtown Sackville built in 1912 by Tingley Bros & Duncan Ltd. to sell agricultural implements and store wholesale fruit and vegetables. It is the last remaining original red brick structure on Lorne Street and an important representation of early business development in Sackville. The building boasts the original red brick and decorative moulding on the façade, typical of Sackville's commercial buildings from 1850 to 1950. 7 Lorne Street became a site of local significance again in 1996, as the home of Struts Gallery. The building's character has shaped our programming and activities, becoming a formative site for local and national art communities.

In 2018 Struts Gallery achieved the significant organizational milestone of purchasing the building. Your support will help preserve this unique asset in downtown Sackville and develop a vital cultural locale into an architectural landmark the community can be proud of.

"Adapting historic buildings for new uses is inherently more environmentally sustainable than new construction. New construction materials such as glass, steel, and concrete are high in embodied carbon. Embodied carbon significantly contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Maintaining and adapting existing buildings, such as Struts Gallery, is essentially a form of reusing and recycling. As such it contributes to the fight against climate change. Any interventions to the building should consider the sustainability impacts, and building reuse is climate action."



The Pre-Design Process

Working with our membership, the broader community and Goguen Architecture we engaged in a year-long process of analyzing our programming needs, renovation requirements, and visionary goals. A survey of our community members was conducted along with several working sessions both in person and online to understand the needs of our gallery users and broader arts community. Further to this, a comprehensive structural and building assessment was conducted. Goguen Architecture provided a code analysis, costed plans, and concept drawings.

Our organization is excited to move ahead with plans for a versatile, accessible, and energy-efficient, world-class arts centre. Our driving focus for this work was to generate a programmed space that would meet the needs of our users and the broader community while providing an inclusive and safe space for the production and promotion of the arts. We will continue to consult with our community and stakeholders as the design process unfolds.

By fostering a sense of ownership and consensus among participants, we were able to develop a design concept that reflects the collective aspirations of the community. This collaborative approach built cooperation among community members, ensuring that the plan is both practical and widely supported.



Struts Gallery



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