

**ST. JOHN'S**  
*International Airport Authority*

**For Immediate Release**

## **News Release**

### **Local Art Unveiled in Expanded Terminal Building at St. John's International Airport**

*Local Artist Prominently Featured at the Entrance to Newly Expanded Departures Lounge.*

**St. John's, NL, Tuesday, July 10, 2018** – Three pieces of digital mosaic art were unveiled today at the entrance of the newly expanded Departures Lounge at St. John's International Airport. Two of the backlit tiled fabric artwork feature the abundance of wildlife that can be found in the North Atlantic Ocean, and the third piece depicts St. John's harbour. These pieces were produced by local mosaic artist, Vessela Brakalova.

The commissioned artwork was funded by Marco Group – the general contractor for the Airport Terminal Building expansion; Colliers Project Leaders – project managers of the Airport Terminal Building expansion, and John Hearn Architects Inc. – the architect for the existing and expanded Terminal Building.

"We're delighted to have such unique artwork in our newly expanded Departures Lounge. It's absolutely stunning and encapsulates the beauty of our region while preserving our sense of place," said Keith Collins, President and CEO, St. John's International Airport Authority. "I would also like to recognize the generous financial contributions of our three corporate donors – Marco Group, Colliers Project Leaders and John Hearn Architects – without them, this would not have been possible," said Collins.

The artwork was commissioned with the assistance of Business and Arts Newfoundland and Labrador to find art that was compelling and culturally relevant. An experienced selection panel was assembled to evaluate the submissions; a short list was developed; and the final products were selected.

"The Airport Authority clearly shares our passion for the magic that happens when Business and Arts come together. These stunning pieces resonate with the unique beauty of our province, and lend its cultural energy to passengers at the start of their journey. It has been a most

rewarding process, and a model for future collaboration” said Mark Dobbin, Co-Chair, Business and Arts Newfoundland and Labrador.

St. John’s International Airport Authority is committed to working with the arts community to highlight the local talent in the area. It has developed a strong partnership with Business and Arts Newfoundland and Labrador since it facilitated the introduction of the first public piano at an airport in Atlantic Canada in 2014 at St. John’s International Airport. The selection of this artwork is the latest collaboration between the Airport Authority and Business and Arts Newfoundland and Labrador.

“I thank Business and Arts Newfoundland and Labrador for helping us commission such beautiful artwork. While assisting with the selection process, their expertise was invaluable,” added Collins.

***St. John’s International Airport Authority*** is a private, not-for-profit, non-share organization with the mandate to provide the region with a safe, cost-efficient transportation facility that is a catalyst for economic growth. Under the provisions of a long-term Ground Lease with the Federal Government of Canada, the Airport Authority is responsible for the airport’s operations on behalf of the community it serves.

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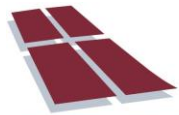
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## **Backgrounder**

### ***RICH WATERS (SHARING THE RICH WATERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC #1)***

The ocean and its rich harvest are why people settled here in the first place. This is the first piece of two-part series that takes you on the journey under the surface of the ocean. As you are mesmerized by the richness of the colours you allow yourself to pause for a moment and surrender to the sounds of the wild creatures that thrive in our corner of the North Atlantic.



# ST. JOHN'S

*International Airport Authority*

## *RICH WATERS (SHARING THE RICH WATERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC #2)*

The ocean is the cornerstone of our culture. This—the second of a two-part series—celebrates the creatures we find on the ocean floor. The Iceberg underwater presence creates a visual illusion of diving deep and connecting with the life on the cold-water reef.

## *DESTINATIONS: PORTRAIT OF ST. JOHN'S*

This city started as the commercial centre for the Newfoundland fishery and continues to be a vibrant port, transportation hub, and staging ground for the offshore industry. But what makes it so remarkable is the spirit of the people who come from across the island, and all over the world, to make this place their home.



*L-R: Rod Akerman, Marco Group; Kirk Kendall, Colliers Project Leaders; Vessela Brakalova, Artist; John Hearn, John Hearn Architects Inc.*

**Vessela Brakalova (Artist)** born in Sofia, Bulgaria, began rigorous art training in the classical tradition at the age of 12. She departed as a refugee in 1990, and her experience at Gander International Airport was her introduction to Canada. Vessela had a front-row seat to the practical and symbolic importance of these facilities and has been making art in St. John's ever since. Recently she's best known as a mosaic artist. Samples of her modern take on the ancient tradition have been featured most recently at St. John's International Airport, St. John's Convention Centre, The Rooms Provincial Art Gallery (summer 2016) and purchased for private and public collections. When she's not making mosaic, she designs interactive exhibits for provincial museums, plans wayfinding systems for public spaces, creates interpretive panels for national parks, and designs award-winning books and catalogues.