

# Núna (now) opens with triple-threat art show

WINNIPEG, MB — Approximately 70 people attended an opening reception on April 22 at the Adelaide McDermot Gallery featuring an exhibition by artists Inga Torfadóttir, Jess Dixon and Karen Jonsson. The opening was the first event



PHOTOS: DAVID JÓN FULLER

**Inga Torfadóttir with some of her abstract work.**

of the NÚNA (now) series of cultural events, April 22 – 29.

Tristin Tergesen, a member of the curatorial board for NÚNA (now), introduced Consul General for Iceland Atli Ásmundsson as well as the artists and thanked them all for their part in the exhibition.

Inga Torfadóttir is a Winnipeg artist originally from Iceland. Her media include printmaking, *Scherenschnitte* (paper cutwork) and ceramic art. A frequent theme in her work is Norse mythology, but in the lithographs and monoprints on display at the Adelaide McDermot Gallery she explored abstract images, which she describes as “very close to my heart.” In an exhibition in Iceland in 2003, her work was largely abstract pieces. “With the abstracts, the possibilities are endless,” she says. “I could work on one plate for days or even weeks and there would be endless variations.”

She is currently putting together a collection of pieces based on Norse mythology with the emphasis on the female characters, an area that is less explored and understood. This is for an upcoming exhibition in June and August in the Dr. Paul H. T. Thorlakson Gallery at the Icelandic Collection at the University of Manitoba.

Karen Jonsson’s works on display were ceramics, including smaller porcelain pieces and a large pottery urn reminiscent of classical Greek pieces. That is definitely an influence on her style, she says, as is the work of Rodin. Karen is of Icelandic descent, with roots in Big Point and Langruth. While she also draws in pen and ink, she finds working with ceramics “very rewarding... it’s a very tactile experience.” She is confined somewhat by the size of her studio, but says she loves “the endless possibilities of clay.”

Jess Dixon is of Icelandic descent through his grandmother Svava Johnson. His pieces at the exhibition included delicate watercolours as well as large works in acrylic on masonite. “I like the dark background of the masonite,” he says, “and the simplicity of having the board show through.” For his watercolour work, he counts Karl Larson as an important influence.

Also attending the exhibition was Skarphéðinn Berg Steinarsson, Managing Director of Baugur Group and Chairman of FL Group, two Icelandic companies that are major sponsors of NÚNA (now).

Skarphéðinn was involved in many  
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**Sigríður Jóhannsdóttir and Skarphéðinn Steinarsson. Skarphéðinn, as Managing Director of Baugur Group and Chairman of FL Group, was a major supporter of NÚNA (now).**



**Karen Jonsson and some of her porcelain works.**

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Iceland-North America events in the year 2000, and found the experience of connecting with North Americans of Icelandic descent very rewarding. He was enthusiastic about supporting NÚNA (now), he says, because “part of being successful is contributing something back. We want to participate in something that is enjoyable, that is done with enthusiasm and that is done well.

“It is important to involve the younger generation,” he adds. “We were not able to do that as much as we possibly could have in 2000.... Atli [Ásmundsson] and the curatorial board understand the importance of the younger generation’s involvement.” Skarphéðinn and his wife Sigríður Jóhannesdóttir were in Winnipeg especially for the opening of NÚNA (now), but he says he also wanted the chance to show her “a glimpse of this story that is quite fascinating —that of Icelandic settlement in Nother America, the *Vestur-Íslendingar*.”



**NÚNA (now) curatorial board members Erika MacPherson (far left) and Caelum Vatnsdal (right) unpack the official T-shirts with Caelum’s wife Alicia Smith at the festival’s opening reception at Adelaide McDermot Gallery.**



**Jess Dixon before one of his acrylic-on-masonite paintings.**



**From left: artists Karen Jonsson, Jess Dixon and Inga Torfadóttir at the exhibition opening.**