

Modern Fuel Artist–Run Centre

Toward 50 Years of Living Art



Jessie in Blue by Laura Lewis (2022)

A Place Like No Other

For nearly five decades, Modern Fuel has been a vital hub for contemporary and experimental art in Katarokwi–Kingston. As the only artist-run centre within a 300-kilometre radius, we offer something both rare and essential: a space where artists are free to take risks, challenge norms, and receive fair compensation for their creative work.

In a city with limited access to exhibition spaces, Modern Fuel offers more than walls. We offer **visibility, voice, and validation**.

At the heart of our mission is a simple but powerful belief—artists are **essential to a thriving community**. By providing space for creation, collaboration, and professional development, Modern Fuel strengthens the cultural fabric of this region. Our programming supports artists at every stage of their careers, while enriching the lives of the broader public.

The result is a vibrant and inclusive arts ecosystem where creativity flourishes, careers take root, and community pride grows.

Artists at the Centre

At Modern Fuel, artists are not just participants. They are leaders, collaborators, and co-creators.

Our exhibitions, residencies, workshops, and mentorship programs are built with and for the artists we serve—emerging, mid-career, and established creators from a diversity of disciplines, cultures, and lived experiences.

Consider our **Mashkawizii Miinikaanan: Strong Seeds Beading Circle**. This series of gatherings was led by Indigenous Artists and Knowledge Keepers who shared beadwork techniques alongside stories and histories of Katarokwi–Kingston. Facilitator Liv Rondeau shares:



Portrait of Julia Hutt, Gigi and Jamel by Claire Drummond (2022)

“Modern Fuel has supported me by providing workshop spaces where I can teach and learn Indigenous beadwork skills and techniques from a variety of Indigenous artists. I am continuously thankful to Modern Fuel for creating spaces that celebrate the diversity, brilliance, and beauty of Indigenous art forms.”

Or hear from **Artist Géorgie Gagné, who participated in the Coalesce Residency** in April 2024 and exhibited in Growing Together: Seeds of Connection and Playful Encounters:

“I’m really grateful for the work of Modern Fuel Artist Run Centre, especially the space it creates for artists of all backgrounds. As a Two-Spirit, trans, and racialized artist, having a place that feels safe—where my art can truly bloom—is very, very special. It’s all thanks to the team here and the community that engages with the Centre. Because of Modern Fuel, I feel that my practice has been able to grow in ways I never imagined.”

At Modern Fuel, creativity knows no borders. Every program is an invitation to connect, learn, and grow through art.



Photo from the Mashkawizii Miinikaanan:
Strong Seeds Beading Circle (2024)

A Platform for Advocacy and Equity

Modern Fuel is more than a gallery. It is a platform for change.

We believe creative labour deserves respect and fair compensation. That is why we advocate for living wages, equitable practices, and artists' rights across the sector. Our workshops on copyright, tax literacy, intellectual property, and self-promotion help artists navigate the realities of a professional arts career.

In a field where many creators are undervalued and underpaid, we lead by example. We are building a fairer, more inclusive future for the arts.

Why Now

As we approach our 50th anniversary, Modern Fuel stands at a pivotal moment.

For half a century, we have been a cornerstone of Katarokwi–Kingston's arts community. We have remained resilient through economic shifts, funding changes, and cultural evolution. While many artist-run centres across Canada have closed their doors, Modern Fuel has not only endured—we have grown.

This milestone is not just about honouring our past. It is about building our future. With your support, we will:

- Expand opportunities for local and regional artists;
- Deepen our impact through outreach and community engagement;
- Strengthen the infrastructure needed for sustainable growth;
- Keep art accessible, inclusive, and central to life in Katarokwi–Kingston for the next 50 years and beyond.

Why It Matters

The arts are not a luxury—they are a lifeline.

- Arts engagement can reduce antisocial and criminal behaviour in youth by up to 14%;
- Creative programs improve mental health in at-risk youth, lowering aggression and internal distress by 13–18%;
- Adults who participate in the arts report greater life satisfaction, stronger mental health, and lower levels of stress and isolation.

These are not just statistics. They are lived experiences at Modern Fuel.

Every day, we see how art brings people together, builds confidence, and creates a sense of belonging. As one supporter put it:

“Modern Fuel gives this city its sparkle.”

In a time of rising living costs, social disconnection, and uncertainty, the arts offer something increasingly rare—hope, resilience, and connection.

What Your Support Makes Possible

Your generosity fuels the next chapter of Modern Fuel.

When you give, you:

- Empower artists through mentorship, resources, and professional opportunities;
- Bring art into schools, community centres, settlement agencies, and public spaces;
- Expand programming that sparks curiosity, dialogue, and cultural pride;
- Provide tools and technology that help artists experiment, innovate, and thrive;
- Deepen community connection through inclusive exhibitions, workshops, and events.

Your support translates directly into more art, more access, and more impact.

Join Us in Shaping the Next 50 Years

This is more than a fundraising campaign. It is a call to action.

By supporting Modern Fuel, you are investing in the artists, ideas, and values that make Katarokwi–Kingston a dynamic, creative place to live. You are helping to build a future where local artists are supported, celebrated, and empowered to lead.

Your monthly gift helps us provide artists with a living wage for exhibitions and workshops—while fostering meaningful connections between them and our community. Donate today by visiting www.modernfuel.org/donate. Book a personal visit by calling 613-548-4883.

Join us in shaping the next 50 years of living art.

Be part of the spark.



Photo from the *Mashkawizii Miinikaanan: Strong Seeds* Beading Circle Exhibition (2025)