



Association of
Canadian Universities
for Northern Studies



Association
universitaire canadienne
d'études nordiques

APECS Canada and ACUNS Unveil the Winning Arctic Science Illustration

A Visual Voyage Illuminates Science on the Arctic Seafloor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It is with great anticipation that the **Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS)** and the **Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) Canada**, with funding support from **ArcticNet**, announce the unveiling of the “**Arctic Science to Art**” contest grand finale. Congratulations to contest winner **Myrah Graham**, a Master of Science student at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of **Memorial University of Newfoundland**, and Yukon-based artist **Misha Donohoe** on their outstanding work of art. This achievement is the culmination of a unique knowledge mobilization opportunity designed for early-career researchers to share their Arctic studies with northern communities for educational outreach.

The illustration, “*Who Lives on the Bottom of the Ocean?*” is a visual voyage that delves into Ms. Graham’s research on the animals called *benthos* and their communities that help keep the ocean healthy. The combined talents of Ms. Graham’s academic research and Ms. Donohoe’s artistic flair draws the audience into an underwater journey of discovery and diversity on the Arctic seafloor. Colourful and engaging, it excels at translating science into an accessible and relatable illustrative story for a non-scientific audience. Available in **French, Inuktitut** and **Inuttitut**, this collaboration celebrates Western and Indigenous knowledge-sharing.

Ms. Graham describes the significance of the imagery used in the story. “*For collecting video data, we work with local Inuit vessel operators in Nunavut and Nunatsiavut. We prioritize working locally because the research becomes a sharing experience. My last visit to Pangnirtung was during a clam harvesting time when families go out at low tide following a full moon. This event illustrates a cherished activity that connects Inuit to benthos. Although many of these organisms are already known (for example: Itik, or sea urchin), the imagery helped to communicate our scientific terms for them, as well as why we study them.*” When people recognize benthos and see that they are an important part of a larger system, the response is inspiring. “*We had the fortune of hiring a local high school student in Pang as a research assistant. When he first saw the live footage of the seafloor just outside his community, he raised his eyebrows and said, ‘I didn't know this was all down there!’*”

Ms. Graham plans to distribute the artwork as postcards at the local elementary and high schools in Nain, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Pangnirtung, Nunavut. Materials will also be shared at community presentations in both communities. Benthic habitat maps, derived from her research, assist local governments as well as fisheries, and hunters and trappers associations.

A poster version of “*Who Lives on the Bottom of the Ocean?*” will be presented at the **2023 ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting** in Iqaluit, Nunavut from December 4 to 7, 2023, and can be seen [online](#) as a virtual poster (#19). We invite you to contact [Myrah Graham](#) and artist [Misha Donohoe](#) for interviews.

About APECS Canada: APECS Canada is a national committee of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) International formed in 2012. Our mission is to create a network of early career researchers (ECRs), including undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, early faculty members, educators, and more. The Board of APECS Canada aims to connect a diverse group of enthusiastic ECRs to share ideas and experiences, stimulate research collaborations, and support future leaders in polar research, education, and outreach. The “*Arctic Science to Art*” knowledge mobilization contest encourages applicants to demonstrate their knowledge about an issue affecting northern communities by submitting a 100-word summary in plain language and a photo of their research. The winner works in partnership with an artist to transform their Arctic science into art. All four language versions of “*Who Lives on the Bottom of the Ocean?*” are available to download on the [APECS Canada website](#).

About ArcticNet: ArcticNet is a Network of Centres of Excellence of Canada that brings together more than 230 Arctic researchers, engineers and managers studying human health, natural and social sciences in the Arctic. The [ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting 2023](#) (ASM2023) is a hub for Arctic and northern research in Canada. The ASM2023 brings together researchers from the natural, health, and social sciences to meet the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing Arctic region. This conference will push the boundaries of our collective understanding of the Arctic and strengthen our ability to address the issues of today and tomorrow.

About ACUNS: The Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS) is a national, non-profit academic association, established in 1978. ACUNS responds to needs and priorities in the territories and provincial north by facilitating collaborative and inclusive research partnerships and educational programming, most notably through our student conference and awards program.

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