



Celebrating Success

It wowed audiences on Haida Gwaii and now it's gathering acclaim across Canada. The movie *S̱Gaawaay K'uuna/ Edge of the Knife* - filmed entirely on Haida Gwaii, with Haida actors speaking the Haida language - was shown for the first time to full and enthusiastic community halls in Skidegate and Old Massett in early September. From there, it travelled to the Toronto International Film Festival, where it received rave reviews, and on to the Vancouver International Film Festival in October, where it was named Most Popular Canadian Film.

The Gwaii Trust provided two Major Contributions grants for specific initiatives related to the *Edge of the Knife*. The first grant was for pre-production workshops and training, which took place in Skidegate, Old Massett and Taalunglung in the spring of 2017. The workshops focused on providing basic acting training, voice coaching, and movement/stunt choreography to the 24 community members who acted in the film, none of whom were professional performers, as well as creating authentic costumes and props, and building an authentic set.

The second grant allowed the film's producers to hold the first screenings on Haida Gwaii in celebratory style, with speeches, performances and formal acknowl-

edgment of all involved, and to send the key creative team and lead actors to the film festivals in Toronto and Vancouver. It will also allow the film to embark on a tour of north coast indigenous communities, including Ketchikan and Prince Rupert, where screenings will be held along with discussions and presentations about how the film was made. It will also allow some of those involved in the film to make presentations at several academic conferences and events, to showcase the innovative and collaborative spirit of the Haida Nation.

The Gwaii Trust was gratified to be involved in another success story this month. On October 15, a book launch was held for *Athlii Gwaii - Upholding Haida Law at Lyell Island*. The 184-page book is filled with stories and archival photos from the 1985 stand at Athlii Gwaii - an event that continues to shape Haida Gwaii today. It's now available in a hardcover version, with a softcover edition coming soon. Proceeds from the sale of the hardcover version will go to support language programs. A special Gwaii Trust grant helped produce the book. The hardcover is now being offered for sale to Haida citizens at the Council of the Haida Nation offices in Old Massett and Skidegate. There will be a launch of the softcover edition for the general public in November, and they will also be available on Amazon.