



# Queer Newfoundland Hockey League



HAMILTON ARTISTS INC.

Lucas Morneau  
September 12 - October 25, 2025  
essay by Katie Campanella

Queer Newfoundland Hockey League (QNHL) – four words that at one time would never dare be spoken together in one breath, takes us to a place that is both a possibility and a reality. More than an art exhibition, Lucas Morneau’s QNHL is a statement that reaches far beyond the walls of Hamilton Artists Inc. Twelve beautifully hand-crocheted jerseys boldly reclaim slurs often used against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community as team names, thrusting their use into the spotlight, and asking the audience to question the hegemonic masculinity often assigned to sports.

QNHL is the fictional hockey league at the centre of Morneau’s exhibition that cleverly takes a shot at many issues still present in the world of sports, including toxic masculinity, discrimination and rigid gender roles. From the hand-crocheted and rughooked jerseys – both practices often delegated as “women’s work” – to the ten crochet goalie masks that have been stylized as doilies, Morneau’s vision reimagines what hockey could look like in a more inclusive world.

And in that world, the puck has officially dropped.

The October chill in the air signals more than just the changing of seasons - it means hockey is back, baby.

Down East, the QNHL season has begun as 14 fabulous teams take to rinks across Newfoundland. The action kicked off Friday night with a fierce battle between the defending 2024/2025 champions, the Dildo Dykes, and the Ferryland Fairies. It was a hard-fought matchup, but the Fairies’ new goalie - Siobhan O’Connell, stole the show. Donning a brilliantly crocheted mask – resembling one of grandma Plante’s doilies – O’Connell combined artistry with athleticism in one of the most stunning goaltending debuts in league history.

The on-ice drama continued across the island where the St. John’s Sissies hosted the Corner Brook Queens in a nailbiter that saw the Queens clinch a dramatic overtime win. Meanwhile, Fogo Island Fag Hags’ veteran Róisín Faganhat netted her third career hat trick, and the Gayside Gaylords edged out the Port Union Pinkos in double OT.

Rookies also made a strong impression in their season openers. The Cox’s Cove Queeros’ Harry Cox logged two goals and an assist, while the Pansies’ Daisy Flowers put up seven shots, two goals, and an assist in their QNHL debut. A surprise centre-ice proposal between two Leading Tickles Lesbos teammates brought fans to their feet while the final games of the weekend and the weekend came to a close with two very close games between the Bonavista Buggers and Come By Chance Flamers, and the Nain Nancy and Francois Fruits, which ended 3-2 and 2-1 respectively.

It’s not just the games that captivate. The artistry of the QNHL lives in every detail from the style to the skill. Each uniform tells a story with a powerful layering of meaning in what might otherwise be dismissed simply sportswear. Some are rughooked using pantyhose worn by drag performers, a nod to both Newfoundland’s craft heritage and queer cultural history. This handicraft style dates back to the Grenfell Mission’s use of stockings from women in rural communities where donated stockings were used to create hooked mats and rugs. The aforementioned crocheted masks draw inspiration from Jacques Plante, the NHL goaltender who was ridiculed for wearing a mask after sustaining serious injuries during a game. Players and fans questioned Plante’s bravery and dedication to the game due to his mask, though it gained acceptance after Plante compared not wearing a mask to skydiving without a parachute. The exhibition, and the fictional league on which it’s based, blur the lines between sport, craft, and identity.

At the heart of it all is Commissioner Lucas Morneau. Their vision for the QNHL not only fosters community on the ice but challenges broader sports culture, confronting a history of discrimination while advocating for a future where 2SLGBTQIA+ athletes can thrive. The exhibition and the fictional league are not separate worlds – they are one brought together, - and brought to life through art, community, passion and hope.

This is the Queer Newfoundland Hockey League.

designed by Sonali Menezes

ISBN: 978-1-926454-34-4

[www.theinc.ca](http://www.theinc.ca)

155 James Street North, Hamilton, ON