



NEWS RELEASE

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EXHIBIT EXPLORES TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN FIRST NATIONS ART

Many First Nations artists active in British Columbia today find their inspiration in the narratives of the past while commenting on the reality of the social, political, and environmental issues present in the world around them.

Starting this month, visitors are invited to join the Langley Centennial Museum in Fort Langley as it explores the traditions and innovations of the Coast Salish and Northwest Coast Salish First Nations. Audiences will have the opportunity to learn about First Nations cultures in BC and the history of collecting First Nations artwork, while viewing the artists' integral works and discovering the design principles and personal inspiration behind them.

Tradition and Innovation in First Nations Art, an exhibition of historic and contemporary works from First Nations artists, runs at the Museum, 9135 King Street, from May 9 to July 17. An opening reception will be held Saturday, May 14, from 1 to 4pm.

"While some art pieces can be evaluated on their aesthetic qualities, it is also important to discover the personal meaning and cultural value behind the works," said Museum Curator Jasmine Moore. "This exhibit will expand expectations of 'authentic' First Nations artwork. Today's artists challenge perceptions of how Aboriginal art should appear, complicating and expanding the public's frame of reference for what is considered authentic or traditional."

The exhibit features contemporary works by Kwantlen First Nations artists Brandon Gabriel and Phyllis and Drew Atkins, Haida artist Corey Bulpitt, Talhtan/Tlingit artist Una Ann Moyer, and Squamish artists Aaron Nelson Moody and Xwalackatun.

"With this exhibition," Moore said, "we really wanted to examine the traditional design principles behind First Nations artwork to demonstrate the inherent innovation in these art forms while asking the questions: What can be considered authentic First Nations art? Who labels, defines, and assigns value? Why is it important to push aesthetic and conceptual values of tradition?"

For more information, visit museum.tol.ca or call 604.532.3536.

The Langley Centennial Museum is owned and operated by the Township of Langley. The Museum opened in 1958 and has 3,500 square feet of exhibition galleries, including temporary displays on a variety of topics from art to history to science. It also has a well-stocked gift shop featuring unique items, handcrafted by local artists and artists.