

McMaster Museum of Art presents *Ascending Horizons*, a new exhibition which honours Indigenous women by exploring themes of the sacred feminine and creation

Join us for a public opening reception on Thursday, January 30th, 5-8pm.

Hamilton, ON – January 16th, 2025 – This winter, McMaster Museum of Art – M(M)A – presents [*Ascending Horizons*](#), a group exhibition that explores how Indigenous women activate their connection to the natural world and dream of new worlds for future generations. Curated by Hamilton-based artist and curator Alex Jacobs-Blum and Métis scholar and professor Kim Anderson, *Ascending Horizons* is on display at the M(M)A from January 8th until June 20th, 2025. The exhibition brings together work by seven Indigenous women artists including KC Adams, Carrie Allison, Judy Anderson, Hannah Claus, Elizabeth Doxtater, Charlene Vickers, and Marie Watt.



Image Credit L-R: Detail of work by Charlene Vickers, Judy Anderson, Hannah Claus, Carrie Allison, KC Adams, Marie Watt, Elizabeth Doxtater.

Ascending Horizons is an invitation to consider embodied connections, cycles and seasons of the sacred feminine, connecting women in creation and re-creation. Tethering land, water, the moon and the cosmos to Indigenous women's bodies, the exhibition honours the sacred cycles of creation and movement, birthing bodies and their grounding in the fertile capacities of earth in relation to the pull of the moon and the sky world.

Through transdisciplinary artistic practices: cornhusking, photography, video, performance, installation, ceramics, beadwork and embroidery, each of the seven artists call upon their own Nations' thought systems and the knowledge of their Ancestors toward an infinite and regenerative future.

"Developing this exhibition alongside Kim Anderson and collaborating with such an incredible group of artists has been a great honour" says exhibition co-curator Alex Jacobs-Blum. "*Ascending Horizons* celebrates the strength, wisdom, and creativity of Indigenous women. Rooted in love, care, and a deep connection to the land, this exhibition invites us to envision a future shaped by kinship and collective power. *Ascending Horizons* is a call to activate our dreams."

The works illuminate Indigenous worldviews through longstanding material connections, building with and from sand, clay, cedar, corn husks, fur and copper, demonstrating how these connections provide teachings about place-making among human relations and beyond. Further, the works show how adorning the body through tattoos, jingles, or the exquisite clothing of cornhusk dolls can become a means of healing. Material comforts such as blankets, felt, buttons and beads speak to the nurturing presence of women across generations, while the use of reprography film and aluminium remind us that Indigenous practices are continually evolving alongside new materials. This weaving of the past and the future blends ancestral knowledge with contemporary practices, reaffirming the boundless, adaptable and ever-evolving nature of Indigenous creativity.

Ascending Horizons builds on Haudenosaunee and Algonquian teachings to re-envision elements of the natural world – from Earth to Sky – to consider how we navigate between them and reimagine a future alongside the creative capacity of Indigenous women.

Everyone is welcome to join us at the M(M)A for the public **opening reception on Thursday, January 30th, 5 – 8PM** (Remarks at 6PM).

Additional programming related to the exhibition will be announced on our website and social media channels.

Artist biographies:

KC Adams (Anishinaabe/Ininnew/British) is a registered Fisher River Cree Nation member living in Winnipeg, Manitoba, with a B.F.A. from Concordia University and an M.A. in Cultural Studies, Curatorial Stream from the University of Winnipeg. She considers herself a relational maker, a creator whose work connects to Indigenous knowledge systems—recognizing her role as an educator, activist, community member and mentor. KC has had numerous solo and group exhibitions and residencies and has been in three biennales, including the PHOTOQUAI: Biennale des images du monde in Paris, France. Twenty pieces from the Cyborg Hybrid series are in the permanent collection of the National Art Gallery in Ottawa, and four trees from Birch Bark Ltd are in the Canadian Consulate of Australia, NSW collection. Adams was awarded the Winnipeg Arts Council's Making a Mark Award, Canada's Senate 150 medal, the Ohpinamake Award in Indigenous Art and the Quill & Quire's 2019 Books of the Year.

Carrie Allison is a nêhiyaw, Métis, and mixed European descent multidisciplinary visual artist based in K'jipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki (Halifax, Nova Scotia). She grew up on the unceded and unsurrendered lands of the Sk̓wxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō, and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam) Nations. Her maternal roots and relations are based in Maskotewisiy (High Prairie, Alberta), Treaty 8. Situated in K'jipuktuk since 2010, her practice responds to her maternal nêhiyaw and Métis ancestry, thinking through intergenerational cultural loss and acts of reclaiming, resilience, resistance, and activism, while also considering notions of allyship, kinship, and visiting. Her practice is rooted in research and pedagogical discourses. Old and new technologies are combined to tell stories of the land, continuance, growth, and healing.

Judy Anderson is nêhiyaw from Gordon First Nation, SK.

Anderson's practice includes beadwork, installation, painting, three-dimensional pieces, and collaborative projects. Her work focuses on issues of spirituality, nêhiyaw intellectualizations of the world, relationality, graffiti, colonialism and decolonization. She is a Professor of Canadian Indigenous Studio Art in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Calgary.

Hannah Claus (Kanien'kehá:ka/English; member of Kenhtè:ke) explores Kanien'kehá:ka ways of knowing and understanding through material and sensorial relationships in her artistic practice. Light and shadow, repetition and

accumulation, as well as collaborative processes are recurring elements within her installations and photo-based artworks. Recipient of the Eiteljorg Fellowship 2019 and the Prix Giverny 2020, recent exhibitions include Plastic Heart (Canadian Cultural Centre, Paris, France) and Whetūrangitia [Made of Stars] (Dowse Art Museum, Wellington, Aotearoa | New Zealand) and North American touring exhibition, Radical Stitch. Claus lives and works on Kanien'kehá:ka territory, in Tiohtià:ke | Montreal.

Elizabeth Doxtater was born and raised on the Six Nations of the Grand River, she celebrates empowerment through her work as a cornhusk artist and painter. Elizabeth's work has appeared in many galleries across North America. In 2015, her solo show, "Art of Peace," was launched at the Woodland Cultural Education Centre alongside the 2015 First Nations Art exhibit, in which she was also featured. "Art of Peace" was also presented at the McMaster Museum of Art in 2016. Her work has been shown at NETO, in Niagara Falls, Ontario; the Iroquois Indian Museum in Cobleskill, New York; and the Glenhyrst Art Gallery. Her show at Glenhyrst was titled "Wa'tkwanonhwerá:ton." Her solo show, "Rednaissance," was exhibited in Midland in 2015.

Charlene Vickers is a Vancouver based multidisciplinary artist working in painting, sculpture and performance. Living on the West Coast for the past 30 years, her work and Anishinaabe presence are embodied connections to her birth territories of Kenora, Ontario. Indigenous presence, healing, and joy are expressed as vivid colour explorations, process and performative action as well as large scale sculptural installations. Vickers attended Simon Fraser University MFA (2013), BA (1998) and Emily Carr University of Art and Design (1994).

Marie Watt is an American artist. She is a member of the Seneca Nation of Indians and also has German-Scot ancestry. Her interdisciplinary work draws from history, biography, Haudenosaunee protofeminism, and Indigenous teachings; in it, she explores the intersection of history, community, and storytelling. Through collaborative actions, she instigates multigenerational and cross-disciplinary conversations that might create a lens and conversation for understanding connectedness to place, one another, and the universe.

Curator biographies:

Alex Jacobs-Blum is a Gayogohó:nq' (Cayuga) and German visual artist and curator living in Hamilton, ON. Her research focuses on Indigenous futurities and accessing embodied Ancestral Hodinöhsö:ni' knowledge. The core of her practice and methodology is a strong foundation in community building, fostering

relationships, empowering youth, and Indigenizing institutional spaces. Her creative process is rooted in storytelling and challenging hierarchical power structures, seeking to facilitate transformative change infused with love and care. She has curated exhibitions at Hamilton Artist Inc., Supercrawl and the University of Waterloo, Longhouse Labs. Alex is a member of the Bawaadan Collective.

Kim Anderson is a Métis writer, scholar and educator based at the University of Guelph where she is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in Storying Indigenous Relational Futures. Kim's storied work involves collaboration with curators, multidisciplinary artists, scholars, and activists. In 2019 she co-curated *Konnón:kwe*, an exhibition for the Guelph Civic Museum that wove together fine art and Indigenous women's history. Members of this curatorial collective are now creating another exhibition for the Guelph Civic Museum on *Where the Rivers Meet*, set to open in spring 2026. Kim has published seven books, including a co-produced memoir with Elder and artist Rene Meshake entitled *Injichaag, My Soul: Anishinaabe Poetics in Art and Words* (University of Manitoba Press, 2019).

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About McMaster Museum of Art

The McMaster Museum of Art is a meeting space for both the University campus and the community situated within the traditional territories of the Mississauga and the Haudenosaunee nations. The M(M)A engages and inspires through arts presentation and promotion, as well as by: growing an awareness of the interconnectivity of the past, present and future; advancing de-colonization; engaging in innovative and imaginative research; dismantling institutional and ideological boundaries; partnering and collaborating with intentionality; diversifying the collection; and building capacity.

Museum Hours:

Tuesday: 11am-5pm

Wednesday: 11am-5pm

Thursday: 11am-7pm

Friday: 11am-5pm

Saturday – Monday: Closed

The museum is open to everyone, and admission is always free.

McMaster University recognizes and acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the Dish With One Spoon wampum agreement.

For more information and exhibition photography, please contact:

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