

## **The Art Gallery of Guelph announces the acquisition of new work by contemporary Indigenous artists**

GUELPH, ON, April 30, 2019 – The Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG) is pleased to announce new acquisitions of ten artworks by four Indigenous artists: KC Adams, Sonny Assu, Kent Monkman, and Meagan Musseau. These works add vital new voices to the significant First Nations, Métis, and Inuit collections at the AGG, and represent critical contemporary engagements with photography, digital production, performance, and material culture practices. They also complement recent acquisitions of textile-based work by Indigenous artists Catherine Blackburn and Katherine Boyer.

The artworks were identified for acquisition by undergraduate and graduate students as part of an innovative course led by Dr. Shauna McCabe, AGG Director and Adjunct Professor at the University of Guelph. The students were provided with a budget for acquisitions, and tasked with researching, selecting, and ultimately presenting the proposed acquisitions to a panel of university and community representatives. This project was made possible through the support of the University of Guelph's Learning Enhancement Fund.

The work of Winnipeg-based First Nations artist KC Adams spans sculpture, installation, drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, printmaking, and kinetic art, often engaging popular culture, technology, and science fiction to address contemporary social issues. Coming to the AGG are five photographs from Adams' first Cyborg Hybrid series (2004), addressing issues of identity, racism, and colonization through portraiture.

Based in British Columbia, Sonny Assu is Ligwilda'xw of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nations. His practice spans painting, sculpture, photography, and printmaking, often negotiating Western and Kwakwaka'wakw cultural references in his exploration of contemporary Indigenous experiences. The gallery has acquired two works from his series Interventions on the Imaginary (2016), featuring digital interventions on Emily Carr paintings in the form of "tags" in abstract shapes that are distinctive of Northwest Coast iconography.

Kent Monkman is a First Nations artist of Cree and Irish ancestry and a member of the Fisher River band situated in Northern Manitoba. Both a visual and performance artist, he works in a variety of media such as painting, film/video, and installation. The new acquisitions include the video painting *The Transfiguration* (2015) as well as the print *To Have and to Clothe Until Death Do Us Part* (2018), tied to *Another Feather in Her Bonnet*, Monkman's performance art wedding to designer Jean Paul Gaultier.

Based in western Newfoundland, Meagan Musseau is a multidisciplinary artist of Mi'kmaq and French ancestry. Adapting unconventional materials to traditional practices, her work incorporates performance and new media, as well as beadwork, embroidery, hand sewing, and basket making. The AGG has commissioned a basket from Musseau, as part of her series Intergalactic L'nu Baskets (2017–18) that consists of traditional Mi'kmaq forms created using synthetic vinyl and neon flagging tape instead of natural materials.

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The Art Gallery of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn, work, and create.