

PAMA presents exhibit From the Heart of Turtle Island

A one-of-a-kind survey of internationally acclaimed First Nations artists opens at the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA) this Sunday (Jan. 24).

All are welcomed to the opening celebration, featuring many of the exhibited artists, contemporary dancers and remarks from the curatorial team next Sunday (Jan. 31) from 2 to 4 p.m.

From the Heart of Turtle Island: Contemporary Art from Manitoulin Island features the work of more than 30 Manitoulin artists, including the legendary Carl Beam, Anne Beam, Leland Bell, Mary Pheasant and many more. Through vivid paintings, drawings, prints and other art forms, the classic Woodlands style of painting is represented alongside other contemporary styles emerging from the island.

"This exhibit offers a one-of-a-kind opportunity to experience the scope of artistic expression on Manitoulin Island in a single exhibition," PAMA's Supervisor and Curator of the Art Gallery and Education Services Thomas Smart said. "It is a powerful reflection of the First Nations experience in Canada, including the significant cultural and traumatic issues indigenous people still face across our country, as recently detailed in the report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada."

The exhibition is presented by a curatorial team comprised of artists, curators and arts administrators, Nikki Manitowabi and Mike Cywink; artist, musician and curator Mark Seabrook; curator and arts administrator Anne Benness; and PAMA's Thomas Smart.

"This exhibition demonstrates PAMA's commitment to working collaboratively to tell the stories of our extended community, including Canada's First Nations upon whose traditional lands PAMA is built," PAMA Manager Marty Brent observed.

PAMA partnered with several organizations to bring this exhibition to life, including the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, the Wiikwemikoong Art Gallery, the Wikwemikong Development Commission and the Wikwemikong Board of Education. The exhibition received valuable assistance from the Clifford and Lily Fielding Charitable Foundation, Fisher Wavy Inc., and the Ontario Arts Council through its Annual Operating Grant Program for Public Art Galleries.

The exhibition will be on view at PAMA from Jan. 24 until March 20. It will then tour to venues in northern Ontario.

Running concurrently with the exhibition are Carl Beams' Selected Prints, highlighting the dynamic innovation of one of Canada's most significant artists, and Spiritual Connections, an exhibition exploring the themes of spirit, myth and folklore.