

PRESS RELEASE

INDIGENOUS CULTURES



Spotlight on First Nations Cultures at the McCord Museum:

Nadia Myre, Kent Monkman, Hannah Claus and an Exhibition of Haida art

Montreal, October 29, 2018 – The McCord Museum’s 2018 and 2019 programming will honour Indigenous artists and cultures. First, **Nadia Myre**, a member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg nation, will show three works as part of the Museum’s permanent exhibition *Wearing Our Identity – The First Peoples Collection*. She will invite visitors to take a contemporary look at Indigenous identity and the place of communities in our society. Then, in February 2019, the McCord will present the highly anticipated exhibition *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience* by multidisciplinary Canadian artist of Cree ancestry **Kent Monkman**. It will be followed in March by an exhibition by **Hannah Claus**, an artist of Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) descent, who will be in residence at the Museum for the 2018–2019 season. Then in April, an exhibition of **Haida art** will open, showcasing the Museum’s outstanding collection of Haida objects along with works by contemporary artists from that community.

Nadia Myre: Reflections on Identity, Resilience and Belonging

Through her multidisciplinary approach, artist Nadia Myre challenges the public to question its conception of Canada as homeland, colonial nation and “Native land” from the viewpoint of contemporary Indigenous identity. Visitors are plunged into the heart of a paradigm shift, as the artist sometimes makes them play the role of “the white man,” sometimes “the Native.”

With her video *Rethinking Anthem*, Myre urges us to remember that “Canada” is a guest on many unceded Indigenous territories. The artist synthesizes her thought in four words, playing with their appearance and disappearance. *Portrait in Motion* is an allegorical superimposition that transposes and merges the “exoticized” image of “the Native” and the coded representation of the pioneer. Finally, the installation *A Casual Reconstruction, Remix*, questions dialogic and documentary forms and concepts of authenticity, while at the same time exploring themes of identity, resilience and belonging in connection with Canada’s historical policies of forced assimilation. For the occasion, chairs decorated with Mi’kmaq porcupine quill designs from the Indigenous Cultures collection, one of the McCord Museum’s signature collections, will be placed alongside the work.

Rethinking Anthem, *Portrait in Motion* and *A Casual Reconstruction, Remix*, will be presented as part of the exhibition *Wearing Our Identity – The First Peoples Collection* until January 2020.

Kent Monkman – *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*

February 8 – May 5, 2019

February will see the much-anticipated return of internationally renowned Cree artist Kent Monkman. When Monkman was the McCord's artist in residence in 2013, he created his monumental painting *Welcome to the Studio* — which was acquired by the Museum in 2014 thanks in part to the support of Montrealers — in tribute to the city, and now he is coming back to present his exhibition *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*.

Monkman's paintings are critical depictions of colonialism and its devastating effects on the Indigenous peoples of Canada. *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience* features the artist's spiritual alter ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, a silent witness to key moments in the history of the First Peoples. The exhibition will also include artefacts from the McCord's Indigenous Cultures and Decorative Arts collections.

Hannah Claus

March 7 – August 11, 2019

As part of its *Artist-in-Residence* program, the McCord Museum will welcome Hannah Claus in March 2019. The program invites artists from Montreal or elsewhere to explore and interact with the Museum's collections, casting a critical and conceptual eye and relating them to their own artistic practices. Through the works they create, artists in residence revisit the social and historical facets of artefacts in the Museum's collections and address how they help construct our identity as Montrealers and as a society.

Hannah Claus is a multidisciplinary visual artist of British and Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) ancestry. She uses installation to create sensory environments that speak of memory and transformation.

Exhibition of Haida Art

April 19 – October 27, 2019

On their lush islands off the northwest coast of Canada, the Haida created a world of exceptional artistic expression—a world that enabled them to leave their mark on history, despite their virtual disappearance in the late 19th century. Their artistic output demonstrates great technical skill and artistic versatility: carved and painted boxes, living masks, finely woven baskets, complex songs and dances, refined tattoos and imposing totem poles all communicate ideas, conventions, histories and philosophies through abstract and naturalistic forms.

The exhibition, featuring a remarkable selection of rare historical Haida objets d'art from the Museum's collections, reveals a slice of this people's rich heritage. Most of the objects were collected in 1878 by George Mercer Dawson on his travels through the Haida Gwaii archipelago. Contemporary Haida artists are continually exploring the ancient language of their art; it is the foundation on which new endeavours are built and the grammar with which future histories are written.

Works by contemporary Haida artists selected by curator Kwiaahwah Jones round out the exhibition. Born in the Canadian Haida Gwaii archipelago, Kwiaahwah Jones is a major figure in contemporary Haida art and in raising the visibility of this unique culture.

The McCord Museum, Keeper of the Vast Indigenous Cultures Collection

The McCord Museum's Indigenous Cultures collection consists of over 16,500 archaeological and historic artefacts recounting nearly 12,000 years of history—eloquent examples of the material culture of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis, primarily from Canada. It explores the deep meaning of the artefacts not just as historical evidence, but as expressions of the development, evolution and constant revitalization of Indigenous cultures. The Indigenous Cultures collection is one of the Museum's key social history components, reflecting founder David Ross McCord's interest in conserving traces of Canada's three founding peoples, including First Peoples.

About the McCord Museum

The McCord Museum is the museum of all Montrealers, a social history museum that celebrates life in Montreal, both past and present—its history, its people, and its communities. Open to the city and the world, the Museum presents exciting exhibitions, educational programming and cultural activities that offer a contemporary perspective on history, engaging visitors from Montreal, Canada and beyond. It is home to over 1.5 million artefacts, comprising one of the largest historical collections in North America, organized into the following departments: Dress, Fashion and Textiles, Photography, Indigenous Cultures, Paintings, Prints and Drawings, Decorative Arts, and Textual Archives. McCord Museum: Our People, Our Stories.

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Interviews may be arranged with Nadia Myre, Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum and Guislaine Lemay, Curator, Ethnology and Indigenous Cultures.

PHOTOGRAPHS

[Nadia Myre](#)

[Kent Monkman](#)

[Hannah Claus](#)

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Source and information

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