

Interweaving Communities

For untold centuries Aboriginal peoples of the Americas have been interweaving communities through the mutual exchange of songs, stories, cultural practices, and finely made art objects. Passed down through generations, and disseminated through trade and other networks, these expressive art forms helped to affirm alliances and kinship ties, while fostering interdependence and mutual responsibility. This tradition of inter-cultural sharing and communal enrichment continues today in the 5th Annual New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts.

“We are all related,” the late Ojibway artist Carl Beam frequently professed – related to each other, to the land, and to all that live on the land. Beam was not just referring to Aboriginal peoples, but to all of humanity. While communal, by nature, none of us is a member of only one community. In fact, we share membership in many discrete yet interwoven communities simultaneously – ethnic, religious, social, political, academic, professional, national, and global. There is a dynamic quality to such communities, with porous and shifting boundaries, and common points of intersection and overlap. Contemporary Aboriginal artists – in performing, publishing, literature and the visual arts – capture this dynamic spirit in their work, drawing inspiration from diverse communal traditions, to weave together a richly textured and multi-hued fabric of indigenous cultural experience. Today, we gather together to further unfold this fabric.

All my relations.

Since its beginning in 2002, the New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts has brought together in a public forum individuals from various First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, as well as from the non-Native community. Presenters have included those with expertise in photography, painting, film making, musical performance, sculpture, art history, literature, and the culinary arts. Themes such as “healing through the arts,” “transforming traditions,” “engaging authenticity,” and “interweaving communities” have been explored in a collegial and communal atmosphere that encourages dialogue on important cultural and artistic issues. The conference honours, and seeks to raise public awareness of individuals whose works affirm contemporary Aboriginal experience and contribute to increased cross-cultural understanding. All conference presentations have been archived on video and can be borrowed from Carleton’s Instructional Media Services.

Dr. Allan J. Ryan was appointed as the New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture in July, 2001. The first of its kind in Canada, the Chair is situated in the School of Canadian Studies at Carleton. It is made possible through the support of the New Sun Fund, administered by the Community Foundation of Ottawa.

Contact: allan_ryan@carleton.ca www.trickstershift.ca

5th Annual *New Sun Conference* **on Aboriginal Arts: Interweaving Communities**

PROGRAM

Saturday, March 4, 2006
9 am to 4:30 pm
Room 5050, 5th Floor, Minto Centre
Carleton University

A presentation of the New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture

with the generous financial assistance of the Office of the Dean of Arts, Carleton University, Carleton’s Centre for Initiatives in Education, and the Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada



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PROGRAM

- 8:30 - 9:15 Registration
Coffee/juice/muffins
- 9:15 - 9:30 Welcome, **Dr. Allan J. Ryan**
New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture
- Opening prayer, Elder **Jim Albert**
- Welcoming remarks, **David Atkinson**
President, Carleton University
- 9:30 - 10:20 **Allan J. Ryan**, co-curator of *About Face: Native American and Inuit Self-Portraits*
- 10:25 - 11:15 **Riel Benn**, painter
- 11:15 - 11:30 Nutrition Break
- 11:30 - 12:20 **Harmony Rice**, Publisher/Creative Director,
SPIRIT Magazine
- 12:30 - 1:30 Buffet luncheon of Native cuisine, Fenn Lounge
Bannock bread with whipped butter
Root vegetable salad
Wild rice casserole
Oven roasted acorn squash
Asparagus
Arctic Char
Venison stew
Blueberry pie with whipped cream
- 1:30 - 2:00 **Susan Aglukark** in concert
- 2:20 - 3:10 **Joseph Boyden**, author and educator
- 3:15 - 4:05 **Susan Aglukark**, singer/songwriter
- 4:10 - 4:30 Concluding remarks



ALLAN J. RYAN

Dr. Allan J. Ryan holds the New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture at Carleton University, and hosts the annual New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts. He is an Associate Professor, cross appointed to the Department of Art History and the School of Canadian Studies. In a varied career he has worked as a graphic designer, recording artist, television satirist, and professor of Native Studies, Anthropology, Art History and Canadian Studies.



Dr. Ryan, along with Zena Pearlstone of the University of California, is co-curator of the major exhibition, *About Face: Native American and Inuit Self-Portraits*, currently on exhibit at the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is the author of *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (UBC Press), which received an American Book Award for its contribution to multicultural literature. When the late Ojibway artist Carl Beam received the 2005 Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts, Dr. Ryan was asked to write the essay for the accompanying publication. More recently, his essay, "One Big Indian," on the work of Mohawk artist, Bill Powless, has been included in *Me Funny*, a collection of writings on Canadian Aboriginal humour, edited by Drew Hayden Taylor, and published in January, 2006, by Douglas and McIntyre.

Visit: www.trickstershift.com

HARMONY RICE

Harmony Rice is an Anishnaabekwe of Potawatomi descent from Wasauksing First Nation. Her Spirit name is Centre of the Sky Woman.

SPIRIT Magazine is a national Indigenous arts and culture magazine that seeks to redefine Indigenous identity in Canada, exploring art, news, opinion, music, film, literature and activism.

Harmony is a mama, multi-media artist and wildflower beekeeping enthusiast. She sits on the Board of Directors for the Harmony Movement, a national non-profit race relations organization and is the President of the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts. She is a former advisor to the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's United Against Racism Campaign, a former editor of the national arts magazine *Aboriginal Voices*, and a former director of the Reel Aboriginal Film Festival. Harmony has produced for CBC Radio and appeared numerous times on CBC Toronto's Metro Morning. She is currently working on a book titled *God's Cool Timing*.

Visit: www.spiritmag.ca



BIOGRAPHIES OF PRESENTERS

SUSAN AGLUKARK

Singer/songwriter Susan Aglukark is a unique artist and a leading voice in Canadian music. She blends the Inuktitut and English languages with contemporary pop music arrangements to tell the stories of her people, the Inuit of Arctic Canada. Susan has held command performances for Her Majesty the Queen, Canadian Prime Ministers Jean Chrétien and Brian Mulroney, as well as the President of France, Jacques Chirac. She has performed for Nelson Mandela and Governor General Adrienne Clarkson along with other dignitaries. Equally important to her are the performances in many, many villages across Canada and the Arctic.



In September 2005 she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada for her contributions to music and as a workshop facilitator and mentor in the aboriginal community. She is the recipient of three Juno Awards, the first-ever Aboriginal Achievement Award in Arts & Entertainment, and the Canadian Country Music Association's (CCMA) Vista Rising Star Award. Her albums have sold over 400,000 copies in Canada.

Susan's current plans include touring her upcoming album and the continuation of her activist work. Susan says she never strays far from her roots or the people of Arctic Canada where she grew up. Her ultimate message, "to learn to be yourself and believe in that person" is for everyone.

Visit www.susanaglukark.com

RIEL BENN

Riel Benn is an established painter, living and working in Bird-tail Sioux, Manitoba. In his short, yet full career there has been an enthusiastic response to his work. In just a few short years he has produced a considerable body of work and become an artist to watch. He has had sold out exhibitions at Wasagaming Community Arts, and Winnipeg's Urban Shaman Gallery.



In 2004 the Art Gallery of Western Manitoba in Brandon exhibited work portraying his alter-ego, "The Best Man." Benn is also a featured artist in *About Face: Native American and Inuit Self-Portraits* currently on display at the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian in Santa Fe, New Mexico. His exhibition "The Magazine Series" is presently touring across the Prairies under the auspices of the Moose Jaw Art Gallery.

Benn is the recipient of several awards, including the 1999 YTV Achievement Award in Visual art, The Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award in 2001, and a nomination for a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 2003. His work can be found in public and private collections nationally and internationally.



JOSEPH BOYDEN

Joseph Boyden is a writer with Métis, Irish, and Scottish roots. He is the author of the acclaimed novel, *Three Day Road*. Inspired in part by real-life World War I Ojibwa hero Francis Pegahmagabow, *Three Day Road* reinvents the tradition of such Great War epics as *Birdsong* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Beautifully written and told with unblinking focus, it is a remarkable tale of one man's journey home. The novel was shortlisted for the 2005 Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction, and Boyden received the Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers Award, as well as the McNally Robinson Aboriginal Book of the Year Award.



His other publications include *Born with a Tooth*, a collection of stories that was shortlisted for the Upper Canada Writer's Craft Award. His work has appeared in publications such as *Potpourri*, *Cimarron Review*, *Blue Penny Quarterly*, *BlackWarrior*, and *The Panhandler*.

He divides his time between Northern Ontario and Louisiana, where he teaches Canadian literature and creative writing at the University of New Orleans.

