



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release — Thursday, November 23, 2023

Art Gallery exhibition bridging gaps between historical cultural material and contemporary art

A unique new exhibit in the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery is bridging the gaps between contemporary art and historical cultural material housed in museums.

The Mootookakio'ssin: Creating in Spacetime exhibit in the Dr. Margaret (Marmie) Perkins Hess Gallery brings together ULethbridge art students and artists living in the UK to experiment with what an art gallery can be and whom it serves.



Assistant Professor in Indigenous Art Studio, Dr. Miguelzinta Solís, led the

Indigenous Art Studio class that came together to create works for the exhibit. Over several weeks, students engaged in discussion, self-reflection, study and consultation to transform the Art Gallery space into a collective studio.

Choosing projects that were personally meaningful to them, topics for the students' artwork ranged from critiquing museum practices, to healing from generational trauma to the search for comfort and interactivity in the art gallery.

"This exhibit addresses Indigenous peoples' right to determine their own cultural expression and unique relationships to traditional objects and material practices," says Solís. "It's also an important platform for intelligent and creative critiques of colonial and Western museum practices.

This exhibit is the result of heartfelt collaboration between students, the Art Gallery and members of the Mootookakio'ssin team."

Art students collaborated with members of the Mootookakio'ssin project to develop the exhibition. The Mootookakio'ssin project connects Blackfoot Elders, artists, scholars and museum professionals living on Blackfoot territory and in Britain and captures historical cultural material in museum collections.

As Solís notes, while these are not easy themes with which to engage, the goal of the exhibit is to bring knowledge and healing to communities.

“The honesty and generosity you see in the art shown is a result of a process of open discussion and generous mutual support amongst students and between staff and students,” says Solís. “I’m deeply humbled to see the level of spirit, knowledge and critical thought each student put into the work.”

One of the students who created work for the exhibit is Pii-taa Kyaa-tsis, Walker English, a ULEthbridge Kinesiology student.

“Creating and showcasing artwork for the larger University and southern Alberta community is a fulfilling experience for me because I am able to express my personal identity, as well as the broader experience as an Indigenous person living in southern Alberta,” says English.

“It helps me foster a sense of community through the sharing of my artwork and allows others to view the artistic expression of my thoughts, feelings and experiences. I am very thankful for the opportunity to showcase my artwork in a public sphere, and I hope that this event becomes a catalyst for future events and conversations.”

Mootookakio'ssin: Creating in Spacetime is open and available to the public to view until December 16, 2023.

More information on the exhibition can be found here: <https://artgallery.uleth.ca/hess-gallery/>.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/art-gallery-exhibition-bridging-gaps-between-historical-cultural-material-and-contemporary>

-- 30 --

Contact:

Monica Lockett, Communications Specialist, Faculty of Fine Arts
m.lockett@uleth.ca
403-331-7664

Dr. Miguelzinta Solis, Faculty of Fine Arts

mc.solis@uleth.ca

Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.