

25 Years of Exhibition Announcements from Indigenous Artists

This display of printed exhibition announcement cards was chosen from the Library's documentation collection to reflect the growing presence in the past two decades of contemporary Indigenous artists in our communities. Indigenous peoples in Canada comprise First Nations, Métis and Inuit. The Library presentation also acknowledges the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*, the Gallery's landmark exhibition of contemporary art by First Nations artists, and complements the Gallery's current major retrospective of work by Alex Janvier.

One of the main functions of libraries is to collect, preserve and record items that might otherwise disappear. Although books, catalogues and magazines are transitory objects, they are typically preserved and remain available, in sharp contrast to exhibition announcements. Announcement cards, though often incomplete, frequently contain vital information such as the preferred form of the name of the artist or group and of the gallery or museum; the title, dates and location of the exhibition; and often a reproduction of an artwork with title and dimensions. These details can be crucial for researchers investigating the provenance of a work or confirming biographical information (Clive Phillpot, "Flies in the Files: Ephemera in the Art Library," *Art Documentation* 14:1 (Spring 1995: 13–14).

In the 1920s, the curatorial staff of the National Gallery of Canada began collecting documentation that would help in their acquisition, exhibition and education work. Because of the paucity of published material on the arts in Canada, files on artists were, and continue to be, an invaluable source of information, particularly in contemporary art, where few monographs or substantial exhibition catalogues have been published for most emerging artists. Today, the collection contains over 40,000 files, encompassing material on visual artists born in Canada, as well as those born elsewhere who have worked in Canada.

Documentation is collected from artists working in a variety of media, including painting, textiles, sculpture, pottery, graphic design, installation art, architecture, photography, bookbinding, and many others. In addition to announcement cards, each file, which may vary in size from a few items to several hundred, may include material such as newspaper clippings, exhibition notices, press releases, documentation received from the artists (including completed biographical forms and curricula vitae) and other printed ephemera. However, printed invitations and announcements are no longer as common, as museums and galleries replace them with digital alternatives. The period covered in this display (1992–2017) evocatively reveals how our experience of art has changed in unexpected ways since the advent of new technology.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

EXHIBITION NO. 54

3 JANUARY - 30 APRIL 2017

25^x25

1. Daphne Odjig (1919–2016)
2. Rita Letendre (born 1928)
3. Norval Morrisseau (called Copper Thunderbird) (1932–2007)
4. Alex Janvier (born 1935)
5. Carl Beam (1943–2005)
6. William Noah (born 1943)
7. Robert Davidson (born 1946)
8. Robert Houle (born 1947)
9. Itee Pootoogook (1951–2014)
10. Gerald McMaster (born 1953)
11. Edward Poitras (born 1953)
12. Shelley Niro (born 1954)
13. Jeffrey Thomas (born 1956)
14. Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (born 1957)
15. Barry Ace (born 1958)
16. Rosalie Favell (born 1958)
17. Rebecca Belmore (born 1960)
18. Shuinai Ashoona (born 1961)
19. Kent Monkman (born 1965)
20. Annie Pootoogook (1969–2016)
21. Brian Jungen (born 1970)
22. Frank Shebageget (born 1972)
23. Nadia Myre (born 1974)
24. Terrance Houle (born 1975)
25. Meryl McMaster (born 1988)

