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## Public Art Call for Emerging Indigenous Artists



*Photo credit: The Bathing Pavilion building at Cave and Basin National Historic Site, Banff, Alberta (image courtesy of Parks Canada)*

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**DESCRIPTION OF OPPORTUNITY:** Parks Canada Agency and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies seek up to three Indigenous Artists to create temporary mural paintings, to be displayed prominently on the grounds at Cave and Basin National Historic Site. This call is open in 2022 to all Indigenous Artists 18 years of age and older from Îyârhe Nakoda (Stoney), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and Tsuut'ina communities who are looking to increase their knowledge of mural painting and large-scale public art-making.

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: Monday, March 4 @ 11:59pm**

**TO APPLY:** Applications should be submitted electronically in \*.PDF format to: [cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca](mailto:cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca) (E-mail subject line should read: Indigenous Artist MENTEE Application.)

**CONTACT:** For more information about the project, or to arrange a meeting via phone, video conference or in-person, please contact Project Coordinator Dawn Saunders Dahl at: [dsaundersdahl@whyte.org](mailto:dsaundersdahl@whyte.org)

**CONTRACT PERIOD:** April 2022- July 2022

**BUDGET:**

- Supplies and installation will be provided as well as per diem, travel and accommodation costs.
- \$2,500 Artist Fee for each Indigenous Artist "Mentee". A maximum of 3 Mentees will be selected. Artists from Îyârhe Nakoda (Stoney), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and Tsuut'ina will be selected in the first year (2022) of this multi-year project. Ktunaxa, Secwépemc, Métis and other Indigenous artists with community/historic ties to Banff will be invited to participate in 2023-24. Please send [cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca](mailto:cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca) your contact info if you are interested in participating.

## 1. BACKGROUND:

This jointly funded initiative is supported by Parks Canada (Cave and Basin National Historic Site) and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies. It is an opportunity to create 3 large temporary murals (approx. 8ft wide x 8ft high x 8 ft long) for temporary display at Cave and Basin National Historic Site in Banff, Alberta. These murals will provide Indigenous artists from Treaty 7 nations (Blackfoot Confederacy, Tsuut’ina, Îyârhe Nakoda) a space to express their perspectives on Indigenous histories of the Cave and Basin and the Banff/Bow Valley Region. This is an opportunity for Indigenous Artists, Elders and Community members as well as Parks Canada and the Whyte Museum staff to come together, connect with the site and share perspectives through art and storytelling. The completed murals will be an opportunity for all visitors to the Cave and Basin to learn about the diverse Indigenous stories, histories and experiences that live in this special place.

**Site Description:** Situated just outside the Town of Banff at the base of Sulphur Mountain, Cave and Basin has been a special place for Indigenous Peoples for over ten thousand years to the present. It is also the site of Canada’s first national park, where settlers built swimming pools, historic architecture and tourism activity following the arrival of the railway. At the heart of this multi-layered and sometimes difficult history are the mineral hot springs, geological features and unique ecology that have drawn people here for millennia. Today, the site is a national historic site and museum visited each year by hundreds of thousands of people from around the world; a gathering place for sharing stories about the connections between people and the land in special places across the northern reaches of Turtle Island.

**Mentorship:** Indigenous arts and culture hold an unmeasurable wealth of knowledge, and for centuries Elders and knowledge keepers have provided support systems for younger generations on Turtle Island. As Elders, artists and community members pass, that loss of knowledge combined with integration of different world views reduces and limits opportunities to continue to ‘pass the fire’. The goal of embedding a mentorship opportunity within this art project is to provide positive experiences through the transfer of knowledge, thus strengthening Indigenous artistic voices within the public art and art exhibition fields.

The Mural Boxes project will be guided by Dawn Saunders Dahl (Manager of Indigenous Relationships and Programs at the Whyte Museum), Angus Leech (Parks Canada) and Mural Artist AJA Loudon. Dawn and AJ are artists and arts administrators who have been collaborating on community mural projects for 10+ years. Cheyenne Ozinja-Thiha, Indigenous Project Coordinator for Parks Canada and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, will handle logistics for this project (with mentorship from Dawn, Angus and AJA). Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous Guest Artists with significant experience making public art will also make an important contribution to the project, by providing guidance and mentorship to Indigenous Mentees.

## 2. GOALS:

Since a time beyond memory, the Cave and Basin, Banff and surrounding areas have been a place for gathering, healing, trade, travel, cultural exchange, economic activity, spiritual practice and ceremony in connection with the land. Over thousands of years to the present, many different peoples have lived in and visited this place, making it what it is today—a landscape multi-layered with stories, languages, memories and perspectives. The purpose of the Cave and Basin Mural Boxes project is to honour the rich Indigenous history and contemporary significance of this place through an art initiative that shares visual stories from a diversity of Indigenous community perspectives, making these stories visible to all site visitors in the form of colorful murals created by emerging Indigenous artists. Principles guiding this project include truth, inclusion, gathering, sharing, exchange of knowledge and perspectives across diverse cultural boundaries, storytelling, land, language, reconciliation and healing. The guiding theme for the project will be “Stories of this Place”. In its first year, the project will prioritize artist participants from Treaty 7 nations (Blackfoot Confederacy, Tsuut’ina, Îyârhe Nakoda). If this project is successful, the intent is to open up participation to artists from other Indigenous nations with ties to Banff in subsequent years.

The intent of the project partners (Parks Canada and Whyte Museum) is that the large-scale mural box artworks will:

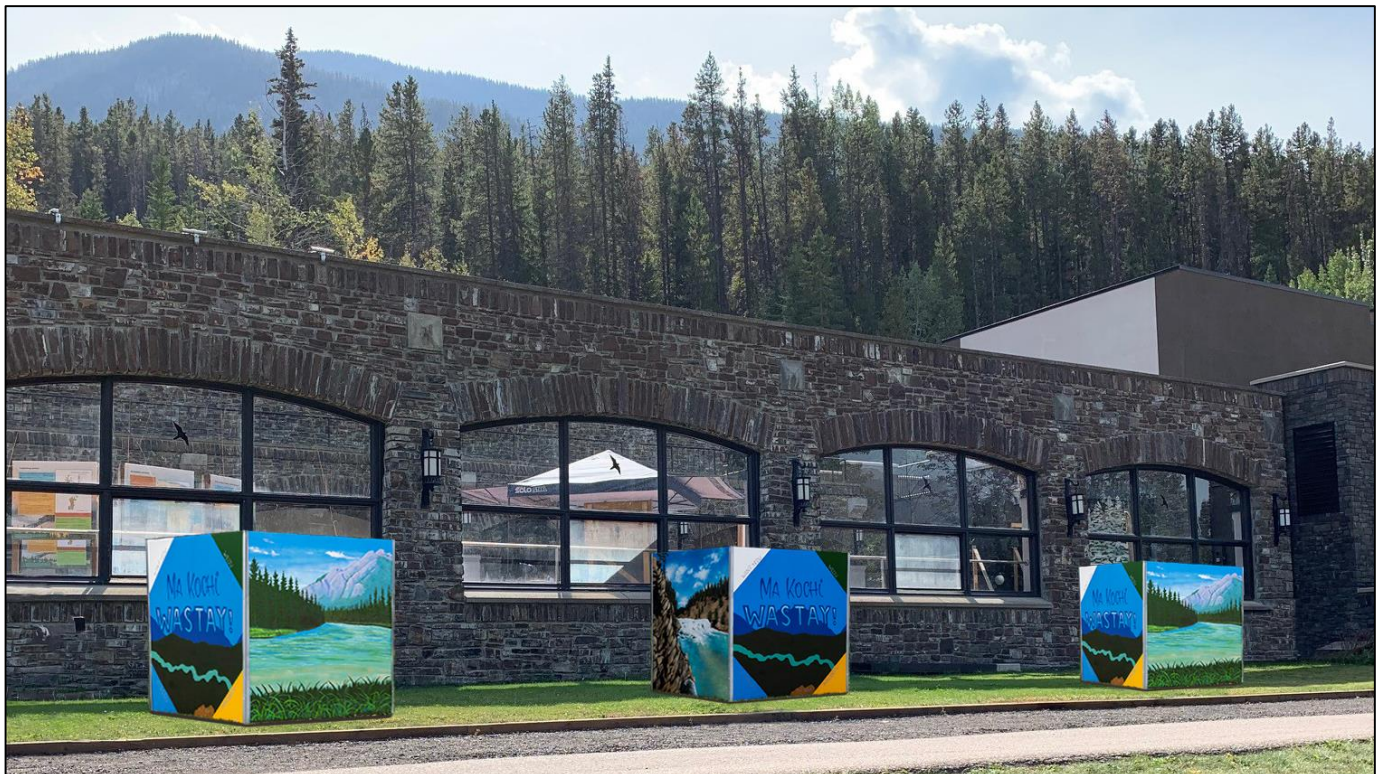
- Welcome and intrigue site visitors from local communities and around the world;
- Tell visually-compelling stories about the rich Indigenous history of Banff and Cave and Basin, from a diversity of Indigenous community and cultural perspectives;
- Inspire the general public to learn about, and become more aware of, Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Ways of Doing, Ways of Connecting and Ways of Being, including connections with the land, cultural values and the unique meanings of this special place to Indigenous communities.
- Remind viewers of both “Truth” and “Reconciliation”— the important work that we all must do to learn the truths, and actively reconcile the consequences of these truths, in the spaces where we learn, work and socialize;
- Offer a physical representation and manifestation of the commitments that Parks Canada and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies have made to reconciliation, right relations and action.
- Contribute to the long-term goal of decolonizing sites like Cave and Basin and making Banff a safe, welcoming and culturally responsive space for Indigenous peoples and participation.

### 3. SCHEDULE (subject to change)

MILESTONES	DATES
Dissemination of Call to Artists / Mentees begins	Jan 14, 2022
Applications for Artist Mentees *DUE*	Friday, March 4, 2022 @ 11:59pm
Artist Mentees selected	March 11, 2022
Artist Mentees Contracts drafted & signed	March 25, 2022
Blessing for Project and Artist Introductions	May 1, 2022
Idea Development	May 2022 (3 days)
Artwork Proposal Review	May 2022
Artwork Creation: Research, concept planning and sketching (*Estimate 2 weeks of activity over 2 months. Exact dates TBA, to be confirmed based on availability of artist participants.)	May to June 2022*
Artwork Creation: Mural painting, installation and debrief	June 2022
Celebration and Unveiling	June 2022

**4. PUBLIC ART TEMPORARY MURAL LOCATIONS:**

The murals created during this project will be painted on large cubes (8' X 8' X 8' plywood boxes) and installed within the grounds of Cave and Basin National Historic Site. The following photos highlight the installation location and show how the boxes will look once installed. (Images courtesy of Parks Canada)



**5. ARTIST MENTEE OPPORTUNITY:**

Cave and Basin National Historic Site (Parks Canada Agency) and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies seek up to three Indigenous Artists to collaboratively create three large-scale temporary murals, to be displayed prominently on the grounds at Cave and Basin. The Artist Mentees will work with Mural Artist AJA Loudon and the Project Coordinators (Dawn Saunders Dahl and Angus Leech) to design and create the artwork in consultation with Indigenous Artists, Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Mentorship and guidance will be provided to the mentee participants in all aspects of the public art-making process, including but not limited to the following areas:

- Content creation
- Idea generation and design development
- Art-making skills
- Fabrication and installation
- Project management skills including budget, timeline, and reporting

This call is open to all Indigenous Artists 18 years of age and older from Îyârhe Nakoda (Stoney), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and Tsuut’ina communities who are looking to increase their knowledge of mural painting and large-scale public art-making. Please note: you do not need to be currently living in areas covered under Treaty 7, but you must be a member of the Îyârhe Nakoda, Niitsitapi or Tsuut’ina Nations to participate in the first year of this project (2022). This mural project and mentorship program will provide participants with opportunities to build their art-making skills, as well as skills in project management for public art-making. Participants will have the chance to conduct research at the Whyte Museum and Cave and Basin, and to network and build new relationships that support their art-making practices. It will also be a valuable opportunity to connect with new audiences, and have artworks seen by large numbers of travellers and locals deeply interested in Indigenous culture and Banff history.

The ideal candidate(s) will demonstrate evidence of their commitment to art-making and efforts they have made to progress their artistic career. They will demonstrate a desire and willingness to learn and benefit from this rare mentorship opportunity. Candidates are encouraged, but not required, to have at least some previous experience making art in different mediums.

**6. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

- Applications must be submitted via email to [cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca](mailto:cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca) as one or more clearly labeled \*.PDF files.
- Subject Line for your email submission should read: “Indigenous Artist MENTEE Application”
- Applications must be received no later than **Monday, March 14, 2022 at 11:59pm.**
- Applications must include:

✓	Artist CV or Resume (3 pages max)
✓	Expression of Interest (1 page max) to describe the applicant’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Artmaking practice</li> <li>✓ Desire for mentorship in art-making</li> </ul>
✓	Images of past artwork (10 *.JPEG images max). Image files must be clearly labeled to include the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Artist name, Artwork title, Artwork dimensions, Medium used, Year created</li> </ul>

**LATE OR INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

## 7. SELECTION PROCESS

The successful candidate will be selected for this opportunity through both an open call and an invitational process. Upon submission of their application to [cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca](mailto:cheyenne.bearspaw@pc.gc.ca) (Subject Line: Indigenous Artist MENTEE Application), applicants will receive, within 2 business days, e-mail confirmation of successful receipt of their complete application. Applications will be reviewed by Parks Canada, Whyte Museum staff and Indigenous Artists. The Committee will evaluate applications according to selection criteria including:

- Demonstrated experience in the visual arts (public art experience is an asset, but not required)
- Expressed interest in a mentorship opportunity
- Demonstrated interest in Indigenous community engagement and collaboration with artists.
- Knowledge of Indigenous art practices and cultural protocols
- Experience in project management related to the creation of public artworks, visual art and/or design would be an asset, but is not required

Once submissions have been reviewed, all applicants will receive an email regarding the Committee's decision on their application.

**THE DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE DEEMED FINAL.**

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Parks Canada and Whyte Museum employees and Selection Committee members will be required to treat both the content of applicant submissions and deliberations of the Committee as confidential. Committee members will not be permitted to keep copies of applications once the selection has been made.

**PARKS CANADA AND THE WHYTE MUSEUM RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL SUBMISSIONS, OR ANY PART THEREOF, OR TO TERMINATE OR RE-ADVERTISE THE PROJECT.**