



KITCHENER - WATERLOO
ART GALLERY

Join *ArtsAccess* at National Aboriginal Day and the K-W Multicultural Festival - June 21 & 22

June 16, 2008 - *Kitchener, Ontario, Canada* – *ArtsAccess* will join community members at this year's National Aboriginal Day held in conjunction with the K-W Multicultural Festival on June 21st and 22nd. Both events are held in Victoria Park, Kitchener.

ArtsAccess is a community arts outreach initiative of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KW|AG) in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario which focuses on building relationships with cultural organizations, schools, libraries and community centres.

National Aboriginal Day events are held in multiple regions across Canada on June 21st. June 21st was chosen because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice (first day of summer and longest day of the year). The event is part of the wider recognition of Aboriginal Peoples' important place within the fabric of Canada and their on-going contributions as First Peoples.

Anishnabeg Outreach will be hosting this event in Kitchener. The festivities will include Ojibway storytelling, dancing, singing, and craft vendors with a grand opening flag ceremony beginning at 12:30. *ArtsAccess* Community Artist Facilitator Mosa Neshamá McNeilly will have an area set up in the park to engage in a collaborative, site-specific art project. The project will use found materials, the colours and symbolism of the Medicine Wheel, and focus on the theme of caring for our Mother Earth.



Community Artist-Facilitator, Mosa Neshamá McNeilly, with young participants at National Aboriginal Day, 2007.



Collaborative artwork made at the K-W Multicultural Festival at Victoria Park, 2007.

"The collaborative art project with *ArtsAccess* offers a unique, powerful way for community members to make connections and acknowledge their footprint on their community - both in terms of their cultural heritage and in an ecological sense," says Donna Gerber, Anishnabeg Outreach's Director.

For the Multicultural Festival, the public is invited to visit the *ArtsAccess* booth and add to another collaborative art work installation, taking inspiration from the current exhibition at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery: Janet Morton's *Better Homes and Gardens*. The project will invite participants to reflect on the impact of the mass amounts of refuse that is discarded everyday while they recycle found materials into a collaborative work of art. Participants will alter and re-purpose the materials to create a plant-like installation that echoes the natural landscape.



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Event Details

National Aboriginal Day

Saturday June 21, 2008, Noon - 7:00 p.m., Sunday June 22, 2008, Noon – 6:00 p.m.

The island at Victoria Park, Kitchener; admission is free and everyone is welcome.

For more information about National Aboriginal Day, visit the Anishnabeg Outreach web site at <http://www.anishnabegoutreach.org/index.php?community>

K-W Multicultural Festival

Saturday, June 21, Noon-9 p.m. & Sunday, June 22, Noon - 8 p.m.

Victoria Park, Kitchener; admission is free and everyone is welcome.

For more information, visit the City of Kitchener web site at <http://www.kitchener.ca/default.aspx?tabid=2>

About Anishnabeg Outreach

Anishnabeg Outreach is a non-profit, charitable organization assisting Aboriginal individuals in their search for employment, training and education opportunities. Their mission is to build bridges for Aboriginal peoples in urban communities. Anishnabeg Outreach provides Aboriginal people with access to culturally appropriate services, direction and assistance to overcome their barriers, encourages individual exploration of avenues that will lead to self-sufficiency and success, and promotes a holistic approach to life-long career decision making. For more information, visit <http://www.anishnabegoutreach.org>.

About ArtsAccess

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery's (KW|AG) participation in *ArtsAccess*, a three year provincial partnership between KW|AG, the Art Gallery of Ontario, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, and Woodland Cultural Centre, provides an alternative approach to programming that draws from community arts practice, with values congruent to the Gallery's goal of transforming the "institutional box" into a catalyst for community development. Over 6300 people have already participated in initiatives through *ArtsAccess*, the majority of whom represent new audiences for KW|AG. Current community partners include: Anishnabeg Outreach, The Children's Museum, Downtown Community Centre, Forest Heights Collegiate Institute, Kitchener Public Library, Kitchener Youth Action Council, the Kitchener Waterloo Multicultural Centre, Open Sesame, St. John's Catholic School, St. Mary's High School, University of Waterloo, and The Working Centre.

About the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

Through thoughtful and engaging programs, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KW|AG) connects people and ideas through art. The Gallery's exhibits and programs are built on the mission that art is the catalyst for shared experience, dialogue and imagination. The Gallery emphasizes contemporary art, often premiering works by Canadian and international artists. Exhibitions frequently draw upon selections from the 4 000 -work permanent collection to provide a forum for dialogue. KW|AG plays a vital educational role in the community, offering a full spectrum of artistic experience for adults, children and families alike. Established in 1956 and operating within Centre In The Square, KW|AG is the oldest and largest public gallery in Waterloo region: roots in the community, eyes on the world. For more information, contact mail@kwag.on.ca or visit www.kwag.on.ca.

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Connecting people and ideas through art.