

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program  
Region 2 - Northeast and North Central Alberta, Art Gallery of Alberta



## Street Wise

In September, 2022, TREX Region 2, managed by the Art Gallery of Alberta, sent three new exhibitions out on the road to travel the province until 2024. This December/January a fourth and final exhibition for the 2022-2023 season from TREX Region 2 began its two year tour of Alberta. Entitled **Ahkameyimo - Never Give Up**, this exhibition features works by two young Indigenous artists whose works, while respecting traditional culture and visual imagery, also engage with the urban environments in which they reside. In doing so these artists challenge perceptions and stereotypes and offer new visions of what Indigenous art can be.

**Matthew Cardinal** is of Cree heritage and was born in Grande Prairie. He lived in John D'or Prairie, Little Red River Reserve in Treaty 8 territory, until he was three years old. His family then moved to Edmonton, believing there were more opportunities in the city. Cardinal has lived in the city ever since.



Matthew Cardinal  
A Days Rest, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
Collection of the artist

While Cardinal was interested in art as a child, as he grew up he gradually lost interest in it. At the age of thirteen, however, he started attending iHuman Youth Society, a non-profit agency in Edmonton engaged with fostering positive personal development and well being among marginalized youth, and was re-introduced to art making there.

While at iHuman he noticed that his friends and family started getting into graffiti and he became interested in it as well. As expressed by this artist, being a graffiti artist 'sort of relates to being Indigenous': just as Indigenous people were traditionally nomadic so too is a graffiti artist, travelling all over the place to work.

Matthew Cardinal relates that he has been painting for about eight years. In his work he focuses on emotions and he describes his work as very intuitive. The main subject matter of his personal art pieces is animals with his interest in them coming from traditional teachings and through learning about the gifts they can bring a person. He creates his paintings in an abstract fashion, incorporating animal imagery and graffiti lettering and elements. The animals in his paintings are fashioned in a mosaic-like manner, with the colours varying depending on what paints he has available to him.

As an artist Cardinal wants his work to take the viewer on a journey through the piece. He also wants each piece to be like a photograph in the viewer's memory; stuck in their heads so they will remember the work long after actually seeing it. On a more personal level, he sees his art making as a means of self-empowerment: making art reminds him to stay committed to something and it helps make things more achievable for himself. For Cardinal the title of the TREX exhibition **Ahkameyimo - Never Give Up** speaks to this sense of empowerment. As he describes it, the title reflects resilience. Cardinal describes himself as being like a phoenix rising from the ashes and he will keep moving on, going from one art piece to the next and nothing will destroy him.

**Lonigan Gilbert** is a Cree artist presently living in Edmonton. Born and raised in Winnipeg, Gilbert moved to Edmonton in 2017 to support his mother and sister and to see a new place and try a new experience.

Since he was a child Gilbert dreamt of working in an art gallery. While growing up he took art classes at the Winnipeg Art Gallery which got him 'hooked' into working in one some day. When he moved to Edmonton he started working with Visitor Experience administration at the Art Gallery of Alberta but was forced to leave for health reasons. Despite this personal challenge, however, Gilbert has maintained a vigorous art practice and has been achieving some recognition in the Edmonton region.

Gilbert has been interested in art since he was a child. His father was a cartoonist and this inspired him from a young age. As he relates concerning his early artistic efforts:

*The first time I ever got paid for art was in Grade Six when I painted a bison hunt for a school wall. I thought it was strange as I never grew up on a reservation but I did the commission. I experienced some bullying in school and art was a way to 'fight' back. I felt good about doing anything related to Indigenous culture and this opened doors for me to paint other projects at school.*



Lonigan Gilbert  
Mars Attacks, 2022  
Acrylic on wood panel  
Collection of the artist

While Gilbert's father was his first big influence, Vincent Van Gogh was his first artistic 'icon'. He was also very inspired by the concept paintings and illustrations of Ralph McQuarrie, who designed many of the sets and costumes for the original Star Wars trilogy and the films E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial and Cocoon. At one time Gilbert wanted to go into drawing and concept art as he loved the story-telling aspect of this art form, which is also a part of Cree culture. A bicycle accident, however, ended these plans and Gilbert's work has become looser and more expressionistic than what he was initially interested in. He sees his style of painting, however, as a means to allow viewers of his work to have their own interpretations of what they see. As he expresses, the overall narrative being expressed is very open to interpretation.

Gilbert views his art work/practice as an outlet for himself and what he strives for is honesty in his work. What he sees around himself and political and social values and dynamics of people are the sources of inspiration for his art and while his work can deal with some very heavy subjects, he is not trying to dictate interpretations or tastes. Rather, he leaves it up to the viewer to arrive at their own interpretations.

For Gilbert the title of this exhibition **Ahkameyimo - Never Give Up** expresses an element of 'hope'. As written by the artist:

*The meaning (of the title) is for many people to persevere through adversity, oppressive division, to carry on living in a good and kind way individually and communally.*

*However giving up can happen willingly or not, knowingly or not with systemic issues effecting growth at any point; through barriers to age, race and gender, or lifestyle struggles both personal or professional.*

*Communal discussions surrounding division on the shoulders of the individual have never been more broad across turtle island as a whole and it is through this complex collective discourse that most insurmountable social issues will be addressed in every field through unity.*

*This empowering charge to recognize shared bonds across cultures and the empathetic engagement necessary to give our shared futures new meaning by working through our generational trauma in a world more transparent to the truth of a repressed past will lead to a brighter future with ahkameyimo in mind.*

# Exhibition Schedule January to June 2023

| Exhibition   | Jan. 26 - Feb. 22  | March 2 - April 12  | April 20 - May 17  | May 25 - June 21   |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>40 is the new 20!</b><br/>This exhibition celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) art collection and the recent 40th anniversary of the AFA's TREX program by re-visiting TREX exhibitions produced by the Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA) over the past twenty years. The works presented express the vitality of the visual arts in Alberta and the roles of the AFA and AGA in supporting the arts in the province.<br/>Curated by Shane Golby, TREX Region 2</p>   | <p>St. Paul Elementary School<br/>4520-48 Ave.,<br/>St. Paul<br/>Contact: Garth Finlay<br/>Phone: 780-645-3537</p> | <p>Ardmore School<br/>4801-48 Ave.,<br/>Ardmore<br/>Contact: Evelyn Bourbeau<br/>Phone: 780-826-5144</p>                        | <p>Ecole Kenneth Kearns<br/>8 Sandpiper Drive<br/>Sherwood Park<br/>Contact: Jacqueline Dargis-Boucher<br/>Phone: 780-467-7135</p> | <p>Alice Melnyk Library<br/>5009 Diefenbaker Ave.,<br/>Two Hills<br/>Contact: Betty Lou Kobe<br/>Phone: 780-657-3553</p> |
| <p><b>Figure It Out</b><br/>For over 40,000 years the human figure has been a vital subject in humanity's artistic endeavors. While the paintings in the exhibition <i>Figure It Out</i> focus on human figures, this exhibition is also about story telling. Rather than creating narratives that have a precise meaning, these artists engage viewers by pulling them into the works to try and figure out what the figures presented are doing while inviting viewers to create their own tales based on the scene.<br/>Curated by Shane Golby, TREX Region 2</p> | <p>WP Wagner School<br/>6310 Wagner Rd. NW<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Rebecca Marcus<br/>Phone: 780-469-1315</p>    | <p>Mother Margaret Mary School<br/>2010 Leger Rd.<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Nicole Thauvett<br/>Phone: 780-988-2279</p>         | <p>Fox Creek Library<br/>103-2a Avenue<br/>Fox Creek<br/>Contact: Mandy Miskelly<br/>Phone: 780-622-2343</p>                       | <p>Barrhead Public Library<br/>5103-53 Ave.,<br/>Barrhead<br/>Contact: Elaine Dickie<br/>Phone: 780-674-8519</p>         |
| <p><b>Come What May</b><br/>For thousands of years artists have either reflected on current situations in their work or created 'alternate worlds' which comment on the present or hint at how the future will unfold. The TREX exhibition <i>Come What May</i> features the work of three artists who, through a focus on 'fantasy' and imagination in their creative endeavors, reflect on the world as they find it or create new worlds which envision a different course for the human race.<br/>Curated by Shane Golby, TREX Region 2</p>                      | <p>Warburg School<br/>5412-50 Street<br/>Warburg<br/>Contact: Janet Sarvas<br/>Phone: 780-848-2822</p>             | <p>Stuart MacPherson Library<br/>#101, 8702-91 Ave.,<br/>Lac La Biche<br/>Contact: Kristy Arsenault<br/>Phone: 780-623-7467</p> | <p>Lacombe Memorial Centre<br/>5214-50 Ave.,<br/>Lacombe<br/>Contact: Maureen MacKenzie<br/>Phone: 403-782-1258</p>                | <p>Vermilion Public Library<br/>5001-49 Ave.,<br/>Vermilion<br/>Contact: Sheila Heit<br/>Phone: 780-853-4288</p>         |
| <p><b>Ahkameyimo - Never Give Up</b><br/>The travelling exhibition <i>Ahkameyimo - Never Give Up</i> features the work of three Indigenous artists whose works, while respecting traditional culture and visual imagery, also engage with the urban environment in which they reside.<br/>Curated by Shane Golby, TREX Region 2</p>  | <p>Rideau Park School<br/>10605-42 Ave., NW<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Jane Zaiane<br/>Phone: 780-437-0010</p>      | <p>Beaumont Public Library<br/>5700-49 Street<br/>Beaumont<br/>Contact: Andrea Ciochetti<br/>Phone: 780-929-2665</p>            | <p>Mayerthorpe High School<br/>5310-50 Ave.,<br/>Mayerthorpe<br/>Contact: Diane Ziemmer<br/>Phone: 780-786-2624</p>                | <p>Devon Public Library<br/>101-17 Athabasca Ave.,<br/>Devon<br/>Contact: Leigha Rind<br/>Phone: 780-987-3720</p>        |
| <p><b>The Rush and Roar!</b><br/>The 1920s were a pivotal decade in human history, ushering in political, economic, social and cultural changes which continue to impact contemporary society. This exhibition presents art works from the collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts which reflect these changes and provide context for the tumult of this present time.<br/>Curated by Shane Golby, Art Gallery of Alberta</p>   |  | <p>Red Brick Arts Centre<br/>4818-7 Avenue<br/>Edson<br/>Contact: Linda Wright<br/>Phone: 780-723-3582</p>                      | <p>Town of Ponoka<br/>#200, 5604-50 Street<br/>Ponoka<br/>Contact: Tamara Cameron<br/>Phone: 403-783-0130</p>                      | <p>W.P. Wagner School<br/>6310 Wagner Rd. NW<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Karly Kulpa<br/>Phone: 780-469-1315</p>           |
| <p><b>Fields of Vision, Lines of Sight</b><br/>Featuring 17 artworks from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts collection, the exhibition <i>Fields of Vision, Lines of Sight</i> highlights Alberta's vast prairie landscapes rendered 2 - dimensionally by twelve different artists.<br/>Curated by Ashley Slemming, TREX Region 3</p>  | <p>Vermilion Public Library<br/>5001-49 Ave.,<br/>Vermilion<br/>Contact: Sheila Heit<br/>Phone: 780-853-4288</p>   | <p>Goes to Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre<br/>TREX Region 4</p>   |  |  |
| <p><b>Tale of a Fish Scale</b><br/><i>Tale of a Fish Scale</i> reflects on the beauty and bounty of fish, as well as the responsibility we hold as stewards of the lakes and rivers they live in. The exhibition hopes to pass on knowledge of the fish scale art form while opening up important dialogues surrounding the preservation of Alberta waterways.<br/>Curated by Genevieve Farrell, TREX Region 4</p>   | <p>Portage College<br/>9531-94 Ave.,<br/>Lac La Biche<br/>Contact: Jaime Davies<br/>Phone: 780-623-5551</p>        | <p>Goes to Art Gallery of Grande Prairie<br/>TREX Region 1</p>  |  |  |
| <p><b>Farming in the Dust Bowl</b><br/><i>Farming in the Dust Bowl</i> explores the histories of the dust bowl on the Canadian prairies during the 1930s. Carefully researched by Carol Bromley Meeres in consultation with cultural sites and family memories, each piece contains a unique reference to farm life during the dust bowl, highlighting stories of survival and resilience during an economic, climate and social crisis.<br/>Curated by Robin Lynch, TREX Region 1</p>   | <p>Viking Municipal Library<br/>4920-53 Ave.,<br/>Viking<br/>Contact: Kelly Harray<br/>Phone: 780-336-4992</p>     | <p>Goes to Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre<br/>TREX Region 4</p>   |  |  |
| <p><b>Fantastic Worlds</b><br/>With works from the collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, this exhibition investigates a wide variety of topics - from the relationship of humans to the natural environment to the whimsical lives of household objects.<br/>Curated by Robin Lynch, TREX Region 1</p>  |  | <p>Lakedell School<br/>RR#1<br/>Westerose<br/>Contact: Donald Teplyske<br/>Phone: 780-586-2415</p>                              | <p>Grasmere School<br/>4201-46 Street<br/>Alberta Beach<br/>Contact: Elizabeth Miner<br/>Phone: 780-924-3758</p>                   | <p>Ardmore School<br/>4801-48 Ave.,<br/>Ardmore<br/>Contact: Evelyn Bourbeau<br/>Phone: 780-826-5144</p>                 |
| <p><b>Urban Soul</b><br/>The exhibition <i>Urban Soul</i> invites viewers to contemplate the living creativity that pumps vibrancy and culture into the veins of a city, a park, or anywhere that humans share space. Six artists contribute their voices and make their mark in this exhibition.<br/>Curated by Ashley Slemming, TREX Region 3</p>  |  | <p>H.W. Pickup School<br/>3505-58 Ave.,<br/>Devon<br/>Contact: Scott Kupsch<br/>Phone: 780-542-4495</p>                         | <p>Archbishop MacDonald H.S.<br/>14219-109 Ave.,<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Jonathan Eschak<br/>Phone: 780-451-1470</p>             | <p>Victoria School of the Arts<br/>10210-108 Ave.,<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: David Cameron<br/>Phone: 780-426-3010</p>   |
| <p><b>Never Ending Poetry</b><br/>The exhibition <i>Never Ending Poetry</i> features the work of six Alberta based artists whose practices engage abstraction as a form of coded language. Instead of words, the artists use colours, textures, compositions and materials with embedded meanings.<br/>Curated by Genevieve Farrell, TREX Region 4</p>   |  | <p>Two Hills School<br/>4806-51 Ave.,<br/>Two Hills<br/>Contact: Mirela Olah<br/>Phone: 780-657-3383</p>                        | <p>High Park School<br/>40 Highridge Way<br/>Stony Plain<br/>Contact: Amy Collett<br/>Phone: 780-963-2222</p>                      | <p>Warburg School<br/>5412-50 Street<br/>Warburg<br/>Contact: Janet Sarvas<br/>Phone: 780-848-2822</p>                   |
| <p><b>Companion Species</b><br/>This exhibition, featuring works from the collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, features works depicting some of Alberta's favourite friends: cats, dogs, and horses too. Through their works the featured artists tell a nuanced story of the entwined and celebrated relationship between humans and animals.<br/>Curated by Genevieve Farrell, TREX Region 4.</p>  |  | <p>Minchau School<br/>3615 Millwoods Road<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Lori Janssen<br/>Phone: 780-461-0616</p>                    | <p>Onoway Elementary School<br/>5108 Lac St. Anne trail North<br/>Onoway<br/>Contact: Danica Brent<br/>Phone: 780-967-5209</p>     | <p>Belgravia Elementary School<br/>11605-74 Ave.,<br/>Edmonton<br/>Contact: Brent Irving<br/>Phone: 780-435-5560</p>     |

**sightlines** is a newsletter from the Art Gallery of Alberta and is published to promote awareness for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program. For information contact Shane Golby, Curator/Manager, by telephone 780.428.3830 or email: shane.golby@youraga.ca Also please visit TREX at <https://www.youraga.ca/exhibitions/afa-travelling-exhibitions-trex> and on Instagram @ trex\_region2