

Nadya Kwandibens

THE RED CHAIR SESSIONS



Waawaate, Anishinaabe from Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation

Photographed on Stoney Nakoda, Blackfoot & Tsuut'ina of the Dene Nations, Treaty 7 Territory

Exhibition Details



Melaw Nakehk'o, Dene and Dēnesųliné Liidlíi Kue from Denendeh

Photographed on the Fort William First Nation near Animikii Wiikwedong on Robinson-Superior Treaty Territory

TITLE	<i>The Red Chair Sessions</i>
SUMMARY	<i>The Red Chair Sessions</i> is an ongoing open-call portraiture series by by Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) artist Nadya Kwandibens from the Animakee Wa Zhing #37 First Nation in Northwestern Ontario. The series places importance on the acknowledgement and reclamation of Indigenous lands and the revitalization of Indigenous languages.
ORGANIZED BY	The Muse - Douglas Family Art Centre, Kenora, Ontario
CURATOR	Sophie Lavoie
# OF WORKS	35 photographs printed on Dibond
DIMENSIONS	50.8 x 76.2 cm (20 x 30 in) and 76.2 x 50.8 cm (30 x 20 in)
LOAN FEE	\$6000 +HST (based on three months exhibition, shipping not included)

Exhibition Description

The Red Chair Sessions is an ongoing open-call portraiture series that places importance on the acknowledgement and reclamation of Indigenous lands and the revitalization of Indigenous languages. This series ultimately disrupts colonial narratives, centres Indigenous Peoples who have been here since time immemorial, and reminds us that we are all guests on Indigenous land.

The colour red represents Indigenous Peoples on the Medicine Wheel and, in this series, signifies Indigenous Peoples' inherent connection to the land and to ancestral bloodlines. Whether sitting on or standing beside the red chair, one feels grounded and firmly rooted; the act itself and the resulting portrait serves as a reminder of our responsibility to steward the lands upon which we walk.

Accompanying each photograph is text in the subjects' respective Indigenous language, or a mix of languages, and can include: names gifted / given in ceremony (written in either English or syllabics), the Nation to which they belong, and the placenames of traditional and Treaty areas that each session occurs. In this way, Indigenous voices are amplified and become a refusal of the colonizer's language while pointing out the erasure of Indigenous history.

The series is also a celebration honouring the many achievements of Indigenous Peoples and presents a positive perspective for future generations.



Lesley Hampton, Anishinaabe & Mohawk from Temagami First Nation

Photographed in Tkarón:to on Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit & Dish With One Spoon Territory



Justin Jacob Louis from Nipisihkopahk in Maskwacis Cree Territory

Photographed on Unceded xwməθkwəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh & Səlilwətaʔ Territories

About the Artist

Nadya Kwandibens is Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) from the Animakee Wa Zhing #37 First Nation in northwestern Ontario. She is an award winning self-taught portrait and events photographer, a Canon Ambassador, and has travelled extensively across Canada for over 10 years. In 2008 she founded **Red Works Photography**. Red Works is a dynamic photography company empowering contemporary Indigenous lifestyles and cultures through photographic essays, features, and portraits. Red Works specializes in natural light portraiture and headshots sessions plus event and concert photography. Red Works also provides image licensing, workshops, presentations and print products. Nadya's photography has been exhibited in group and solo shows across Canada and the United States.

Nadya's artistic practice builds upon three ongoing bodies of work: **Concrete Indians** is an open-call series of contemporary urban Indigenous identity and is a representation of decolonial assertions of resistance and resurgence; **Red Works Outtakes** is an uplifting portraiture series created to combat the "stoic indian" stereotype; and **emergence**, another open-call series, focuses on resurgent acts of decolonization by means of transmission and conveyance of Indigenous intelligence. Her most recent project is titled **The Red Chair Sessions**, and is an open-call series that places importance on reclamation of Indigenous spaces / places and languages. She is also currently in the research and development phase for a new multimedia series titled **The Kitchen Table Talks** that will bring together Indigenous wombyn, LGBTQ2S, and invited settler- allies to round-table perspectives on matrilineal leadership and nationhood with a focus on addressing urgent local and regional Indigenous matters.

Nadya is also a member of the Indigenous Laws + The Arts Collective, the founding body of **Testify**, a travelling multimedia group exhibition. Testify pairs artists and legal thinkers to work in conversation with each other to create art pieces that explore facets of Indigenous law. Her work in this dynamic exhibition is titled **RE:Turning Home** and focuses on child-welfare law and the foster care system.

In 2018, Nadya won the Ontario Arts Council's Indigenous Arts Award. Jurors stated, "Nadya is an intrepid, ground-breaking and influential artist. She has brought an Indigenous voice to portrait photography that recontextualizes images and shows us our true selves."

In addition to commissioned works, Nadya delivers empowering photography workshops and presentations for youth, universities, and community groups. She currently resides in Tkarón:to on Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Mississauga of the Credit River & Dish With One Spoon Territory.



Nadya Kwandibens. Photo by Tenille Campbell >> sweetmoon photography.

Publication

DESCRIPTION

A full-colour catalogue featuring all photographs and texts from the exhibition, as well as a foreword from curator, Sophie Lavoie.

THE RED CHAIR SESSIONS

Nadya Kwandibens

SPECIFICATIONS

FORMAT	Softcover with glued binding.
DIMENSIONS	25.4 x 25.4 cm (10 x 10 in).
PAGES	33
LANGUAGES	English Anishinaabe + Anishinaabe Syllabics Nehiyawak / Cree + Cree Syllabics Musqueam Squamish Tsleil-Waututh Kanien'kehá:ka Dene Zhatie Haida Tsilhqot'in
IMAGES	31 coloured plates (<i>includes 30 images from the exhibition and 1 portrait of the artist</i>)
RELEASE DATE	June 2021
COST	\$10 per catalogue (suggested retail of \$15)

EXHIBITION INQUIRIES

Please contact Sophie Lavoie, Art Centre Curator at slavoie@themuskenora.ca or 807-467-2201.

ABOUT THE DOUGLAS FAMILY ART CENTRE

The Douglas Family Art Centre opened to the public in December of 2019. The creation of the Art Centre was prompted by the generous offer of two longtime lake residents, Nicki and Bryce Douglas. They have been collecting the Lake of the Woods themed colour woodcut prints, watercolours, and engravings of Canadian artist Walter J. Phillips for over 30 years. Because of their connection to, and love of, Lake of the Woods and Kenora, they have gifted their collection of 67 pieces, to the City of Kenora through the Art Centre.

Their gift presented a wonderful opportunity and initiated a process of establishing an Art Centre in Kenora, the community's first public art gallery. Bryce Douglas put words to their vision for the Art Centre: "We would like to see a vibrant art centre that would present opportunities for students of all ages to learn about art and for the arts community to share ideas and develop their talents. As well, it would be a place to display not only the Walter J. Phillips collection but the work of local artists, Indigenous artists and aspiring artists." With the generous support of local and lake residents and all levels of government, the dream of an Art Centre in Kenora has come to fruition.

Together the Lake of the Woods Museum and the Douglas Family Art Centre are well positioned to move into the future, offering inspired exhibits and exhibitions, quality programming, and enriching experiences that make the most of the significant synergies that exist between them.



224 Main Street South, Kenora, Ontario, P9N 1T2

www.themusekenora.ca



Miskobinessik from Sagkeeng First Nation

Photographed at Bwaan Odaazhewe'onaaning on Anishinaabe Aki, Treaty 3 Territory



Derek Miller, Mohawk from Six Nations of the Grand River

Photographed at Six Nations of the Grand River on Dish With One Spoon Territory



Mskwaa-Giiso Kwe, Anishinaabekwe from Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory
Photographed in Odawa on the traditional territories of the Algonquin Nation



Kristi Lane Sinclair, Haida & Cree, Yahgujaanaas Clan from Gaw in Xaayda gwaii

Photographed near Teiaiaagon on Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit & Dish With One Spoon Territory

Image Credits

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Cover

Waawaate, Anishinaabe from
Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation
*Photographed on Stoney Nakoda, Blackfoot &
Tsuut'ina of the Dene Nations, Treaty 7 Territory
media*

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Back Cover

Ryan Gustafson
*Photographed at Animikii Wiikwedong on
Robinson-Superior Treaty Territory*



Ryan Gustafson
Photographed at
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