

Series of vibrant portraits celebrate syilx culture

Sheldon Pierre Louis: puti kwala – we are still here
July 8, 2020 to July 2021

at the Kelowna Art Gallery's offsite exhibition space
at the Kelowna International Airport

July 8, 2020 – Kelowna, BC: Kelowna-based artist Sheldon Pierre Louis is the creative force behind a series of new paintings on view at the Kelowna International Airport.

The exhibition is titled *puti kwala – we are still here* and features six colourful multi-layered portraits that celebrate the beauty of the syilx/Okanagan Nation's history and culture.

The paintings are rich with intricate filigree patterns and incorporate a mix of traditional and contemporary imagery. In them, we see generational snapshots — a grandfather teaching his young granddaughter how to plant seeds; two nieces snapping a selfie; and a boy proudly showing off the prize-sized fish he caught. The portraits reveal a glimpse into the artist's own extended family life, but viewers will no doubt find pieces that resonate with their own.

puti kwala – we are still here can be seen just before the security screening area near the departure gates in the Kelowna Art Gallery's offsite exhibition space at YLW. It opens July 8 and will remain on view until July of 2021.

Sheldon Pierre Louis is an interdisciplinary artist whose versatile work is shown in a variety of settings ranging from large-scale wall murals to gallery exhibition spaces to public art installations. He is a member of the syilx Nation, a Councillor at Okanagan Indian Band, and a community leader whose work is influenced by his ancestral roots. He is a mentor for youth from his own and surrounding communities and he finds joy in the mutual inspiration fostered through these collaborations.

The artist will speak about his artistic practice and current installation during a virtual talk that will be held on Tuesday, September 1, from 12 to 1 pm. It will be broadcast live online as part of the ongoing *LunchBox Lectures*, which is a partnership between the Kelowna Art Gallery, Sncəwips Heritage Museum, and Kelowna Museums. This event is free and open to the public to attend.

For more information about current exhibitions, public programming, or other related projects, please visit the Kelowna Art Gallery online at www.kelownaartgallery.com or call 250-762-2226.

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