



CARING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

A Photography Exhibition

Curated by Cindy Blackstock, photography by Liam Sharp

Monday November 23 – Friday November 27

Main Lobby, First Canadian Place

100 King Street West, Street Level

Caring Across Boundaries is an exhibition engaging First Nations and all peoples of Canada in reconciliation to promote the wellbeing of children and youth. Reconciliation opens the doors for all Canadians to have a new relationship with First Nations based on mutual respect and friendship.

In this exhibition, three First Nations communities share their daily experiences with a view to inviting every Canadian to make a positive difference for First Nations children and their families.

It is a collaboration between renowned photographer Liam Sharp, Aboriginal child rights advocate Cindy Blackstock and the First Nations communities of Attawapiskat, Ontario; Carrier-Sekani Family Services: a branch society of the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council, British Columbia; and, Tobique First Nation, New Brunswick.

For more information and to find 7 free ways to make a difference for First Nations children visit the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada www.fncaringsociety.com

This exhibit is made possible through the generous support of the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and by the volunteer contributions of Liam Sharp, Cindy Blackstock and the First Nations communities of Attawapiskat, Ontario; Carrier-Sekani Family Services: a branch of the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council; and Tobique First Nation, New Brunswick. Thanks also to First Canadian Place for generously hosting the exhibition.

“Reconciliation is about working for our common future”

Caring Across Boundaries brings to life the challenges and dreams of First Nations communities with the goal of promoting understanding and contributing to the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal Peoples and Canadians.

Reconciliation happens in the small moments when people with open hearts and minds come together. It is based on a better understanding of our history and is built on trust, respect, and a genuine commitment to our collective well-being and prosperity.

The First Nations children and families shown in this exhibition are sharing their daily experiences in ways that invite caring Canadians to make a real and positive difference for First Nations children and their families.

Their lived experiences are typical of other First Nations peoples in Canada and so is their hope that we can ensure all children and youth in Canada can grow up healthy, happy and proud of who they are.

Reconciliation is possible. It requires each and every one of us to stand up and be counted as people who care about our common future.

LIAM SHARP Liam Sharp is an internationally renowned photographer who specializes in storytelling conceptual photography. For over twenty years, Liam has worked in settings ranging from diamond vaults to impoverished neighbourhoods, museums, sky scrapers and theme parks. He was this year's recipient of the Silver Award of the Art Directors Club of Canada and was nominated for a National Magazine Award. His work has been featured in Graphis, Applied Arts and PDN magazines, Report on Business, The London Times Magazine, among others publications.

CINDY BLACKSTOCK is one of Canada's leading and most passionate spokespersons for the promotion and strengthening of First Nations cultures, knowledge and rights. A member of the Gitksan First Nation, and the Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCSC), she has worked in the field of child and family services for over 20 years.

ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION is home to the Mushkego or Omushkego James Bay Cree located along the Attawapiskat River near James Bay, Ontario. The community takes great pride in its Cree culture and language and most children are fluent in Cree despite the devastating impacts of colonization. Daily life for families in the community is difficult. The school sits on a site contaminated by over 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel, sanitation systems are grossly inadequate, food costs are high, and there are severe housing shortages. The community leadership has worked hard with federal and provincial governments to deal with the problems but progress is slow.

CARRIER SEKANI NATIONS people historically have resided in a vast territory, of over 76,000 kilometers, primarily located in North Central British Columbia. Today there are approximately 10,000 individuals represented by 22 Indian Bands or First Nations, as recognized by the Department of Indian Affairs that identify as being Carrier or Sekani societies. Families are challenged by the inter-generational impacts of colonization, poverty and unresolved land claims. Carrier Sekani peoples have developed institutions such as Carrier Sekani Family Services to help community members but they need more resources to meet all of the needs. Go to www.csfs.org for more information.

TOBIQUE FIRST NATION is a Maliseet community located in a rural area along the St. John River in New Brunswick. A hydro electric dam was built on their lands but the community receives very little benefit from the dam. They pay some of the highest electric power bills in the province, have seen their traditional foods and medicines eroded due to the dam and many community members are living in poverty. Federal and Provincial government funding for essential government services such as education and child welfare fall far below what other children in the province receive. This community is working hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children but they need access to the resources other communities take for granted.