May 11, 2024

New Waterfront Wisdom Pathway Celebrates Indigenous Art and Culture

Community invited to May 15 ceremony unveiling new artwork

Cobourg, ON (May 11, 2024) – The Town of Cobourg's Community Services Division invites all community members to attend the *Waterfront Wisdom Pathway* unveiling ceremony on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at 10 a.m.

The Waterfront Wisdom Pathway is a collection of 26 banners created by local Indigenous artists Rick Beaver and Koren Smoke of Alderville First Nation. The banners, displayed on the lampposts along the Cobourg waterfront, bring vibrant expressions of storytelling, tradition, and remind us of our connections to the land. The artists selected the harbourfront location due to the significance of water to Indigenous culture.

"We are thrilled to share the completion of this artwork with the community," says Jackie Chapman-Davis, Town of Cobourg's Manager of Culture, Events & Tourism. "These beautiful and meaningful banners will provide artistic storytelling of Cobourg's unique connection to the land."

Artists have taken different approaches to their designs of the banners, lending variety to the viewers experience as they walk along the path. Koren Smoke has assumed the teachings of the Seven Grandfathers, Respect, Love, Bravery, Honesty, Wisdom, Humility, and Truth. Rick Beaver's pieces showcase themes of land and water creatures, plants and flowers, and features the very real connection to the Indigenous community and its art forms.

Unveiling Ceremony

The community is invited to the Cobourg Marina (103 Third Street) on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at 10 a.m. for a special unveiling ceremony. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the talented artists behind this project and participate in a guided tour of each piece of art. The story walk from the Marina to the east end of the boardwalk will begin with the banner entitled "All My Relations," symbolizing the interconnectedness of all beings.

About the Artists

Rick Beaver, A Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg residing on Alderville First Nation, Rick Beaver brings 45 years of professional artistry coupled with a background in trained wildlife biology. His unique perspective on humanity's relationship with the land enriches the Waterfront Wisdom Pathway. He brings a unique perspective on humanity's relationship with the land and the life it supports. He continues to teach, consult and advise in the areas of art, culture and the environment in retirement.

Koren Smoke ᓵᓴᑭᒐᖕᐊᓐᕉ Hailing from Alderville First Nation, Koren Smoke, also known as Koren George, infuses her artwork with the traditions and culture of her ancestors. A passionate advocate for Indigenous art and culture, Koren inspires others to explore their identity and voice through her work. Her earliest memory of producing art was painting in first grade during her time at Roseneath Centennial Public School.