

PRESS RELEASE - November 22, 2007

In their 37th year history, the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association hosts their First Black-Tie Cultural Celebration.

Edmonton, AB - On November 30th, the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA) will host their first Black-Tie cultural gala, “The Gathering: *A Cultural Expression of Indigenous Arts*” at the Myer Horowitz Theatre, 8900 – 114 Street.

This night will officially launch the ANFCA’s “Artist in Action” concept. The concept will feature an on-line database designed to showcase all interested Alberta-based Aboriginal performing, literary, visual, traditional and contemporary Artists, to an international audience via the world-wide web. Artists listed in the database will encompass many categories ranging from cultural teachers, i.e. making traditional crafts, film-making, poets, drummers, visual artists, and much more. This service will be free for Aboriginal artisans living in Alberta who are members with one of the 20 Friendship Centres in Alberta.

The Alberta Foundation of the Arts (AFA) has provided funding support for this initiative.

“The Alberta Foundation for the Arts is pleased to provide support to the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association on this worthwhile initiative. We recognize its importance as a catalyst to promote and showcase for Aboriginal arts and culture,” says AFA Chair Audrey Luft.

Doors will open at 5:45 pm. The evening program will begin with a gala reception, featuring the “Artist in Action” artist exhibit, a silent auction, followed with a concert beginning at 7:00 p.m. which will feature award winning performers and musicians. The concert line-up will include Edmonton’s own Asani, Jared Sowan, The Métis Child Little Jiggers, with special guests Nipivut – “Our Voices” Inuit Throat Singers, Wayne Lavalee, Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, and Kinnie Star.

In addition to the array of performing artists, Canadian renowned Aboriginal artists will be in attendance: Alex Janvier, Order of Canada Recipient, along with Edmonton artist, Jane Ash-Poitras, National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipient, with Aaron Paquette, and Calgary’s Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and April Mecedri.

"It is wonderful to see the Alberta Friendship Centres' new formal initiative to support the Arts. There are so many amazingly talented Aboriginal People, born here, or living in this province working in all aspects of the professional and emerging Art disciplines, both contemporary and traditional," said Cardinal-Schubert. "It is not inconceivable to imagine year long shared programming between centres to celebrate this long demonstrated cultural continuum and make it available to the many communities here as well as to other provincial and national centres."

“This will be truly a night of celebration to honour Alberta’s richly diverse Aboriginal cultures which are woven through the twenty Friendship Centres in Alberta.” said Joanne McDougall-Mason, ANFCA Executive Director.

Since 1970, the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association (ANFCA) has been the Provincial/Territorial Association office servicing 20 Friendship Centres within the province. The ANFCA was the first such association office to be incorporated in Canada and is a registered non-profit charitable organization.

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