

**Frist Art Museum Presents Exhibition Spanning 100 Years of
Contemporary Indigenous Art, Highlighting a Continuum
of Elders and Emerging Makers**

An Indigenous Present

June 26–September 27, 2026



George Longfish. *Take Two Aspirins and Call Me In The Morning, You Are On Target*, 1984. Acrylic on canvas; 85 x 117 in. Courtesy The Fine Arts Collection, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art, University of California, Davis.
© George Longfish. Photo: Cleber Bonato

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (April 29, 2026)—The Frist Art Museum presents [*An Indigenous Present*](#), an exhibition that spans 100 years of modern and contemporary Indigenous art and includes 15 artists who pursue abstraction as a tool for liberated expression. Organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, the exhibition will be on view in the Frist’s Upper-Level Galleries from June 26 through September 27, 2026.

An Indigenous Present is cocurated by artist **Jeffrey Gibson** (member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and of Cherokee descent), whose work was presented at the Frist in 2023, and independent curator **Jenelle Porter**. The exhibition includes significant works by artists including **Teresa Baker, Raven Chacon, Kimowan Metchewais, Caroline Monnet, George Morrison, Mary Sully, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith**, and **Kay WalkingStick**, among others.

An Indigenous Present draws from Gibson and Porter’s landmark 2023 publication of the same title, which, through a collaborative process, brought together work by Native North American artists exploring diverse approaches to concept, form, and medium. “We consider this exhibition a chapter in the project that is *An Indigenous Present*—hence our repetition of the title—one in which we envision the ways abstraction can dissolve the hierarchies and categories that confine making, seeing, and thinking,” write exhibition cocurators Jeffrey Gibson and Jenelle Porter.

In a conversation about the development of the exhibition, Porter states, “Abstraction is this incredibly flexible tool that allows artists a liberated field in which to make and think and see and hear. But we’ve included artists who use abstraction in ways that counter what is typically expected of contemporary Indigenous artists.” Gibson adds, “We chose artists who have pushed traditional forms of cultural abstraction into realms that don’t directly reference specific cultural traditions. They are experimenting with it, pushing it into places where it’s still tethered to where the reference originates from, but in a new format that can make it almost unrecognizable.”

The exhibition is organized into five interconnected thematic sections that begin with a focus on the work of George Morrison and Mary Sully, two important forebears in the development of contemporary Indigenous art during the first half of the 20th century. Throughout the exhibition, works by emerging artists are positioned in dialogue with those by more established makers. Kay WalkingStick and Dakota Mace explore seriality and repetition in bodies of work realized in the 1970s and 2020s, respectively. WalkingStick’s *Chief Joseph Series*—dedicated to the heroic Niimípuu / Nez Perce chief—presents a grid of 27 paintings that characterize the artist’s decades-long devotion to serial forms and storytelling. Mace’s *So’ II (Stars II)* is composed of 40 unique chemigram prints that draw on Diné (Navajo) design histories and heritage.

In another artistic dialogue, Morrison and Teresa Baker evoke the land and light of their own ancestral homelands through an interplay of color and form. Morrison, who trained alongside abstract expressionist painters in New York in the 1950s, is known for vibrant compositions, especially those inspired by the horizon near his Lake Superior, MN, home. Baker composes with yarn, paint, willow, and hide on irregularly cut artificial turf to create large-scale abstractions that convey her memories of place, such as the Northern Plains of her youth, as well as legacies of color field painting and collage.

Guests can access a [podcast produced by the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston and WBUR](#) in the galleries to learn more about contemporary Indigenous art. In a series of conversations, the cocurators discuss the exhibition and are joined by artists Teresa Baker, Raven Chacon, Sky Hopinka, Sonya Kelliher-Combs, Caroline Monnet, and Anna Tsouhlarakis, and scholar Philip Deloria.

Exhibition Artists

Teresa Baker (Mandan/Hidatsa; born 1985 in Watford City, ND)

Raven Chacon (Diné; born 1977 in Fort Defiance, Navajo Nation)

Sky Hopinka (Ho-Chunk Nation; born 1984 in Bellingham, WA)

Sonya Kelliher-Combs (Iñupiaq/Athabaskan; born 1969 in Bethel, AK)

Gabrielle L’Hirondelle Hill (Cree and Métis; born 1979 in Comox, British Columbia)

George Longfish (Seneca and Tuscarora; born 1942 in Ohsweken, Ontario)

Dakota Mace (Diné; born 1991 in Albuquerque, NM)

Kimowan Metchewais (Cree; born 1963 in Oxbow, Saskatchewan; died 2011, St. Paul, Alberta)

Caroline Monnet (Anishinaabe [Algonquin] and French; born 1985 in Ottawa, Ontario)

George Morrison (Ojibwe; born 1919 in Chippewa City, MN; died 2000, Red Rock, MN)

Audie Murray (Cree and Métis; born 1993 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (citizen of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation; born 1940 in St.



Mary Sully. *Amelia Earhart*, ca. late 1920s–early 1940s. Colored pencil, graphite, and watercolor on paper; three parts, 2 7/8 x 18 in., 12 x 19 in., 9 1/2 x 12 in. Courtesy The Mary Sully Foundation. Photo: Charles Meyer Photography

Ignatius Mission, Flathead Reservation, MT; died 2025, Corrales, NM)

Mary Sully (Susan Mabel Deloria) (Yankton Dakota; born 1896 in Standing Rock Reservation, ND; died 1963, Omaha, NE)

Anna Tsouhlarakis (Navajo/Creek/Greek; born 1977 in Lawrence, KS)

Kay WalkingStick (Cherokee and Anglo; born 1935 in Syracuse, NY)

Program

Opening Conversation: *An Indigenous Present*

Thursday, June 25, 6:30 p.m.

Auditorium

Free for members; gallery admission required for not-yet members

Registration required

Exhibition cocurators Jeffrey Gibson, artist, and Jenelle Porter, independent curator, will come together with Katie Delmez, Frist Art Museum senior curator, for a conversation exploring the ideas, practices, and approaches of Native North American artists featured in the exhibition.

Exhibition Credit

An Indigenous Present is organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston. The exhibition is curated by Jeffrey Gibson and Jenelle Porter, guest curators.

Supporter Acknowledgment

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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About the Frist Art Museum

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Frist Art Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit art exhibition center dedicated to presenting and originating high-quality exhibitions with related educational programs and community outreach activities. Located at 919 Broadway in downtown Nashville, Tenn., the Frist Art Museum offers the finest visual art from local, regional, national, and international sources in exhibitions that inspire people through art to look at their world in new ways. Information on accessibility can be found at [FristArtMuseum.org/accessibility](https://www.fristartmuseum.org/accessibility). Gallery admission is free for guests ages 18 and younger and for members, and \$20 for adults. For current hours and additional information, visit [FristArtMuseum.org](https://www.fristartmuseum.org) or call 615.244.3340.
