



Bakwiné Mescakasa (Soul Hair)

GEORGE LITTLECHILD + LIZ CARTER
COMOX VALLEY ART GALLERY JUNE 20 – SEPTEMBER 5, 2015

Bakwiné Kwakwala = Soul Mescakasa Plains Cree = Hair

"Bakwiné Mescakasa (Soul Hair)" is a collaborative site installation by George Littlechild and Liz Carter, comprised of large format self-portraits, woven braids and prayer sticks made from Kwakwala and Cree cultural materials and objects.

Littlechild and Carter describe the importance of hair, a primary element in their work, as "a physical extension of our thoughts and braids as a symbol of oneness and unity. Individually each strand may be perceived as weak, but when joined together – woven into one soul, the result is strength." "Bakwiné Mescakasa (Soul Hair)" coincides with "Walking with our Sisters," a memorial installation for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women of North America, that will be presented in the Comox Valley from July 31 - August 15, 2015. http://walkingwithoursisters.ca/

Littlechild and Carter have created their site installation in honour of these Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and the Residential School Survivors. The artists share their collective process of making each braid and prayer stick "as a means of shedding light on the many abuses and deaths rained upon Canada's First Peoples. We braid and we pray that peace will one day be ours."

"Bakwiné Mescakasa (Soul Hair)" will be on view in the CVAG contemporary window gallery as part of a First Nations Program of exhibitions this summer, including the touring exhibition "Record, (Re)Create: Contemporary Coast Salish Art From The Salish Weave Collection" and the exhibition "Youth Art, Design and Print Program," showcasing current and past Wachiay Friendship Centre students.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our thoughts are with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our thoughts go to the Residential School Students who lost their lives and with those who live to tell us the truth of their experiences.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our awareness of the disproportionately high percentage of First Nations Peoples represented in the judicial system and the higher than ever number of children apprehended and taken into foster care — leaves much work.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our thoughts engulf the stereotyping that makes it possible to minimize a group of people to the point in which they are not seen, not heard and are mistreated without thought.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our Self-Portraits resist the stereotypes and serve instead as protectors and bear witness to our collective strength.

While creating the Mescakasa Our art asks for equality, peace, love and perseverance. The creation of each Braid and each Prayer Stick speaks to a collective process, one that transmits the energies needed to bring many together.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our intention is to bring communities together to strengthen awareness and understanding. Unity is Power. One hair is weak while several braided hairs create strength – one prayer creates power. Many collective prayers foster passion.

While creating Bakwiné Mescakasa Our hope is that our actions and the collective mindset will shed light on traumatic affects and issues. We have become a part of the process through this art installation that speaks about our sacred losses, we hope that through awareness we can help strengthen the plight of those lost and murdered and who have under gone Traumas.

All my relations. Aho / Ha'em.

George Littlechild and Liz Carter June 2015









