

## Connecting Art and Ecology: Olivia Whetung's vibrant exhibition *inawendiwok* at the Art Gallery of Mississauga

**Mississauga, ON – January 18, 2024**, The Art Gallery of Mississauga is pleased to announce its newest exhibition, *inawendiwok*, featuring the insightful artwork of Indigenous artist Olivia Whetung. A member of Curve Lake First Nation and citizen of the Nishnaabeg Nation, Whetung draws upon her experience working on and with the land to create artworks that speak of the interdependence and relationality within our ecosystem. Guest curated by Mona Filip, *inawendiwok* will be on display from **January 27 to April 7, 2024**. All are welcome to attend the opening reception on **Sunday January 28, 2024 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm** to celebrate the launch of this exciting exhibition. The artist will also be in attendance.

Researching land-based and food de-commodifying movements, Anishinaabe knowledge, and the ecology of her home territory, Whetung has produced a series of sculptural installations, digital prints, and three-dimensional beadworks that articulate the vital connectivity between woodland, wetland, and garden environments. The artist's first-hand observations are nourished by a critical understanding of Western agricultural models and natural science methodologies as detrimental to the ecologies of Southern Ontario, where they have caused massive environmental destruction. Western worldviews, brought over by European settlers, treat only cleared farmland as "productive" while deeming woodland and wetland unmanageable and useless. These outlooks centre human needs and desires at the expense of the ecosystem's survival.

Whetung's poignant works solicit our attention and reconsideration of spaces and species that are crucial to biodiversity and to sustainable food production. Tenderly foregrounding our more-than-human neighbours, they remind us that we are not the only ones to benefit from the land's gifts, nor to suffer from ecological ruin. The exhibition's Anishinaabemowin title, *inawendiwok*, loosely translates as "they are related to each other," emphasizing the ways in which coexistence within the ecosystem is mutually linked. With human yearning for endlessly available resources and sanitized nature comes devastating loss. Only through a renewed understanding of kinship and gratitude may we restore an ecology based on responsibility and reciprocity that can sustain the future.

Funding for the Art Gallery of Mississauga is generously provided by the City of Mississauga, the Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, Rama Gaming House and Charitable Gaming, and Community Good.

The opening reception is expected to be popular, so pre-registration is highly recommended. For more information, please visit <http://www.artgalleryofmississauga.com> or visit our programming registration page at [bit.ly/EventsAGM](http://bit.ly/EventsAGM).

### ABOUT THE ART GALLERY OF MISSISSAUGA

The Art Gallery of Mississauga is a public gallery supported by the City of Mississauga, the Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, Rama Gaming House, Charitable Gaming, Community Good, corporations, private citizens, and its members. The AGM provides platforms for exhibitions, collections, and experimentation in contemporary culture with a recent focus on artists and cultural producers from Indigenous, newcomer, and youth communities. Through a broad range of educational programs, artist projects, and other forms of critical dialogue, the AGM seeks to transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries, foster community, and provide spaces where alternative modes of thought are supported and activated in tangible ways. The AGM is proud to provide free admission, serve communities, and provide positive visual art experiences for all visitors.