

PLAINS ART MUSEUM

Now Open at Plains Art Museum: Gerald Cournoyer

Press Release

For Immediate Release (March 2023)

Fargo, North Dakota – *Gerald Cournoyer: Sending a Voice* is now on view in Plains Art Museum's Fred Donath Jr. Memorial through September 30, 2023. In his newest solo exhibition, Cournoyer explores his observations of all aspects of Lakota lifeways through ceremony, dance, and prayer.

Cournoyer rejects photographer, Edward Curtis's, observations that the Lakota are a people of the past stating, "We are more than a photograph," emphasized in his work that the ceremonies and events in Curtis's photographs are yet contemporary and vital to the identity of the 21st century Lakota. The long tradition of Lakota ceremonies such as hanblecha, Sun Dance, and Keeping A Soul are still central to Lakota life, despite the dark legacy of the 20th-century boarding school era.

"Attending St. Paul's Indian Mission in Marty, South Dakota, we were not permitted to speak our language or participate in ceremonials. This abandonment of culture, language, history, spirituality, and traditional lifeways were brought in after the end of the Indian Mission Boarding School Era. It seemed like overnight it was finally acceptable to be Native American," said Cournoyer.

Finally, on **Thursday, March 30, 2023 at 5:30 pm**, the public is invited to join Gerald Cournoyer, along with the Museum's Director of Native American programs Joseph Williams, as they reflect on their 25-year collaboration working with youth from the Oscar Howe Summer Art Institute, to the Plains Art Museum's Northern Plains Summer Art Institute. The two will discuss the importance of Native American art history, mentorship, and Native American presence in the contemporary art world today.

Gerald Cournoyer (Ogala Sioux Tribe) holds two Masters Degrees from the University of Oklahoma; one in Fine Arts from the University of Oklahoma and the other in Non-profit Arts Management. He is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Philanthropy and Funding from the University of Central Michigan. Born and raised in Marty, South Dakota, Cournoyer is the Tribal Arts instructor at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck. Cournoyer has blended his cultural and artistic backgrounds to connect with his students throughout his 30-year career. Cournoyer is also the lead instructor for the Northern Plains Summer Institute, held this year from June 18-30.

Plains Art Museum is the largest art museum in the Dakotas and Western Minnesota. It is general admission free and educationally-focused thanks to strong and growing support from over 800 households and businesses. The Museum manages a permanent collection of over 4,000 objects, organizes and presents dozens of annual exhibitions, facilitates public art projects, and leads over 200 educational programs and experiences for all ages each year. The Museum and its Katherine Kilbourne Burgum Center for Creativity are located at 704 First Avenue North in downtown Fargo. For more information about visiting or supporting your art museum, visit plainsart.org.

Gerald Cournoyer, *Euler Diagram*, 2014, Acrylic on canvas



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