

Justina M. Barnicke Gallery & Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival present:

KWE

Photography, sculpture, video, and performance by Rebecca Belmore

May 15 – August 9, 2014

Curated by Wanda Nanibush

Exhibition Opening Reception – May 15, 6-8 pm

Remarks at 7 pm

KWE delves into the complicated and fertile relationship between Indigeneity, art, and colonization. *Kwe* is the Anishinaabe word for woman and is a term of respect and is used to mark out a deeply personal exhibition. Rebecca Belmore's artistic practice engages the question of what it is to be an Anishinaabe-kwe artist working today through photography, sculptures, videos, and performances. Belmore works toward creating art that functions as a poetic political intervention for her people and all the anonymous dispossessed. In her searing, beautiful objects and images, Belmore transforms victimization and the seemingly unchanging nature of domination into an act of resistance and resurgence. Belmore's work is beautiful but radically so because it resists both commodification and edification. The work she creates out of her deeply intuitive process taps into the precariousness of life.

This exhibition is produced in partnership with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival who has commissioned a new public installation of billboards at the NE corner of Spadina Ave. and Front St. in Toronto. Belmore will also produce a new performance on May 23. We will close the exhibition with a performance of Belmore's large megaphone, *Speaking to their Mother*, which will be marched from the gallery to the waterfront where it will be installed to allow people to speak to the spirit of the water, repurposing it for the politics of today.

Rebecca Belmore is a Winnipeg-based multi-disciplinary artist from Upsala, Ontario. In 2013 she won the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. She gained internationally acclaim at the 2005 Venice Biennale's Canadian Pavilion where she was the first Indigenous woman to represent Canada. Belmore has exhibited and performed internationally and nationally since 1987. She won the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation's prestigious VIVA Award 2004 and the 2009 Hnatyshyn Visual Arts Award. Her work is in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Canada Council Art Bank, the Canadian Museum of Civilization and many others.

Wanda Nanibush is an Anishinaabe-kwe image and word warrior, curator, community animator, and arts consultant from Beausoleil First Nation. Currently she is Curator in Residence at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and Dame Nita Barrow Distinguished Visitor at University of Toronto. She has her Masters in Visual Studies from the University of Toronto.

Public Events at Justina M. Barnicke Gallery

Justina M. Barnicke Gallery Opening Receptions – May 15, 6-8 pm

Live Performance – May 23, 8-11 pm

Curatorial Talk with Wanda Nanibush – May 25, 2-3 pm

Speaking to Their Mother Performance – August 9, 1 pm

Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, University of Toronto at Hart House

Anishinaabeg Kwewag: Artist, Feminist, Activist Panel – May 24, 11am-1pm

A conversation between Rebecca Belmore and Wanda Nanibush

Public Installation

Billboards @ Spadina Ave and Front St W, NE Corner

May 1-31, 2014

Supported by Pattison Outdoor Advertising and Nikon Canada

The Justina M. Barnicke Gallery's programs are made possible by the generous support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

Media Contacts:

Bunmi Adeoye

Account Manager, NKPR

Public Relations for the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival

416.365.3630 x226

bunmi@nkpr.net

Justina M. Barnicke Gallery

7 Hart House Circle

Toronto, ON M5S 3H3

416-978-8398

Jmb.gallery@utoronto.ca