



Tāpis

A love letter to our Dog Kin

Conceived by Nehiyaw and Mischif knowledge keeper, Elder-in-training, and multi-disciplinary artist Adele L^ab^oΔ^oq^o Arseneau, *Tāpis: A love letter to our Dog Kin* exhibits nine intricately beaded dog blankets. Over the course of a 20-week online residency led by Adele, four Indigenous beaders whose communities traditionally used Tāpis, learned how to create this important piece of regalia to honour their Dog Kin. This exhibition seeks to share the history of Tāpis and recognize the significant responsibility these beaders have undertaken to rebuild chains of knowledge that were damaged by colonialism and the residential school system.

Originating from the Métis, Northern Cree and Dene communities, 'li Tāpis' (small carpet) named by the French Mischif known as 'tuppies' by the English and Scottish Mischif, are dog blanket regalia created to celebrate dogs. Tāpis are made from wool and embellished with intricate beadwork, silk, embroidery, moose or caribou hair tufting, outlined with fringes made of ribbon or yarn and adorned with bells. Showing respect for sled dogs, Tāpis were draped over the backs of dogs.

During this residency, Adele guided four beadworkers through the labour-intensive process of creating their own bespoke Tāpis for their dogs. "It was my dream to share the knowledge gifted to me by my mentor, Velma Olsen, with my kin and to create more Indigenous knowledge keepers. I will continue to resist colonial erasure and make this hard-earned knowledge accessible to the communities that had these traditions stolen from them." For each of the participants in this cohort, honouring their "more than human kin" by reclaiming the tradition of Tāpis is a powerful act of cultural resistance

Exhibiting Artists: Adele L^ab^oΔ^oq^o Arseneau, Velma Olsen, Debbie Dillon, Jaimy Fischer, Vicky Fraser, and Carrie Moran McCleary

September 10 - November 2, 2024

Exhibition Reception: September 15, 2024 from 2 - 4 p.m.

Artist Talk with Adele L^ab^oΔ^oq^o Arseneau: October 27, 2024 at 2 p.m.

seymour
art gallery

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We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver through North Vancouver Recreation and Culture, the Province of British Columbia, and gallery members. Front image credit: Adele L^ab^oΔ^oq^o Arseneau

The Seymour Art Gallery stands on the traditional, unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyam (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

