

Art of tule reed weaving showcased in new exhibition

kn kʷul̓lm tl iʔ spuʔús (I made it from my heart)

Mariel Belanger

June 21 to November 2, 2025

June 17, 2025 – Kelowna, BC: The art of tule reed weaving will be highlighted in a new exhibition that opens this weekend at the Kelowna Art Gallery. The exhibition, titled *kn kʷul̓lm tl iʔ spuʔús (I made it from my heart)*, presents the work of artist **Mariel Belanger** and features maker **Kalli Van Stone**, and Elder weaving mentor **Wendy Hawkes**. It runs from June 21 to November 2, 2025.

Tule reed weaving is a craft of deep cultural importance to the syilx people. The selected works on display showcase the intricate artistry of using ephemeral materials like tule reeds, while also addressing pressing social issues, including the protection of marshlands, environmental sustainability, and the sovereignty of First Nations.

Visitors will have the opportunity to view beautiful tukʷtán woven corsets, hats, dresses, shawls, and other magnificently crafted outfits. These will be complemented by cattail backpacks, tule/rafia baskets, and a selection of deftly woven pouches. Audiences can view a recorded performance by Mariel Belanger and Kalli Van Stone by watching a video screened within the exhibition space.

Through their collaboration as sqilxw women, these artists create a powerful platform for knowledge exchange, ensuring the continuity of cultural heritage and fostering a dynamic connection that strengthens the fabric of their community.

A special **Live Performance by Mariel Belanger & Kalli Van Stone** will be held on **Saturday, June 21, 2025, at 11 am**, at the Kelowna Art Gallery. This event is free and open to the public to attend. As part of the celebrations for National Indigenous Peoples Day, the Kelowna Art Gallery will offer all visitors free admission for the day.

Mariel Belanger, a member of the Okanagan Indian Band, is dedicated to using interdisciplinary arts to engage Indigenous communities, languages, and cultures while bridging societal understanding. Her research on colonial land-grabs in the Okanagan and MFA Thesis on blood memory and personal governance highlight her commitment to decolonizing knowledge. As a founding member of Sqilxw Apna and Kama? Creative Aboriginal Arts Collective, she promotes land-based cultural education and advocates for Indigenous rights and healing through her art and research.

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The Kelowna Art Gallery is located at 1315 Water Street in the heart of Kelowna's Culture District. For more information visit kelownaartgallery.com or call 250-762-2226.

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About the Kelowna Art Gallery

The Kelowna Art Gallery engages, inspires, and enriches the community it serves through the exhibition, collection, and interpretation of visual art. Work by Canadian artists, both historical and contemporary, are presented in five distinct exhibition spaces. The Kelowna Art Gallery is invested in the idea that art helps to bring people together; and that life is simply better with art in it. Programs for people of all ages and backgrounds help to instill confidence in ones' creativity and to foster meaningful dialogue on matters important to Canadians.

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Media Inquiries

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