



Festival du Voyageur

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

SCULPTURE UNVEILING FOR “WE DREAM OF FLYING CANOES” BY ARTIST DAVID PERRETT

SAINT-BONIFACE, September 20, 2017 – Festival du Voyageur is proud to announce the unveiling of “**We Dream of Flying Canoes**”, a new sculpture by **artist David Perrett**. Sculpted from the remains of the old elm tree in Whittier Park which was diagnosed with Dutch elm disease, the work of art represents a child’s hand just as it begins to throw a canoe into the air. “Festival du Voyageur celebrates “la joie de vivre”,” explains **David Perrett**. “I want to evoke that sense of youthful play with this sculpture.”

The sculpture pays homage to the legends of flying canoes that can be found in many North American cultures and will also feature a phosphorescent resin that will glow for hours after sunset. In recognition of the traditional territorial rights of the Cree and Saulteaux First Nations, the clan totems used to sign the 1817 Selkirk Treaty will be carved into the art piece.

Festival du Voyageur would also like to thank the **City of Winnipeg** and **Councilor Matt Allard** who, along with the support of the **Land Dedication Reserve Fund**, secured a **\$16,000 grant** to help transform the elm tree. In addition to giving renewed life to a beloved tree, these funds will enable the creation of an educational program which will offer several interpretive and pedagogical opportunities for Fort Gibraltar’s summer and winter school as well as public programs.

“I am very happy and excited to have the privilege of witnessing the rebirth of our elm tree as a superb monument that, for years to come, will represent the shining spirit of Festival,” declares **Festival du Voyageur’s President, Simon Normandeau**. “For me, this sculpture represents an homage to all the men and women who came from afar and, thanks to partnerships established with First Nations Peoples, made the creation of our beautiful province and the birth of a new nation, the Métis, possible.”

The sculpture unveiling will take place on **Thursday, September 21, at 5:30 p.m.** at **Whittier Park near Fort Gibraltar**. To mark the occasion, **Indigenous Elder Linda Blomme** will offer a prayer, **storyteller Janine Tougas** will recite an excerpt of the Chasse-Galerie legend, **David Perrett** will present his sculpture and **Simon Normandeau** will speak on behalf of Festival du Voyageur. Refreshments will be served following the presentations.

– 30 –

For more information:

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