

***Cree artist's childhood passion exhibited at McMichael Gallery in Vaughan***

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*York Region.com*

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

Original URL: <https://www.yorkregion.com/whatson-story/9859968-cree-artist-s-childhood-passion-exhibited-at-mcmichael-gallery-in-vaughan/>

## **Cree artist's childhood passion exhibited at McMichael Gallery in Vaughan**

Brenda Draney's exhibit "Brenda Draney" on display at Kleinburg art gallery March 7-May 31

WHATSON Feb 26, 2020 by [Simone Joseph](#) Newmarket Era



Brenda Draney's paintings, including "Tent 2013," will be exhibited at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection from March 7 until May 31, 2020. - Courtesy of MCAC



Brenda Draney's paintings, including "Suspend 2013," will be exhibited at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection from March 7 until May 31, 2020. - Courtesy of MCAC

When [Brenda Draney](#) was a girl, she remembers being disgusted with her sister and cousin for how they chose to spend their summers.

They devoured stacks of books while eating sunflower seeds. Draney would become frustrated because they were not playing with her. They gave young Brenda artistic tools, and she ended up spending much of her time alone.

"I needed to find a quiet activity. They'd set me up with drawing things. I'd be in my element – markers, scissors, rulers, smelly markers."

She loved to draw and colour, loved creating her own world.

That time alone paid off.

Draney ended up going to art school, where her drawing and painting become more complicated.

“I never wanted to stop. You built your own world.”

Today, Draney is about to launch her latest exhibit. Called "Brenda Draney," the exhibit is at [The McMichael Canadian Art Collection](#) and runs from March 7 to May 31.

Her paintings present narratives that stem from her background as a Cree woman living in northern Alberta.

This exhibition includes paintings from as early as 2009, together with a new body of work.

For the new work, she drew on memories she had of a Group of Seven print in her parents' house ([White Pine, 1957, by A.J. Casson](#)). “I didn't think of that memory for years, then went to the McMichael and the painting came up for me.”

She created three paintings responding to the print.

She is happy that her exhibit will be at the McMichael.

“You are struck by how beautiful the place it – the history it holds. You can see it isn't a blank, white cube other galleries have.”

She is adamant that an exhibit should not present every last piece of the artist's intentions or thoughts.

“Sometimes, leaving something unsaid is more important than trying to articulate something to death.”

Draney wants people looking at the exhibit to do some of their own interpreting.

“I want to allow them freedom. I don't want to bring them into a closed system where I tell you what we're looking at. I want you to have freedom to fill that up with your own stories.”

For more information, visit <https://mcmichael.com/event/brenda-draney/>.

**Correction — Feb. 27, 2020: This article has been edited from a previous version because The title of Draney's exhibit was changed.**