



KASKA DENA COUNCIL  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **KASKA ART EXHIBIT ANNOUNCED FOR WHITEHORSE**

LOWER POST, B.C. -- The Kaska Dena Council, Kaska Tribal Council, the Yukon Arts Centre and the Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry are planning an exhibit of Kaska art in Whitehorse, May 22 to July 20, 2003 at the Yukon Arts Centre.

“At a time when indigenous art forms are becoming increasingly threatened, Kaska art is alive and well, and that fact should be known,” said Dave Porter, Chair of the Kaska Dena Council. “We want to do all we can to encourage our artists to continue with their work and we want the public to be able to view it and appreciate its beauty.”

The exhibit includes more than 40 works by about 20 artists. It will feature traditional work and handcrafts as well as modern pieces. Visitors will have an opportunity to view a variety of work including masks, beadwork, bone, antler and wood carvings, paintings and drawings. Artist talks are scheduled May 23 at noon.

Ukjese van Kampen, First Nations Intern Curator at the Yukon Arts Centre Gallery, is responsible for the Kaska Nation art exhibition. “Being Aboriginal and very interested in Aboriginal cultural identity I am quite excited about this upcoming art exhibition,” he said. “To be a significant artist you must possess at least two important ingredients. You need to have a good foundation of skill to execute your desired vision, and your vision has to have some connection to you or your people. As many First Nations people have suffered cultural identity loss, this exhibition depicts a Nation that is rediscovering itself. Skill and vision are evident in the Kaska work. The Kaska work has originality and soul.”

“We hope this exhibit will not only increase awareness of Kaska art, but also help us to find markets for this work,” said Tribal Chief Hammond Dick, Kaska Tribal Council. “We also hope to encourage young people to pursue their interest in Kaska art – it is a critical part of our culture.”

(MORE)

The Kaska art exhibit is being made possible through the support of many individuals and organizations including Kaska Dena Council, Kaska Tribal Council, the Yukon Arts Centre, the Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry and Foothills Pipe Lines.

The Kaska Nation includes five First Nations in the southeast Yukon and northern British Columbia. Their traditional territory covers about 25 per cent of the Yukon, adjacent areas of Northwest Territories and about 10 per cent of B.C. The Kaska land claims are part of the first comprehensive claim accepted by Canada under its 1973 policy.

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