

HOUSATONIC
MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Housatonic Museum of Art Partners with Art Bridges Foundation to
Expand Community College Art Museum Programming**

*Inaugural collaboration focuses on Indigenous perspectives with community-centered
event featuring Julie Buffalohead's artwork*



Students view Julie Buffalohead's *Resurrection* on display at the Housatonic Museum of Art at CT State Housatonic in Bridgeport, Connecticut in October 2024. Julie Buffalohead (b. 1972), *Resurrection*, 2023, oil on canvas, 52 x 124 x 3 in. Art Bridges. Photography by Brandon Smith, Whiskey & Oxfords.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT, October 23, 2024 — Housatonic Museum of Art (HMA) at Connecticut State Community College Housatonic is proud to announce its new partnership with Art Bridges Foundation in Bentonville, Arkansas. In honor of Native American Heritage Month, the HMA will present “Storytelling through the Art of Julie Buffalohead,” a free community program on **Wednesday, November 20, 2024**.

This event is the result of an Art Bridges Learning & Engagement project that is centered around *Resurrection* by Julie Buffalohead, a celebrated Indigenous artist and member of the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma. A hands-on artmaking workshop and a discussion will explore the themes found in Buffalohead's work, which is on loan from the Art Bridges Collection and currently on view in the Beacon Hall Event Center.

Attendees will engage in the artmaking workshop led by Darlene Kascak, Educational Outreach Ambassador at the Institute for American Indian Studies and a Schaghticoke Tribal Nation storyteller. Drawing inspiration from Buffalohead's *Resurrection*, participants will create memory bead necklaces as active storytelling tools that deepen their connection to the painting.

As part of the event, Dr. Royce K. Young Wolf (Hiraacá, Nu'eta, and Sosore, ancestral Apsáalooke and Nəm̀n̄n̄) — the inaugural Assistant Curator of Native American Art at Yale University Art Gallery and the Collection Manager of the Native North American and Indigenous Collection at the Yale Peabody Museum — will lead a discussion on the cultural significance of the artwork and Buffalohead's broader impact as an Indigenous artist.

The partnership between Art Bridges and the HMA represents a pioneering effort to integrate student-led programming with professional, community-based art education. With this initiative, two community college interns have taken on key roles in selecting the artwork, applying for the grant, and conceptualizing and delivering the event, underscoring the potential of community colleges to drive innovative and inclusive art experiences. These students collaborated closely with Buffalohead, as well as Kascak and Dr. Young Wolf, and have helped shape a program that fosters engagement with Indigenous perspectives.

"We are incredibly proud of our CT State Community College students and their willingness to dive into an experimental project. The interns were involved in the very beginning of the project and guided our thinking and discussion around this unique opportunity," said **Jennifer Reynolds-Kaye, PhD, Director of the Housatonic Museum of Art**. "We are grateful to the collaborative spirit of Art Bridges, CT State Community College, and our event facilitators, Dr. Young Wolf and Darlene Kascak. We are excited to create a powerful and meaningful experience with Buffalohead's work for our community college students and learners of all ages."

Event Details

What: Storytelling through the Art of Julie Buffalohead

When: Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Time: 3-6 p.m.

Where: Housatonic Museum of Art, Beacon Hall Event Center, 900 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport, Connecticut. Free parking in the CT State Housatonic parking lot, 870 Lafayette Blvd.

This event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP at bit.ly/hma-buffalohead-rsvp. Visit housatonicmuseum.org to learn more.

About the Artwork

In *Resurrection*, Julie Buffalohead, an acclaimed Indigenous artist and member of the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma, uses animals to explore Native identity and narratives. In the work — a part of the Art Bridges Collection since 2023 — she separates these characters by using different Ponca patterns, placing them into two worlds: the underground, an allusion to Mississippian serpent effigy mounds, and the overarching tree, a representation of the present. The snakes illustrate the buried and forcibly erased memories of Native life, while two trickster coyotes attempt to weave them back into the branches above. A raccoon stands in between the coyotes, holding a red, white, and blue popsicle as a pointed symbol of the United States. *Resurrection* specifically examines the systemic eradication and burial of Native cultural and linguistic practices in boarding schools, but despite the presence of the raccoon, the snakes continue to be resurrected, symbolizing the resilience of Native futurity.

About Art Bridges' Learning & Engagement

The Learning & Engagement team works with partner museums to create transformative programs that reach new and diverse communities, connect with current audiences in new ways, and highlight interdisciplinary elements, involving disciplines like the performing arts, science, and technology to expand access and audience engagement within the visual arts. These partner institutions are eligible to apply for Learning & Engagement funding once a collection placement, traveling exhibition, or cohort project is approved. For examples of Learning & Engagement projects we support, visit our Idea Center at artbridgesfoundation.org/idea-center.

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About Housatonic Museum of Art

Located in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the Housatonic Museum of Art is committed to enriching the cultural life of its community through dynamic exhibitions, educational programs, and community outreach. As an educational resource, the museum serves Connecticut State Community College Housatonic and beyond, promoting the transformative power of art. For more information, visit housatonicmuseum.org.

About Art Bridges Foundation

Art Bridges Foundation is the vision of philanthropist and arts patron Alice Walton. Founded in 2017, Art Bridges creates and supports projects that share works of American art with communities across the United States and its territories. Art Bridges partners with a growing network of more than 240 museums on nearly 900 projects—impacting 5.3 million people nationwide—to provide financial and strategic support for exhibitions, collection loans, and programs designed to educate, inspire, and deepen engagement with local communities. The Art Bridges Collection represents an expanding vision of American art from the 19th century to present day and encompasses multiple media and voices. For more information, visit artbridgesfoundation.org.

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