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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Nickle Galleries to Receive 2024 Leadership Award for Education from the Alberta Museums Association**

August 14, 2024

Edmonton, Alberta - The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) is pleased to announce the Nickle Galleries at the University of Calgary as the recipient of the AMA's 2024 Leadership Award for Education, in recognition of their work in developing the *Prairie Interlace: Weaving, Modernisms and the Expanded Frame* exhibit, a large-scale retrospective survey of fibre-based artwork made on the Canadian Prairies done in collaboration with the Mackenzie Art Gallery.

*Prairie Interlace* examines how artists of diverse backgrounds wove new histories of fibre during a period of intense energy and creativity. Curators Michele Hardy (Nickle Galleries), Julia Krueger, and Timothy Long assembled sixty works from forty-eight artists spanning the intersecting narratives of art, craft, feminism, immigration, Indigeneity, regionalism, and architectural interior design, bringing to light oft-neglected stories of prairie innovation and creativity.

The exhibit demonstrated the Nickle's deep commitment to providing exceptional and accessible learning experiences, incorporating dynamic educational programming such as free public lectures and tours, digitized interviews and artist discussions, a bilingual website exploring the themes, artists, and images of the works, as well as an exhibit book. Published in late 2023 by the University of Calgary Press, the book features eleven essays exploring the depth and variety of prairie textiles. The exhibit book is available free online through open access as well as in print for purchase.

The collaborative work of *Prairie Interlace* is a testament to the generosity, passion, and exceptional skillset of the team at the Nickle Galleries. The research process for the exhibit involved connecting with artists across the prairies as well as several institutions, councils, groups, and scholars building lasting awareness of the tremendous value of the artworks and efforts to document it. This building of awareness also extended into the digitization of all back issues of the Alberta Craft Council's publication *Alberta Craft*, ensuring its future accessibility. Further, Hardy offered tours of *Prairie Interlace* to university classes - sharing strategies for the design, lighting, and conservation of complex textile works, mentoring the next generation of Alberta museum professionals.

"A museum gallery is an empty space waiting to be animated. To animate it, one needs not only the artifacts or objects but a team of dedicated individuals working together to create an engaging narrative," said Dr. Jennifer Salahub, Board Member of the Alberta Craft Council. "Nickle Galleries has built just such a well-knit team - and it is their generosity as much as it is



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their combined knowledge and exceptional skillsets that have made the greater community the ultimate beneficiary.”

Nominations for the Leadership Awards are adjudicated by the Leadership Awards Committee, comprised of Individual Members of the AMA. The Award will be presented at an Awards Ceremony during the AMA’s 2024 Fall Gathering. Nickle Galleries’ achievements will be celebrated during this Awards Ceremony, taking place on Saturday, September 14, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller, Alberta.

## **Background**

The Leadership Award for Education recognizes those who facilitate a culture of inquiry. Recipients in this category are innovative in their approach to educational program development and delivery. They view education as a core function of the museum, which is reflected in their collections research and exhibit development. They inspire lifelong learning through participatory programming, interpretation, and artifact engagement, and reach out to diverse audiences and encourage people to think critically about the world around them. They strive to make information accessible to a wide audience by considering the needs of different types of learners, using evaluation tools to understand community impact and refine their approach to programming, and providing opportunities for visitors to experience a sense of curiosity and wonder.

The AMA Leadership Awards recognize the exceptional work of Alberta museums and museum professionals in creating value, accessibility, and relevance in their communities. The Leadership Awards recognize excellence, innovation, and creativity in Alberta’s museum community in three categories: Engagement, Education, and Sustainability. More information about the AMA Leadership Awards can be found on the [AMA website](#).

The Alberta Museums Association provides a variety of programs and services to over 500 museums and museum professionals across Alberta. Through its focus on community engagement, social responsibility, and sustainability, the AMA utilizes its funding, accreditation, awards, and professional development opportunities to support institutions in their vital role as leading contributors to the social, cultural, and educational fabric of Alberta. The AMA believes that museums can leverage their positions as trusted institutions to encourage respectful dialogue, provide educational opportunities, and bring awareness to some of society’s most pressing issues.

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