



# SUBSTANCE OF STARS

## For Immediate Release:

CONTACT: [media@heard.org](mailto:media@heard.org)

### HEARD MUSEUM ANNOUNCES MAJOR NEW EXHIBITION FOCUSED ON CREATION STORIES OF FOUR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

**Multi-sensory exhibition includes historic works and major contemporary art commissions by leading artists**

**PHOENIX, Ariz. (June 27, 2022)** - The Heard Museum is pleased to announce a new Signature Exhibition, *Substance of Stars*, opening November 6, 2022. This multi-sensory experience shares public elements of creation stories that form the foundational knowledge systems and inspire artistic production for the Haudenosaunee, Yup'ik, Diné, and Akimel O'otham. *Substance of Stars* will combine historic and contemporary works with immersive digital technologies to showcase the cosmological and spiritual practices of each community.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is the "Sky-Dome," which will give visitors an immersive 360-degree experience within a room showing projections on all 20-foot-high walls. Incorporating edge-blended technology, the wall imagery will feature the work of four Indigenous videographers and will show dynamically changing landscapes, shifting from day to night, and between seasons. Simultaneously, the ceiling will be a fiber optic map of the cosmos centered on the North Star and will rotate four times to represent the change of seasons as seen from Arizona. According to DLR Group, the design firm overseeing the project, "*These classic, yet highly effective star field techniques work in conjunction with the Barco 4k projection and state of the art processing and playback from Dataton and Alcorn McBride, combining to create a unique immersive environment to highlight the origins of these Indigenous peoples.*"

The culmination of a three-year collaboration with advisors from four Indigenous Nations, the exhibition examines the collection of the Heard Museum from Indigenous perspectives of their own cultural production, across a variety of media. It incorporates Indigenous languages, knowledge, and spiritual values as well as the foundational origin stories and sky knowledge that figure prominently in the identities of Indigenous peoples.

New works by contemporary Indigenous artists have been commissioned for the exhibition and will be featured prominently alongside historic works and site-specific immersive media. These include works by Marie Watt (Seneca), Jacob Butler (Akimel O’otham), and Steven Yazzie (Diné), as well as a range of contemporary and cultural arts drawn from the Heard’s permanent collection. Giving an ongoing changing life to the presentation are a variety of key works being lent to the Heard from partner institutions: the Fenimore Museum; the Honolulu Museum of Art; the Rochester Museum of Science and Culture; and several others from across the United States. This exhibition is guest curated by Sean Mooney and Chuna McIntyre (Central Yup’ik,) with advisory support from Josephine Aloralrea (Cup’ik, Nunivak Island), Vernon Chimegalrea (Central Yup’ik), Jamie Jacobs (Seneca), Michael Galban (Mono Lake / Paiute), Thomas Porter (Mohawk), Ansley Jemison (Seneca), Marie Watt (Seneca), Velma Kee Craig (Diné), Manuelito Wheeler (Diné), Steven Yazzie (Diné / Laguna Pueblo / Anglo), Orlando White (Diné), Barnaby Lewis (Akimel O’otham), David Martinez (Akimel O’odham / Hia Ced O’odham / Mexican), and Jacob Butler (Akimel O’otham).

*Substance of Stars* is made possible thanks to the generosity of Lilly Endowment Inc.

For information about the exhibition please contact: [media@heard.org](mailto:media@heard.org)

LOCATION: Heard Museum, 2301 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004

### **About the Heard Museum**

Since its founding in 1929, the Heard Museum, a private nonprofit organization, has grown in size and stature to become recognized internationally for the quality of its collections, world-class exhibitions, educational programming and unmatched festivals. Dedicated to the advancement of American Indian art, the Heard successfully presents the stories of American Indian people from a first-person perspective as well as exhibitions that showcase the beauty and vitality of traditional and contemporary art. The Heard Museum is supported, in part, by the generosity of Heard Museum members and donors, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the City of Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture. In association with the Smithsonian, the Heard Museum is part of a select group of museums and cultural, educational and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian’s resources with the nation.

###