



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Mitchell Museum for the American Indian in Evanston, IL Announces Reopening

The Museum celebrates reopening with a new exhibit and the unveiling of a new sculpture by Cliff Fragua for members and supporters on the evening of August 12

Evanston, IL., July 22, 2021 – The Mitchell Museum for the American Indian (“Mitchell Museum”) announced today that it plans to reopen to visitors on Saturday, August 14, with a special reopening celebration for invited guests, including Museum members, supporters, Native American community members, and elected officials on Thursday, August 12 from 6 pm to 8 pm CT to celebrate this milestone.

Visitors are invited to view two new attractions, a new exhibit on repatriation and the unveiling of a seven-foot-high bronze sculpture by nationally recognized artist Cliff Fragua. The sculpture *Child of the Clouds* is the latest work of art to be added to the Mitchell Museum, one of North America's most important Indigenous collections. The Museum has been closed for over a year due to the pandemic.

"We are very excited the day has come that we can welcome our community back to the Mitchell Museum to reconnect in person with our extraordinary collections and experience the beauty of our new installation, *Child of the Clouds*," said Mary L. Smith Interim Executive Director. "In this time of racial reckoning, there is a renewed interest in the indigenous peoples of North America, and the Mitchell Museum is one of only a handful of independent museums in the country where visitors can learn about the past, present, and vibrant future of indigenous peoples."

Child of the Clouds. Cliff Fragua of Jemez Pueblo is an internationally acclaimed sculptor known for his graceful work in stone and bronze. He has received the most prestigious commission for sculptures in the United States, representing the state of New Mexico in the National Statuary Hall in Washington D.C with his marble sculpture of Po'pay, the leader of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt against the Spaniards. *Child of the Clouds* is a seven-foot-high bronze statue that shows the beauty, power, and grace of both the artist and his culture. It will be unveiled on Reopening Night and shown to the public for the first time.

Repatriation Exhibit. The Mitchell Museum is pleased to open its new [Repatriation Exhibit](#), *Reclaiming Cultural Treasures*, to the public for the first time. Every week, news headlines around the world report new requests for the return of stolen cultural patrimony and ancestral remains from countries on every continent. For indigenous peoples of the U.S., the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (“NAGPRA”) outlines how tribes can request the return of their ancestors’ remains and sacred materials. While there are stories of success like the return of Chief Red Cloud’s eagle feather bonnet in 2020, there are also

barriers to be broken down by shining a light on these thefts. This exhibit opens the door to the challenges of repatriation and its impacts.

“In reopening, our first priority is the safety of our visitors and staff, so we are following the guidelines of the CDC, the State of Illinois, and the City of Evanston and enacting new policies to keep everyone healthy,” says Smith. “We’re doing everything we can to make visiting the museum a safe, stress-free experience.”

While the Mitchell Museum will be open at full capacity, the Museum will continue to follow safety procedures to ensure guests' safety. Timed admission tickets are available on the Museum’s website, and physical distancing measures will be in place to reduce crowding. As permitted by [guidance from the City of Evanston](#), all visitors and staff will be required to wear masks while inside the building (with age- and health-related exceptions).

The museum has also added new hand-sanitizing stations for visitors to use, and masks will be provided by the Museum for visitors who don’t have their own. The museum’s housekeeping staff are increasing the amount of cleaning throughout the building.

Beginning on August 14, the Mitchell Museum will be open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 am-5 pm, with plans to eventually open additional days per week.

For more information regarding this event, reservations, membership, and the Museum's new safety protocols, please visit <https://mitchellmuseum.org/>.

About the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian

The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian is one of only a handful of museums across the country that focuses exclusively on the art, history, and culture of American Indian and First Nation peoples from throughout the United States and Canada. The Museum was founded by John and Betty Seabury-Mitchell, who donated their personal collection to Kendall College in 1977.

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