



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Molly Murphy: *Reservations Required*

Exhibition: March 7- May 24, 2008

Artist Reception: March 7, 2008

Artini Gallery Talk: The Bead Goes On, March 20, 2008, 7pm

Second Saturday Family Workshop: Beadwork, April 12, 11-12:30 pm

Beadwork and Mixed Media Collage: Thursdays, April 3-24, 3-5 pm

Bringing Native American Beadwork to the Classroom: April 12, 12-3 pm, for teachers

Missoula, MT / February 6, 2008 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM)/ On March 7th, the Missoula Art Museum welcomes Molly Murphy, who weaves her rich history and contemporary art into a beautiful work that combines past and present. Murphy, a mixed blood descendant of the Oglala, Lakota tribe, was raised in western Montana and learned to bead from her mother at an early age. Part of that training and the original meaning behind beadwork stays with her and her artwork today.

The exhibition begins with an Artist's reception on March 7th and then continues with a Gallery Talk on March 20th, at 7pm, as part of MAM's Thursday night Artini.

Murphy's native heritage and her formal art education at The University of Montana have shaped her skills. She uses beadwork and felt in both traditional and non-traditional forms. The exhibition will include traditional beaded bags and boxes and as well as a series of beaded XXXL T-shirts which comment on the very contemporary problem of obesity and diabetes within the Native American community.

When asked about the humor that is shown in her work, Murphy stated " I once heard ....humor is tragedy survived. When you have generations of tragedy you

require prodigious amounts of laughter. Some things are too painful to say straight out and irony and humor temper difficult subjects." As part of her heritage, humor and irony are often used to get the message across without having to state things directly.

Murphy also spoke of how she first became interested in art, saying that "Growing up I had no concept of art. Rich people had art; actually rich people had reliable cars and art." Even after her mother passed on her knowledge of beading, Murphy did not consider beading as art, but rather as a skill. It wasn't until later that she saw the potential to make a career out of that skill. In conjunction with her exhibition and with the support of the Montana Arts Council, Molly Murphy will be offering a series of classes to the community during the month of April. Having embraced the rich history of Native American beadwork and the language of contemporary art, Murphy brings a unique set of skills and knowledge to the classroom. Murphy will be teaching a special four-week beading and mixed-media workshop for middle school students, a Second Saturday Family Art workshop and a Saturday afternoon class geared for teachers wanting to gain an understanding of Native American art and culture. In addition to these classes, Murphy will also be meeting with the visiting fifth grade classes for one week during the Fifth Grade Art Experience. During this time she will be in the gallery demonstrating her beading techniques and talking to students about her work and the connection to her Native American culture.

Contact:

Renee Taaffe, Curator of Education 406/728.0447 x 228

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About MAM: FREE EXPRESSION / FREE ADMISSION. MAM educates, challenges and inspires the community through contemporary art. MAM preserves our emerging cultural heritage through the development and conservation of its art collection. Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Association of Museums since 1987, MAM showcases diverse and thought-provoking contemporary artwork from local and international artists. Gallery Hours: Tues-Sat, 11AM-5PM. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.

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