

CAPE ANN Museum

Contemporary Art Wetu Unveiled at CAM Green

Opens June 29



Untitled by Robert Peters, courtesy of SmokeSignals.

GLOUCESTER, Mass. – Cape Ann Museum is delighted to unveil a [Contemporary Art Wetu](#) at the Cape Ann Museum Green (CAM Green). The installation is the next phase of an ongoing partnership with SmokeSignals, a Native production company. SmokeSignals will add a large-scale print of new original artwork to the wetu frame built at CAM Green in May 2023 as part of the [Native Waters; Native Lands](#) initiative.

The artist, Robert Peters, is a citizen of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and is well known for his art that blends historical and modern life of indigenous people of the Northeast. Peters' artwork created for the Contemporary Art Wetu shows the continuation and evolution of cultural tradition through a round dance. Round dances encourage community participation and are often used to connect tribal communities to the land and ancestors.

“The *Contemporary Art Wetu* reflects our Native communities as they exist today,” says Steven Peters, Creative Director of SmokeSignals. “As indigenous people, we’re too often only seen in a historical context related to this Nation’s founding. This has created an image of our people and culture that remains frozen in time. The Cape Ann Museum and the City of Gloucester have been amazing partners helping us break down this barrier and replace it with a progressive and vibrant gateway to the region. A gateway that challenges the public to rethink who indigenous people are today and how our culture continues to evolve.”

“We hope that every visitor and member of the community will join us at the Cape Ann Museum Green this summer to experience the *Contemporary Art Wetu*” says Oliver Barker, Director of Cape Ann Museum. “It is a unique and very important feature of the CAM Green campus and illuminates the history as well as the contemporary stories of Native people across Eastern Massachusetts.”

Visitors to CAM Green are invited to enter the Contemporary Art Wetu to experience the conversation between traditional building methods and contemporary creativity of Native partners. Visitors are also welcome to see the artwork installation in process from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Friday, June 21, or to sign up for [Panel Discussion: Creating the Contemporary Art Wetu](#) at 1 p.m. on Friday, June 21.

Both [Native Waters; Native Lands](#) and the culminating [Contemporary Art Wetu](#) covering are presented as part of the [CAM Native Initiative](#), an ongoing series of programs, installations, and exhibitions at the Cape Ann Museum dedicated to centering and expanding the histories and contemporary stories of Native people across Eastern Massachusetts.

The [Contemporary Art Wetu](#) and the [1st Peoples: Portraits of the First Light](#) exhibition (which opens at CAM Green on June 29) are both funded in part by the Institute for Museum & Library Services.



[Native Waters; Water Lands](#) was a 2023 partnership between the Cape Ann Museum, Discover Gloucester, the Gloucester 400+ Anniversary, SmokeSignals, and the City of Gloucester. The project was funded in part by the Essex County Community Foundation’s Creative County Initiative.



CAM’s Native Initiative design, created by the Wampanoag-owned production company SmokeSignals in partnership with the Cape Ann Museum, is a play-off of Eastern Woodlands patterns with two common pots. This graphic is used by the Museum as a recognizable visual tying together all of the elements of CAM’s ongoing Native Initiatives including public projects, objects on display, events, and educational materials.

The Cape Ann Museum, founded in 1875, exists to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national, and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, four historic structures, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. In Summer 2021, the Museum opened the 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center at the Cape Ann Museum Green. The campus is located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester and is open seasonally.

The Cape Ann Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. General admission is \$15.00 adults, \$12.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors, and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents can visit for free on the first Friday (from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and second Saturday (10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) of each month. More information can be found on www.capeannmuseum.org or please call (978)283-0455 x110.

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