

Pawaatamihk Artist Feature **Tim Moore**

Cathy Mattes

Vol. 1, Issue 2 (2024)



Erasure is Futile, 2021, mixed media sculpture (collaged map, casted erasers), top view, photo provided by Tim Moore.

Feature Artist Section Layout

Tim Moore is a Métis artist who lives and works in Round Lake, Saskatchewan. He was raised in Prince Albert and is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan; his ancestors originally hail from Oxford House and Norway House, Manitoba. Moore studied art at Okanagan University College in Penticton, British Columbia, and works primarily in painting, collage, and mixed media sculpture. His art has been featured in group and solo exhibitions, including the 2020 Western Canadian Biennale, *Borderlines* (Remai Gallery, Saskatoon), the seminal exhibition of contemporary Métis artists *Li Salay* (2018, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton), and *Another Day at the Races* (2017, Langham Cultural Society, Kaslo, British Columbia). In 2026 his work will be included in the group exhibition *COLLAGE* at the Nelson Museum, Archives, and Gallery in Nelson, British Columbia, while a solo exhibition will take place at Chiguer Art Contemporain in Montréal, Québec in 2024. Moore's work can be found in private and public collections across Canada, including The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (University of Manitoba, Winnipeg), the Indigenous Art Center of Crown-Indigenous Relations Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC, Gatineau, Québec), Dunlop Art Gallery (Regina), and the Saskatchewan Arts Board.

In addition to his art-making practice, Moore has advocated for Indigenous artists in Saskatchewan as a founding member and chairperson of The Indigenous People Artists Collective of Prince Albert Inc. (IPAC), a mentor for CARFAC Saskatchewan, and as an Indigenous representative for the Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Association (2018–2020). He was also a committed project artist and educator for the Indigenous Youth PhotoVoice Project between 2014 and 2018.¹



Jerry, 2010, mixed media sculpture (gas can covered in caribou hide), photo provided by Tim Moore.

Moore's work boldly reveals and centers the impact of colonization on the lives of Métis peoples over several generations. By experimenting with a variety of materials, he imbues his work with irony, wit, and thoughtful contemplation. During a 2004 mentorship with artist and educator Michel Boutin, Moore was exposed to Dadaism, which flourished in the years after World War I, and the mediums of collage and assemblage. By recombining 2-D materials to make collage and 3-D found objects to create assemblage sculptures, his work began to express more explicitly individual and collective angst. The types of materials he merged to reveal and redress colonial narratives provoke consideration about present-day experiences and future possibilities for Métis peoples.

The sculpture *Jerry* is an example of Moore's assemblage work; it was exhibited in his touring solo exhibition *Hybrid* (2011–2012, curated by David Garneau, organized and toured by the Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils). For that exhibition, he gathered everyday objects that represent life in northern Saskatchewan, including discarded toys, construction site materials, and small appliances. By covering a discarded gas can with found caribou hide to create *Jerry*, Moore encourages viewers to contemplate the contradictions between urban and rural life and between manufactured, utilitarian objects and those gifted from the land.²

¹ Excerpts from the unpublished biography and CV provided to the author by Tim Moore on May 6, 2024.

² Bassai, M. (2013, January 9). Tim Moore: Hybrid. *Vie des arts* (229). <https://viedesarts.com/visites/tim-moore-hybrid/>



Whitewash, 2016, Collage, photo provided by Tim Moore.

The world of horse racing, so inextricably tied to the elite that it is known as the sport of kings, served as an analogy for Moore when further examining his Métis identity. His collage and assemblage works include grotesque-appearing jockeys, hybrid and disjointed horse and human figures, and printed text to reveal the world of horse racing as an expression of toxic masculinity that eventually altered familial and community dynamics.¹ Also imbedded into these works are recognizable cultural signifiers, such as the Hudson's Bay Company blanket and floral beadwork representing Métis presence and ties to the land, as seen in the collage work *Whitewash*. These cultural signifiers both embody experiences with early colonization and assert ancestral ties to the land.

¹ Galeri3. Tim Moore. https://www.lagalerie3.com/en/tim_moore/ (Accessed May 15, 2024).



Erasure is Futile, 2021, mixed media sculpture (collaged map, casted erasers), collection of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (Winnipeg), photo provided by Tim Moore.

“My family has experienced the erasure this work is talking about ... there was a lot of disconnect on my father's side of the family. And it's taken a long time for us to piece together exactly what happened during that time period and in our family.”¹

After participating in a Métis arts symposium for the exhibition *Li Salay* (2018, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton), Moore began creating a series of sculpted and cast erasers stamped with a number to signify the watermarks found on Métis scrip. A common theme throughout the panel discussions was the impact of erasure, from colonial governments' attempts to erase the Métis nation to the legacies left by many the Métis who attempted to erase their cultural ties simply to survive. After beginning this series, which contains over five hundred cast and stamped erasers, three dominant themes emerged: Moore's personal experience with displacement, the impact of his family losing their scrip allotments, and the intergenerational impact of Moore's grandfather being taken away to residential school at age seven, never to return to his parents. Erasers became a simple symbol for the loss that comes with these lived circumstances and continues to be so in Moore's recent works.

Erasure is Futile speaks to the impacts of these interconnected events, which changed the course of his family's legacy. It was commissioned by the CBC for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in 2021 and has since been donated to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg. Secured to a rounded base is a small tower of stamped erasers—reminiscent of how bison bones were once piled high during Western settlement. To create the base, Moore tore up a map of Saskatchewan and collaged it back together to represent how land was stolen from Indigenous peoples, repurposed, and then re-presented as something entirely different. Although the work conveys difficult stories, the title *Erasure is Futile* actually connotes strength and hope for the future. This work and others from the *Erasure* series are not a testimony that colonial strategies of erasure worked; by contrast, they serve as an offering to others who carry similar stories and as a recognition of Moore's resilient family, whose legacy he braids together and makes visible with collage, assemblage, and contemplation of the now and what is yet to come.

¹ Natascia Lipny, “How a day for truth and reconciliation inspired these Indigenous artists.” *CBC News* online. September 30, 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/saskatchewan-indigenous-artwork-national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation-1.6189278>

Additional Resources on Tim Moore

- Anderson, Kjelti. (2012, November 14). Exploring personal and collective identities. *The Battlefords News-Optimist*. <https://www.sasktoday.ca/north/in-the-community/exploring-personal-and-collective-identities-4035955>
- Desloges, Josianne. (2016, September 8). Tim Moore. <https://www.lesoleil.com/2016/09/09/les- rendez-vous-de-lautomne-77088c5aafd502f71419aeb3db2fc726/>
- Desloges, Josianne. (2016, November 19). Tim Moore: La course identitaire. *Le Soleil*. <https://www.lesoleil.com/2016/11/20/quatrieme-foire-en-art-actuel-de-quebec-transactions- creatives-7a3e3bc5cc6e84d1556200d2a9fd12f7/>.
- Hellings, Scott. (2012, October 11). Hybrid exhibit explores where cultural identity comes from. *Moose Jaw Express*.
- Miliokas, Nick. (2009, November 12). Exhibit corrects cultural gap mindset. *Leader Post* (Regina).
- Milroy, Sarah. (2013, June 7). An art show with everything but the kitchen sink – Even the kitchen chair. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/summer-entertainment/an-art-show-with-everything-but-the-kitchen-sink-even-the-kitchen-chair/article12414305/>
- The Painting Project: A Snapshot of Painting in Canada*. Galerie l'UQAM, 2013. <https://galerie.uqam.ca/en/expositions/the-painting-project-a-snapshot-of-painting-in-canada-2/>
- Slideshow: The Painting Project. (2013, June 27). *Canadian Art*. <https://canadianart.ca/features/painting-project/>