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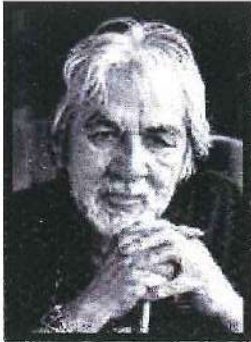
Gallery 260

Collection

Norval Morriseau

NORVAL MORRISSEAU

1932-2007



Norval Morrisseau was born March 14, 1932 on the Sand Point Ojibway reserve near Beardmore, Ontario. Some sources quoted him as saying that he was born in Fort William, now part of Thunder Bay, Ontario, on the same date in 1931. His full name is Jean-Baptiste Norman Henry Morrisseau, but he signs his work using the Cree syllabics.

According to Anishnaabe tradition, he was raised by his maternal grandparents. His grandfather, Moses Potan Nanakonagos, a shaman, taught him the traditions and legends of his people. His grandmother, Grace Theresa Potan Nanakonagos, was a devout Catholic and from her he learned the tenets of Christianity. The contrast between these two religious traditions became an important factor in his intellectual and artistic development. At the age of six, he was sent to a Catholic residential school, where students were educated in the European tradition, native culture was repressed, and the use of native language was forbidden. After two years he returned home and started attending a local community school.

At the age of 19, he became very sick. He was taken to a doctor but his health continued to deteriorate. Fearing for his life, his mother called a medicine-woman who performed a renaming ceremony: she gave him the new name of Copper Thunderbird. According to Anishnaabe tradition, giving a powerful name to a dying person can give them new energy and save their life. Morrisseau recovered after the ceremony and from then on always signed his works with his new name.

An early advocate of Morrisseau was the anthropologist Selwyn Dewdney, who became very interested in Morrisseau's deep knowledge of native culture and myth. Dewdney was the first to take his art to the public. Jack Pollock, a Toronto art dealer, helped expose Morrisseau's art to a wider audience in the 1960s. The two met in 1962 while Pollock was teaching a painting workshop in Beardmore. Struck by the discovery of Morrisseau's art, he immediately organized an exhibition of his work at his Toronto gallery.

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One of Morrisseau's early commissions was a large mural in the Indians of Canada pavilion at Expo 67; a revolutionary exhibit voicing the dissatisfaction of the First Nations People of Canada with their social and political situation.

In 1972, he was caught in a hotel fire in Vancouver and suffered serious burns on three-quarters of his body. In that occasion he had a vision of Jesus encouraging him to be a role model through his art. He converted to the apostolic faith and started introducing Christian themes in his art. A year later he was arrested for drunk and disorderly behavior and was incarcerated for his own protection. He was assigned an extra cell as a studio and was allowed to attend a nearby church.

In 2005 and 2006, the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa organized a retrospective of his work. This was the first time that the Gallery dedicated a solo exposition to a native artist. This show attracted the largest attendance of any solo exhibitor in the history of the National Gallery.

Norval Morrisseau is considered the grandfather of the Woodlands Style and the most popular of what has been dubbed "Canada's Native Group of Seven." Morrisseau is now known internationally. Morrisseau is a self-professed Ojibway Shaman who paints the visions that come to him in dreams. While he is considered the founder and cornerstone of the Woodlands School of Art, (also known as Legend or Medicine Painting) other members of this "Native Group Of Seven" have their work on Redkettle site such as Carl Ray and Joshim Kakegamic. Their influence continues to affect the art being done by young native artists today considered to be "Woodlands- the next generation".

~Untitled~



Acrylic on canvas, 12x17in, \$32.00

In this painting Norval Morrisseau has depicted the head of a man gazing into the eyes of a beast. Attached from the neck down, their union is symbolic of the act of man becoming at one with nature and the animal kingdom. It reflects that we are all somehow connected. Morrisseau's use of patterns and bold colours make this mythical painting come to life.

~Thunderbird, 1974~



18x12 in, \$3 500

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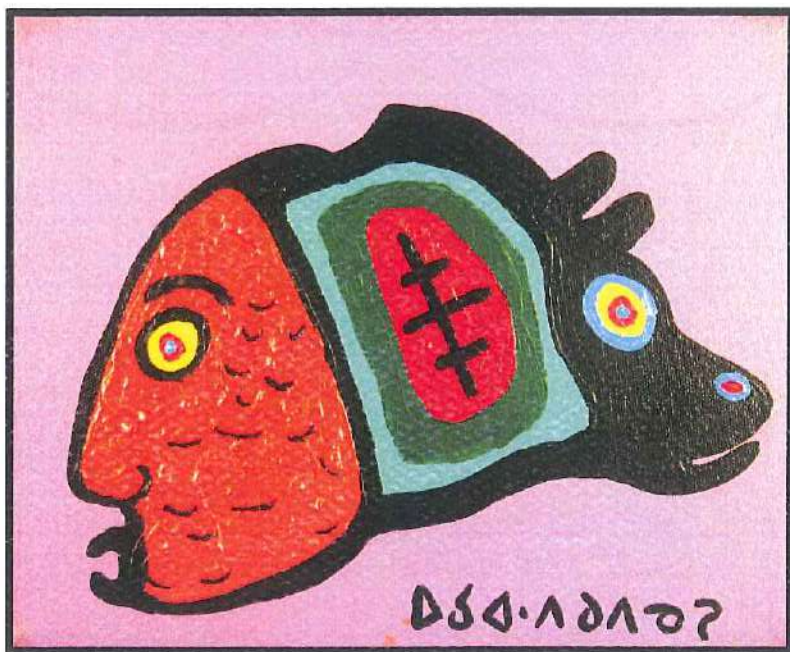
~Moose and His Friends, 1988~



26x20 in, \$3 800

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~Aging Bear~



8x10 in, \$5 000

~ Thunderbirds on plain ~

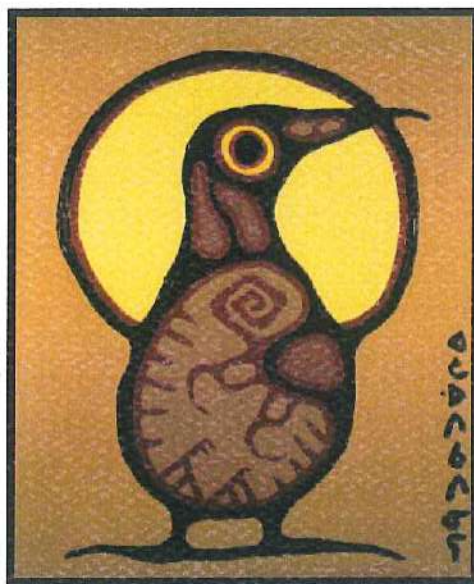


30x20 in, \$7 500

The vibrant and red background of this composition offsets the simple black line figures that are scattered about the canvas. The turquoise shapes on either side of the painting create balance and interest. Although Morrisseau has used the entire canvas, he avoids muddling space by limiting his use of colour and form.

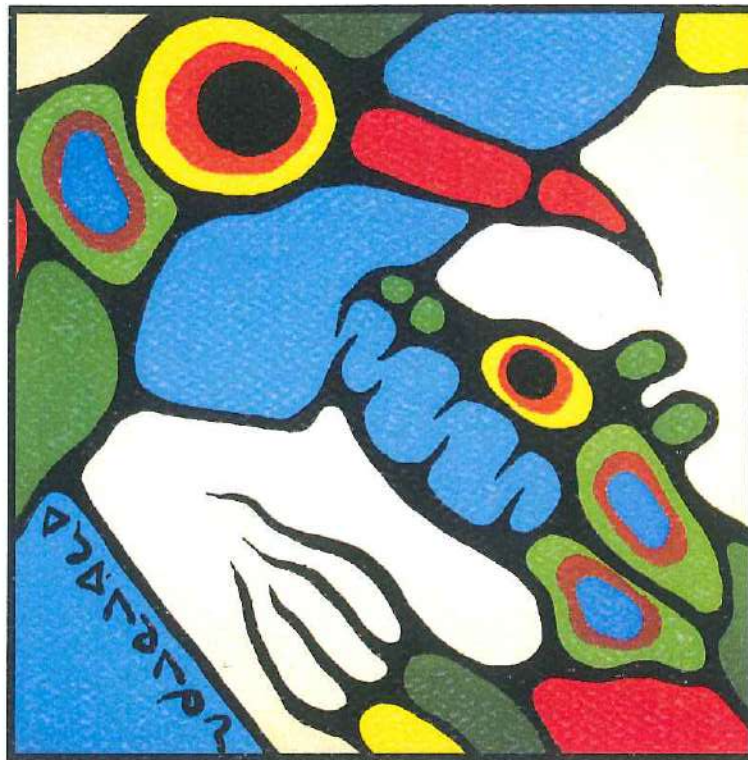
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~ Thunderbird beije Jenn off, 1970~



24x19.5 in, \$7 500

~Untitled, 1972~



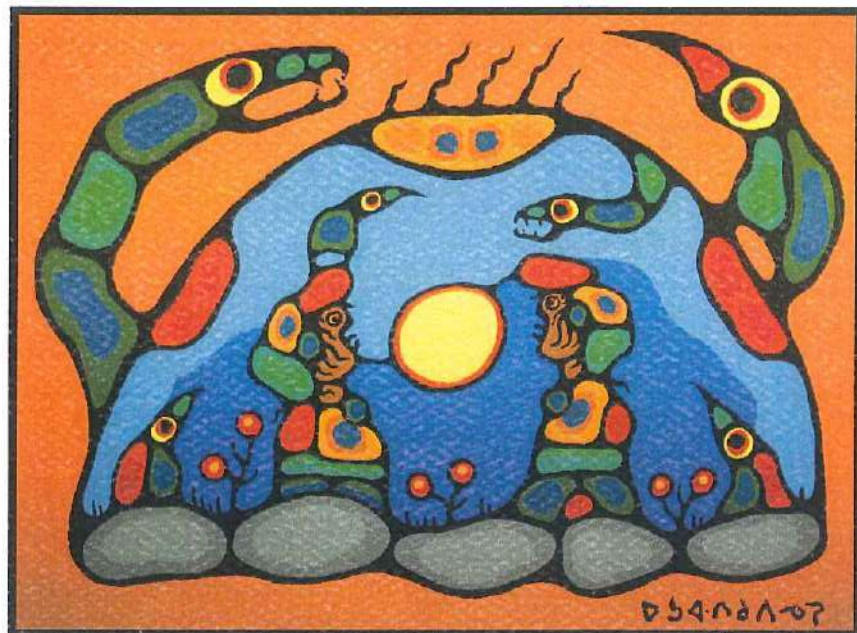
19x19 in, \$7 500

~Transformation Within, 1985~



36.0x24.0 in, \$8 500

~Healing Ceremony, 1980~



35.0x25.5 in, \$8 500

~Shaman Gives to Creator~



23x27 in, \$8 500

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~Thunderbird, 1980~



21.0x27.5 in, \$9 000

~ Unreadable man face , 1976~



18.5x26.5 in, \$9 000

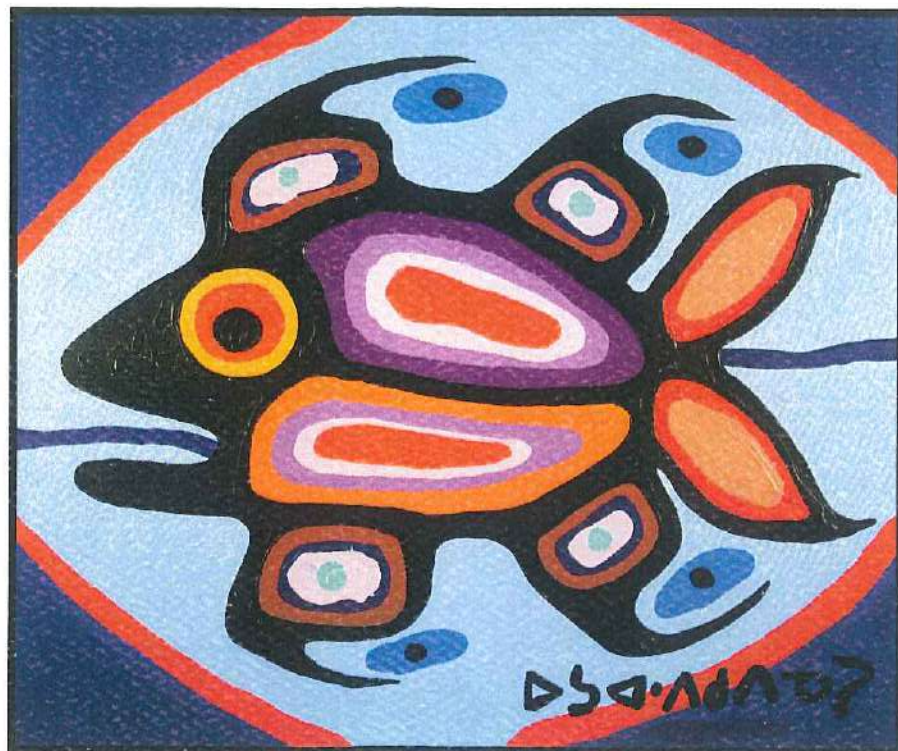
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~Thunderbirds~



17 3/4 x 11 1/4 inc, selling as a set for \$9 500

~ Cosmic Fish, 1980 ~



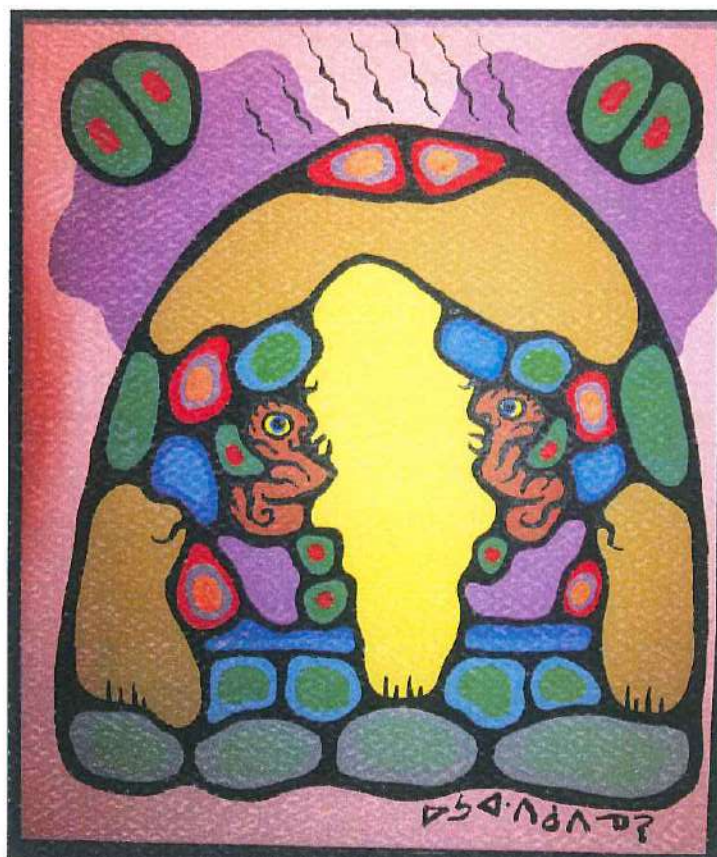
32x26 in, \$9 500

~Protecting Eggs, 1974~



20.5x27.0 in, \$10 000

~Shaman Shows Visions to Apprentice, 1977~



20.0x23.5 in, \$10 000

~Loon and Fish Serpent, 1980~



17.5x30.0 in, \$11 000

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~ Life Journey, 1983 ~



36x24 in, \$11 000

~Sacred Fish, 1974~



32.5x21.5 in, \$11 000

~Thunderbird~



35x29 in, \$12 000

~Shaman Enters Underworld~



Acrylic on canvas, 32x 28in, \$12 000

Encased in a twisted black frame, this painting symbolizes the legend that a shaman enters the underworld through a cave or hole in the Earth. Morrisseau's shaman enters from one side and is greeted by fiends of the underworld, crawling out of the abyss. The many pockets of colour are representative of fire, water, earth and air. This, along with his asymmetrical use of shape and mythical use of character, creates a supernatural ambience.

~Shaman and Apprentice, 1976~



23.0.x36.5 in, \$12 200

~Thunderbird~



36x24 in, \$12,500

~Inner Spirit, 1975~



28.5x28.5 in, \$13 000

~ Fish with energy circles and power, 1982 ~



29.5x36.5 in, \$13 500

~Thunderbird, 1973~



27x35 in, \$14 000

~ Medicine Bird, 1982 ~



30x30 in, \$14 000

At first glance it seems that Morisseau painted a man whose body is composed of eight thunderbirds. However, the multicoloured blocks which make up the space between the man and the birds closely resemble cells, suggesting that these are not separate entities stuck together but rather a single creature. Its colors underline this unity, as well as the creature's connection to other entities around it. Its structure is reminiscent of a ship, sailing on a turquoise sea to other spiritual realms. Morisseau uses his signature intense colors and bold outlines to draw in his viewer.

~Artist Speaks with Thunderbird Child, 1974~



21.5x36.5 in, \$14 000

~ Thunderbird, 1980 ~



Acrylic on canvas, 32x32in, \$14 000

We are presented with a moment of gentle embrace between two birds. On the spot where the two creatures touch life spurs in form of a beautiful and vibrant plant. This plant might represent love and offspring. In this painting Morisseau celebrates the physical and the spiritual connection between two entities with bright, joyful colors contained within a continuous bold outline.

~Thunderbird~



30x30 in, \$14 500

~Thunderbird, 1980~



Acrylic on canvas, 32x32, \$15 000

A scene of Thunderbird sitting on a tree stump against an uncharacteristic for Morrisseau soft, peach background. The colours within the bird make it look as if it is pulsating with life. As it raises its wings to prepare for flight this magnificent creature looks larger than life. This painting may represent Morrisseau's miraculous recovery from a deadly illness after which he was given his native name ~Thunderbird.

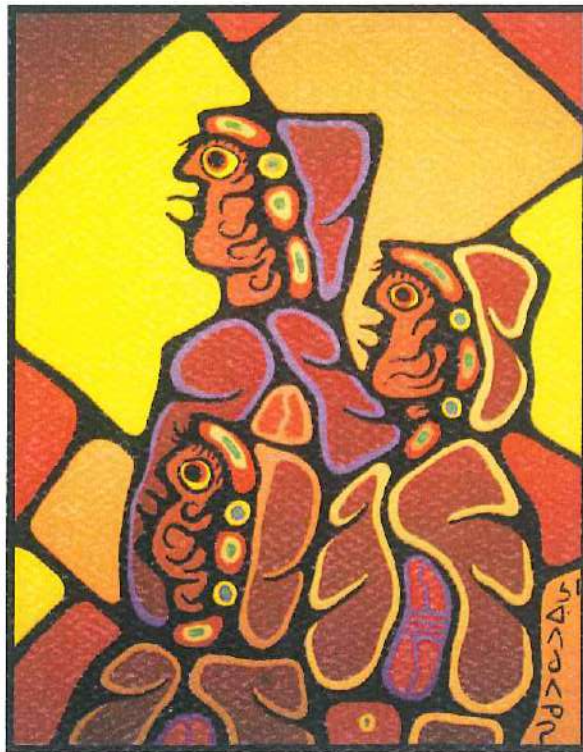
~Food of the Gods~



Acrylic on canvas, 76x23inc, \$18 000

This painting portrays a nautical scene, where, resting on the rocks, lie creatures of the deep. Against a two-tone aqua setting, the warm and bright colours that fill the foreground create a contrast that lights up the room. Based on a vision Morrisseau saw in a dream, this untitled painting's creativity and mystery spark the imagination.

~Astral Spirit Scouts, 1977~



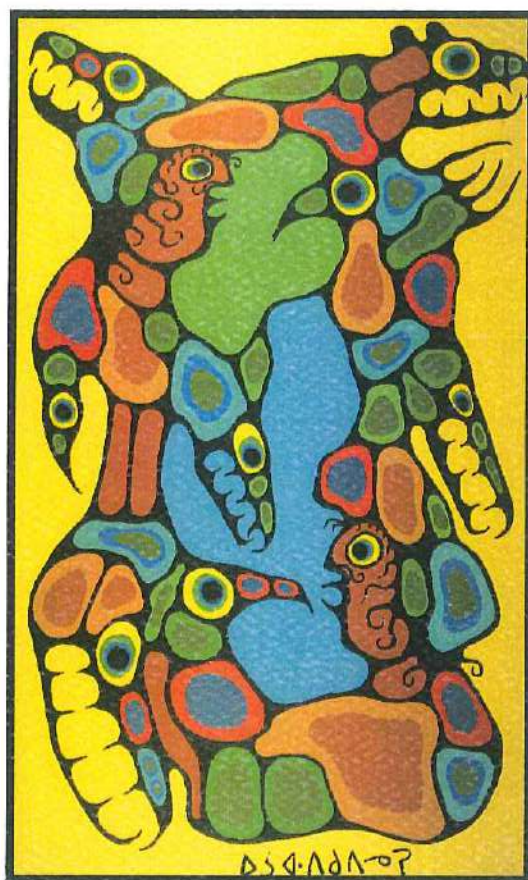
27x35 in, \$18 000

~ Sacred Thunderbird my Totem, 1975 ~



29.5x36.5 in, \$20 000

~ Gathering Shamans, 1977 ~



51.5x30.5 in, \$23 000

~Shaking Tent, 1978~



Acrylic on canvas, 54x37inc, 1978, \$25 000

In this piece, Norval Morrisseau depicts a world inside an existence inside a tent, while an outside force, a large creature, shakes the tent from the outside. Morrisseau personifies the wind as a faceless monster, communicating the strength of nature and humans' inability to hide from the natural in our increasingly technological era. He uses his signature style of bold colours to tell his story and relay his message in a vivid a manner.

~Bear Spirit, 1978~



Acrylic on canvas, 60x39in, \$25 000

A common subject of Norval Morrisseau's paintings is the shaman character, a partial backup for his nickname "The Shaman Artist". In this painting, "Moon River", Morrisseau, depicts a shaman surrounded by various animal figures, conveying the unity with nature that shamans possess. The concept of a moon river is often associated with healing and serenity, and the artist's use of deep greens and blues is a visual manifestation of these feelings.

~Astral Community, 1984~



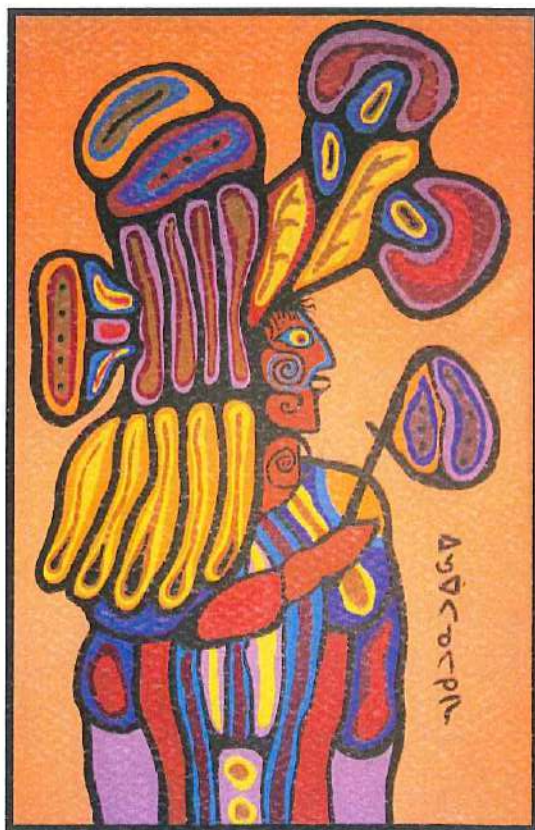
47x36 in, \$28 000

~Fish and Fish with Spirit Loons, 1983~



36.5x29.5 in, \$28 000

~ Moon River Shaman, 1985 ~



60x39 in, \$33 000

~Scared Medicine Bear, 1974~



37x52in, \$35 000

~ Grandfather with Child, 1973 ~



57.5x35.0 in, \$35 000

~ Forth Plain, 1976 ~



42.5x55.0 in, \$36 000

~ Ojibway Union with Floral Tree, 1982 ~



41x80 in, \$38 000

~Untitled~



26x130 in, \$40 000

~Sacred Moose Spirit~



Acrylic, 46.5x 58.5in, \$40 000

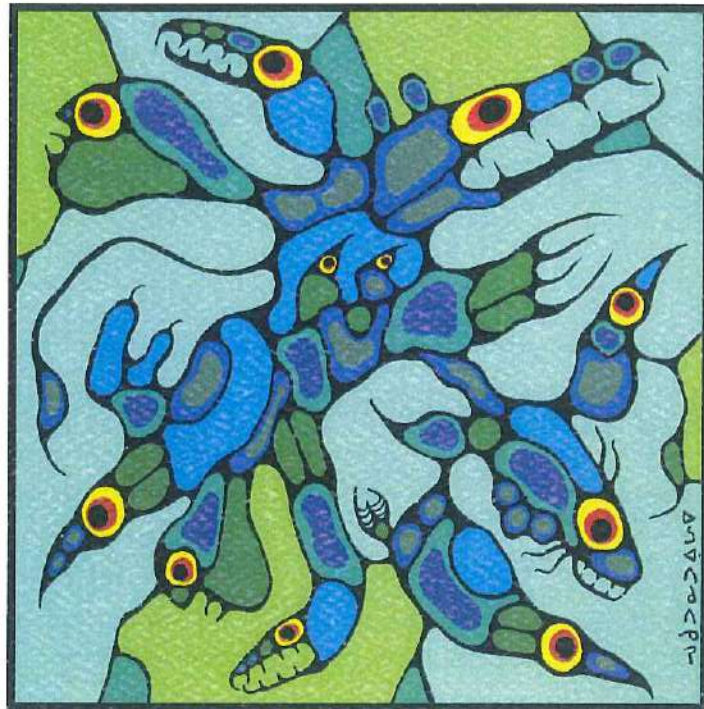
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~Untitled~



54x50 in, \$41 000

~Inorganic Beings, 1974~



48x49 in, \$41 000

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~ Energy, 1979 ~



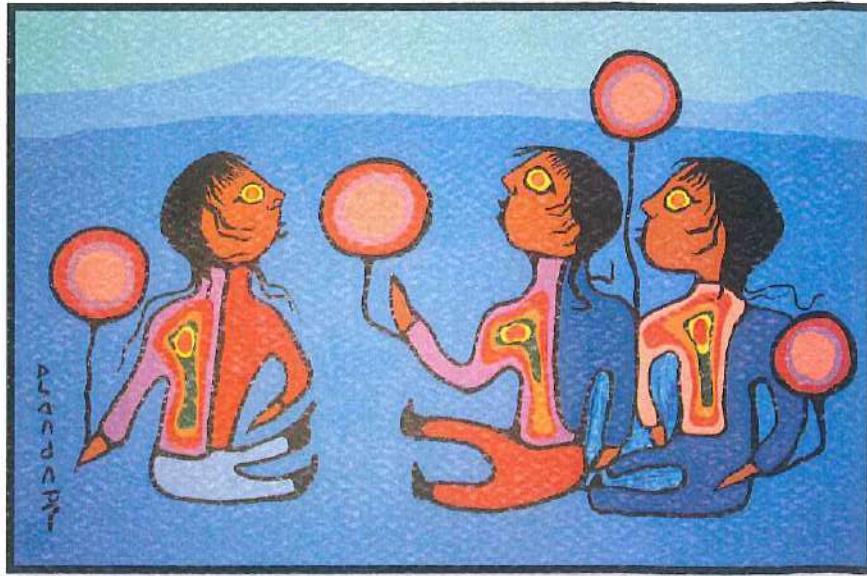
90x36 in, \$42 000

~ Gathering Shamans, 1977 ~



69x48 in, \$43,500

~Ojibway Children Remember their Past, 1983~



35x48 in, \$45 000

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~Untitled, 1978~



90.5x31.0 in, \$45 000

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~Untitled~



46x64 in, \$45 000

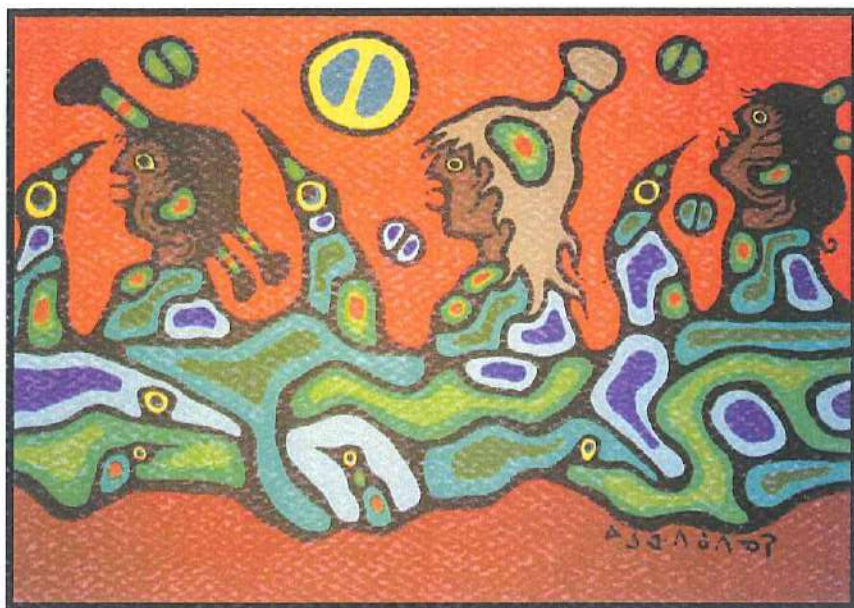
~Changing the Windigo~



42.5x36.5, \$48 000

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~Untitled~



46x66 in, \$50 000

~Children viewing Floral Bloom, 1985~



36x48in, \$50 000

~Path of Life, 1977~



96x33 in, \$55 000

~ Mother Earth with Sacred Turtle ~

&

~ Ancestral Demi God Figure, 1981 ~



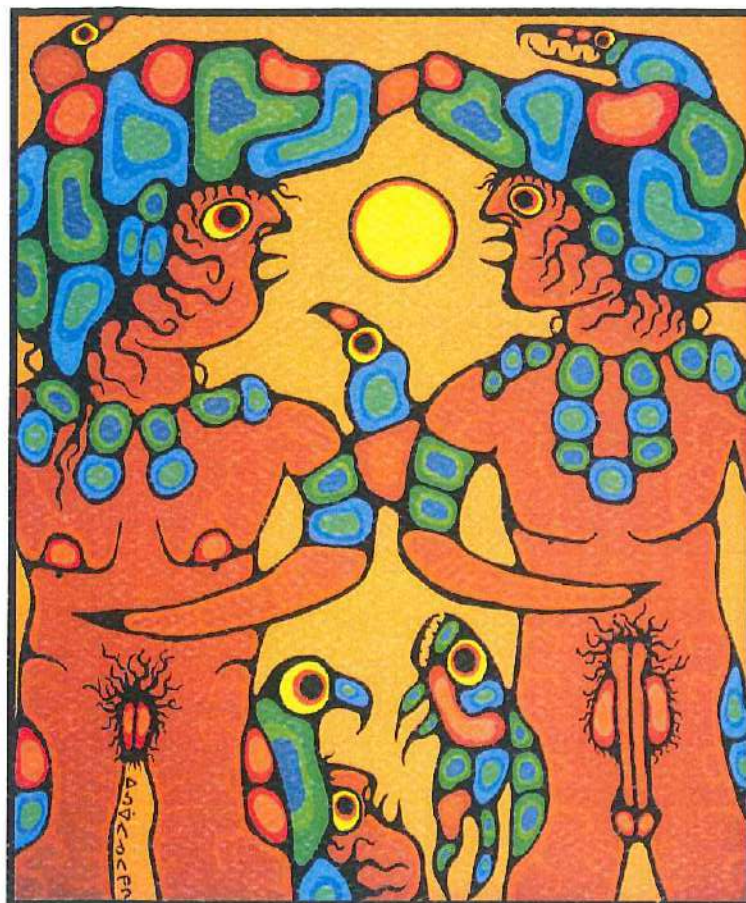
36x48 in/each, \$60 000

~Merman Conjuring, 1983~



24x36 in/each, \$60 000

~ Erotic, 1972 ~



55.0x45.5 in, \$60 000

~Untitled~



51x78 in, \$65 000

~Peace Pipe, 1983~



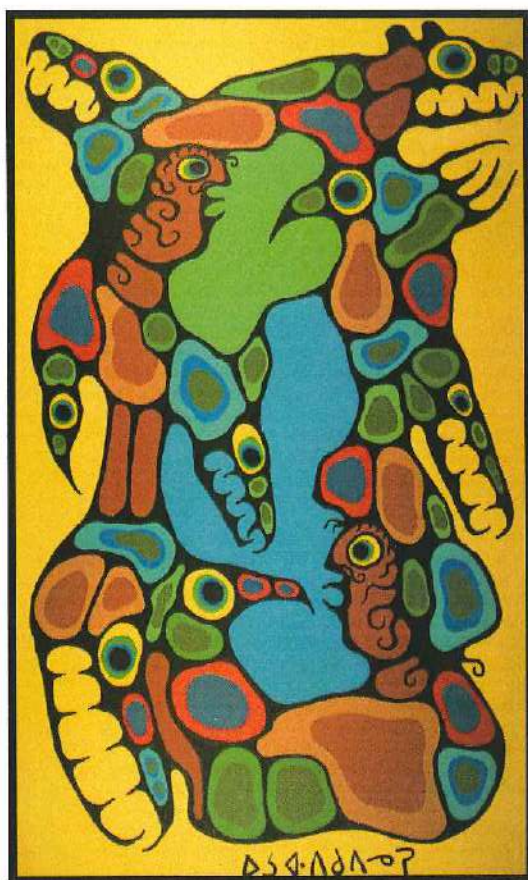
98x61 in, \$70 000

~ Beaver Unity, 1980~



25x25 in, \$10 000

~ Untitled, 1979 ~



51.5x30.5 in, \$23 000

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