

The Art Gallery of Hamilton Presents *Shary Boyle: How We Are* and
mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective.



February 18, 2026, HAMILTON, ONTARIO

Opening February 14, 2026, and February 21, 2026, respectively, *Shary Boyle: How We Are* and *mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective* offer space for reflection and critical discourse on current and historical events and narratives. The Winter Exhibition Opening Celebration will take place Sunday, February, 22, 2026 from 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM. Artists will be in attendance and admission is free.

"This season's exhibitions underscore the palpable relationship of art to contemporary politics and ideas. Spanning several decades and through the multigenerational lens of Ruth Cuthand and Shary Boyle, broad ideas of identity, loss, protest, and resistance are tautly woven with the intensely personal. Integrating sculpture, painting, beading, photography, drawing, video, and installation, both artists draw us into liminal spaces balancing the tangible with the emotional and at times spiritual and metaphoric. Two extraordinarily powerful exhibitions that transport, challenge and invite us to reflect."

– Shelley Falconer, President & CEO, Art Gallery of Hamilton

This winter, the Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH) hosts a brand-new exhibition, *Shary Boyle: How We Are*. For the first time in Boyle's thirty-year exhibition history, the artist presents a survey of her socio-political artworks.

Shary Boyle: How We Are reveals and grapples with the most harrowing complexities of the contemporary landscape—gendered violence, white supremacy, colonialism, war, authoritarianism, extinction, censorship, and on. This exhibition draws attention to urgent yet quietly normalized social and political ills, inviting viewers toward a collective turning. Transcending the confines of everyday, Boyle opens spaces where wonder might coexist with inquiry—where respectful conversation can empower personal reckonings with unspoken beliefs. The exhibition opens Saturday, February 14, 2026, and runs until Sunday, May 10, 2026.

Among the 17 pieces on view is Shary Boyle's 9-foot-tall sculpture, *White Elephant*, acquired by the AGH in 2024. The piece was purchased through a grant from the Council of Canadian and American Relations made possible by the generous support of an anonymous donor.

The AGH is also pleased to present *mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective*. The exhibition encompasses Cuthand's diverse range of interests and strategies, engaging communities with stories that encourage Indigenous knowing, caution, and continuation or survival.

Curator Felicia Gay looks at Cuthand's career from 1983 to 2024. Comprising new and past works, *mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective*, includes beadwork, painting, installation, video, photography, and collaborative story-work between Cuthand and Gay. Cuthand critiques historical and contemporary narratives with humour and biting wit, highlighting the enduring effects of the colonial project as well as the enduring strength of Indigenous people in Canada. The exhibition opens on Saturday, February 21, 2026, running until Sunday, May 24, 2026.

On view are works from Cuthand's *Trading Series* which bridges art and science while simultaneously confronting viewers with the historic harms of trading between European settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada. Cuthand's beaded microscopic views of viruses, connect the brutality of the virus with the beauty of art.

Entry to both exhibitions is included in General Admission. Visitors under 18, students, and Indigenous Peoples receive free year-round admission to the AGH. Thursdays are free admission, courtesy of RBC and incite Foundations for the Arts.

EXHIBITION CREDIT

mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective is organized and circulated by the MacKenzie Art Gallery. Curated by Felicia Gay. The MacKenzie receives ongoing support from the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation, Canada Council for the Arts, SaskCulture, City of Regina, University of Regina, and Saskatchewan Arts Board. Tour supported by Total Transportation and the Canada Council for the Arts.



PROGRAM SCHEDULE

[Artist-Led Tour with Shary Boyle](#) | February 22, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM **SOLD OUT**

[Winter Exhibition Opening Celebration](#) | February 22, 2026, 2:00 – 5:00 PM

[Artist Talk with Ruth Cuthand and Shelley Niro](#) | February 22, 2026, 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Artist Talk with Shary Boyle | April 9, 2026, 7:00 PM

ABOUT SHARY BOYLE

Shary Boyle's multidisciplinary work considers the social history of ceramic figures, animist mythologies, antiquated technologies and folk-art forms to create a symbolic, feminist and politically charged language uniquely her own. Her practice is activated through collaboration and mentorship, engaging other creative communities and makers with a characteristically inclusive spirit.

ABOUT RUTH CUTHAND

Ruth Cuthand's career as a visual artist, educator, and community advocate for women and BIPOC communities has impacted the Canadian cultural landscape in a multitude of ways. Cuthand has been instrumental to the development of an experimental and expansive Indigenous art practice grounded in critically relevant subject matter.

-30-

ABOUT THE ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON

Founded in 1914, the AGH is the oldest and largest public art gallery in southwestern Ontario. Its permanent collection, which is focused on historical Canadian, International, and Contemporary art, numbers just under 12,000 works and is recognized as one of Canada's finest. The AGH is a vital creative hub and centre of lifelong learning that enables people of all ages to enrich their lives by gaining a deeper understanding of art.

Exhibition Media Package: [AGH Winter Exhibitions](#)
For media requests, email info@artgalleryofhamilton.com

IMAGE CREDITS:

Shary Boyle, *White Elephant*, 2021, wool, jersey, cotton, metal snaps, aluminum, foam, textiles, porcelain, motor. Art Gallery of Hamilton. Purchased through a grant from the Council of Canadian and American Relations made possible by the generous support of an anonymous donor, 2024. © Shary Boyle. Photo: John Jones, 2021.

Shary Boyle, *The Silences*, 2024, series of pigmented, press-molded stoneware, with glazes and inset Limoges porcelain eyes. Courtesy the artist, Patel Brown and EKWC (European Ceramic Work Centre). Photo: Rene van der Hulst, 2024.

Ruth Cuthand, *Panic Attack*, 2021, glass beads, thread, backing. Installation view, *mīgisak mīgohk / Beads in the Blood: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective*. Collection of Francesca Patterson and Peter Rozee. Photo Don Hall.