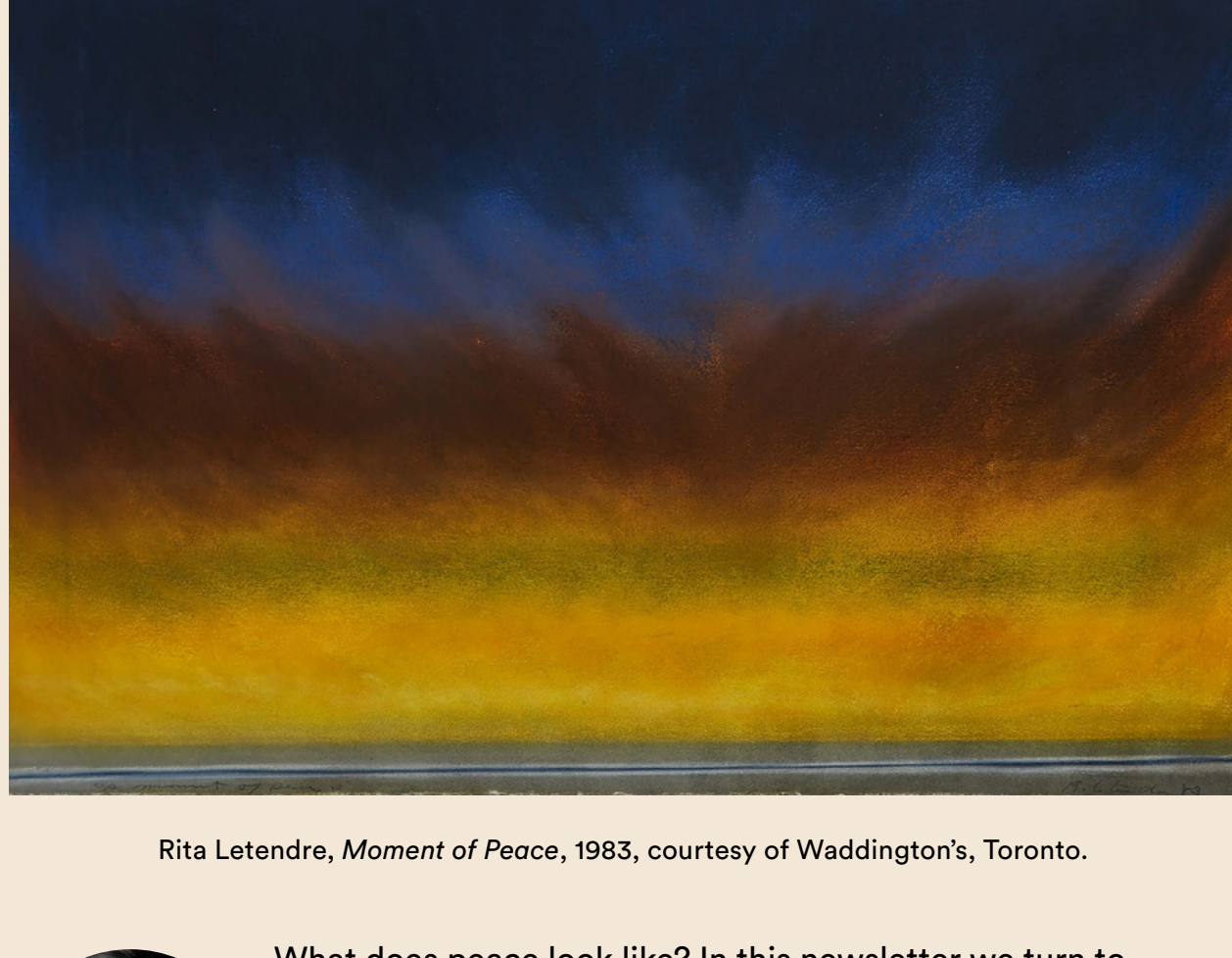


DECEMBER 15, 2023

MOMENTS OF PEACE 4 ARTIST REFLECTIONS

Thought-provoking and hopeful perspectives on peace, community, and our interconnected world.



Rita Letendre, *Moment of Peace*, 1983, courtesy of Waddington's, Toronto.



What does peace look like? In this newsletter we turn to Canadian artists for answers, because, as the Québécoise and Abenaki artist Rita Letendre [put it](#), “You don’t accept darkness, you pass through it and you win.” Her ethereal pastel drawing *Moment of Peace*, 1983 (above), features the bold application of deep blues, browns, and radiant yellows, which meld together to form a kind of sunset. In the 1980s, Letendre began shifting away from the signature hard-edged chevrons and lines of colour that characterized her earlier geometric compositions, creating atmospheric works like *Moment of Peace* and taking greater inspiration from the natural world. Looking forward to 2024, we share Letendre’s magnificent drawing as well as works by Shuvina Ashoona, Ammar Bowaihl, and Norval Morrisseau, with wishes that the year ahead may be one in which unity and harmony prevail.

Sara Angel

Founder and Executive Director, Art Canada Institute

COMPOSITION (PEOPLE, ANIMALS, AND THE WORLD HOLDING HANDS)

by Shuvina Ashoona



Shuvina Ashoona, *Composition (People, Animals, and the World Holding Hands)*, 2007–8, collection of Edward J. Guarino.



In this lively drawing by Inuk artist Shuvina Ashoona (b.1961), animals, humans, mythical creatures, and the Earth itself join hands to form a circle. “I was thinking that they were having a meeting... rethinking what the world would be for the animals,” [says Ashoona](#). “I started thinking that all of these animals would be friends, even some of the dangerous animals.” Emphasizing community and collaboration over differences, the work embodies Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit—the traditional knowledge systems and values passed down through generations that rest on an understanding of the interconnectedness of all life.

Read more in ACI’s [Shuvina Ashoona: Life & Work](#)

by Nancy G. Campbell

COMMUNITY

by Ammar Bowaihl



Ammar Bowaihl, *Untitled*, n.d., from the series *Community*, courtesy of Ammar Bowaihl.



Two people meet in the middle of a heart-adorned chalk maze in this image by Saudi-born Yemeni Canadian photographer Ammar Bowaihl. Part of his series *Community*, n.d., it was shot in his home of Thorncliffe Park, a Toronto neighbourhood known for its cultural diversity and significant Middle Eastern and South Asian populations.

“I have tried to capture the soul of my community and produce images that will resonate and represent everyone in this neighbourhood,” he explains in [an artist statement](#).

[Learn more about Ammar Bowaihl](#)

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ANDROGYNY

by Norval Morrisseau



Norval Morrisseau, *Androgyny*, 1983, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Aboriginal Art Collection, Gatineau.



In this cheerful painting by Anishinaabe artist Norval Morrisseau (1932–2007), the Thunderbird spreads their wings under a large arch, surrounded by animals, humans, trees, flowers, and spirit-beings. When Morrisseau offered this piece to the federal government as a gift to the people of Canada, he was expressing his hopes for a unified country committed to reconciliation and inclusivity. [In a letter to then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau](#), Morrisseau explained: “The theme of the mural is A [sic] shaman that is Androgyny in four directions, filled with all parts of nature in Canada, thunderbeings, sacred serpents and turtles, flowers, animals, and we children of Mother Earth. PS. Butterflies and Bumble Bees, too!”

Read more in ACI’s [Norval Morrisseau: Life & Work](#)

by Carmen Robertson

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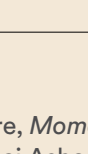
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Image Credits: [1] Rita Letendre, *Moment of Peace*, 1983, pastel on paper, 55.9 x 75.6 cm. Courtesy of Waddington's, Toronto. [2] Shuvina Ashoona, *Composition (People, Animals, and the World Holding Hands)*, 2007–8, ink and coloured pencil on paper, 66 x 102 cm. Collection of Edward J. Guarino. Courtesy of Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Poughkeepsie. © Dorset Fine Arts, Toronto. [3] Ammar Bowaihl, *Untitled*, n.d., from the series *Community*. Courtesy of Ammar Bowaihl. [4] Norval Morrisseau, *Androgyny*, 1983, acrylic on canvas, 366 x 610 cm. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Aboriginal Art Collection, Gatineau, Quebec (306400 A-D). Photo credit: Lawrence Cook.