

Designs From Nature: Native Art at the UNB Art Centre

by Jethelo E. Cablete

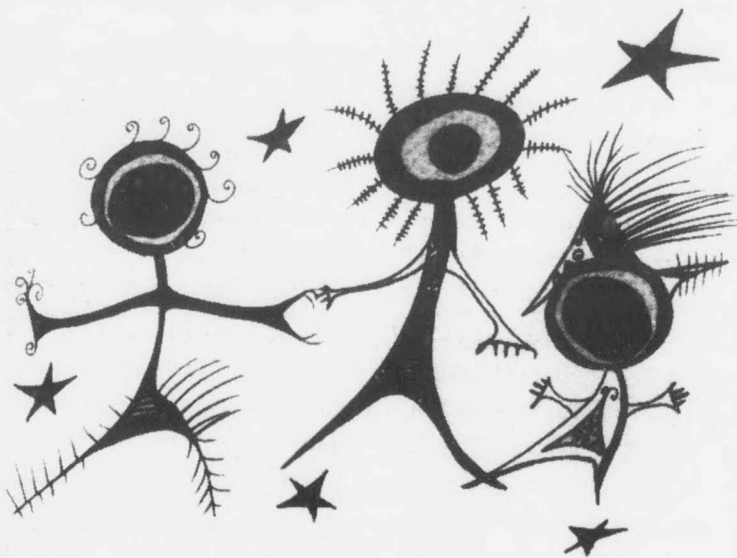
Native art has always appealed to the world in its beauty, inspiration and reflection of the Native way of life. It also encompasses a wide range of topics, including nature, family, spirituality or heritage. This week, we take you on a spiritual journey through the art of Alan Syliboy and his Designs from

Nature.

Born in 1952 in Millbrook, Nova Scotia, Alan Syliboy explored his identity as a Mi'kmaq artist through painting and Mi'kmaq spiritualism. He studied at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in 1975-76, and established an entrepreneurship for marketing Native arts and crafts, called Red Crane Enter-

prises. As part of his exploration of art and spiritualism, he studied privately under renowned artist, Shirley Bear. Alan Syliboy's activities and exhibitions range include Pe'la'tukwey: Recent Work by Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Artists at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, in Halifax; Art is Healing Symposium at the UNB Art Centre, in Fredericton; Maritime Native Artisans' Co-operative at the Church on North Street, Halifax and Family, Quest, Strength at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, in Dartmouth.

Alan Syliboy incorporates symbolism and simple usage of line and colour to give his art a vibrancy all their own. Nova Scotian Mi'kmaq petroglyphs provide some of the inspiration for his themes of family, struggle, nature and heritage. Much like a Native vision-quest, his artworks are a journey through spirituality and Native search for culture. The exhibition at the UNB Art Centre, Designs from Nature, comprise his recent works of the Native love of family, the respect of Nature and the search for spiritual wholeness. Family (1992) is a colourful serigraph of husband, wife and child. Moose (1989) conveys the respect for this magnificent creature that the Native peoples have. Star Warrior (1992) and Star Bride (1989) are representations of Mi'kmaq spirituality, while MicMac Creation seems to be an example of the Mi'kmaq creation myths. All in all, Designs from Nature is a lighthearted and beautiful travel through Mi'kmaq traditions and



My subjects deal with family, searching, struggle, and strength. All of these things are part of my art, and my art gives me strength for my continuing spiritual quest.

-Alan Syliboy

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The exhibition, Designs from Nature, is from January 12, 1994 - February 20, 1994. The UNB Art Centre is open Mondays to Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and on Sundays and holidays from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Make sure to catch this exhibition before it finishes.

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