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For immediate release

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### **American Masterpieces project features rarely seen Native American regalia**

SALEM, Ore. — A groundbreaking exhibition of historic and contemporary ceremonial regalia from all nine of Oregon's federally recognized Native American tribes, much of which is rarely seen by the general public, will be on display Sept. 27 to Jan. 18 at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University.

*The Art of Ceremony: Regalia of Native Oregon*, Oregon's 2008 American Masterpieces project, features what the tribes consider their finest artwork, items they wear and use in private ceremonies and rituals. Hand-crafted dance outfits, jewelry, staffs, headdresses, musical instruments and a 21-foot cedar canoe — many on loan from Native families across the state — are among the items to be displayed. The American Masterpieces grant was awarded by the Oregon Arts Commission with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

"Most people have never really seen Oregon's traditional regalia," said Willamette anthropology Professor Rebecca Dobkins, who organized the exhibition in collaboration with Native community curators. "The only time much of this regalia is worn is during private events like funerals, feasts or dance ceremonies. These items are not largely shared outside their community."

A multitude of free public events will accompany the exhibition, starting with a Procession of Nations through campus at 3 p.m. Sept. 27 that will include members of all Oregon's tribes. The procession will be followed by an opening ceremony at the museum and a traditional Native American feast on campus. Visitors can watch regalia-makers at work from 1 to 5 p.m. Sept. 28 at the museum. Tours, films, lectures and demonstrations are among the other events scheduled throughout the exhibition.

*The Art of Ceremony* will showcase the diversity of regalia between tribes, from the western tribes' use of feathers and abalone shells to the eastern tribes' beadwork and buckskin. After leaving the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, the exhibition will travel to the Tamástsiikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton, Ore., and the Museum at Warm Springs in central Oregon.

"A lot of people attend intertribal powwows and mistake what they see there as our traditional dances and regalia," said Bud Lane, vice chairman of the tribal council for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians on the central Oregon coast. "We want people to see that each tribe has its individual traditions and cultures that vary from region to region."

In addition to the American Masterpieces grant, the exhibition is supported by an endowment gift from The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde through the Spirit Mountain Community Fund, a Millicent McIntosh Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, a Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund award, and by grants from the city of Salem's Transient Occupancy Tax funds, the Oregon Arts Commission and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art is located at 700 State St. (corner of State and Cottage streets) in downtown Salem near the campus of Willamette University. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday from 1–5 p.m. The galleries are closed Monday. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for seniors and students. Children younger than 12 are admitted free, and Tuesday is an admission-free day. For more information, call (503) 370-6855 or visit [www.willamette.edu/museum\\_of\\_art](http://www.willamette.edu/museum_of_art).

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#### **ATTACHED PHOTOS:**

Coquille: Feather Headdress; created by Lyman and Brenda Meade, Coquille Indian Tribe; flicker and red tail hawk feathers, abalone and deer hide; Meade Family Collection. Photo by Frank Miller.

Grand Ronde: Drum; made by Phillip Lockerby and designed by Adam McIsaac, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; deer hide and cedar; 2008; collection of Bobby Mercier. Photo by Frank Miller.

Burns Paiute: Woman's Buckskin Wedding Dress; Burns Paiute Tribe; buckskin and beads; 1940s; Oard Family Collection. Photo by Frank Miller.