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News Release

*Tributaries* artist reimagines the concept of royal regalia in Metal Museum exhibition

Morgan Asoyuf’s *Royal Portrait* underscores significant role of Indigenous matriarchy, emphasizes tribal system and environmental custodianship

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (July 25, 2022)** – Contemporary Ts’ymsen artist Morgan Asoyuf, the Museum’s newest *Tributaries* artist, highlights matriarchal power in her exhibition [*Royal Portrait*](https://www.metalmuseum.org/tributaries-morgan-asoyuf), on display at the Metal Museum from July 24 through Sept. 25.

Her exhibition re-envisions the crowns, scepters, mantles and jewelry that identify leaders while also making a point about the power struggle seen in her Northwest Indigenous community, particularly around land rights, environmental custodianship and the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples.

“It is a crucial time for our people to create conversations around traditional societal structures, power and leadership,” Asoyuf stated. “We must properly acknowledge our matriarchs.”

Asoyuf’s use of such adornment in her art confronts the traditional societal structures that have existed for eons and recalibrates the power balance toward the matriarch to start important conversations around who should bear the responsibility for caring for one’s community and the land they inhabit.

In Ts’ymsen culture, matriarchs hold a special high-ranking position. By featuring regalia adorning Indigenous matriarchs and activists, Asoyuf highlights matriarchal power within the Northwest Coast system as a legitimization of Indigenous sovereignty. Her work speaks to the importance of prominent issues such as Land Back, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Two Spirit Individuals, and environmental custodianship.

An artist and teacher, Asoyuf apprenticed with several wood sculptors before studying at The Crucible (Oakland, CA), Vancouver Metal Art School (Bowen Island, BC), and Revere Academy (San Francisco, CA). She is a member of the Ts’ymsen Eagle Clan from Ksyeen River (Prince Rupert area), British Columbia, Canada.

**Event Details:**

A closing reception and artist talk will be held for *Tributaries: Morgan Asoyuf | Royal Portrait* at the end of the exhibition; event details TBD.

**About the Metal Museum**

The Metal Museum is the only institution in the United States devoted exclusively to the preservation, promotion, and advancement of the art and craft of fine metalwork. This mission is achieved through four primary program areas – exhibitions, collections, studio practice, and community education and engagement. Programs are facilitated on the Museum grounds and at locations across the Mid-South. Located on 3.2 acres of historic property overlooking the Mississippi River, the Museum grounds include the main Museum building as well as the Metalworking Facilities, Library + Resource Center, and private artist residences. Learn more about the Museum and its programs by visiting our website at [metalmuseum.org](http://www.metalmuseum.org).

The Museum receives operating support from ArtsMemphis and the Tennessee Arts Commission. Programming support is received from Hyde Family Foundation, the Windgate Charitable Foundation, and hundreds of corporate, foundation, and individual supporters.

High-resolution images of artwork and exhibit graphics are available upon request. Please contact Jenn Godwin, Communications Manager for the Metal Museum, at (901) 774-6380 or [jenngodwin@metalmuseum.org](mailto:jenngodwin@metalmuseum.org).