Museum London\

421 Ridout Street North, London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5H4
t 519-661-0333 \ museumlondon.ca
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Nico Williams, Tribute to a Warrior (*Dudley George*), 2026, 11/0 seed beads, 15/0 Japanese glass Cylinder Beads. Polyethylene thread. Photo credit: Paul Litherland

Museum London Receives Prestigious York Wilson Endowment Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

London, ON — OCTOBER 26, 2026 — Museum London is honoured to be named a recipient of the 2026 York Wilson Endowment Award from the Canada Council for the Arts, which supports the acquisition of *Tribute to a Warrior (Dudley George)*, 2026, a significant work by nationally renowned, Sobey Award-winning artist Nico Williams.

Established in 1997, The York Wilson Endowment Award supports non-profit art museums and public art galleries in acquiring original works of painting and sculpture by living Canadian contemporary artists.

Tribute to a Warrior (Dudley George) is a life-size recreation of Canada's familiar blue-and-black plaid flannel jacket, created using thousands of tiny Japanese glass seed beads and polyethylene thread. The work exemplifies Williams's distinctive artistic practice, which transforms everyday objects through meticulous beadwork while exploring the presentation of Indigenous identity, history, and lived experience.



Nico Williams, Tribute to a Warrior (*Dudley George*), 2026, 11/0 seed beads, 15/0 Japanese glass Cylinder Beads. Polyethylene thread. Photo credit: Paul Litherland

The work, commissioned by Museum London, also holds special significance as a reflection on the 1995 Ipperwash Crisis, a defining event in the ongoing legacy of colonialism in our region. Through the image of an empty jacket, Williams evokes the loss of human life, colonial displacement, and violence, while keeping alive the memory of protester Dudley George, who was fatally shot during a confrontation with police.

Through extraordinary technical skill with powerful cultural and historical references, Williams' practice invites audiences to reflect on the stories embedded in familiar materials and objects, and the ways art can preserve memory and challenge dominant narratives.

"It's an honour to receive this award for the significant and meaningful new artwork we commissioned by Nico Williams," says Museum London Executive Director & CEO Julie Bevan. "Nico's relationship to London, the artwork's connection to a powerful story from this region, and its sheer beauty and extraordinary use of materials make it a very special addition to Museum London's collection. We're thrilled that audiences will be able to see it on display in the days ahead."

Tribute to a Warrior (Dudley George) will be on view as part of the new exhibition, *Nico Williams: Bingo*, opening this Saturday in Museum London's Ivey Galleries and running until April 4, 2027. The exhibition is organized by PHI, Montréal, and presented in collaboration with Museum London.

About the artist

A celebrated alum of London's own Bealart program, Nico Williams, ᐅᑌᒥᐣ (b. 1989), is a member of Aamjiwnaang First Nation (Anishinaabe) and currently lives and works in Tiohtià:ke/Montréal. In 2021, he graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture from Concordia University. He has a multidisciplinary and often collaborative practice that is centred around sculptural beadwork. Williams is active within the urban Indigenous

Montréal arts community and is a member of the Contemporary Geometric Beadwork research team. He has led workshops at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the McCord Stewart Museum, MOMA x AICH, and the University of Toronto. In 2021, he was awarded the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Fellowship in Contemporary Art, and in 2024, he was the laureate of the prestigious Sobey Art Award, for which he was longlisted in 2022.

About Museum London
Museum London mobilizes art and history to build community and co-create an inspired future. Through exhibitions, programs, and events, we connect communities, challenge ways of thinking, and ignite creativity toward a more just world.

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For more information, high resolution images or interview requests, please contact:

Ahmed Ismail, Marketing & Communications Specialist

aismail@museumlondon.ca

office: (519) 661-0333 ext. 4237
cell: (226) 559-0456

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