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**Abbe Museum**  
26 Mount Desert Street  
Bar Harbor, ME 04609  
Contact: Jason K. Brown (207)288-3519  
[jason@abbemuseum.org](mailto:jason@abbemuseum.org)  
Visit us online: [abbemuseum.org](http://abbemuseum.org)

## **2009 Native American Festival in Bar Harbor Renews Ancient Trading on Maine's Coast**

Bar Harbor is a town that embraces its artistic community and how fitting that it plays host to the premier Indian Market of the east coast. On Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> the annual Native American Festival and Basketmakers Market will open to the public at 10:00am. This popular festival, sponsored by the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance and the Abbe Museum is hosted on the campus of the College of the Atlantic and offers visitors, collectors and gallery owners the opportunity to buy directly from the artists, as quality and authenticity is the hallmark for this Indian Market. For many visitors, this is a rare opportunity to meet the artists and learn about contemporary Indian arts and cultures from Maine and the Maritimes.

Theresa Secord, Director of Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance relates that *"The Native American Festival in Bar Harbor provides the public a rare opportunity to collect baskets from Masters of the ancient art of ash and sweet grass basketry. This unique glimpse into our historic gathering takes place in virtually the same spot where our ancestors have conducted one of the oldest Indian markets in the northeast. Not only is the art found at this market beautiful to look at, it is also highly desirable to many collectors and offers those who own it a sound investment in original American art that will appreciate in value over time."*

Throughout its 20 plus year history, the Native American Festival has been one of the central events in establishing the relevance of Wabanaki Native arts and culture. The festival is the voice and platform for Native artists to promote their art practice and to build bridges of cultural understanding with Maine communities and the world. While this festival is deeply rooted in the ancient traditions of the Wabanaki people, it also makes bold leaps by offering native artists a chance to explore and show contemporary works of art, and to bring them in touch with people of the museum and gallery world.

Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, CEO of the Abbe Museum says *"I am thrilled to experience the Native American Festival for the first time this year. This long-standing event is an important partnership between the Abbe and M.I.B.A. and I am looking forward to meeting the native artists, enjoying the art, and meeting community members during this fun-filled day. This event is a perfect example of future partnerships I want to develop and promote in my tenure at the Abbe."*

It takes many people with a passion for Native American arts to make this festival happen. Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance and the Abbe Museum offer a heartfelt thank you to the College of the Atlantic, the Ford Foundation, LINC Leveraging Investments in Creativity, the First Peoples Fund, and the National Endowment for the Arts for their generous support in bringing this important event to the public.

For more information on this event, Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance or the Abbe Museum contact Jason K. Brown, Abbe Museum Public Affairs Manager at 207-288-3519 or [jason@abbemuseum.org](mailto:jason@abbemuseum.org)

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