

EXHIBITION BY ARTIST CHERYL L'HIRONDELLE

Why The Caged Bird Sings: Here I Am



AT THE **ART GALLERY OF ALGOMA**

"Part of my larger nation-wide project entitled *Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the song *Here I Am (Bless My Mouth)* was co-written by myself, my project co-producer and most importantly by a group of incarcerated women and their literacy teacher at Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge, a minimum-security federal prison located at Nekaneet First Nation in southwestern Saskatchewan. In the making of this installation, I invited twelve female artist and academic friends to stand in as proxy for the women inside, in solidarity with their voice and words.

Inside these thick institutional walls, a circular central light suggests that a sacred, life affirming space has been forged. High above, the rolling hills of the northern plains are visible - ultimately the only thing capable of sustaining and cradling us. Each of the tablets reveals a woman sitting at a payphone singing into the receiver."

This exhibition is a collaboration between the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC) at Algoma University and the Art Gallery of Algoma.

For more information contact the SRSC: ShingwaukDG@algomau.ca or 705.949.2301 ext. 4623

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