

On exhibit in the Main Gallery

Florida's Lost Tribes: A Series of Paintings by Theodore Morris

Exhibition Dates: Sept. 5 - Nov. 22, 2008

Theodore Morris is a Sarasota-based artist whose work is a journey through time. He began studying Florida's history and its earliest peoples in 1987, through reading and participating in archaeological excavations. With painstakingly researched detail, Morris chronicles Native Americans who lived in Florida as many as 12,000 years ago but who look, in his paintings, as if they might have just pulled their boat through the mangroves or come in from the pine woods.

Some of Morris' paintings offer a glimpse at Indians' everyday lives; in others, the subjects stand and look directly ahead, as if watching the viewer. He uses oil painting as a visual language to depict Florida's native cultures. His realistic portrayal of these ancient people is not a romantic image, but a sensitive understanding of their way of life. Morris works both in the field and in the studio with archaeologists and anthropologists throughout Florida to verify accuracy in rendering both the subjects and their artifacts.

"I would like to create a body of work similar to George Catlin who painted early portraits of America's Western tribes," says Morris. "My goal is to complete paintings which cover an entire community of people from each of the major tribes of Florida."

Pictured: "Chief Outina" by Theodore Morris

