

**Sale Name:** Important Indigenous Fine Art Auction November 6th 2024

**LOT 20 - Norval Morrisseau - Thunderbird Spirit 51/78**



**Artist Description** Norval Morrisseau (1932 – 2007 CAD) R.C.A., Order of Canada  
Also known as Copper Thunderbird, was an Indigenous Canadian artist from the Bingwi

Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation. Known as the "Picasso of the North", Morrisseau created works depicting the legends of his people, the cultural and political tensions between native Canadian and European traditions, his existential struggles, and his deep spirituality and mysticism. His style is characterized by thick black outlines and bright colors. He founded the Woodlands School of Canadian art and was a prominent member of the "Indian Group of Seven". Morrisseau was a self-taught artist. He developed his own techniques and artistic vocabulary that captured ancient legends and images that came to him in visions or dreams. He was originally criticized by the native community because his images disclosed traditional spiritual knowledge. Initially he painted on any material that he could find, especially birchbark, and also moose hide. Dewdney encouraged him to use earth-tone colors and traditional material, which he thought were appropriate to Morrisseau's native style. The subjects of his art in the early period were myths and traditions of the Anishnaabe people. He is acknowledged to have initiated the Woodland School of native art, where images similar to the petroglyphs of the Great Lakes region were now captured in paintings and prints. His later style changed: he used more standard material and the colors became progressively brighter, eventually obtaining a neon-like brilliance. The themes also moved from traditional myth to depicting his own personal struggles. He also produced art depicting Christian subjects: during his incarceration, he attended a local church where he was struck by the beauty of the images on stained-glass windows. Some of his paintings, like Indian Jesus Christ, imitate that style and represent characters from the Bible with native features. After he joined the new age religion Eckankar in 1976, he started representing on canvas its mystical beliefs.

### Description

*Serigraph on Rag Paper 51/78 - c1977*

Titled, Numbered, Dated & Signed Across Lower Border

Sheet - 31 ins x 21 ins (78.7 cm x 53.34 cm)

Unframed

Paper: Rag

### Provenance:

Private Collection

**Quantity: 1**



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