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Children of Norval Morrisseau, Canadian Aboriginal Artist, Commence Lawsuit to Protect Artist's Legacy

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Toronto, June 30 - A lawsuit was filed in BC Supreme Court today by the seven children of Norval Morrisseau, to challenge the validity of the late artist's last will and testament.

Norval Morrisseau died on December 4, 2007, leaving a purported will dated July 16, 1999. Under the terms of the purported will, Gabor Michael Vadas is the executor, trustee and sole beneficiary of Norval Morrisseau's estate.

In the Statement of Claim, the family alleges that the purported will was executed under suspicious circumstances. The family is requesting that the Court declare it to be invalid, because of undue influence by Mr. Vadas. The family is also seeking in the alternative that the will be varied pursuant to the British Columbia Wills Variation Act.

Victoria Morrisseau Kakegamic, daughter, speaking on behalf of the family, said, "We want to honour dad's legacy as one of the greatest Canadian and Aboriginal artists. I believe dad wanted his estate to stay in the family. I know he wouldn't disinherit us on purpose."

Ted Charney, co-counsel for the Morrisseau family, said, "This lawsuit will require the Court to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the execution of the purported will, and whether Mr. Morrisseau really intended to deprive all of his children of their birthright."

At issue in the lawsuit is control over the right to use Norval Morrisseau's name and images and to reproduce his unique and well known works, many of which are featured in Canada's most prestigious public galleries.

The plaintiffs are being represented by Amy Francis of Legacy Tax + Trust Lawyers in Vancouver, BC and Ted Charney of Falconer Charney LLP in Toronto, Ontario.

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