

© Copyright 2017

Jessie Ryker-Crawford

**Towards an Indigenous Museology:  
Native American and First Nations Representation  
and Voice in North American Museums**

**Jessie Ryker-Crawford**

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

University of Washington

2017

Reading Committee:

Professor Miriam Kahn, Chair

Professor James Nason, Co-Chair

Professor Sven Haakanson

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Anthropology

University of Washington

Abstract

**Towards an Indigenous Museology:  
Native American and First Nations Representation  
and Voice in North American Museums**

Jessie Ryker-Crawford

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:  
Professor Miriam Kahn  
Department of Anthropology

The museum field has had a definite impact on the identity of Native American and First Nations peoples, perhaps more than on any other cultural group. Yet the dynamics and historical relations between museums and these populations have been contentious at best. This dissertation examines museums and their history through an Indigenous lens. It explores how the museum field has changed and enriched its philosophical and educational missions due to the modification of collections, curatorial, and conservation practices brought about by Native American and First Nations peoples. It addresses how this has transformed museums across the globe and has impacted the field of museology through the delivery of a more inclusive museum studies curriculum.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xiii
PREFACE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	6
Chapter 1 THE EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSEUMS AND NATIVE PEOPLES.....	10
A Brief History of Early Western Museums .....	11
Changes During the Civil Rights Movement.....	15
The Repatriation Movement .....	18
Defining “Art” .....	21
The Primitivism Exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art (1984).....	24
The Spirit Sings Exhibit at the Glenbow Museum (1988).....	32
Chapter 2 NATIVE AMERICAN- AND FIRST NATIONS-CURATED EXHIBITS.....	36
Indians of Canada Pavilion, Expo 1967.....	36
Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century Exhibit (1991).....	41
1992 Columbus Quincentenary Exhibits .....	45
Fluffs & Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness (1992).....	46
Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs: A Visual Commentary on the Columbus Quincentennial from the perspective of America’s First People (1992).....	56
INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art (1992).....	64

Reservation X: The Power of Place in Aboriginal Contemporary Art (1998) .....	73
Chapter 3 THE RISE OF THE TRIBAL MUSEUM.....	92
The U’Mista Cultural Centre .....	96
The Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre .....	100
Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center .....	103
Saginaw Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways.....	112
Chapter 4 SPREADING INFLUENCES: NATIVE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON STORAGE, PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION, AND USE OF COLLECTIONS .....	128
Research on Pre- and Early-Contact Native American Conservation Techniques.....	135
Pitch Patch Repair .....	141
Shard Plug Method .....	145
Hide and Skin Glue .....	147
Rawhide Lashings .....	149
Rawhide Stirrup Lashings .....	149
Rawhide Lashings with Boring Methods.....	149
Basketry Repair.....	153
Textile Repair.....	155
The Importance of Cross-Cultural Consultation.....	157
Chapter 5 GROWING IMPACTS: A NEW GLOBAL MOVEMENT .....	161
The Union de Museos Comunitarios de Oaxaca .....	161
The Cape Town, South Africa District Six Museum.....	164
The Lwandle, South Africa Migrant Labour Museum .....	172

Chapter 6 HORIZONS IN A TRIBAL MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM .....	182
REFERENCES CITED.....	197
APPENDIX A: DUANE NIATUM’S LETTER TO JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE SMITH .....	208
APPENDIX B: CHARLOTTE DECLUE “BLANKET POEM #4...VISITING DAY” .....	210
APPENDIX C: MEMORANDUM OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUM[,] KIKS.ADI CLAN OF SITKA [AND THE] TIN.AA HIT (COPPER PLATE HOUSE OF SITKA TRIBE OF ALASKA).....	212
APPENDIX D: MUSEUM COLLABORATION MANIFESTO .....	217

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1: Norval Morrisseau's Indians of Canada Pavilion mural, after Exposition organizers forced Morrisseau to re-paint the mural (modified from Robertson, n.d.). .....	38
Figure 2-2: Joe Herrera (Cochiti). <i>Spring Ceremony for Owah</i> . 1983. Watercolor on paper. Collections of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Archuleta & Strickland, p. 51). .....	43
Figure 2-3: Fritz Scholder (Luiseño). <i>Indian Wrapped in Flag</i> , c. 1976. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Archuleta & Strickland, p. 54).	44
Figure 2-4: Opening Display for the <i>Fluffs &amp; Feathers</i> Exhibit at the Woodland Cultural Centre (modified from Doxtator, p. 9). .....	48
Figure 2-5: “Poster lithograph displaying... Buffalo Bill stopping an Indian raid on settlers, [circa] 1887” (Doxtator, p. 17). .....	52
Figure 2-6: “Royal Doulton collection mug that borrows the symbols of Indianness. Issued in 1967 to [commemorate] Canada's Centennial.” Collections of the Woodland Cultural Centre (Doxtator, p. 34). .....	54
Figure 2-7: George C. Longfish (Seneca/Tuscarora) <i>Born to be Wild or We are Damned Glad Columbus Wasn't Looking for Turkey</i> , n.d. Mixed media assemblage (Quick-to-See Smith, p. 45). .....	60
Figure 2-8: Ernie Pepion (Blackfeet). <i>There Goes the Neighborhood</i> , n.d. Pastel (modified from Quick-to-See Smith, p. 53). .....	62
Figure 2-9: Susie Bevins (Inupiat). <i>My Roots Unearthed</i> , n.d. Assemblage with text (Quick-to-See Smith, p. 20). .....	63
Figure 2-10: Jane Ash Poitras (Chipewyan). <i>Shaman Never Die V: Indigena</i> , 1990. Three panels, mixed media on canvas. Collection of Canadian Museum of Civilization (modified from McMaster & Martin, p. 167). .....	68
Figure 2-11: Jim Logan (Cree, Sioux, Scottish). <i>National Pastimes</i> , 1992. Acrylic on canvas (McMaster & Martin, p. 143). .....	69
Figure 2-12: Harry Fonseca (Maidu). <i>When Coyote Leaves the Res: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Coyote</i> , 1980. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Arcturus). .....	70

Figure 2-13: Carl Beam (Ojibway). <i>Burying the Ruler #1</i> , 1989. Photo Emulsion and acrylic on Canvas (Canada Council Art Bank).....	71
Figure 2-14: Photo by Harry Foster. Mary Longman (Saulteaux Band of Gordon First Nations). <i>Strata and Routes</i> , 1998. Matrix G, rocks, cottonwood, fir and photo emulsion (modified from McMaster, p. 75).....	78
Figure 2-15: Photo by Harry Foster. Nora Noranjo-Morse (Santa Clara Pueblo). <i>Gia's Song</i> , 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 88). ....	80
Figure 2-16: Side view of Nora Noranjo-Morse' "Gia's Song" installation (modified from McMaster, p. 90).....	81
Figure 2-17: Marianne Nicolson (Dzawada'enuxw). <i>House of Origin</i> , 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 102). ....	82
Figure 2-18: Shelley Niro (Mohawk). <i>Honey Moccasin</i> , 1997. Film, mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 116). ....	83
Figure 2-19: Jolene Rickard (Tuscarora). <i>Corn Blue Room</i> , 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 129). ....	86
Figure 2-20: Mateo Romero (Cochiti Pueblo). Portion of <i>Painted Caves</i> installation, 1998. Mixed media (modified from McMaster, p. 145). ....	88
Figure 2-21: C. Maxx Stevens (Seminole). <i>if these walls could talk</i> , 1998. Multi-media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 157). ....	90
Figure 2-22: Opposite view of C. Maxx Stevens installation <i>if these walls could talk</i> (modified from McMaster, p. 156).....	91
Figure 3-1: Ga-ha-no, ca. 1880. Digital image (Native North American Images – Old Photos). .....	93
Figure 3-2: Original Walkus poles on the beach of Cape Mudge. The far left pole did not survive restoration attempts (modified from TimberWest). ....	102
Figure 3-4: Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center textile hanging storage. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author). ....	108
Figure 3-5: Closeup of Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center hanging storage apparatus. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).....	108

Figure 3-6: Corrugated roofing material as the base of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center storage shelves. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author). .....	109
Figure 3-7: Storage shelves, detail. Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author). .....	110
Figure 3-8: Quilts of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center collection. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author). .....	110
Figure 3-9: Mary Bordeaux in front of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author). .....	111
Figure 3-10: Ziibiwing Cultural Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	112
Figure 3-11: The Great Lodge Lobby, reflecting “the beauty and ingenuity of a traditional <i>Anishinaabek Kinoomaagamik</i> ” (Teaching Lodge). Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	116
Figure 3-12: Diorama showing Anishinabe studying the lessons of the <i>Eshibiigaadek Asin</i> . Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	117
Figure 3-13: <i>Contact &amp; Co-Existence</i> exhibit, bandolier bags. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	119
Figure 3-14: <i>Contact &amp; Co-Existence</i> exhibit, traditional clothing. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	120
Figure 3-15: the Ziibiwing Center’s mission school installation. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	121
Figure 3-16: Looking through the window to the inside the Ziibiwing Center’s mission school installation. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	122
Figure 3-17: Historical images of the people of the Saginaw community. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	122
Figure 3-18: The importance of language reflected in the exhibit components of the Ziibiwing Center’s <i>Language</i> exhibit. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). ....	123
Figure 3-19: Interactive language wheel in the middle of the Ziibiwing Center’s <i>Language</i> exhibit. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author). .....	124

Figure 3-20: <i>Diba Jimooyung: Our Story</i> , in the words of the Saginaw community. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).....	125
Figure 3-21: Hallway to the room of the Seven Fires teachings. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).....	126
Figure 3-22: Oral accounts of the Seven Fires as documented history. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).....	127
Figure 4-1: Girl's Plains leather dress, ca. 1890. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 84.2611. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	138
Figure 4-2: Plains leather dress, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 84.2611. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	139
Figure 4-3: Choctaw swamp cane woven basket. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7126.519. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	143
Figure 4-4: Choctaw basket, bitumen pitch repair, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7126.519. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	144
Figure 4-5: Santo Domingo jar, ca. 1880. Gypsum fill with plug from another pot shard. Museum of Indian Arts & Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 35771 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	146
Figure 4-6: Aleut drum with strips of fish glue patches. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 8436.2291a-b. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	148
Figure 4-7: Aleut drum, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 8436.2291a-b (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	148
Figure 4-8: Santo Domingo water carrier with rawhide lashings, ca. 1915. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 12264 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	150
Figure 4-9: Northwest Coast feast bowl, with closeup. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7337.331. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	151
Figure 4-10: Antonita Quintana, Cochiti jar with rawhide bottom support & rawhide lashings, ca. 1910. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 22623 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	151

Figure 4-11: San Ildefonso jar, bored holes with rawhide lashing. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 674/12 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).....	152
Figure 4-12: Northwest coast basket with interior canvas and exterior rawhide repairs. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico; FH1970-598 (2006 photo by author).....	154
Figure 4-13: Mexican serape cut down to become a Diné child's shawl. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico (photo by author). .....	156
Figure 4-14: Mexican serape, repaired extensively. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico (2006 photo by author). ....	156
Figure 5-1: IAIA Native American/South African Cultural Exchange delegates arriving in South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	166
Figure 5-2: District Six Museum Gift Shop <i>The Little Wonder Store</i> , Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).....	167
Figure 5-3: Collected recipes of the District Six (D6) community on the meeting area walls. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	168
Figure 5-4: Community-made items sold in the D6 gift shop. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	168
Figure 5-5: Elevator to the top floor... ..	169
Figure 5-6: ... where the youth art studio resides. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).....	170
Figure 5-7: Meeting with the D6 staff, community constituents, and IAIA museum/educator delegates. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).171	171
Figure 5-8: Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	173
Figure 5-9: Lwandle Township cinderblock houses (2007 photo by author). ....	174
Figure 5-10: Touring the Lwandle Township (2007 photo by author). ....	175
Figure 5-11: Article on South Africa's men's hostels. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	176
Figure 5-12: Inside Block Six, continuously lived in from the 1950s until recently. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ....	177

Figure 5-13: One of the 'niches' that made up the men's quarters. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ..... 178

Figure 5-14: Image of whole families sleeping in one male worker's 'niche' quarters. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author)..... 178

Figure 5-15: Discussions on the Block Six exhibit space. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ..... 179

Figure 5-16: Residents of Lwandle. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author). ..... 180

Figure 6-1: Diorama of powwow dancing in the *A Tribute to Survival* exhibit. Courtesy of the Milwaukee Public Museum. .... 183

Figure 6-2: Lynda Romero (Pueblo of Pojoaque) & Toneh Chuleewah (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) install a class-curated exhibit (2008 photo by author) ..... 189

Figure 6-3: Carmen McKenzie (Diné) cleaning photograph in "Introduction to Collections Care" class (2006 photo by author)..... 190

Figure 6-4: RoseMarie Cutropia & Zonnie Miera (Cochiti Pueblo, Navajo, Spanish) inspect pottery in "Issues in Conservation" class (2012 photo by author)..... 190

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No journey is made alone, and paths and obstacles are often laid out for us before we are even born. These can be gifts if we are able to find our own way on – and over – them. My awe and gratitude go out to the many individuals and institutions that have touched me and guided me to the place where these words were finally transferred into text.

*Miigwetch* to professors at the Institute of American Indian Arts and the University of Washington – who shocked me by believing in abilities that I did not yet possess: Professors Charles Daily, Dr. Nancy Mithlo, Evelina Lucero, Jon Davis, Dr. Charlene Teters, Dr. Linda Lomahaftewa, Karita Coffey, Dorothy Grandbois, Dr. LeeAnn Wilson, Stephen Fadden, Steven Wall, Dr. Gary Witherspoon, Dr. Sven Haakanson and, most especially, Dr. Ann Filemyr, Dr. Miriam Kahn, and Dr. James Nason. There were many others, but those of you mentioned here particularly touched my life in ways that I will never be able to fully express.

*Chi Miigwetch* to the institutions and associations that have supported my studies and research. You are testimony to the true dedication you have for those hoping to change their future and perhaps, just perhaps, change others' lives as well: The American Indian College Fund, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The National Endowment for the Humanities, The Nyswander Manson Family, The Lynn Reyer Foundation, The Association for Tribal Archives, Libraries & Museums, The Native American Art Studies Association, the American Studies Association, the Native American & Indigenous Studies Association, The Inter-Congress World Archaeological Congress, The Congress of the American Indian, The American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, The Poeh Cultural Center, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, The Peabody Essex Museum, and the White Earth Tribe.

*Giga-waabamin menawaa* to colleagues and students alike; you have been my guiding force and true companions, and I look forward to continuing our work in the future: Mary Deleary, Summer Honyoust Frazier, Mary Young Bear, Linda “Woody” Cywink, Tatiana Lomahaftewa-Singer, Ryan Flahive, John Joe, Patsy Phillips, Sheila Nichols, Bradley Pecore, Audrey Dreaver, Karl Duncan, Patricia Trujillo, Mary Bordeaux, Tammy Rahr, Janet Travis, Nonabah Sam, Saeko Yamada, Lynda Romero, Jacqueline Smith, Valerie Siqueiros, Elviria

Aquino, Liz Monture, Alicia Rencountre-Da Silva, Toni Jo Gobin, Lorenza Marcais, Shar Lopez, Iлона Spruce, Dakota Mace, Alli Moran, Rose Marie Cutropia, Eva Jewell, Upton Ethelbah, Suzanne Willener, Buffy Herrera, Henryrick Burke, Toneh Chuleewah, Melanay Whitehair, Tiffany Homer, Jessica Bridgewater, Elizabeth Starks, Judith Vicenti, Lorraine Cate, Carmane Hickman, Arlene Kinart, Carmen McKenzie, Sharon Freemont, Acacia Cochise, Jodilynn Trujillo-Ortiz, Kevin Locke, Arielle Mills, Azizah Muhammad, Lavina Faulk, Delene Santillanes, Angelica Gallegos, Katie Avery, Loni Bernally-Holyan, Chantel Comardelle, Bryan Lee, Dena Hunt, Dylan Iron Shirt, Leisha Bell Johnson, Jennifer Juan, Shannon Kravitz, Bill Ferguson, Benjamin Garza, Barbara Francis, Laura Walkingstick, Walela Knight, DeeAnna Homer, Kendra Greendeer, Leanne Campbell, Joy Farley, Mary Shakespeare, Eri Imamura, James Rutherford, Dina Velarde, Joy Chrisjohn, Dedric Lupe, Nancy Strickland Fields, Shawndi Appah, SunRose Iron Shell, Kelley Mitchell, Melvin Sarracino, Tania Larsson, Hayes Locklear, John Pepion, Colleen Lucero, Samantha Tracy, Terran Kipp Last Gun, August Walker, Tahnee Ahtone GrowingThunder, Jean Yellowbear, Tazbah Gaussoin, Jamelyn Ebelacker, Valentina Herrera, Amy Red-Horse, Del Curfman, Sam Haozous, Rachele Pablo, Felipe Estudillo Colón, Michelle McGeough, Dr. Lara Evans, Amber-Dawn Bear Robe, and many more who have aided me in this endeavor. If I have not listed your name here, I will make amends.

And above all, *gi zah gin* my family: Tonya and Jason Crawford, and Kateri, Catherine and Valliant Ryker. Without you I would be lost and cold, and my feet would have never dared tread my current route.

## PREFACE

Native Americans working within the field of museology are attempting to change not only museum theory and methodology but also practice. Previous museological theory was built upon philosophical and anthropological paradigms that have an extremely long history dating back to Europe's 1500s. These paradigms have changed, some very drastically, others very little.

The new paradigm that we are embracing acknowledges that Native peoples have very important knowledge and understandings of their own cultures that have not only been overlooked, but have been aggressively silenced. These multiple voices have power. When that power is silenced by others, it does not do service to and for humanity. Each voice, each line of thinking, enriches and empowers us all. To exclude these dialogues causes great damage and chasms when culture is being presented.

Dr. Shawn Wilson, author of *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, overcame the difficulty of writing an academic publication through an Indigenous-driven methodology based upon tribal relationship and community accountability by writing to his sons. Likewise, as an associate professor of an Indigenous museum studies program and a member of the White Earth Chippewa Nation, I have the privileged position of knowing that my writings are for and directed towards Native American students. I teach museum studies at a multicultural college where a majority of the students are Native American and First Nations from the United States and Canada. They reflect a wide range of Indigenous cultures, histories, and life experiences. My professional position influences my teaching philosophies and techniques, as well as the words I choose in writing my dissertation. For as diverse as these students are, we have commonalities that allow me to speak as a community member to a community member. It

allows me to be the storyteller to an academic audience whose cultural foundations are similar to each other's and to my own in many ways.

The research I conducted for this dissertation has since been integrated into the curricula of the Institute of American Indian Arts & Culture (IAIA) Museum Studies program, a multi-tribal and (hence) multi-cultural college. This work was guided by many diverse native and non-native student voices that came from many walks of life and histories, each with its specific interests and concerns relating to museological practices. My methodologies have also been informed by several writers: Linda Tuhiwai-Smith, Paulo Freire, Howard Zinn, bell hooks, Winona LaDuke, Gregory Cajéte, Ella Deloria, and Shawn Wilson. Each of these writers stresses the need for critical dialogue to be written in an approachable manner for the under-represented audience to which it is directed.

My hypothesis for this dissertation is that North American museums have been molded by Native American and First Nations agency, and that we are active in the positive movements that are happening within museum education, both in the museum and the classroom. This stance stems from my working in the fields of museum and museum studies over a period of twenty years and the avid discussions that have taken place between Native American and First Nations museum professionals, scholars, and students—through conference topics, within the classroom, during collaborative projects, and through academic research topics that reflect ongoing dialogues occurring about Indigenous museology and education. This dissertation, then, focuses upon various areas within the professional field of museology, their impact on Native American and First Nations communities, and the move towards an inclusivity of voice that has not been historically been experienced before in post-contact North America.

Some individuals are fortunate enough to enter into a profession that has captivated them from childhood. This was the case for me. After sixteen years of working as a waitress, I entered college and later graduated with degrees in museum studies and anthropology under my belt. I became one of those lucky individuals. My childhood experiences with museums and exhibits greatly influenced how I have always viewed the role of museums and their responsibility to the cultures to which they give a human face.

When I was still quite young I visited the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago numerous times with my parents for museums and art galleries were a passion of my father's. My favorite exhibits were the dioramas of Native American life; by looking at them I was filled with a great pride in my cultural history and through these exhibits of Native North America I felt as though I became part of the exhibit space. In 1968 the Field Museum curated a photo exhibit of the Chicago American Indian Center and I, at the age of six, attended the daycare that the Indian Center offered. A large mural of me wearing the paper-plate-and-tissue Easter hat that I had made was on the wall very close to the diorama of Iroquois life. Because of this juxtaposition of historical and contemporary Native American life, I just naturally believed that all museums offered a dialogue on Indian culture that was a continuation of a history that included Native Americans today. I did not realize that what the Field Museum was presenting was a new approach to curation, one that broke the mold of displaying our peoples' histories as both beginning and ending at the time of European contact. This photo exhibit represented urban Native American life by celebrating the community centers that ground us in our cultures. In hindsight I now realize that this reflected a new paradigm shift after 400 years of displaying Indian culture otherwise. At that time, and for the first time, stories of contemporary Indigenous cultures were being told within museum galleries.

These experiences and revelations later influenced my undergraduate studies. In 1998 I entered the Institute of American Indian Arts and quickly expanded by studies from a single major in Studio Arts with a painting focus to a double major that included Museum Studies as well. I was not fully aware of the privilege and honor that was bestowed upon me by studying under the brilliant Professor Charles Dailey and Dr. Nancy Marie Mithlo. The privilege was that I was learning about museology through a Native-centric lens. We were introduced to the history of museums by first learning about the rise of the tribal museum and then secondarily the ethos of European and Western museology. Throughout my studies Professors Dailey and Mithlo stressed the need for Native voice and self-representation.

I am grateful to both of them for carefully educating me about some glaring and disturbing truths surrounding museums and Indigenous peoples that, unfortunately, continue to this day to some degree. Without their initial support and guidance of my studies I doubt that I could have continued my professional trajectory with the persevering hope and optimistic vision for the future of museology that I continue to hold. Learning about the history of museology and museums through the eyes of Indigenous peoples is very disturbing indeed. But one of the ways that we can begin to understand, and ultimately reshape, the complicated relationship between Native Americans and museums is to delve into the historical rise of the ‘museum as institution.’ By grounding museums historically as a mirror of the Western psyche of the times, a more thorough critique of this relationship is possible. This then opens up the opportunity to fully explore the obstacles that Indigenous groups have faced when confronted with institutions (and their philosophical paradigms) that present living cultures through a narrow Eurocentric lens. By doing so, the impact that the activism of Native American and First Nations peoples has had on the field of museums can be truly understood; whether that activism has been through political

engagement (as in demonstrations and boycotts) or through social engagement (through Native-curated exhibits and collections policies of tribally-run museums and cultural centers). Through the guidance and lessons of Profs. Dailey and Mithlo, and their insistence that the deep history of the relationships between museums and Native peoples has not yet been fully assessed and disseminated, my strong and captivated interest in that topic continues to guide me in my research.

## INTRODUCTION

Here I present an outline of the dissertation to help orient the reader. This dissertation explores changes that have occurred within the museum field due, in great part, to the activism and involvement of Native American and First Nations elders, political leaders, artists, educators, knowledge holders, and museum professionals.

Chapter 1, *The Evolving Relationship between Museums and Native Peoples*, explores the overarching history of museums, the functioning epistemologies and philosophies at play that have established these institutions over the last 2,000 years, and particularly the contentious relationship between Native American and First Nations peoples and these institutions.

Although viewed as spaces of shared knowledge, museums have not always acted as democratic entities. Even the earliest museums – the Mesopotamian museum of 545 BCE and the Alexandrian Mouseion of ca. 320 BCE – were open only to people of particular class status. This was also the case for the seventeenth-century museums of Europe and the United States. It wasn't until the latter part of the nineteenth century that a more all-encompassing idea of the museum audience began to emerge to include “working men” and their families. This targeted audience was further expanded to families of color during the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement.

At this point in history the voice of authority was strongly questioned and contested. Along with the Repatriation Movement in which Native peoples demanded the return of their ancestral remains, plundered grave goods and ceremonial objects, there was a strong outcry against how curators had been describing the cultures of the first people of this continent. Following a number of problematic exhibits (i.e., *Primitivism* at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984 and *The Spirit Sings* at the Glenbow Museum in 1988), both U.S. Native Americans and

Canadian First Nations demanded a voice in the exhibition of their respective cultures and the curation of their objects.

Chapter 2, *Native American- and First Nations-Curated Exhibits*, explores various responses of Indigenous peoples to previous museum exhibitions of their culture. This chapter begins by scrutinizing the outright commandeering of an exhibit by First Nations consultants and artists (the 1967 World's Fair *Indians of Canada Pavilion*) and then looking at numerous Indigenous-curated exhibits. Explored is a new way that was offered of delving into Native American contemporary history through the Heard Museum's 1991 *Shared Visions* exhibit which presented the history of Native American art through a fine arts lens rather than an ethnographical study. Numerous Indigenous-curated exhibits were produced in response to the 1992 Canadian and U.S. celebrations of Columbus "discovering America:" The Woodlands Cultural Centre's *Fluffs & Feathers* exhibit, the Canadian Museum of Civilization's *Reservation X*, and the traveling exhibits *Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs* and the *INDIGENA* exhibit.

Both the curation of these exhibits, and the objects and artwork presented within them, told the story of First Nations and Native American culture and history from a very different point of view. They presented the perspective of the Indigenous people themselves and marked a decidedly different trajectory in the museum exhibition of Native cultures.

Chapter 3, *The Rise of the Tribal Museum*, takes a step back in history to explore some of the earliest known Native owned museums. These include Ga-ha-no's private museum on the Tuscarora Reservation of the late 1800s and early 1900s, and some of the tribal museums and cultural centers that exist today, such as The Kwakwak'wa'k'wakwa U'Mista Cultural Centre

and Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre, the Pine Ridge Red Cloud Itowapi Owapazo Indian Center<sup>1</sup>, and the Saginaw Zibiiwing Cultural Center.

Chapter 4, *Spreading Influences: Native American Perspectives on Storage, Preservation/Conservation, & Use of Collections*, critiques the changing faces of museum collection care and object conservation within more inclusive and culturally appropriate theoretical and methodological techniques. Case studies of pre- and early-contact Native American conservation techniques are presented through the collections of five museums across the United States. These are The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of the American Indian's Cultural Resource Center in Suiteland, Maryland; the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma; the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle, Washington; and the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian and the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, both in Santa Fe, New Mexico).

Chapter 5, *Growing Impacts: A New Global Movement*, briefly looks at changes happening in the museum field across the world. It explores how Indigenous peoples are actively asserting their philosophical insights and community needs into the ways in which museums in their respective countries respond to tribal participation. Two case studies from South Africa – the Cape Town District Six Museum and the Lwandle Township's Migrant Worker Museum - highlight differing needs due to unique community history and locale and how these are being addressed by these museums through collaborative work with their communities.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Red Cloud Indian Center is not specifically a tribal cultural center in the sense that it is not owned and operated by the tribe. Yet its history and position within the Pine Ridge Reservation and integration into the community problematizes its designation as a Jesuit museum.

Finally, Chapter 6, *Conclusion: Horizons in a Tribal Museum Studies Program*, looks at the Institute of American Indian Art's Museum Studies program and explores how the field is being envisioned through an Indigenous lens.

## CHAPTER 1 THE EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSEUMS AND NATIVE PEOPLES

The professional working relationship between museums and the Native American communities they represent through their displays has a long and problematic history. At times this relationship has been elitist, racist, classist, exclusionary, dismissive, and non-existent. Occasionally, and especially more recently, it has also been supportive, celebratory, inclusive, and collaborative. The current movement in which museums further embrace and integrate collaborative models that express multiple voices is firmly grounded in the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and the demands by Indigenous<sup>2</sup>, ethnic, and diverse peoples for acknowledgement and agency in telling their own stories.

Today museums are considered institutions of open access. Ideally, their exhibits are designed to educate and enlighten audiences from all walks of life and from different cultures, economic classes, ages, and genders. This goal—regardless of whether or not it has been accomplished—represents a fairly recent shift in thinking. As discussed in this chapter, museums have not always embraced the idea of open access and inclusion. Originally they were available only to the elite, and little concern for the general public existed in the minds of museum professionals (Burcaw 19; Bennett 60-61). Over the years this has slowly changed. Yet, even

---

<sup>2</sup> The term “Indigenous” is used in this dissertation as it is referred to in the wording on NAGPRA. NAGPRA defines Native American as “relating to, a tribune, people, or culture that is *indigenous* to the United States [italics added]” (Sect. 2.8). Thus, Indigenous refers to those that are native to their traditional lands or have been forcibly removed from those said lands. . Dr. Ronald Niezen of McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, pinpoints the term first used—on a global stage—to the 1923 visitation to Geneva of Cayuga Chief Deskaheh to the newly formed League of Nations (which would become the United Nations) (31-36).

with the changes in philosophy, museums have struggled with their representations of Native Americans and other non-Western peoples.

Early political activism demanded greater inclusivity of voice and input in the collecting of Native American and First Nations cultural objects and their exhibit presentation. This marked a dialectical change in which tribal communities began to hold greater power in the decisions as to how their cultures were to be represented, and allowed these communities to better understand themselves through much more appropriate interpretations and sharing of their cultures and histories.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY WESTERN MUSEUMS

The idea of public access to the holdings of museums dates back to one of the earliest known museums in the Western world, namely the Alexandrian Mouseion or “house of the muses” established in Greece ca. 290 BCE during the reign of Ptolemy (Burcaw 18)<sup>3</sup>. During this time Alexander the Great accumulated a vast collection of manuscripts and objects from the regions he had conquered, and had the texts translated into Greek with the goal of building a universal library that could be accessed by all (Greek) scholars. Alexander died before the library was built but one of his most trusted generals, Ptolemy I, built the Great Library of Alexandria in Egypt, along with its sister-institution, the Mouseion Academy, in the city that Alexander had

---

<sup>3</sup> The earliest known example of a museum is the Neo-Babylonian museum of Ennigaldi-Nanna, the curator and princess daughter of Nabonidus. This museum was located in the state of Ur and existed ca. 530 BCE. It is contested as to whether this was a museum; it is true that there is scant information on this site (Woolley: 1965, 1982; Gathercole & Lowenthal: 1994), but the controversy may stem from the fact that the temple complex in which it is situated was a women’s only college – and only those who were studying to become priestesses were allowed within the complex grounds. However, excavations of the site unearthed clay cylinders that accompanied individual objects. These are considered by some to be the earliest known museum labels. (“Ennigaldi-Nanna’s Museum”).

founded and which bore his name (Burcaw 17; Phillips). Both Alexander's and Ptolemy's passion for learning stemmed from their youth when Aristotle tutored them side-by-side at Mieza in philosophy, logic, religion, medicine and the arts ("Alexander the Great").

Although the Mouseion was considered an open educational institution for the study of literature and the sciences, its access was limited to "citizens" of Greece, which excluded Egyptians, women and slaves (Bales 19). The destruction of the Library of Alexandria and the Mouseion during the reign of Aurelian (270-275 AD) marked an end to the semi-public museum for almost 1,500 years (Burcaw 18).

Although we cannot know precisely what theoretical grounding the Alexandria Mouseion was built upon, we do know through ancient accounts that the academic pedagogy of the Mouseion and Library of Alexandria was based upon Aristotle's contention that true scientific knowledge and philosophy (two fields that he considered linked) arose from the direct observation of nature, that scientific theory must be based upon provable fact, and that logic could be categorized through logical principles (ibid.).

Much later in the sixteenth century, Europe experienced a rise in a particular type of museum that granted access only to those who were from the upper class. Prior to this time cultural artifacts from around the world were primarily valued as "curiosities." For example, Italian princes of the fifteenth century had educational *studioli*, which were cupboards that often lined the walls of a study chamber. These cupboards housed the material artifacts from parts of the world that the monarchs ruled (Bennett 15-6) or where voyages of discovery and conquest had taken place. In Germany private galleries and *Wunderkammer*, or "curiosity cabinets," displayed objects and artifacts along with fossils, stuffed animals and birds, mammoth bones, Egyptian mummies, human skulls, unicorn (narwhal) horns, rocks, minerals, and semi-precious

gemstones. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an immense number of private collections of natural curiosities could be found throughout Western Europe.

During the seventeenth century, as collections became more specialized and refined as educational presentations, private collectors began to carefully catalogue their assemblages. Ultimately, these large private collections developed into the museums we know today. In 1661 the city of Basel purchased the Amerbach Cabinet collection and in 1671 opened the first university museum. In 1683 the Ashmolean Museum, composed mainly of natural history specimens, was established at Oxford University. The National Museum at the Palace of the Louvre, which opened in 1793, is generally considered to be the first great national art museum where treasures from France, Italy and Greece were exhibited. During the early 1800s General Bonaparte's campaigns and invasions added art treasures from Belgium, Holland, Egypt, and Spain to the Louvre collection (Bennett 25-6).

All of these early museums allowed entry only to the elite. The British Museum, founded in 1753, received 30 visitors a day, all of whom had to be of nobility or high academic standing. They had to produce credentials before even being considered for a place on the two-week waiting list for an admission ticket (Burcaw 19). Visitation to the exhibit was limited in time, and during these visits the role of the curator was to make sure that the admitted guests moved along at a fast pace. Exhibition labels and educational information as we know them today did not exist.

During the 1800s a push began for museums to transform themselves from the display of wealth and high culture for the elite into institutions of public access. The reason, however, was one that still revered elitism. The theory at the time was that if one were to expose working men to the mantle of high culture—such as art, ballet, and classical music—they would turn away

from the lowly types of entertainment such as the ale houses and other places of ill repute (Bennet 17-24).

For the next century a slow shift continued from the exhibition of objects as manifestations of empire and “courtly display” to their exhibition as a mirror to be held up to the civilized lifestyle “for the cause of social and political critique” (Habermas as cited in Bennett 25).

If culture was thus caught up in the symbolization of power, the principle role available to the popular classes—and especially so far as secular forms of power were concerned—was as spectators of display of power to which they remained external... (t)he people, so far as their relations to high cultural forms were concerned, were merely the witnesses of a power that was paraded before them (Bennett 20-21).

In a 1907 address to the Staten Island Association of Arts and Sciences, Brooklyn Museum Director Frederic A. Lucas commented on the changing role of the museum from a place of privilege to a place for the public.

...[the] museum of today is a great deal more than a place where objects are merely preserved, it is an educational institution on a large scale, whose language may be understood by all, an ever open book whose pages appeal not only to the scholar but even to the man who cannot read... the idea that the museum is an important educational factor in the community is comparatively new, and it is only recently that steps have been

taken to put this idea into execution. The early museums were primarily for the student, secondarily for the public... (Genoways 58-9).

## CHANGES DURING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The emphasis on museums as institutions for more inclusively-based community pride and integration began in the 1920s via Joseph Cotton Dana's museum work in Newark, but it was not until the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement that museums began to be seriously viewed as "social instruments." The humanitarian shift in the museum field was a direct outcome of a hard-fought movement within this country's history. To more fully understand the paradigmatic shift, one must look at the events of the 1950s and 60s and the new demands that came out of this historical era. Until this time, Jim Crow policies and the forced segregation of the south continued the pre-Civil War racism and oppression that Black people had suffered and endured. "African Americans, their indignation long pent-up, rebelled all over the South, and changed not only that section of the country, but the consciousness of the nation itself" (Zinn 227).

On the evening of December 5, 1955, having just been appointed president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) at the Mount Zion AME Zion Church, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. voiced these historical words to Holt Street Baptist Church MIA members:

We are here because of our love for democracy, because of our deep-seated belief that democracy transformed from thin paper to thick action is the greatest form of government on earth... And you know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. There

comes a time, my friends, when people get tired of being flung across the abyss of humiliation where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July and left standing amidst the piercing chill of an alpine November... [W]e are not wrong in what we are doing. If we are wrong, then the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong. If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong (Davis 37).

The post-World War II immigration of minorities into the inner cities and the awareness of continued historical racism caused the emergence of a minority social activism (Lippard 34), which also embraced the museum field. Soon a growing movement to open museums and their collections to a broader range of society began. "...the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s set the process in motion as African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and other ethnic minorities, as well as women's rights organizations, began to pressure museums to be more inclusive" (Kreps 74).

Up until the 1960s the collecting and exhibiting of Indigenous North American objects had not changed dramatically since the mid-sixteenth century (Maurer 15). The stories that were being told through the choice of objects or art pieces on display, and the text that accompanied them, continued to be a one-sided affair. Anthropology-based history museums continued to display both secular and sacred items within glass boxes and upon walls, and exhibited mannequins divorced from their cultural context and meaning. The field of museology remained steadfast in its belief that the curator was the authority that could act independently from the communities that were on display.

“... the process of creating exhibitions at that time virtually always placed the primary, if not sole, burden of decision-making on the curator. In other words, community representatives were rarely involved. Instead, the curator decided and spoke for the institution, and thus for the community, with all of the authority presumably conferred by advanced university training and professional experience. Put differently, the real significance in an exhibition, represented by both object selection and interpretive text preparation, came from the curator, and not from the community being represented by the objects and text (Nason 1992: 29).

With the Civil Rights Movement, however, the issue of representation became as important as that of civil rights.

Before racial integration there was a constant struggle on the part of black folks to create a counterhegemonic world of images that would stand as visual resistance, challenging racist images. All colonized and subjugated people, who, by way of resistance, create an oppositional subculture within the framework of domination recognize that the field of representation (how we see ourselves, how others see us) is an ongoing struggle.

The history of black liberation movements in the United States could be characterized as a struggle over images as much as it has also been a struggle for rights, for equal access. To many reformist black civil rights activists, who believed that desegregation would offer the humanizing context that would challenge and change white

supremacy, the issue of representation—control over images—was never as important as equal access (hooks 57).

Even with these post-1960s visions of more inclusiveness and more accurate representation, museum exhibits and their accompanying texts utilized native “informant” material in a haphazard manner. Some curators included in-depth information shared by knowledgeable community members, while others excluded the “native voice” entirely. This disregard for community knowledge resulted in both the misinterpretation and misrepresentation of a great number of cultural objects. The contestation by Native American and First Nations peoples over “...not only what is to be represented, but over who will control the means of representing” (Karp & Lavine 15) was a push to obtain an active voice, and was based upon a need to clarify cultural realities and histories.

## THE REPATRIATION MOVEMENT

The repatriation movement of the 1980s and 90s marked another epic change in the relationship between museums and native peoples. The Native American repatriation movement culminated in the passage of two key pieces of federal legislation: the 1989 National Museum of the American Indian Act (NMAIA) and the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). These laws mandated the repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, and both patrimonial and sacred cultural objects from all government museums, as well as from museums and institutions receiving any direct or indirect form of federal funding back to their original native communities – when cultural affiliation could be proved.

A great number of sacred objects, as well as other objects owned by a tribe as a whole, were regularly placed on display in exhibits of native culture. These objects, which never should have found their way into the museums to begin with, were there because of two modes of thinking that dated back to the late 1800s (Fine-Dare 30): first, the idea of museums as prominent institutions of collecting was at its pinnacle at that time. Second, there was the widely held view that Native American and First Nations peoples were “vanishing races.” For the native peoples of North and South America had been decimated both in terms of population and culture through hundreds of years of introduced diseases and military conquest. Coupled with the federal policies that had been put in place in both the United States and Canada that forbid much of the ceremonial and religious ritual life that had sustained native communities over millennia, it was widely believed that Native American and First Nation peoples and their cultures would soon be extinct. Museums and universities sent out anthropologists and hired hands to collect any and all human remains, cultural objects, and related information that could be collected from the native tribes. These objects were seen as the last physical vestiges of dead or dying cultures and peoples (Bieder 29) and anthropologists such Franz Boaz, Alanson Buck Skinner, Frank Hamilton Cushing and Aleš Hrdlička aggressively accumulated as many North American human remains and/or cultural objects as they could for the museums of Canada and the United States. It was at this time that the term “salvage anthropology” emerged within the field of anthropology.

Some objects were bought and many others were stolen. Human remains, dug up or collected from the battlefields of the West, made their way into the medical collections of the U.S. Army and eventually into the physical anthropology collections of museums. By the early twentieth century several large public and private museums, including the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of Natural History, New York’s Heye Foundation Museum of the

American Indian, and the Field Museum in Chicago, held collections of native objects that numbered into the millions (20).

The paradox about “salvage anthropology” was that native tribes, in fact, survived. Native cultural stabilization took place during the 1930s, 40s and 50s, and developed into a cultural renaissance in the 1960s. Native communities began to look at the material culture that the nation’s museums and universities stored and exhibited, and began to approach these institutions for access and the return of these items. Initially, museums were not very responsive to requests regarding human remains, funerary objects, and sacred and ceremonial objects, and Native American attempts to retrieve them were stalemated. In response, native interest groups sought redress from Congress, which resulted in the passage of the NMAIA and the NAGPRA (Harjo 7).

Thus began a fundamental shift in the philosophical mind-set of museums, away from the idea that museums have the legal authority to hold their collection for the benefit of the broader public, and towards the idea that museums have an ethical trust obligation to the cultures and peoples whose material they collect and exhibit, and that this obligation includes support, collaboration, and interaction with these peoples. Repatriation laws did not change the mandate that all public museums have a legal obligation to hold collections as a public trust, and this is one reason why many felt that they could not legally repatriate human remains and culturally important objects back to the host communities. However, it opened up the possibility that museums have a potentially ethical role of working with communities whose heritage materials are held within the museum collection.

For native communities, the result of repatriation was the end of one era—in which museums collected and withheld vast amounts of cultural objects without thought to those

communities' wishes and needs —and the beginning of a new era that embraces the support of Native American cultural identity.

## DEFINING “ART”

African art scholar, Susan Vogel, has stated that a culturally biased division exists in the way that Western scholars classify non-Western art as ethnic artifact vs. ethnic art. Focusing specifically on African objects, she has noted,

Our categories do not reflect African ones, and have changed during this century. An examination of how we view African objects (both literally and metaphorically) is important because unless we realize the extent to which our vision is conditioned by our own culture—unless we realize that the image of African art we have made a place for in our world, has been shaped by us as much as by Africans—we may be misled into believing that we see African art for what it is (209).

The same can be said about Native North American objects. Once relegated to the classification of “curio,” Native American and First Nations objects of great beauty slowly found their way into the realm of “art.” Yet they were not elevated to the genre of “fine art,” but rather were assigned to the category of “primitive art.” With the redefinition of the museum as a social instrument that is more inclusive of a diverse humanity, the term “primitive art” as a description of non-Western art became highly problematic.

Prior to the mid-1500s, artifacts from different parts of the world were primarily valued for their materials and, those that contained metal, were often melted down to extract the metal.

Native American, African, and other non-Western fine arts, if retained at all, remained among collections of natural curiosities, reflecting the mindset of the times. “What could not be contained within the traditional order of things, [scholars of the Renaissance period] licensed to remain on the margins of culture” (Mullaney as quoted in Errington: 9).

This Western distinction between fine art and primitive art has influenced not only exhibition spaces but also museums themselves. Shelly Errington pointed this out in talking about Indigenous peoples, who were represented within the traditional natural history museum setting where such cultural information was often provided. They were exhibited “as objects of knowledge rather than the producers of knowledge, for their representations and artifacts lie in the realm of nature, which is studied, rather than of history, the realm of people who acquire knowledge and penetrate nature’s secrets” (24).

Museums of history and science also exhibited the cultural remnants of the “primitive Other” and did so in the form of linear models of progress that placed items from lowest to highest on an evolutionary scale. Meanwhile the arts of “civilized” peoples were housed in art museums. As with all museums, “[h]and-in-hand with [the] natural tendency to collect things... is the desire to show them to others; to seek approval and admiration, to gain prestige by the respect and envy engendered by the ownership of interesting, beautiful, unusual, and commercially valuable objects” (Burcaw 15). But Native American and First Nation art was never presented within the art museums and, instead, was relegated to the history and ethnographical museums, reflecting an unspoken but accepted Eurocentrism.

There was yet another marked distinction, which was “the distinction between art museums, which are, strictly speaking, not educational, and all other kinds of museums, which are” (11-12). The paradigmatic shift from museums as places of “cultural governance of the

populace” to “social instruments” of inclusionary education occurred much later within the art museum field. Still acting as collectors and presenters of refined culture (read as European culture), art museums continued to exclude the art of Native Americans as well as other minorities and ethnic peoples.

In this way non-Western art continued to be marginalized in one way or another. Objects were presented as “curiosities” from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, then as “material culture” or “artifact” during the nineteenth century, and as “primitive art” during the twentieth century. It was not until the late 1960s that Native American art found its way into fine art museums and galleries.

Even with this gradual development and contemporary redefinition, eighteenth century binary categorizations and taxonomies of both museums and their objects are still utilized today. Examples can be seen in the Western categories of fine art vs. ethnic and folk art, or science and technology museums vs. botanical and herbal gardens. Non-Western historical art often continues to be relegated to the domain of the taxonomic natural history collections as “primitive art.”

The category of “primitive art” became especially popular by Fauve and Cubist artists, who recognized and utilized the strong aesthetic qualities of Indigenous art and material objects (although not necessarily the merits of the artists). Gradually this art became appreciated for its own characteristics and the historical art of ethnic people began its integration into the taxonomy of “fine art.”

## THE PRIMITIVISM EXHIBIT AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (1984)

In 1984 the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) presented the groundbreaking exhibit “*Primitivism*” in *20<sup>th</sup> Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*. The exhibit juxtaposed Western modern art alongside “primitive” art from around the world “in the light of informed art history” (MoMA Press Release Archives). The exhibit opened to the public on September 27, 1984 and ran through January 15, 1985.

The driving force behind “*Primitivism*” was William Rubin, MoMA’s Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, who at the time recognized that only one art history book had explored the impact that the global arts had on modern art. This was Robert Goldwater’s *Primitivism in Modern Painting*, which was published in 1938. Rubin describes his realization of the strong influences tribal arts had upon artists of the time through discussions about tribal art that he had with Picasso.

The few exchanges I had about tribal art with Picasso in the last years of his life altered all this. I was staggered to discover that his views on these sculptures were antipodal to the received ideas. [A clue to this had already appeared in Françoise Gilot’s memoir, but I had overlooked it; subsequently, Malraux would report a conversation with Picasso very like my own.] In time, I decided that the entire question of primitivism had to be investigated anew. And what better way than by the exploration and research that an exhibition on the subject would occasion? (ix)

Hamish Maxwell, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Philip Morris Incorporated, which sponsored the exhibit, stated,

The influence of twentieth-century Western art of the traditional sculpture of African, Oceanic, and other peoples of the world's developing countries demonstrates the vitality that can result from cultural interaction. It is also a measure of the debt that modern culture owes these peoples.

At the outset of our century Western eyes were insensitive to the beauty, power, and subtlety of the tribal arts. But if the word “primitive” was until then used almost in a pejorative sense, it fell to the greatest and most innovative modern artists to give the word a sense both positive and vital—as when Picasso declared that “primitive sculpture has never been surpassed.” Through their admiration for tribal art, and as a result of the inspiration they drew from it, modern art has been immeasurably enriched, and its public has been helped to appreciate a variety of great arts remote from its own traditions (Maxwell in Rubin vol. 1: intro.).

Rubin intended to highlight the impact that the art of the “Other” had upon Western artists of the time. Although the general impact that “*Primitivism*” had was extremely positive in its introduction of non-Western cultural material to the general public, it also included controversial and disrespectful aspects. These arose precisely because this “great art” was being presented “remote from its own traditions” and was given value only through its appropriation by Western modern artists.

Cultural appropriation does not necessarily have to be negative. “Appropriating—taking something for one’s own use—need not be synonymous with exploitation. This is especially true of cultural appropriation. The ‘use’ one makes of what is appropriated is the crucial factor”

(hooks 11). It was a shocking realization to Native peoples that these objects were even in the MoMA collections and what most alarmed Indigenous peoples about the exhibit was the way in which art by Western artists working within the Primitivist Movement was shown side-by-side with a plethora of non-Western sacred and ceremonial objects that were never meant to be shared outside of their religious ceremonial context.

An example of this can be seen in Emil Nolde's famous oil painting *Exotic Figures II* (1911). In this piece a Hopi Katsina is flanked by two jaguar-like images. The exhibit catalog describes the work in the following way.

Nolde's overall approach depends upon our assumption of the pathetic fallacy [of the confrontation between "bizarre stalking beasts and equally bizarre but dignified and self-contained" human beings], which leads us to think of wooden figures and other inanimate objects as telling a human tale. The entire approach, like the process of caricature itself, involves both artistic aggression (against the object) and psychic regression (to childlike play)... [and] the roundness of the Kachina is given its due, to be sure, but the flatness of the stepped headdress is emphasized in the painting by repeating its dark shape in light tones on the still-life background (Gordon in Rubin vol. 2: 381-2)

The catalog's description, while focusing on artistic elements, failed to address the sensitive cultural context of the Katsina. The Hopi female *Salaka Mana* and the male *Salaka Tano* constitute a pair of female/male spiritual entities that bring forth rain. For this reason, *Salaka Mana*'s headdress is the symbol of the cloud. Katsinas, often erroneously described as "dolls," are used to teach Ceremony that surrounds the particular spiritual entity. Unlike Katsinas

that are made for sale, and thus have been carefully modified, early Katsinas that were forcibly taken from the Pueblos were virtual renditions of the spirits.

The *Salaka Mana* that Nolde reproduced in his *Exotic Figures II* came from the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde and was sketched by Nolde, while visiting the museum during the early 1900s. Many artists of the early and mid-1900s—including Max Ernst, Andre Breton, Marcel Duchamp and Horste Antes—had Katsina collections in their personal studios (Thomson). The modernists, and particularly the primitivists, were actively seeking innovative expressions within their own artwork, and although they had little cultural knowledge of the art they had appropriated, this non-Western art provided them with a new way of developing own personal styles.

Another highly problematic example of cultural misappropriation was the juxtaposition of Man Ray's 1914 oil on canvas *Totem* with a Zuni *Ahayu:da*. Gail Levin states, "...*Totem* is both *d'après nature* and from a man-made object, probably a pastiche of such American Indian wood carvings as Zuni War Gods and Northwest Coast Indian totems, such as could be seen at the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Natural History" (Levin in Rubin vol. II: 462). A detailed description of *Ahayu:da*, what they are, what they look like, and what they are meant to do, is important for understanding the serious insensitivity of the exhibit.

The Zuni "War Gods," or *Ahayu:da*, became known to the public during the mid-1970s due to the Zuni repatriation efforts and their difficult decision to fully disclose the sacred *Ahayu:da*'s role within the Zuni community. *Ahayu:da* are associated with the Zuni twin protectors (often mislabeled as "war gods") about whom many Zuni oral histories are passed on. The Ceremony that surrounds the *Ahayu:da* begins with the re-emergence of their beings when the members of the Deer Clan or *Shokwida:kwe* come together to oversee the creation of

*Uyeyewi*. The Elder Brother and members of the Bear Clan or *Ashne:kwe* aid in bringing forth *Ma'a'sewi*, the Younger Brother (Ferguson et. al in Mihesua: 240; Zuni letter to Sotheby's: 2). *Ahayu:da* Ceremony culminates when the *Bi'la:shiwani* or Bow Priests ceremoniously place the *Ahayu:da* upon specific mesas surrounding the Pueblo of Zuni. *Ahayu:da* must be placed within an environment that is open to the elements, in order to protect not only the *A:shiwani* (or Zuni) from harm, but also to allow their powers to bring fertility and good things to all the peoples of the world. *Ahayu:da* were created in time immemorial by the Sun Father, the ultimate giver of life, to lead the Zunis and help them overcome obstacles in their migration to the Middle Place at Zuni Pueblo. In sculptural form, the *Ahayu:da* are carved from cylindrical pieces of cottonwood or pine, and range from two inches to two feet long, featuring a stylized face, torso, and hands. Bundles of prayer sticks and other offerings are attached around their base. Once they are placed at a shrine, they are meant to gradually disintegrate and return to the earth<sup>4</sup>.

Once the *Ahayu:da* are placed at their shrine, no one has the authority to move them. Zuni religious leaders know that to do so unleashes their great powers, resulting in wanton destruction and mayhem. Because of this, the repatriation of the *Ahayu:da* has been of grave concern to Zuni peoples. But because they are left on the land in plain sight, anthropologists such as Frank Hamilton Cushing and James Stevenson took these sacred beings and sold them to museums across the country (Fine-Dare: 97).

In 1963 Zuni elders initiated a project to attempt to track down all *Ahayu:da* that were held in both private and museum collections. In 1978 the Zuni passed a tribal resolution

---

<sup>4</sup> Although the *Ahayu:da* were never meant to be shared outside of Ceremony, members of the Zuni community have said that it is important that we know about them so that if we ever “come across them in our travels” they will be known for who they are and the importance of their returning to their home land.

pertaining to the repatriation of sacred objects. It outlined and defined the decision-making authority of Zuni religious leaders regarding sacred artifacts, and stated the Tribal Council's support and role as tribal liaison between religious leaders and outside entities. In a 1978 letter to Sotheby's Auction House in New York, Zuni elders made a heart-felt plea for the return of one *Ahayu:da* from the auction block.

The Ahayu:da are created only through the cooperation and combined efforts of many religious leaders from many different groups. The Ahayu:da are not "owned" by any one individual, and no one individual or group of individuals has the right, power, or authority to give away or sell the Ahayu:da. The War God images which embody the Ahayu:da belong to the whole tribe; insomuch as they are property at all, they are communal property. Thus all Ahayu:da which have been removed from their shrine/homes have been stolen.

For a hundred years and more we have watched outsiders come to Zuni land and steal, or induce our own people to steal for them, the Ahayu:da and other sacred religious objects. In recent years, these thefts have increased so much that we can no longer stand by without taking action.

The catalog for the "*Primitivism*" exhibit includes images of two *Ahayu:da*, one of which was taken from the Pueblo of Zuni so soon after being placed within its shrine that, shockingly, the paint is still fresh and visible. Paul Klee's *Mask of Fear* is compared to this specific, fully painted, *Ahayu:da*. (I chose not to list the page).

In the cases of the Hopi *Salaka Mana* and the A:shiwi *Ahayu:da*, as well as the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) “False Face Mask,” discussed below, the presentation of Sacred and Ceremonial cultural objects for the purposes of highlighting the Western artistic primitive movement did great harm to those Native American communities with which they were affiliated. When ritual objects are taken away from the communities they serve and their ceremonial lives are ruptured, the damage caused cannot be remedied. The Haudenosaunee official website on the policies about False Face Masks states this clearly.

The public exhibition of all medicine masks is forbidden. Medicine masks are not intended for everyone to see and such exhibition does not recognize the sacred duties and special functions of the masks.

The exhibition of masks by museums does not serve to enlighten the public regarding the culture of the Haudenosaunee as such an exhibition violates the intended purpose of the mask and contributes to the desecration of the sacred image. In addition, information regarding medicine societies is not meant for general distribution. The non-Indian public does not have the right to examine, interpret, or present the beliefs, functions, and duties of the secret medicine societies of the Haudenosaunee. The sovereign responsibility of the Haudenosaunee over their spiritual duties must be respected by the removal of all medicine masks from exhibition and from access to non-Indians.

Reproductions, castings, photographs, or illustrations of medicine masks should not be used in exhibitions, as the image of the medicine masks should not be used in

these fashions. To subject the image of the medicine masks to ridicule or misrepresentation is a violation of the sacred functions of the masks.

The Council of Chiefs find that there is no proper way to explain, interpret, or present the significance of the medicine masks and therefore, ask that no attempt be made by museums to do so other than to explain the wishes of the Haudenosaunee in this matter (Haudenosaunee Confederacy Announces Policy on False Face Masks).

In all three instances, the non-Western counterpart to the primitivist art should not have been shown publicly. This is not to say that this was done intentionally or with malice. It does, however, speak of ignorance and insensitivity which could have been remedied through consultation with community members of the presented artwork/cultural objects.

Although many exquisite works of art—both Western and non-Western—were displayed and admired in “*Primitivism*,” the exhibit also highlighted some very disturbing double standards of the time. All Western artists were named within the exhibit. Yet not one non-Western artist was referred to by name. For example, paintings by Pablo Picasso hung next to an “Etoumbi Region..Mask” and a “Kwakiutle Mask.”

Without a deep understanding of the history of colonization or cultural norms specific to the objects that were displayed, Native American and other Indigenous peoples’ objects were displayed inappropriately and detrimentally towards the people that the curators were attempting to feature and honor.

## THE SPIRIT SINGS EXHIBIT AT THE GLENBOW MUSEUM (1988)

Four years after the “*Primitivism*” exhibit opened at MoMA, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta, Canada opened an exhibit called “*The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada’s First Peoples.*” “*The Spirit Sings*” was the best funded exhibit that Canada had produced at the time, with a substantial budget of \$2.6 million (Loft 18). With its opening planned to coincide with the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics, it was “heralded as the flagship” by the Glenbow and as a groundbreaking exhibit of First Nations peoples’ culture and traditional artwork (Dibbelt 2). The exhibit included 650 First Nations cultural objects from museums across North America and Europe, many of which had been taken out of Canada and had not been seen previously by a national audience (Loft 18, Cooper 21-2). Yet, this exhibit, like “*Primitivism*” at MoMA, highlighted the problems that Native American and First Nations peoples were facing with museums at the time. These problems included exhibiting culturally sensitive objects used for ceremony that had been confiscated from tribes by the Canadian and American governments, the disregard for and omission of dire issues that First Nations peoples were facing, and exhibits that were being curated about tribal culture without community collaboration or communication.

At its January 14, 1988 opening First Nations representatives from Alberta, Newfoundland, Quebec and British Columbia, as well as more than 150 other First Nations and non-Native people, gathered in front of the Glenbow to protest the showing of sacred objects as well as the underwriting of the exhibit by the Shell Oil Corporation, then currently in a land and oil rights dispute with the Lubicon Cree; Shell Oil was, at the time, actively drilling on contested Lubicon Cree lands (Dibbelt 2).

The curators' intent was to foster an appreciation of pre-contact Indigenous society and culture, all by borrowing looted objects from colonial institutions, while paying for it from money provided by a company that was actively fighting an Aboriginal land claim...and extracting resources from the disputed territory. A recipe for disaster? Most certainly! Although reasonably well attended, and of course supported by government and corporate interests, the exhibition has gone down as one of the lowest points in the museal [sic] history of Indigenous art in this country (Loft 18).

Inside the museum, during the opening celebrations, Glenbow Chairman David Tavender stated, "As you see this exhibition, you will appreciate the traditions, culture, and above all, the spiritual and artistic heritage of the Native people" (Dibbelt 2). But outside the building, First Nations representatives were voicing a different opinion of the festivities. "These... which museum curators call artefacts are to us living spirits." Grand Chief Joseph Norton of the Quebec Mohawk Council of Kahnawake stated, "We are fed up. We will no longer stand for it, no longer be insulted by having our national treasurers [sic] displayed... These things were either stolen (from us) or bought illegally in some fashion" (ibid.). Gerald McMaster, a renowned Canadian Plains Cree/Blackfoot curator, voiced similar sentiments.

*The Spirit Sings* was... problematic in its presentation of First Nations cultural objects. Touting itself as a celebration of the important contribution of First Nations to Canada's cultural heritage, the exhibit continued the anthropological presentation of objects as exclusively historical, the culture and values of the artifacts on display having no connection to the current lived realities of the peoples whom the objects seemingly

represented. The incongruity of this presentation was reinforced in protests against *The Spirit Sings* organized by the Lubicon Cree, then in the midst of land claim disputes with Shell Oil, a major sponsor of the exhibition. Reaction to the boycott within the Canadian museum community varied, with some curators readily complying with the wishes of the Lubicon and refusing to allow certain works to leave their institutions, while others, most visibly the exhibition's curator, Julia Harrison, claiming that the Lubicon's boycott of the exhibition was an inappropriate intrusion of politics into the sacred realm of culture (Whitelaw: 34).

The day of the opening, the Mohawk Nation filed an injunction through the Court of Queen's Bench demanding that several sacred and ceremonial objects, including a *ga:goh:sah*, or False Face Mask, be removed from the exhibit. The next day the injunction was granted and the Glenbow removed the Mohawk objects from the display (Dibbelt 2).

"*The Spirit Sings*" has become a landmark exhibit for the movement of First Nations peoples in the field of museology. It acted as a strong catalyst in the ongoing discussions surrounding best practices as to how exhibits about Indigenous cultures should be collaboratively researched, designed and implemented (Coombes 130).

Georges Erasmus, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and George MacDonald, director of the Canadian Museum of Civilization co-sponsored the 1988 symposium "*Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*" which focused on the issues that had arisen surrounding "*The Spirit Sings*" exhibit, including repatriation and the exhibition of sacred and ceremonial objects (Cooper 25, Coombes 130).

Following the symposium a task force was convened, led by Museum Director Tom V. Hill (Seneca) of the Brantford, Ontario Woodland Cultural Centre and Trudy Nicks of Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum (ibid.). Museum personnel and First Nations leaders debated as to how the representation of Canada's first peoples could be better suited within Canadian exhibits through cultural sensitivities and inclusion.

What emerged from the discussions was the 1992 *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples*, jointly produced by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations (Penney 53-4). In the report ten topics of importance were laid out, including the historical and educational importance of cultural objects held within museums, the need for increased involvement by First Nations communities in all facets of the museum field. This included exhibit interpretative offerings, easier access for Indigenous peoples to the collections of the nation's museum collections, access to job training, financial support for First Nations cultural institutions and research projects, and the need to turn an eye towards international collection holdings and the need for international repatriation measures (Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People).

The report acknowledged that a number of museums were in fact working toward these ends. Along with non-native curators that were well aware of the extreme lack of Indigenous agency in culturally based exhibits, Native American and First Nations curators were entering the playing field and new exhibitions were emerging across North America (to be discussed in the next chapter) that told the stories of first people history, art, and culture through an Indigenous lens.

## CHAPTER 2 NATIVE AMERICAN- AND FIRST NATIONS-CURATED EXHIBITS<sup>5</sup>

The “*Primitivism*” and “*The Spirit Sings*” exhibits solidified, for First Nations and Native American peoples at least, the need to exhibit cultural “art” and property in a positive and appropriate way. Moreover, it became clear that the guidelines and initiatives would need to come from the community members themselves. Richard W. West, Northern Cheyenne, first Director of the National Museum of the American Indian, phrased the sentiment in the following way at a symposium on the presentation of Native Americans in museums. “We do not feel that our goals are necessarily iconoclastic; we believe, rather, that our incorporation of the Native voice restores real meaning and spiritual resonance to the artifacts we are privileged to care for and put on public display” (West 7).

Encouraged by the “*Primitivism*” and “*The Spirit Sings*” exhibits, as well as the 1992 Columbus celebrations being held in the United States and Canada, 1992 marked a turning point in Native American and First Nations curated exhibits. Interestingly, though, one of the first major Indigenous-curated exhibits actually dates back to 1967.

### INDIANS OF CANADA PAVILION, EXPO 1967

Prior to “*The Spirit Sings*” controversy, the demand for cultural self-representation had fallen on deaf ears for almost fifty years (Cooper 2). One of the first acts of guerrilla warfare, as far as the appropriation of exhibits was concerned, occurred at the 1967 Canadian International

---

<sup>5</sup> The published catalogues of these exhibits have been extensively utilized and cited; many of these are no longer in print.

and Universal Exposition in Montreal. Coinciding with its centennial celebration, Canada was chosen by the Bureau International des Expositions as the site of the 1967 World's Fair (Expo 67). The Canadian government's hope was that an "*Indians of Canada Pavilion*" would encourage tourism to Canada by introducing First Nations cultures and their arts to a global audience. In order to present a First Nations point of view, First Nations consultants were brought in, who in turn insisted on curatorial collaborations with such artists as Alex Janvier (Dene Suline/Saulteaux) and Norval Morrisseau (Anishinaabe) (Bryndon 56; Janvier).

From the beginning collaboration attempts between the consultants and the Exposition organizers became contentious. Norval's original painting on the side of the pavilion portrayed a Native boy and a young bear suckling at the breasts of Mother Earth. The Exposition organizers ordered Norval to repaint the mural, with the outcome being an image of the boy and bear both gazing to the left of the Mother Earth (Janvier, Pomedli xvi) [see figure 2-1].

What was occurring within the pavilion, however, stayed under the radar. The First Nations artists and artist consultants completely revamped the original exhibit design and produced display storylines that reflected First Nations' outrage over Canada's treatment of its Indigenous peoples, which was very different from what the Exposition organizers originally had in mind (Janvier, CBC Digital Archives).

Upon walking into the pavilion, visitors were greeted with messages such as: "You have stolen our native land, our culture, and our soul..." Native curators wrote the labels to accompany the photos, maps and artifacts. One stated that, "An Indian child begins school by learning a foreign tongue... The sun and the moon mark passing time in the Indian home. At



Figure 2-1: Norval Morrisseau's Indians of Canada Pavilion mural, after Exposition organizers forced Morrisseau to re-paint the mural (modified from Robertson, n.d.).

school, minutes are important and we jump to the beat” (Brydon 60). Exhibit organizers were caught completely off guard when they saw texts such as these for the first time just days before the International Exposition was to open. Mixed reactions followed. Discussions were in process

to completely change the exhibit when a local newspaper printed a column describing the content and praising the exhibit. Once the exhibit opened, the Queen of Canada cut her visit to the pavilion short soon after entering the pavilion. Ironically, the Canadian government received accolades from the newspapers and radio stations for putting together such a forward-thinking exhibit, which Canadian First Nations people saw as a coup in allowing their voices to be heard within museum exhibits (CBC Digital Archives). Janvier described the exhibit as “one of the breakthroughs that we made, in that point of Native American history... it was the first impact of our people asserting ourselves, outside of the [1951 Canadian] Indian Act. It was our first positive visual civil disobedience—positive for us, not for them” (Janvier).

[D]espite the government’s best intentions and wishful thinking, the Indian Pavilion came to symbolize a transitional phase in the history of First Nations’ representation in colonial and national spectacle. Instead of portraying First Nations in agreement with the policies of the federal government, the interior of the pavilion actually told a story that was meant to provoke the viewers to think about the impact of colonization on First Nations. Never before had Canadian or international visitors been asked to do that. These realistic images were sometimes construed as “bitter,” but at least the “happily ever after” fantasy had been replaced, perhaps only temporarily, by a new discourse which was more fitting for the age (Rutherford & Miller 153-4).

Alissandra Cummins, in her essay “Caribbean Museums and National Identity,” points out: “The question remains who is authorized to reconstruct (or deconstruct) such a ruptured past, such a fragmented history? How is ‘the soul of the people’ expressed in these manufactured

cultural identities? And what is the role of the individual within these frameworks” (227)? The 1967 exhibit marked a decidedly radical shift in curatorial voice. The history of First Nations peoples was told through the lens of the colonized rather than the colonizer. This exhibit marked an important point for Indigenous presentation in both Canada and the United States, and is widely spoken about as the first major exhibit on First Nation/Native American culture.

[T]here is little evidence that the Indian Pavilion, whatever *succès de scandale* it enjoyed, had a lasting impact on public opinion or policymakers. Where the experience of mounting, operating, and defending the Indian Pavilion did matter, however, was with First Nations themselves. Whether causation or coincidence, the newfound confidence and pride that underlay the creation of the Indian Pavilion was completely consistent with the positive demeanour of Aboriginal political leaders from the late 1960s on (Rutherford & Miller 148).

Rather than being passive viewers of constructed post-contact Native American history, a group of Native American and First Nations curators arose that began to present Native American and First Nations history on their own terms. “Museums, which moved from private, princely collections to public institutions... [to] proliferating instruments of symbolism and cultural expression... inextricably bound up with the process of nation-building and self-imaging which they were to mirror” (Cummins 228) were about to go through another metamorphosis. As Eric Gable noted,

Museums, so the standard assertion goes, make “official history” in the service of the

state. They create an imagined community from the top down, in part because their caretakers wish to use public history as a tool for developing a better, more committed citizenry. Likewise, imagined communities are created from the bottom up, as the people who visit museums sometimes argue back at the messengers (Marstine 110).

### SHARED VISIONS: NATIVE AMERICAN PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY EXHIBIT (1991)

“*Shared Visions*” was envisioned by Dr. Rennard Strickland (Osage/Cherokee), a professor of American Indian law, legal historian, author, and Native American art collector. Margaret Archuleta (Tewa), curator of Fine Art at the Heard Museum (directed by Martin Sullivan) in Phoenix, Arizona, curated the exhibit, “*Shared Visions*,” which presented a chronological view of “contemporary” Native American artists, their works, and the historical context within which the artwork was situated. It was in this exhibit that the term “Native American Fine Art Movement” was first coined in describing Native American art from the mid-nineteenth century onward.

The impetus and mission of “*Shared Visions*” was to educate art historians and fine art critics about the rich history behind post-contact Indigenous art of the United States, in addition to highlighting pieces from the recently donated Strickland Collection (Archuleta & Strickland 3). The exhibit presented 125 works by more than seventy contemporary Native American artists. The exhibit, the accompanying catalog and, more specifically, the resource guide, emphasized the historical and chronological influences of modern Western art on Native American artists.

Rather than presenting modern Western art alongside Native art in order to validate the

works as comparable to contemporary ‘fine art’ (as per the “flipped” juxtaposition of the “*Primitivism*” exhibit), “*Shared Visions*” described the impact that the various Western art genres had upon “traditional-based” Native artists, while allowing the artwork to stand alone on its own merit. “Too often, students of American Indian art have considered Native painting as nothing more than an elaboration or extension of the design elements in pottery or baskets, or perhaps a refinement of ledger drawings or pictographic sketches. In truth twentieth century American Indian painting is much more” (Archuleta & Strickland 7).

Archuleta and Strickland defined contemporary Native American art and the Native American Fine Art Movement as “born in crisis” (ibid.). While the artwork spanning the mid-1800s through the twenty-first century depicted a variety of topics and issues (from ceremonial dance to the boarding school experience), they asserted that the one cohesive message was that of cultural survival.

“*Shared Visions*” discussed the impact that art institutions had upon various artists. Contributor W. Jackson Rushing discussed the emergence of “Pueblo modernism” via Cochiti Pueblo artist Joe H. Herrera’s work after his graduation from Dorothy Dunn’s “The Studio” on the campus of the Santa Fe Indian School during the 1940s (12) [see figure 2-2]. Rushing also delved into the strong influence that the 1960 University of Arizona’s experimental Southwest Indian Art Project had upon Fritz Scholder and others [see figure 2-3], and the project’s ultimate continuation as the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) (16-17). Joy Gritton further expanded upon the history of IAIA and its influence on contemporary Native American art, describing the college as a continuance of the assimilation work that the U.S. government was still partaking in throughout the 1960s and 1970s (22-29).



Figure 2-2: Joe Herrera (Cochiti). *Spring Ceremony for Owah*. 1983. Watercolor on paper. Collections of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Archuleta & Strickland, p. 51).

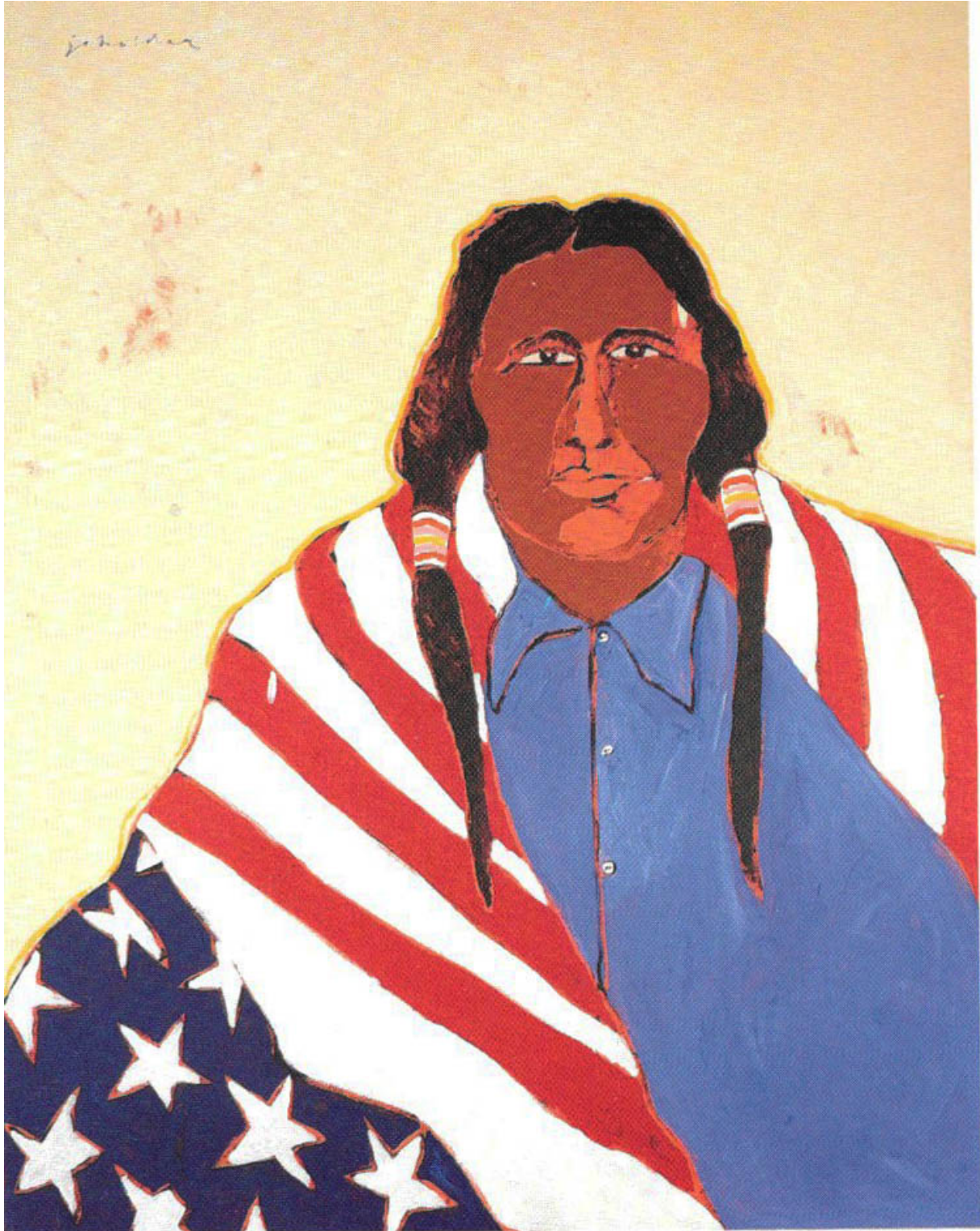


Figure 2-3: Fritz Scholder (Luiseño). *Indian Wrapped in Flag*, c. 1976. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Archuleta & Strickland, p. 54).

However, “*Shared Visions*” was a celebratory presentation of the aesthetic beauty and diversity of Native American art, on par with any modern Western art genre. “Early Narrative” (1850-1953) “the San Ildefonso Watercolor Movement” (1900-1910), the Kiowa Five, the “Bacone Period” (1935-present) and “The Alaskan Movement” (1937-present) gave a “fine art” presentation to the works that spanned decades and regions. Native artists who previously had been overlooked and ignored were presented and lauded as artists, in their own rights, through their own culturally specific artwork.

While the term “Native American Fine Art” was never embraced as the exhibit creators had hoped, “*Shared Visions*” was successful in that it helped to break down notions of what constituted “Native American art” and allowed Native artists to be positioned within a dialogue about “fine art.”

## 1992 COLUMBUS QUINCENTENARY EXHIBITS

As the United States and Canada began planning for the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus’ landing in the Americas, Indigenous peoples of North America prepared to present a “de-celebration” on both sides of the border. “They were especially concerned about how museums might commemorate the anniversary... Most American Indians involved in museum work expected that somewhere in the nation a troublesome exhibition espousing a biased version of Columbus would arise” (Cooper 109). Those fears were proven to be well founded as Columbus-based exhibits sprouted up throughout museums across North America.

The 1990 Florida Museum of Natural History’s exhibit “*First Encounters*” was scheduled to travel across the United States between 1990 and 1992. Members of the American Indian Movement and students from the University of Florida picketed this sanitized version of

American colonization (ibid.). The exhibit labels—describing colonists as “plagued by... a lack of Indian support,” and saying “When Native labor became scarce, colonists began importing African slaves,” and stating that Hernando de Soto utilized “vicious attack dogs to intimidate native peoples” (112-3)—whitewashed a history of Native American intense suffering and historical trauma at the hands of colonizers.

Ironically, in response to the protests of the exhibit, the curators responded “...if individuals become frustrated because their voices are not part of the exhibition, the most productive avenue is for them to create their own exhibitions and public forum” (Milbrath & Milanich as quoted in Cooper 113-4). McMaster & Martin state that, “Plans for the celebration of ‘discovery’ in 1992 galvanized Indigenous peoples of the Americas in common feelings, shared experiences and responses” (14).

*Fluffs & Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness (1992)*

“*Fluffs & Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness*” was produced by the Woodland Cultural Centre (WCC) in Brantford, Ontario. The WCC was founded in 1972 under the direction of the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians with the original main directive to develop a library and museum collection on *Kanien'kehá:ka* (Mohawk) history and culture<sup>6</sup> (Woodland Cultural Centre). By 1975 the WCC was supporting First Nations art across Canada through their annual Indian Art juried exhibit (ibid.) and presenting First Nations art and historical exhibits.

---

<sup>6</sup> Due to the great distance between Kanien'kehá:ka communities, the WCC now focuses its cultural support on the three Kanien'kehá:ka communities of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Six Nations of the Grand River (Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Onondaga and Tuscarora) and the Wahta Mohawks.

Envisioned by WCC Director Tom Hill, one of the co-directors of the “*Turning the Page*” symposium and First Nations consultant on the *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples*, “*Fluffs & Feathers*” was guest curated by Deborah Doxtator (Oneida), a recent Museology graduate at the time of the University of Toronto (Doxtator 6). “*Fluffs & Feathers*” became a traveling exhibit with support from the Royal Ontario Museum, touring Eastern Canada from 1992-1995. The focus of “*Fluffs & Feathers*” was on symbolism and the ways in which stereotypes manipulate existing tribal symbolism by replacing it with other, damaging meaning. WCC Executive Director Joanna Bedard explained, “When a society chooses its own symbols, it is a way of empowering itself and its individual members... Through the process of symbolization a culture pulls together into one simple representation all the brightest ideals it expresses both to itself and to the world.”

What then happens to a culture whose symbols are chosen by outsiders, by those who do not understand its deepest beliefs, structures and ways of life? What kind of interpretation of a society can come from symbols designed not to elevate conscious understanding to the highest of that society’s ideas but to reduce that understanding to categories that debase or ridicule. The opposite of empowering occurs. Feelings of rage, impotence and powerlessness are evoked. The symbols are not representations but caricatures (Doxtator 5).



Figure 2-4: Opening Display for the *Fluffs & Feathers* Exhibit at the Woodland Cultural Centre (modified from Doxtator, p. 9).

Dr. Dave Warren (Chippewa, Santa Clara Pueblo) describes the importance of symbology as one of the basic elements tied inextricably to Native identity and interlinked with language, traditions, beliefs, values systems, and the senses of origin and destiny (Warren & Flahive 17). Shared by the tribal community, these elements of the self allow for an overall world vision shaped by the ancestors and a collective history, which, in turn, allows the tribal community to define itself as situated within a larger social or national body.

*Elements of the cultural system not only have form but significance or meaning for the*

*human individuals* in that group; a relationship is established between people and cultural products. Second, the identification system has a historical dimension. The identity symbols constitute a type of storage mechanism of human experience...[and] constitutes a means for organizing the accumulating experience of a people. The belief that the experience is shared with and through ancestors is basic to the identity system. Third, the identity concept places individual motivation in the process of analysis. *People build a cumulative image of themselves through the meanings of identity symbols—all of which become the source for motivation to continue and fulfill that self-defined image.* The fulfillment of the image comes throughout a series of historical events that the symbols emphasize (Warren & Flahive 18).

When a peoples' cultural symbology is misappropriated or when new, derogatory symbols are created by others, then self-identity is no longer in the hands of those people. "Teepees, headdresses, totem poles, birch bark canoes, face paint, fringes, buckskin and tomahawks... are symbols of 'Indianness' that have become immediately recognizable to the public. To take it one step further, they are the symbols that the public uses in its definition of what an Indian is" (Doxtator 10).

Doxtator divided "*Fluffs & Feathers*" into seven thematic sections, each addressing a particular issue surrounding the use of First Nations and Native American stereotypes and symbolism. The introductory section, titled *The Idea of Indianness*, began with a text panel that explained how symbols of "Indianness" are usually generated by outsiders and are "widely circulated... by non-Natives who have little knowledge of how Aboriginal People see themselves" (Geller). The panel further explained that "Stereotyping occurs when a group, for

their own purposes, tries to define another people, and in so doing, sets boundaries and limitations for them” (ibid.).

In an attempt to convey how this materializes, a fully beaded headdress was displayed next to the introductory panel. An icon of “Indianness,” the headdress and its deep cultural signification of leadership and honor has been misappropriated and is readily recognizable by both Native and non-Native alike as a generalized over-arching symbol of Native American and First nation identity.

*The Idea of Indianness* section also highlighted how the misappropriation of symbology can “often operate as a form of social control.”

For example, images in the media of women as incompetent, physically inferior, and scatter-brained have in the past been used to justify why women should not hold executive positions in Canadian business.

Racial stereotypes in television situation-comedies have in the past justified why it is all right to deny other racial groups access to power and financial rewards. Indians have been subject to this type of “control: but also to a unique form of psychological [sic] warfare. Minority groups often endure discrimination but they never experience situations in which the discriminating group usurps their identity. For example, No [sic] Canadians of East Indian descent have experienced other Canadians, identifying with them and pretending to be them (Doxtator 14).

Although the symbolism of “Indianness” has changed over the past four hundred years, this change is more often a continued expansion on, rather than departure from, earlier concepts.

Native children continue to be taught that their culture and society is “inferior, their religion was wrong, and their language useless” (12) and that the elements of their cultural system and the symbology intricately tied into these systems are “less than.”

The *Wild, Weird and Wonderful: Indians on Exhibit* section explored the Wild West shows that toured throughout North America and Europe between 1883-1937. A precursor to the Hollywood Western movie genre, the Wild West shows were hugely popular as a recreational resource (16). Specifically, the Indian attack re-enactments were a strong draw for audiences. *Wild, Weird and Wonderful* questioned the popularity of these enactments:

What made the thought of Indians in feathers and leathers, bareback on horseback, whooping and hollering while they pretended to try to kill “white” settlers, so very attractive? Why is it still attractive to the public even today? In the 1970s at the Calgary Stampede members of the Stampede organizing committee wanted to institute a staged “Indian attack” on a mail coach as a tourist attraction. If tomorrow some one [sic] advertised a staged “Indian attack” there would be more than enough people interested in watching it, to make it economically viable (Doxtator 17).

Doxtator posits that the fascination and draw of these Indian attack enactments is due to the stereotype of Native Americans as “naturally exciting, unpredictable, and in a word, ‘wild’” (18). But there was never any real danger as a “white savior” (in the form of the cavalry or Buffalo Bill) would swoop in and vanquish the bloodthirsty attackers [see figure 2-5].

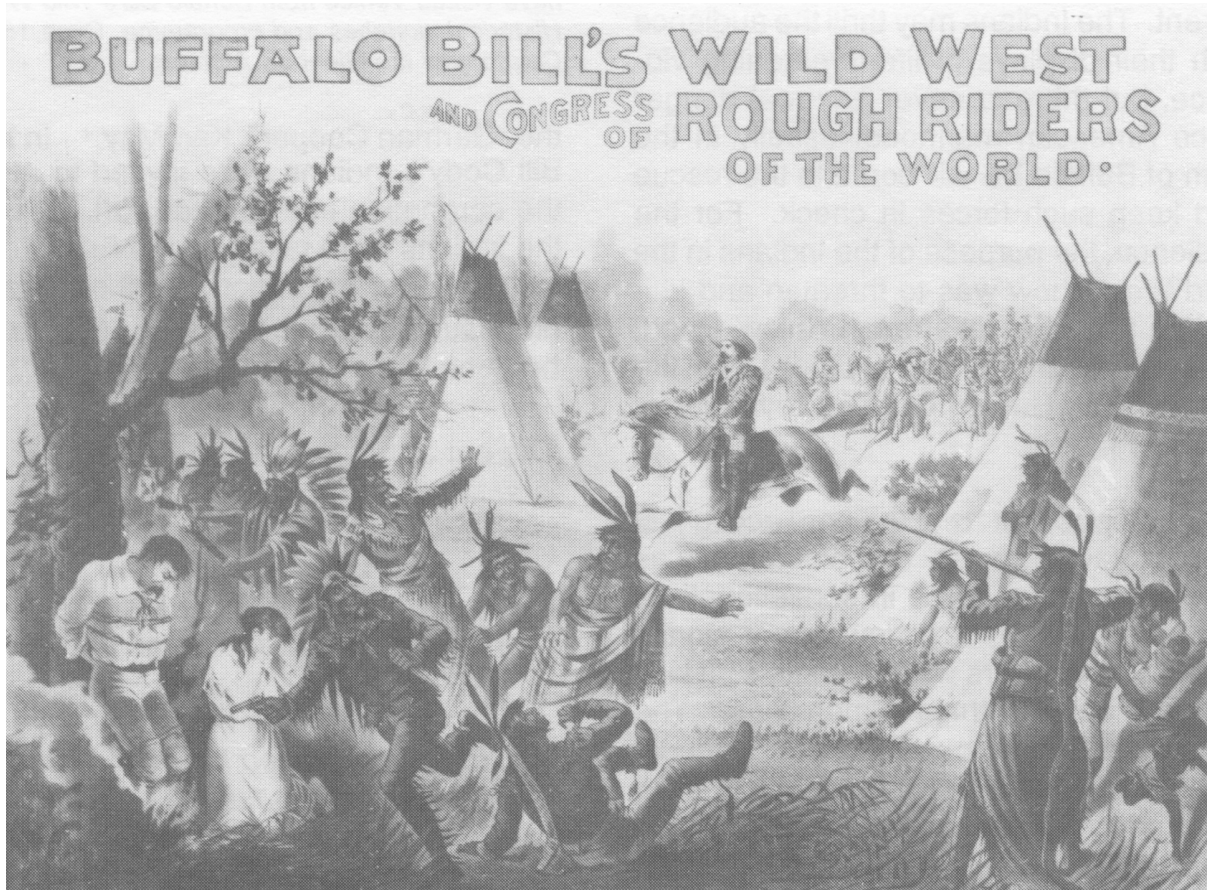


Figure 2-5: “Poster lithograph displaying... Buffalo Bill stopping an Indian raid on settlers, [circa] 1887” (Doxtator, p. 17).

These enactments were seen as authentic and historically accurate depictions of early Western life. The Buffalo Ranch Real Wild West Show, which toured between 1906-1909, touted their show as “History blended with pleasant instruction” (19).

By the late 1930s the Wild West shows and the battle re-enactments had disappeared, but the presentation of Native Americans—as originally depicted within the Wild West shows as “savage” and “exotic others”—continued to be present within parades and “Indian villages” across the United States and Canada. World Fairs, so popular in the late 1800s, persisted in presenting Native peoples based upon these same stereotypes, which were presented as fact.

Produced with the consultation of archaeologists and anthropologists, the world fair “Indian villages” were considered educationally accurate and anthropologists would bring in their students to view these villages as “an adventure in social Darwinism” (Willinsky as quoted in Fine-Dare 23).

*Wild, Weird and Wonderful* explored the idea of exhibiting Native American and First Nations people through the presentation of cultural objects outside of their original context. It questioned the fascination of Native culture by anthropologists and archaeologists as “examples of the types of things one could expect to encounter in North America with little or no interpretation of their cultural meaning” (Doxtator 21).

The exhibit text argued that the Wild West interpretation of Native peoples continued within museums, “best appreciated as a... safe historical... category with a safely inferior place in a neatly organized exhibit...” (21).

Indian images have been carved, painted, rug hooked, woven into fictional plots, made into pottery, sung about, featured in official government gifts to visitors, and given a place in school children’s pageants. In Canada, images of Indians are culturally inescapable. It is not possible to speak of the “Canadian” experience: without dealing with the reality of “Indians.” No matter what the artistic discipline, you will be sure to see Indians sooner or later (Doxtator 26).



Figure 2-6: “Royal Doulton collection mug that borrows the symbols of Indianness. Issued in 1967 to [commemorate] Canada's Centennial.” Collections of the Woodland Cultural Centre (Doxtator, p. 34).

The public fascination of Native artistic forms, re-invented for a commodity-driven populace, was the focus of *The Borrowed Indian* section. There is a long history of non-native writers, artists, musicians and poets incorporating a skewed version of native peoples based upon current stereotypes of the times. This section displayed examples such as Pauline Johnson, a famous late nineteenth-early twentieth century poet, who was extremely popular for her recitals of Native American-themed poetry. Adorned in a buckskin dress, red cloak and a bear claw necklace, Pauline travelled across Canada, the United States and London reciting her poetry such as “A Cry from an Indian Wife.”

*My Forest Brave, My Red-skin love, farewell;  
We may not meet tomorrow; who can tell  
What might ills befall our little band,  
Or what you'll suffer from the white man's hand?  
Here is your knife! I thought 'twas sheathed for aye.  
No roaming bison calls for it to-day;  
No hide of prairie cattle will it maim;  
The plains are bare, it seeks a nobler game;  
'Twill drink the life-blood of a soldier host (24).*

“*Fluffs & Feathers*” was successful in that it presented a well-rounded thematic exploration of First Nation/Native American stereotypes throughout history. However, the messages held within the exhibit did not always connect with the audience. Peter Geller says, “I watched one group of children race through the exhibit area making ‘Indian’ war cries as they

passed by the cases of plastic totem poles and ceramic canoes. Later, a mother exclaimed to her son, in front of the same case, ‘Oh, how cute’” (Geller).

It is difficult to present exhibit topics and the display of objects that are meant to educate and inform an audience without missing the mark when mainstream media has manufactured stereotypical depictions of Native American people and their communities, history and culture. As Doxtator states, “there is no easy way to discuss the facts. It is impossible to discuss the concept of “Indianness” without addressing racism and the injustices that have occurred. It is impossible to talk about “Indianness” without facing the uncomfortable reality of the dispossession of one people by another” (10).

Yet “*Fluffs & Feathers*” was a seminal exhibit in that it was the first large exhibit produced by a tribal cultural center and curated by a First Nations curator. The text and accompanying publication reflected an Indigenous voice, and was a historical story told by native peoples, through native eyes. “*Fluffs & Feathers*,” although describing a de-humanizing issue, presented the facts in a more truthful way.

*Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs: A Visual Commentary on the Columbus Quincentennial from the perspective of America’s First People (1992)*

The “*Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs*”<sup>7</sup> exhibit was curated by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (Flathead), a prominent Native American artist whose work broke through artistic genre borders. Her work has been shown in museums and galleries across the Americas such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, The National Museum of

---

<sup>7</sup> The title is a palindrome – “Submuloc” being “Columbus ” spelled backward

Women in the Arts, New York's Accola Griefen Gallery, and the LewAllen Contemporary. Quick-to-See Smith has curated over thirty Native art exhibits and has lectured extensively on the Native American Fine Art Movement (Jaune Quick-to-See Smith).

Quick-to-See Smith requested that the artwork for "*The Submuloc Show*" be constructed out of found objects.

In the midst of the struggle for survival, Indian peoples have continued to sustain themselves through the making of art. Art works—such as ribbon shirts, silk appliques and quilts—are often made from the cast-offs of society at large. In some of the darkest periods of history, like the Ghost Dance era, some of the finest and most beautiful works were wrested from the mass anguish of tribes (Quick-to-See Smith iii).

The works were to be a visceral response to colonization and holocaust as well as a celebration of cultural continuance. Thirty-seven Native American and First Nations artists and writers were chosen for the exhibit.

"*The Submuloc Show*" opened on January 5, 1992 at the Museum of Art in Eugene, Oregon and traveled extensively throughout the United States, closing on February 28, 1994 at the Spokane Falls Community College in Spokane, Washington (iv). Carla Roberts, Atlatl's Executive Director (the organizer of the exhibit) stated:

As celebrations throughout North America and Europe re-enact and eulogize the historical importance of the voyages of Christopher Columbus, Indigenous people across the hemisphere are reacting with varied modes of expression.

Was the “Admiral of the Ocean Seas” a noble explorer? Or a ruthless exploiter? The Columbian legacy and the colonization of the Americas appear somewhat differently from the perspective of America’s First People. This intimate exhibition provides an enlightened perspective on the cultural encounter celebrated in 1992 (v).

Roberts described the exhibit and its artwork as an exploration of the issues brought up in the minds and psyche of Indigenous peoples surrounding the Columbus celebrations, and their reflections on the continued colonization of tribal peoples. She notes that society expects native art to contain certain qualities based upon pre-conceived notions of a “traditional culture.” But “traditional native culture is not static, captured forever in the nineteenth century, but dynamic and responsive to contemporary society” (v).

Duane Niatum (Klallam), a prolific and accomplished writer and former editor of Harper & Row’s Native American Authors series, submitted the poem “Cristóbal Colón, (Christopher Columbus), A Sailor’s Dream.”<sup>8</sup> In this piece, Niatum engages in a personal dialogue with Columbus:

...Even with countless storms charting the waves,  
the Taino gave you an anchor to the sea’s bottom.  
Forever shouting the Holy Ghost’s at the helm  
rather than the flag of Queen Isabella’s sails,  
you humored frigate-birds navigating hills of water.

---

<sup>8</sup> See Niatum’s impassioned submission letter to Quick-to-See Smith in Appendix A

The world learned you enslaved Indians like trapped fish,  
fed their flesh to hunting dogs as a Spanish joke.  
Colonists joined in after you raised the first ax.  
You can't hide behind Aristotle's theory that some  
men are born slaves, don't need much of a push (11).

Along with poetry<sup>9</sup> and short writings from Native American writers, the reflections of the artists were coupled with the 2- and 3-dimensional works within the exhibit. In describing his piece "Born to Be Wild or We Are Damned Glad Columbus Wasn't Looking for Turkey" (mixed media assemblage, mask), George C. Longfish (Seneca/Tuscarora) explains, "The unique quality that makes Native Americans different from other ethnic groups in America *is* and *will* always be the land. For all who have been at war with America, they have always been given the chance to retain their land and their self-respect, not so with the 'Indian'" (Quick-to-See Smith 44).

Longfish's mask [see figure 2-7], made of leather and adorned with baby bottle nipples, a pacifier, dice, a pair of metal skulls, feathers and beadwork does not, in any way, resemble the Seneca False Face used in ceremony (which would be inappropriate since these "masks" cannot be shown outside of their ceremonial context), and Longfish may be referring to the native use of masks as teachers and protectors.

---

<sup>9</sup> See Charlotte DeClue's (Osage) poem "Blanket Poem #4... Visiting Day" in Appendix B.

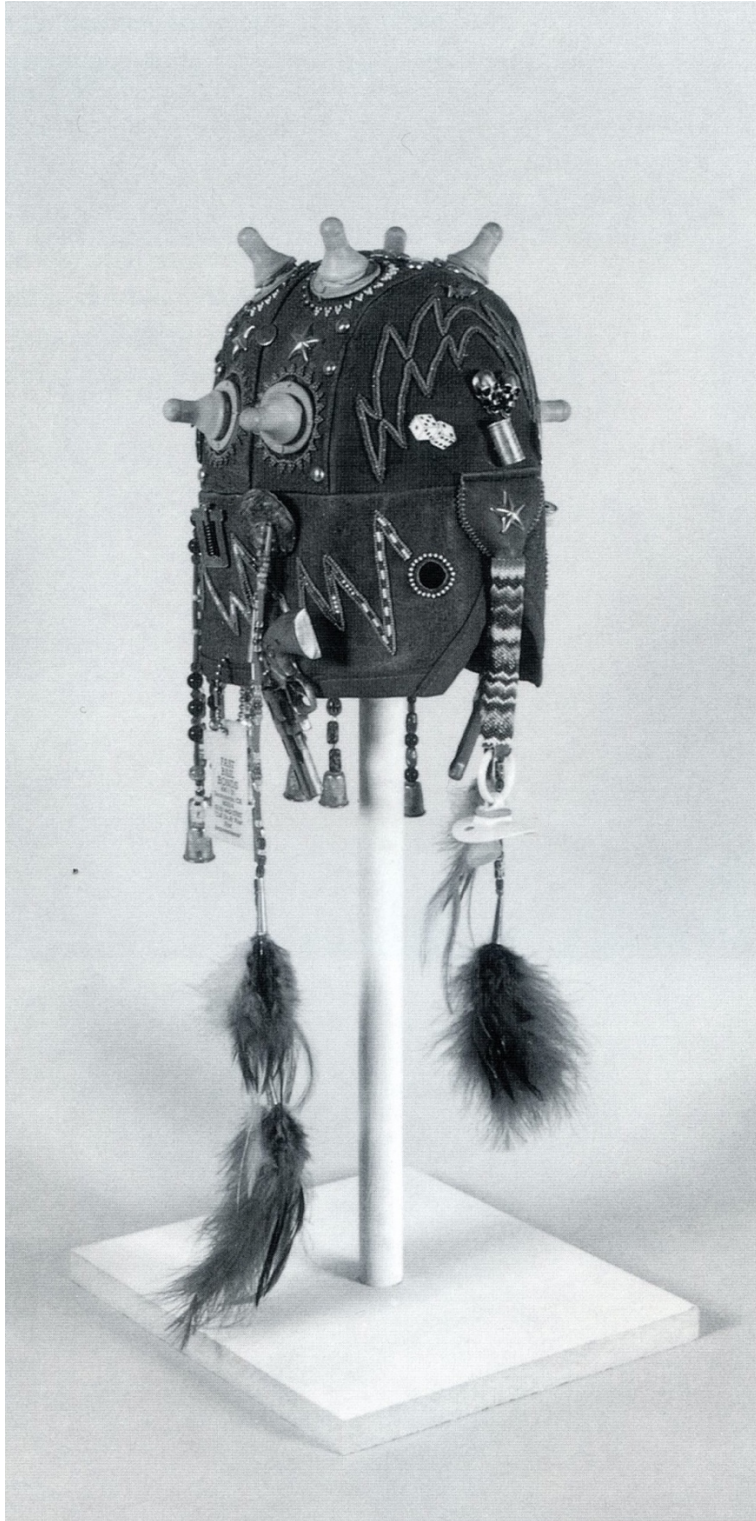


Figure 2-7: George C. Longfish (Seneca/Tuscarora) *Born to be Wild or We are Damned Glad Columbus Wasn't Looking for Turkey*, n.d. Mixed media assemblage (Quick-to-See Smith, p.

45).

Ernie Pepion (*Eewokso*) (Blackfeet), in describing his piece “There Goes The Neighborhood” (pastel), states, “With the rape and plunder of our lands, we have threatened our cultural heritage. Since we cannot turn back time to fully restore our damaged environment, we have to protect what remains” (52).

Pepion’s piece [see figure 2-8] depicts Columbus standing at the bow of the *Santa Maria*, Spanish flag in hand. On the shore is a large building with a Taj Majal façade, with the words “Find your Fortune: Atlantic City” over the doorway. In front, stands a white elephant (53). In his piece, Pepion is making a statement about Columbus’ belief that he had found India and the ensuing desecration of traditional lands for monetary plunder. Pepion states, “Our dependence upon technology has weakened our culture and forced us to live in a fast, plastic, imitation world...” (52) The Atlantic City Boardwalk, with its brick and stucco façades, bright lights and tourist-focused stores and casinos, epitomizes the direction that American consumerism dictates how pristine lands are destroyed and re-utilized.

Suzie Bevins’ (Inupiat) “My Roots Unearthed” [see figure 2-9] is an assemblage of Inuktut objects placed into a museum-like display box. Ethnographical sketches, diagrams, and short descriptions accompany each object.

In the area around Point Barrow, Alaska, my home village, numbers of flint blades and scrapers have been found at various sites indicating that my ancestors had adapted to this harsh environment as early as 8000 BC.

My piece evolved from archeological documentations that I have studied over the years. Historical records nullify the claim of any western man to have discovered America (20).

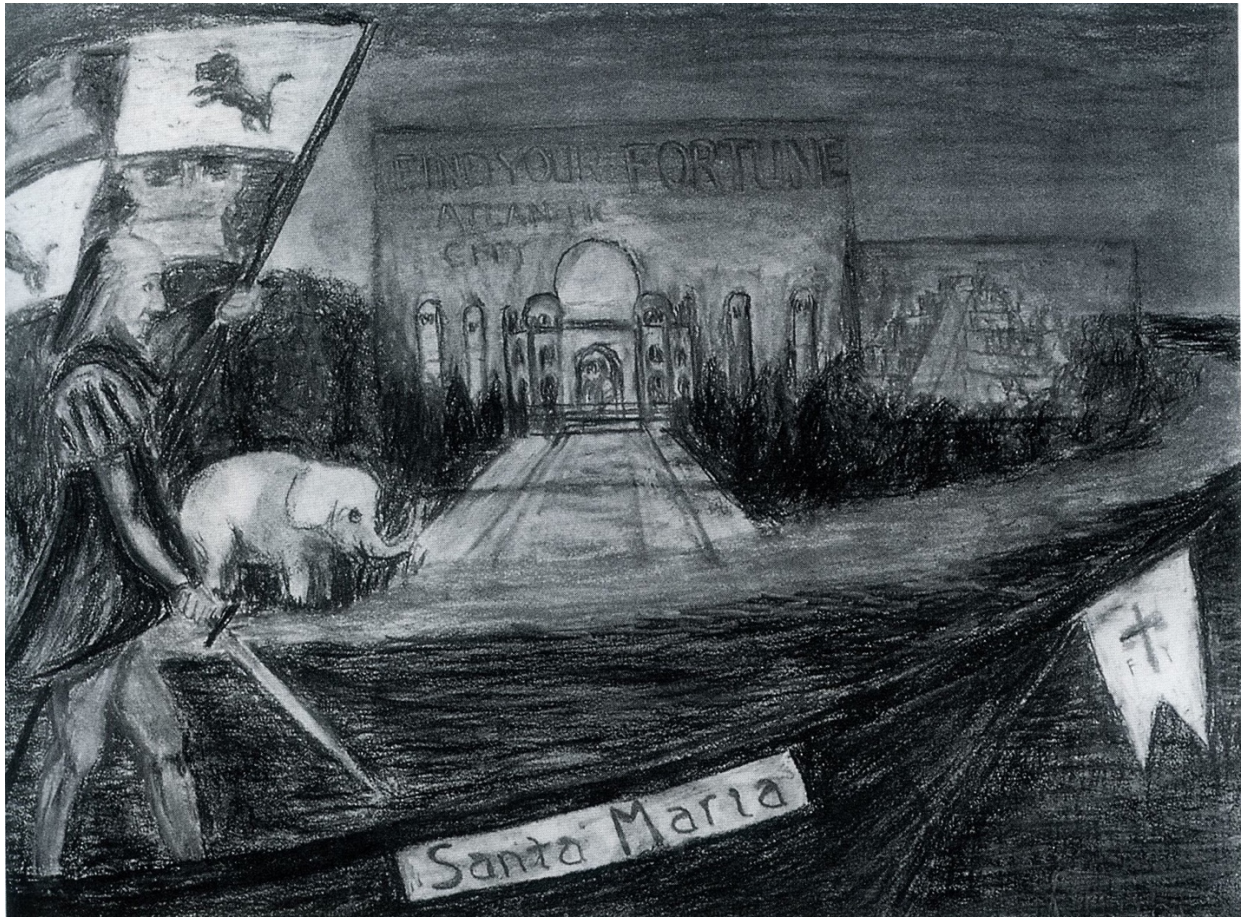


Figure 2-8: Ernie Pepion (Blackfeet). *There Goes the Neighborhood*, n.d. Pastel (modified from Quick-to-See Smith, p. 53).



Figure 2-9: Susie Bevins (Inupiat). *My Roots Unearthed*, n.d. Assemblage with text (Quick-to-See Smith, p. 20).

Through a multitude of artistic mediums and personal reflections, the artists within “*The Submuloc Show*” articulated an Indigenous insight into national responses of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary

of Columbus' voyage. As Robert Houle (Saulteaux/Ojibwe) and Greg Staats (Mohawk) declared, "It was important that our work express our 500 year history of annihilation, marginalization, misrepresentation and invisibility. This litany honors the 'extinct' First Nations of North America and expresses the 'distinct' character of our contemporary sisters and brothers" (34).

*INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art (1992)*

McMaster & Martin state that, "Plans for the celebration of 'discovery' in 1992 galvanized indigenous peoples of the Americas in common feelings, shared experiences and responses" (McMaster & Martin 14). The "*INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art*" exhibit wanted "to give special attention to issues of self-representation in art museums, and issues related to working with Native communities" (66). The arts project culminated in a two-year traveling exhibit, which toured Canada and the United States. The project was moved and molded by First Nations artists, writers and museum professionals. But the driving force behind the exhibit and the ensuing catalog were the co-curators Gerald McMaster (Plains Cree) and Lee-Ann Martin (Mohawk).

The curators point to the project's beginnings with a 1989 Ottawa conference on Canada's upcoming 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation, and the five hundredth anniversary of Columbus' 1492 "discovery" of the New World—entitled "Towards 1992"—and the realization by First Nations peoples in attendance that this would be a celebratory event. Georges Erasmus, then National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, was the only Indigenous Canadian invited to address the conference. His words highlighted the dichotomous stance of the audience on the issue.

What are we going to celebrate?... I don't think that we have a solitary thing that we should be celebrating about unless we are going to do something different in the future. It's really time for some change. It's really time that the European people and their descendants, and the rest that are here, that are now Canadians seriously begin to address the basic relationship they have with this land and the people who were here first... It was an insult to the First Nations of this country when the Premiers and Prime Minister were going to tell the world that there were two "founding peoples," [referring to the English and the French] that there were two "distinct societies." They had the audacity or the ignorance not to recognize that it is Canada—nowhere else in this world—that the indigenous people call home, and if we are not "distinct" here, where in the hell are we "distinct?"

I believe we can do something different. We want to do something different. We are sick and tired of being your conscience—absolutely sick and tired of it!! We'd like nothing more than to go around and dance and feel good about ourselves. But, by God, we have too many real things to be concerned about (McMaster & Martin 8-9).

McMaster and Martin further explain that, "INDIGENA grew out of a concern that Indigenous peoples would be the recipient of a five-hundred-year hangover without ever having attended Western civilization's party" (15).

Although serious concerns existed about how Native American and First Nations peoples were being represented and exhibited within ethnographical, military and natural history museums, the curators chose to direct their lens towards how Indigenous artists are, or are not, presented within art museums. Specifically, they wanted to underscore how the Indigenous

visual languages and perspectives were being silenced when aboriginal art *was* presented. McMaster, in his article “INDIGENA: A Native Curator’s Perspective” explains, “Ethnography museums traditionally are repositories for ‘objects made by Native people’; whereas art museums are repositories of ‘fine-art objects’ that chart the art-historical course of Western civilization... I question why art museums have excluded aboriginal art from Canada and the United States” (McMaster 66).

Aboriginal artists were asked to address specific themes on cultural values and philosophies “within their own framework, without the need for validation from Canadians of European ancestry,” personal reflections on the last five hundred years of colonization, the Euro-centric academic writings about First Nations art and artists, and the “recognition that 1992 is not only an arbitrary date in history, but also a point of departure for the future” (ibid.).

“*INDIGENA*” included paintings, photographs, installations, performance art, and new media art from nineteen Canadian aboriginal artists. The publication included six essays by aboriginal writers. This marked a turning point in the critical discussion of Native American and First Nation art—from the standpoint of the “Other,” of a critique by those within the cultures. Rather than discuss native arts and culture as ending in the early pre-contact era, the curators and submitting essay writers spoke of the current cultural context of the work.

Academic disciplines still have great difficulty accepting Indian art, history, literature, music, and technology as art, history, literature and technology without first placing it in an anthropological context. Museums continue to foster the view of Indians as “pre-historic”... Indians are perceived to have culture, not history...” (Doxtator 12).

Artists and writers reflected upon the last 500 years, "...on this 'meeting of cultures,' addressing such issues as historicity, cultural conquest, Aboriginal title, identity and sovereignty" (McMaster & Martin 12). In their introduction, the curators denounce the ways that "exploration" and "discovery" are used to define Canada, and the ways that these words distort the history of the first inhabitants of the Americas.

Artists and writers addressed colonization, historical inaccuracies and cultural misconceptions—Jane Ash Poitras' (Cree) triptych "Shaman Never Die V" [see figure 2-10] addressed the misunderstanding surrounding spirituality and altered consciousness: "It is not that this spirituality is not adaptable to contemporary life, but that there is a concerted effort to block its application by those who have no understanding of it and no willingness to learn" (166).

Jim Logan (Cree/Sioux/Scottish) presented the importance and love of hockey on the reserve (142, 146-147) [see figure 2-11], while Harry Fonseca (Maidu) offered an alternative representation of Native culture in "When Coyote Leaves the Res: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Coyote" (100) [see figure 2-12].

Carl Beam (Ojibway) explored the relationship between man and the environment in "Burying the Ruler," which was a three paneled, mixed media piece that played with the metaphor of "burying the hatchet" and doing away with Western scientific ways of "measuring" the impact that progress has upon the land [see figure 2-13].



Figure 2-10: Jane Ash Poitras (Chipewyan). *Shaman Never Die V: Indigena*, 1990. Three panels, mixed media on canvas. Collection of Canadian Museum of Civilization (modified from McMaster & Martin, p. 167).



Figure 2-11: Jim Logan (Cree, Sioux, Scottish). *National Pastimes*, 1992. Acrylic on canvas  
(McMaster & Martin, p. 143).

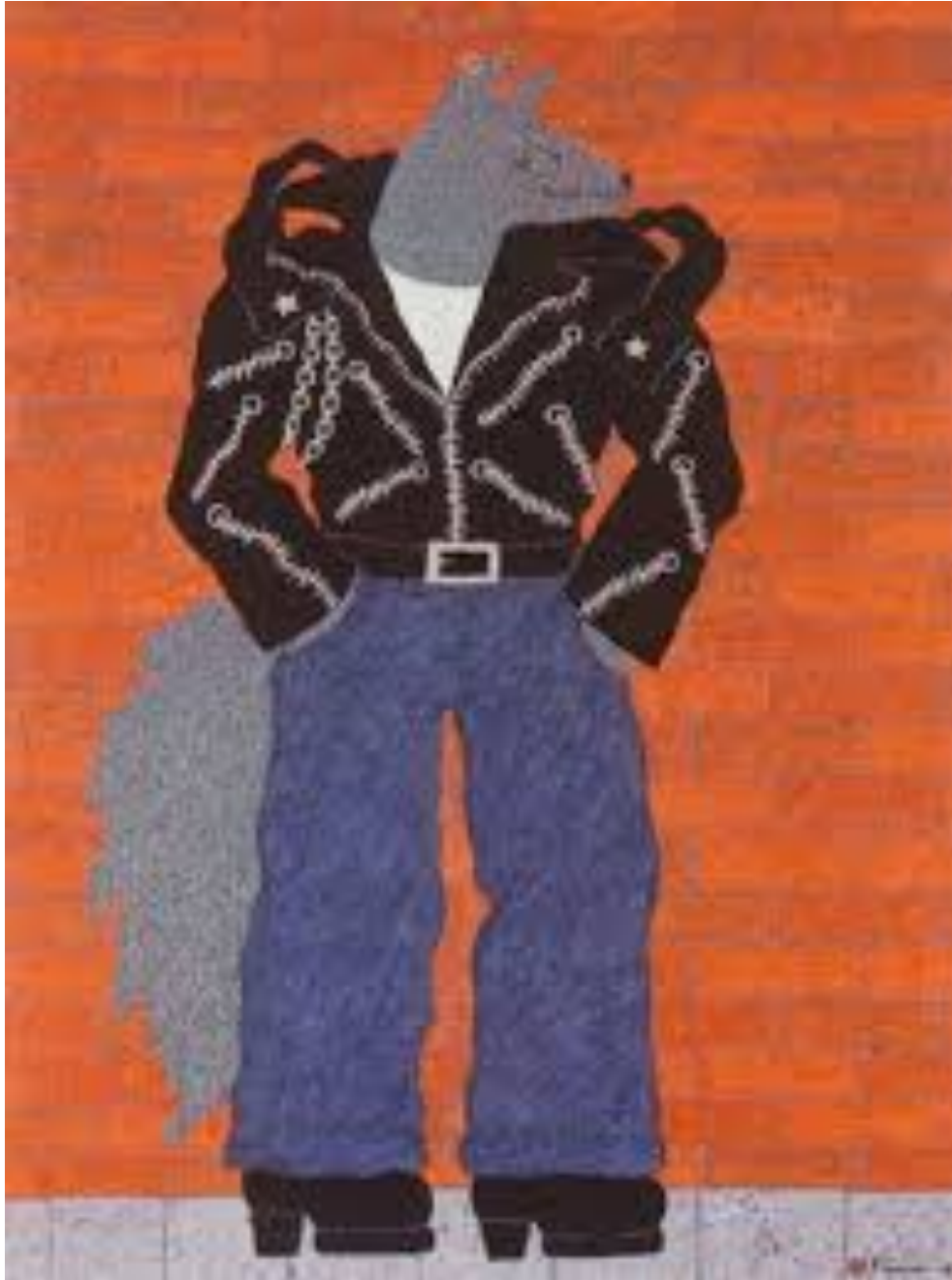


Figure 2-12: Harry Fonseca (Maidu). *When Coyote Leaves the Res: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Coyote*, 1980. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona (Arcturus).



Figure 2-13: Carl Beam (Ojibway). *Burying the Ruler #1*, 1989. Photo Emulsion and acrylic on Canvas (Canada Council Art Bank).

In her essay “What More Do They Want?” Loretta Todd (Cree/Métis filmmaker, writer) critiques the theories of modernism and postmodernism as Eurocentric frameworks (73). Todd argues that these terms (“philosophies even”) are the product of an elitist mentality and of colonialism when applied to First Nations art and artists.

Modernism has its origins in a culture based on exclusion and hierarchy. Its emphasis on reason and rationality gave rise to technological developments and scientific theories, including anthropology. At the same time that modernism came into being, colonialism was intensifying... In the modernist period, it was the lands and resources they sought; in the postmodern it is the experiences, the sensation... Nothing is authentic or autonomous, therefore everything is fair game...

In postmodernism, our representation is not questioned as such, except perhaps to ask “how much?”... We are supposed to live now in a global village, experiencing cultural convergence. Jameson’s “depthlessness and simulacrum” are the norm, and historical ownership is not part of the language, even if you perceive your ownership to exist prior to colonial—and modernist—claims.

Based on their historical context, modernism and postmodernism are not terms to lightly embrace, yet academic and theoretical discussion seems to encourage such identification. Everything from exhibits to critical essays refers to modernism and postmodernism as if they are inevitable and even necessary stages for the development of Native art, expression and representation (74).

Todd stresses the need for Native American and First Nations peoples to utilize their own ways of critiquing art and Indigenous representation, based upon philosophies other than those of the dominant culture. Todd asserts that the scholarly narration of aboriginal art, culture and lifeways is entrenched in dichotomy-based critiques and will be “forever trapped in a process that divides and conquers” (75). Rather than describing experiences and histories as “either/or” “reductive” conflicts, Todd believes that there are other ways to define the value of *all* art and

cultural meaning.

Alfred Young Man (Chippewa-Cree) reiterates Todd's assertions in his essay "The Metaphysics of North American Indian Art" (80-99). In critiquing the aesthetic description of the "ghetto-ization" of Native American art, Young Man asserts that this harkens back to the Western dichotomy of "higher/lower" art and is simply a newer allocation of "the lowly status of 'marginal art,' which is now the practice among the power-elite of the art world" (85). Young Man requests that we look towards Indigenous philosophies in critiquing Native American art, and through which we then define "Native American Perspectives" of art. For examples, Young Man mentions the holistic Osage philosophy that "All things exist in Wah'kon-tah and Wah'kon-tah exists in all things" (Peek 4) and Professor Rennard Strickland's (Osage/Cherokee) description of Native artists' lives as "a house of mirrors" (McMaster & Martin 44).

Divorced from anthropological theories and Western-based art history theories, the critical works in "INDIGENA" presented a more in-depth view of Native American art that reflected Indigenous concepts of art and its ties to culture and history. Acting as a critique of Western thought about the definition of "Native American" or "First Nations," the curators presented a discourse on Indigenous culture as an attempt to "unravel complex histories and [to] redefine relationships of Aboriginal peoples within a constantly changing environment" (18).

#### RESERVATION X: THE POWER OF PLACE IN ABORIGINAL CONTEMPORARY ART (1998)

In 1998 the Canadian Museum of Civilization organized the exhibit "*Reservation X*," which explored the U.S. Native American reservations and the Canadian First Nations reserves as Indigenous "homelands."

Curator Gerald McMaster presented seven First Nations and Native American artists. In addition, he and three other writers submitted essays on topics ranging from identity as constructed through reservation life (Paul Chaat Smith) to the “ownership of place” (Nancy Marie Mithlo). The artists, in various ways, communicated how their own lives and cultural identity were formed and molded by their communities, whether they had been disassociated from the reservation at an early age (Mary Longman: “Strata and Routes”) or whether they had strong ties with the cultural values that permeate Puebloan life, which impacted their work (Nora Noranjo-Morse: “Gia’s Song”).

“*Reservation X*” strove to present the multi-faceted spaces in which Native American and First Nations peoples live and where culture survives. Like “*INDIGENA*” and “*Columbus Woks*,” “*Reservation X*” included neither ethnographic objects nor murals nor dioramas of old ways of life. The exhibit was meant to present North American Indigenous peoples as they are in the present, and the artwork produced for “*Reservation X*” solidly spoke of place and community, and how Indigenous identity is integrally intertwined with both, whether or not this has been fragmented through colonization. In *New Reference Points*, McMaster answers the question “Why is Reservation X important and for whom?”

I suggest that between two or more communities—reserve and urban—there exists a socially ambiguous zone, a site of articulation for the aboriginal contemporary artist that is frequently crossed, experienced, interrogated, and negotiated. This idea argues for a space of radical openness and “hybridity,” or spaces of resistance being opened at the margins...

Aboriginal contemporary artists, like other artists, often reflect the conditions of

their times. These artists move freely between different communities and places often within a new “third space” that encompasses the two (McMaster 28).

McMaster addressed the conundrum that contemporary Native artists often find themselves facing. On one hand, the role of “artist” is a fluid and dynamic identity, seen by both art patrons and the art community as someone who is able to freely speak of issues of the time. On the other hand, the role of the “Indian” is steeped in stereotypes that mainstream audiences firmly hold onto. McMaster asserts that Native artists struggle with this “baggage” not only in their professional lives, but also in their identity as native first and artist second (29).

The essays were hard-hitting and were meant for a native audience. Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche), writer, curator (soon-to-be at the National Museum of the American Indian) and Native American historian, blasted the 1960s attempts of Native American peoples to move forward with the civil rights movement. In his tongue-in-cheek essay titled *The Meaning of Life*, Chaat Smith focused his view on the 1967 special issue “Return of the Red Man,” which bore a “crazy Day-Glo illustration of, presumably, an Indian from this century” (31). Within the *Life Magazine* special edition was an article about the Institute of American Indian Arts, touting a blend of traditional culture and modern art. “The article offered powerful evidence that something, in fact, was happening somewhere, and it answered the prayers of lost teens from Medicine Hat to Miami. *Life* had given them life” (ibid.).

But with all of the promises of the sixties shattered, with the failing of Alcatraz, the retiring of AIM and radicals from Wounded Knee, and the turning away of the media from the plight of Native peoples across the continent, Chaat Smith ended his essay with optimistic hope for the direction that Native people were now going, despite the continued issues of alcoholism,

internal tribal politics, and the loss of language. "...[I]nstead of addressing the entire planet, we'd have to settle for talking to each other. And the conversation immediately became smarter and way more interesting." (39) Beyond the dialogues invoked by the hippy era of universal love and Native "pure" spirituality (Chaat Smith contends), the discussions are now turning to the dialogue of "affirming a continued Indian existence, of convincing ourselves and others that our culture is alive and dynamic, that history has often lied about us, that we are not all the same... The question is no longer whether we will survive but how we will live" (ibid.).

No less powerful were First Nations art historian Charlotte Townsend-Gault's essay *Let X = Audience* and Apache Native American art critic Nancy Marie Mithlo's *Lost O'Keeffes/Modern Primitives: The Culture of Native American Art*. Both explored a number of current native artists and their work, positioning them in the field of art history writ "fine."

The five Native American and two First Nations artists presented in "*Reservation X*" were to become well-known and firmly established Indigenous artists and professors of our time. For this reason, it is important to explore, in detail, the artists and their work within this pivotal exhibit.

Mary Longman (Saulteaux Anishinaabe) was finishing her Ph.D. in Art Education at the time of the "*Reservation X*" exhibit. Working in multi-media, Longman explored the issue of cultural memory. In her gold-red piece *Reservation*, Longman created a column-like pedestal with a small tree encased within a birdcage. This artwork speaks of the confines of cultural tradition. The leaves of the small, fragile tree, which are the focus of the piece, push outward from the confines of the cage. Relating to the natural life of First Nations peoples, the tree in *Reservation* (as well as the trees in her piece titled *Strata and Routes*) stand for the bond between family and nature, the slow and organic growth of the cultural self, and the external influences

that shape one's identity [see figure 2-14]. "Community is a complex idea. To look at any community you have to examine the identities that make up the community—personal and collective identities... Collective identity consists of activities you share in the environment you live in" (71).

Nora Naranjo-Morse (Santa Clara Pueblo) uses humor to critique the encroachment of mainstream culture that takes place within the Santa Clara community. One of her most famous pieces, *Pearline Teaching her Cousins Poker*, is a group of female figurines fashioned out of micaceous clay, a traditional pottery material. The four round female figurines are fashioned in the *koshare*, or sacred clown, manner with painted stripes upon their bodies and hair extensions of tassels. They sit around a small woven rug, playing cards in hand, while Pearline pours over a book on how to play poker. Naranjo-Morse explains this exquisite piece: "I made this grouping after I'd gone to that sinful city of Las Vegas for a very, very lost weekend. Pearline returning a little more worldly, tainted if you will, returning to the village to teach her cousins... the seedier side of life. Of course I'm dealing with the process of assimilation, couched in an appealing format" (82).

In "*Reservation X*" Naranjo-Morse continues her critique of assimilation on the Pueblo with her fabricated installation of a manufactured home. The piece is titled *Gia's Song* [see figures 2-15 & 2-16]. On the outside of the home the walls are filled from top to bottom with layers of graffiti. Words such as "Why is Leonard still in jail" and "gov housing" are spray-painted in thick lettering. Through a window you can see a stark white room, sparingly furnished with a few pictures and a cross on the wall, a television front-and-center. But walk to the side of the house and you are met with beautiful soft-brown adobe walls, seemingly worlds apart from the front. Following the curved natural clay wall, you come to a tall red ochre figure painted



Figure 2-14: Photo by Harry Foster. Mary Longman (Saulteaux Band of Gordon First Nations). *Strata and Routes*, 1998. Matrix G, rocks, cottonwood, fir and photo emulsion (modified from McMaster, p. 75).

within a niche standing among sand and head-high thin straw stalks. A single set of handprints is at the base of the figure, pressed into the soft brown-pink sand that can be found only in the southwestern regions. Nancy Marie Mithlo, in her essay on *Gia's Song*, explains to the viewer “Naranjo-Morse’s role as an independent thinker is informed by this process of pulling together varied components of modern Tewa life to form a whole: an organic metaphor encompassing both beauty and loss. Her work unifies that which lies almost unconsciously in pieces on our collective landscape” (84).

Marianne Nicolson, a Dzawada'enuxw artist from Kingcome Inlet, British Columbia, is well known for her incorporation of traditional Kwakwaka'wakw forms into vibrant installations and public art pieces. In her installation *House of Origin* [see figure 2-17], Nicolson combines paintings and photography to construct a longhouse-like space within the gallery setting. Hung at both sides of the area are two double-sided panels painted in rich colors of reds, blacks and whites—traditional colors of the Dzawada'enuxw ceremonial robes. On the outside of the two panels are words in the Kwakwaka'wakw language, while one inside panel translates “The great Flood had not yet arrived when Kawadilikala and his younger brother Kwa'lili dressed in their wolf cloaks travelled to look for new land...” and the other translates “What does this bird sound like in your land?” asked Kwa'lili. ‘Dza'wala,’ replied Kawadiikala. Then the name of your people will be the Dzawada'enuxa...” (97-8) Nicolson describes *House of Origins*:

The big house is predominant in all my work. It represents the idea of self. The house is a symbol of that development, of seeking self. It's a strong symbol of identity, home, family, and community. I constructed a house to be viewed from all sides, from both the outside and the inside. I wanted to express ideas about perspective and how people view

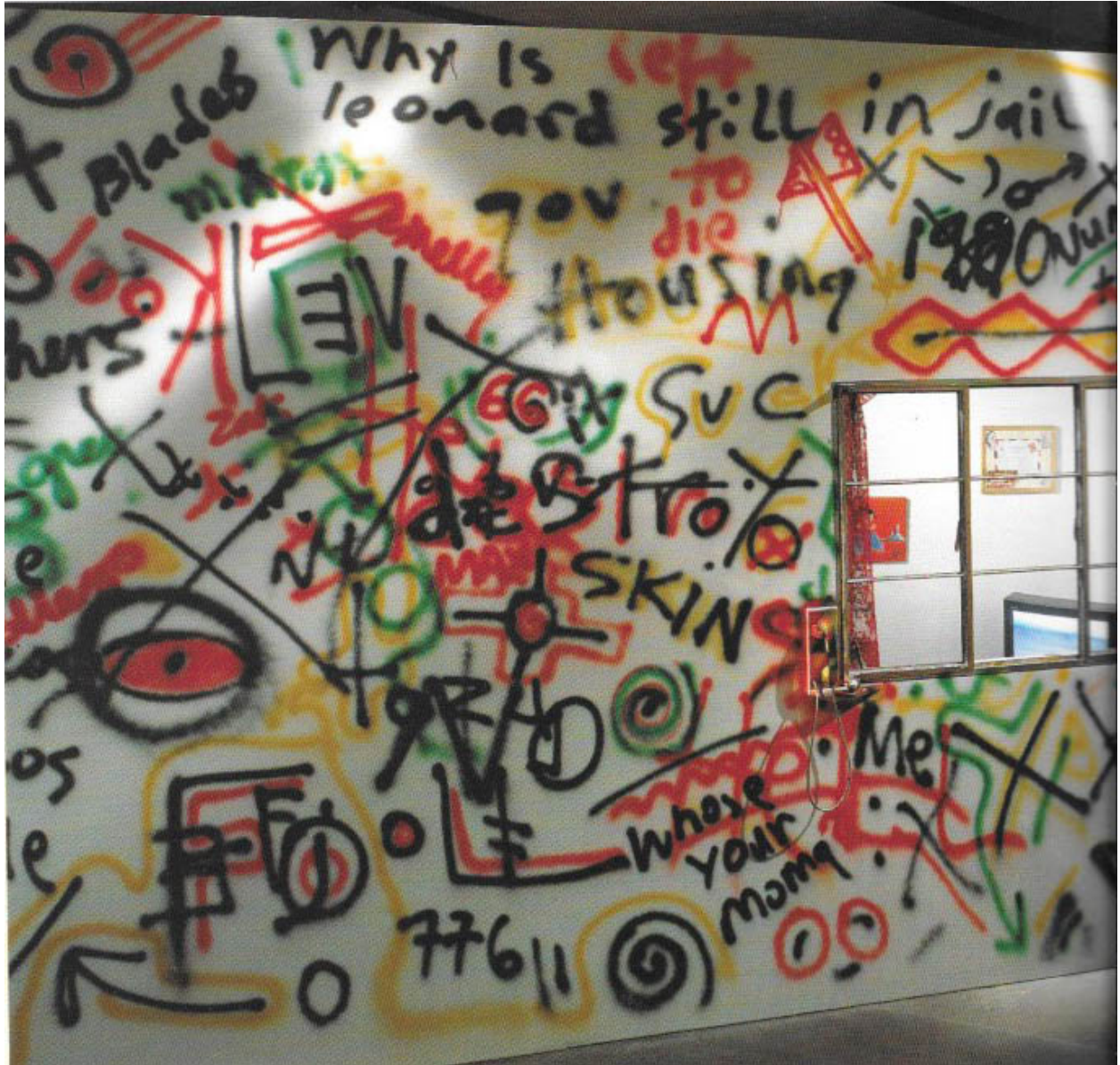


Figure 2-15: Photo by Harry Foster. Nora Noranjo-Morse (Santa Clara Pueblo). *Gia's Song*, 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 88).

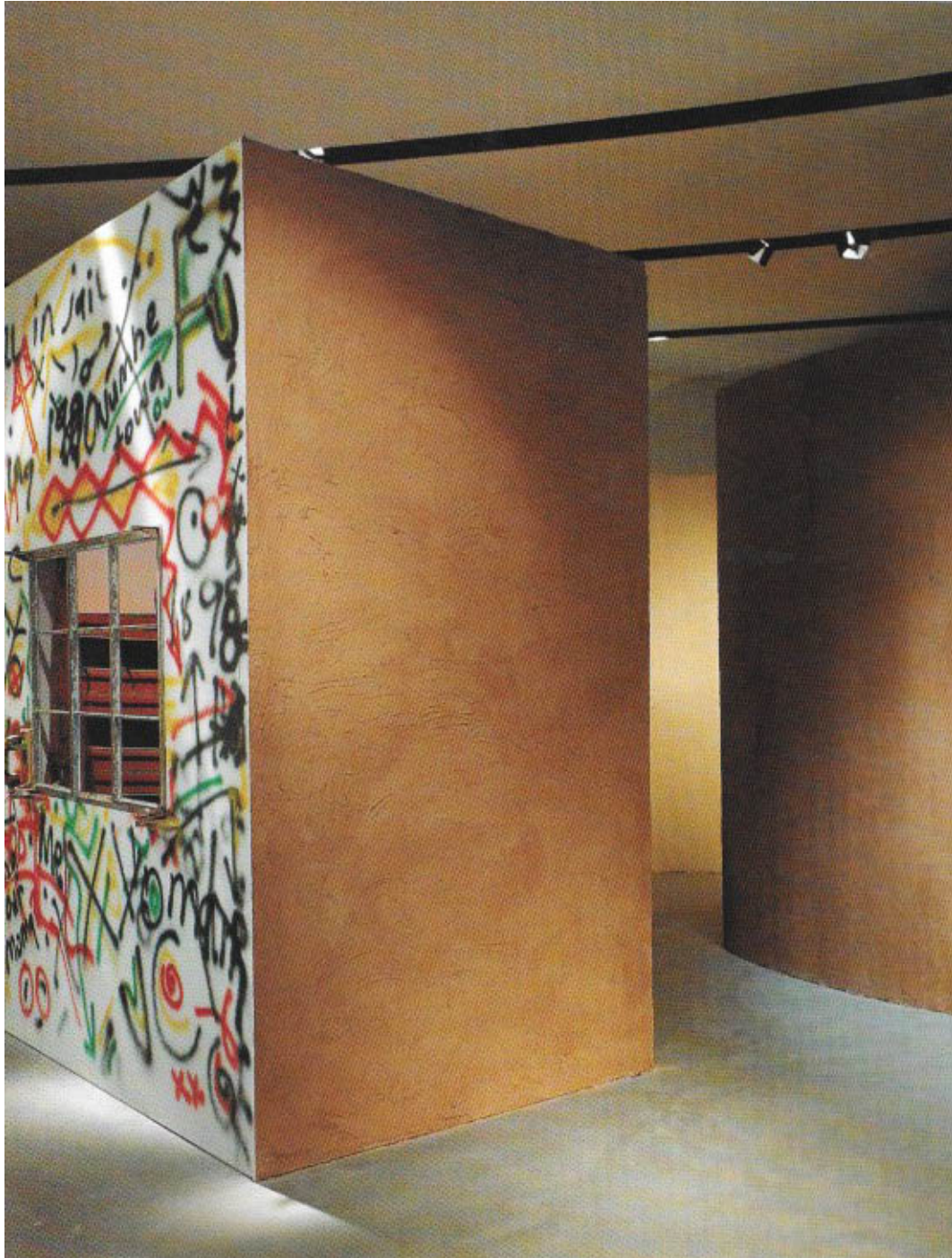


Figure 2-16: Side view of Nora Noranjo-Morse' "Gia's Song" installation (modified from McMaster, p. 90).



Figure 2-17: Marianne Nicolson (Dzawada'enuxw). *House of Origin*, 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 102).

other people's lives. In a large part, our lives have been highly documented because others have imposed their perspectives... I wish people to have a viewpoint of my home and experience. I also want to represent it in my own way and not necessarily have everything understood (101).

Shelley Niro's (Six Nations Mohawk) film contribution to the exhibit, *Honey Moccasin* [see figure 2-18], has become a staple in First Nations/Native American film courses. The film is set within the fictional reserve of Grand Pine, or "Reservation X." In this film pastiche, the character Honey Moccasin owns and runs the Smokin' Moccasin Bar. The storyline focuses upon the mystery of who keeps stealing the powwow regalia from dancers' homes, as well as the rivalry between the Smokin' Moccasin Bar and the Inukshuk Café. The actors and actresses are



Figure 2-18: Shelley Niro (Mohawk). *Honey Moccasin*, 1997. Film, mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 116).

almost entirely First Nations peoples, including Paul Chaat Smith, who plays the news commentator.

The target audience for *Honey Moccasin* is First Nations, Natives, and Indians. I want them to relate to the situations in this film without trying to find a way in. They're in as soon as the film starts... Conflicts and their resolutions come from the Native community. The entertainment, the social commentaries, the acts of wackiness all come from this fictional reserve. We are seeing variety, strength, weakness, emotion, and humour in this film (Niro as quoted in McMaster 115).

In the exhibit, Niro surrounds the film with powwow regalia created from found objects. There is a Ghost Dance Shirt fashioned out of second-hand clothing, a men's outfit designed with Fruit Loops ©, Gummy Lifesavers © and lollipops, and a man's breastplate made of rubber tire and wire.

Niro is playing with notions of identity, creativity and adaptation. Beyond the trappings of the post-modern world, the characters and circumstances are uniquely native; the questions raised and the outcomes to the situations would only arise within a tribal community. And, as Chaat Smith states, "At a time when pan-Indian pop has become a tidal wave and Indian identity seems like a question many of us answer with skillful accessorizing, *Honey Moccasin* suggests that being Indian takes more than feathers and beads" (111).

*Corn Blue Room* [see figure 2-19] by Jolene Rickard (Tuscarora) is a hauntingly beautiful installation that traveled extensively after "*Reservation X*" closed its doors. In the middle of a glowing blue space hang ceiling-to-floor strands of corn bathed in blue and purple light. All

around this monumental central piece are images of what it means to be a contemporary Iroquoian: images of the Mohawk Iron Workers who were famous for their help in building the skyscrapers of Chicago and New York (and continue to do so), of Iroquoian raised beadwork, of the annual cross-border march of the Indian Defense League of America from Niagara Falls, Ontario to Niagara Falls, New York. But a great majority of the images are of struggle—images of dams and power lines, indicative of past struggles to keep the community alive.

Along with being a well-known artist, Dr. Rickard is a visual historian, curator, and professor and Director of the American Indian Program at Cornell University. Chaat Smith explains:

Her scholarship, be it on Iroquois beadwork or post-modernism, has earned her a national reputation as well as a PhD. Her influential critical essays have argued that the art world's current interest in Indian art is a trap that reduces Indian cultural expression to victimhood, protest, and craft. She thinks many Indian artists are all too willing to submerge their work into a system that one can never take seriously the idea of an indigenous knowledge base. She also challenges the idea that indigenous expression can ever be divorced from a direct connection with the land (124).

Rickard's work often plays with symbolism and deeper meaning. Her focus upon community is grounded in Longhouse Society, where she plays an important role in the politics and wellbeing of her extended Haudenosaunee community.

Mateo Romero's (Cochiti Pueblo) work often blends the silhouettes of Puebloan community life, public Ceremonial dance and the rich colors of the southwestern



Figure 2-19: Jolene Rickard (Tuscarora). *Corn Blue Room*, 1998. Mixed media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 129).

environment. His paintings depict a celebration of Kerasan life, with a subtle, yet sharp, criticism of encroaching Western ‘norms.’ In Mithlo’s essay, “Mateo Romero: Painted Caves – Conspiracy Theory,” she notes Romero’s usage of “truthful images” in his installation piece:

... Romero communicates the poignancy of contemporary Native life. Alcoholism, violence, poverty, commercialization, loss of religion, loss of family, and just plain loss are presented without apologies. Although his messages are consistently oblique, this is not propaganda. Rather, he delivers information from the perspective of an informed bystander (McMaster 135).

Romero’s mural [see figure 2-20] reflects the “painted caves” found at Bandolier National Park. And, as with his ancestor’s work at Bandolier, the images tell multiple stories: of harvest-time, of the encroachment of the dominant society, of paths being tread into the unknown. On each side of his painting are *retablos*, small niche-like shelves that are often used to hold religious objects or objects of importance. On these *retablos* are small mounds of fine dirt – presumably from the lands of the Cochiti people. As with many of Romero’s pieces, there is serenity in the muted palette that he chooses to utilize, although this particular piece is in black- and-white. Still, the cross-hatched greys and soft blue-grey wash belies the fact that the topics presented are harsh and stark realities of what the Indigenous peoples of the southwest have encountered and continue to face.

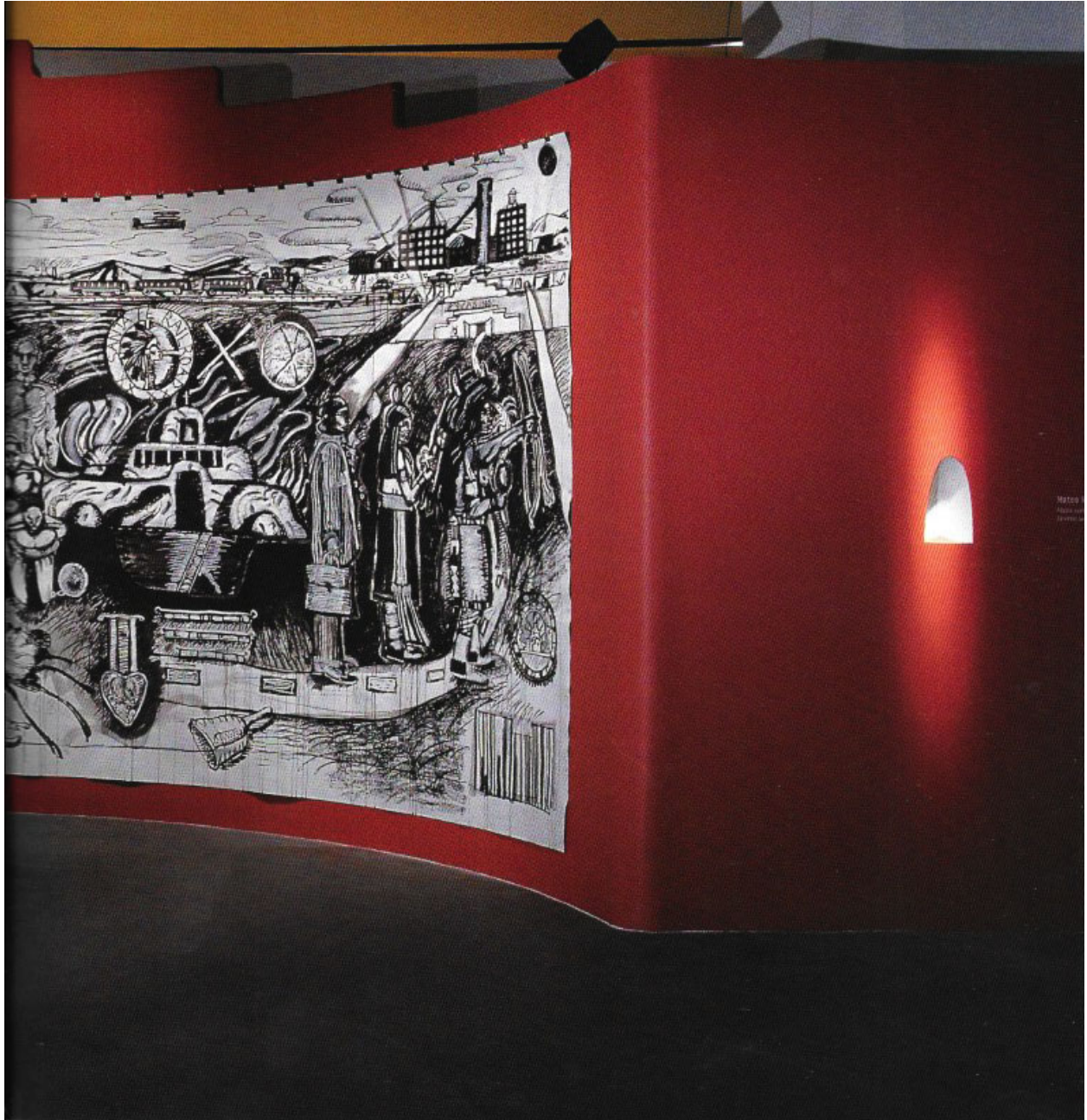


Figure 2-20: Mateo Romero (Cochiti Pueblo). Portion of *Painted Caves* installation, 1998.

Mixed media (modified from McMaster, p. 145).

C. Maxx Stevens (Seminole) is renowned for her masterful installation work. Imparting stories through a plethora of materials and embedded symbology, Stevens' works are often delicate in design and fabrication. Her *Reservation X* installation, *if these walls could talk* [see figures 2-21 & 2-22], addresses the breakdown of cultural family life through the forced assimilation that was so predominant in the public schools of her youth. On one end is a picnic table, situated within an outside environment of trees, stars, and the outside lights that many families strung up for late-night gatherings. On the other end is a stark white classroom – school chairs set in uniform lines, with “Anglo” children’s names written largely on the blackboard: “Annie,” “Jimmie,” “Wilma.”

As with many of Maxx’s pieces, there is an embracing of familial strength, and an acknowledgement of its continuous disassemblment by outside forces. McMaster, in his essay on Steven’s installation, asks: “How does one live in two worlds? This may seem like a simple reductivist framework, but the idea is more complex” (151).

These early Native American- and First Nations-curated exhibits drastically deviated from previous presentations of the Native American experience; issues of stereotypes and misrepresentation were forefront themes and acted as “the voice of self” in their discourse on what it means to be a part of the Indigenous communities of North America. These curators’ insights forged the way in the openness and truthfulness that current Indigenous exhibits are known for.



Figure 2-21: C. Maxx Stevens (Seminole). *if these walls could talk*, 1998. Multi-media installation (modified from McMaster, p. 157).



Figure 2-22: Opposite view of C. Maxx Stevens installation *if these walls could talk*  
(modified from McMaster, p. 156).

## CHAPTER 3 THE RISE OF THE TRIBAL MUSEUM

Today, there are over sixty tribal museums and cultural centers across the country (Tribal Museums & Cultural Centers) and these numbers seem to be increasing. The growth of these institutions has been a rocky one. This chapter discusses the history of the rise of tribal museums in the United States and Canada, and looks specifically at four tribal museums as case studies.

One of the first recorded proposals of a tribe wishing to start its own museum was by the Cherokee Tribe of Georgia. In 1826 the tribe held discussions on the establishment of a public museum, but never followed through on this (Fuller & Fabricius 224). However, during the late 1800s there were a number of private museums that had been established by Native American individuals, as a way to present their personal collections of heirlooms, ethnographic and archaeological pieces and historical ephemera (Abrams 4).

The earliest known of these private museums was situated on the Tuscarora Reservation in Niagara County, New York. This small museum was owned by Ga-ha-no, or Caroline G. Parker Mt. Pleasant [see figure 3-1]. Mrs. Mt. Pleasant was the sister of the Seneca Chief Dohehogewa, also known as Brigadier General Ely S. Parker), and was the wife of Tuscarora Chief Dah gah-yah-dent (Day 195), also known as John Mt. Pleasant. When Ga-ha-no's husband died, she returned to the Tonawanda Indian Reservation near Akron, New York, and her collection was disbursed. The site of her museum now lies under the reservoir waters of the New York State Power Authority (Abrams 4).



Figure 3-1: Ga-ha-no, ca. 1880. Digital image (Native North American Images – Old Photos).

In 1923 the Muscogee Creek Indian Memorial Association established the Creek Council House Museum in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, as an education center focused upon Native American history (Muscogee [Creek] Nation Council House). In 1924 Jesuit Father Eugene Buechel founded what became known as the Buechel Memorial Lakota Museum. Located on the Rosebud Reservation in St. Francis, South Dakota, the museum displays a wide range of Lakota objects

ranging from clothing to hunting tools and rare photographs of Sicangu Chief Spotted Tail (McMacken 87). Father Buechel is recognized as a “spiritual leader of the times” although he was not Lakota (87). It is said that he “was deeply interested in the Lakota culture (Drake-Garcia 8-9). He wrote a Lakota dictionary and began a vast Lakota photo collection that resides at the museum.

In the late 1930s the Tribal House of the Bear in Wrangell, Alaska, was established, a Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) constructed replica of a tribal house, in front of which stands replicas of Chief Shakes’ totems as well as two totems belonging to Chief Kadashan (Drake-Garcia 2). Also in the late 1930s a number of North Carolina Cherokee and Osage tribal members from Oklahoma created organizations that would become the roots of their current tribal museums: the 1938 Osage Tribal Museum and the 1948 Museum of the Cherokee Indian (Fuller & Fabricius 224, Lonetree 19, The Museum of the Cherokee Indian).

The Six Nations Indian Museum in Onchiota, New York and the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee, Oklahoma were established in 1954. Early tribal museums and cultural centers of the 1960s include the Malki Museum in Banning, California and the Three Affiliated Tribes Museum in New Town, North Dakota, both established in 1964, the Jicarilla apache Indian Arts & Crafts Museum in Dulce New Mexico which was established in 1966, the Colorado River Tribes Museum in Parker, Arizona, the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, and the Quechan Tribal Museum in Yuma, Arizona, all established in 1969 (Drake-Garcia 2-6).

During the 1970s the Economic Development Administration (EDA) afforded federally recognized tribes across America the ability to construct buildings upon their reservations in an effort to provide work and programs that would promote the living standards of those living within the reservations. Many tribal museums and cultural centers were built during this time

(LoneTree 19). In 1977, with the aid of the Smithsonian Institution, the North American Indian Museums Association (NAIMA) was formed in an effort to support these tribal museums and cultural centers. Unfortunately, due to financial, administrative and personal issues, the organization was disbanded in 1987.

The tribal museums and cultural centers struggled. “While the early EDA projects provided money for bricks and mortar, oftentimes there was little consideration of how the museum or the tribe was to fund annual budgets, staff, acquiring and maintaining collections, upkeep of the building, etc.” (Abrams 4). However, a number of these tribal institutions continued on until today, including the Seneca-Iroquois Nation Museum in Salamanca, New York, the Kiowa Tribal Museum in Carnegie, Oklahoma, and the Lenni Lenape Museum of Indian Culture in Allentown, Pennsylvania (Drake-Garcia 6-8).

By 1981 there were approximately 40 tribal museums and cultural centers across America and Canada and by 1991 these numbers had grown to more than 200 (Abrams 225). These numbers are fluid since the definition and criteria as to what a museum is can be hard to pin down: “A recent Smithsonian survey considers tribal museums to be ‘museums that retain Native authority through direct tribal ownership or majority presence, or that are located on tribally controlled lands, or that have a Native director or board members’” (Lonetree 19). Lonetree points out that if one adheres strictly to these criteria, then those 1991 numbers drop to between 120-175 tribal museums existing in North America.

In 1992 the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) conducted a survey of tribal museums and cultural centers in an attempt to better understand the storage, collections care and access policies currently in place, as well as the perceived needs of the tribal communities. Across Canada and the United States 128 institutions were recognized as affiliated

in some way with a tribal government, were located on or near a reservation, or were thought to be affiliated with, or operated by, a tribal community. Of all the museums/cultural centers 33% reached out to respond, forty from American institutions and three from Canada (Nason 1992).

## THE U'MISTA CULTURAL CENTRE

Two Northwest Coast First Nations museums have been looked upon as groundbreaking institutions in that they embody what native-driven museums and cultural centers can be: the Kwagiulth Museum and Cultural Center (renamed the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre in 2007) which opened in 1979, and the U'Mista Cultural Center, which opened in 1980. Both exist due to a historical atrocity and cultural trauma that occurred in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, centering upon the traditional Northwest Coast ceremony of Potlatch.

The word Pałá·č comes from the Nuu-chah-nulth word whose literal translation is “to give away” or “to gift” (Potlatch). The Pałá·č takes place over many days, and almost a whole village of one tribe would travel days or even weeks to attend the Potlatch of another village. The Potlatch had an “arrival by canoe” portion of the Ceremonies – partly, because travel between Northwest Coast villages was often conducted by canoe, but also because canoes were needed to transport the abundance of gifts that would be given away by the host village, and be taken back to the visiting village afterward. Tribes across the Pacific Northwest Coast participated in Potlatch – including villages from northern Oregon to the coast of Alaska (Potlatch). This extensive Ceremony includes dance, storytelling, naming ceremonies, the “telling” of family lineages, and Giveway.

In 1922 in British Columbia, Canada, almost every Kwakwaka'wakw (or Kwagiulth) Village Island ceremonial object, clothing and regalia was seized by the Canadian Mounted

Police when they stormed a large Potlatch, which at the time was outlawed because it was thought to be part of savage religion beliefs. Forty-five Village Islanders were arrested and seventeen crates containing 450 items were sent to Ottawa's Victoria Memorial Museum (Mithlo 2004: 751). This raid was the largest Potlatch confiscation recorded on the central coast (Cooper 74). The Kwakiulth worked for almost 100 years to reclaim these objects in order to get back a part of their heritage. This was a monumental task, since the Canadian government had dispersed these objects across Canada and into Europe (ibid.). The Kwagiulth were finally returned many (but not all) of their Potlatch objects but under one condition; namely that they open a museum to house them. They decided to open two, the Kwagiulth Cultural Centre on Cape Mudge, and the U'mista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay, British Columbia. The U'mista Centre opened in 1980.

U'mista, in the Kwakiulth language, roughly translates as "to be returned home from capture." The Northwest Coast tribes had a history of capturing people from other warring villages, and keeping them as slaves or, most often, holding them for ransom and returning them once the ransom was paid (Potlatch).

The U'mista Big House Gallery (Big House refers to the traditional long and extremely large cedar halls used to conduct ceremony and gatherings) presents the masks as you would see them within ceremony. Appropriately for the culture, they are out in the open and not placed behind glass. This exhibit was groundbreaking in that it was produced by those within the Native American community. Gloria Cranmer Webster, the curator of the U'mista exhibit and the first director, stated, "we didn't know it was groundbreaking. We were simply building an exhibit that spoke to us, and for us" (Mithlo 1998).

Object labels were also written according to tribal customs. Instead of describing the materials or "naming" the object such as "Kwagiulth mask," labels might describe the Spirit that

the mask becomes during ceremony, or the family that owns Spirit, or may tell a story that surrounds that Spirit (ibid.).

James Clifford wrote a well-known essay on the U'Mista Center's exhibit of these repatriated objects titled "Four Northwest Coast Museums: Travel Reflections." In his critique of the Big House exhibit, he states:

The tribal museum has different agendas [as compared to large provincial museums]: (1) its stance is to some degree oppositional, with exhibits reflecting excluded experiences, colonial pasts, and current struggles; (2) the art/culture distinction is often irrelevant, or positively subverted; (3) the notion of a unified or linear History (whether of the nation, of humanity, or of art) is challenged by local, community histories; and (4) the collections do not aspire to be included in the patrimony (of the nation, of great art, etc.) but to be inscribed within different traditions and practices, free of national cosmopolitan patrimonies... Thus a constant tactical movement is required: from margin to center and back again, in and out of dominant contexts, markets, patterns of success (Clifford 225-226).

However, Dr. Nancy Marie Mithlo (Chiricahua Apache) argues against Clifford's hypothesis that tribal museums tend to "stress entanglement and relationship rather than independence or an experience significantly outside the national culture" (Clifford 215). Instead, she agrees with Clifford's view that "[m]aster narratives of cultural disappearance and salvage could be replaced by stories of revival, remembrance, and struggle" and "many tribal groups and individuals have found ways to live separate from and in negotiation with the modern state" (214).

Certainly, as a woman, a student, and a single mother from Native background with my six-year-old child in tow, I may be expected to perceive the tribal museum in a different light than Clifford... I wondered how this oppositional concept between a minority museum and a majority culture could be attributed to a place where as I observed there were people simply doing what they have always done—telling stories, talking among themselves about themselves. I sent my essay to Ms. Cranmer Webster to have her check my accuracy and she penned me the following reply:

“The world of Anthropology never ceases to amaze me. Here we are, in our little cultural center, doing our thing, unaware that all this controversy is going on about what we’re doing and why we’re doing it! I suppose this might be considered another contribution of U’Mista to the world out there.

Reading your paper and re-reading Clifford’s made me think back to when we were building this place and how our plans developed. I cannot honestly remember white people ever being considered when we were deciding about anything. The majority/minority issue never came up, maybe because on this island we are not a minority. What shit-house luck that we did all these clever things without knowing what we were doing” (Mithlo 2004: 753).

Mithlo warns: “The danger in characterizing the perceived minority as oppositional is that alternative ideologies are overlooked” (754). Clifford’s essay moves Mithlo to ask whether tribal museums, in presenting their own histories within the framework of cultural norms and storytelling (read as “Indigenous research and educational presentation”) will ever be viewed as merely a reaction to a “perceived Western totality” (ibid.).

The U'mista Center is not unique in its focus upon its own community and ways of cultural representation that can be viewed as outside the norm. JoAllyn Archambault (Standing Rock Sioux) states, "I found it one of the most challenging museums I have ever visited [sic]. There was little in the label text to inform the visitor about the historical background of the collection, its seizure by the Canadian government, and its ultimate return" (12). Archambault goes on to surmise that the main exhibit seems to be specifically geared towards community, with a presentation of the Kwakwaka'wakw masks and garments that deviates from mainstream museological storytelling, for a reason. The Big House exhibit is meant to resonate with a Kwagiulth audience as well as other First Nation and Native American visitors.

The U'mista Center also acts as an environmentally controlled repository for Kwagiulth families. It is a place where they can store their ceremonial regalia and objects, and from where they can retrieve these items when needed (12). A policy of "holding" cultural objects for a community is one of the many practices that tribal museums and cultural centers routinely offer their tribal constituents that is rarely implemented through Western museums and their collections.

## THE NUYUMBALEES CULTURAL CENTRE

Located in the Village of Cape Mudge on the southwest coast of Quadra Island, just east of Vancouver Island, the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre (NCC) houses more than 350 ceremonial and regalia items from the 1979 repatriated Sacred Potlatch Collection. The Wai Kai Nation (Cape Mudge Indian Band of Kwakwaka'wakw) and the the Wei Wai Kum Nation (Campbell River Band of Kwakwaka'wakw) decided to fashion the NCC into a much more conventional museum as compared to the U'Mista Centre. The NCC spans three levels with approximately

7,304 square feet of space (TimberWest). The galleries are filled with pedestals and objects presented behind glass cases. Archambault explains, “Tribal Museums are not uninterested in the presentation of materials that would be at home in ethnographic museum, i.e. exhibits using 19<sup>th</sup> century objects to illustrate cultural practices of that period” (12).

However, as a cultural centre, their museum is a hub of activity for the region and acts as a cultural resource for the Cape Mudge and Campbell River communities. The Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre’s mission statement asserts their focus of “Celebrating the language, traditions and culture of the Kwak’waka, Laich-Kwil-Tach & K’omoks peoples” (Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre). The Centre is also the site of the House of Ah Wah Qwa Dzas, a resting, feasting and storytelling area, and the House of Eagles Carving and Education Centre where a number of carving projects have taken place, including the 2013 Cook Potlatch Welcoming Poles Restoration Project.

In 1880 three carved cedar poles were gifted by Kwakwaka’wakw Chief Numus Walkus of River’s Inlet to Major John Dick of the We Wai Kai Nation (Cape Mudge Band) as part of the dowry for his niece, Marian Smith (Cook Potlatch Welcoming Poles, Timberwest) [see figure 3-2]. During the 1950s the Walkus poles were moved to the Campbell River Museum for restoration and one of the poles did not survive the process (Cook Potlatch Welcoming Poles).

While In 1979 the remaining two Walkus poles were repatriated back to Cape Mudge (Douglas), under Brad Assu (the President of the Nuyumbalees Society) Assu (lead carver), Dora Cook, Eugene Alfred and Bob Neil were commissioned to restore the three replica poles (Cook Potlatch Welcoming Poles). In 2014 the Cook Welcoming Poles were re-erected in front of the NCC, in time for the July 1, 2014 Canada Day celebrations [see figure 3-3]. The importance of these poles to the Nuyumbalees community stems from how Welcoming Poles act as complex

and symbolic narrative, “their placement and importance [lying] in the observer’s knowledge and connection to the meanings of the figure and the culture in which they are embedded” (Totem Pole 2017).



Figure 3-2: Original Walkus poles on the beach of Cape Mudge. The far left pole did not survive restoration attempts (modified from TimberWest).

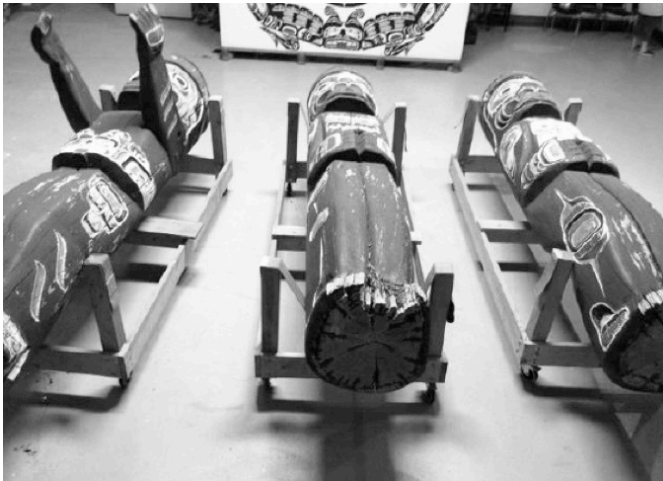


Figure 3-3: Replica Walkus poles slated for renovation (modified from TimberWest).

## RED CLOUD ITÓWAPI OWÁPAZO INDIAN CENTER

The Red Cloud Indian School was founded in 1888 at the insistence of Chief Red Cloud (Mahpiya Lúta), the Oglala Lakota leader known for opposing U.S. military and settler presence in the Great Plains region (Maxwell 19-20). Red Cloud and his band successfully resisted the development of the Bozeman Trail through Montana Territory from 1855 to 1868, which came to be known as Red Cloud's War (Red Cloud: Activist, Folk Hero). In the early spring of 1868 the U.S. government sent peace commissioners to Fort Laramie in an attempt to reach a peaceful agreement with the Oglala Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho. Red Cloud refused to meet with the commissioners until the army agreed to abandon their forts along the northern Bozeman Trail. In August of 1868, the forts were officially vacated. Days after the soldiers left, the tribes burned the forts to the ground. In November of 1868 Red Cloud signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie, which created the Great Sioux Reservation<sup>10</sup> (Red Cloud's War).

That year, Red Cloud moved his people to the area that is now known as the Pine Ridge Reservation. He is also well known as a major leader of the Lakota throughout their transition from traditional plains culture to reservation life, outliving all of the major Lakota chiefs of the Indian wars (Red Cloud's War). Seeing the drastic changes that were taking place in the Lakota way of life, Red Cloud petitioned the U.S. government for the Sina Sapa ("Black Robes," or priests) to establish a school on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Red Cloud School). First named the Holy Rosary Mission, the school continues to be run by Jesuit Priests via the Jesuits and Sisters

---

<sup>10</sup> The Great Sioux Reservation was the late-1800s original area that currently encompasses the reservations of South Dakota and Nebraska. By 1910 more than half of those areas were lost due to the 1874 Black Hills Expedition (when gold was found in the Black Hills) and the passage of the 1887 General Allotment Act.

of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity. In 1969 the mission officially changed its name to the Red Cloud Indian School in recognition of the great Lakota Leader.

Although the museum of the Red Cloud Indian School is not run by the Lakota peoples, The Heritage Center houses over 10,000 historical and contemporary Lakota objects and art pieces, a number of which have been accessioned through the annual Red Cloud Indian Art Show. Begun in 1968, the Red Cloud Indian Art Show was initiated as a way to bring financial aid to Pine Ridge Lakota artists (Bordeaux 2009). The Jesuit priests and benefactors of the reservation saw that the traditional arts were extremely important to the culture. Through gifts, the school was receiving extraordinarily beautiful pieces of beadwork, quillwork and traditional regalia. The Red Cloud Indian School purchased the pieces that won 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the first art show and has continued this tradition until today. These pieces now make up a great portion of The Heritage Center's contemporary Native Art collection (Bordeaux 2015). The Red Cloud Indian Art Show collection includes artwork from tribes across the United States, as the art show is open to all tribal artists, and showcases roughly 200 Native American artists annually.

The collection also includes a large number of ethnographical and historical pieces. During the late 1800s H.A. Dawson, who resided in the heart of Sioux territory, owned the first Pine Ridge trading post. Museums in New York commissioned him to collect Lakota work for their collections. Legend has it that he would buy one piece for the museums back east, and another similar piece for his own collection (Bordeaux 2009). Through both outright purchases and trade, Dawson acquired an excellent collection of Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservation cultural objects. The Dawson family donated H.A. Dawson's entire collection to The Heritage Center. The collection is widely recognized by researchers for its unique regional specificity. "Its importance for the community is that the pieces come solely from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud

Reservations. Rather than having a provenance of being simply ‘Sioux,’ this collection could potentially be researched down to the originating Lakota families of the area” (ibid.).

Other large donations of Lakota objects came from Bill and Sue Hensler of Durango, Colorado who, while traveling through South Dakota on their honeymoon in 1966, saw the second annual Red Cloud Indian Art Show and became fascinated with the work. They became avid supporters of the show and collectors of Native American art in general. They donated their entire collection to the Red Cloud, which also included beautiful prints from Alaskan artists (Bordeaux 2015).

Jesuit Brother Claire M. Simon is considered to be the first curator of The Heritage Center. Transferred to Red Cloud in 1969 and then hired as the church’s treasurer, Brother Simon helped to establish the first Red Cloud Indian Art Show (Falcon). As administrator of funding, he was soon given the job of overseeing the purchased collection. He was well known for his knowledge and appreciation of Lakota art. “He saw the art and their handicraft as expression of their culture, the beauty that is part of their culture” (Falcon). Although the collection for the most part was kept in wooden boxes and received no financial support for its care, Brother Simon was dedicated to the care and stewardship of this growing collection. For many years the pieces were housed in the dirt-floor basement of the original 1880 building. In order to protect the collection, Brother Simon chose to live in the basement next to the storage areas rather than in the dormitories with the other brotherhood (Bordeaux 2015). This was fortuitous as in 1996 there was a major fire. Brother Simon and the maintenance crew were able to remove the collection before it was damaged or destroyed. Brother Simon stated that “everything was saved,” although this cannot be verified as there was no inventory conducted on the collection at that time (ibid.). In 1982 The Heritage Center officially became its own entity

and Brother Simon became its director until 2004 when he stepped down from that position (Falcon).

Around this same time, the museum intensified its ability to care for the collections, due in large part to the work of Mary Bordeaux (Sicangu Lakota). In 2003 Mary graduated from the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) with a B.A. in Museum Studies. She applied for, and received, an internship at the newly opened Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Cultural Resource Center (CRC). The NMAI was in the process of moving the Native American collection of the Smithsonian's George Gustav Heye Center in New York to the CRC storage center in Suitland, Maryland. There, she worked with CRC staff, interns and volunteers in unpacking the crates, documenting the objects, and producing archival storage boxes and mount systems as the objects were placed upon shelves (Bordeaux 2009). In August of that year she moved home and applied for the first collections manager position of The Heritage Center. Although after the 1996 fire the collection had been moved to better storage areas, the environment continued to be inadequate for the collection which still resided in wooden and cardboard boxes in cinderblock rooms. Moreover, the objects had not been viewed for decades, nor had they ever been inventoried (Bordeaux 2009, 2015).

As is the case with many other reservations, Pine Ridge had other, more dire issues to deal with. The Pine Ridge Reservation (site of the Wounded Knee Massacre) is one of the poorest communities in the United States. As of 2011 there was an 80% unemployment rate on the reservation (as compared to 10% for the rest of the country), 49% of the residents lived below the Federal poverty level with a 61% unemployment rate for those under the age of 18, an infant mortality rate five times higher than the national average, and in 2007 the life expectancy rate was estimated to be 48 for males and 52 for females (Maxwell 18).

The Pine Ridge Reservation had neither the funds nor means to focus upon its collection and since its accumulation from the 1800s onward, there had never been an inventory conducted upon the Red Cloud holdings. Still, with the insistence of Bordeaux and with the support of a newly hired Heritage Center Director, Peter Strong, the Red Cloud Indian School procured a small amount of funds through school fundraising efforts to purchase metal shelving for the collection and fireproof cabinets for the archival paperwork associated with the objects (possibly spurred on from the experience of the fire) (Bordeaux 2015). Mary tackled the task of conducting the collection's first inventory and of building appropriate archival storage systems with a limited budget. She and Peter Strong set up tables and then began to unpack the contents of the boxes. Once she had an idea of what was within the boxes—a great number of Lakota garments and blankets as well as numerous other objects—she then went to the local hardware store and began purchasing material out of pocket in order to re-house the collection that spanned over 200 years. Taught in the IAIA “Chuck Dailey School of Museum Studies,” which prepared students to build an exhibit or collections storage with very little money, Mary would wait until local stores would have sales. For the much-needed muslin fabric, she would wait until it was on sale and then bring in a 60%-off coupon. Purchasing bookshelf brackets and “mop holders,” Bordeaux fashioned a textile storage system that could hold metal poles in place for the blankets, rugs and large textile pieces [see figures 3-4 & 3-5].



Figure 3-3: Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center textile hanging storage. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).

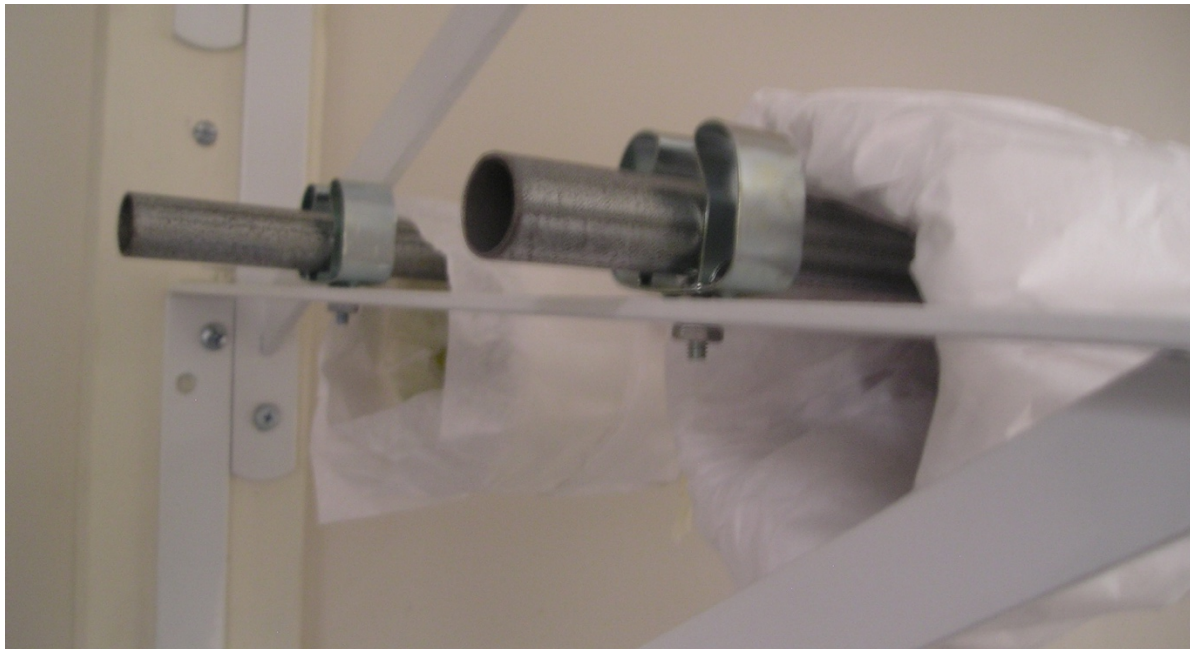


Figure 3-4: Closeup of Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center hanging storage apparatus. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).

By layering corrugated metal roofing material from local hardware stores and archival board ordered from archival supply companies onto the basic metal shelving units, she was able to unpack the rest of the objects and lay them out so that they could be seen, waiting for a time when cabinets could be purchased [see figures 3-6 – 3-8].

During the unpacking and placing of articles on the shelves, it was discovered that a large number of children's regalia were held within the collection. Mary surmises that community members made these garments for the school's traditional dance troupes that traveled across South Dakota and, perhaps, even to Washington, D.C. for reservation fundraising and awareness purposes (Bordeaux 2015).



Figure 3-5: Corrugated roofing material as the base of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center storage shelves. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).



Figure 3-6: Storage shelves, detail. Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).



Figure 3-7: Quilts of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center collection. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).

Found within the collection and unknown to exist were priceless cultural articles such as American Horse's top hat<sup>11</sup> and spear/staff, and a headdress of Black Elk, along with their accession paperwork.

By 2004 all of the collection had been moved out of their storage boxes, off the floor, and onto some manner of archivally appropriate storage, and just this year has been completely inventoried, researched, acquisitioned and catalogued (Bordeaux 2009, 2015).

During her time as the Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center curator [see figure 3-9], Mary received an MFA in Museum Studies through the University of the Arts and has since moved on to become the Museum Curator and Director of Cultural Affairs for the Museum of North America at the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota.



Figure 3-8: Mary Bordeaux in front of the Red Cloud Itówapi Owápazo Indian Center. Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota (2008 photo by author).

---

<sup>11</sup> American Horse's top hat is currently on loan and on exhibit at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.

## SAGINAW ZIIBIWING CENTER OF ANISHINABE CULTURE & LIFEWAYS



Figure 3-9: Ziibiwing Cultural Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribe's Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways (Ziibiwing) has been the focus of a brilliant writing by Amy Lonetree, a talented researcher and writer (*Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*, 2012). The Ziibiwing and the architectural firm Andre & Associates took an especially collaborative approach in the planning and design of Ziibiwing's current exhibits. The collaborative efforts of both are a strong testimony to what true collaborative work between a tribal community and an architectural firm can accomplish.

The Ziibiwing opened its doors in May of 2004, with a focus on the rich history and culture of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Mt. Pleasant, Michigan and other regional

Anishinaabek (Chippewa) peoples (Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways). The Saginaw tribe is comprised of the Saginaw, Black River, and Swan Creek bands, whose traditional lands covered the eastern regions of Michigan. The Saginaw people migrated to the Great Lakes region approximately 1,000 years ago, in the great *Waabinakii* (“People of the Day Break Land”) movement (Benz & Todd 7). Between 600-900 AD a large number of Anishinaabek groups moved from the Atlantic shores into the interior Great Lakes region. This migration history is related within many Chippewa tribes, and has ties to our teachings of the Seven Fires. Between 1855 and 1864 the Isabella Indian Reservation was diminished to 130,000 acres and, with the 1884 Allotment Act, was greatly reduced. By 1934 only a small amount of land continued to be owned by tribal members (Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways). In 1937 the tribe was able to acquire 500 acres just east of Mt. Pleasant in Isabella County.

The Ziibiwing Center is a 34,349 square foot cultural center offering a number of galleries, classrooms, meeting areas, collections area, and a gift store. In 2006 my mother and I attended the Center’s symposium “Embracing a Community – A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tribal Museum Model.” Led by Museum Director Shannon Martin, the conference offered a number of presentations and workshops aimed at sharing people’s initial visions for the center, their experiences, trials, and the final outcome of collaborative work between the Saginaw community and the exhibit designers of the center. Bianca J.A. Message, President of André & Associates, Interpretation and Design Ltd., described in detail how the project changed her and her company. In her workshop “Teaching Each Other to See,” Bianca described how her family has been in the exhibit design business for over 50 years. Her father, Jean Jacques André, was the former chief of exhibits at the Royal British Columbia Museum and in 1961 founded the business (formerly

the Jean Jacques André Design and Graphic Arts). Jean Jacques worked on exhibit design projects at the Royal Ontario Museum, the Michigan State Museum and Midland Center for the Arts, and the UNESCO World Heritage site of Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in Southern Alberta.

While Bianca was working as a naturalist at the Royal British Columbia Museum in 1981, her father asked her to help him for a short time by conducting some research for the Heads-Smashed-In project. Some 25 years later, Bianca was not only still with her father's firm, from which he had retired, but she was not also the president of the company (Message). Bianca, Shannon, and Bonnie Ekdahl, Ojibwe Language Immersion Specialist (now current director) shared in detail the process that it took for an outside exhibit design company to fully comprehend what it meant to not only collaborate on an important project for a tribal community, but also to feel liberated once the design company let go of their authoritative power.

Prior to procuring funds, the Saginaw community had a strong vision of what they wanted the cultural center to look like. They knew that they wanted to incorporate cultural design and symbols into the architecture of the building, and they knew what stories they wanted to tell within the galleries. Bianca was honest in her initial hesitancy about staying true to those visions. "The first layout that I presented in the community meeting was shot down." Her firm's schematic followed previous museum designs that she and her father had produced. "They simply did not want it," she stated. Shannon explained that it took some time for their people to make the exhibit design group understand that their vision was non-negotiable. The storylines and topics that they wished to present came directly from the people for whom the cultural center

was being built. “If they were not going to build what we asked them to, our elders stated that they would then find someone else who *would* do it.”

Bianca explained that the community members were extremely patient with her and her crew, but they were also adamant about their requests. Bianca described it as an “aha moment” for her. At one point during their explanations, she fully understood. “It was like a lightning bolt hit me.” What then occurred were several community meetings with the exhibit designers, something that had not happened before. And so the exhibits grew. Bianca stated, “Ultimately, it is you, the owner, after the architects and designers go home, that has to live with the space, and you must consider every combination of uses, needs and requirements as you allocate space for your institution.” In the end, the cultural center was divided into a number of permanent and temporary galleries according to the community’s wishes.

As visitors walk into the Ziibiwing Center, they are met with a beautiful open foyer, with walls of cedar and a large floral motif in traditional design on the floor. The foyer is constructed in the shape of a traditional long house, or *Kinoomaagegamik* (Teaching Lodge). On each side doorways lead to classrooms, meeting rooms and the gift store. It is a huge expansion of ‘space,’ which lends itself well to a meeting area, or gathering area, for grade school children waiting to enter the exhibits. Directly ahead in the foyer is the *Diba Jimooyung: Telling our Story* permanent exhibit. In this area is a life-sized diorama of two *Anishinaabe* men standing upon a flat slab of sandstone. This stone is the sacred *Ezhibiigaadek Asin*.

In 2011 the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) invited Dr. Paul Tapsell (then Chair of Māori Studies and Dean of Te Tumu, University of Otago, New Zealand) and me to be keynote speakers at the conference titled “*Indigenous Peoples and Museums: Unraveling the*

*Tensions*<sup>12</sup>” held in Indianapolis. After the conference we were invited to visit the Ziibiwing Center [see figure 3-11] and specifically to join seven WAC *IPinCH (Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage)* members and other interested parties in visiting the *Ezhibiigaadek Asin* [see figure 3-12 of the Ziibiwing Center’s replica] located in the Sanilac Petroglyphs State Park, close to the Ziibiwing Center.

Shannon Martin, who was the Ziibiwing Director at the time, Ziibiwing’s Curator William Johnson, and Sonya Atalay, an Anishinaabe archaeologist at Indian University, Bloomington, hosted me, Tapsell, and the IPinCH group that was working on a collaborative project on *Ezhibiigaadek Asin*. The sacred stone, which had hundreds of petroglyph



Figure 3-10: The Great Lodge Lobby, reflecting “the beauty and ingenuity of a traditional *Anishinaabek Kinoomaagamik*” (Teaching Lodge). Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

---

<sup>12</sup> “*Unraveling the Tensions*” was graciously sponsored by the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indiana University, Purdue Museum Studies Program, and the Inter-Congress of the World Archaeological Congress.



Figure 3-11: Diorama showing Anishinabe studying the lessons of the *Eshibiigaadek Asin*. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

engravings upon its face, was quickly deteriorating due to preservation attempts, which unfortunately were adding to the problem.

Some years ago a shingled arbor – a roof open to all four sides – had been erected over the stone in an attempt to stop weathering from the Michigan rains and snow. The result was that lichen was able to form on the face of *Ezhibiigaadek Asin* and was eating away at the sandstone.

Discussions were held as to whether dismantling the covering would be the best answer, or if there were other means to stop the lichen damage. Archaeologists within the group pointed out

that there must be an alternative to removing the covering, as weather was a contributing factor to the disappearance of a number of petroglyphs that had existed a few years ago but were now obliterated. Fortunately, a cast of *Ezhibiigaadek Asin* had been taken in the late 1800s and was ultimately given to the Saginaw tribe, where it now resides at Ziibiwing.

The Ziibiwing exhibits are divided into fifteen permanent and temporary exhibit spaces that reflect storylines important to the Saginaw tribe. These are: the interpretive Salicac petroglyph area featuring *Ezhibiigaadek Asin*, the *Introduction to the Anishinabe Creation Story & Creation Theater*, the *Teaching Lodge (1<sup>st</sup> Prophecy)*, the *Where We Come From (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Prophecies)* exhibit, the *Winter Lodge*, the *Contact & Co-Existence (4<sup>th</sup> Prophecy)* exhibit, *The Effects of Colonization (5<sup>th</sup> Prophecy)* exhibit, *Environmental Changes (6<sup>th</sup> Prophecy)*, *Blood Memory (7<sup>th</sup> Prophecy, Part 1)*, the *Language* exhibit, *Anishinabe Strengths*, *Introduction to Sovereignty*, the *Identity Theater*, the *Spirit of Sovereignty* exhibit, and *Continuing the Journey (7<sup>th</sup> Prophecy, Part 2)*. Amy Lonetree (keynote speaker at the 2006 Ziibiwing “*Embracing a Community*” symposium), states, “This center... engages directly with the theoretical concepts of historical trauma and historical unresolved grief” (Lonetree 123-4). As well as celebrating continuous cultural survival [see figures 3-13 & 3-14], the Ziibiwing Center does not shy away from directing the audience’s gaze towards the long periods of assimilation and culturcide. In the “*Waawiindimaagewinan Gii Zhichigaadek: When the Promises were Made*” exhibit space, audio renditions of the voice of Lewis Cass, military officer and governor of the Michigan Territory, 1813-1831, can be heard expressing his opinions on the Indian Problem.



Figure 3-12: *Contact & Co-Existence* exhibit, bandolier bags. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).



Figure 3-13: *Contact & Co-Existence* exhibit, traditional clothing. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

The Mission Schools section is particularly poignant, as you look through the windows of a brick-and-mortar building to the tools of assimilation – hard-backed wooden chairs and textbooks written in English [see figures 3-15 & 3-16]. Bianca honestly explained that she fought against this exhibit portion, feeling that it would be too radical for the tourist audience. The Saginaw community stood firm in their wish for it to be included and it is a powerful tool in telling the historical trauma of the tribe.

Yet, even the presentations and exhibit displays that address historical trauma are also filled with pride of community and survivance, celebration of culture, and hope for the future. In the section “*Effects of Colonization*,” community members across generations are depicted in life-size murals, beautifully mounted on panels that the visitor walks past and around [see figure 3-17]. There is a beauty to the faces, and the people’s garments reflect the historical continuity of the Saginaw people. Community members are filled with a sense of pride and awe, and a feeling of familiarity with the individuals that are shown within this hall of ancestors.



Figure 3-14: the Ziibiwing Center’s mission school installation. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).



Figure 3-15: Looking through the window to the inside the Ziibiwing Center's mission school installation. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).



Figure 3-16: Historical images of the people of the Saginaw community. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

The *Language* exhibit focuses on language retention. Within a circular room is imagery of nature and everyday objects, labeled with their *Ojibwemowin* translation [see figure 3-18]. At the center of the room is an interactive wheel that shows the clans and their *Ojibwemowin* words [see figure 3-19]. My clan, the Loon or *Mang* clan, is there. This exhibit is geared specifically to the young of the tribe, but it is a favorite for all ages. I remember how the young Saginaw docent kept me in this room, describing the words and sharing with me the correct pronunciation of each.



Figure 3-17: The importance of language reflected in the exhibit components of the Ziibiwing Center's *Language* exhibit. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

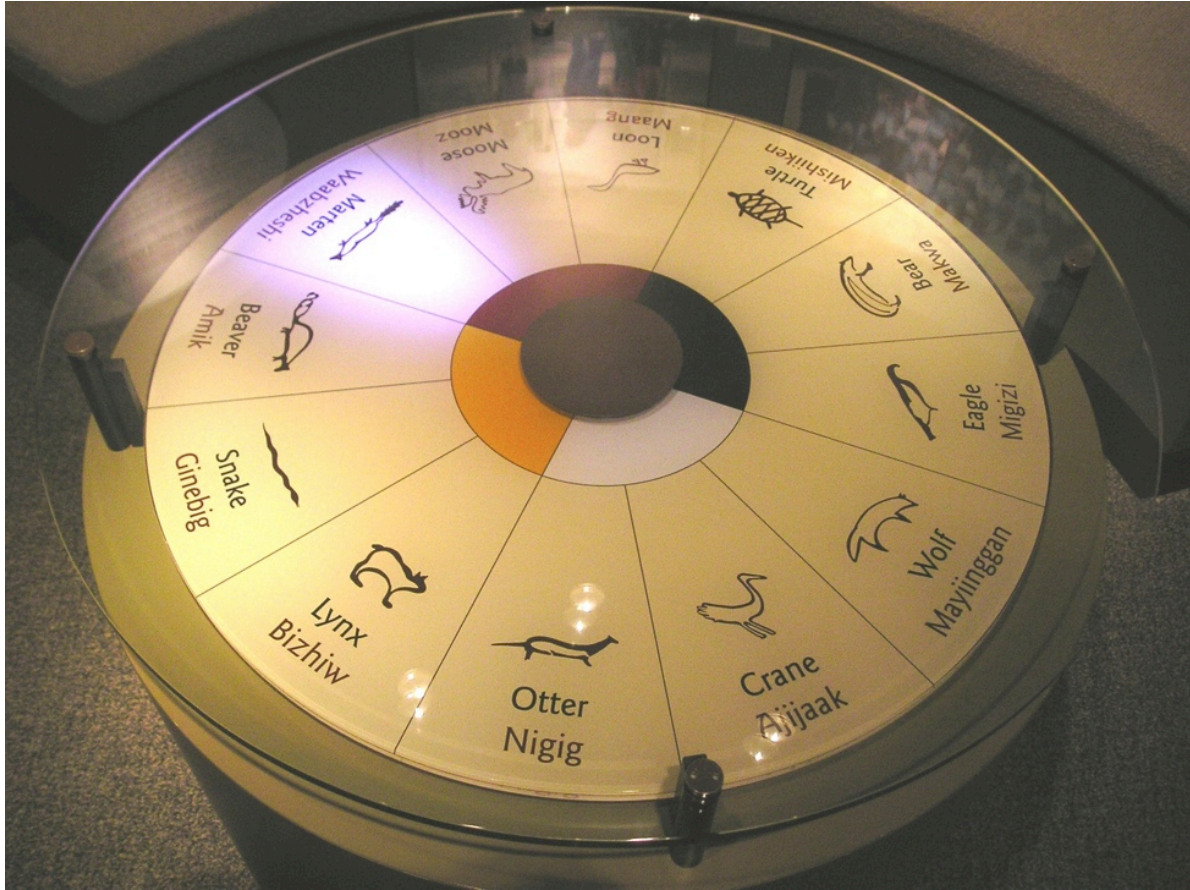


Figure 3-18: Interactive language wheel in the middle of the Ziibiwing Center's *Language* exhibit. Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by author).

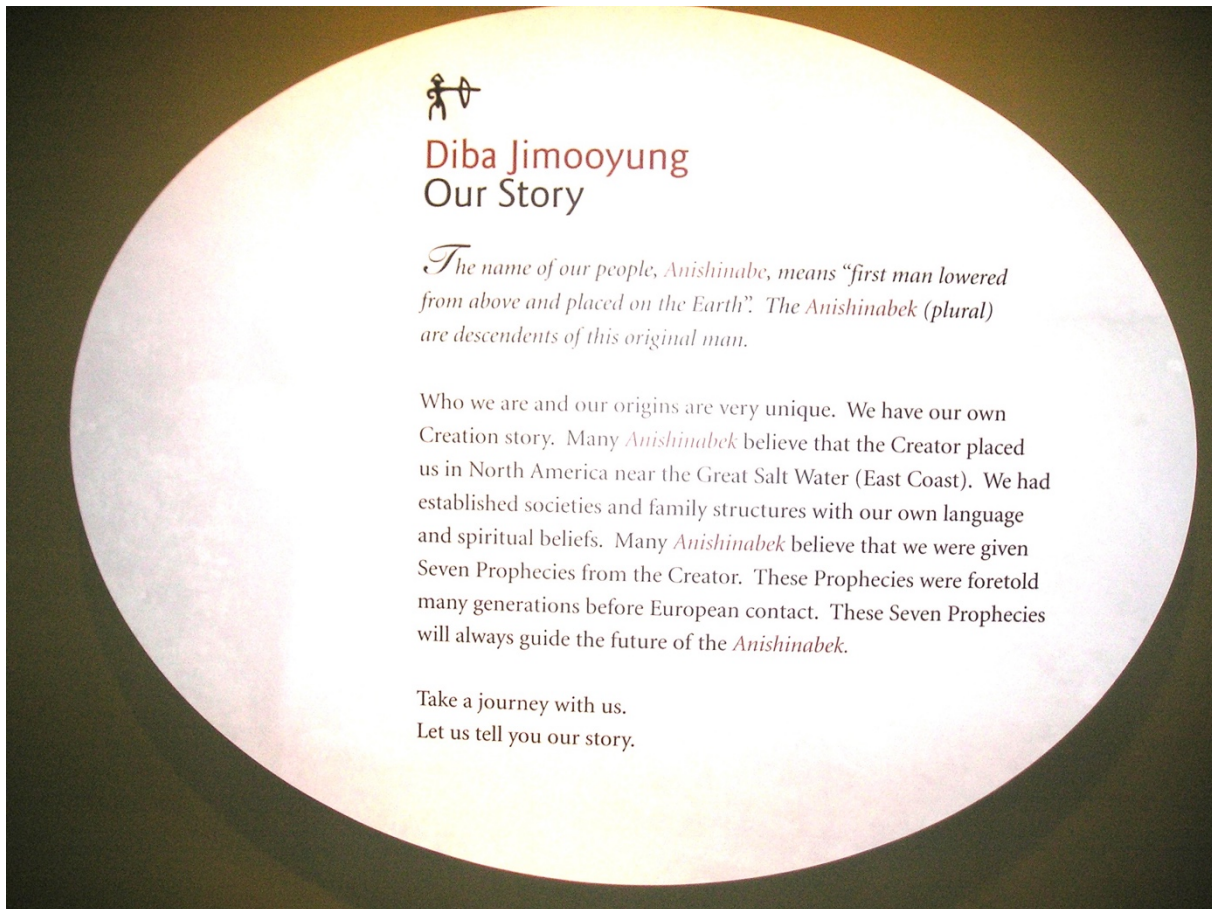


Figure 3-19: *Diba Jimooyung: Our Story*, in the words of the Saginaw community. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).

The last gallery of the Ziibiwing Center, part of the permanent “*Diba Jimooyung: Telling our Stories*” exhibit [see figures 3-20 – 3-22], focuses on a poignant description of Seven Teachings of the Saginaw *Anishinaabeg* people. By ending the exhibit with the Seven Teachings, which all *Anishinaabeg* tribes know and follow, the Saginaw people conclude the presentation of their people and their hope for the future on a powerful note, for this is not the end. According to the prophecy, we are waiting for the eighth teaching, the one that will bring all the world together and that marks the new beginning for all of us. In spite of the misgivings of those outside the community about the topics and issues that these exhibits address, the Ziibiwing

Cultural Center is a beacon for how Indigenous museums and cultural centers can show the range of history of North America's first nations in ways that are truthful, brave, and of great beauty. By presenting a community-based understanding of its own history through display decisions that were a product of communal planning projects the Ziibiwing Cultural Center shows us how tribal museums and cultural centers are empowering the voices of their tribal constituents and educating external audiences on their own terms. This shift in power from an elite few (the curator, the museum director, the Western academic) to a widely inclusive joint partnership (the community members themselves) changes the playing field and gives rise to new means of cultural presentation.



Figure 3-20: Hallway to the room of the Seven Fires teachings. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).



Figure 3-21: Oral accounts of the Seven Fires as documented history. Ziibiwing Center, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (2005 photo by the author).

## CHAPTER 4 SPREADING INFLUENCES: NATIVE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON STORAGE, PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION, AND USE OF COLLECTIONS

The collecting, care and display of Native American and First Nations cultural objects has been deeply ingrained in North American history of colonization and cultural appropriation, resulting in vast amounts of Native American items leaving their home communities.

Consequently, the ownership of pre-contact and early reservation era cultural tangible property shifted profoundly away from their original communities to private collectors, government and state institutions, universities, academic departments and, more specifically, to the authoritative care of these objects by professionals within the fields of archaeology, anthropology, art history and museology. George Heye, Director and President of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation (MAI) acquired more than one million Native American objects for his personal collection (now the base collection of the National Museum of the American Indian) (Ronan 137). Some events, such as the World's Columbian Fair in Chicago, also saw tens of thousands of objects being acquired by others (Rosenberg 253, World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 Collection). Janet Berlo described this contentious history of collecting:

Prodded by Native American activists and academic theorists, historians and curators of Native American... [cultural material] are today rethinking the most fundamental questions: Who has the right to control American Indian objects, many of which are thought by their makers not to be art objects but instruments of power? Who has the access to knowledge (even simply the knowledge gained from gazing upon an object of power), only those who have been initiated, or all who pass through the doors of a

cultural institution? Who has the right to say what the objects mean, and whether and how they are displayed? And how will Native Americans, as they assume increasingly authoritative roles in museum representation, remake the museum as an institution (Berlo et al. 6)?

Nason points out that it is useful to remember that the collecting, care, and exhibition of Native American and First Nations objects must be a two-way street – that “both sides need to collaborate in a constructive way for anything to work” (2017). And so Indigenous curatorial and exhibition theories are emerging from the need to rethink and reshape the ways in which indigenous North American stories are told within the museum arena. Moreover, Indigenous sciences and philosophies are also being brought forward by Native and non-Native academics and professionals within the field as authentic and essential components of museum collection practices. Beyond the necessities of adequate and professional staffing, minimum collections and exhibition facility requirements, and funding to care for collections in an adequate way, there is a growing understanding that there is a need for appropriate processes “whereby standard museum practices and policies intermesh in a nuanced way with [Native American] perceptions. The goal is to make the result at least philosophically ‘essential to everyone as a new standard’” (Nason 2017).

However, integrating these diverse knowledge systems into the care of archives, collections and conservation policies can work at odds with each other. Because of longstanding assumptions about museums as authoritative caretakers and about the policies and practices built upon these principles, museums inevitably act as “sites where cultures intersect,” where tribal claims of meaning and authority can clash with the museum’s perceived educational and stewardship functions (Cash Cash 141).

The National Museum of the American Indian acknowledges that authority over its collection holdings “must be shared with [its] Native constituency” in order “to remain true to the museum’s mission and enhance the programmatic aspects of the museum’s work” (Pepper Henry 107). Pepper Henry, NMAI’s past Repatriation Program Manager, goes on to describe how Native people’s concerns about conservation and the artificial means that museums use to slow the natural deterioration of an object’s life cycle act as an almost unbreachable impasse between the museum and its Indigenous constituents. For example, tribes have expressed great concern with the ways that museums traditionally deter pest infestation of cultural objects, which are often seen as living entities, through freezing or oxygen-deprivation treatments. Some community members have seen these treatments as being detrimental and damaging to the object’s living spirit. On the other hand, museum managers cannot see a way that pest infestation could ever be allowed to continue unmitigated as this would be in direct contrast to the museum’s stewardship responsibility to protect and preserve its collection. The NMAI describes these incompatible ethics as “cultural risk factors” and implemented the NMAI Culturally Sensitive Collections Care Program to address these issues (108-9).

Another way that NMAI addressed the concerns of its tribal constituents was to integrate detailed descriptions of special care needs for specific objects into a Collections Information System (CIS), readily available to the museum staff, albeit in a hierarchal access-controlled environment (110). In this way, collections workers can refer to tribal wishes and needs prior to acting upon an object in any way, whether that be conservation projects or exhibit display. Both the Culturally Sensitive Collections Care Program and the CIS database act as a compromise.

The management of culturally sensitive collections... will never be able to approximate the objects' original cultural contexts. The makers of the vast majority of these cultural materials did not intend for them to be placed in a museum or any repository. The NMAI is committed to building and maintaining relationships with the cultures associated with the collections and to maintaining a comfortable and culturally sensitive environment while these items are in its care (Pepper Henry 112).

While this example highlights extreme differences surrounding material object conservation care that might never be surmounted, there are ethical aspects of collections care that are agreeable to a wide range of people within tribal communities and the museum profession. NMAI has successfully incorporated tribal concerns and needs:

... NMAI policies are based on the work of [a] planning team that spent six years of direct community consultation in every part of Native North America, on a storage facility design that incorporated community perspectives on access and the correct care of living and other objects, and on a North American tribal museum survey that sought advice and suggestions about all storage, conservation, and handling issues. This team included not only the newly appointed NMAI director, Richard West, Jr., but also eight Native American and other museum professionals familiar with these concerns [originally] began as a group of five but then expanded). Their reports are a key part of the planning documents that led to NMAI's storage facility design and operations in Suitland, Maryland...

NMAI's planning documents are thousands of pages in subject specific volumes that deal with every conceivable aspect of the NY, DC, and Maryland facilities. The bulk of these planning documents are called "The Way of the People." One initial key volume in the series was "The Way of the People, Master Facilities Programming, Phase I, Revised Draft Report," Nov 22, 1991. There are several important sections in Part IV – The Architectural Program – that apply to this discussion. IV.A. Museum Activities, 1. deals with Nurturing Relationships with Indian Communities and deals with what George HorseCapture and I (Nason) referred to as the "Fourth Museum" (i.e. the whole NA community). Section A.2. Collections Care and Research, states:

"NMAI places great importance, to the extent possible, on the exhibition, care and housing of its collections in accordance with the customs and policies of the peoples who made them and in ways that give all people, especially Indians, far greater access than before... Accommodation of community wishes with respect to collections will involve a number of scenarios... that will vary among tribes.

... Most Indians regard the items in the Museum's collections not as inanimate art objects but as living things which need to breathe and be cared for, in order to play their part in a greater cultural context... These include special considerations for the mounting and orientation of objects, limitation of access to certain elders and others, provisions for spiritual treatment and interaction with objects (some of which expose objects to smoke, light, and other elements) and enclosure of objects in specific materials." (pp.66-67)

... This is the basis for the storage facility storage unit design HorseCapture and I wanted, why the survey was done, and why the handling and other details were worked out as they were. And this emerged in part from all the input we got from all those

regional and area meetings with NA tribal representatives. And all this was informed by some of the earlier tribal museum developments, e.g. the Makah CRC, the Museum at Warm Springs, etc., where years went into the planning of each facility and involved everybody (Nason 2017).

Miriam Clavir points out that conservation concerns of First Nations and Native Americans are perhaps more in tune to a museum audience's understanding of object use – as an active, usable tool – than a museum professional's tenet of preserving an object for as long as possible. The example that she gives is Gloria Cranmer Webster's and John Moses' descriptions of "damage" of a ceremonial dance mask, which would *not* include signs of normal wear and tear due to usage, but *would* include any issues that would deter the mask from being used within ceremony – i.e. the functioning of a beak or eyes opening and closing (Clavir 150-151). An object's natural deterioration process, while being used within the context of its original purpose, is to be expected. This ethos can, in fact, resonate with museum collections managers and curators, who regularly weigh the need to preserve an object for as long as possible with the need to exhibit an object in order to educate the museum audience. This would be the case with objects chosen for grade school hands-on kits, or the balancing of the need to display an object vs. the damage that will occur to the object due to lighting and environmental fluctuations within the exhibit space. Clavir's main point is that the decisions made about an objects conservation must be dependent upon how one defines the "significance" of an object in relation to the cultural intent of that object, which she refers to as "intent of the originators" (61). Nason describes this as "object integrity" wherein integrity is "the significant inherent values or features of an object in all of its respects – physical and cultural" (2017).

Tribal cultural centers and museums are successfully integrating Western museum practices into their own specific community needs while implementing traditional standards of collections care in innovative ways. Karen Cooper explains that culture and tradition are not stagnant, and so Native communities are in constant flux as they strive to make their museum practices relevant to the changing needs of their people (Cooper 157). One tribal museum that has successfully accomplished this is the Makah Cultural and Research Center.

In 1969 the prehistoric Makah village site of Ozette was in danger of being obliterated due to erosion and vandalism. Buried under a massive mudslide over 500 years previously, the site contained eight family longhouses and their holdings preserved under oxygen-deprived earth. With the weathering away of the slide material, objects were being exposed to oxygen and the elements as well as to pot hunters and collectors of Native American artifacts (Cooper 158, *A Gift from the Past*). In a pro-active move, the Makah people negotiated an agreement with Washington State University in which they would retain control of the excavation of the objects. They insisted that young tribal members be trained in archaeological techniques so that they could work alongside the archaeologists in the excavation of the site, as well as have Makah elders act as extensive consultants (*A Gift from the Past*). The artifacts were to be the possession of the Makah, and during the eleven years that archaeological excavations took place, the Makah worked on building a cultural center that would house the Ozette findings (Cooper 158). The collections were to be used for ongoing education, language, and cultural programs of the tribe, which would include tribal elder participation (Nason, 2017). Nason states, “This planning, training of staff, and design of facility, design of exhibits, and operations design took five years...in order to make sure everyone in the community was satisfied, and required a major

outside grant and BIA assistance for training as well as [a total of] six facility designs [submitted] by the project architect and planning team” (ibid.).

The Makah Cultural and Research Center opened in 1979. Their collections management system categorizes 55,000-plus Lake Ozette archaeological artifacts based upon the family houses, and documents that the gender restrictions required of those objects (Kreps 109-110). Within the collections area, the artifacts are grouped according to Makah cognitive categories as well as their culturally appropriate relationships (Cooper 159).

The ways that Native American objects are documented, categorized and conserved are being transformed due to active agency on the part of museum professionals as well as Native American and First Nations people. Indigenous peoples have always been interested in the conservation of important tangible heritage and there is much that can be discussed about, and learned from, the study of conservation techniques that have been passed down for generations. As Bloomfield points out, “Preservation is an existing concept in indigenous cultures even if it does not relate strictly to material culture... family tradition and environmental preservation are key features of many indigenous cultures” (141). The following case study is an exploration of various conservation techniques that have been utilized throughout North America prior to European contact.

## RESEARCH ON PRE- AND EARLY-CONTACT NATIVE AMERICAN CONSERVATION TECHNIQUES

In 2009 I was awarded a W. Mellon Fellowship to research traditional theoretical and methodological means of object conservation, adding to current research conducted by conservators and museum professionals such as John Moses (Heikell et. al 1995, Clavir 2002),

Tharron Bloomfield (2013), Nancy Odegaard (1995, 2001, & Sadongei 2001, 2006), Miriam Clavir (2002), Shereilyn Ogden (2004, 2007), and Marian Kaminitz (Johnson et al. 2005), to name but a few who are actively restructuring how Indigenous knowledge systems are viewed and empowered.

With the help of my research assistant, Mary Deleary (Chippewa of the Thames First Nation), our research supported the growing collaboration between Indigenous and Western thought within the museum field. We were aware that this line of research was unique and intriguing for others within the field. Native American traditional conservation methods have been briefly discussed in various literatures such as ethnographical periodical (i.e., *American Anthropologist*) and the growing body of work focusing upon culturally appropriate means of caring for Native American objects. (Ogden 2004, Portell 2003). But other than Odegaard's work on the use of traditional adhesives in the repair of southwestern pottery (2017), this genre has not been treated as a specific scientific topic. This research gathered collections findings and existing publications that could potentially be shared with museums, cultural centers, and Indigenous communities. Additionally, our focus on traditional repair methods that various Native American tribes utilized throughout North and South America supported the curriculum of the IAIA Museum Studies course "Issues in Conservation."

My personal goal was to study traditional repair methods that are comparable to museum conservation object restoration and its associated ethos of "preservation for future generations" and to highlight areas of complimentary action or belief, as well as to examine how these approaches may diverge philosophically and ethically. My hope was to examine both Indigenous and Western conservation approaches, methods and theories, as alternative sciences, i.e. established realms of systematized knowledge based on observation, study, and experimentation.

During any meaningful research project, some initial hypotheses must be redefined as the research advances. Not that this *specifically* means that the research topic is good or meaningful (other than to the researcher as an individual), but it does mean that something was learned, and I learned a lot. I came to understand that I carried some preconceived notions about how the philosophies of two very different scientific thought processes would intersect concerning the conservation of objects.

My epiphany about my biases came when Mary and I were visiting the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma and were examining a Lakota girl's buckskin dress [see figure 4-1]. A small hole in the dress had been patched with a buckskin circle and the perimeter of the patch had been meticulously beaded with the smallest of blue beads [see figure 4-2]. We were not even sure if this was an example of restoration until we had carefully looked at the underside and seen the patch piece. I was in awe of the care and love that went into this small patch sample by someone's mother, grandmother, aunt or sister, and came to the decision that any conservation description required an elaboration of the strong familial considerations made in the mending of a minor hole. I'm sure that this seems like a small thing and perhaps an over-exaggeration of the situation. But for me it highlighted the fact that the underlying philosophical approaches to why Indigenous people repair some things in particular ways were important to the collection of repair data. Rather than elevating this example of Lakota restoration to a "higher" level by addressing only its scientific qualities, I would be ignoring what this research could tell us about a Lakota way of life.

I came to the realization that this type of research should not be speaking – at least exclusively – of the restorative techniques used, but of the cultural intangibles attached to such

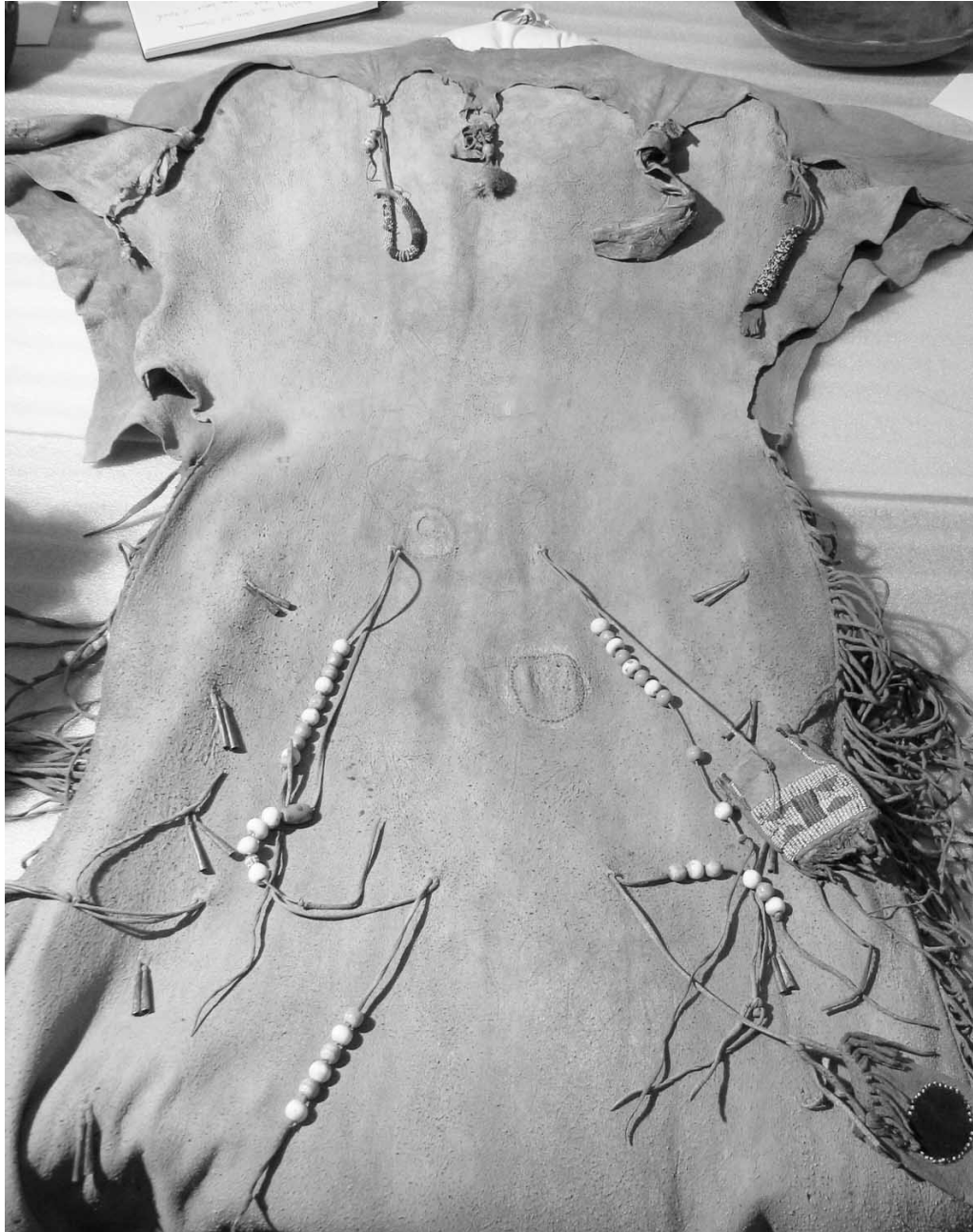


Figure 4-1: Girl's Plains leather dress, ca. 1890. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 84.2611. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).



Figure 4-2: Plains leather dress, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 84.2611.

Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

objects. I am painfully aware that museum records and exhibits often omit important cultural contexts, but I was still under the impression that I could gather factual scientific information on Native object restoration and repair methods, and that this would “communicate” to the conservation field and elevate these methods to a “high science.” By following this narrow path of inquiry I would be doing our Native philosophies a great disservice in my attempt to force “philosophies” into the realm of “hard science.” I was also being quite arrogant towards the conservation field in that I felt that native philosophies surrounding the care of cultural objects would not be meaningful to those within the field of museology. As aware as I am (or think I am) of the validity of our own traditional philosophies, obviously there was some level where I was looking at Western science as a higher level of research. I realized that this Lakota patch *is* an example of the highest of sciences, blending an acute knowledge of material repair and techniques with ongoing daily use, and any discussions of such an example must include philosophical matters as well as technical explanations.

David Hostler, Director of the Hoopa Valley Tribal Museum and Ceremonial Leader, states: “Everything we make, whether it’s basketry or regalia, comes from our heart, from our feeling of goodness, from our creator making our dances carry on forever...” (LaDuke: 81). This statement reflects one particular cultural perspective on the intangible properties held within Native American objects. Much more can be told of this Lakota dress than what is currently told within its object records. Sherelyn Ogden states, “The intangible nature of cultural objects is being addressed and is seen as equal in importance to, or in some cases greater than, an object’s tangible nature” (275). The poignancy of Ogden’s words is that “museum professionals have been positing for over 100 years that objects are useful as illustrations of ideas, facts, and knowledge, and that it is the knowledge that is more important than the object, per se” (Nason

2017). Unfortunately, the illustrative presentation of these objects has been one sided – leaving out the perspective of the originating peoples. For the most part, this chapter is only addressing the tangible nature of the objects such as how it was repaired and what materials were utilized to make that repair. In essence, the research is incomplete and it will take a much deeper collaborative investigation to fully discuss what we are seeing in these examples of object repairs. However, what this introductory exploration into repair techniques historically utilized by tribes reveals to us is an in-depth knowledge of environmental resources and an expertise of material usage.

### *Pitch Patch Repair*

The term bitumen encompasses naturally occurring mixtures of hydrocarbons of varying compositions, boiled down to a tar-like material. Sources vary from oil residues such as those from tar or asphalt pits, to pine or other tree resins. Bitumen tends to develop a very dark and shiny appearance over time. It also becomes extremely brittle with age. Because it can be applied liberally, this technique serves the dual purpose of both joining and filling, or coating and sealing, e.g. Apache coated basketry water bottles. Application techniques include both heating the bitumen in a vessel over a fire and “painting” the adhesive onto an object, or melting a lump with a firebrand and applying the bitumen onto the seam with the firebrand.

Lac is another naturally occurring pitch substance. It is a resinous secretion formed by a number of insect species. Lac is processed by being collected from twigs of trees and bushes and heated until it becomes soft and viscous. Once cooled, lac again becomes quite hard and solidified. Tribes across North and South America utilize lac for a variety of adhesive purposes, such as attaching arrow points to the shaft, mending pottery, waterproofing basketry, and

inlaying turquoise. The chemical composition of lac renders it more stable than bitumen as a patching method, as it becomes less brittle over time.

An example of hermetic sealing of a storage vessel with pitch for food preservation has been found in western Arizona, and the contents have been radiocarbon dated to around 1305 AD ( $\pm 250$ ). Discovered in a cave near Kingman in 1938, the pottery vessel contained about forty-five pieces of fiber mat soaked with dried mescal syrup. Found in the region of the pre-historic Patayan cultures (ancestors of the Yuma, Paiute, Maricopa, Mohave, Yavapai, Hualapai and Havasupai), the lid of the jar (which is 28 cm. tall) had been hermetically sealed with a dark, reddish-brown substance. Microscopic and chemical tests showed the substance to be lac from the creosote brush insect, *Tachardiella larreae* (Euler & Jones 1956). There is some question as to whether this pre-contact seal was meant to be hermetic (i.e., airtight) since food protection against bacteria, yeast, and molds is not a concern in desert areas. The sealant may have been a protection against insects and rodents. However, contemporary knowledge holders of this technique are well aware of its ability to create an airtight seal, and in fact the hermetic qualities of this method are still utilized in the preservation of fresh fruit. When hermetically sealed, fruit does not need to be dried to remain edible and can be stored for up to a year this way.

Whatever the case may be, a number of Yuman-speaking tribes have historically used this technique. In the 1930s a Walapai woman described how foods like mescal cakes and yucca pods were sealed in vessels by applying a “dried sap that hangs on [the branches] of greasewood” between a pot and a ceramic shard lid (Mekeel in Eurler & Jones 1935: 90). The resin was first heated, and then applied to the seam. The seam could be broken by reheating the sealant until it became soft. There are examples of the Papago utilizing this technique when

sealing vessels that contained saguaro cactus syrup, of the Yuman peoples of the lower Colorado River when storing their seed stock, and of the Mohave when storing tepary beans (Eurler & Jones: 90). Northeastern and Plains tribes have also extensively used bitumen to patch and waterproof woven containers, building off an extensive knowledge of bitumen's adhesive and patching abilities.



Figure 4-3: Choctaw swamp cane woven basket. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7126.519. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).



Figure 4-4: Choctaw basket, bitumen pitch repair, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7126.519. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

An example of this is visible on the interior of a Choctaw woven basket (See figures 4-3 & 4-4) and seems to be a bitumen patch made from thickened pine resin which points to the fact that this basket was deemed both important and valuable enough to repair despite the fact that it was overly worn – with some of the bottom slats broken off (most evident on the bottom of the basket). Bitumen tends to UV fluoresce orange and is soluble with petroleum distillates and alcohol, and this example could easily be tested to confirm that the substance is indeed a form of pitch repair. Both Northeastern and Plains tribes used bitumen extensively to patch and waterproof woven containers.

### *Shard Plug Method*

Indigenous repair methods that use muds, clays, and adobe have not been explored. Sealing methods that utilize these materials, however, have received attention. In the Southwest, clay (either used alone or mixed with grass or other plant material) was used as a container sealant. Storage bins constructed of stone were plastered over with clay, and even entire storage room entrances were sealed in this method.

Adobe is a composite material of sand, clay, and water. A fibrous or organic material such as sticks, straw, or dung is added to the mixture, which bonds it together and allows it to dry evenly to prevent cracking. When dry, adobe becomes extremely durable, and adobe structures account for some of the oldest buildings in the world. Northern New Mexico Gallina pottery has been found in the Pueblo III Kayenta cliff ruins, sealed with adobe, which contained *Amaranthus* sp. seeds. Adjacent to these granaries are Diné (Navajo) constructed granaries, which were sealed with clay (Euler & Jones 1935: 92). The Pueblo III granaries date from 1100-1300 AD, while the Diné constructions date to the mid 1500s.

Large Puerco Black-on-White storage jars, plugged with clay stoppers and sealed with mud, have been found in eastern Arizona and date to around 1100 AD. When the jars were opened, the nuts stored inside were still oily and had not desiccated. Vessels sealed with mud and clay have also been found at the Hohokam sites of Los Muertos and Texas Canyon, Arizona, and Mogollon sites near Point of Pines. (Eurler & Jones: 92).



Figure 4-5: Santo Domingo jar, ca. 1880. Gypsum fill with plug from another pot shard. Museum of Indian Arts & Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 35771 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

The example of a Santo Domingo jar [see figure 4-5] raises the question as to whether this is an Indigenous or a collector's repair, but is included here to discuss repair techniques that have been utilized across the globe. A large hole in the pot has been filled with a shard fragment from another pot, and filled with what looks to be a gypsum-based material. The "shard plug" method has been used historically by both Native and non-Native restorers.

Gypsum is a soft mineral composed of calcium sulfate (calcium, sulfur, and oxygen) and is the most common sulfate mineral in existence. When it is ground up and mixed with water, it becomes quite hard. Plaster of Paris is gypsum that has been processed by having had all

moisture removed; gypsum alabaster is naturally formed by the evaporation of bedded deposits, usually evaporated seawater. Because of its natural binding properties, gypsum has been utilized as a fill and repair material throughout the Americas and Europe.

Western restoration did not reach its peak until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, specifically by the 1960s, when a plethora of literature arose on ceramic reparation techniques. Most, if not all, of the synthetic adhesives of this era are now labeled by conservators and art restorers as obsolete fill materials, and have been replaced by materials that are more stable but reversible. Due to the lack of written records, conservators are left to identify the materials utilized through either empirical testing or with the aid of sophisticated analytical techniques such as chemical spot tests, solvent solubility, and organic or inorganic analysis. But dependent upon what materials were used in making the fill material, even scientific testing may leave some questions as to the provenance of the restorer.

### *Hide and Skin Glue*

Animal protein glues originate from mammal or fish sources that are rich in collagen such as skins, internal membranes, bones and hooves. When boiled down and applied while warm, the collagen proteins of the glue form a strong molecular bond. Usually a clear yellow-brown, these adhesives age to a darker color. This form of glue or fill material is quite strong, as is shown in the Aleut drum (see figures 4-6 & 4-7) which was evidently strong enough to withstand constant pounding with a drumstick post repair.



Figure 4-6: Aleut drum with strips of fish glue patches. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma: 8436.2291a-b. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

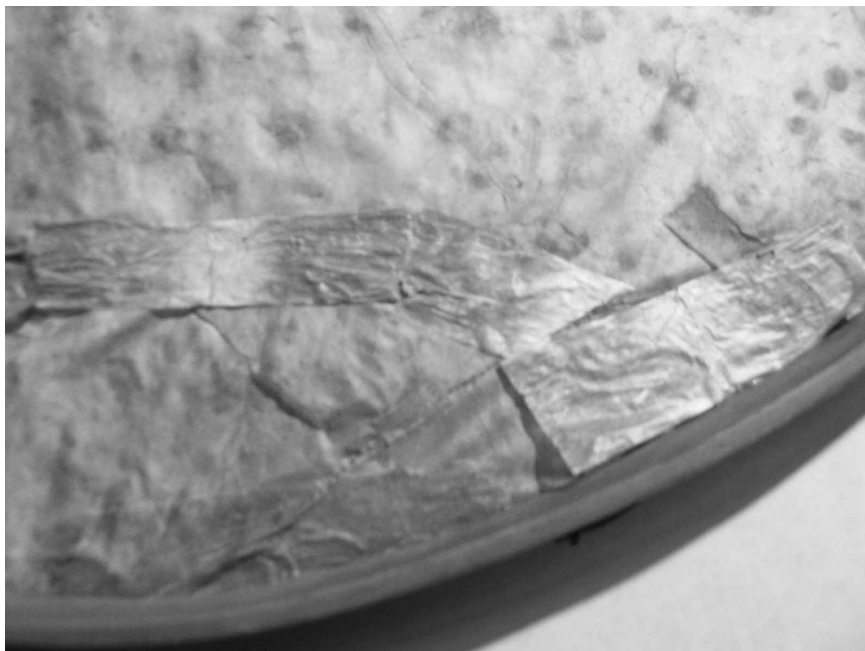


Figure 4-7: Aleut drum, detail. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 8436.2291a-b (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

### *Rawhide Lashings*

Rawhide is animal skin that has been processed through scraping and stretching but, unlike buckskin or leather, has not been tanned, making the end product hard and extremely strong. Animal skin is made up of long chains of chemical building blocks called polymers, which give it its elasticity, especially when wet. Because of its innate composition, rawhide lends itself well to use as a lashing material. The rawhide is lashed onto the object when damp. As it dries, it contracts and hardens around the lashed object.

Rawhide lashings have been used extensively to mend cracked pottery [see figure 4-8] and wooden vessels [see figure 4-9] across the continent. Excellent examples can be found in the southwest. The lashings form such a strong and tight patch that large pottery can be used to hold water. This Santo Domingo pot stands about 24” high and has a circumference of approximately 21”.

### *Rawhide Stirrup Lashings*<sup>13</sup>

When the crack extends to the bottom of a vessel, a stirrup method can be utilized which, again, renders the pot waterproof. The tightness of the repair method is obvious as the stirrup lashing has become a part of the vessel [see figure 4-10]. This method has been used extensively on larger pots, evidence to the great difficulty in producing larger pottery without breakage occurring during the firing process.

### *Rawhide Lashings with Boring Methods*

A ceramic piece with this technique (not the one shown here) began my interest in this

---

<sup>13</sup> I have taken some liberties with the terminology I use. This is my own term for this technique.

research topic. A four-foot high Cochiti pot had been bored and lashed, despite its thin walls. I wondered how this was accomplished without breaking the pot? Looking at a number of



Figure 4-8: Santo Domingo water carrier with rawhide lashings, ca. 1915. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 12264 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

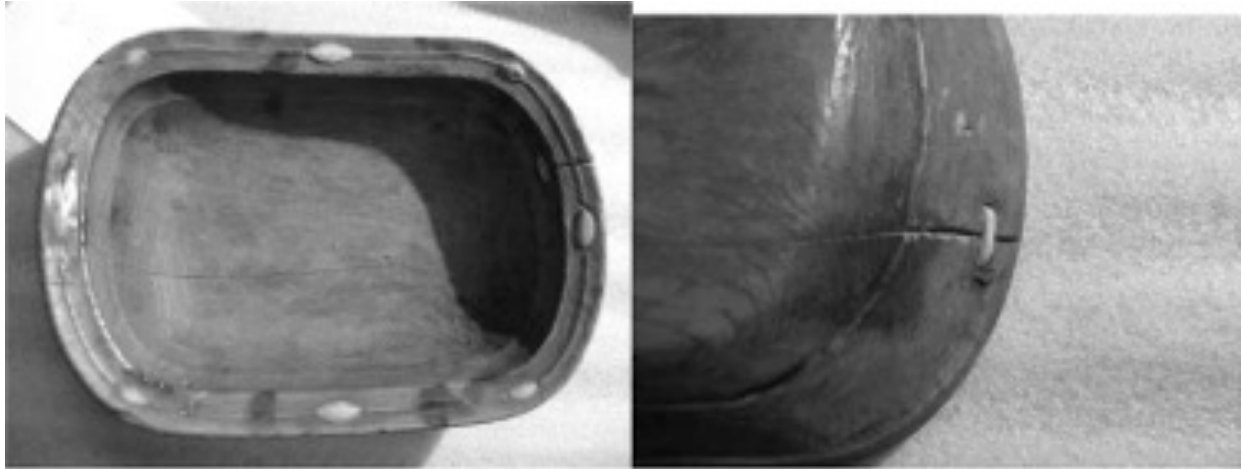


Figure 4-9: Northwest Coast feast bowl, with closeup. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma; 7337.331. Printed with permission (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).



Figure 4-10: Antonita Quintana, Cochiti jar with rawhide bottom support & rawhide lashings, ca. 1910. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 22623 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).



Figure 4-11: San Ildefonso jar, bored holes with rawhide lashing. Museum of Indian Arts and Culture Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe, New Mexico; 674/12 (2006 photo by Mary Deleary).

examples, it seems that the technique uses increasingly larger drill bits (see figure 4-11).

Prehistoric microdrills have been found in Cahokia sites that date to 900 AD (specifically the Fairmount, Stirling and Moorehead phases) and were used to drill shell beads, various animal teeth and bone, and holes for tools such as atlatls. These microtools were fashioned out of strong but workable stone, most often chert.

Side-scrapers, end-scrapers, graters, chisels and especially drills have been found throughout the Cahokia sites. Microdrills are the most common tools found in the microlithic

assemblages in Cahokia and in other Mississippian sites such as at the northern Mitchell site and the Zebree site of northeastern Arkansas (Yerkes: 503-4). Microwear analyses of Powell Mound and Dunham tract microdrills have shown that these chert tools were used to drill a number of materials including wood, shell, bone, and the shell-tempered pottery of the Cahokia settlement system (504). The long, thin shape of the chert drills indicates that they were used with an attached wooden shaft and a bow drill.

Numerous pots and pottery shards with evidence of the boring method have been found in Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) sites in Canada of the same age as the Cahokia sites, dating to around 1000 AD (Late Woodland Period).

### *Basketry Repair*

During our research, we found little evidence of basketry being repaired prior to European contact. Yet, there were many examples of early post-contact repairs [see figure 4-12]. This points to a drastic shift in Native American economics as well as the sudden neglect of traditional utilitarian objects soon after European utensils and materials were introduced. Douglas B. Bamforth, in his article *Technological Efficiency and Tool Curation*, clarifies that the maintenance, recycling and repair of cultural objects, “are responses to raw material shortages” (38). He quotes L.R. Binford’s explanation of *curated* tools as those that are “effective for a variety of tasks, are manufactured in anticipation of use, maintained through a number of uses, transported from locality to locality... and recycled to other tasks when no longer useful for their primary purposes.” *Expedient* tools, on the other hand, are those “that are manufactured, used, and discarded according to the needs of the moment” (ibid.). As noted above, Binford describes the need to curate, or recycle, lithic tools is dependent upon the energy

expended in its manufacture, while Bamforth expounds upon this description to include regional raw material scarcity as well (40).

Bamforth's hypotheses and conclusions are geared specifically towards subsistence settlement organizational theories, and explains why an object is repaired and recycled due to raw material shortages. Placed within the context of why basketry repair quickly emerged – and just as quickly disappeared, during the post-contact era – this points to Northwest Coast



Figure 4-12: Northwest coast basket with interior canvas and exterior rawhide repairs. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico; FH1970-598 (2006 photo by author).

historical trauma. European tools and utensils were quickly incorporated into Native American communities. In the Northwest Coast region where this basket comes from, this began around the late 1700s with Captain James Cook's landing in Nootka Sound in British Columbia and Captain George Vancouver's exploration of the Puget Sound area to the south (Deloria 36-37).

### *Textile Repair*

As with basketry repair, we found few southwestern examples of pre-contact textile repair. Here, a Mexican serape [see figures 4-13 & 4-14] has been cut down for use as a child's shawl, and mended numerous times with commercial yarns. Again, the date of the textile repair correlates with a time of great cultural upheaval amongst the Diné (Navajo) due to raw material shortages, specifically the dramatic reduction in wool due to the Navajo Livestock Reduction of the 1930s. Considered by the Diné to be one of the two great tragedies in tribal memory (the Long Walk being the first), in 1933 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier proposed a drastic reduction of Diné livestock. After the incarceration of the Diné at Fort Sumner ended in 1868, families were allotted 2-3 heads of sheep each. Collier ordered the mass slaughtering of over 80% of the tribal livestock because it was thought that reservation lands were being overgrazed. This was a great psychological trauma for the Diné as well as a major economical catastrophe. For the Diné, sheep were not only the major source of food and clothing, they were also an integral sacred part of Diné life and were considered *K'é*, close family. By 1870 there were an estimated 15,000 sheep on the reservation. By 1930 the Diné had brought that number up to 500,000.



Figure 4-13: Mexican serape cut down to become a Diné child's shawl. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico (photo by author).

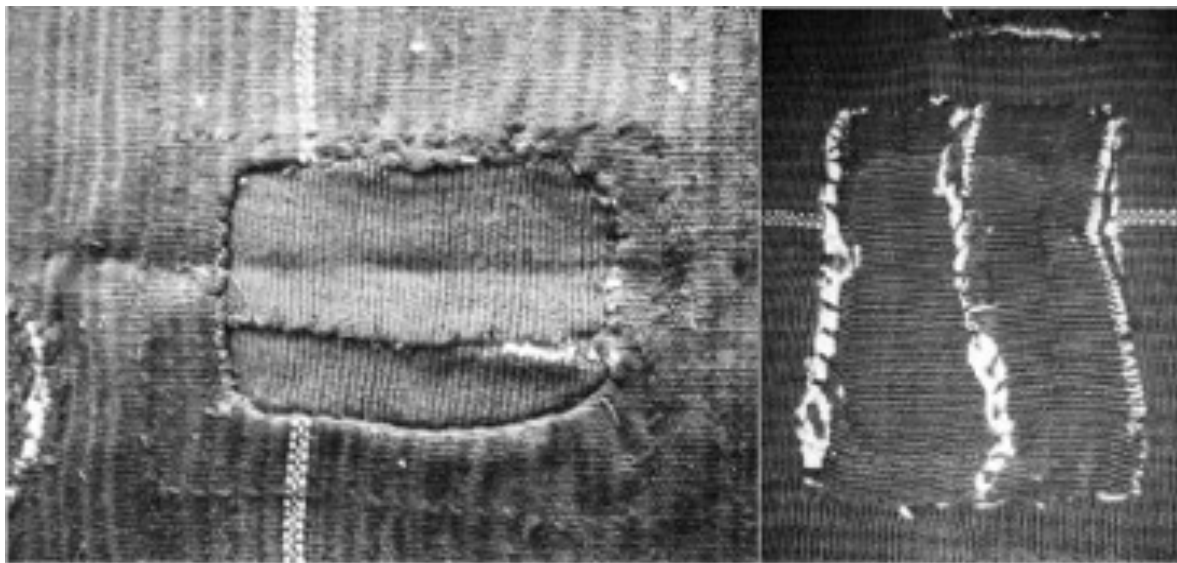


Figure 4-14: Mexican serape, repaired extensively. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe, New Mexico (2006 photo by author).

This serape is testimony to a tragic era within Diné history when food and materials were scarce, and what little weaving was being produced had to be sold to the tourists coming in by train at the time<sup>14</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> This only pertains to the collections we visited within New Mexico museums. Numerous

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-CULTURAL CONSULTATION

There is scant anthropological documentation and research pertaining to Native American repair methods other than a brief mention in a paragraph or two, or an interesting side note. Museum professionals are becoming aware that this topic has been overlooked, and museums have begun to add the category of “native repair” to their collection database systems (i.e., the University of Washington’s Burke Museum and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian). Nancy Odegaard, the Arizona State Museum Conservator and Head of the ASM Preservation Division, is currently conducting chemical analyses on traditional adhesives used to repair southwest pottery. As these repair methods are revisited and researched, the current ethics of collaboration and the integration of tribal consultation will lead to new ways of describing Indigenous knowledge systems. These new ways are now well under way – although not consistently embraced throughout the anthropological and museological fields.

During planning for the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) on the Washington D.C. Mall, a number of consultations took place between NMAI conservators and nineteen Native communities about the conservation repair of objects that were to be included in the exhibits. These consultations were viewed as productive collaborations between professional knowledge holders within the fields of museum conservation and curation, and Indigenous sciences. Most importantly, consultations were conducted with the understanding that “Native communities are the authorities of their own philosophies, histories, and identities” (Johnson et al.: 204).

---

examples are found in South American collections, especially from those cultures with strong textile traditions such as the Peruvian and Andean peoples.

Enabled by generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, tribal knowledge holders were brought to the NMAI's Cultural Resource Center in Suiteland, Maryland where the collections are housed. The consultations were well documented with notes, video, and digital photography. This in-depth documentation provided conservators and curators with Indigenous knowledge about appropriate care of the cultural objects well after the tribal professionals had returned home. During these consultations, NMAI staff respected their consultants' wishes not to disclose certain methodologies to people other than the staff, and occasionally not even to disclose those techniques to the staff. It is this specific cultural concern that caused Mary and me to focus our research upon utilitarian objects. Although we knew that most traditional repair methods are passed down among those who care for ceremonial objects, we were also aware that those techniques are not to be shared outside the specific cultural practices. As the NMAI conservation and curatorial team so eloquently put it,

The challenge for conservators (as throughout the museum...[is] to balance institutional practices with concerns of Native communities... [and] there is growing agreement that the people most directly affected by a conservation process, the stakeholders, should be part of the process used to make the decisions about care. NMAI very specifically identifies its primary constituency, the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere, as its major stakeholders (204).

Another example of NMAI collaboration (from the article *Practical Aspects of Consultation with Communities*) occurred in the case of Tuscarora beaded cloth stabilization. Rick Hill, of the Tuscarora Nation, is a renowned curator and past Museum Director of the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum. As a guest curator, Hill chose a 19<sup>th</sup> century

beaded textile that had significant bead loss. The piece was brought to the Buffalo-Niagara area near the Tuscarora reservation, in order for professional beadworkers of the community to work on the conservation of the textile. The five expert women artists who acted as consultants decided that, beyond stabilizing the piece, loss areas should not be restored because the textile did not truly represent the community. The NMAI conservators decided that this was acceptable if 1) the stitching thread and method could be distinguishable from the original work and, 2) the artisans who worked on the piece were experienced beadworkers descended from the original beadworking artist.

One more example was the case of the *Siletz Dance Regalia loan*. During a repatriation visit Robert Kentta, Cultural Resources Protection Specialist for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, inquired whether several pieces of Siletz regalia were in good enough condition to be loaned for an upcoming ceremonial Dance House dedication and Nay Dosh ceremony. NMAI's curatorial council unanimously approved this request. "After every round of dancing, the floor was inspected to collect bits of shell or feather that might have fallen off the regalia, whether old or new, to be re-associated and repaired after the ceremony" (Johnson et al. 2005: 206)<sup>15</sup>.

These instances highlight the major positive shift in museum ethics that has developed recently. Rather than exclude the knowledge that communities hold about their cultural objects, museums increasingly view Native groups as valuable and necessary partners in the dissemination of knowledge inherent within their objects and their cultural contexts.

---

<sup>15</sup> The Memorandum of Agreement Between the Alaska State Museum and the Kiks.adi Clan of Sitka, the Tin.aa Hit (Copper Plate House) of Sitka and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska of 1993 pre-dates these NMAI case studies and sets precedence for tribes to have access of museum collections in order to "dance" the regalia and conduct repair on the objects, in a workable standard for common use in the profession – see memorandum in Appendix C.

Faith Bad Bear (Crow/Sioux), former Assistant Curator of Ethnology at the Science Museum of Minnesota, described the philosophy behind traditional conservation care. “Our cultural items from the past are important. They tell us why things were done back then. It’s important that the children of the Tribes understand this. It is important for the children to learn from us... some items are meant to deteriorate and should be left to deteriorate naturally. Some are not. Those that are not should be used to educate our children” (Ogden 2004: 82). This new era of collaborative and co-operative collections care and conservation has the potential to expand understanding about how objects are viewed, and to guide research into new realms of intellectual explorations that produce unique and previously unrecognized avenues of insightful knowledge. Through Native American and First Nations agency and the close collaboration between their community members and museum professionals, the care and conservation of collections and information for exhibition purposes will only be strengthened. In answer to Berlo’s questions that the beginning of this chapter, it is the Native American and First Nations people themselves who have the right to say what an object means, whether and how they will be displayed, whether an object will be preserved and/or repaired or allowed to naturally deteriorate as it was originally meant to do, and who has an authoritative role in museum representation and the remaking of the museum as an institution.

## CHAPTER 5 GROWING IMPACTS: A NEW GLOBAL MOVEMENT

*Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.*

*~ 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 15.1*

Indigenous peoples are becoming active participants in museums and cultural centers across the world. They are utilizing these spaces as strategic tools for community building, group support and cultural engagement, as well as arenas to convey their stories and histories. They have done this by serving on advisory committees for museums and collections departments, and by engaging in meaningful collaborations on captivating exhibits meant to engage both Indigenous peoples and outside groups. They are involved in discussions about cultural art and objects, and now actively create and manage community-owned museums, cultural centers, history centers, and treasure houses.

This chapter briefly explores how museums are being re-thought by Indigenous peoples of Mexico and how a union of these museums are working together on matters that collectively affect them. It then describes two South African museums and their own unique missions and concerns, and the collaborative work that the Institute of American Indian Arts conducted with them both.

### THE UNION DE MUSEOS COMUNITARIOS DE OAXACA

From Mexico to Africa, Indigenous-based educational institutions and exhibition spaces have sprung up that have little in common with the traditional ethnographic museums of North

America and Europe. Alternative practices of cultural presentation, collection and care of objects, and educational outreach have emerged that are unique in their cultural values. “Such centers hope to strengthen familiar social structures such as honoring elders, warriors, and spiritual leaders; educating youth in community practices; and informing citizenry about local issues” (Cooper 157).

The community museum movement in Mexico originated in Santa Ana del Valle in 1985, when this Zapotec community demanded financial support to create a community museum that would protect their cultural heritage material. In 1986 the Shan-Dany (Zapotec for “Low Hill”) Museum was created. Over one hundred archaeological and historical objects make up its collection including pre-Hispanic burial remains, weapons of the Mexican Revolution era, and historical photographs (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia). Other communities requested financial and training support in creating their own museums. Today there are approximately fifty community museums across Mexico in existence (ibid.) which is a relatively low number in relation to the diversity and population of Mexico.

Through the Mexican *Movimiento Museo Comunitario*, or Community Museum Movement, Indigenous activism spread to interrogating and re-designing Western museum models of Indigenous presentation to fit community needs (Erikson 34). In Mexico, the *Union de Museos Comunitarios de Oaxaca* (UMCO), or Union of Community Museums of Oaxaca, is an association of nineteen Indigenous communities across Oaxaca whose focus is on community networking-driven promotion and development of cultural revitalization across Mexico and other South American countries (Camarena & Morales 322, 334). Although the UMCO is both situated in, and focused on, the sovereign state of Oaxaca, the UMCO also works with Indigenous communities in Brazil, Guatemala and other Mexican states. It collaborates with

these places to establish strategies for cultural survival and political voice in the face of “ongoing and often brutal repression of indigenous peoples” (Erikson 34).

These collaborations have included hosting Mayan delegates who are interested in building their own museums and interpretive cultural centers. It has also worked on sending exhibits to the California Plaza de la Raza in Los Angeles so that the collective rich history of Mexican people can be told on both sides of the border, specifically with children in mind so they do not forget their heritage (ibid. 34-35). I remember having a discussion with a delegate from the Universidad Intercultural del Estado de Mexico (UIEM), who was very excited about how the UMCO was dealing with a lack of archival material. He explained that they were working with a milk carton manufacturer in Mexico to procure wax-covered sheets of thin board. They used these sheets as semi-archivally appropriate vapor barriers between objects and storage shelves, and as material from which to make protective storage boxes.

Mexico’s community museums have risen out of the desire to preserve heritage, memory, and identity. In 2015 a seminar was held at the National School of Conservation, Restoration and Museography (ENCRyM) in Mexico City. Its theme, “Community Museums: Current Principles and Practices in Mexico and Latin America,” focused upon building relationships between local museums and communities and assessing the currently existing relationships (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia). The aim of the seminar was not to produce a community museum model, but rather to come up with principles and practices of collaboration that would fit each community’s needs. This reflects the unique make-up of these Mexican community museums which have been described as “a collective community creation process, which develops the ability of communities to act on their own memory, while promoting self-knowledge and critical reflection (ibid.)”.

## THE CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA DISTRICT SIX MUSEUM

In 2007 a group of thirty-six Native American artists, educators, museum professionals, and students traveled to Africa. This was the second South African cultural exchange funded by the Kellogg Foundation in which the Institute of American Indian Arts and chosen South African communities came together in order to work together on cross-cultural artistic projects. The first phase of the exchange supported an African delegate of fifteen to travel to the IAIA campus in 2005 to specifically discuss how Native Americans support tribal arts. The 2007 exchange was a much more extensive plan of action. The delegate of thirty-six Native Americans would land in Johannesburg, meet for a few days in Lesotho, and then disburse into seven groups that would each travel to different African nations – each having specific community supportive directives.

Many of the groups were made up of Native American artists. Traditional weavers, silversmiths, beadworkers, sculptors, and potters traveled to African countries such as Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Angola. Artists brought the tools of their trade; sculptural utensils, jeweler's tools, and Navajo looms were all used in the exchange of traditional art knowledges and were left behind for the African community artists. The Native American educators traveled back to Johannesburg to meet with K-12 teachers, while the museum professionals journeyed to Cape Town to work with two African museums. I was among this group.

We shared many similarities with the African people that we worked with, but we also came across some very real differences. The term “Indigenous” is often used across the globe as a marker of solidarity and resistance. However, we found out that this is not necessarily true in South Africa. Although the black African museum movement has a lot in common with those of North and South America, there are some major differences in history and culture. This became

apparent to us when we proudly introduced the chair of our newly formed Indigenous Liberal Studies program. We received many puzzled looks, and several aggressive glares, which really confused us. Fortunately, someone asked, “what do you mean by Indigenous, and what do you mean by liberal?” We learned that the first colonizers in Africa, the Dutch Boers, who were the first farming colonizers and arrived in South Africa in the late fifteenth century, referred to themselves as the Indigenous peoples of Africa. Moreover, “liberal” in Africa is the same as our hard, right wing conservatives. So, what the South Africans heard was that we were proud of our colonizer, right-wing republican studies program.

African “Indigenous” people refer to themselves as black. Even the word “tribe” is considered derogatory, and many do not refer to themselves as “tribal people” since tribal is still used to denote “primitive.” It took us some time to overcome these language barriers and find words that would keep the dialogue open and productive.

On a side note, Apartheid is not over in Africa. As a group, we represented people of varying skin colors even though we were Native American. We soon learned that in South Africa, people (of all colors) assumed that those of us with lighter skin had more power than those of us with darker skin because this is how it still is in South Africa. South Africans responded with shock when our young Native American men would open a door for an elderly black woman.

The two museums that the museum group visited in order to engage in outreach projects was the Cape Town District Six Museum and the Lwandle Township Migrant Worker Museum. The District Six Museum is located directly in Cape Town. Prior to Apartheid laws, this community was a mixture of various ethnicities situated within a working class area of the city, which, due to neglect on the part of landlords and local authorities, had become extremely

rundown. On February 11, 1966, under apartheid, the government declared District Six to be a “white area” and all of the District Six people were forcibly removed from the community and relocated to other areas. Families were broken up and moved to specific townships based on their skin color. This meant that children were taken away from parents, married couples were split up, and families and communities were completely destroyed as familial ties were severed. The process took fifteen years and some 55,000 people were forcibly removed, after which the area was razed to the ground. Thirty years later, a number of original families had moved back to District Six and, although the diversity is not what it once was, it has continued to increase.



Figure 5-1: IAIA Native American/South African Cultural Exchange delegates arriving in South Africa (2007 photo by author).

The District Six Museum was established in 1994 and is dedicated to telling the stories of this once vibrant community, and specifically to educate people about the South African history of forced removal that devastated communities and families. District Six museum personnel (of

which, there were only three full-time staff) were extremely interested in learning how to support current community members financially. They were specifically interested in entrepreneurial workshops for their community members, and expanding their gift shop in order to cater to visitors and to bring in more money for the local elderly. The staff wanted to know how Native American tribal museums and cultural centers support the arts and crafts of their people.

The District Six (D6) Museum is not an object-based museum, and what objects they have are on display; there is no collections storage. Rather, they are focused on projects that help their financially struggling community members to find ways to bring in much needed money. They have published a small cookbook of various ethnic recipes gathered from the community, and conduct workshops that teach elderly women (who are struggling the hardest) how to embroider, sew, and create batik fabrics for sale in their gift shop, *The Little Wonder Store* [see figures 5-2 – 5-4].



Figure 5-2: District Six Museum Gift Shop *The Little Wonder Store*, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).



Figure 5-3: Collected recipes of the District Six (D6) community on the meeting area walls. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).



Figure 5-4: Community-made items sold in the D6 gift shop. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

The whole of the building is utilized, even though it is in dire need of repair [see figure 5-5]. The one large room that makes up the top floor is used as an art studio where community youth produce paintings and other artwork for sale [see figure 5-6]. This area also acts as an art classroom where young people can come and get lessons from local artists. Although it has very little funding, the D6 Museum is an active and dynamic space for the Cape Town community. The museum and its collections focus exclusively on the local people. It cannot be stressed enough what a drastic shift this is from historical South African museums and collections, which for hundreds of years have been geared towards upper-level academics and visitors of the politically- and wealthy-elite.



Figure 5-5: Elevator to the top floor...



Figure 5-6: ... where the youth art studio resides. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).



Figure 5-7: Meeting with the D6 staff, community constituents, and IAIA museum/educator delegates. District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

While we were there ostensibly to offer guidance in their efforts to further the District Six Museum's support of its community [see figure 5-7], we had little to offer. Instead, what they were accomplishing in this small, underfunded museum serves as a model for how to respond to our own difficulties within tribal museums and cultural centers across the United States. We were able to take away some very important insights about ways in which community museums can support their constituents in need. We were exposed to innovative ideas as to how we can actively incorporate cultural arts and crafts within our own museum and cultural center shops,

and the importance of offering financial support as well as engaging historical storytellers of the current struggles of their own communities.

### THE LWANDLE, SOUTH AFRICA MIGRANT LABOUR MUSEUM

If I diminish you, I diminish myself. In my culture and tradition, the highest praise that can be given to someone is ‘Yu, u nubuntu,’ an acknowledgement that he or she has this wonderful quality: ubuntu. It is a reference to their actions toward their fellow human beings, it has to do with how they regard people and how they see themselves within their intimate relationships, their familial relationships, and within the broader community... they share their worth. In doing so my humanity is recognized and becomes inextricably bound to theirs. ~  
The Most Reverend Desmond M. Tutu (Gandhi 3)

The Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum is located on the western outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa, within the Lwandle Township<sup>16</sup>. Like most African townships, Lwandle is situated far away from the major city that the African people who originally lived in Lwandle had built [see figure 5-8]. The Lwandle Township was established in 1958 as a migrant labour camp. Black men not only worked the nearby fruit farms and canning factories, but also built the city of Cape Town. The living conditions for these men, who numbered in the thousands, were appalling, and they are not much better today. Table Mountain, just outside of Cape Town, is a

---

<sup>16</sup> “townships” refer to the residential areas that were reserved for non-whites

sacred place for the original African people of the area – the Khoi and the !San. In the !San language, the word for this mountain is Hu-!Gai, which means “veiled in clouds.” There are a number of sacred sites within Hu-!Gai, but none of these sites are protected, and the original African peoples of this area have no specific rights to those sites.

The Lwandle Migrant Labour Camp Museum is a grassroots museum, meaning that the people of the community established the museum. Lunga Smile, the museum manager, explained to our group that the museum acts as a memorial to the labour conditions of the Apartheid era, so that neither the Lwandle community nor others forget the history of their oppression and continual survival. African men were brought into the migrant labour camp from the surrounding area as well as from all across South Africa. It was illegal for them to bring their families, since these labour camps were meant to be temporary. Once the work was done, the workers were meant to leave the area because Cape Town was designated as a Whites Only community. Occasionally women and children would join the men at these camps but were imprisoned if caught.



Figure 5-8: Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

Workers from the Lwandle migrant labour camp, as well as from other labour camps, built the thriving cities of South Africa. Despite Cape Town being designated as a Whites Only city, there was work to be had for black people in positions as servants, laundry workers, construction workers, and other low-paying jobs. Back in the traditional villages, opportunities to make money were almost non-existent. If men worked in the labour camps they were able to buy food for themselves and their families. The alternative of staying back in the villages, and experiencing poverty and hunger, was worse.

Lwandle Museum staff requested that we come to discuss issues of financial stability, cultural tourism, and the preservation of a particular historical building that they wished to



Figure 5-9: Lwandle Township cinderblock houses (2007 photo by author).



Figure 5-10: Touring the Lwandle Township (2007 photo by author).

incorporate into their walking tour. We toured the township while Lwandle personnel and community members explained the history of Lwandle, and the pride that they had for this place, as their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation homeland [see figures 5-9 & 5-10].

Many of the houses were simply made of cinderblock as they were the original men's temporary hostels, which residents had added to and improved upon over the years. There were many "township shacks" as well, which were made of plywood, wooden crates, tin siding, and anything else that could be gleaned from the local dumps.

The Lwandle Museum was the first township museum in existence, having opened its doors on South Africa's Workers Day, May 1, 2000. During our visit we discussed a number of issues. Although the District Six Museum and the Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum had worked with a local tour guide company to bring visitors in from the D6 Museum to the Lwandle museum, very few tours of Lwandle were conducted because of its distance from Cape Town of over an hour. The main focus was the renovation of one of the original hostel blocks, Block Six,

to turn it into an extension of the museum that could show the original living conditions of the men. The museum included it in their walking tour, although they were not bringing visitors in to the block itself [see figure 5-11].



Figure 5-11: Article on South Africa's men's hostels. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

Things became a bit contentious because the male leaders of the community wanted the Block to depict *only* the male side of the story. We quickly became very aware of our own power, for although we were outsiders, our words seemed to carry more strength than they should have. The community women looked extremely unhappy and angry as the male leaders described their wishes and visions for Block Six [see figures 5-12 – 5-13]. Some of the Native women in our group voiced concern about this male perspective of the history of the living space and



Figure 5-12: Inside Block Six, continuously lived in from the 1950s until recently. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

pointed out that the story of the women who faced imprisonment by simply being there was a compelling part of its history. At this point the Lwandle male elders became angry and silent. It was a difficult discussion, and we had to be careful not to come across as part of the dominant society that had always had more power than black people in South Africa. We were careful in our explanations of how museums act as community catalysts by bringing men, women and children together through the stories that the exhibits can tell about everyone within the community.



Figure 5-13: One of the 'niches' that made up the men's quarters. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author).



Figure 5-14: Image of whole families sleeping in one male worker's 'niche' quarters. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

We ended the conversation by suggesting that the block be divided into a number of areas, each illustrating an historical point of time, beginning with Lwandle being a men-only community, and why [see figure 5-14]. We left Lwandle not knowing if our words held any legitimacy for this wonderful community. However, once we had voiced our concerns and made some suggestions, the women began to talk about what they envisioned this space to look like and offered some very powerful design ideas.



Figure 5-15: Discussions on the Block Six exhibit space. Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Lwandle, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

Block Six (or Hostel 33) had become extremely run down. There had been continuous residency within it and, like some of the other buildings, had not been kept up, most probably due to the tenants' lack of finances. But there were still a number of things within it that were remnants of the 1950s, and this is what made it the best candidate for an historical site. For one,

as with the original blocks, it did not have indoor plumbing, and its occupants had to use the “bucket method” as a toilet. Also, the interior walls and floors were original to the time when it was a men’s hostel. Finally, it still had the “niches” where men would sleep. These were cinderblock crevices into which one would climb and where whole families would sleep.

After the end of Apartheid the community became more vibrant. It is this history that the people of Lwandle are so proud of. The museum vibrantly reflects what humanity can overcome in the face of great injustice, and the perseverance that the human soul is so capable of.



Figure 5-16: Residents of Lwandle. Lwandle Township, South Africa (2007 photo by author).

The stories that communities can tell about themselves, in their own words, within their own museums and cultural centers, will only enrich the history of this world. These small museums and cultural centers, as the Lwandle and the District Six Museum, are the ones that we

now look towards to lead us in new museum philosophies, theories, and techniques. As bell hooks, the African-American educator, feminist and educational theorist, so eloquently put it:

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls... is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin (hooks 1994: 13).

## CHAPTER 6 HORIZONS IN A TRIBAL MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM

Over the past forty years meaningful collaboration between museums and Indigenous people has become more prevalent. In a small survey conducted in 1995 by Karen Cooper, museum responses reflected that prior to the 1970s relatively few collaborative projects occurred between their museums and tribes (four listed) whereas by the 1990s that number had doubled (Cooper 175). While the numbers of submissions were too small to be of significant use, they do reflect changing paradigms in the ways that museums view their cultural constituents. Major changes have occurred. For example, the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society and the Iroquois people began working together through a Native advisory committee, after years of the society exhibiting human remains and ceremonial objects. The Milwaukee Public Museum opened the unique “*A Tribute to Survival*” exhibit, which showcases a revolving life-size diorama of 37 powwow dancers featuring life casts of real dancers [see figure 6-1]. This exhibit was produced through working with native communities in the Milwaukee area and is visited by an unprecedented number of Native American people (176). Besides tribal museums and cultural centers, mainstream museums are injecting Indigenous voice into their exhibits. The Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University in Cambridge, and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts have both extensively integrated Native American curation of their exhibits, as have the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, the South Dakota State Historical Society, the National Museum of the American Indian, and many others. At the Institute of American Indian Arts, the museum studies program focuses on teaching museology from an Indigenous perspective.



Figure 6-1: Diorama of powwow dancing in the *A Tribute to Survival* exhibit. Courtesy of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

The academic field of museology is fairly recent, with professionals coming primarily from the fields of anthropology, archaeology, history, and art history. The IAIA Museum Studies Program is thought to be one of the oldest museum studies program in the nation. In 1975 IAIA made the transition from being an immersive junior and senior high school Native American arts program to offering two-year associates degrees in studio arts, creative writing and museum studies. In 1984 the associates programs were awarded accreditation by both the nation's Higher

Learning Commission (HLC) and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). In 2000 IAIA was approved by both HLC and NASAD to offer baccalaureate degrees in museum studies, studio arts, new media arts, creative writing, and Indigenous liberal studies.

The museum studies program arose due to the forward thinking of the founders of IAIA who recognized that, in order for Native American contemporary art to thrive, there had to be Native administration within the country's museums. Their vision reflected the changing paradigms of how Native American and First Nations art and culture are presented, questioning voice and the changing views as to who, ethically, has the authoritative voice. Moreover, the move to create a Native American-focused museum studies program supported the federal policy that officially sanctioned IAIA as a culturally specific place of learning. The IAIA was established through an executive order in 1962 under President John F. Kennedy and, in 1986, congress passed the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development (IAIANCAD) Act (Pub. L. 99-498), making IAIA one of only five colleges<sup>17</sup> in the nation that is congressionally chartered through the United States government<sup>18</sup>. Section 4401. of Public Law 99-498 states:

The Congress finds that –

---

<sup>17</sup> The other four colleges that are congressionally chartered by the United States are Washington D.C.'s American University (a private secular Methodist college chartered in 1893), Gallaudet University (a private university for the deaf and blind, chartered in 1864), Georgetown University (a private Catholic and Jesuit research university, receiving its federal corporate charter in 1844) and George Washington University (a private coeducational research university chartered in 1821). This makes the IAIA the only federally chartered *public* educational institution, as well as the only chartered college situated east of the Mississippi River.

<sup>18</sup> Consequently, IAIA can only be dissolved by an act of congress.

- (1) Indian art and culture and Native Hawaiian art and culture have contributed greatly to the artistic and cultural richness of the Nation;
- (2) Indian art and culture and Native Hawaiian art and culture occupy a unique position in American history as being our only native art form and cultural heritage;
- (3) the enhancement and preservation of this Nation's native art and culture has a fundamental positive influence on the American people;
- (4) although the encouragement and support of Indian and Native Hawaiian arts and crafts are primarily a matter for private, local, and Indian and Native Hawaiian initiative, it is also an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government;
- (5) it is appropriate and necessary for the Federal Government to support research and scholarship in Indian art and culture and Native Hawaiian art and culture and to complement programs for the advancement of such art and culture by tribal, private, and public agencies and organizations;
- (6) current Federal initiatives in the area of Indian art and culture and Native Hawaiian art and culture are fragmented and inadequate; and
- (7) in order to coordinate the Federal Government's effort to preserve, support, revitalize, and disseminate Indian art and culture and Native Hawaiian art and culture, it is desirable to establish –
  - a. a national Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development, and
  - b. a program for Native Hawaiian culture and arts development (Pub. L. 99–498).

Through the leadership and vision of co-creators Dr. George Boyce and Lloyd Kiva New, IAIA took a daring and innovative stance on the ways and means that Native American arts and culture were viewed. Although the IAIA courses arose out of the rigid Dorothy Dunn school of Native American art, the courses were modeled after Dr. Boyce's and Lloyd New's pre-IAIA art courses, which encouraged the blending of modern Western art forms and practices with traditional tribal art forms and practices. This philosophy was reflected in the Museum Studies courses. Classes were geared towards preparing Native American students to become leaders in the field rather than to simply remain the "objects" of the exhibits. From its inception, the program has offered courses that blend cultural sensitivities and concerns with traditional Western topics. Students in the curatorial courses were encouraged to weave their own voices, and the stories of their people, into the exhibition texts. Even the choice of objects for display were a reflection of what Native peoples were currently interested in, what movements were taking place within Indian Country, what artists and art forms had been overlooked, under-represented, or actively demeaned through labels that used such words as "primitive" and "craft."

The IAIA Museum, now known as the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA), began on the Indian High School campus in the old bathhouse. Occupying an area of only 1,700 square feet, including the basement, it began as a place for IAIA students to exhibit and sell their work to earn money to defray the costs of their education and to obtain some pocket money. In 1990 The IAIA MoCNA moved from its location on the Indian High School site to its current location in downtown Santa Fe. As MoCNA and its collection continued to grow, the collection was moved to the campus on the south side of town in 2010, which made room for additional exhibition galleries, meeting rooms, presentation rooms and visiting artist

and writer offices/work spaces. The new MoCNA Collections Storage is a state-of-the-art open storage facility, twice the size of the previous collection area. It is currently a space of 2,700 square feet with the capability of expansion built into the design specifications. Its location on campus allows for greater student accessibility, and classes often take advantage of this within their curricula.

As Dr. Boyce, New, and others had envisioned a change in the way contemporary Native American art was viewed, art pieces made by students began to be purchased. In the heyday of IAIA, during the 1970s and 1980s when tuition and supplies were free for students, the college began the policy of taking one piece of artwork from each student in return for their tuition, supplies, room and board. In this way, the IAIA Honors Collection began to grow. But also, each semester, art was left behind, destined for the garbage bins. Professor Charles Dailey would gather notable works and accession them into the collection. Hundreds of these pieces remain in the collection and include works by artists that have gone on to become famous in the Native American contemporary art genre, including Linda Lomahaftewa, Gray Cohoe, and Jim Rivera. The IAIA Archives began in a similar way of gathering material that was found.

The 1960s contemporary Native American artistic movement that was growing within the college was reflected in the museum studies courses as well. Current art produced by the students in the classroom was traveling across the country and, indeed, across the world, due to the work of the Museum Studies faculty, staff and students. Interpretive dance intertwined with traditional dance. Music and fashion blended seamlessly and were extremely popular during the 1960s and early 1970s. IAIA exhibitions of contemporary Native American art traveled across the country, as Bill Prokopiof, artist and IAIA Museum staff, and Prof. Charles Dailey, Museum Studies faculty and then-director of the museum, packed and shipped pieces across the country.

One of IAIA's mission objectives is to serve "as a national center of excellence in contemporary Native arts and cultures through exhibitions, research, Indigenous exchange and other educational programs." Core Values include Collaboration, Creativity, and Respect: "fostering an understanding of cultures, perspectives and identities." The IAIA Museum Studies Program's Philosophy Statement is: "We believe museums and cultural centers can serve as focal points in providing educational contexts for the appreciation of Native arts and cultures. These spaces can provide unique opportunities for the recognition and acknowledgement of the many contributions, past, present, and potential, of Native Americans and other indigenous peoples throughout the world." The Museum Studies program has graduated over 400 Native American and First Nation students who have gone on to become museum directors, curators, educators, repatriation officers, registrars, collections managers and teachers. I, too, am an alumna of its two-year program.

The IAIA Museum Studies curricula has been fashioned and molded through the collaborative efforts of faculty and students. With over fifty tribes represented through the IAIA student body in any given semester and between 75-90% of the Museum Studies faculty, adjunct faculty and supporting staff being Native American/First Nations tribal members, courses have emerged based upon the perceived needs of tribal communities across North America. It has been the diversity of the IAIA community members and rotating constituents that has enriched the program's teaching materials and has guided the mission and vision of the program over these past fifty years. Heartfelt discussions take place within the classroom and out in the research field, at association conferences that bring together students and professionals, and through social media. Courses are continuously being refined and assessed, while new theories and topics are experimentally explored through special topics classes.

Our courses cover the field of museology with a distinctive Native-centric focus. Introductory courses include “Introduction to Curation & Research: Maintaining our Traditions” [see figure 6-2] and “Introduction to Collections Care: Caring for our Cultural Property” [see figure 6-3]. Upper-level courses include “Indigenous Curatorial Method & Practice” and “Indigenous Collections Care Protocol,” which focus on Native American issues, ethics and concerns within the fields of curation and collections management. The “Issues in Conservation Methods” course [see figure 6-4] not only delves into Western conservation practices, but also Indigenous care of objects. This includes feeding, smudging, conserving in culturally appropriate ways, being mindful of collections and exhibition needs based on the seasons, and storing artifacts in ways that allow living objects to breathe and to be close to corn meal, ceremonial



Figure 6-2: Lynda Romero (Pueblo of Pojoaque) & Toneh Chuleewah (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) install a class-curated exhibit (2008 photo by author)



Figure 6-3: Carmen McKenzie (Diné) cleaning photograph in “Introduction to Collections Care” class (2006 photo by author)



Figure 6-4: RoseMarie Cutropia & Zonnie Miera (Cochiti Pueblo, Navajo, Spanish) inspect pottery in “Issues in Conservation” class (2012 photo by author)

sage offerings, etc. Also important are tribal requirements of limited viewings based on traditional knowledge systems surrounding the objects.

In order to graduate with their baccalaureate degree, students are required to produce a senior thesis exhibit within the IAIA Balzer Contemporary Edge Gallery. The exhibit must reflect community collaboration as well as the voice of the artist/community member, and must support changing views of the curator as mediator and the sharer of stories rather than the curator as authority figure. After graduation, many students have taken their exhibits back to their communities. One such example was an exhibit about the Hopi Harvey Girls that was exhibited and discussed at Hotevilla, which was attended by elder women who were once Harvey Girls. Their children and grandchildren were thus able to see the great contributions of these women to the tourist industry — a chapter in Hopi history that has been overlooked. Other graduation exhibits dealt with the history of powwow and its current place in Native America, the Gullah-Geetchee and their blend of African slave and Native American culture, Native American women in the armed forces, Native American stereotypes within consumer articles, and master beadworkers who are barely recognized other than within their own community. Even the museum field itself has been strongly critiqued in student presentations, as Navajo students have researched and reported upon how the current trends do, or do not, fit into cultural norms and concerns.

The “voice of the other” has been replaced by the “voice of ourselves.” Students and faculty alike have traveled to communities interested in beginning their own cultural centers and museums, and new models of collaboration and respect for the authority of tribal members has been supported and empowered. We have often forgotten the age-old traditional methodologies that incorporate community-driven directions as the methodologies of the “sage on the stage”

and elitist forms of control have been pushed, and nurtured, through educational models as well as curatorial directives.

Silence, when listening to an elder, is a strong force. Western thought demands that pauses be filled with talk and discussion. We leave our youth uncomfortable with the long, respectful pauses that once permeated ways of learning. The technique of lowering one's gaze to one's lap as an elder finds the correct words that they will use to share their knowledge is a technique that has to be re-learned. At one point, faculty held discussions about offering a "Listening 101" course to combat this, but instead it has been incorporated into the Oral Histories Research curriculum.

A strong blend of both Western and Indigenous theory, methodology and practice moves through the classrooms, creating an old and yet new way of academic interaction. Students are encouraged to bring their own life-ways and life-learned experiences into all that they do, whether this is through the care and protection of cultural objects, or through the storytelling in the curatorial text of an exhibit. Lighting, wall color, and visitor flow are dictated by the story rather than standard perimeters of current museum norms. For example, a Balzer Gallery exhibit on Native American graffiti brought in artists that "tagged" the gallery walls in the form of a four-sided mural, which enhanced rather than detracted from the presentation. The whole space became the interwoven story of a dynamic art form found within reservations and urban settings.

The focus of the degree program is on inclusion rather than exclusion. The curator is now the semi-silent partner, listening closely to the artists and/or community members, using their expertise to highlight the story that is just now emerging, or has been waiting hundreds of years to be told. The stewards of collections and archives integrate cultural requirements, and host-

culture concerns and wishes. Museum educators turn to the communities to learn what is needed, and curricula and educational components mirror these rather than those set by outside forces.

Language retention is also addressed. Wall text may be in the traditional language first, and in English second. Interactive components show current community happenings alongside historical presentations. Our heritage is still vibrant, and the blend of age-old arts and blue jeans is to be celebrated and exalted. We are not “less than” what we once were as Native American peoples, nor are we “greater than.” Our pride is tempered by our humbleness towards those who have gone before us, a value that is not always embraced or applauded within a Western sense of history and linear evolution.

The curators who are emerging from the IAIA program represent a new breed, and they are not the only ones. Across the world, students and faculty are embracing new ideals. Gentle. Caring. Respectful. Empowering. To give up control is to open oneself to new ways of thinking. This benefits all. That road has been paved by individuals from many walks of life: an African-American Baptist minister (Martin Luther King, Jr.), an Eastern Indian philosopher and civil rights supporter (Gandhi), a Jewish historian (Howard Zinn), a Chippewa (Anishinaabe) environmentalist (Winona LaDuke), and many others. Native Americans are entering the museum field in greater numbers. In 1990 W. Richard West Jr. (Cheyenne) became the director of the National Museum of the American Indian, making him the first Native American director of a Smithsonian museum. In 2004 Hartman Lomawaima (Hopi) became the director of the Arizona State Museum and Eric Jolly (Cherokee) was named the president of the Science Museum of Minnesota (Cooper 173). This inclusionary movement stems from one simple fact, namely, that humanity is beautiful in its diversity, with each community being a treasure-trove of insight and unique ways of interacting with the world. Each acts as a firm scaffolding of

knowledge that is unique and vibrant, and that should be shared with a world that is recovering from the “dark ages” of disdain and disrespect towards fellow humanity.

The wondrous thing about museums and cultural centers is that they are spaces of education that are open to all – young and old, from all walks of life, from all corners of the world. There are no limitations. Those of us who work within the museum field are moving forward with blended ideas as to what is in store for not only Native American museums and cultural centers, but for institutions across the world. Native Americans, who gain knowledge from personal experience, are the ones who can speak best about the topic. The words of François Mianscum, an Ndoho Istchee (Waswanipi Cree) land-based hunter, has been re-quoted numerous times since first quoted by James Clifford in his 1986 *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Clifford & Marcus 1986). During the 1972 Canadian court case of James Bay Cree vs. James Bay Energy Corporation, Mianscum was instructed to place his hand upon the Bible and to “tell the truth.” After a lengthy discussion between Mianscum and his translator, the translator turned to the judge and responded, “He does not know whether he can tell the truth. He can only tell what he knows” (Stonebanks & Wootton 33). His additional words speak volumes about the challenges for collaboration between Native American/First Nations peoples and outsiders:

I understand the forestry workers need their work and that it is possible to share the land. However, they must understand that we Crees also need our land to survive. I have been on my Ndoho Istchee since I was 15 years old. I believe I am now 68 years. I have seen what they have [done] to the land. This is not proper sharing... This summer, the forestry company wants to continue to cut... The

foresters told me this. They flew in by helicopter... I told the gentlemen that I knew that this paper would be thrown away and that my desires would not be respected... What I see happening is the fact that their so-called consultations result in no respect for their own words. I do not want the situation to get worse with the younger generation. There are more and more conflicts on the land between the Crees and the loggers. I think the foresters should stop logging until they respect the Cree use of the land. The loggers should do what we ask them to do (Felt 75).

His words convey several important things. First, the Canadian government does not listen to what First Nations peoples say about their lands and environment. Second, people who conduct research and “tell” about Native American and First Nations peoples do not always listen to what those host communities say about their own culture, lifeways, and histories. We have new stories to tell perhaps through the old stories that have been passed down from generation to generation, since time beyond time. Our youth have deep insight into our overall story of ourselves and can still speak about our cultures better than any outsider. As quoted, none of us can “tell the truth.” We can only “tell what we know.”

I would like to end with an excerpt from the “Museum Collaboration Manifesto” that Jim Enote (Zuni), A:shiwí A:wán Museum and Heritage Center Director, wrote as his keynote address for the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries & Museums’ annual International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums in September 2015<sup>19</sup>. It speaks eloquently for all of us within the museum field:

... If the field of museology is truly egalitarian and moving forward then there must be

---

<sup>19</sup> See full manifesto in Appendix D.

centrifugal answers to our problems. We will labor, co-labor, collaborate from the fixed center. We are aware that knowledges are transitory and fluid and the old systems supporting only one way of knowing are themselves artifacts of humanity's misstep...

(Enote).

## REFERENCES CITED

- Abrams, George H.J. *Tribal Museums in America*. American Association for State and Local History, 2004.
- Alexander, Edward P. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. AltaMira Press, 1996.
- "Alexander the Great." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 9 Nov. 2017. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_the\\_Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great). Accessed 14 Nov. 2017.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Verso, 1992.
- Archambault, JoAllyn. "Native Communities, Museums and Collaboration." *Practicing Anthropology*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2011, pp. 16-20.
- Archuleta, Margaret & Dr. Rennard Strickland. *Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century*. The New Press, 1991.
- Arcturus. "Constellations: Harry Fonseca." *Constellations: Illumination for the Spectacle*, Blogspot, 5 Jan. 2007, [con-stellations.blogspot.com/2007/01/harry-fonseca-5-jan-1946-28-dec-2006\\_05.html](http://con-stellations.blogspot.com/2007/01/harry-fonseca-5-jan-1946-28-dec-2006_05.html). Accessed 7 Sept. 2017.
- Bales, Stephen. "The Post-Aristotelian Academy Library as a Tool for Exclusion." *Texas A&M Univ. Libraries/Digital*, 2009, [plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/). Accessed 19 May 2015.
- Bamforth, Douglas B. "Technological Efficiency and Tool Curation." *American Antiquity*, vol. 51, no. 1, Jan. 1986, pp. 38-50.
- Barreiro, Jos, ed. *Indian Roots of American Democracy*. Akwe:kon, 1992.
- Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. Routledge, 2009.
- Benz, Charmain M. and Ronald Todd Williamson. *Diba Jimooyung, Telling Our Story: A History of the Saginaw Ojibwe Anishinabek*. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Ziibiwing Cultural Society, 2005.
- Berlo, Janet Catherine, Ruth B. Phillips, Carol Duncan, Donald Preziosi, Danielle Rice, and Anne Rorimer. "The Problematics of Collecting and Display, Part 1." *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 77, no.1, 1995, pp. 6-24, *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/3046076](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3046076). Accessed 4 Oct. 2016.
- Bieder, Robert E. "The Representation of Indian Bodies in Nineteenth-Century American Anthropology." *Repatriation Reader: Who Owns American Indian Remains?*, edited by

- Devon A. Mihesuah. U of Nebraska P, 2000, pp. 19-36.
- Blackstone, Sarah J. *Buckskins, Bullets, and Business: A History of Buffalo Bill's Wild West*. Greenwood, 1986.
- Bloomfield, Tharron. "Engaging Indigenous Participation: Toward a More Diverse Profession." *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2013, pp. 138-52.
- Bordeaux, Mary. Personal Interview. 24 May 2009.
- Personal Interview. 16 Aug. 2015.
- Brydon, Sherry. "The Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo 67." *American Indian Art Magazine*, vol. 22, no. 3, 1997, pp. 54-63.
- Burcaw, George Ellis. *Introduction to Museum Work*. American Association for State and Local History, 1975.
- Burcaw, George Ellis. *Introduction to Museum Work*. American Association for State and Local History, 1975.
- Camarena, Cuahtémoc & Teresa Morales. "Community Museums and Global Connections: The Union of Community Museums in Oaxaca." *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, editors Ivan Karp, Corinne A. Kratz, Lynn Szwaja & Tomás Ybarra-Frausto. Duke UP, 2006, pp. 322-344.
- Canada Council Art Bank. "Burying the Ruler #1." *Carl Beam*. Canada Council for the Arts. [artbank.ca/art-piece/burying-the-ruler-1/](http://artbank.ca/art-piece/burying-the-ruler-1/). Accessed 9 Oct. 2017.
- Cash Cash, Phillip E. "Medicine Bundles: An Indigenous Approach to Curation." *The Future of the Past: Archaeologists, Native Americans, and Repatriation*, editor Tamara L. Bray, Garland Pub., 2001, pp. 139-45.
- CBC Digital Archives. *Expedition: Expo 67's Indians of Canada*. Society: Native Issues, 4 Aug. 1967.
- Clavir, Miriam. *Preserving What Is Valued: Museums, Conservation, and First Nations*. UBC, 2002.
- Clifford, James. "Four Northwest Coast Museums: Travel Reflections." *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, editors Ivan Karp & Steven D. Lavine, Smithsonian Institution, 1991, pp. 212-254.
- and George E. Marcus. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography: A School of American Research Advanced Seminar*. U of California P, 1986.

- Cohen, Felix. *The Legal Conscience, Selected Papers*. Yale UP, 1960.
- Cook Potlatch Welcoming Poles Restoration Project, Summer 2013. Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre, 2013, [www.museumatcapemudge.com/](http://www.museumatcapemudge.com/). Accessed 20 April 2015.
- Coombes, Annie E. *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand and South Africa*. Manchester UP, 2006.
- Cooper, Karen Coody. *Spirited Encounters: American Indians Protest Museum Policies and Practices*. AltaMira, 2008.
- Cummins, Alissandra. "Caribbean Museums and National Identity." *History Workshop Journal*. Autumn 2004, pp. 224-245.
- Cusick, David. "Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations." *The Iroquois Trail, or, Footprints of the Six Nations in Customs, Traditions, and History*. W.M. Beauchamp, Fayetteville Recorder Office, 1892.
- Davis, Townsend. *Weary Feet, Rested Souls: A Guided History of the Civil Rights Movement*. W.W. Norton, 1998.
- Day, David T. *Miscellaneous Documents of the House of Representatives: For the First Session of the Forty-ninth Congress, 1887-88, in Twenty-seven Volumes*. Washington, G.P.P., 1889.
- Deloria, Jr., Vine. *Indians of the Pacific Northwest: From the Coming of the White Man to the Present Day*. Doubleday, 1977.
- Dibbelt, Dan. "Nations Gather to Protest Glenbow's Spirit Sings Display." *Windspeaker: Canada's Aboriginal News Source*, vol. 5, no. 23, 1988, p. 2.
- Douglas, Kristen. "Band Launches Campaign to Restore Poles." *Campbell River Mirror*. Black Press Community News Media, 18 July 2013.
- Doxtator, Deborah. *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness: A Resource Guide*. Woodland Cultural Centre, 1992.
- Drake-Garcia, Nichelle Lee. "Reclaiming Our Cultures: The Development of Tribal Museums in the United States Survey Results." San Francisco State University, thesis, 2004.
- Enote, Jim. "Museum Collaboration Manifesto." *Facebook*. Facebook, 8 Sept. 2015.
- Erikson, Patricia Pierce with Helma Ward & Kirk Wachendorf. *Voices of a Thousand People: The Makah Cultural and Research Center*. U of Nebraska P, 2002.
- Errington, Shelly. *The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress*.

- UC P, 1998.
- Euler, Robert C. & Volney H. Jones. "Hermetic Sealing as a Technique of Food Preservation Among the Indians of the American Southwest." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 100, no. 1, 24 Feb.1956, pp. 87-99.
- "Expo 67." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 27 March 2009, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expo\_67. Accessed 4 April 2014.
- Falcon, James C. "Communities Mourn Loss of Brother Simon." *Rapid City Journal*, 2006, p. A-1.
- Felt, Harvey A. "Neoliberal Governance and James Bay Cree Governance." *Indigenous Peoples and Autonomy: Insights for a Global Age*, edited by Mario Blaser, Ravi De Costa, Deborah McGregor, and William D. Coleman, UBC, 2010, pp. 49-79.
- Ferguson, T.J. Roger Anyon & Edmund J. Ladd. "Repatriation at the Pueblo of Zuni: Diverse Solutions to Complex Problems." *Repatriation Reader: Who Owns American Indian Remains?*," edited by Devon A. Mihesuah, U of Nebraska P, 2000, pp. 239-265.
- Fine-Dare, Kathleen S. *Grave Injustice: the American Indian Repatriation Movement and NAGPRA*. U. of Nebraska P, 2002.
- Fleury, Eric M. "Emergence of Museums and Institutes for African-American Civil Rights, History and Culture." *The Black Collegian*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998, pp. 143-46.
- Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness*. Manitoba Historical Society, 11 Apr. 2010. [http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb\\_history/fluffandfeathers.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/fluffandfeathers.shtml). Accessed 25 Oct. 2014.
- Fuller, Nancy J. and Susanne Fabricius. "Native American Museums and Cultural Centers: Historical Overview and Current Issues." *Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie*, vol. 117, 1992, pp. 223-237.
- Gandhi, Mahatma. *Peace: The Words and Inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi*. Blue Mountain, 2007.
- Garbarino, Merwyn S. & Robert F. Sasso. *Native American Heritage*. Waveland, 1994.
- Gathercole, P. & David Lowenthal, editors. *The Politics of the Past*. " Routledge, 1994.
- Geller, Peter. "Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness." *Manitoba History*, Autumn 26, 1993, [http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb\\_history/26/fluffandfeathers.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/26/fluffandfeathers.shtml). Accessed 25 Oct. 2014.

- Genoways, Hugh H., and Mary Anne. Andrei. *Museum Origins: Readings in Early Museum History and Philosophy*. Left Coast, 2008.
- A Gift from the Past*. Dir. Karen Thomas. Exec. Prod. Karen Thomas, Robin Cutler and Dave Warren. Narr. Wes Studi. Media Resource Associates, 1994.
- Gordon, Donald E. "German Expressionism." *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*. William Rubin. Vol. II. Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 369-403.
- Grinde, Donald A. Jr. & Bruce Johansen. "Exemplar of Liberty: Native American and the Evolution of Democracy." 1991. [rational.org/many\\_worlds/6Nations/EoL/](http://rational.org/many_worlds/6Nations/EoL/). Accessed 14 Feb. 2016.
- Hale, Horatio, ed. *The Iroquios Book of Rites*. [1883] 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., AMS, 1969.
- H. Con. Res. 331, 100<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session. October 5, 1988.
- Harjo, Suzan Shown. "Introduction." *Mending the Circle: A Native American Repatriation Guide*. American Indian Ritual Object Repatriation Foundation, 1996, pp. 3-7.
- "Haudenosaunee Confederacy Announces Policy on False Face Masks." *Kanatiiosh*, Aug. 2001, <http://www.nativetech.org/cornhusk/maskpoli.html>. Accessed 20 May. 2014.
- Heikell, Vicki, Dean Whiting, Miriam Clavir, Nancy Odegaard, Marian A. Kaminitz & John C. Moses. "The Conservator's Approach to Sacred Art." *WAAC Newsletter*, 1995, vol. 17, no. 3, Sept. 1995.
- hooks, bell. *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics*. NY, 1995.
- . *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge, 1994.
- Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. *Community Museums Preserve Memory and Identity*. Google Translation. 23 Oct. 2015. [www.inah.gob.mx/es/boletines/443-museos-comunitarios-preservan-la-memoria-e-identidad](http://www.inah.gob.mx/es/boletines/443-museos-comunitarios-preservan-la-memoria-e-identidad). Accessed 23 Oct. 2015.
- Janvier, Alex. Personal Interview. 2 Jan. 2012.
- "Jaune Quick-to-See Smith." *Accola Griefen Gallery*. 2014, <http://accolagriefen.com/artists/jaune-quick-to-see-smith>. Accessed 20 May 2015.
- *National Museum of Women in the Arts*. 2014, [nmwa.org/explore/artist-profiles/jaune-quick-to-see-smith](http://nmwa.org/explore/artist-profiles/jaune-quick-to-see-smith). Accessed 20 May 2015.
- Johansen, Bruce E. *Forgotten Founders: Benjamin Franklin, the Iroquois and the Rationale for the American Revolution*. Gambit Inc., 1982.

- Johnson, Jessica S., Susan Heald, Kelly McHugh, Elizabeth Brown & Marian Kaminitz. "Practical Aspects of Consultation with Communities." *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, vol. 44, no. 3, Fall-Winter 2005, pp. 203-215.
- Karp, Ivan, and Steven D. Lavine. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Smithsonian Institution, 1991.
- Kreps, Christina. "Changing the Rules of the Road: Post-Colonialism and the New Ethics of Museum Anthropology." *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First-Century Museum*. Ed. Janet Marstine. Routledge, 2011, pp. 70-84.
- LaDuke, Winona. *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming*. South End, 2005.
- Levin, Gail. "American Art." *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*. William Rubin. Vol. II. Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 453-473.
- Lippard, Lucy R. *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America*. Pantheon Books, 1990.
- Loft, Steven. "Reflections on 20 Years of Aboriginal Art." *The Trudeau Foundation Papers*, vol. IV, no. 1, 2012, pp. 12-33.
- Lonetree, Amy. *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. U of North Carolina P, 2012.
- Marstine, Janet. *New Museum Theory and Practice*. Blackwell, 2006.
- Maurer, Evan M. "Presenting the American Indian: From Europe to America." *The Changing Presentation of the American Indian: Museums and Native Cultures*. NMAI Smithsonian Institution, 2000, pp. 15-28.
- Maxwell, Lesli A. "Running in Place in Indian Country." *Education Week, Special Section*, vol. 33, no. 13. 4, December 2013, pp. 12-20.
- McMacken, Robin. *The Dakotas: Off the Beaten Path*. Insiders' Guide, 2006.
- McMaster, Gerald, ed. *Reservation X: The Power of Place in Aboriginal Contemporary Art*. U of Washington P, 1998.
- & Lee-Ann Martin, eds. *INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art*. Douglas & McIntyre, 1982.
- Mekeel, S. "Mescal." Ed. A.L. Kroeber, Walapai Ethnography. *American Anthropological Association Memoir*, 1935, p. 42.

- Message, Bianca J.A. "Teaching Each Other to See." Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways Symposium "Embracing a Community – A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tribal Museum Model," 18 May 2006.
- Mithlo, Nancy Marie. "The U'Mista Cultural Center." Institute of American Indian Arts lecture, Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 23 March 1998.
- "'Red Man's Burden': The Politics of Inclusion in Museum Settings." *The American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2004, pp. 743-63.
- MoMA Press Release Archives No. 17. MoMA Press Archives, 1980-89, MoMAPS1, 2012.
- Moses, John. "Future for First Nations Advocacy in Canadian Museums." *Muse*, 1997, pp. 74,76.
- "Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council House" *Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council House – Muscogee (Creek) Nation*. Muscogee Creek Nation, 2014, <http://creekculturalcenter.com/2014/05/muscogee-creek-nation-council-house/>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2016.
- "The Museum of the Cherokee Indian." *The Museum of the Cherokee Indian*. <http://www.cherokeemuseum.org/>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2016.
- Nason, James D. *National Museum of the American Indian: Phase 2 – Native American Tribal Museum and Center Survey: Storage, Care and Access Policies for Museum Collections*. Burke Museum, American Indian Studies Center, 25 May 1992.
- . "'Our' Indians: The Unidimensional Indian in the Disembodied Local Past." *The Changing Presentation of the American Indian: Museums and Native Cultures*. NMAI Smithsonian Institution, 2000, pp. 29-46.
- . Personal Correspondence. 7 Sept. 2015.
- Native North American Images – Old Photos. *Ga-ha-no, digital image*. Facebook, Facebook, 27 Nov. 2013, [www.facebook.com/NNAIOP/](http://www.facebook.com/NNAIOP/). Accessed 1 Oct. 2015.
- Niezen, Ronald. *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity*. UCP, 2003.
- "Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre." *Museum at Cape Mudge*. <http://www.nuyumbalees.com/cultural-centre.html>. Accessed 10 April 2014.
- Odegaard, Nancy. "Artists' Intent: Material Culture Studies and Conservation." *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, vol. 34, no. 3, Autumn-Winter 1995, pp. 187-193.
- . "Changing the Way Professionals Work: Collaboration in the Preservation of Ethnographic and Archaeological Objects." *CGI Newsletter*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2005.

- . "Methods to Mitigate Risks for Use of Contaminated Objects, Including Methods to Decontaminate Affected Objects." *Collections Forum*, vol. 17, no. 1-2, 2001, pp. 117-121.
- . "Preserving the Tangible and Non-Tangible in Native American Art." *World of Tribal Arts*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1995, pp. 78-9.
- . 2017. "A Survey of Plant and Insect Exudates in the Archaeology of Arizona." *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, vol. 15, October 2017, pp. 272-281.
- & Grace Katterman. *A Guide to Handling Anthropological Museum Collections*. Western Association for Art Conservation, 1991.
- & Alyce Sadongi. *Old Poisons, New Problems: A Museum Resource for Managing Contaminated Cultural Materials*. AltaMira, 2005.
- Ogden, Sherelyn. "Understanding, Respect, and Collaboration in Cultural Heritage Preservation: A Conservator's Developing Perspective." *Library Trends*, vol. 56, no. 1, Summer 2007, pp. 275-287.
- ed. *Caring for American Indian Objects: A Practical and Cultural Guide*. Minnesota Historical Society, 2004.
- "Our Story, Our Success: Wičhóoyake na Wóokihi Uŋkithwwapi Kiŋ." *History*, Red Cloud Indian School, [www.redcloudschool.org/page.aspx?pid=424](http://www.redcloudschool.org/page.aspx?pid=424). Accessed 25 Oct. 2015.
- Peek, Walter W., editor. "Pre-Columbian Religions: From Wah'kon-tah the Great Mystery." *Literature of the American Indian*. Glencoe, 1973.
- Penney, David W. "The Poetics of Museum Representations: Tropes of Recent American Indian Art Exhibitions." *The changing Presentation of the American Indian: Museums and Native Cultures*. NMAI Smithsonian Institution, 2000, pp. 47-65.
- Pepper Henry, James. "Challenges in Managing Culturally Sensitive Collections at the National Museum of the American Indian." *Stewards of the Sacred*. Ed. Lawrence Eugene Sullivan and Alison Edwards. American Association of Museums in Cooperation with the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard U, 2004, pp. 105-12.
- Phillips, Heather. "The Great Library of Alexandria?" *Lib. Philos. and Practice*, UNL, 2010, <http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/phillips.htm>. Accessed 12 March 2015.
- Pomedli, Michael. *Living with Animals: Ojibwe Spirit Powers*. U of Toronto P, 2014.
- Portell, J.D. "Prior Repairs: When Should They Be Preserved?" *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2003, pp. 363-380.

- "Potlatch." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 19 July 2015, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potlatch. Accessed 16 Aug. 2015.
- Pub. L. 99-498, title XV, §1504, Oct. 17, 1986, 100 Stat. 1601.
- Quick-to-See Smith, Jaune. *The Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs: A Visual Commentary on the Columbus Quincentennial from the Perspective of America's First People*. Atlatl, 1992.
- "Red Cloud: Activist, Folk Hero." *Bio.com*. A&E Networks Television, 2015, www.biography.com/people/red-cloud-9453402. Accessed 16 Aug. 2015.
- "Red Cloud's War." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 1 Aug. 2015, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red\_Cloud%27s\_War. Accessed 16 Aug. 2015.
- "Repatriation." *National Museum of the American Indian - Repatriation*. Smithsonian Institution, 2015, <http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/repatriation/>. Accessed 02 Sept. 2015.
- "Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People." *Appendix 6A Excerpts from Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*, Christian Aboriginal Infrastructures Development, 1996, [http://caid.ca/Vol\\_3\\_RepRoyCommAborigPple.html](http://caid.ca/Vol_3_RepRoyCommAborigPple.html). Accessed 24 June 2015.
- Robertson, Carmen. "Norval Morrisseau: Life & Work – Biography." *Art Canada Institute – Institut de L'Art Canadien*, ACI, 2013, www.aci-iac.ca/norval-morrisseau/biography. Accessed 21 Oct. 2017.
- Ronan, Kristine. "Native Empowerment, the New Museology, and the National Museum of the American Indian." *Museum & Society*, vol. 12, no. 1, July 2014, pp. 132-147.
- Rosenberg, Chaim M. *America at the Fair: Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition*. Arcadia, 2008.
- Rubin, William, ed. "Primitivism" in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern." Vols. I and II, Museum of Modern Art, 1984.
- Rutherford, Myra & Jim Miller. "It's Our Country: First Nations' participation in the Indian Pavilion at Expo 67." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2006, pp. 148-173.
- "Totem Pole." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 5 Dec. 2017, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Totem\_pole. Accessed 7 Dec. 2017.
- Thomson, Kate. "Dolls' Surreal Influence: Kachine Beliefs Inspired Horst Antes." Special to the Japan Times, The Japan Times Online,

www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2005/05/11/arts/dolls-surreal-influence/#.WhMQurQ-eRs.  
Accessed 11 May 2005.

TimberWest. "TimberWest Donates Logs to Restoration of Cook Welcome Poles." *TimberWest Forest Corp.*, 10 Sept. 2013, www.timberwest.com. Accessed 9 Aug. 2015.

Tooker, Elisabeth. 1981. "Eighteenth Century Political Affairs and the Iroquois League." *The Iroquois in the American Revolution: 1976 Conference Proceedings*, Rochester Museum & Science Center, 1981.

Tremblay, Roland. *The St. Lawrence Iroquoians: Corn People*. Pointe-À-Callière, Montréal Museum of Archaeology and History, 2006.

"Tribal Museums & Cultural Centers." *Tribal Museums & Cultural Centers*. National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, tribalmuseums.org. Accessed 04 Aug. 2015.

Vogel, Susan. "Introduction to Art/Artifact: African Art in Anthropology Collections." *The Anthropology of Art: A Reader*. Howard Morphy & Morgan Perkins, editors, Blackwell Publishing, 2006, pp. 219-236.

Wallace, Paul A. *The White Roots of Peace*. [1946] 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Ira J. Friedman, 1968.

Warren, David & Ryan S. Flahive, editors. "Dr. Dave Warren and the Transformation of Cultural Studies." Dave Warren & the Institute of American Indian Arts, 2014.

West, W. Richard. *The Changing Presentation of the American Indian: Museums and Native Cultures*. National Museum of the American Indian, 2000, pp. 7-14.

Whitelaw, Anne. "Land Spirit Power: First Nations Cultural Production and Canadian Nationhood." *Aboriginal Peoples and Canada: International Journal of Canadian Studies*, Fall, vol. 12, pp. 30-49.

Witt, Shirley Hill. *The Tuscaroras*. Crowell-Collier, 1972.

"Woodland Cultural Centre" *Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance*. IPAA Membership Directory, 2009, March 2010, www.ipaa.ca/membership/organizations/eastern/woodland-cultural-center. Accessed 22 March 2014

Woolley, Leonard. *Ur "of the Chaldees": The Final Account, Excavations at Ur*. Book Club Associates in agreement with Herbert Press, 1982.

--- *Excavations at Ur – A Record of Twelve Years Work by Sir Leonard Wooley*. W.W. Norton, 1965.

"World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 Collection." *The Field Museum*.

[www.fieldmuseum.org/node/5106](http://www.fieldmuseum.org/node/5106). Accessed 22 Oct. 2017

Yerkes, Richard W. "Microwear, Microdrills, and Mississippian Craft Specialization." *American Antiquity*, vol. 48, no. 3, Jul. 1983, pp. 499-518.

"Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways." *Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan*. 1998, [www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/](http://www.sagchip.org/ziibiwing/). Accessed 14 July 2015.

Zinn, Howard. *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress*. City Lights, 2007.

Zuni Letter to Sotheby's Auction House – New York. October 9, 1978. The Pueblo of Zuni April 1999.

APPENDIX A: DUANE NIATUM'S LETTER TO JAUNE QUICK-TO-SEE  
SMITH

*My son, be generous and forgiving to the relatives, friends, enemies, who are often harsh, unfair judges of your path. Your life may take many directions: learn from pain, joy, sorrow, failure. This will mean little to these people. So you must listen closely to your guardian spirits for direction out of your life storms; be grateful and patient. Because you are young, I, very old, our village but a memory of smoke and ash, there is little I can say of our people's old ways in these bad times. You must grow strong like mother spruce. You are my son; I leave you this song.*

*--- Francis Patsy, Elder Klallam*

*Dear Jaune;*

*What I intend to celebrate in 1992 is **not** Christopher Columbus' arrival in what is now known as the Americas, but what these words of my grandfather suggest are worthy of celebration. My grandfather and his father and grandfather were members of a traditional circle of Coast Salish communities. Like many native peoples from North, Central, and South America, I will celebrate 1992 as the year of Indigenous People.*

*I will celebrate the vision and path of my Klallam, Swinomish, Snohomish, and Umatilla ancestors because time is weighing down my shoulders with the passage of decades more than years. This path back to the rivers, lakes, shores, and mountains of my tribal ancestors keeps me in harmony with my guardian spirits, since without the songs from my spirit helpers it is foolish to think my imagination alone can save me from the straight and narrow road of science, philosophy, technology, and commerce. With luck, these guardians will also save me from the path of despair when it ends at the self-destruct machine, the mind pulling out its eyes.*

*As one who believes completely in the legends and myths of his North American tribal ancestors, I know in my gut and heart that the Earth is the fundamental element of the universe I was born into and still live, walk, and dream upon, and will die back into. The earth is my mother as much as the one who gave me birth, and as I begin my fifties, she may be even more than that. She could turn out to be the last supreme joy of the rest of my life, enclosed as it is between two parentheses.*

*Therefore, it will be my grandfather and his Pacific Northwest coast stories that will be celebrated in 1992. Since what artistic self exists today began under his guardianship. This view of my ancestors has proven to me over and over again that the joys and sorrows of being are absorbed and understood when looked upon in relationship to the entire cosmic order, from the microbe to the Milky Way.*

*Finally, in 1992, I want to pay homage to the tribal view, the unspoken agreement among the community of artists, that one should look at the age and society with an impassioned skepticism. For without this shield, the artist is too often compromised and pulled into the counterfeit traps of Consumer culture.*

--- *Hooy-kwi,*  
*Duane Niatum*

*(Quick-to-See Smith: 8)*

APPENDIX B: CHARLOTTE DECLUE “BLANKET POEM #4... VISITING  
DAY”

*Joe Harp Correctional Center, Lexington, OK*

*Big Ole Sky Woman breathes life  
into open thighs, Breasts rise like circling clouds  
on hot summer afternoon, dropping moisture  
on Blanket Flowers that grow wild in prison yard.*

*At home he would pick them, put ‘em  
In a pop can and set ‘em on the table,  
I would knead dough with my knuckles  
while he felt for my belly  
beneath folds of cotton skirt. It would be  
that way “at home.”*

*Once he would have cut me burden straps  
from side of buffalo calf. I would have pounded  
out fat, and juice from berries.  
We would lie on some creek bed  
listening to locusts sing in cottonwood trees.*

*La Raza couple share table with friends  
from the outside who talk about El Conquistador  
and his new BMW, and the time Crisobal Colon  
had a flat and had to hitch a ride to the Pueblo.*

*The guard laughs about us “suckin’ face.”  
knows who we have to thank for all this...  
the Quakers and Oprah Winfrey,  
thank you to Anaconda for razor wire,  
thanks to the technocrats for video equipment,  
and thanks to a dead warden  
for the name on the place.*

*THERE IS A ROAN HORSE GRAZING behind  
barbed wire that is not as free  
as he would want to be.*

*THERE IS A YOUNG MAN SEARCHING midtown streets  
for loose change, while another rolls pencils  
across a desk. They are not as free  
as they would want to be.*

*THERE IS A YOUNG WOMAN DISAPPOINTED with life  
who pouts through a Rabbit Dance,  
while her sister eyes another woman's husband.  
They are not as free  
As they would want to be.*

*Couples swear that if Columbus  
had landed in another place  
they would still be in love.*

*I think about THESE THINGS the 30 minutes  
it takes to drive for Visiting Days.....  
the horse, the lips wrapped around a bottle,  
the sad-eyed women....the wait  
that seems forever,  
#88935, Unit C,  
the maze of doors slamming behind me.*

*A tongue searches the place inside me.  
that keeps repeating "I miss you, I miss you."*

*Sky Woman opens her strong arms,  
breathes life into tired eyes.  
A-Ha! It will be a damn good day.*

*--- Charlotte DeClue*

*(Quick-to-See Smith 12)*

APPENDIX C: MEMORANDUM OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE  
ALASKA STATE MUSEUM[,] KIKS.ADI CLAN OF SITKA [AND THE]  
TIN.AA HIT (COPPER PLATE HOUSE OF SITKA TRIBE OF ALASKA)

This agreement is entered into by the Alaska State Museum (hereinafter referred to as “Museum”), the Kiks.adi Clan of Sitka (hereinafter referred to as “House”), and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska (hereinafter referred to as “STA”), to specify necessary measures for the care, control, maintenance, and protection of the Kids.adi Frog tunic (Hereinafter referred to as “Tunic”), Museum catalog number 93-29-1.

WHEREAS, the Clan has lost possession of the Tunic, and important piece of regalia said to have been made for Rudolph Walton, a leader of the Tin.aa Hit; and

WHEREAS, the Clan believes that, notwithstanding the present owner’s legal title to the Tunic, the Tunic remains the property of the Clan under traditional law; and

WHEREAS, the Tunic is on the verge of leaving the State of Alaska through sale by the legal owner; and

WHEREAS, all parties believe that the Tunic should be preserved in Alaska and available to the Clan for traditional uses, and

WHEREAS, the Museum will prevent the loss of the Tunic by purchasing it and allowing the Clan to ceremonially use or display the Tunic; and

WHEREAS, all parties agree that the purchase of the Tunic by the Museum is the only viable means at hand to keep the Tunic in Alaska and accessible to the Clan; and

WHEREAS, the Museum has the appropriate facilities to protect and preserve the Tunic, and can exhibit the Tunic for non-profit educational purposes, and

WHEREAS, all parties are aware of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (hereinafter referred to as “NAGPRA”); and

WHEREAS, the Museum wishes to establish a valid and uniformly recognized right of possession of the Tunic, as defined by NAGPRA; and

WHEREAS, all parties recognize that a request for repatriation of the Tunic under NAGPRA subsequent to the Museum's purchase of the tunic would defeat the mutual goals of the parties; and

WHEREAS, the Museum, Clan, House, and STA believe the following measures will adequately provide for the care, control, maintenance, and protection of the Tunic;

THE PARTIES THEREFORE MUTUALLY AGREE as follows:

I. TITLE TO THE TUNIC:

- 1.1 The Clan, House, and STA voluntarily consent to the acquisition of the Tunic by the Museum through purchase of the Tunic from Steve Johnson of Sitka, Alaska.
- 1.2 The Clan, House, and STA voluntarily consent to transfer to the Museum any and all ownership rights they have in the Tunic under traditional law. Consent under this subsection does not affect the rights otherwise provided for in this agreement to ceremonially use or display the Tunic, to advise the Museum on the proper use and display of the Tunic, or for the Clan to purchase the Tunic under 1.5 of this section.
- 1.3 All parties agree that legal title to the Tunic will remain with the Museum unless and until the Clan exercises its option to purchase under 1.5 of this section.
- 1.4 All parties agree that this Agreement, combined with the Museum's purchase of the Tunic from Steve Johnson of Sitka, Alaska, establishes a valid right of possession of the Tunic for the Museum, as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990 (section 1, no. 13), and the Clan, House, and STA agree not to seek repatriation, directly or through other groups, of the Tunic under NAGPRA or other federal, state, local, or tribal statute.
- 1.5 The Clan has a ninety-nine year irrevocable option to purchase the Tunic from the Museum. Should this option to purchase be exercised, the sales price will be the Museum's original purchase price of \$14,000, adjusted upward to reflect the true value of \$14,000 at the time the Clan exercises this option. This option is assignable only to the House or the STA.

II. CARE, CONTROL, PROTECTIN, AND DISPLAY OF THE TUNIC:

2.1 All parties agree to observe the following necessary measures for the care, control, maintenance, and protection of the Tunic:

2.2 The Museum Shall:

- A. Be the repository for the Tunic (unless the Clan elects to purchase the Tunic under 1.5 of this agreement), and care for the Tunic to assure its preservation, protection, and use in a manner consistent with Kiks.adi traditions and history.
- B. Display the Tunic for educational programs in consultation with the Clan and House.
- C. Keep the Tunic at the Alaska State Museum's Juneau facility unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties.
- D. Maintain insurance that is adequate to protect the Tunic from risk or loss and is comparable to coverage of other artifacts of similar significance in the Museum's collection.
- E. In consultation with the other parties, perform restoration or conservation treatments on the Tunic which are consistent with generally accepted museum practices.
- F. Make the Tunic available for priority use and benefit of the Clan or House, and allow the Tunic to be withdrawn by persons specifically authorized by the Clan to act on its behalf.
  1. Construct a secure and safe crate for transportation of the Tunic to and from traditional and cultural events.
  2. Offer instruction regarding appropriate care to a person or persons designated by the Clan to withdraw the Tunic for traditional or ceremonial use (see addendum "A").
  3. Supervise, in consultation with the Clan/House, the handling, transportation, and security of the Tunic at all times when the Tunic is away from the Museum building.
- G. Recognize that the STA shall, after construction of an appropriate facility, with proper security and climate control as defined by the

American Association of Museums, have the right to borrow the Tunic if desired and approved by all parties.

2.3 The STA shall:

- A. Have the right to display the Tunic on loan from the Museum upon construction of an adequate facility as determined by the standards of the American Association of Museums, and if approved by all parties.
- B. Agree not to challenge the Museum for the right of possession or legal title of the Tunic under any federal, state, local, or tribal statute.
- C. Agree not to request repatriation of the Tunic from the Museum under NAGPRA.

2.4 The Clan and/or House shall:

- A. Assist the Museum in determining appropriate display and educational use of the Tunic.
- B. Research and document the history of the Tunic, and deposit the data for permanent preservation with the Museum.
- C. In the event the Clan purchases the Tunic from the Museum, in accordance with 1.5 of this agreement, permit the Museum to display and preserve the Tunic under such conditions and terms as are mutually agreed upon by the parties.
- D. Designate in writing a person or persons officially authorized to withdraw the Tunic from the Museum for traditional and cultural functions, and upon the death or removal of the designee(s) select a replacement, and communicate this designation to the other parties.
  - 1. Provide the Museum with a minimum of fourteen (14) days advance notice prior to any withdrawal of the Tunic.
  - 2. Pay all transportation costs, if any, associated with the transportation of the Tunic to and from traditional or cultural events, including the travel and per diem of one museum staff member accompanying the Tunic to and from the event for which the Tunic is withdrawn.

3. The designated person withdrawing the Tunic must complete a copy of the Withdrawal Agreement (addendum "B"), and provide proof of authorization to the Museum (which may, at its discretion, seek to verify this authorization with the Clan or House).
  4. The designated person withdrawing the Tunic and the Clan and House are individually and collectively liable to the Museum for any loss or damage to the Tunic while being displayed or worn at the ceremonial event.
- E. Agree not to challenge the Museum for the right of possession or legal title of the Tunic under any federal, state, local, or tribal statute.
- F. Agree not to request repatriation of the Tunic from the Museum under NAGPRA.

This agreement takes effect on the last date set out below and is subject to amendment at any time by mutual consent of the parties.

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

Dated: 11-2-93

By: Bruce Kato, Chief Curator

Dated: 11-1/93

By: Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections

DIKS.ADI CLAN

Dated: 10-30-93

By: Al Perkins, Chief

Dated: 10-29-93

By: William Brady, House Master

SITKA TRIBE OF ALASKA

Dated: 10-29-93

By: Executive Director

Addendum A: Guidelines for Handling and Ceremonial use of tunic

Addendum B: Withdrawal Agreement

## APPENDIX D: MUSEUM COLLABORATION MANIFESTO

After many years working within museology we continue to see items in collections disguised with mistaken and unsuitable interpretations. With so much error many items gain false significance and meaning by the hand of outdated standards and practice. It is strange enough that things are removed from their local setting and context, now they have been renamed and reframed in languages and contexts foreign to the place and people from which they were born.

We are now finally witnesses to efforts that improve staid systems of museum classification and accounting. Let us bury the fit-in-a-box orthodoxy of one structured and established system of classifying objects and archival materials. The current system is not even binary. It is not two systems, with one recognizing the other. It is one system. And I will say this. No one has a right to restrict what we name or label this thing or that.

Inclusion of expert peoples representing the source of collection materials is the keystone of a collaborative movement. Welcoming and respecting knowledge of objects by the makers and users of the objects does not change the objects. Why must we even offer an explanation? Has a museum or archive ever created objects in their collections?

In the spirit of Amidolanne, the Zuni word for rainbow and the name of a multiple museum collection database situated at the A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center, we will advocate for pure and virtuous collaboration. This is a higher order than many may be concerned with and implies that collaboration involves reaching out and enlightening on equal terms: to decentralize power and leadership and share problem solving. We will not oppose each other; rather we will enable one another and allow objects and people to speak. Through pure collaborative spirit we will pay tribute to voices of objects, as the objects should be perceived and understood.

Clearly, many old conventions in museum collection management, lexicon, and conservation have lost their purpose. If the field of museology is truly egalitarian and moving forward then there must be centrifugal answers to our problems. We will labor, co-labor, collaborate from the fixed center. We are aware that knowledges are transitory and fluid and the old systems supporting only one way of knowing are themselves artifacts of humanity's misstep.

A new museum conservation dialogue has emerged. In some situations let us marvel in the beauty of aging things. In collaboration with the desires of source communities and makers of objects, we will respect that some items should fulfill their lifetime as naturally as possible. As we are fascinated with the age and seasoning of buildings and other structures, we can honor the aging of some items in collections. In this sense some items will reclaim their destinies. We will pay tribute to the creative, the impalpable nature, and the spiritual dynamics of objects together with the science of materials and their environments.

I believe the spirit of pure collaboration is a movement and the number of colleagues that are attaining pure collaboration is additive and promising. These colleagues' works are principled and noble and I applaud them and everyone associated with their ideas.

We are informed by many years of experience, we are serious people, and we are thinking differently from those that served before us. Surely, imaginative and unfamiliar concepts will be met with resistance, but when the tide goes out I imagine we will trust heretical notions as positive beacons that will enlighten the field of museology and manifest new accountability of all knowledges through pure collaboration.

(Presented at the 2015 International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums. Washington, DC)

Jim Enote, Director  
A:shiwi A:wam Museum and Heritage Center

## VITA

Jessie Ryker-Crawford is of the *Gah-waabaabiganikaag*, or White Earth Chippewa Nation. Her mother is of the Loon Clan. She entered the Institute of American Indian Arts in 1998 where she received an Associates of Fine Arts in both Studio Arts and Museum Studies. She then went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of Washington and entered the Ph.D. program in Anthropology at the University of Washington in 2002. She is currently an Associate Professor of Museum Studies at the Institute of American Indian Arts, where she served as Department Chair from 2007-14.