



NATIVE ART NOW!

Plate 3
Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie (Duskegee/Diné, b. 1954)
Portraits Against Amnesia, Idelia, 2002
Digital Platinum Lambda Print; 30 x 20 inches

Collection of the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians
and Western Art

INTRODUCTION: Twenty-five Years of Native American Art

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In the winter of 1991, on the eve of the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in North America, James Luna gave an interview to Steven Durand of *High Performance Magazine* in which he announced his intention to create a work titled *Call me in '93*.¹ The title has become a nearly iconic phrase in the annals of Native American art, encapsulating the deep frustration that many artists felt at the lack of critical attention paid to contemporary Native American art prior to 1992 and a reluctance to return to a neglectful status quo once the Quincentennial "celebrations" concluded.² Thankfully, these concerns proved unwarranted—contemporary Native American art has thrived in the past quarter century. As Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche) put it, "There was genuine doubt about whether we were going to be around or not, and if we were, whether we could cut it or not. Those doubts have vanished."³

Indeed, contemporary Indigenous art has risen to national prominence in both the United States and Canada: in the United States, the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), first in New York City and then on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., has propelled into the public eye the work of contemporary Native artists such as those represented in this book: George Morrison, Alan Houser, Fritz Scholder, Kay WalkingStick, Brian Jungen, Jeffrey Gibson, Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds, James Luna, and many others.⁴ In Canada, the formation of a department

of Indigenous Art at the National Gallery of Canada in 2007 initiated a series of large-scale exhibitions that began with *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art* in 2013 and is intended to continue with exhibitions at five-year intervals throughout the next quarter century.⁵ In the international arena, Native American artists are recurring participants in the cycle of global art fairs that includes the Venice and Sydney biennials, as well as Art Basel, documenta, and an ever-expanding number of smaller fairs.⁶ This increase in the visibility of contemporary Native American art (and artists) is coincident with sweeping changes in institutional practices, not the least of which is the paradigm shift toward collaboration between institutions and Native communities that is a legacy of the repatriation movement,⁷ and a sharp increase in the number of Native museum professionals and curators.⁸

For artists, there are far more opportunities for support in 2017 than there were in 1992. Educational programs are flourishing: the Institute of American Indian Art in New Mexico, for example, has expanded its degree offerings to include a master of fine arts program and has constructed a new 140-acre campus outside Santa Fe. In Toronto, the Ontario College of Art and Design University launched an Indigenous Visual Culture Program in 2012 to train students across the disciplines of Native art practice. Avenues of federal funding for the arts, and for Native arts in particular, have increased in Canada under the auspices of the Canada Council for the Arts. Regrettably, the same cannot be said for the United States: crowd-sourcing and grants from private foundations such as Creative Capital (established 1999) and the Andy Warhol Foundation have endeavored to bridge

the gap created by reduced government support for the arts in the United States.⁹ Since 1992, the number of artists' and curatorial residencies has been on the rise, with the Banff Centre, Native Arts and Culture Foundation, Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts, Denver Art Museum, Joan Mitchell Foundation, and Smithsonian Institution providing both established and emerging professionals with critical resources. At the forefront of these efforts, the Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship has been a source of both funding and recognition for contemporary Native artists: since 1999, the Fellowship has provided more than one million dollars in support to fifty artist fellows and produced a series of publications that has steadily advanced scholarship in the field.¹⁰

Because many of these developments are treated in depth in the essays that follow, the aim of this introduction is to trace what we consider to be the two biggest developments in the creation and reception of contemporary Native American art at the turn of the recent millennium. These are the explosion of new media (including installation, digital media, and performance art) in contemporary art practices in general and the turn toward a new interpretive framework for Indigenous arts in particular; namely, the theorization of art as a practice of Indigenous visual sovereignty. Both bear heavily on the subjects of this book—one encourages us to reflect upon what is “contemporary” about contemporary Native American art, while the other compels us to consider what is uniquely or fundamentally “Indigenous” about the art practices discussed herein.

The first is particularly relevant for the organization of this volume, which is divided into three

sections, each taking as a starting point a classic medium such as painting, sculpture, or photography and venturing into ever-more innovative iterations of that medium. In the first section, painting and drawing are considered alongside related two-dimensional media such as printmaking and graphic arts; in the second section, an influx of new materials impacts the category of sculpture (i.e., mixed media), which in turn expands into the space of the environment in the form of installation art; in the third section, photography provides the literal support for film, video, digital arts, and performance art practices. In this regard, the structure of each section reflects the inexorable expansion of art's media¹¹ over the course of the twentieth century, during which time the foundations of each "classic" medium were tested by generations of artistic innovators from Marcel Duchamp to William Kentridge. In the twenty-first century, this situation has only accelerated, leaving us to negotiate not only the "postmodern," but also the "post-medium" condition.¹²

Far from ignoring the sea changes that have taken place in art's mediums, the structure of this book opens up space for reflection on those developments. The essays treat the past as well as the present, providing both a historical and truly contemporary perspective on recent Native American art. The authors of these essays are uniquely qualified to offer a multifaceted view of the field: they include artists, scholars, and curators whose careers have spanned the breadth of the period under consideration, as well as emerging professionals whose contributions will continue to shape the field for years to come. All have grappled with the issue of medium specificity in their work. Lee-Ann Martin, Margaret Archuleta, and Charlotte

Townsend-Gault for example, were instrumental in addressing mixed-media, installation art, film, and performance art in the series of early-1990s landmark exhibitions now collectively known as the Quincennial Response shows.¹³ In this volume, all three scholars reflect on that history while paying close attention to contemporary practices in various media: Martin writes on installation art, especially in Canada, Archuleta explores a range of sculptural practices by artists as divergent as Alan Houser and Rose Simpson, and Townsend-Gault considers the roles of both performers and spectators in performance art.

Similarly, Rebecca Dobkins, who offers an overview of printmaking techniques here, came to that particular medium in part through her long relationship to sculptor Lillian Pitt and painters Rick Bartow and James Lavadour, the latter the founder of Crow's Shadow Institute for the Arts on the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon. Since its establishment in 1992, Crow's Shadow has provided Lavadour, Pitt, Bartow, and dozens of other artists opportunity to experiment with printmaking processes under master printer Frank Janzen.¹⁴ In this volume, Diné artist Melanie Yazzie offers insight into the importance of such collaborative art projects, chronicling her own involvement in printmaking collectives and exchanges between Indigenous artists in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. In her artistic practice, Yazzie works in multiple mediums (such as ceramics, painting, and mixed media) to confront the "harsh realities" of contemporary life; in seeking to restore balance and harmony to Native communities, Yazzie's work strives to embody the Diné dictum "walk in beauty."

Of all the essays in this book that engage

directly with the ever-changing nature of art's mediums, Mique'l Dangeli's account of the living legacies of a turn-of-the-century Tsimshian photographer may be the most novel. Growing up in the Native Alaskan community that B. A. Haldane had photographed nearly a century before, Dangeli made it her mission as a young woman to "locate, attribute, collect, and bring [Haldane's] work" home to share with her community.¹⁵ In the course of Dangeli's journey, the still, silent photographs are literally "brought to life" through song, dance and ceremony: the medium of photography is not so much transformed as reinvigorated—reanimated in the body of the artist. That Dangeli's integrated practice as a scholar, dancer, and choreographer might lead us to see the body as image as well as as the locus of history and practice is consistent with contemporary understanding of the role that mediums continue to play in the support of art's ideas.

Reflecting on developments in late-twentieth-century art in 2010, critic Rosalind Krauss noted that while, "The onset of postmodernist practice in the 1980s saw the collapse of traditional mediums such as painting or sculpture...the abandonment of the medium as the basis of artistic practice was not total."¹⁶ The task of the critic, Krauss argued, was to become increasingly attuned to the novel mediums of postmodernism, be they bodies, cars, video monitors, or piles of earth. It is exactly such an attention to medium that underscores the organization of this collection and the content of these essays. A strong case in point is offered in Kathleen Ash-Milby's essay, "The Essence of the Matter: Materiality and Mixed Media," in which the author considers the use of materials that are uncommon in contemporary art practices

but have long and deep histories in Indigenous visual and material culture. Rather than make a case for the "traditional" over the "contemporary" or vice-versa, Ash-Milby raises the possibility that artistic practices that do not seem demonstrably Indigenous at first glance may reveal their ties to tradition and community through the "use and understanding of media." Ash-Milby is the curator behind the remarkable 2010 NMAI exhibition *HIDE: Skin as Material and Metaphor*, which brought together such disparate works as Sonya Kelliher-Combs' series of translucent pouches made of walrus stomach and human hair (*Small Secrets*, 2011); Nadia Myre's *Scarscapes*, 2009, torn canvases incompletely mended with cotton thread; and Michael Belmore's huge sheets of hammered copper etched with the shorelines of continents (*Dark Water*, 2009–2010). The assemblage of works in *HIDE* evokes a multitude of notions of skin as a surface, a membrane and a material, as well as a metaphor for Indigenous identity. Thus, the sustained critical attention that Ash-Milby pays to Indigenous art's mediums yields at least one possible answer to the second question posed in this introduction: what is uniquely or fundamentally "Indigenous" about the art practices discussed in this book?

Indigenous Visual Sovereignty

In her introduction to *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*, curator Christine Lalonde writes that three intersecting questions drive the curatorial selections for exhibitions in the new department of Indigenous Art at the National Gallery of Canada: "Indigenous? Global? Contemporary?"¹⁷ Endeavoring to define the term "Indigenous," Lalonde turns to the United Nations and

the recently ratified UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, ratified in 2007). She notes that while the declaration assiduously avoids defining “Indigenous,” the “use of the term articulates a concept based on ancestry, relation to ancestral lands, cultural continuity, language, and most recently added, the right of self-identification collectively and individually.”¹⁸ Lalonde’s evocation of UNDRIP in this context underscores the degree to which the term “Indigenous” has become inextricably bound to, and evocative of, the right of political self-determination. In the case of UNDRIP, a people’s Indigenous status guarantees them the right “to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions.”¹⁹ Sovereignty need not be a strictly political (or communal) concept, however. As early as 1994, Osage critical theorist Robert Allen Warrior argued for a broader view of sovereignty as a personal empowerment:

If our struggle is anything, it is the struggle for sovereignty, and if sovereignty is anything, it is a way of life. That way of life is not a matter of defining a political ideology....It is a decision—a decision we make in our minds, in our hearts, and in our bodies to be sovereign.... [T]he struggle for sovereignty is not a struggle to be free from the influence of anything outside ourselves, but a process of asserting the power we possess as communities and individuals to make decisions that affect our lives.²⁰

Warrior’s definition of sovereignty encompasses both

communal and personal self-determination, and in so doing, it shades toward the realm of culture. Aspects of culture are fundamental to the provisions of UNDRIP as well, including the right of Indigenous peoples “not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture,”²¹ but the notion of intellectual sovereignty did not figure strongly in the discourse of Native studies until roughly twenty years ago. Once the migration of the concept of sovereignty from legal discourse into cultural studies began in earnest, the door was opened for interpretation of a wide variety of texts in these terms. Scott Lyons, for example, coined the term “rhetorical sovereignty” to indicate “resistance to assimilation through acts of writing”:

Rhetorical sovereignty is the inherent right and ability of peoples to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse.²²

Lyons is concerned in this statement with literary texts, but clearly art also constitutes a language of public discourse, especially in the postmodern and post-colonial period.

Jolene Rickard has long argued for such an approach to Indigenous visual arts, asserting that sovereign thoughts, strategies and practices cut across the whole spectrum of cultural production. In 1995, Rickard wrote in a special issue of *Aperture* magazine devoted to Native American photography:

As part of an ongoing strategy for survival, the work of Indigenous artists needs to be understood

through the clarifying lens of sovereignty and self-determination, not just in terms of assimilation, colonization, and identity politics.²³

In Rickard's view, contemporary works by Native photographers join the discourse of Indigenous sovereignty by challenging imposed notions of Indian identity, for example, in Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie's *Nighthawk Series* (1991)—in which she superimposed her tribal enrollment number across her forehead in her self-portraits—or simply by asserting presence, as in Zig Jackson's *Indian Man in San Francisco* series, 1993. Rickard insists that viewing such works through the “lens of sovereignty” allows us to perceive the shift from “a victimized stance to a strategic one.”²⁴

Of the many scholars of Native American art and visual culture who took up Rickard's charge, Seneca literary theorist Michele Raheja deserves recognition for introducing the term “visual sovereignty” to the field in 2007. In an analysis of Zacharias Kunuk's film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, Raheja defined visual sovereignty as an act of artistic resistance and agency: created from an entirely Inuit perspective, Kunuk's film, according to Raheja, effectively supplanted the salvage paradigm bias of the early ethnographic film *Nanook of the North* (1922) with a “flow of Indigenous knowledge.”²⁵ The example of *Atanarjuat* suggested to Raheja that works of art might be open to a range of sovereign strategies and practices beyond the political. She wrote that “visual sovereignty...is not always directly involved in political debates...there is more room for narrative play” than in other forms of sovereignty discourse.²⁶ In the case of *Atanarjuat*, Raheja argues that the film's

construction of imaginative narrative sequences of a spirit/dream world and its incorporation of humor, parody, and absurdity reveal an Indigenous perspective beyond the strictly legal rhetoric of sovereignty. Nevertheless, Raheja's concept does hinge on a notion of Indigenous agency as construed primarily in opposition to structures imposed upon Indigenous communities from without: she refers to visual sovereignty as a “corrective cultural narrative”²⁷ (emphasis added). In this respect, Raheja differs from Rickard, who configures Indigenous sovereignty not as a primarily deconstructionist stance, but rather as an inherently affirmative practice of self-determination.²⁸ Rickard concluded her article on sovereignty as a lens for understanding Indigenous artistic practices with the statement that

[art works] made by Indigenous makers are the documentation of our sovereignty, both politically and spiritually. Some stick close to the spiritual centers while others break geographic and ideological rank and head West. But the images are all connected, circling in ever-sprawling spirals the terms of our experiences as human beings.²⁹

While Raheja's discernment of the resistant strategies of Indigenous art practices provides useful insight into many of the individual works created in the last quarter century—especially those that clustered around the Columbian Quincentennial—Rickard's broader view of visual sovereignty as encompassing all works that convey an Indigenous worldview is arguably more useful for understanding the scope of this

book. Rickard's analysis invites us to see contemporary art produced by Indigenous artists as an exercise of Indigenous visual sovereignty, no matter what its subject matter, medium, or even its message. Moreover, it establishes a ground for understanding the contemporary art practices covered in this volume as being both fully conversant in the languages of art's "mainstream" discourses, while also positioning them as unique.

Decolonizing Native American Art

This is a matter of great importance, for one of the questions this book addresses is what exactly constitutes Native American art as a field unto itself. To put it another way: what exactly is Native about a galvanized steel pole erected in Brussels or Siberia or Winnipeg (Jimmie Durham's *Pole to Mark the Center of the World* (2010)).³⁰ These questions have echoed across the discursive field since the so-called "culture wars" of the 1980s, but they too took a legislative turn in the following decade with the passage of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (IACA) of 1990. Co-sponsored by Representative Ben Nighthorse Campbell and enacted by the United States Congress, the IACA of 1990 was intended primarily to safeguard the market for traditional Indian art, crafts, and jewelry against a vast influx of imported imitations. The act stipulates that any person or organization that offers for sale any good "in a manner that falsely suggests it is Indian produced" is subject to fines and and/or imprisonment. For the purposes of the act, Congress stipulated that an Indian is "any individual who is a member of an Indian tribe."³¹ As well-intentioned as the act may have been, its passage generated immediate concern that Native artists who did not have a

tribal enrollment number (including especially those members of tribes that are not federally recognized) would be prohibited from exhibiting or selling their work.³² Some artists voiced their concern through their work: Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie's aforementioned *Nighthawk Series*, 1991, was created in response to the passage of the IACA. Tsinhnahjinnie wrote that "[t]he new law is quantum questioning and is creating division within Native Nations"; therefore she elected to display her enrollment number on both her body and her work to truncate any further discussion on the matter.³³ Jimmie Durham, who refuses to prove his status as a member of the Cherokee tribe, lampooned the essentialist premises of the act in a work called *My Blood*, which proclaimed a quantity of red pigment to be "Real Indian Blood—color enhanced," in an exhibit at London's Institute of Contemporary Art in 1994.³⁴ In retrospect, perhaps one of the great surprises of the past twenty-five years is that, following an initially painful and turbulent period in the very early 1990s, the passage of the IACA of 1990 does not seem to have had a deleterious effect on the Native American fine arts.

Instead, it can be argued that the focus of academic interest and artistic practice has shifted from policing the boundaries of Native American art toward acknowledging areas of congruence between Indigenous and "mainstream" art practices and the shared experience of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in an increasingly globalized culture. In a symposium that accompanied the opening of Kay WalkingStick's career retrospective at the National Museum of the American Indian in 2015, Comanche curator and longtime political activist Paul Chaat Smith lauded

this progression:

As we continue to ask for a new reading of American art, we should and I believe we *are* looking for new ways to understand Native art. And as many of us begin to disengage from strategic essentialism... maybe we can imagine a dialogue that is about entanglement and complexity and connections rather than essentialized, cost-free, and often imaginary difference.³⁵

Recognizing that WalkingStick's multivalent identities—as the daughter of a white mother and Cherokee father, as a Catholic whose paintings convey a deeply Native spirituality, and as a landscape painter fully committed to modernist abstraction—are all equally vital to her work, Smith observes that contemplating the artist's career “invites a discussion on what we are talking about when we are talking about American Art and the United States itself.”³⁶

The “new reading of American art” that Smith calls for acknowledges the contingent histories of Native American and American art, not only in the post-modern period but throughout the twentieth century. Focusing especially on developments in painting and sculpture, as in Bill Anthes' *Native Moderns: American Indian Painting, 1940–1960* (2006), and comprehensive exhibition catalogues such as *Kay WalkingStick: An American Artist* (2015) and *Modern Spirit: The Art of George Morrison* (2013),³⁷ contemporary scholarship demonstrates a shift in perspective on modernism itself, from one that reifies modernism as an exclusive and monolithic entity to one that acknowledges what

Ruth Phillips has termed the “co-modernity of world arts” in the twentieth century.³⁸ Phillips has been instrumental in advancing the dialogue on this subject: in 2011, she co-founded a multi-year symposium, *Multiple Modernisms: Twentieth-Century Artistic Modernisms in Global Perspective*,³⁹ on the premise that a more inclusive view of modern art's past has much to contribute to our understanding of contemporary practices. Phillips comments:

With the recent interest in the global nature of contemporary artistic practice, new scholarly research has begun to focus on the modernist innovators who preceded these contemporary artists, bringing to light the diverse and active engagements of artists living under colonial and neo-colonial regimes.⁴⁰

Phillips' use of the terms “colonial” and “neo-colonial” is instructive, given that she has argued persuasively elsewhere that the term “post-colonial” is misleading with regard to the study of contemporary Indigenous art in the United States and Canada. In an essay on “Settler Monuments,” Phillips notes:

In contrast to former external colonies, for internally colonized peoples there have been no definitive acts of political liberation, and no formal closure to the colonial era.⁴¹

Thus, in place of the term “post-colonial,” Phillips and many others prefer to speak of “decolonial” movements, and Phillips is careful to count artistic strategies among these efforts. She argues that “the lack of formal closure on a political level has given special

prominence to activist projects within the sphere of the visual arts,”⁴² such as photographer Jeff Thomas’ “Seize the Space” series of portraits of Indigenous artists and allies posed in front of the Samuel de Champlain Monument in Ottawa (see “Introduction to Part II” in this volume).⁴³

Whether focused on the past or the present, the current emphasis in scholarship on Indigenous art and sovereignty is on connections, contingent histories, and what Rickard refers to simply as “our experiences as human beings.” Yet clearly, the signifier “Native” still has valence, and it is often the common experience of distinctly Indigenous peoples that is expressed in the art works and practices discussed in the essays that follow. One such distinction is the concern that Indigenous peoples have with the land: connection to place is a fundamental component of Indigenous identity,⁴⁴ and the complex interrelationship of peoples and the land has inspired some of the most powerful works of contemporary Indigenous art of the past three decades. Land lies at the heart of many of the works brought together under the aegis of the Columbian Quincentennial Response shows, for example, most notably *Land Spirit Power* at the National Gallery of Canada (1992). Subsequent exhibitions such as *Reservation X: The Power of Place in Contemporary Aboriginal Art* at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (1998) and *Off the Map: Landscape in the Native Imagination* at NMAI (2007) have continued to explore the ways that land figures in the political, spiritual, and emotional lives of Indigenous artists. Of his own paintings such as *Blanket*, 2005,⁴⁵ inspired by walking in the mountains of the Umatilla Reservation where he lives, James Lavadour remarks that he begins “with the premise that the land

and I are one. Whatever is in the land is in me, and whatever is in me is in the land.” For Lavadour, the act of painting—laying down and scraping through skeins of pigment that accrue as layers of sediment do—is itself a microcosm of the epic forces of nature. “I’m not looking at the land as a symbol of something,” he insists. “It is something: it’s a living, fertile, dynamic thing.”⁴⁶

Nadia Myre takes a quite different approach to the landscape in her *Landscape of Sorrow*, 2009, which is comprised of six 6” x 84” canvases that together form a double horizon line more than twenty feet long. Each of the long, horizontal panels is unpainted and unadorned except for a jagged “scar” or crudely stitched seam that runs the length of raw canvas. *Landscape of Sorrow* is a companion piece to Myre’s magnum opus, *The Scar Project*, 2006–2013, a series of more than 1,400 individual 10-inch square unprimed canvases, each bearing a “wound” that is incompletely mended: each represents a real or metaphorical, physical or psychic injury suffered by Myre or one of the thousands of Americans, Canadians, and Australians invited to participate in her public art projects.⁴⁷ For Myre, the series is about trauma, longing, and loss, as well as about “healing and forgiveness.”⁴⁸ In its conception and in its format, *Landscape of Sorrow* refers to the overwhelming accumulation of scars rendered in *The Scar Project*, but it also attests to Myre’s growing conviction that loss of connection to the land is one of the deep traumas that resonate through Indigenous lives.⁴⁹

There is perhaps no more poignant illustration of this resonant grief than Kent Monkman’s multimedia installation at the Denver Art Museum, *Lot’s Wife*, 2012, an ethereal specter of a figure gazing longingly

at a distant landscape. The work refers to one of the most famous exiles in the world, the biblical figure of Lot's wife, who was turned to a pillar of salt for the sin of looking back at her homeland as she and her family were led from the city of Sodom. For Monkman, the story is both ubiquitous and personal: *Lot's Wife* memorializes his own great-grandmother, Caroline Everett, a citizen of the Cree Nation who was forced to relocate off-reserve from her home on the Red River in Manitoba in 1907. That very landscape, of the Red River as it flows south from Lake Winnipeg, is shown in the projected video image in the installation, accompanied by an audio track of bird songs and other ambient noise from the natural environment. The beauty of the image underscores the poignancy of Everett's loss, and Monkman's, and by inference, that of generations of Indigenous people. Echoing Myre, Monkman refers to the land as "the site of our conflict, *and* our connection"⁵⁰ (emphasis added).

Here we return to Jimmie Durham's enigmatic *Pole to Mark the Center of the World* and the question posed earlier in this introduction: what exactly is Native about a galvanized steel pole erected in Brussels or Siberia or Winnipeg? Viewed in the context of the works described, Durham's *Pole* may be understood as an invocation of a shared history of displacement and forcible itinerancy of Indigenous peoples, or a more affirmative declaration of his own claim to global citizenship, or both. In any case, the literal grounding of each pole situates Durham's work firmly within the discourse of Indigenous visual sovereignty, which Rickard has characterized as being fundamentally a claim to space, be it physical, political, intellectual, or cultural. (Recall that the very title of Jeff Thomas' Champlain Monument series is "Seize the Space.")

Viewing Durham's or Monkman's mixed-media installations, Myre's *Scar* paintings, Thomas' photographs, and Kunuk's film—indeed, any of the works of art discussed in this volume—through the lens of Indigenous visual sovereignty invites us to see beyond the particularities of medium, or even the circumstances of an individual artist's life or creative process, to the wider arc of Indigenous history and culture. Thus to a great extent, the subjects of the essays in this volume are not works of art per se, but the lived experiences of Native peoples.

¹ Steven Durland, “Call Me in ’93: An Interview with James Luna,” *High Performance* 14, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 34–39.

² Or, more accurately, counter-celebrations. *Land/Spirit/Power; Indigena; The Submuluc Show*; and the special issue of *Art Journal* were all fundamentally distinct from the celebratory rhetoric of the Quincennial events enacted in the mainstream.

³ Paul Chaat Smith, “The Meaning of Life,” in ed. Gerald McMaster *Reservation X* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 39.

⁴ The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of the American Indian was established by act of Congress in 1989 (U.S. Public Law 101–185). NMAI’s George Gustav Heye Center (GGHC) opened in New York City in 1994; since its inception (and including its inaugural exhibitions, *This Path We Travel: Celebrations of Contemporary Native American Life* and *All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture*), GGHC has been an important venue for the exhibition of contemporary Native American art. NMAI opened on the National Mall in 2004, with two long-term installations, *Our Lives: Contemporary Life and Identities* and *Our Peoples: Giving Voice to Our Peoples*, and one less permanent installation, *Native Modernism: The Art of George Morrison and Allan Houser*. See, *The National Museum of the American Indian: Critical Conversations*, eds. Amy Lonetree and Amanda Cobb (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

⁵ The first was *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art*, which opened in 2013.

⁶ Notable examples include the selection of Edward Poitras and Rebecca Belmore to represent Canada at the Venice Biennales of 1995 and 2005, respectively; NMAI’s sponsorship of James Luna’s and Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds’ installations in Venice in 2005 and 2007, although neither artist was represented at the official U.S. Pavilion; curator Nancy Mithlo’s nine exhibitions of contemporary Native American art at the Venice Biennale (1999–2015) under the auspices

of the Indigenous Arts Action Alliance; Brian Jungen’s inclusion at the 2008 Sydney Biennale; and Gerald McMaster’s turn as co-curator of the Eighteenth Sydney Biennale in 2012.

⁷ The United States’ Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 mandates that museums and other federally funded institutions in the United States must consult with Native communities in identifying human remains, funerary materials, and sacred objects held in their collections.

⁸ The formation of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective in Canada in 2006 has had a profound effect on the field of Native American art studies throughout North America.

⁹ The Aboriginal Arts office of the Canada Council is specifically charged with fostering the support and development of art by First Nations artists. The Canada Council for the Arts’ 2015 annual budget was \$191 million dollars (theglobeandmail.com). By contrast, the total budget for the United States National Endowment for the Arts in 2015 was \$146 million dollars, a reduction since 1992 of approximately 17% (<https://www.arts.gov/>).

¹⁰ The year 2017 marks the tenth biennial Contemporary Art Fellowship formerly known as the Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Fine Art.

¹¹ In this instance, the term “mediums” is used to distinguish between multiple mediums and new media such as digital art, computer graphics and the like.

¹² The term “postmedium” implies that the traditional categorization of art by medium no longer holds. Rosalind Krauss, *Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition*, 31st Walter Neurath Memorial Lecture (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), 7.

¹³ Diana Nemiroff, Robert Houle, and Charlotte Townsend-Gault, *Land Spirit Power* (Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada), 1992; Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin, eds., *Indigena, Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art* (Craftsman House,

1992); Margaret Archuleta and Rennard Strickland, eds., *Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1991). *Shared Visions* is of the same era.

¹⁴ Former artists-in-residence at Crow's Shadow include painter Kay WalkingStick, performance artist James Luna, photographer Larry McNeil, sculptor Truman Lowe, and mixed media artists Jeffrey Gibson and Marie Watt, to name but a few.

¹⁵ This work became the basis of Dangeli's graduate thesis at the University of British Columbia: she received her Ph.D. in art history, visual art, and theory in 2015.

¹⁶ Rosalind Krauss, *Perpetual Inventory* (Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 2010), xiii. Krauss refers to mediums as the "apparatus," "material support," or "technical support" for artistic practice.

¹⁷ Christine Lalonde, *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2013), 14.

¹⁸ Lalonde, *Sakahàn*, 15.

¹⁹ UNDRIP, Article 5.

²⁰ Robert Allen Warrior, *Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 124. Warrior's application of the term (and the concept) is both an extension and a critique of legal scholar Vine Deloria, Jr.'s groundbreaking study (with Clifford Lytel), *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). For more on the evolution of the concept of sovereignty from a strictly legal-political principle to an intellectual ideology, see Amanda J. Cobb, "Understanding Tribal Sovereignty: Definitions, Conceptualizations, and Interpretations," *American Studies* 46:3/4 (Fall-Winter 2005): 115–132.

²¹ UNDRIP, Article 8 (1).

²² Scott Richard Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What Do American Indians Want from Writing?," *College Composition and Communication* 51, No. 3 (February 2000): 449–450.

²³ Jolene Rickard, "Sovereignty: A Line in the Sand," *Aperture* 139 (Summer 1995): 51.

²⁴ Rickard, "Sovereignty," 51.

²⁵ The film was written, directed, acted, filmed, and produced by the majority Inuit production company Igloodik Isuma Productions, Inc.; it was released in 2000. Michelle H. Raheja, "Reading Nanook's Smile: Visual Sovereignty, Indigenous Revisions of Ethnography, and 'Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (December 2007): 1163. See also, Michele Raheja, "Visual Sovereignty," in Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith and Michelle H. Raheja, eds., *Native Studies Keywords* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2015), 25–34.

²⁶ Raheja, "Reading Nanook's Smile," 1165.

²⁷ Raheja, "Reading Nanook's Smile," 1180. Raheja calls for "a reading practice for thinking about the space between resistance and compliance wherein indigenous filmmakers and actors revisit, contribute to, borrow from, critique, and reconfigure ethnographic film conventions..." Raheja, "Reading Nanook's Smile," 1161.

²⁸ Rickard writes, "Growing up, I assumed that everybody knew that Native people used a number of strategies to survive, ranging from traditional governments to spiritual political movements.... It's still how people talk in our communities, mostly playing down our resistance to the state." Rickard, "Sovereignty: A Line in the Sand," 54.

²⁹ Rickard, "Sovereignty: A Line in the Sand," 54. See also Jolene Rickard, "Visualizing Sovereignty in the Time of Biometric Sensors," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 110, no. 2 (2011): 465–486.

³⁰ See Morris essay, this volume.

³¹ The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101–644, 104 Stat. 4662 (1990). For complete text and analysis of the act, see Gail Sheffield, *The Arbitrary Indian: The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

³² In an opinion piece in the *Akwe:kon Journal*, Kay WalkingStick details the many reasons that an individual might be unable or choose not to acquire a tribal enrollment number: their tribes may not be federally recognized, or their ancestors refused to sign the tribal rolls, or the enrollment criteria of the tribe may exclude

them on the basis of whether it is their mother or father who is an enrolled member. Kay WalkingStick, "Indian Arts and Crafts Act: Counterpoint," *Akwe:kon Journal* 11, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1994): 117.

³³ Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, "Directions of New Work," *CEPA* (Fall 1991): 13.

³⁴ Robin Cembalest, "What's In a Name?," *ARTnews* 90, no. 7 (September 1991).

³⁵ Paul Chaat Smith, "Closing Remarks," presented at "Seizing the Sky: Redefining American Art" symposium, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C., November 2015.

³⁶ Smith, "Closing Remarks."

³⁷ W. Jackson Rushing III and Kristin Makhholm, *Modern Spirit: The Art of George Morrison* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013).

³⁸ Multiple Modernisms Project, <http://carleton.ca/culturalmediations/mappingmodernisms/multiple-modernisms-project/>.

³⁹ The symposium was convened by Phillips and fellow Canadian art historian Elizabeth Harney at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, in 2011. The first meeting of the consortium was followed by four more in Ottawa, Cambridge, Wellington, and South Africa through 2016.

⁴⁰ Multiple Modernisms Project.

⁴¹ Ruth Phillips, "Settler Monuments, Indigenous Memory: Dis-membering and Re-membering Canadian Art History," in eds. Robert Nelson and Margaret Olin, *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 284.

⁴² Phillips, "Settler Monuments, Indigenous Memory," 284.

⁴³ The series began in 1992 and is ongoing. See Claudette Lauzon, "Monumental Interventions: Jeff Thomas Seizes Commemorative Space," in eds. J. Keri Cronin and Kirsty Robertson, *Imagining Resistance: Visual Culture and Activism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 78–93.

⁴⁴ The terms "Aboriginal," "Indigenous," "First Nations," and "Native American" all refer to the original inhabitants of a place.

⁴⁵ Exhibited in *Off the Map: Landscape in the Native Imagination* at NMAI (2007), now in the collection of the NMAI.

⁴⁶ James Lavadour, interview by Kate Morris, March 1, 2014.

⁴⁷ The collaborative projects are typically held in museum or gallery settings. Myre provides the raw stretched canvases to visitors and asks them to render an impression of a scar that is part of their lived experience. She also asks them to write a short narrative explaining their depiction.

⁴⁸ Bryne McLaughlin, "Four Questions for Sobey Winner Nadia Myre," *Canadian Art* (Dec. 12, 2014), <http://canadianart.ca/features/nadia-myre-qa/>.

⁴⁹ Nadia Myre, artist's statement in *Hide: Skin as Material and Metaphor*, 110.

⁵⁰ Grania Litwin, "Landscapes Skewer 'Noble Savage' View; Native Artist's Alter Ego Shakes Up Historical Scenes—in a Boa and Heels," *Victoria Times Colonist*, June 24, 2010, D10.