



WITNESSES:

Art and Canada's Indian Residential Schools

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INTRODUCTION

Scott Watson

I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department, that is the whole object of this Bill.

– Duncan Campbell Scott, 1920¹

This exhibition was occasioned by a gathering, the *Dialogue on the History and Legacy of the Indian Residential Schools*, held at the University of British Columbia First Nations House of Learning on November 1, 2011. At the conclusion of the daylong meeting, Chief Robert Joseph asked those of us present if we could act to raise awareness of the history and legacy of the residential schools. Thus, the idea of the present exhibition came to be – as a response to a request. An exhibition of art seemed a way to bring the issues around residential schools to a broad audience, while considering the impact of the schools on art itself.

In the weeks that followed, I gathered a team of interested and knowledgeable people and we began to meet to discuss what an exhibition centering on the residential schools might look like. Early on, we met with Leona Sparrow, who liaises with UBC for the Musqueam Nation, and Chief Joseph who both enjoined us to think of reconciliation and not just narratives of victimhood.

We wanted to honour this request to show works that might point to healing and the future while still telling some of the stories that needed telling about the schools. Those stories are still coming out of the archive and there are doubtless further disturbing aspects of the schools that are yet to be revealed.

The story of the schools has few redeeming features and many former students and their children tell of experiences that are difficult to recount and painful to hear. There are too



Jamasie Pitseolak, *The Day After*, 2010

many stories of the abuse of children at the hands of schoolteachers. Such abuses occur whenever adults supervise children in institutions. But in Canada's Indian residential schools these abuses were compounded and exacerbated by the agenda that established the schools and the system that administered them, what Geoffrey Carr terms a "total institution." Tuberculosis was rampant in the schools and many children died. Many more were malnourished and the subject of medical experimentation without the consent of themselves or their parents.

The schools were set up to educate Indigenous children to prepare them, not for careers as doctors, lawyers or entrepreneurs, but for work as labourers on farms and in factories. But the project was not merely additive – to add Settler knowledge to Native knowledge – but subtractive as well. The overall policy was to eradicate Indigenous language and culture. However, art was taught in some schools (mostly the day schools) and encouraged by those, mostly non-Indigenous, who felt, counter to the government policy, that Indigenous culture should be nourished and folded into, rather than excluded from the national narrative.

That national narrative for the most part placed Indigenous people in the margins. Northrop Frye, arguably Canada's most known literary critic and architect-in-chief of Canadian cultural identity, described Canada as an "obliterated environment" full of "largely unknown lakes, rivers and islands."² For Frye, the Indigenous could be called "savages" and belonged to a hostile nature. This theme is threaded through his work on Canadian literature as evidenced by these words about "Canada's greatest single poem," *Brebeuf and His Brethren* by E.J. Pratt (1940): "Superficially, the man with the vision is tied to the stake and destroyed by savages who are in the state of nature, and who represent its mindless barbarity."³ Frye established, as the motor of cultural identity, the principle that, "The creative instinct has to do with the assertion of territorial rights."⁴

Given that what was at stake – as it still is – is territory and resource ownership, the residential schools project falls into the darkest political categories we have: ethnic cleansing and genocide. And as the project lasted well beyond the protocols against such things established at Nuremberg after the Second World War – one wonders if there is not a small legion of Canadian government and church retired officials and teachers guilty of crimes against humanity.

The schools were meant to assimilate and dispossess. They surely must confound the easy, untroubled notion that Canada is a country that came by its territory through courageous exploration and battles with European powers. It is our hope that an exhibition such as this one can raise awareness and understanding of an aspect of history Canadians need to take full ownership of. Canadians need to understand what happened to generations of Indigenous children. Only with such an understanding can Canada move forward towards the goal of a fair and just society.

It was not exactly a surprise that the experience of the schools should be a topic addressed by many Indigenous artists. But it was somewhat telling that no Canadian gallery or museum had mounted an exhibition on this topic before now despite the welcome number of exhibitions devoted to Indigenous art since the 1980s and the weaving together of Native and Settler histories in the national narratives at the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Our curatorial team found that, as soon as we addressed our attention to the topic, the amount of art that had been made in response to the experience of the schools was almost overwhelming. It can be said with some certainty that the Indian residential schools are to be deeply inscribed in Canadian art history.

I would like to thank the insightful and dedicated curatorial team who made this project possible – Geoffrey Carr, Dana Claxton, Tarah Hogue, Shelly Rosenblum, Charlotte Townsend-Gault and Keith Wallace. And the team would like to thank all of those people who took the time to advise us on this project, including: Linc Kesler, UBC's Director and Senior Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs; Debra Martel, UBC's Associate Director of the First Nations House of Learning; Leona Sparrow, Director of the Musqueam Treaty, Lands and Resources Department; Chief Robert Joseph, Reconciliation Canada Ambassador; Alvin Dixon, Truth and Reconciliation Canada Liaison for the Indian Residential School Survivors Society; Paulette Regan, Director of Research for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; Andrea Walsh, Department of Anthropology at the University of Victoria; and Larry Grant, Musqueam Nation and Resident Elder, UBC First Nations House of Learning.

1 Scott, Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, refers to Bill 14 (1920), which amended the Indian Act to make school attendance compulsory for Indian children aged seven through fifteen. National Archives of Canada, Record Group 10, vol. 6810, file 470-2-3, vol. 7, pp. 55 (L-3) and 63 (N-3). For a more accessible source, see John Leslie, *The Historical Development of the Indian Act, second edition* (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Treaties and Historical Research Branch, 1978), 114.

2 Northrop Frye, "Preface," in *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1971), iii.

3 "Canada and its Poetry," (1943) in *The Bush Garden*, 142.

4 "Preface," i.



Skeena Reece, *Touch Me*, 2013

BEARING WITNESS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS IN CANADA

Geoffrey Carr

It is daunting to write a brief history of Canada's Indian residential schools, not only as this is a long, complex, and often traumatic past, but also one that, in many ways, remains undisclosed. A prime example – the very recent, chilling revelations that the federal government allowed nutrition scientists to conduct experiments without consent on malnourished residential school students: some were given dietary supplements, others placebos, and still others kept malnourished to establish a research baseline.¹ At present, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) aims to compile a fuller historical account by collecting testimony from Indigenous survivors of the residential schools. The findings of the TRC, however, will offer only a partial record, as many survivors have decided not to participate in the statement-gathering process. Further, the TRC does not have the authority to force residential school staff who are guilty of crimes to make public disclosure in exchange for amnesty from prosecution. TRC researchers also face problems gathering archival evidence, as in recent decades vast stores of relevant government documents have been destroyed.² Those records that do survive in government and church archives, in certain instances, have been surrendered too slowly or not at all, while the cost of thorough examination of all records exceeds available TRC funding.

Such challenges to forming an accurate historical picture complicate a pressing ethical issue: namely, how will this difficult past be characterized, remembered, and taught to subsequent generations? Government and churches have apologized to the Indigenous peoples of Canada, but for what precisely are they sorry? Collectively they express regret for failing to protect Indigenous children from physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, a failure fueled by arrogant presumptions of Settler superiority and disdain for Indigenous cultures. While commendable, these apologies avoid difficult questions about racially-based policies of assimilation and segregation, forcible removal of children, and extremely high mortality rates in certain residential schools. Some critics question whether these misdeeds should be considered crimes against humanity, while others raise concerns of genocidal intent.³ These

disputes will not be explored in this text, yet it is crucial that they are mentioned, so that readers understand that such serious questions remain unanswered as the nation comes to grips with the historical and lasting impacts of the Indian residential schools. Despite its enormous impact, few Canadians know much about the history of this institution. This essay attempts to fill in some of these gaps by presenting a series of governmental policies, missionary aims, institutional practices and designs, and the experiences of survivors of the system.

While the majority of Indigenous people relate their experience of the residential schools in negative terms, it needs to be said that this disapproval is not universal. A number of students have praised the schools for providing education, religious teaching, organized sports, musical training, a safe place to live, or, simply, a bed to sleep in. Furthermore, of the many who were victimized within the system, some still relate stories of affection and gratitude for teachers or administrators who truly were well intentioned. It also is critical to point out that certain parents and students mitigated the darkness of the system by defying school policies or confronting abusive staff: from petitions to Ottawa, activist organizations, appeals to Indian agents, refusals to enrol children – to more direct action, such as threats or assaults on staff, arson attacks on schools, stealing food, or running away. These varying accounts of suffering, succeeding, or resisting in the residential schools demonstrate the complexity of this social history, yet they do not provide a full picture of the nature of these institutions; a better understanding of the residential schools requires consideration of their policies, practices, and designs.

The Assembly of First Nations – in their landmark publication *Breaking the Silence* (1994) – defines the residential school as a “total institution,” a finding later confirmed by the Law Commission of Canada.⁴ Total institutions seek to control every aspect of daily life, how those in custody dress, wash, speak, eat, sleep, and so on. Supervisors in such spaces wield tremendous authority without much institutional oversight, often resulting in excessive punishments and failures to address allegations of abuse. The most severe total institutions impose involuntary confinement and a series of structured humiliations meant to deprive new inductees of their sense of identity.⁵ Indian residential schools fit this description, owing not only to excessive punishments and (often) forcible induction, but also to policies such as banning Indigenous languages and culture, assigning numbers or Christian names for birth names, cutting sacred braids of hair, group delousing, and chronic failures to protect students from physical and sexual abuse. As a consequence of such practices, children in the residential schools often experienced feelings of degradation, alienation, loneliness, and powerlessness. Of course no institution can exert total control, and many students found ways to accommodate, negotiate, or resist the institutional power of the system, a testament to their resilience and cunning.

Building the Federal System of Indian Education

After passing the Indian Act in 1876, the federal government began, somewhat tentatively, to build and manage a federal system of “Indian education” – a network of day schools, industrial schools, and residential schools.⁶ Ottawa was responding in part to the pleas of

missionaries from various denominations who sought to “civilize” pre-Settler societies by imposing Christian teaching. The earliest institutions were built by Catholic missionaries in New France (later Québec) in the seventeenth century, and by the mid-nineteenth century, a few church-run schools also operated in Manitoba and Ontario.⁷ For the most part, these fledgling efforts failed miserably. Indigenous children did not take to strict teaching methods or separation from family, so they often chose not to attend, as attendance was not compulsory. In this germinal phase, government also was responding to various Indigenous nations who lobbied for schools to be built in their territories. Many communities believed that instruction in language, trades, and agriculture would better their chances of survival in the new, colonial situation, especially with the decimation of local game populations.⁸ The government – in its “Numbered Treaties” (drafted from 1871 to 1921) – promised money for the construction of schools, payment of teachers, purchasing of supplies, and so on. Significantly, however, treaties made no mention of forcibly removing Indigenous children to boarding schools in remote locations.

The Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) enlisted the help of five Christian denominations to staff and run the Indian schools: Roman Catholic, Church of England (Anglican), United Church, Presbyterian, and Methodist. From the very beginning, the relationship between government and church was unsteady and often adversarial, yet both missionaries and government shared an abiding faith in the “civilizing mission” of Indian education. The central guiding policy of the system was termed “aggressive civilization,” a euphemism for a set of procedures that aimed to destroy the political, economic, social, cultural, and familial bases for Indigenous life. The federal government adopted this position on the advice of Nicholas Flood Davin, a journalist, politician, and lawyer who was commissioned by Ottawa to write a report on Indian education in Canada. His *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* (1879) borrowed liberally from policies he studied while touring American Indian boarding schools. Davin argued that only by removing children from their parents, prohibiting Indigenous languages, and banning cultural practices could students be removed “from evil surroundings” and be relocated in the “circle of civilized conditions.”⁹ In the eyes of many missionaries and government officials, pre-Settler societies seemed primitive, degenerate, and even a source of moral contagion that – without intervention – would be transmitted to future generations. It followed that the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into Canadian society could only be achieved through an invasive system of social-engineering, which took as its target the youngest, most vulnerable, and most malleable. This is the rationale behind the oft-repeated aim of the DIA to “kill the Indian in the child.”

Discipline, Economics, and Disease

From the earliest moments of contact, it was clear to newcomers that Indigenous peoples lived in very tight-knit communities and that children were treated with utmost respect and care. Corporeal discipline was mostly unheard of, which is not to suggest – as some outsiders assumed – that children were free to do as they pleased. Government agents and missionaries often misjudged the effectiveness of correctives such as silence, stern glances,

practical jokes, or, when needed, public mockery.¹⁰ The attitude of Duncan Campbell Scott, then Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs, provides insight into the perceived failure of Indigenous parents and the presumed benefit of subjecting their children to more invasive disciplinary methods: “Indian parents are not strict enough with their children, leaving it to the teachers to correct their faults ... I have been among Indians for half a century, and have yet to see the first parent chastising his or her child.”¹¹

Students in the Indian schools were subjected to a number of physical and psychological punishments for a wide variety of offenses. For speaking their own language, incorrectly reciting prayers, talking to the opposite gender, bedwetting, truancy, running away – to name only a few – students would be rebuked, denied food, forced to kneel for prolonged periods, humiliated publicly, or strapped. Haida elder Adeline Brown remembers how odd she found this culture of punishment, noting that, “I never ever saw my mom and dad fight, and I never got one spanking from them, so all this discipline was always alien to me.”¹² Much more extreme punishments included blows to the body with straps or sticks, blows to the head and face, whippings, electrical shocks, solitary confinement, and restraint in chains or (in one account) in stocks. More than once, student runaways fleeing such extreme punishments – some as young as seven – died of exposure.¹³

Interestingly, however, Stó:lō elder Charles Chapman explains how at times students would find ways to collectively resist disciplinary practices:

They would call us all there and would get us all to line up. They would bring up something [a rule violation], and they would say, “Who is responsible,” or “Could that person step forward?” And this is when we had the code of silence. You know, even if we knew who did something, we wouldn’t tell. When things like that would happen, instead of just punishing one person, they would punish all the boys, from the littlest ones to the oldest ones. So this is where I would say all of us learned how to take punishment together.¹⁴

Despite such moments of solidarity, the excessive punishments meted out by members of religious orders traumatized generations of children, a constant source of friction between churches and government, who, despite much handwringing, rarely intervened to protect students.

Government and churches also disagreed over questions of curriculum, institutional authority, and, most pointedly, funding. Ottawa understood early on that employing poorly paid – if less qualified – missionary teachers and administrators would significantly cut operational costs.¹⁵ This sort of ruthless austerity was typical, and students bore the burden of such miserliness. The DIA’s adoption in 1892 of a per-capita grant for school – funding dictated by the total number of students enrolled – demonstrates one of its most

cynical policies. Per-capita funding imposed a “forced system of economy” on the schools, which in plain terms meant that they received much less money from government than needed.¹⁶ Each institution was compelled to ask for money from their church membership for food, clothing, medicines, building materials, salaries, and more. As a consequence of this disastrous policy, schools often inducted more students than they could accommodate safely to ensure a larger operating grant, and students generally received substandard care, food, and education. Children also were compelled to provide unpaid labour. The so-called “half-day system” required pupils to divide their time between study and chores or domestic and agricultural training. The DIA killed two birds with one stone: exploiting free labour and instilling “industry” in Indigenous students who were generally perceived as indolent. Parents and some DIA inspectors complained that exhaustion from physical labour was having an adverse effect on academic performance and the general health of the students, especially the very young, but the half-day system remained in effect until 1951 when it was finally abolished.¹⁷

Rather than take a firm leadership role, government mostly reacted to appeals for money from competing denominations, who by their own initiative had erected small day schools or larger residential schools. Most of these institutions were poorly designed and built, providing insufficient space and facilities for students. DIA inspections discovered a mostly derelict stock of structures that often posed serious – at times even lethal – health concerns for students. Unfit water, poor ventilation, insufficient heating, improper fireproofing, cramped dormitories, all of these deficiencies alongside chronic underfunding exposed students to extremely dangerous conditions. The following quote by Dr. F.A. Corbett, a physician hired by the DIA to inspect Indian residential schools in the western provinces, describes conditions at Sarcee Boarding School near Calgary. His words provide an unflinching view into such horror:

The condition of one little girl found in the infirmary is pitiable indeed. She lies curled up in a bed that is filthy, in a room that is untidy, dirty, and dilapidated ... no provision of balcony, sunshine, or fresh air. Both sides of her neck and chest are swollen and five foul ulcers are discovered when we lift the bandages. This gives her pain, and her tears from her fear of being touched, intensifies the picture of misery.¹⁸

Tragically, such deplorable scenes of neglect and disease were all too common, leading some DIA officials and parliamentarians to wonder if the federal government were guilty of criminal offenses bordering on manslaughter. The question of criminality becomes more acute when considering how school administrators were not responsible for informing parents of their ailing child’s welfare or death. Many children left for the schools and were never seen again. At present, the TRC’s Missing Child Research Project hopes to determine the number of children who died in care, the names of the disappeared, and the locations of unmarked graves.¹⁹

The DIA was well aware of the crisis of tubercular infection in residential schools – a calamity made crystal clear by DIA Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Peter Bryce. His controversial paper, the *Report on the Indian Schools of Manitoba and the North-West Territories* (1907), painted a shocking picture of residential schooling, which he referred to as a “trail of disease and death.”²⁰ Bryce supported his critique of government mismanagement – later referring to it as a “national crime” – with statistical evidence collected through surveys of various schools.²¹ The Bryce report estimated that of the total of Indigenous students enrolled in the institutions surveyed, twenty-four percent died of tuberculosis.²² He identified some especially epidemic institutions in which Indigenous students suffered a fifty percent mortality rate. One particular school – File Hills Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan – saw seventy-five percent of its students perish in its first sixteen years of operation.²³ Incredibly, at this critical moment, the government did little to aggressively combat the scourge of tuberculosis in the system. Instead they demonstrated near apathy, an indifference compounded by the constant effort of the DIA to cut costs, especially after the outbreak of war in 1914. Bryce blames this bureaucratic inertia on Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, who – in Bryce’s opinion – privately believed that large numbers of Indigenous peoples were fated to die off by disease.²⁴ Ironically, Scott used the general alarm (not without cause) that non-Indigenous Canadians could contract tuberculosis from infected Indigenous people. He justified further cuts to the residential schools, so that more money could be funnelled into tuberculosis prevention, all the while refusing to make any substantive changes to DIA policy.²⁵ It is worth pointing out that while a sizable number of tuberculosis sanatoria were constructed in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century, these institutions generally refused Indigenous patients. Difficult as it is to believe, the government waited until 1941 to open the first sanatorium for Indigenous peoples, in of all places a repurposed residential school at Coqualeetza (BC).²⁶

Segregation, Secular Curriculum, and Religious Instruction

In 1910, the federal government announced a new course of action, its stated goal to “fit the Indian for civilized life in his own environment”; in no way should this new direction be misconstrued as a response to confront Ottawa’s failings of Indigenous students.²⁷ Rather, in concrete terms, this new direction signalled the end of existing policies of assimilation for new tactics of segregation. Earlier assimilationist theories lost steam owing to a growing sense that the actual assimilation proved much more expensive and difficult to achieve.²⁸ Initially, in the later nineteenth century, the federal government strongly endorsed the industrial school model, institutions charged with the task of teaching Indigenous children a skilled trade, such as leatherwork, blacksmithing, mechanics, tailoring, cabinetmaking, boatbuilding, and printing.²⁹ These institutions typically were built closer to populated regions, so that graduates could compete with whites for skilled jobs and more easily integrate into Canadian society. This educational model failed for several reasons, including insufficient funding, poor training, voluntary attendance, and the resistance of Indigenous cultures to assimilation. Government parsimony, compounded by missionary and Indigenous defiance, prompted officials in the DIA to decide that it

would be less of a drain on the public purse to train Indigenous students to be farmers and housewives – rather than as skilled artisans – before sending them home for permanent resettlement on reserve.³⁰

This new Canadian *apartheid* required the design of a new sort of boarding school, what could be called a “second-generation residential school.” In contrast to industrial schools, second-generation residential schools were much larger, often built in more remote locations with the aim of further isolating students from their families and home communities. These new institutions would be supported by a 1920 amendment to the Indian Act that would reinforce existing rules for compulsory attendance, making parents responsible for child truancy – noncompliance now punishable by prison sentence.³¹ School administrators, Indian agents, and the RCMP regularly worked together to round up school-age children – often against their will – and transport them to a residential school. Hayter Reed, a high-ranking DIA official, makes clear how the policy of sending students away from their families was deemed crucial to the success of Ottawa’s social-engineering project: “the more remote from the Institution and distant from each other are the points from which the pupils are collected, the better for their success.”³² Catchment policies also suggest this same tactic of dispersion, though admittedly government documents explaining catchment appear to have been culled. Survivors testify how their families were divided, siblings and cousins inexplicably enrolled apart from each other, often in distant places. Heiltsuk elder Alvin Dixon, who spent eight years at the Alberni Indian Residential School on Vancouver Island, recounts how his siblings were separated from one another:

It was very abnormal ... my older sisters went to Alert Bay. [Another] ... went to Coqualeetza in the Fraser Valley, and then she went to Alert Bay after with the other ones. My two youngest sisters went to Alert Bay as well. But when I left Alberni the youngest of my two younger sisters went there [Alberni]. And the youngest brother went to Edmonton ... That obviously was a very serious act of separating ... [W]hen we got together in the summer, it was really strange.³³

These policies for isolating students can be read also in the design of the second-generation residential school. Students were assigned to gender-specific dormitories located at either end of the institution, flanking a central administrative block that typically was off limits to children. They were further segregated by age – the eldest typically assigned to dormitories on the upper floors, whereas younger students were consigned to dormitories on the lower floors. Separation according to gender and age often turned family, friends, and community members into strangers, precisely the sort of effect the DIA sought.

The curriculum of these new schools also alienated Indigenous children from their ancestral cultural traditions, languages, and religious practices. Upon induction, younger students would learn how to speak English or French, to count, to pronounce and write the alphabet, as well as to read a clock and calendar. This in itself may not seem invasive, for

it is what most non-Indigenous children in Canada study in one form or another. But in a colonial context where the government's stated intent was to "kill the Indian in the child," such curriculum diverted the transmission of traditional knowledge – through oral histories – from elders to the young. Moreover, for many children, the loss of fluency in their first language proved to be the most devastating aspect of this indoctrination. Language does more than describe the experience of being in the world: language provides the very foundation for human experience, be it subjective, cultural, spiritual, political. Every thought, every concept, every emotion, every action issues from it. So what does it mean when the very foundation for individual and collective identity is purposefully destroyed? When a language dies, it could be argued, a world dies with it.

Though not every society builds schools, every society teaches their young. Children in pre-Settler societies received practical, philosophical, and religious instruction, either through storytelling or from purposeful games that would sharpen their abilities to hunt, gather food, travel, understand weather, and so on.³⁴ They were taught by people close to them, teachers they trusted – treated with patience, respect, and affection. Later, as children approached adolescence they would go through traditional trials and rituals that would teach autonomy, sound decision making, and social responsibility. On the contrary, adolescents in the residential schools received instruction in subjects bereft of traditional content. For example, historical studies attended to provincial and national pasts, while ignoring the history of Indigenous peoples. As Celia Haig-Brown argues, "when a culture is being attacked in an effort to dominate it or replace it with an alternative way of life, an effective tactic includes lack of acknowledgment of the culture's history."³⁵ With this in mind, subjects such as history, geography, or writing cannot be considered ideologically neutral. Rather each supports a construction of knowledge in which Settler worldviews take absolute prominence, and Indigenous ways of knowing are dismissed as primitive, childlike, and irrational.

It is important to point out that academic curriculum was never meant to trump the study of Christian teachings. Every residential school contained at least one chapel, demonstrating the general sense that religious instruction would help Indigenous children to reject morally decadent traditional beliefs. In 1883, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald declared that "secular education is a good thing among white men but among Indians the first object is to make them better men, and, if possible, good Christian men by applying proper moral restraints."³⁶ Next to the subversion of first languages, the imposition of Christian teachings had the most lasting effect on pre-Settler cultures, but the quality of that effect is fiercely disputed. For some, such as Vivian Ignace, who survived the Kamloops Indian Residential School, religious training brought only pain, confusion, and resentment:

I never knew a compassionate God. I knew there was a God, but I was always scared of the devil more than I was of God. Our spirituality, the thing that should have been our strength, was working against us. You know, they played with us that way. I didn't like that. I didn't have words for it then, but I can see it now. That was a way of control.³⁷

Yet for others, Christianity offered comfort, a sense of purpose, and an opportunity for communal belonging. Alvin Dixon remembers how important church activities were to him while at Alberni Indian Residential School:

For me it was a good experience, because it was spiritual. I never saw it as an onus. A lot of people hated it, but I grew up with very spiritual parents who taught me to appreciate worship, so I enjoyed participating, I enjoyed leading.³⁸

Such divergent experiences of religious training in the residential school demonstrate the complexity of this history and the difficulties in drawing conclusions on the basis of subjective testimony. How to assess Christianity's contribution in the schools in light of such conflicting views? It is simply too easy to suggest that devout students did not know their own minds, that they were all somehow brainwashed. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that many survivors have benefited from rejecting their Christian teaching in favour of traditional forms of spirituality. Clearly there is no one answer to this profoundly important question. If nothing else, such tensions demonstrate the need for pluralism, tolerance, and mutual respect, principles sorely lacking during the inception of the Indian residential school system.

Political and Economic Intervention, Proliferation, Desegregation

It is widely understood that the residential schools were used to subvert Indigenous cultures, languages, and spirituality. Yet the schools also helped to disrupt traditional systems of political rule and economic philosophies – in keeping with the larger project of securing control of Indigenous lands and resources. Without doubt, Ottawa utilized the residential school system to turn students from traditional cultural practices such as the Sundance or the potlatch. Such intent is openly professed by Indian Agent W.M. Halliday in the 1912 DIA *Annual Report*:

Education has a tendency to break up the old customs, and the young men who received ... education look upon the potlatch as an evil. At present ... there is not one of them strong enough to come out and take the leadership against the potlatch and be able to put up with the opposition of the older men [but] ... if one such should arise and throw down the gauntlet, and have the necessary eloquence and leadership, victory would be assured.³⁹

Although the federal government banned the potlatch and the Sundance in 1884, many Indigenous communities in western Canada refused to abandon their cultural birthright. The DIA understood that potlatching and Sundancing posed a genuine political threat, for they were not mere ceremonies. Rather they comprised the core of a complex and pervasive socio-economic system that could hamper the growth of capitalist enterprises, as well as the

spread of missionization.⁴⁰ Halliday's hope that ex-students would be able to oppose their elders – in this case Kwakwaka'wakw elders resistant to government policies – makes clear the political stakes in his vision of "victory."

In a similar vein, the new policy of segregation – and the subsequent attempts to fashion Indigenous children into "settled" farmers and housewives on reserves – sought to substitute agrarianism for seasonal hunting and gathering. Government hoped to instill an appetite for European ideas of economy: individualism, competition for scarce resources, frugality, accumulation, and "industry." The communal and nomadic lifestyles of pre-Settler societies proved to be a hindrance. Also, despite much evidence to the contrary, DIA documents had always bewailed the "naturally indolent character" of Indigenous peoples.⁴¹ Training in the residential schools was meant to cure children of this perceived laziness, while severing their connections to ancient life ways founded in communal ownership, migratory use of resources, and collective cultural ceremony. Instead, newer generations would live on a sliver of their forbearers' territories, while what remained could be opened by Settler interests for resource extraction, infrastructural development, and urbanization.

By the early 1930s, the federal government oversaw the operation of eighty residential schools. The proliferation of these institutions helped tighten political and economic control of Indigenous populations in the west, especially in Alberta and British Columbia where most of Canada's Indigenous populations continue to reside. In the early 1950s, the residential school system expanded yet again, this time in the North. The newly created Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources subsumed the existing network of missionary schools that had operated in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories since the nineteenth century. Despite advice from government officials and without any consultation with Inuit and Dene leaders, the federal government again imposed the same socially destructive educational model.⁴²

This educational model founded on cooperation between government and churches, alienation of children from families, and racially based policies of segregation changed little from its inception until the early 1950s. Rumblings about the merits of dismantling the residential school system could be heard as early as 1946 in Ottawa, but it took until 1951 for a policy of school desegregation to be written into the Indian Act. The new direction in policy did not indicate official contrition but rather the usual interest in cutting costs and a revived commitment to the project of assimilating Indigenous cultures.⁴³ Interestingly, high-profile struggles for desegregation of schools in the United States influenced the rate at which Ottawa began – in the early 1960s – to phase out the Indian residential school. More and more Indigenous students either bussed to integrated institutions off-reserve or attended day schools near or on reserves. The policy of desegregation decreased demand for existing residential schools, which often became homes for orphans or children removed from "unfit parents," many victims of a policy of forced adoptions now known as the "Sixties Scoop." By 1969, the government all but eliminated church involvement in the residential school system and over the next ten years closed the vast majority of southern

schools. Ottawa in this same period also deferred responsibility for the northern schools to the governments of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. In the mid-1990s, the final few existing institutions closed in Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

Conclusion

Coincidentally, as the system ceased operation in the mid-1990s, survivors began to speak out about their struggles coping with their experiences of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse in the residential schools. In 1990, Grand Chief Phil Fontaine's public disclosure of the sexual assaults he suffered in the system shocked the country but opened the door for further discussion and criminal investigations. In a watershed 1995 court decision, Supreme Court Justice Douglas Hogarth sentenced "sexual terrorist" Arthur Henry Plint to thirteen years for over thirty counts of exceedingly violent sexual and physical assault. Incredibly, children brave enough to alert school administrators of Plint's crimes were not only ignored but in certain instances received severe physical punishment.⁴⁴ Hogarth famously referred to the Alberni School as "institutionalized pedophilia."⁴⁵ The power of such horrific revelations helped fuel the struggle for justice in Indigenous communities, paving the way for class-action lawsuits, the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (2007), apologies from churches and government, and the forming of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Though there is much to be disclosed about this history, what remains clear is the ongoing impact of the residential schools in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. Many Indigenous people distrust educational institutions, which limits academic opportunities. Survivors speak of an inability to parent their children, for they were never taught how to do so. Children are exposed to sexual abuse from first and second-generation survivors, and drug and alcohol addiction, domestic violence, and suicides disproportionately afflict First Nations, Inuit, and Métis populations. But there is also hope. Many Indigenous leaders, healers, academics, activists, artists – to name only a few – work with their communities and with non-Indigenous groups to heal old wounds, to restore cultural pride, and to build bridges between divided people. Visitors to this exhibition have been asked – through artwork, accounts of survivors, and the catalogue – to share in the work of witnessing the history and present-day legacy of the Indian residential schools. It is up to each who have looked upon the testimony to consider what has been seen and to ask of themselves not only how they are connected to this difficult history, but also how they can contribute to some measure of justice, healing, and reconciliation.

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INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF ROBERT JOSEPH

Conducted by Geoffrey Carr, July 25, 2013

Geoffrey Carr: What was life like before you were sent to Indian residential school?

Chief Robert Joseph: I gave some thought to that question before I went through the Independent Assessment Process for physical and sexual abuse that I suffered at the residential schools. Because my experience in those schools was so horrific at that time – so cruel and brutal – I couldn't help but think of times before as a little boy. The window on those earlier memories isn't that great because I was just turning seven when I got to St. Michael's Indian Residential School in Alert Bay. But I do have memories of living on Gilford Island – it's a little village on the mainland adjacent to the North Island. Gilford Island village was on a midden, thousands and thousands of years old. That was my playground, that was my home, that was where my tribe lived, that was where I saw our culture flourish and thrive. It was so important for me to remember those things because it gave me a tool to survive the suffering at St. Michael's School. All the young men and little boys would go out with our grandfathers or our uncles, and we'd live off the sea, harvest fish, shellfish, and because of that we had a strong attachment to the land. You sensed even as a little boy that somehow you are intricately tied to this environment – especially to the ocean – when you're going out there and you're harvesting, watching parents or grandparents hanging and drying various species to sustain us for the year. The little village had an ocean in front of it and a forest behind it, and so the entire area was a playground. At times we would play behind the village, or in the forest. We would hide from each other or pretend we were hunting and it was just a special place and the culture was really strong. I have pictures of me wearing masks; as a little guy I was already dancing in masks, and so I knew that our culture was strong. I was absolutely fluent in Kwak'wala, and it was so nice to feel that I belonged to something.

GC: Was there potlatching going on then?

RJ: Absolutely, in my early recollections there were lots of potlatches going on, all through every winter. And the other thing about it was that there was a sense of community, a really,



Carl Beam, *Forced Ideas in School Days*, 1991

really close-knit community, but, more than that, there was a sense of family. I never felt more loved, more cherished, more cared for than throughout the rest of my life.

GC: Can you say something about what it was like to enter St. Michael's Indian Residential School?

RJ: Suddenly to be snatched away was a really terrifying, hurtful experience. One day I found myself walking towards a big school and my foster mother was silent. She didn't say where we were going. She didn't say anything at all, just complete silence. And to add to the trauma, my foster sister's natural parents chose that day to drag her away from us. I remember hollering and crying and screaming, "My sister! My sister!" and she was screaming and crying, and she didn't want to go, but I thought later maybe it was because those parents didn't want her to go to school and they had some influence over whether she should go or not. And then, finally, we got to this big school and it's frightening when you're a little boy, when you've always lived at home where everything is familiar – the language, the food, the way we interact with each other, comfortable and secure – and then suddenly to be in this big school was pretty frightening. My mother walked in, sat with me and took me through the door, and there was a man in the hallway waiting, and she just gave me over to him. She didn't say goodbye, didn't say anything, just turned around and walked away. She didn't say, "I'm going to come back for you someday," or, "I love you, take care," or anything like that. She just turned around and walked away. And then it became really frightful. I was among so many people I didn't recognize and I didn't know who they were. I'd hardly seen a Caucasian person in my life, maybe the odd one, a preacher, so entering that school was a frightening experience.

There are some early experiences still in my mind that were very horrific. I didn't speak any language other than Kwak'wala. I started attending Grade 1 and the teacher was just brutal. She gave instruction in English, and if you didn't respond correctly, you'd get cuffed in the ear or both ears, you'd get strapped on the back of the hand or on the palm of the hand, or you'd have to stand in a corner for two, three, four hours and just be left there. If you wanted to go to the bathroom, you'd try to put your hand up, and you wouldn't be allowed – many kids wet themselves. It was really dehumanizing. So those were really brutal times. Then of course it was lonely, and in the early years of school, especially the first one or two or three years, I used to cry myself to sleep, or until there were no more tears. I'd have these little fantasies where I'd think about being home with my family, about not being afraid. And the food really was bad. Recently, we have heard stories of nutrition being managed and experimented with students of Indian residential schools, and although I didn't know first hand that they did that in Alert Bay, the food was horrible. In those early years we'd have porridge and there would actually be these little black worms or insects dancing in the porridge! We were so hungry we would try to pick them out, but we'd eat the porridge! Everything was so bland, there was no variety, and I'm sure that we were malnourished, and I keep thinking about what it might have been like if we had been properly nourished and how much difference it might make in my academic pursuits. Because of all the beatings

on my ears, I lost my hearing, and as it became worse and worse, I kept moving further and further to the back of the class. Through almost eleven years that I was at the residential school there was no period in which I was inspired. I just didn't care.

GC: I'm curious, was there not one instructor who was helpful to you?

RJ: No, not one in that whole school, in that whole time. I remember when I finally went back to St. Michael's School after graduating, my last time, I saw the principal. He asked, "Bob, can I see you for a moment in my office." I said, "Of course," because I knew he couldn't do anything more to me. He said, "You know what? You and I have had a lot of trouble together. You and I have had a lot of fights. But for what it's worth, I think you're going to make it." I don't know why he waited all those years to say something like that! So I left, I went into the building, got my little suitcase with what few clothes I had and I stood at the top of the stairway and suddenly realized I had nowhere to go. I realized there was absolutely no inspiration in my life, no sense of purpose, and that I was just a broken, young man. I didn't even know where I was going to go from those steps! I eventually found my way to the village and found a party, but it was really heartbreaking to be that hopeless so early in my life.

GC: You were in the system for a long time, how did you learn to cope with living in such an abusive environment? What helped you to survive?

RJ: There were little things along the way that were useful. I had some really good friends in residential school. Some of the older students protected us. Just knowing that I wasn't always alone, that I had friends, sort of carried me through the day.

GC: There was no figure in the administration who sheltered you?

RJ: No, they were all cruel, all mean.

GC: So the only way that you managed to get through then was through some sort of solidarity with other students?

RJ: With some of the people that I knew as friends, and finding some solace in being defiant, in resisting.

GC: What were some of the ways that you did that?

RJ: There were lots of ways. A common punishment for failing to oblige orders was to be denied the privilege to go to the village, freedom – off the school grounds you could go and do what you liked. But when they would deny that privilege, we would find moments we thought were safe to sneak away, to go downtown and then sneak back. It was a real joy when we got away with it! They deny a privilege and somehow you exercise the privilege, in

an underhanded way, and get away with it. Or growing up, they would put us in the dorms early, at 7 pm, and lock us in. It would still be beautiful outside and we could see the village kids out the windows celebrating sports days or playing. We would wait for dark and would sneak out and be out all night partying or visiting, and then sneak back. That was a huge triumph, to be able to get away with that! They were just little acts of defiance that were important to us.

I think that was mainly how we survived. And of course, partying and drinking every time we could. By the time I was fourteen, I was already a full-blown alcoholic. I never had a social drink in my life, ever. The first drink was a drug, the last drink was a drug. And lots of blackouts, lots of harm, self-destructive behaviour, just being angry at everything and everybody and the world around me – I never thought, “Why did this happen to me?” I just was angry. The best solution was to have another drink.

I mentioned earlier that I was always lonely for a big part of my time at school, so I thought when I got out of school, “I’m going to get married and have my own family, my own children, then I’ll never be lonely again and never be alone.” I got married and had five kids. I didn’t know you were supposed to know something about relationships! Or marriage! I didn’t know you had to nurture and nourish them. I had no idea. So my family broke up fairly early, and from that moment on, I really began to descend into a real broken journey.

It actually took an epiphany, a vision, to get me out of it. I knew I was in deep trouble, and I couldn’t control or manage myself. I was suicidal. There was no hope in my life until one day, after my family had gone, I was walking in a stupor downtown and a friend of mine saw me and said, “Bob, I really don’t like what you’re doing to yourself. You should come fishing with me.” He didn’t have to ask me twice because I knew I was in deep trouble. I barely remember getting to the boat, but I went down and passed out in the engine room of the boat, and when I woke up the next day we were already anchored out! I got off my bunk and I tiptoed – I don’t know what I was afraid of – through the engine room to the galley to the back of the boat, and there was no other boat in sight, there were no other human beings in sight. I fell to my knees and I said, “God help me!” and my tears just flowed, I couldn’t see through my tears.

It wasn’t really a prayer because I’d been so mad at God for a long time. But as soon as I said “God help me,” I opened my eyes and I started to see differently. I saw the ocean was absolutely coral green and blue and had lightning rays going through it. I saw the forest on the mountainside, and it had lightning and energy going through it. Finally, I gazed up at the heavens and the whole universe unfolded before my eyes. I could see everything. I don’t know how long it took, it must have been milliseconds, and, as I was gazing, a voice said, “In spite of what you’ve done to yourself I love you and you’re part of all of this.” So somehow hearing those words – if they were words at all – spoke to my disconnect with everybody and everything, even myself. We fished for the day, then we went home that evening and I never

drank again. I’ve never been as lonely anymore or as broken. As a matter of fact, I have such a strong sense of the universe and the oneness of us, of mankind, that I’m so happy I had that vision, because first of all it sobered me up. It got me on the right road.

I was blessed to have such a vision, and because of that I’ve been able to set aside those eleven years and the resultant impacts that they’ve had on my life. I’m now a speaker in our Kwakwaka’wakw Big House, and I think, “Oh my God, my people are so beautiful, they’re forgiving!” They’re not saying, “You’re nothing but a drunk and you shouldn’t be here.” They’re allowing me to be part of this spiritual potlatch and culture. I can’t express how deeply I appreciate that I’ve come full circle.

GC: Why is it important for you to share your experiences of the Indian residential school with non-Indigenous Canadians and people from other parts of the world?

RJ: I think having learned about the human condition and conflict and harm, that I have a duty and a responsibility to include all of us, not just Aboriginals. The fact is that all of our realities are interconnected and all of the harm that we suffer is similar, it doesn’t matter what race or creed or colour. The Kwakwaka’wakw worldview is that everything is interconnected, that all of the parts of the whole are so intertwined with each other that what happens to one part will impact all the others. So we have to nurture all of our people wherever they live. And it’s so important, especially in Canada now. We are here and all of the human race is here, all the ethnicities, cultures, and we need to not repeat what was done to Aboriginal people. We need to ask newcomers, immigrants, to bring with them the best of their cultures. We should not try to assimilate them or homogenize them to the point where they lose their own God-given divine purpose in life. In Kwakwaka’wakw culture, even before colonization, reconciliation was a spiritual imperative for our people. If you study our songs and dances, the way we tell our stories, it is always about trying to reconcile our world. I guess it’s that way because somehow we understand that we will always live in an unreconciled world, and if we don’t make any effort to reconcile this world, we’re really in deep trouble. I’ve made an assumption that, as an elder having lived the life that I have and having the perspective I do, that I have to stand up for that perspective. What I’m really saying is that I now realize that everything I do, say, think and feel has an impact that reverberates outwards to the universe. So I can’t simply consider my own interests anymore, or the interests of my tribe or my people. This place is getting so small that we are going to have to embrace the reality of this global village because if we don’t we’ll still be living in indifference from each other.

There are a lot of survivors saying, “Why should we care about reconciliation when rights and title issues are still so distant, while so many kids are still taking their own lives, while poverty prevails.” And it’s true, but it’s exactly why we *should* be thinking about reconciliation, because all of those extremely deep, harmful experiences are hurting us right now. They are hurting our families and our communities, and we have to – at some personal level – begin to try and reconcile ourselves to that. Otherwise we’re dysfunctional,

we're angry, we're depressed. We need to understand from our own perspective what happened, and that it wasn't our fault. It's important to have taken all these little steps, because reconciliation is really just a continuum of healing.

GC: We've seen various church apologies, the federal apology in 2008, reparations from the settlement agreement and now the meetings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. At what stage will non-Indigenous Canadians not be in the shadow of this history? At what point can non-Indigenous people think that they can move on from this, or is such a thing even possible?

RJ: Oh absolutely it's possible for sure, for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It will be important not to forget, but it won't be the demon that has been hanging over our heads. It will be simply a reminder of what can happen when people fail to honour each other. And I think that especially in Canada, and especially in light of all the discussions we've had over the last few years – more importantly the last few months – that there's so much interest in reconciliation here in Vancouver and elsewhere in Canada. Many non-Aboriginal people simply want to be invited into some kind of process, some discussion, so that they can begin to understand more and move forward together with all of us. So it's going to take a lot of new dialogue and new deeper discussions about who we are as Aboriginal people. Once you start having this discussion, the whole nature of it shifts and changes. Suddenly we begin to appreciate our common humanity. We realize that there are interests higher than our individual self-interests, that there's a noble, collective, spiritual law or imperative that exists that we ought to be using as a guideline to live out our lives.

It's this kind of discussion that will elevate our consciousness about who we are and what we're responsible for. And it's going to happen by degree, by each situation. But it begins now, right at this moment with you and me talking. With every human being that elevates this thinking just a little bit, then we will begin to move away from those shadows, I'm certain of that. And that's why I'm not afraid to stand up and talk about reconciliation. Reconciliation is going to mean so many different things at different levels. It's like a jigsaw puzzle that is being pieced together, but over time it is going to be brilliant and hopeful. It will set us free. Have you ever read the preamble for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission? If you haven't, read it. In there, part of the words say, "The truth shall set us free." This is not new – we have heard it from Martin Luther King and others – but I put it in my preamble because I thought that's the spirit we need, to find something that sets us free from our prejudice, from our hate, from our ignorance or from our lack of confidence.

GC: Often you hear non-Indigenous people say that we need to "move on" or "turn the page." How can we be sure at the close of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that moving on does not mean forgetting?

RJ: One thing is to ensure that the residential schools are not simply buried in the pages of history, and to ensure that we remember because we don't want it to be repeated. So we

need to have a new dialogue, to make sure that discussions happen at kitchen tables and in classrooms at our universities, high schools and elementary schools. We are all a part of the discussion, part of bringing out the truth and talking about it. It is really important to look forward together. And I think we're not that far from looking forward together. Survivors of residential schools and other Aboriginal people want to move on too. We've been here so long. It's been so dark, hurtful and shameful, and we now better understand our history, why we've become the way we've become and why people see us in the ways they see us. We want to move forward, but we think the only way to move forward is to have a vision, together, about what the future looks like. That won't happen unless we have dialogue and new understandings between us, as well as the commitment to move forward in a way that is inclusive and collaborative, just and equal. We're going to move forward, it's going to happen, but it's going to take a lot of work and a lot of people being committed. There is already a critical mass of people who are interested – Canadians are interested and care. I've been talking to CEO's, directors, heads of unions, and even they can see the worth in talking about the value of a new relationship and a reconciliation. They know that we have an unreconciled state right now. We also need to make sure that we capture the attention of different ethnic groups, to get them to understand the history of this land. Canadians need to work together toward a new future that's really inclusive and collaborative – where every ethnicity, every colour, every race, every creed is honoured in these lands.

I think the best way to make sure these things don't happen again is to make sure that we don't forget the effort to assimilate Aboriginal people and destroy their languages, so we will always be a beacon of hope for generations to come. And the world is watching, they really are. Every truth commission around the world has an audience. We live in a pivotal time. We're at a moment that has the potential to transform the face of human kind around the globe. Reconciliation in Canada has so many ramifications beyond just Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals here in Canada because I think the world is watching and we have here an opportunity to showcase our compassion and that we are taking care of each other.

GC: Can you say something then about the difference between the official and the personal efforts at social reconciliation?

RJ: Everywhere I go, I say in the first instance that reconciliation begins with you. Absolutely, only you. You've got to give it some thought. You've got to think about your own life, and think about why your mind, your body, your soul and spirit is unreconciled. Why it happened, and how you can address that. How you can start to reconcile your life experience to others and to places and institutions or whatever. So, on a personal level, if that's all we do our communities would be generally healthier. But one of the things I understand about healing is that I am connected to a broader community and because of this, reconciliation is something that grows outward. We really have to start dealing with the broader society – institutional and governmental racism. All sectors of society need to be interested in what reconciliation means to them and their world. Reconciliation is just an endless possibility, a multiplicity of levels, personal, collective, political, spiritual.

It is complex, yet so simple. I've been to war-torn countries and it's hard for them to talk about it. I met a young Jewish man in Tel Aviv and I said, "What do you do to promote reconciliation in your beautiful land?" He said, "Oh, nothing, we leave that to the old guys." I was shocked, I didn't have a response for that. Somehow we forget that reconciliation does not begin with other people, it belongs to all of us. It's like love. It's a spiritual commandment or imperative. It belongs to all of us. Imagine how much more empowered we'd all feel if we thought we could contribute to reconciliation.

GC: What role do you think visual art and exhibitions such as *Witnesses* can play in addressing Indian residential schools?

RJ: There are so many different ways to give expression to our reality. The exhibit at the Belkin Gallery helps to define how these artists perceive the unreconciled, and how they see it becoming reconciled through various art forms. One of the important things about the Belkin exhibit is that these ideas and perspectives are coming from people who have been harmed, from people who desire so deeply to address the harm. When I saw the work that is going to be in the exhibition, I was really moved. I got very emotional and I thought, "Oh my God, this is wonderful!" I didn't always feel this way about art, but I realize that it is a medium that can be very powerful. For the curators at the Belkin to organize this exhibition of artists, and for the artists to agree to show their work – that's reconciliation right there.



Alex Janvier, *Blood Tears*, 2001

ARTISTS

GERRY AMBERS

As an Indigenous colonized person I paint the reality I know. I paint for us, the colonized. I paint the reality I know against the reality I am forced to know, sometimes with humour, sometimes with pain but always with love. I paint with acrylics mostly on canvas. I believe that the responsibility of the artist is to reflect back to the people facets of their reality and I have chosen painting to achieve this end.

To feel, to inspire, to think, to weep and to be a human being.



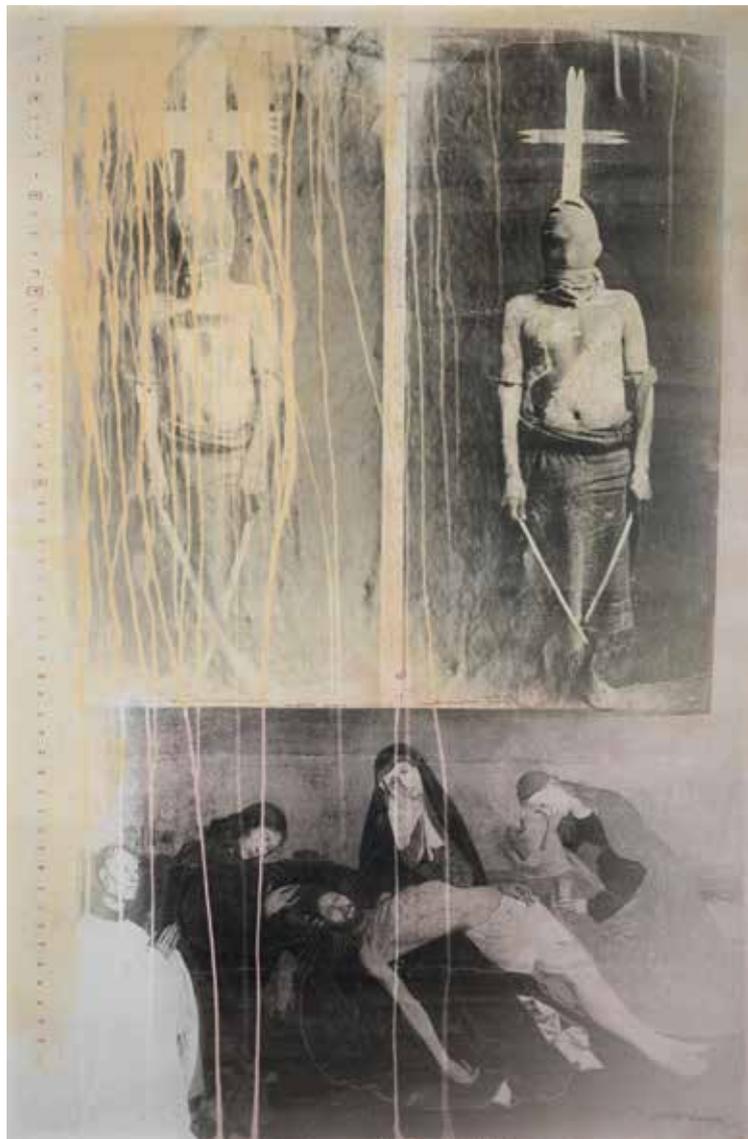
Gerry Ambers, *Dzunukwa Dreaming of Summer Holidays*, 1992

CARL BEAM

My works are like little puzzles, interesting little games. I play a game with humanity and with creativity. I ask viewers to play the participatory game of dreaming ourselves as each other. In this we find out that we're all basically human.... My work is not fabricated for the art market. There's no market for intellectual puzzles or works of spiritual emancipation.

There's got to be a certain irony in speaking English, French and Latin. Why couldn't they have appended Ojibway? And Ojibway history? Why couldn't there have been *one* enlightened priest? It's stupid – as if there was already proof that speaking Indian was a handicap to speaking English. The irony is to mask it in a spiritual mode. If they told me I was in prison when I was a kid it would be easier to accept. But a Roman Catholic boarding school? How could that be? There must be another motive – but I can't locate what that motive was. You can't really change anybody. You shouldn't. What for?

– Carl Beam, 1991 interview with Allan J. Ryan, in *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (Vancouver and Seattle: UBC Press and University of Washington Press, 1999).



Carl Beam, *The Unexplained*, 1998



Rebecca Belmore, *Apparition*, 2013

REBECCA BELMORE

Apparition is an artwork that reflects my understanding of the loss of our language. More, it is an illustration of the potential for its disappearance. I do not speak Anishinaabemowin even though I grew up within it and around it. Sadly, I am well aware of the devastating effects of the residential school system, particularly the deliberate role it played in the silencing of our languages. For this reason *Apparition* is an image of myself, a silent portrait of this loss.

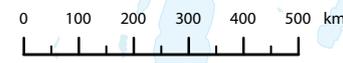


Residential Schools of Canada



From the 1870s to the 1990s Canada, often in partnership with leading church organizations, operated a residential school system to which over 150,000 First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students were sent. This map shows the location of residential schools identified by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Students who attended these schools are eligible to apply for compensation.

- Church**
- A = Anglican
 - B = Baptist
 - C = Catholic
 - M = Mennonite
 - N = Non-denominational
 - P = Presbyterian
 - U = United



P.E.I.: PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
N.B.: NEW BRUNSWICK
N.S.: NOVA SCOTIA



Chris Bose, *The Apology*, 2011

CHRIS BOSE

When the Apology by Stephen Harper happened on June 11, 2008, I was both amazed and enraged. I never thought it would happen in my lifetime, or even ever, but how empty it seemed and how quickly it came and went on the Canadian consciousness was unsettling. A week after it happened I went to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development website and downloaded the video for it and began chopping it up to reflect what I heard. I was inspired to keep it alive and to unearth it and bring it to the surface so we never forget and people really understand what happened. The residential school experiences, the generations of damage it has done. Or at least, get other people exposed to what happened. These are our hidden histories and the stories must be told, people need to be heard in order for some kind of reconciliation to take place.

CATHY BUSBY

WE ARE SORRY (Melbourne 2009/Winnipeg 2010) commemorated the public apologies made in 2008 by Canadian and Australian heads of state to the Indian Residential School survivors in Canada and the “Stolen Generations” in Australia, edited from the lengthy original apology speeches. In Melbourne *WE ARE SORRY* was installed outdoors (2009-2013) as part of the Laneway Commissions. The following year a second version was presented at the Winnipeg Art Gallery in conjunction with the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2010). This artwork sustained the presence of these landmark apologies and, hopefully, the accountability of the governments to their words. *WE ARE SORRY* also functioned as a backdrop for further expression by those who were being apologized to: in Melbourne at the opening, Indigenous writer and activist John Harding performed his outrage at the post-apology treatment of his people; at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, traditional dancer Brian Clyne performed a hoop dance as a gesture of healing.

As part of Printed Matter’s *Artists and Activists* series, AA Bronson invited me to produce a *WE ARE SORRY* pamphlet containing the two apologies (edition 2,500). I was able to negotiate this as a co-publication between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Printed Matter, institutions whose interests cross but whose worlds are very unlikely to meet.

In 2012, I produced an over-sized billboard, *BUDGET CUTS*, as a ready-made news event and update to *WE ARE SORRY* at Paved/AKA, Saskatoon. It addressed severe federal government cuts to First Nations programs and institutions since the 2008 apology and was accompanied by a take-away folder listing news sources of these cuts. *WE ARE SORRY 2013* in *Witnesses: Art and Canada’s Indian Residential Schools* is a continuation of this work, and is also accompanied by an information pamphlet.

This work is presented at: Walter C. Koerner Library, the University of British Columbia, 1958 Main Mall



Cathy Busby, *WE ARE SORRY 2013*, 2013

JOANE CARDINAL-SCHUBERT

This installation originated in 1989 and was first exhibited in a solo exhibition at Article Gallery in Montreal. Subsequently, it was included in many venues across Canada at community events, Friendship Centres and within public galleries and museums. It included a performance aspect wherein ten Aboriginal People were invited to participate as “students” occupying the chairs, giving voice to the textual content of the “blackboard of truth” while adding their chosen individual personal shared experiences, interspersed, in their own voice. At that time not much was understood about what these experiences were, as although the Residential Schools persisted until 1996, the real horror of their history was only rumoured and hidden until fairly recently. On June 11, 2008, the Canadian Government issued an “official” apology. Subsequently a committee of three under the title “Truth and Reconciliation Commission” was established to review and hear the experiences of former “students” of these schools. Within this compartmentalized view of history such a focus by government fails to address the real impact of these schools and atrocities on generations of Aboriginal People since the church-run schools were initiated in Ontario in the 1840s. In 1842, the Canadian federal government became directly involved with their management and in 1857 the Gradual Civilization Act set aside funding for these schools. Children, sometimes four and five years of age, were removed from their parents, family, language and culture as official government policy. It has been referred to as a deliberate government attempt to “Kill the Indian in the Child.” Others prefer to equate it to global history and refer to the indentured practice and outcome as the Aboriginal Holocaust, an exercise of cultural genocide. It remains a history owned by all. Subsequent generations of all people have to come to truth and reconciliation.

– Joane Cardinal-Schubert, 2009



Joane Cardinal-Schubert, *The Lesson*, 1989



Beau Dick, *The Ghost Con-fined to the Chair*, 2012

BEAU DICK

This piece began when the journey of a chair met my vision about a ghost. The chair started out as a furnishing in a local pub. When the pub burned down the chair was picked up by a restaurant. The chair was again discarded and picked up by the Alert Bay Residential School where it was used in their carving workshop. I found the chair there when I visited the school some ten years ago and brought it home to use for a carving chair. For many years this was my favourite place to sit and carve. When the chair began to deteriorate I had a vision, and I decided it was to serve a new purpose so incorporated it into this work. I painted the back of the chair with a box of treasure design and replaced myself with a ghost. The ghost sits on a few objects that have significant meaning. There is a copy of the Indian Act, loose ends of cedar rope and goat’s wool and a woven cedar rose. The cedar rose and ghost were part of my vision: the ghost was dancing around the chair with a rose in its mouth performing its “Indian Act.”



Faye HeavyShield, *Numerous* (detail), 2013

FAYE HEAVYSHIELD

In *Numerous*, each image in the grid represents a 6-year-old girl posed in school dress; this silhouette also serves as the plane for the attendant numbers. The digits are embossed in clear compound and appear liminal as decoration and identification.

In my experience, at the end of summer at home with family ... at the beginning of September, children were returned to St. Mary's. That child then surrendered his or her "own" clothes and was issued school things. Everything – underwear, pyjamas, socks, shoes, toothbrushes – was marked in permanent ink with the child's number for that year.

Memory serves differently for all: I can recall all the names of the teachers, nuns and priests, and most of the numbers I was for those years. It is more difficult to recall the faces of schoolmates or even what I looked like.

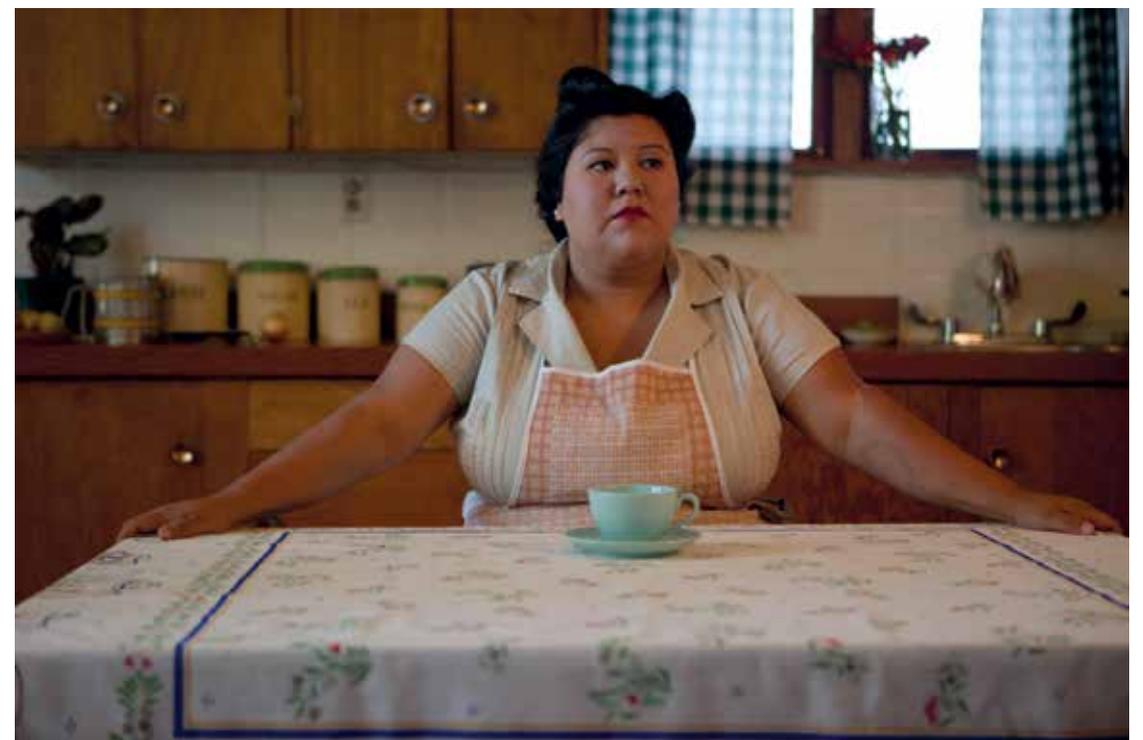
What has stayed with me is the voice of home and family.

LISA JACKSON

Savage comes out of an initiative of the imagineNATIVE Film Festival in Toronto called the Embargo Collective. The festival selected seven international indigenous filmmakers and brought us together to discuss our work, the creative challenges we were facing and – ultimately – assign "obstructions" or restrictions to each other for the making of a short film. Being a documentary filmmaker, I was assigned a musical that would include heavy metal, set decoration and working with both actors and non-actors. For all of the filmmakers, there was a universal theme of "patience" and no English allowed. We premiered the films on October 17, 2009 at the Festival's 10th anniversary. *Savage* is my response to the challenge.

I used my "obstructions" to bring a fresh take on Canada's Indian residential school history, which, sadly, is still unknown to many Canadians. As in my first short film *Suckerfish* (which looks at my own history with my mother and native identity), with *Savage* I'm trying to subvert stereotypes about "native issues" and use an unconventional approach to get underneath preconceptions and deliver an emotional experience.

My mother was a residential school survivor who was taken away at age five and I've always known I would work to bring a deeper awareness of this part of Canada's history to light. This short musical is a stand-alone "gesture" inspired by the subject I feel so passionately about.



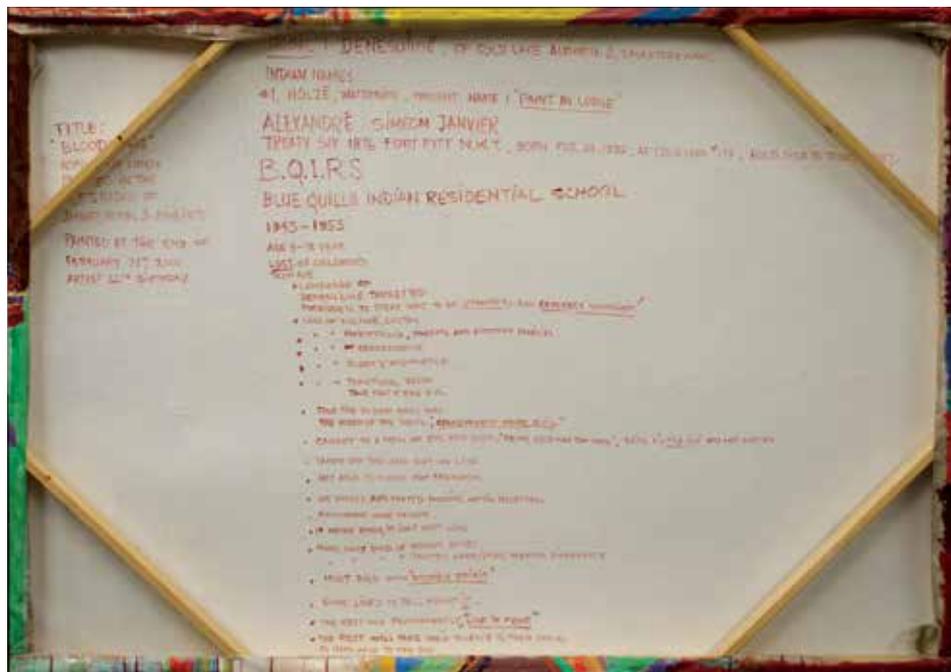
Lisa Jackson, *Savage*, 2009

ALEX JANVIER

Painted on the artist's 66th birthday, *Blood Tears* details on the verso of the canvas the series of losses that Janvier attributed to the ten years he spent at the Blue Quills Indian Residential School, transcribed as follows:

Loss of childhood / Teenage

- Language of Denesu'line targeted, forbidden to speak was to be strapped, and severely punished!
- Loss of culture, custom
- Loss of parenthood, parents and extended families
- Loss of grandparents
- Loss of elder's knowledge
- Loss of traditional belief, told that it was evil
- Told the Indian ways was the work of the devil, "Grandparent were evil"
- Caught in a mess of evil and good, "Being good was top mark," being a "little boy" did not matter
- Taken off the land that we love
- Not able to guard our resources
- We prayed and prayed morning until nightfall
- Punishments were severe
- It never ends, it just kept going
- Many, many died of broken bodies, of twisted conflicting mental difference
- Most died with "Broken spirit"
- Some lived to tell about it
- The rest are permanently, "Live in fear"
- The rest will take their silence to their graves as many have to this day



Alex Janvier, *Blood Tears* (verso), 2001

GINA LAING

This series of paintings was completed through the mid-1990s when I was in treatment. They depict memories from my time at the Alberni Indian Residential School. The people depicted in the paintings are school authorities who abused me. You will see many eyes in the paintings; I always felt I was being watched; I couldn't get away. There are several pictures of me holding "my light." I never let this light inside me go out. The paintings are of my memories. They show the horrific abuse I saw other children receive, and they are of specific memories of my own physical and sexual abuse. I am showing them because I want people to understand what happened to me, and to witness my story through my art. These paintings allowed me to begin to heal and recover from this time in my life. I want to educate people through my paintings. They are about healing and moving forward in the best way I can today as a stronger woman.

The artist has requested that her work not be illustrated in this catalogue.



Peter Morin, 2013

PETER MORIN

In the dream, I see the hair that was removed from the children. It is lying on the floor. There is one moment, before the hair is swept away and put into the trash. When I wake-up from the dream, I realize that these scissors cut off thousands and thousands of miles of hair. Enough hair to make a rope to capture the moon. The first lesson learned from the Residential School was the scissors.

Transformation requires commitment. There is no space for denial. We live in a land created through forcible impact, a land influenced by the movement of steel scissor blades. This performance invites the creation of a collective map. Viewers, and artist, work collaboratively to confront this difficult history. The meeting of these two metal blades is a concert of movement. The meeting of these blades contributes to transformation. Today, we cut the Residential School. Cut. Cut. Cut. Sadness. Cut. Cut. Cut. Grief. Cut. Cut. Cut. The pieces of hair land to create a new map of Canada. The hands make these scissors travel. Today we are remembering a nation-building act.

The performance of This is not a simple movement by Peter Morin takes place at the Belkin Art Gallery on two occasions:

Thursday, September 26, 2013

Sunday, December 1, 2013

NORVAL MORRISSEAU

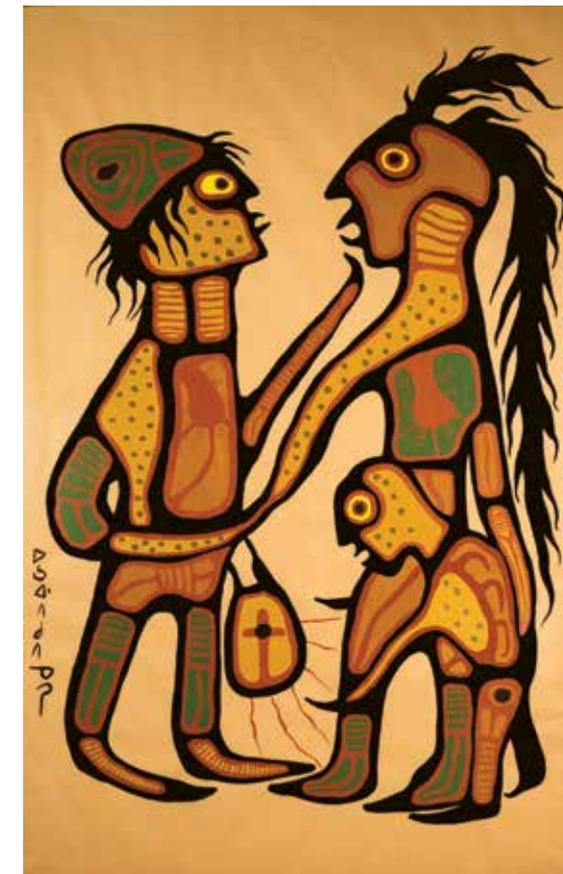
My grandparents were mostly raised in the Catholic atmosphere instituted by the Jesuits and so on. They were very strong Catholics, not like we see today. On my grandfather's side it was different. He believed more in the traditional way of doing things. So I was also raised more traditionally, more like an Indian. I was often taught by my grandfather, "Never trust a white man!" Because of his own experience with white society, he felt I should be protected.

But you know how all this gets started. "Why don't you send these children to school?" my auntie said. "They are more like savages. They are learning all these things from their grandfather. That is not the way people should be." Just on account of that, I never realized how much my auntie buggered up my life. If we had stayed at home, we would have been just as smart, maybe even smarter.

– *Norval Morrisseau, in The Art of Norval Morrisseau (Toronto: Methuen, 1979).*

Norval Morrisseau has always prided himself on remaining politically unaffiliated. Only on rare occasions does he use his art to spell out and comment on the injustices done to his people. By depicting the white man with his heart beating, carrying a pouch with the Christian motif of the cross emblazoned on it, he expresses bitter satire. The white man shakes the hand of the Indian brave and, in so doing, bestows on him and his child the "sacred gift" of smallpox.

– *Lister Sinclair and Jack Pollock, The Art of Norval Morrisseau.*



Norval Morrisseau
The Gift, 1975

JAMESIE PITSEOLAK

When I went to school everything was right until about Grade 4. That's where all of my hardship outside of my family came to be. We had moved back to Cape Dorset at that time, and I had a teacher who was a pedophile. We all have our trials and tribulations, but this was a totally different homecoming. This wasn't a residential school, I lived at home but I had to go to school everyday. We didn't have running water back then in 1978, but my teacher did and he said, "Jamasié, if you want to take a bath or a shower you can come to my house." I thought he was just letting me have a bath, but he had other intentions about that. That's where the etching comes from.

When I was in Montreal in 2010 at the printmaking residency, some people asked me if I wanted to give my life story but I didn't really want to go there because it was the darkest part of my young life. I mean, I'm 45 years old now – my 20s, my 30s, my 40s, I have good stories, a history – but those years are different from my childhood and I can deny my childhood even though it's totally there, it keeps creeping up on me and I have nightmares and anxieties because of it. It affects me even today. I was so innocent back then and I couldn't do anything to overpower them.

When I started carving I used traditional subjects. I did seals, mother figures, those kinds of things. One time I tried making a polar bear with a big rock of soapstone and I kept carving until it totally evolved to nothing. I wasted a whole rock, it was down to a tiny little rock! I thought to myself, "What the hell am I doing here?" So for a long while I did nothing, and then I thought, "What if I do a guitar?" The sculpture of a shoe, titled *Lady*, is the result of my experience at the day school in Cape Dorset where I was dealing with the same pedophile. He used to dress me up as a woman in women's clothes, mainly high-heeled shoes and a wedding dress. So I carved this shoe from memories. I put the flower there as if I'm the flower and you're the high heel – that's where it stems from.



Jamasié Pitseolak, *Lady*, 2011



Skeena Reece
Touch Me, 2013

SKEENA REECE

Pain, loss, grief – usually brings us together. Blame, shame, guilt – we are doing what we should be doing. Our job, as Indians. To give up, give in, implode, explode, be destroyed. My Father broke away from his script. My Mother broke away from her script. Imperfect. Angry. Still trying to assemble. Find culture. Find love.

We four children never got to hear about their past. Only their very present, present. Safer. Always. Wanted to know. What happened.

The before he left. He touched his weathered hand. My brother. Was angry. Sad. Cloth moved over his body. Soap. Water. "He's like a baby." A large brown scarred vulnerable baby. His grey hair. His eyes peering back. Gentle – not the holder of his emotional emancipation. "Forgive me son. I am imperfect." So many years lost – pain, grief.

"Mother. Tell me what happened. Let me touch you, again. I want to forgive. I want to love. Even when it hurts."

Tell me the truth.

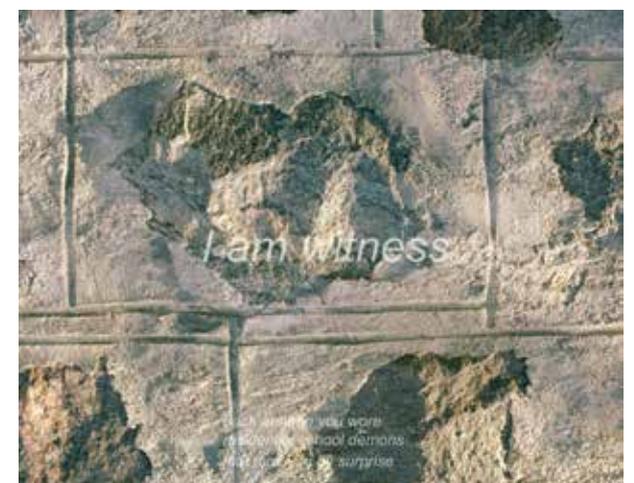
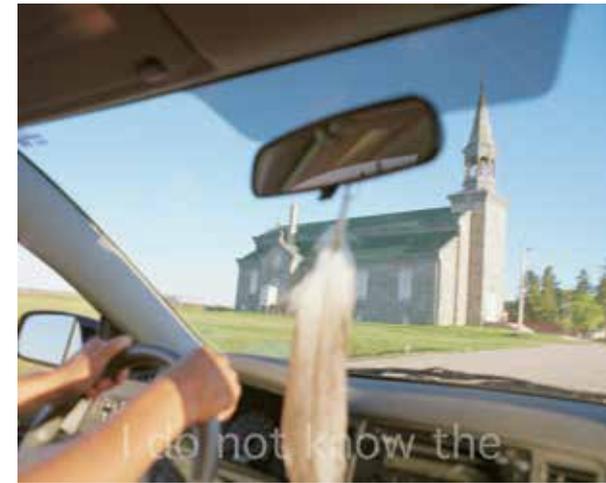
In our haste to survive, become whole again, to feel worthy and viable, we left something behind. Entitlement – the belief that we never lost it. Some of us will never know before they leave us here, alone, with them. They don't understand. Some of them will never know before they leave us here, alone, with us. So tell me what happened.

Let me touch you, again. I want to forgive. I want to love. Even when it hurts.

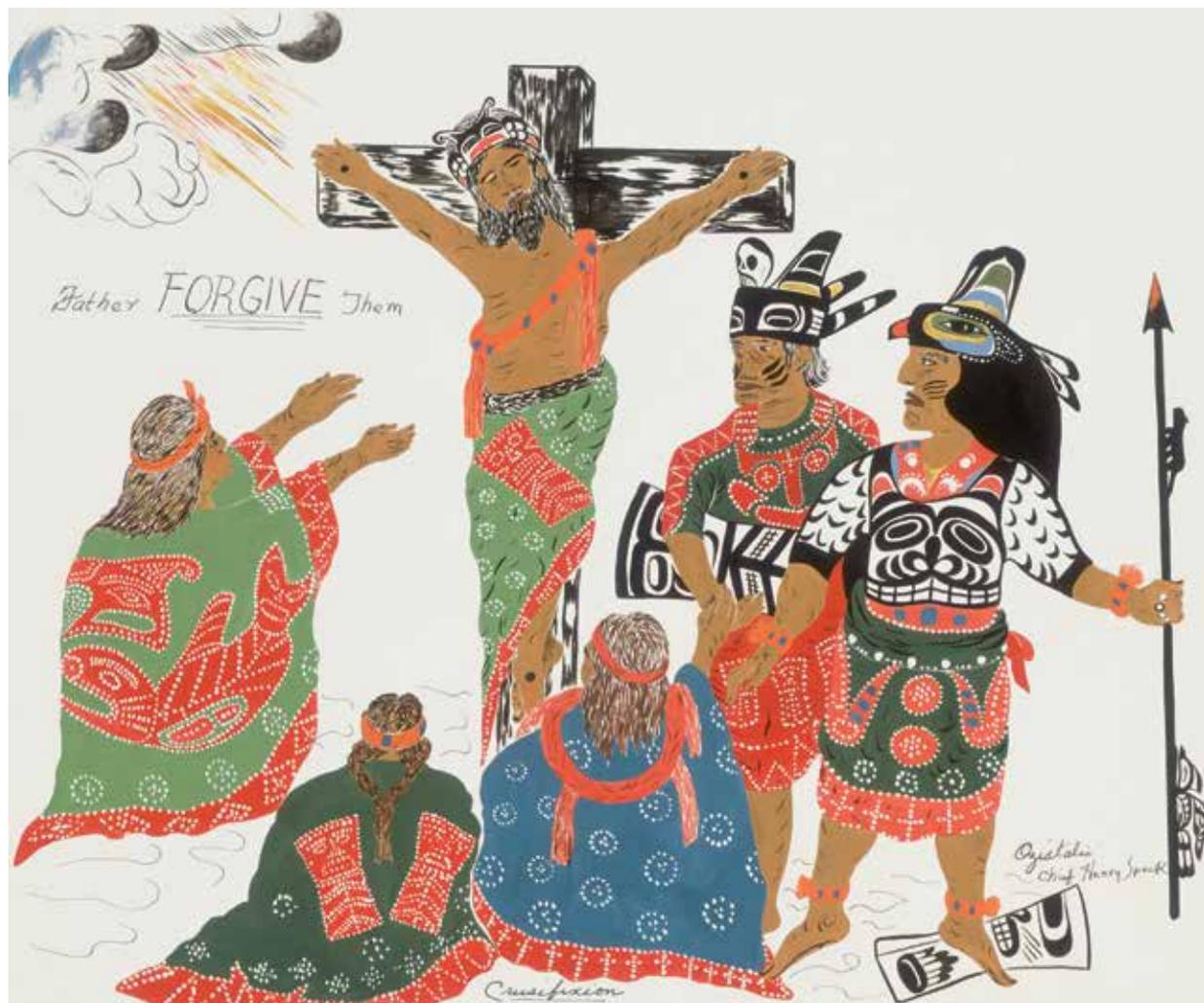
I make this to make sense. Everything I've ever made may have been selfishly and simply to assemble and disassemble things I understand and don't. Through the years I haven't been fair. I've taken a lot of freedom, because sometimes it's safer to be dangerous. Safer to be feared than vulnerable. When so much has been taken and given away.

SANDRA SEMCHUK AND JAMES NICHOLAS

James Nicholas and I collaborated as a husband and wife team. James (1946-2007) was a powerful orator, a liaison between the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and governments as well as a spontaneous performance artist and poet. I am a photographer. James and I learned together, using dialogue as a way to document history's erasure and emergence in the present. As James's wife, I am a part of the Residential School story, have experienced the lateral violence *that* violence precipitated, as well as being witness to his suffering and addictions. *Camperville Residential School, Manitoba* documents a trip we made in 2006 to visit his former teacher, Sister Yvette Carroll and the site of the residential school he attended. James told stories of sneaking in through the tiny open window of the church to steal wine, of snaring rabbits to supplement their diet, of the horror of loss of familial bonds and of never being able to really go home again. James spoke of huddling in the boiler room with another student, Phil Fontaine, the Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief who helped create the Truth and Reconciliation process. The boys had vowed that they would help their people. Sister Yvette Carroll was still living on the reserve and eating pickerel brought to her by former students. She had encouraged the children to speak their own languages by having them teach her. James died when he accidentally fell from a cliff on the Fraser River. It was autumn, always a difficult season...the season he had gone away to school for so many years.



Sandra Semchuk and James Nicholas
Camperville Residential School, Manitoba, 2006-10



Henry Speck, *Father Forgive Them*, 1958

HENRY SPECK

In the beginning of my initiation into the Hamat'sa dance, when I was about eight years old, I was taken into hiding in the woods for three months. This is where I became an artist and carver. My second uncle was with me in the woods, he was a carver and started me out to be his helper. Every day, I worked with my second uncle. It was just in me, it just came naturally, and I found out that I was an artist and a carver. My great grandfather on my mother's side was a great man, he was a teacher of art, and he was a great carver. My art runs through the family, I would say it was in my blood. I never was taught by anyone, I just grabbed the carving knives and paintbrushes and I found that I was a good artist. ... I don't copy designs from books, I just take them out of my head without thinking. I alter the traditional style to suit my own needs. This talent, this gift, it's just been handed out to me, I've been doing this since I was a little boy.

– Henry Speck, *CBC audio interviews with Norman Newton, Potlatch (1968) and The Indian as Artist (1965)*.

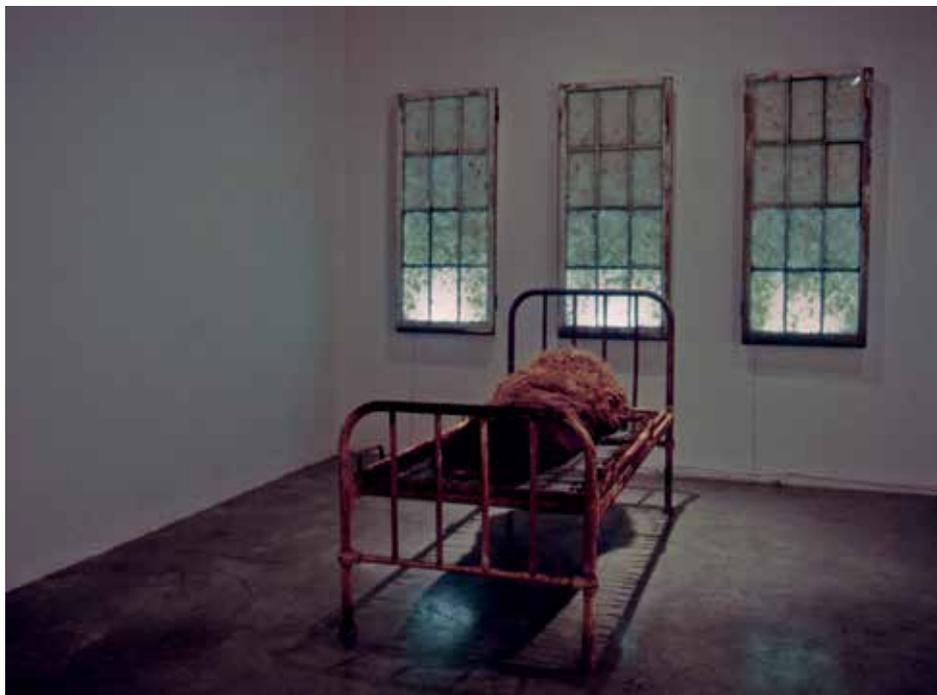
Speck's art was individualistic, but carried a collective function. ... His paintings on paper, created through the 1930s to the late 1960s, brought forward a new way of picturing Kwakwaka'wakw ritual dances and mythological characters. His subjects came from his own, lived, contemporary experience in the potlatch as a ceremonial singer and dancer, and he sometimes depicted supernatural beings mapped onto the landscape features of Tlawit'sis territory. His work shows a spontaneity and painterliness that may be surprising to people more familiar with the Northwest Coast silkscreen prints – especially those with northern-style, formline imagery – that came to institutional and market prominence in the 1970s.

– Karen Duffek, in *Projections: The Paintings of Henry Speck, Udzi'stalis*, by Karen Duffek and Marcia Crosby (Vancouver: Satellite Gallery and UBC Museum of Anthropology, 2012).

ADRIAN STIMSON

Sick and Tired is an installation that explores identity, history and transcendence through the reconfiguration of architectural and natural fragments. It is homage to colonial history. Its elements are three Old Sun Residential School windows, filled with feathers and back lit, and an old infirmary bed from the same school with a bison robe folded into a human shape placed on its springs. The bed is illuminated from the top to create a shadow beneath similar to a stretched hide. This work references material culture and post-colonial issues in Aboriginal art. *Sick and Tired* is a continuation of my explorations into my Siksika (Blackfoot) identity and the reality of cultural genocide. Combined, these elements speak to fragmentation, re-signification and counter memory – ideas that are a part of colonial or post-colonial discourse.

Residential schools were instruments of genocide; they created isolation, disorientation, pain and death and ultimately broke many human spirits. I can imagine many children peering out of these windows, longing to be home with their families. Their reality, however, was confinement similar to being smothered by a pillow. Sickness and disease were and still are a reality for First Nations – a legacy of illness represented by the infirmary bed. How many people lay sick, tired, dying or dead on this bed is not known, yet I feel the heaviness of its presence, a state that exhausts me physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. The bison robe configured like a mummy lies on the bedsprings; it is a cultural reference that speaks to another fragment, that of a historically decimated mammal analogous to the people and their culture. A light shines down illuminating robe and bed; the shadow beneath represents a stretched hide and speaks to the duality of life and death or the yet known. For me, creating this installation has been a way to exorcise and transcend the colonial project, a way to forgiveness, healing and obtaining a state of grace.



Adrian Stimson, *Sick and Tired*, 2004



Tania Willard, *Be a Good Girl*, 2007

TANIA WILLARD

Two Worlds (2007) was a community art project in partnership with Gallery Gachet and funded by Canada Council for the Arts that looked at Aboriginal communities and mental health. I worked with young Aboriginal artists, mentoring them in relief printing, linoblock and woodcut, around themes of Aboriginal peoples and mental health as related to socio-political realities, historical injustice like the residential school system, and effects of colonialism as linked to substance use, lateral violence and cultural erasure. Working with emotional and difficult subject matter, the group looked at individual iconographies and stories linked to personal, familial and community based mental health. The group editioned several works at Malaspina Printmakers. My resulting body of work was called *Crazymaking* (*Free Your Mind*, *Be a Good Girl*, *Hiawatha Indian Insane Asylum*, *Transformers*, *Ghostsickness*) and represented a reflection on these issues but also a celebration of the strength of Aboriginal people and the strength all marginalized people have to endure, and change their worlds. My grandfather was of mixed blood, Secwepemc and Canadian, he said he lived in two worlds. I wanted to express this tension; this sacrifice and survival that we as Native people navigate and that sometimes (or always in some ways) drives us crazy.

LAWRENCE PAUL YUXWELUPTUN

My work is about recording history. Native people need memorial places in every city, town and reserve so we have spaces to pray, to mourn and to honour those that lost their lives at Indian residential schools and those that survived – to honour these children who died and made the biggest sacrifice for us with their own lives so that we could have a better life. I went to a residential school myself, so I know what it was like. One of my friends died at the school when I was attending. My work is based on that kind of memory and is a statement about what the church did to us. It is time to share these memories. I am not interested in finger-pointing or laying blame, it is more important to talk about what we are going to do now. Let us do this together, Canada. It is a time for resolution and healing, let's pray this does not happen to anyone any more.



Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, *Portrait of a Residential School Girl*, 2013

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

GERRY AMBERS (Namgis, b. 1948)

Gerry (Geraldine) Ambers was born into the Namgis Nation of Alert Bay, BC. She studied Northwest Coast design with acclaimed carver Doug Cranmer and Chinese painting with Lloyd Yee, receiving her BFA from the University of Victoria in 1992. Ambers took classes with Cranmer in Alert Bay, where he taught in the basement of the building that once housed the St. Michael's Residential School (St. Michael's was turned over to the Namgis First Nation in 1973 and renamed Namgis House). During the 1980s, Ambers worked with Cranmer on a number of projects including the post and beam construction of U'mista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay and the Folk Life Pavilion at Expo '86 in Vancouver, and the totem pole restoration in Stanley Park, Vancouver. Ambers attributes her creativity to her lineage, the natural and unseen world, and the visual influences around her.

CARL BEAM (Ojibwe, 1943-2005)

Carl Beam was born on M'Chigeeng First Nation (formerly West Bay) on Manitoulin Island, ON. Of Ojibwe heritage, the artist has exerted a strong influence on a generation of Indigenous artists creating work that combined contemporary techniques and motifs with the traditions of his people. He was raised by his parents and grandparents, and at the age of ten was sent to the Garnier Residential School in Spanish, ON where he stayed until completing Grade 9. Beam began his art studies at the Kootenay School of Art in 1971, receiving his BFA from the University of Victoria in 1974 and pursuing graduate work at the University of Alberta in 1975. He is known for working with photography, collage, image transfers and drawing in an aesthetic way akin to the expressive layering and montages of American Pop Art. His 1985 painting *The North American Iceberg* was the first work by an Indigenous artist purchased by the National Gallery of Canada in 1986 as contemporary art. In addition to the National Gallery, Beam's work is found in major Canadian and international collections including the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Heard Museum (Phoenix, AZ) and the Albright-Knox Gallery (Buffalo, NY). In 2000, Beam was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and in 2005 received the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.

REBECCA BELMORE (Anishnaabe, b. 1960)

Born in Upsala, ON, Rebecca Belmore is an artist currently living and working in Winnipeg. She attended the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto and is recognized for her performance and installation art. Since the 1980s, her multidisciplinary work has addressed history, place and identity through the media of sculpture, installation, video and performance. Belmore's work is firmly rooted in the current political and social realities of Indigenous communities, but its power and poetry resonate worldwide. Belmore was Canada's official representative at the 2005 Venice Biennale, where she was the first

Indigenous woman to represent Canada. Her work has appeared in numerous exhibitions both nationally and internationally, including the Havana Biennial (1991), the Biennale of Sydney (1998) and *The Named and the Unnamed*, a touring exhibition organized by the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery that consisted of a multi-part installation commemorating women missing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Belmore is the recipient of numerous honours and awards, including the 2009 Hnatyshyn Award and the 2013 Governor General's Award for Visual and Media Arts.

CHRIS BOSE (N'laka'pamux/Secwepemc, b. 1970)

Chris Bose is a Kamloops-based writer, multidisciplinary artist, musician, curator and filmmaker. He is a facilitator of community arts events, digital storytelling and art workshops; his work also includes research and writing for periodicals across Canada, project management and coordination, video recording and editing. Through his artwork, Bose wrestles with the traumatic effects of Indian residential schools on his parents, aunts and uncles and how that trauma has affected his entire generation. Bose's work has been shown at the ImagiNative Film and Media Arts Festival (Toronto), the National Museum of the American Indian (Washington, DC) and the Arnica Courthouse Gallery (Kamloops, BC); his book of poetry, *Stone the Crow* (2010), was released by Kegedonce Publishing.

CATHY BUSBY (Canadian, b. 1958)

Cathy Busby is a Canadian artist based in Halifax. She has a BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and has been exhibiting her work internationally over the past twenty years. Busby grew up in the suburbs of Toronto until 1974 when she had the opportunity to attend the Carcross Community Education Centre in the Yukon. This was an alternative school housed in the former Chooutla Indian Residential School and attended by both Settler and Indigenous students. Her Grade 11 year at Carcross was a turning point for Busby, marking the beginning of her development as an artist concerned with social justice. Busby received an MA in Media Studies and a PhD in Communication from Concordia University, Montreal and was a Fulbright Scholar at New York University. She is an Adjunct Professor of visual art in the UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory (2013-2014).

JOANE CARDINAL-SCHUBERT (Canadian Blood/Kainai, 1942-2009)

Joane Cardinal-Schubert was an artist, writer, curator, lecturer, poet, activist and visual storyteller who lived and worked in Calgary until her death in 2009. She attended the Alberta College of Art and the University of Alberta, ultimately receiving her BFA from the University of Calgary in 1977. Her multimedia works reflect a strong spirituality and have been described as visual stories of personal experiences, layered against a backdrop of social and historical issues. Her works have been widely exhibited, with more than twenty-six solo exhibitions in Canada, the US and Europe and numerous international touring group exhibitions. Her work is included in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC), the Glenbow Museum (Calgary, AB), the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC) and in the collection of Her Majesty

Queen Elizabeth II (Duke and Duchess of York) (London), as well as many other national and international public and private collections. She was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1986, awarded the Commemorative Medal of Canada in 1993 for her contribution to the arts, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 for her contribution to community, the 2007 National Aboriginal Achievement Award for the Arts and honorary degrees from Alberta College of Art and Design and the University of Calgary (2003). In celebration of the province of Alberta's centennial year in 2005, the Premier gifted the National Gallery of Canada with the artist's work *Song of my Dream Bed Dance* (1995).

JUSTIN CARDINAL-SCHUBERT (Canadian, b. 1970)

Justin Cardinal-Schubert is a painter, animator and new media artist. He received his early education in Calgary from 1980 to 1993, the last two years of which were spent at the Plains Indians Cultural Survival School. He attended the En'owkin Centre in Penticton, BC where he studied painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, textiles and creative writing. Cardinal-Schubert was his mother's full-time assistant for twenty-two years until her passing in 2009. During that time, she encouraged her son to pursue his own artistic career, which today includes rendering three-dimensional objects with computer software.

BEAU DICK (Kwakwaka'wakw, b. 1955)

Beau Dick, acclaimed as one of the Northwest Coast's most versatile and talented carvers, was born on Village Island, Kingcome Inlet, BC and lives and works in Alert Bay, BC. Reaching out beyond the confines of his own Kwakwaka'wakw culture, Dick has explored new formats and techniques in his work, including painting and drawing. His work can be found in private collections as well as museums, including the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC), the Heard Museum (Phoenix, AZ), the Burke Museum (Seattle, WA), the UBC Museum of Anthropology and the Vancouver Art Gallery. Dick's work has been exhibited most recently in *Sakahan: International Indigenous Art* (2013) at the National Gallery of Canada, *75 Years of Collecting: First Nations: Myths and Realities* (2006) at the Vancouver Art Gallery and *Supernatural* with Neil Campbell (2004) at the Contemporary Art Gallery (Vancouver). In 2012, Dick received the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation's VIVA Award for Visual Arts. In Fall 2013, Dick will be an Artist in Residence at the UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory.

FAYE HEAVYSHIELD (Blackfoot/Kainai, b. 1953)

Faye HeavyShield, a member of the Kainai First Nation and fluent Blackfoot speaker, lives and works on the Blood Reserve in the southern Alberta foothills where she was born and raised. HeavyShield attended St. Mary's Catholic School as a child, an Indian residential school near her home in Alberta. In 1980, she attended the Alberta College of Art and Design. Since the mid-1980s, her work has been exhibited throughout Canada and the US and is held in public and private collections throughout North America, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Glenbow Museum (Calgary, AB), the Heard Museum of Native Cultures and Art (Phoenix, AZ) and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art (Indianapolis, IN). The artist acknowledges the many influences and blessings of language, land, community and family.

LISA JACKSON (Anishnaabe, b. 1974)

Lisa Jackson is an award-winning filmmaker based in Vancouver with a BFA in Film Production from Simon Fraser University. With a background in documentary film including the acclaimed short *Suckerfish* (2004) and the CTV "W5 Presents" one-hour *Reservation Soldiers* (2007), Jackson expanded into fiction with *Savage* (2009), which won a 2010 Genie award for Best Short Film. *Playback Magazine* named her one of *10 to Watch in 2012* and her work has played at festivals internationally, been widely broadcast on television and is used extensively in educational and community settings. Recent films include the 35mm fiction short *Parkdale* (2011), *How a People Live* (2013), a one-hour documentary on the 1964 forced relocation of BC's Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw people and a short performance-based film *Snare* (2013), which addresses the issue of violence against Indigenous women. Jackson's films have garnered numerous awards and in 2012 the ReelWorld Festival named her a Trailblazer.

ALEX JANVIER (Dene Suline/Saulteaux, b. 1935)

Alex Janvier is one of Canada's most acclaimed contemporary painters. As a member of the Professional Native Indian Artists Incorporation (PNIAI), commonly known as the Aboriginal Group of Seven, Janvier's work is informed by his cultural and spiritual heritage as well as the history of modernist abstract painting. Janvier was born on the Le Goff Reserve of the Cold Lake First Nations in northern Alberta, where he was raised by his family speaking the Dene language until he was sent to the Blue Quills Indian Residential School at the age of eight. About this experience he has stated, "Fortunately, I had a good foundation in my language. I learned from the old people, the elders and old ladies, and they made sure I was well instructed in my language, in my culture and in my livelihood." He went on to receive formal art training at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (now the Alberta College of Art) in Calgary, graduating with honours in 1960. He instructed classes at various institutes in Alberta before devoting himself full-time to his painting practice in the early 1970s. Janvier's work has been widely exhibited and collected, both nationally and internationally; in 1995, he completed the mural *Morning Star* in the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC). Janvier was elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of the Arts in 1992. In 2007 he was made a member of the Order of Canada. In recognition of his contribution to the arts in Canada, Janvier received a Governor General's Award as well as the Marion Nicoll Visual Art Award in 2008, Alberta Order of Excellence in 2010 and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013.

GINA LAING (Uchucklesaht, b. 1947)

Gina Laing (Cootes) was born in Port Alberni, BC and is a member of the Uchucklesaht First Nation. She continues to live in the village of Kildonan on the west coast of Vancouver Island where she was raised as a child. She attended the Alberni Indian Residential School between 1954 and 1964. The paintings in this exhibition were created as part of a healing program she attended during the mid-1990s. This program incorporated art into healing, asking participants to create images in a particular space of time ranging from under a minute to up to an hour.

PETER MORIN (Tahltan, b. 1977)

Peter Morin, a member of the Crow clan of the Tahltan First Nation in northern British Columbia, is a Victoria-based performance artist, curator, writer and community educator. He received his BFA from the Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design (2001) and completed his MFA at UBC Okanagan in 2011. In his artistic practice as well as his curatorial work, Morin explores issues of decolonization and Indigenous identity and language. Morin's work has been exhibited in numerous galleries, including the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto), Open Space Artist Run Centre (Victoria, BC), Satellite Gallery (Vancouver), Richmond Art Gallery and Urban Shaman Gallery (Winnipeg). Morin has curated exhibitions at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, Western Front (Vancouver), the Burnaby Art Gallery and grunt gallery (Vancouver). In 2010, Morin received the British Columbia Creative Achievement Award for Aboriginal Art.

NORVAL MORRISSEAU (Anishnaabe, 1932-2007)

The artist Norval Morrisseau, also called Copper Thunderbird, rose to fame in the early 1960s when he developed the unique painting style known as the Woodland School, translating his Anishnaabe culture visually through acrylic paintings, prints and drawings accessible to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. He invented the pictographic style, now used widely by Indigenous artists and his art expresses his spiritual and cultural explorations. Born on the Sand Point Reserve near Lake Nipigon in northern Ontario, Morrisseau was raised by his maternal grandparents Moses Potan and Vernique Nanakognagos. He spent several years at the Saint Joseph's Indian Residential School in Thunder Bay, ON, leaving school after the fourth grade. Morrisseau was a self-taught painter, creating an innovative vocabulary reflecting his traditional spiritual knowledge. Morrisseau completed many commissions during his career, including the mural for the Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal. He is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (1970) and a recipient of the Order of Canada (1978). In 1980, he received honorary doctorates from McGill and McMaster Universities. He was acknowledged as Grand Shaman of the Ojibwe in 1986 and in 1995, the Assembly of First Nations bestowed on him their highest honour, the presentation of an eagle feather.

JAMES NICHOLAS (Cree, 1947-2007)

James Nicholas was a full blood Rock Cree from Nelson House, MB. His great grandfather was Medicine Man Pierre Moose, and both of his parents used traditional medicine to help their community. At the age of eight, Nicholas was sent to residential school. During the 1970s, he studied in BC working with and exchanging ideas with Bob Manuel, son of native strategist George Manuel, while continuing his dialogues with political activists Rodney Spence and Phil Fontaine in Manitoba. When he returned to Nelson House, he provided leadership to his community in education, economic development and government-to-government liaison. In the 1990s James relocated to Vancouver to pursue acting, writing, photography and videography. He made many collaborative works with his wife, Sandra Semchuk, that challenge the known history of relations between Indigenous and Settler cultures and assumptions in identity politics.

JAMASIE PITSEOLAK (Black Scottish Inuit, b. 1968)

Born near Cape Dorset on southern Baffin Island, Jamasie Pitseolak belongs to the first generation of Inuit who grew up in permanent year-round settlements. The son of artists Mark and Okpik Pitseolak, he began carving when he was eight or nine, selling his first works to the Hudson's Bay Company. One of his earliest influences was his grandfather, Peter Pitseolak, a well-known carver and photographer from the Dorset area. Pitseolak was raised by his parents as well as his grandparents, and attended day school in Cape Dorset. Whereas most Inuit artists produce sculptures from single blocks of stone, Pitseolak works like a collagist, painstakingly assembling his pieces from individually carved components. Equally inventive is his distinctive modern subject matter. Pitseolak represents objects from contemporary Inuit life – motorcycles, machinery with moveable parts and guitars. In 2010, Pitseolak was part of a residency program for Inuit artists at Montreal's Studio PM where he produced his sugar-lift etchings. Pitseolak's work is held in many private and public collections, including the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC). His work has been exhibited across Canada and the US since the mid-1990s.

SKEENA REECE (Tsimshian/Cree, b. 1974)

Skeena Reece is the Tsimshian/Cree daughter of Red Power radical Cleo Reece and internationally renowned carver Victor Reece. She currently resides on the West Coast of Vancouver Island raising her son and awaiting her newest baby. An international multimedia artist whose work includes performance art, spoken word, "sacred clowning," writing, singing and video art, Reece has performed at venues including The Power Plant, Toronto (2012), Modern Fuel, Kingston, ON (2011), 17th Biennale of Sydney (2010), Nuit Blanche, Toronto (2009), LIVE Biennale, Vancouver (2009), the UBC Museum of Anthropology (2008) and the National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC (2008). Reece studied at Northwest Community College and Emily Carr University of Art + Design and trained at the Banff Centre and grunt gallery as a curatorial practices intern. Reece is the recipient of the 2012 BC Creative Achievement Award for First Nations Art.

SANDRA SEMCHUK (Ukrainian-Canadian, b. 1948)

Sandra Semchuk is a photographer and associate professor at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. She received her BFA from the University of Saskatchewan (1970) and her MA from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (1983). She grew up in a grocery store in Meadow Lake, SK, where her father Martin Semchuk helped bring Medicare to the province. Semchuk's photographic collaborations and video works use autobiography and dialogue as the basis for recognition and identity, focusing on the relationships between herself, her family and her community. As a member of the Settler culture and widow of a traditional Cree speaker, James Nicholas, Semchuk's work disrupts myths that historically have shaped Settler relations to Indigenous people, using personal experience as a basis for storytelling. Semchuk's photographs and collaborations have been exhibited widely including at Presentation House Gallery (North Vancouver), the Mendel Art Gallery (Saskatoon), the Urban Shaman Gallery (Winnipeg), the Center for Creative

Photography (Tucson, AZ), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Museu d'Art Contemporani (Barcelona, Spain).

CHIEF HENRY SPECK (Kwakwaka'wakw 1908-1971)

Also known as Udzi'stalis, Chief Henry Speck was born in 1908 on Turnour Island, BC. He attended the Alert Bay Residential School for two years. At age fourteen, he was initiated as a Hamat'sa dancer in the Tlawit'sis tribe - and therefore an acknowledged ceremonial songwriter and composer of Kwakiutl dances - during his uncle Chief Bob Harris's potlatch. Speck's father hosted a potlatch to assume the position of chief of the Tlawit'sis tribe in 1925, at which his son danced. When the elder Speck passed away, Henry Speck was made chief and given the name Udzi'stalis, which means "The Greatest." A largely self-taught artist, Speck worked in both watercolour and woodcarving. Speck's first solo exhibition was held in 1964 at the New Design Gallery in Vancouver and was comprised of forty watercolours. The sixteen-page catalogue that accompanied the exhibition, *Kwakiutl Art*, was one of the earliest attempts to thoroughly analyze and promote Kwakiutl art in print for commercial purposes. The following year, Speck became artistic director of Chief James Sewid's Big House project in Alert Bay, BC. Speck also exhibited at the Simon Fraser University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. His work is included in the collections of the British Columbia Provincial Museum (Victoria), the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC), the Glenbow Museum (Calgary), the San Diego Museum of Man and the Campbell River Museum.

ADRIAN STIMSON (Siksika, b. 1964)

Born in Sault Ste. Marie, ON, Adrian Stimson is a member of the Siksika (Blackfoot) Nation in southern Alberta and currently lives and works in Saskatoon. He is an interdisciplinary artist, curator, writer and educator with a BFA from the Alberta College of Art and Design and MFA from the University of Saskatchewan. His work includes installation, painting, performance, video and photography. He is a regular participant at Burning Man and was featured in the 2007 summer issue of *Canadian Art*, "Buffalo Boy at Burning Man" and the 2009 spring issue of *FUSE magazine*, "Buffalo Boy Then and Now." Stimson was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in 2003, the Alberta Centennial Medal in 2005 for his human rights and diversity activism and the Blackfoot Visual Arts Award in 2009.

TANIA WILLARD (Secwepemc, b. 1976)

As an artist, curator and designer, Tania Willard works within the shifting ideas around the contemporary and traditional, often working with bodies of knowledge and skills that are conceptually linked to her interest in intersections between Indigenous and other cultures. Willard has worked as an artist in residence with the Stanley Park Ecology Society and the City of Vancouver, Gallery Gachet in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and the Banff Centre, and as a curator in residence with grunt gallery. Willard's work is held in the collections of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, the Kamloops Art Gallery and Thompson Rivers University (Kamloops, BC). Willard's recent curatorial work includes *Beat Nation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture*, featuring twenty-eight contemporary Indigenous artists exhibited at the Vancouver Art Gallery (2012) and touring to multiple venues until 2014.

LAWRENCE PAUL YUXWELUPTUN (Coast Salish, b. 1957)

Born in Kamloops, BC, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluption is a Vancouver-based artist who graduated from the Emily Carr College of Art + Design in 1983 with an honours degree in painting. He attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School as a child, but spent most of his adolescence in the Vancouver area. He documents and promotes change in contemporary Indigenous history through his paintings using Coast Salish cosmology, Northwest Coast formal design elements and the western landscape tradition. His work explores political, environmental and cultural issues and his own personal and socio-political experiences enhance this practice of documentation. In addition to his solo shows his work has been shown in numerous group exhibitions including *Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years* (2011) at Plug In Institute for Contemporary Art (Winnipeg), *75 Years of Collecting: First Nations: Myths and Realities* (2006) at the Vancouver Art Gallery and *INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives* (1992) at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC). In 1998 he was the recipient of the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation's VIVA Award for the Visual Arts. His paintings are held in the collections of the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Gatineau, QC), the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the National Gallery of Canada.

CURATORIAL TEAM

GEOFFREY CARR

Geoffrey Carr is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of the Fraser Valley. He holds a PhD in Art History from the University of British Columbia. His research examines the largely overlooked architectural history of the Indian Residential School system in Canada, as well as the problems pertaining to the preservation and commemoration of these contentious places. He also is interested in issues related to memorialization, heritage preservation, state apology and discourses of social reconciliation.

DANA CLAXTON

Dana Claxton, a member of the Lakota Nation, is a curator, artist and Assistant Professor in the UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory. Claxton works in film, photography, single and multi-channel video installation and performance art. Her practice investigates beauty, the body, the socio-political and the spiritual. Her work has been shown internationally at the Museum of Modern Art (New York), Walker Art Centre (Minneapolis, MN), Sundance Film Festival, Eiteljorg Museum (Indianapolis, IN) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (Sydney, AU) and held in public collections including the Vancouver Art Gallery, National Gallery of Canada, Art Bank of Canada and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. She has received numerous awards including the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation VIVA Award for the Visual Arts and the Eiteljorg Fellowship.

TARAH HOGUE

Tarah Hogue is a writer and curator of Dutch/Métis ancestry. Born in Red Deer, AB, she received her BA in Art History from Queen's University in 2008 and her MA in Critical and Curatorial Studies from the University of British Columbia in 2012. Her practicum exhibition *Facing the Animal* focused on animal imagery in contemporary art and compared post-humanist and Indigenous ontologies. Hogue co-curated *No Windows*, the first group exhibition at the Satellite Gallery in Vancouver (2011) and in 2009 co-founded The Gam Gallery, an exhibition space and artist studio located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

SHELLY ROSENBLUM

Shelly Rosenblum is Curator of Academic Programs at the UBC Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery where she develops programs that increase outreach and integration of the Belkin Gallery both within the University community and the Vancouver community at large. She received her PhD from the Department of English at Brown University and has taught at Brown, Wesleyan and UBC. Her research interests include discourses of the Black Atlantic, critical theory, narrative, performativity and issues in contemporary art and museum theory.

CHARLOTTE TOWNSEND-GAULT

Charlotte Townsend-Gault is a Professor in the Department of Art History and a Faculty Associate in the Department of Anthropology at UBC. She has published widely on the history and politics of response to Indigenous arts and culture in North America since the early 1980s. *Native Art of the Northwest Coast: A History of Changing Ideas*, co-edited with Jennifer Kramer and K̓i-ḱe-in, is due in September 2013 from UBC Press. Exhibitions curated include: *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* (with Diana Nemiroff and Robert Houle) (1992) and, at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, *Yuxweluptun: Born to Live and Die on your Colonialist Reservations* (1995); *Rebecca Belmore: The Named and the Unnamed* (2003); and *Backstory: Nuuchaanulth Ceremonial Curtains and the Work of K̓i-ḱe-in* (2010).

KEITH WALLACE

Keith Wallace has been a curator of contemporary art since 1979 and has worked both independently and in various visual arts institutions. In 2004, Wallace became Editor-in-Chief of *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* which is published by ARCO in Taipei. He is currently Associate Director/Curator at the UBC Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery.

SCOTT WATSON

Scott Watson is Director of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery and Head of the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at UBC. Recent distinctions include the Hnatyshyn Award for Curatorial Excellence (2010) and the Alvin Balkind Award for Creative Curatorship in British Columbia Arts (2008). Watson has published extensively in the areas of contemporary Canadian and international art. His 1990 monograph on Jack Shadbolt earned the Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize (1991). He has enacted numerous exhibitions including *Mark Boulos* (2010); *Jack Shadbolt: Underpinnings* (2009); *Intertidal: Vancouver art & artists* (2005/06) at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp; and *Rebecca Belmore: Fountain* (2005) for the Venice Biennale Canadian Pavilion.

LIST OF WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Gerry Ambers
Dzunukwa Dreaming of Summer Holidays, 1992
acrylic on canvas
167.6 x 215.9 cm
Collection of Laura Cranmer

Carl Beam
Forced Ideas in School Days, 1991
photo emulsion and ink on paper
98.0 x 78.0 cm
Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank

Carl Beam
The Unexplained, 1998
photo emulsion and ink on paper
154.0 x 106.0 cm
Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank

Rebecca Belmore
Apparition, 2013
video
2:50
Courtesy of the artist

Chris Bose
The Apology, 2011
video
11:10
Courtesy of the artist

Cathy Busby
WE ARE SORRY 2013, 2013
vinyl billboard and artist book
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist
On view at the UBC Walter C. Koerner Library

Joane Cardinal-Schubert
The Lesson, 1989
mixed media installation
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the Cardinal-Schubert family

Beau Dick
The Ghost Con-fined to the Chair, 2012
found chair, paint, cedar, feathers, cedar bark and the
Indian Act
78.7 x 33.0 x 48.3 cm
Collection of Laing and Kathleen Brown

Faye HeavyShield
Numerous, 2013
55 embossed inkjet prints
17.8 x 12.7 cm each
Courtesy of the artist

Lisa Jackson
Savage, 2009
video
6:00
Courtesy of the artist

Alex Janvier
Blood Tears, 2001
acrylic on linen
128.3 x 177.8 x 7.0 cm
Courtesy of Janvier Gallery and the artist

Gina Laing
Untitled, c. mid-1990s
16 works on paper of various media
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

Peter Morin
This is not a simple movement, 2013
mixed media installation and performance
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist
Performed at the Belkin Art Gallery September 26 and
December 1, 2013

Norval Morrisseau
The Gift, 1975
acrylic on canvas
196.0 x 122.0 cm
Collection of the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, from the
Estate of Helen E. Band

Jamasie Pitseolak
Untitled, c. 2009
stone
3.8 x 10.5 x 11.4 cm
Collection of John and Joyce Price

Jamasie Pitseolak
The Day After, 2010
hand-painted drypoint etching
49.5 x 38.1 cm
Courtesy of Marion Scott Gallery | Kardosh Projects

Jamasie Pitseolak
The Student, 2010
hand-painted drypoint etching
80.0 x 111.8 cm
Courtesy of Marion Scott Gallery | Kardosh Projects

Jamasie Pitseolak
Lady, 2011
stone
17.8 x 12.7 x 29.2 cm
Collection of Marnie Schreiber

Skeena Reece
Touch Me, 2013
video
13:49
Courtesy of the artist

Sandra Semchuk and James Nicholas
Camperville Residential School, Manitoba, 2006-10
6 lightjet prints
76.2 x 95.9 cm each
Courtesy of Sandra Semchuk

Henry Speck
Father Forgive Them, 1958
watercolour on paper
35.6 x 42.6 cm
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery,
Acquisitions Fund

Adrian Stimson
Sick and Tired, 2004
windows and infirmary bed from Old Sun Residential
School, feathers, fluorescent lights, bison robe
dimensions variable
Collection of the MacKenzie Art Gallery, purchased with
the assistance of Taylor Automotive Group in memory of
Bobbie Taylor

Tania Willard
Be a Good Girl, 2007
woodcut on paper
61.0 x 76.2 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Tania Willard
Free Your Mind, 2007
woodcut on paper
61.0 x 76.2 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Tania Willard
Hiawatha Indian Insane Asylum, 2007
photocopy transfer and woodcut on paper
40.6 x 25.4 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun
Portrait of a Residential School Girl, 2013
acrylic and gold leaf on canvas
177.0 x 135.0 cm
Courtesy of the artist

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Work from this exhibition is also presented at the Walter C. Koerner Library, the University of British Columbia, 1958 Main Mall.

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