# Sites of Aboriginal Difference:
# A Perspective on Installation Art in Canada



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January 30, 2002

*A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research*
*in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

## Acknowledgements

Over the past six years while I have been researching and writing this dissertation I have received unlimited support and encouragement from countless colleagues, friends, and family members that it is virtually impossible to do them all justice here. Thus, I extend a general debt of gratitude to everyone listed below and apologize for any omissions as a result of the frailty of my own memory.

Christine Ross, my advisor, colleague, and friend is without question the person I hold in the greatest academic regard. Her patience, insight, openness, and constructive criticism have made me a better student. Dr. Ross has also generated an atmosphere in the new Department of Art History and Communication Studies, that both encourages excellence and challenges institutional standards. Among the staff members at McGill University Lise Ouimet, Carol Jackman-Schuller, Bozena Latincic, and Karin Bourgeois are deserving of my gratitude.

For the financial assistance that has enabled me to pursue my doctoral studies I am also indebted to Dr. Ross, who successfully recommended me for the department's Dr. Max Stern Graduate Recruitment Fellowship. Dr. Stern's posthumous support of art historical scholarship in Canada is a fitting tribute to this generous individual. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada also deserves recognition for the Doctoral Fellowship I was awarded during the final years of my full-time studies.

Over my entire academic career there have been a number of teachers who have sparked my interest in art and revealed to me the value of education, and foremost among them are: Mr. Ouimet, Mr.Legault, Mrs. Cox, Mr. Casgrain, Dr. Malcolm Thurlby, Dr. Brian Foss, and Dr. Lise Lamarche. Brian Roy deserves special thanks for the confidence he has instilled in me throughout my academic pursuits.

For the support and continued encouragement of my friends and colleagues I am truly grateful. Thanks to Donna Bomberry, Robert Houle, Ani Jeanneault, Edward Poitras, Valerie Lamontagne, Nina Ladocha, Pierre Meredith, Faye Heavyshield, Tony Boyd, Dominique Vaillencourt, Krista Harris, Joey Babineau, Nick Morin, Claudio Rivera-Seguel, Rebecca Belmore, Ted Buyers, Marie-Josée Lafortune, René Blouin, Ray Cronin, Judith Mackin, Marcus Miller, Andrew Forster, Trevor Gould, Jason Fitzpatrick, Juri Ladocha, Dan Elzinga, and Jim Redpath.

Both the McGregor family of Birch Island and the Corriveau family of Cornwall have been a constant source of strength for me on a personal level. My siblings Peter, Michael, and Susan, as well as their families have also played a key role in my academic well being.

Finally, there are not enough words for me to express the debt that I owe to my parents.
Thanks Mom and Dad.

## Claim of Originality

This dissertation traces the presence of installation-based practices among artists of Aboriginal ancestry from the mid 1970s to the early 1990s via selected exhibitions across Canada. While no significant studies on such an aesthetic movement exist, there are exhibition catalogues, contemporary art periodicals, survey texts, and academic writings which do touch on installation art and its relation to the First Nations. The most relevant of these sources have been cited throughout the body of this study and are listed in the bibliography. Similarly, the methodological perspective on Canadian art history, federal law, and human science presented here has been previously used to create contexts for the discussion of contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry. However, there are no in-depth discussions that make such an extended link to spatial art productions. The interweaving of First Nations artistic, political, and literary trends during the post-war era in Canada is also not entirely uncommon, but my orchestration of these histories toward comprehending a specific practice is unique. Theories of the avant-garde, post-colonialism, and post-modernism have often come into play through recent discourses of artistic production in Canada, while this study attempts to deploy installation in a bridge-like capacity between these fields of interest. The following dissertation is thus original in; 1) thoroughly charting the development of installation-based practices among artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada, 2) relating installation art to hybrid applications of indigenous North American and Western European artistic traditions, 3) providing a Canadian neo-colonial backdrop that serves as the paradoxical location from which the selected artists emerge, 4) defining an inter-tribal cultural community in Canada and its relation to a radical artistic phenomenon, 5) recognizing the simultaneous tensions created in Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal settings by the practices under review, 6) proffering a visual rereading of national identity politics somewhere between post-modernism and post-colonialism.

## Abstract

This dissertation traces the presence of installation-based practices among artists of Aboriginal ancestry via selected exhibitions across Canada. It begins with a methodological perspective on Canadian art history, federal law, and human science, as a means of establishing a contextual backdrop for the art under consideration. The rise of an Indian empowerment movement during the twentieth century is then shown to take on an international voice which had cultural ramifications at the 1967 *Canadian International and Universal Exhibition*. Nascent signs of a multi-mediatic aesthetic are distinguished in selected works in *Canadian Indian Art '74*, as well as through Native-run visual arts programs. First Nations art history is charted via new Canadian art narratives starting in the early 1970s, followed by the development of spatial productions and hybrid discourses in *New Work By a New Generation* in 1982, and *Stardusters* in 1986. The final chapter opens with a history of installation art since the Second World War, as related to the pronounced presence of multi-mediactic works in *Beyond History* in 1989. Post-colonial and post-modern theories are deployed to conclusively situate both the artistic and political concerns featured throughout this study, and lead into the analysis of selected installations at *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives* and *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*. These 1992 shows in the national capital region ultimately confirm the maturation of a particular socio-political aesthetic that tested issues of Canadian identity, while signifying Aboriginal sites of difference.



## Résumé

Cette dissertation retrace la présence de pratiques installatives d'artistes de descendance amérindienne au sein d'expositions choisies à travers le Canada . Le sujet d'étude débute par une approche méthodologique de l'histoire de l'art canadien, de la loi fédérale en matière de législation et du domaine des sciences humaines, de façon à procurer comme toile de fond le contexte référentiel à l'art dont il est question. L'émergence d'un mouvement amérindien pour la souveraineté au cours du XXième siècle a su tirer avantage du capital politique et culturel de l'*Exposition Internationale et universelle du Canada* en 1967 pour se doter d'une voix internationale. L'on distinguait déjà les signes avant-coureurs d'une esthétique multi-médiatique parmi certaines oeuvres de *L'art des Indiens du Canada 74*, de même que dans les programmes en arts visuels autogérés par les autochtones. Dès le début des années 1970, l'histoire de l'art des Premières Nations s'élabore selon de nouveaux énoncés, desquels s'ensuivent la production d'œuvres installatives et l'élargissement des discours hybrides comme dans *New Work By a New Generation* en 1982 et *Stardusters* en 1986. Le chapitre final s'ouvre sur l'histoire de l'art de l'installation depuis la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, comme le démontrent de façon proéminente les oeuvres multi-médiatiques de *Beyond History* en 1989. Les théories post-coloniale et post-moderne sont exposées et débattues afin de situer décisivement les intérêts à la fois politique et artistique représentés tout au long de cette étude, et conduire à l'analyse d'installations choisies telles que *Indigena: Perspectives autochtones contemporaines* et *Terre, esprit, pouvoir: les Premières Nations au Musée des beaux-arts du Canada*. Ces expositions de 1992, montrées dans la capitale nationale, confirment la maturité d'une esthétique sociopolitique singulière, ce qui repose la question de l'identité canadienne, tout en marquant les lieux de la différence autochtone.

*Sites of Aboriginal Difference: A Perspective on Installation Art in Canada*

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## Introduction

In recent decades, artists of Aboriginal ancestry have effectively constructed spaces of extreme socio-political importance in Canada via installation-based practices.[1] This doctoral dissertation traces the presence of selected multi-mediatic works that gained their creators regional, national, and international recognition through seven exhibitions held between 1974 and 1992. The artists as well as curators under review were also key players in the emergence of a larger inter-tribal community from the late 1960s onward, which ultimately redefined the nation's official identity. Installation art proved to be the most flexible and dramatic medium in this collective interrogation of hegemonic Euro-North American discourses. Hence, the central hypothesis of my study revolves around how and why both the selected artists and their works achieved Aboriginal difference within a Canadian context.

In order to pursue such an art-historical objective it is necessary to first establish the cultural circumstances as well as political conditions that marginalized First Nations peoples across the country during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An ever increasing move towards Indian empowerment after the Second World War then demonstrates the pressures placed on Euro-Canadian society to part with its neo-colonial legacies. This tension soon affected a growing number of artists from cities, towns, villages, and reservations, who gained strength from their shared Aboriginal experience. The simultaneous development of hybrid practices among these same individuals drew upon both indigenous North American and Western European artistic traditions. By the mid 1970s, nascent signs of installation art's potential to evoke paradoxical spaces in the nation's public self-image has determined the starting point in my visual analysis which extends through the early 1990s. Furthermore, the aesthetic issues raised in this dissertation will bridge post-colonial and post-modern theories, as well as being dependent on disciplines ranging from federal law to anthropology.

The first chapter, **Canadian Legacies**, provides a contextual backdrop for the art and exhibitions explored in chapters III through IV. It begins with a review of English-Canadian art-historical surveys in order to reveal the devaluation, fixing, and eventual absence of Native artistic production and

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[1]The terms Indian, Native, Aboriginal, Amerindian and First Nations refer to the indigenous peoples of North America, with the exception of the Inuit. The Métis peoples also fall within this reference, while their cultural status as a hybrid nation of mixed Aboriginal and European origin will be taken into consideration.

peoples from the late 1800s to the mid 1900s. This cultural disavowal is followed by a review of simultaneous political developments which reveal how the Dominion of Canada gradually usurped First Nations sovereignty and then legalized Indian oppression. Contemporaneous scientific supports for Western European racial superiority are brought to light via anthropological doctrines, which hinged upon a downgrading of North America's indigenous peoples. The collusive quality of such cultural, legal, and scientific directives in Canada will be mirrored in the Aboriginal contextual resistance that installation art came to facilitate.

In the second chapter, **Twentieth-Century Indian Empowerment**, I chart the advent of inter-tribal political organizations through the 1900s, alongside selected acts by Native leaders who fostered a greater movement towards Indian empowerment across Canada. The 1967 *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* then offers an official portrait of the nation's modern bi-cultural identity, as illustrated through selected architectural designs, pavilion displays, and textual information. This Montreal exhibition's focus on human achievement through technology is subsequently contrasted with the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's critical rereading of Western hegemony in North America. A discordance between the site's demanding interior storyline and its facile exterior design exemplify the Government of Canada's attempt to silence contemptuous Aboriginal voices at the 1967 fair. Site-specific exterior paintings by Norval Morrisseau and Alex Janvier for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion proffer visual precursors to the hybrid aesthetic identified in the third chapter, while the patriarchal treatment of these artists by Euro-Canadian bureaucrats also uncovers an enduring neo-colonial power structure. The urgent political cry sounded by Native peoples at *Expo 67* is linked to manifestos issued by Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr. in 1969, as they diagnose an unending Western psychosis in North America. Frantz Fanon's Les Damnés de la terre lends a greater consideration to my discussion for indigenous peoples' revolutions around the globe following the Second World War. This atmosphere of radical socio-political change will be shown to sow the seeds for a commensurate artistic uprising in Canada that peaks during late the 1980s.

The third chapter, **Inter-Tribal Considerations**, opens with an overview of *Canadian Indian Art 74* at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and curator Tom Hill's essay designates a new discourse in Canadian art history. However, the residue of anthropological directives is shown to influence how this museum was incapable of according such contemporary art an autonomous existence outside its

historical specimens. Sarain Stump's *The Pain of the Indian* then reveals a significant cross-tribal aesthetic borrowing from nineteenth-century sources, which he infuses with a modern-day socio-political commentary. Guy Sioui's sculpture-installation, *La Direction,* foreshadowed an increasingly militant artistic community, whose most radical members took up installation-based practices. The establishment of Native-run colleges during the mid 1970s signifies a major victory for Native leaders in gaining control over the education of their peoples from the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). Art programs at the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College and Manitou College emphasized a reconnection with indigenous North American aesthetic traditions, as central to the project of defining contemporary tribal identities. Sarain Stump and Domingo Cisneros represent key artist-teachers, whose influences over Edward Poitras, Guy Sioui, Gerald McMaster, and Lance Belanger are crucial to this study. These younger artists also played an important role in establishing the Society for Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry, which exerted pressure on public institutions and funding agencies to part with their longstanding policies of Aboriginal exclusion. The DIAND's role in subsidizing cultural initiatives among the First Nations is then shown to be guided by a strategy of homogenizing Indian art for commercial purposes through the 1970s. Meanwhile, rereadings of First Nations art history by Barry Lord and a collective of editors and writers in Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada mark a turning point in Canadian art narratives. The 1982, *New Work By A New Generation,* exhibition at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina identified the most innovative trends in a flourishing inter-tribal art community that now spanned Canada and the United States. Robert Houle's curatorial essay champions the emergence of a hybrid aesthetic among artists of Aboriginal ancestry, while admonishing the ongoing reduction of such contemporary cultural productions to an anthropological phenomenon. Edward Poitras's *Stars in Sand* designates his role as a leader in the creation of spaces, and the possibility for a synthesis of shamanic and political artistic objectives. Theories of the avant-garde by Walter Benjamin and Renato Poggioli provide useful reference points in the description of a radical inter-tribal connection to installation art. The *Stardusters:New Works by Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Edward Poitras* exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery connotes a federal government effort to accommodate new definitions of identity in Canada; however, the subsuming effect of official multiculturalism is shown to be at variance with the possibility for an inherently heterogeneous Aboriginal art. Selected installations by Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Edward Poitras are used to distinguish a budding visual lexicon of resistance which edged dangerously close to tribal rituals.

The fourth chapter, **Contextual Art and Contentious Narratives,** commences with a history of American installation art according to surveys by Brian O'Doherty and Julie H. Reiss. Their respective narratives are then linked through L'installation pistes et territoires, which charts this practice's presence and discourses in Quebec and Canada from 1975 to 1995. *Beyond History* at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1989 claimed an avant-garde phenomenon among artists of Aboriginal ancestry, whose ephemeral creations precariously straddled Aboriginal and Western aesthetic traditions. Selected works by Robert Houle, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Bob Boyer, Mike MacDonald, Edward Poitras, and Ron Noganosh evoked a vigorously charged socio-political Canadian context. Concurrent literary equivalents to such visual art productions are located in the post-colonial criticism of George E. Sioui and Homi K. Bhabha. The 1992, *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives,* show at the Canadian Museum of Civilization decelebrated the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' landing in the New World. Installations by Lance Belanger, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Joseph Tehawehron David carried this challenge to Western history from ancient times to the present day, as they implicated viewers in Aboriginal atmospheres of pain, anger, and disillusionment. Breakdowns in modernism's master narratives across Europe and North America are central to the post-modern condition described by theorists Jean-François Lyotard and Fredric Jameson. Such recognition of ethical failures in Western cultural logic provided co-curators Diana Nemiroff, Robert Houle, and Charlotte Townsend-Gault with the institutional impetus for *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada.* Works by Domingo Cisneros, Teresa Marshall, and Rebecca Belmore represented two generations of installation practitioners who had successfully asserted an Aboriginal difference within the nation's identity. However, the possibility of a truly sovereign political presence for the First Nations in Canada has yet to be fully resolved.

At the concluding point in this dissertation, I pronounce a particular understanding of installation-based practices by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada and their relevance to contemporary theoretical contexts. In an epilogue, I offer my personal, academic, and curatorial relation to the art under consideration. Following this there is a bibliography, a list of exhibition venues, dates, and tours, a numerated list of illustrations (ill.), and finally, an appendix of 82 illustrations.

## Chapter I: Canadian Legacies

Chapter I opens with a historiographic brief of English-Canadian art surveys published between 1898 and 1963 in order to distinguish the devaluation and fixing of indigenous North American arts and peoples. The development of such master narratives is reflected through the official lack of place for Native artists at the National Gallery of Canada from the moment of its inception through the post-modern era. These textual and institutional strategies are then tied to the intense political marginalization of the First Nations across the Dominion of Canada during the nineteenth century. The federal government's Indian policies also reveal a wholly legalized state of oppression that was maintained until the 1960s, and featured the banning of cultural practices. Scientific aegis for the socio-political domination of Aboriginal individuals and communities can be further linked to the early discourses of anthropology. The National Museum of Man is presented as the site where this discipline established its official authority. Documenting such legacies of collusion in Canada ultimately serves to locate the paradoxical backdrop from which the installation-based productions discussed in chapters III and IV emerge.

### Art Historical Devaluation, Fixing, and Absence

English-language art-historical discourses in Canada from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century are dominated by the work of male artists of Western European ancestry. Central to these singular narratives which flourished via survey texts was the practice of painting on canvas, as it occupied the highest rank in British and French academic art traditions. Such a cultural commodity easily facilitated the creation of national signifiers in the modern era. These signifiers coalesced with public institutional efforts to define a Canadian identity. However, the generation of these complementary literary and painting strategies came to hinge upon a vehement process of Aboriginal devaluation and fixing initiated by the country's proto-art historians.

The fourth volume in the 1898 publication, Canada: An Encyclopaedia of the Country, features a series of regionally oriented essays delineating the origins of art in Canada. Beginning with J.W.L. Forster's "Art and Artists of Ontario," the extinction of both Indians and Indian art precedes the discussion of paintings created by predominately English-Canadian men. "All this was, perhaps, rather the end of a phase of Art in a decaying race than the beginning of it in Canada. Indian Art is childish and

unfinished."[2] The author seems to base his devaluing of such art on the assumed fact that tribal societies were destined to perish as a result of their mental and physical inferiority. In general, Euro-Canadians were thus ideally positioned to create a unique North-American culture, where it had only existed in degenerate forms before their arrival. Robert Harris, a Paris-trained painter and founding member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, claims a more exacting point for the advent of Canadian art in his article "Art in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces." "The first pictorial work done in Canada was in all probability that of the redoubtable Champlain himself."[3] His treatment of the French explorer-cartographer Samuel de Champlain, who was instrumental in the founding of New France during the early seventeenth-century, as Canada's original artist, thus marrying the act of graphic representation with colonial settlement. Unfortunately, such a narrative setting purposefully forgets the predominance of indigenous art forms on the continent at that time. From a more contemporaneous point of view, the surveys of Forster and Harris will bare out how a commensurate political marginalization of the First Nations in Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritimes was completed well before the nineteenth-century's close.

The submerging of indigenous North American arts beneath aesthetic traditions imported largely from Britain and France coincided with a contradictory evocation of the Native subject. For example, W.A. Sherwood's survey of art in the Prairie provinces, in Canada: An Encyclopaedia of the Country, suggests the land's original inhabitants are a valuable pictorial resource for "the canvases of truly Canadian painters."[4] According to him, the sensitive treatment of such content by "native-born artists" separated their painting from the work produced by ever-present "foreign schools."[5] However, the author does place situational limits on the Indian figure. "The Indian as seen in civilized conditions is as unpicturesque and uninteresting as a horse pursuing the treadmill's ceaseless round. It is only in natural situations that he is interesting."[6] His banning intimates a social anxiety regarding contemporary Aboriginal existence, which is visually unfit for the nation's image of itself. Sherwood's uncontaminated Indian was often characterized as a mounted male warrior in full regalia, chasing

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[2]J.W.L. Forster,"Art and Artists in Ontario," in J.C. Hopkins, ed., Canada: An Encyclopaedia of the Country (Toronto: Linscott Publishing Company, 1898) vol. IV: 347.
[3]Robert Harris, "Art in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces,"in J.C. Hopkins, ed., vol. IV: 353.
[4]W.A. Sherwood, W.A.,"Art in the Prairie Provinces," in J.C. Hopkins, ed., vol. IV: 367.
[5]Ibid.
[6]Ibid.

buffalos across the Great Plains. Paul Kane, a Scottish-born painter who was raised and lived in Toronto, popularized this Canadian identity with works including the 1849-55 oil-on-canvas *The Man That Always Rides.* (ill. 1) The nomadic tribes who occupied the southern reaches of Saskatchewan and Alberta, prior to their provincial designation, thus became a fixed visual indicator of cultural difference between Canada and Western Europe. However, by 1899, such paintings did not reflect the realities of these peoples oppressed state, which will be demonstrated in the next section.

The art-historical discourses authored by Forster, Harris, and Sherwood belie their common link to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (RCA), established in 1880 by Canada's Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne. This learned society promoted the primacy of Western European art traditions in Canada, and was based on a seventeenth-century English academic model. RCA members and associates included painters, sculptors, academics, and arts professionals from urban centres across the country whose mandate was to found and maintain a public gallery in Ottawa. On March 29, 1880, the Queen's Privy Council placed the National Gallery of Canada under the care of the Minister of Public Works, and its initial holdings featured diploma works deposited by RCA members as a condition of their acceptance into the society. In 1913, the gallery was incorporated via an act of parliament, and a board of trustees was appointed by the federal government. By that time the NGC's programming included nation-wide touring exhibitions, and the gallery's holdings were expanded beyond an exclusively Canadian focus with the acquisition of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British portraits.[7] However, it would take the NGC more than one century before it began to actively collect and exhibit works by artists of Aboriginal ancestry. Hence, the Royal Canadian Academy of the Arts and the National Gallery of Canada are considered as institutional extensions of Britain, whose official goal was to perpetuate an exclusively Western view of Canada's art history.

By 1921, the Dominion of Canada had fulfilled its motto *a mari usque as mare* (from sea to sea), and gained autonomous status from the League of Nations. This organization of Western nation-states, which emerged from the 1919 Paris Peace Conference at the conclusion of First World War, designated Ottawa as an international capital in recognition of the nation's substantial military contribution to

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[7]National Gallery of Canada, "Historical Background: Origins of the Collection," Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, policy files, 1977, 1-11.

Britain's war against the German and Austro-Hungarian empires.[8] Such diplomatic advancements parallelled a renewed intellectual effort to chart the moment when an authentic Canadian art was achieved. Newton MacTavish, a Toronto-based journalist and NGC trustee from 1920 to 1932, pursued this formidable task in The Fine Arts in Canada.

MacTavish's 1925 publication is the first comprehensive English-language art-historical survey of Canada, and it increased the distancing of Aboriginal art forms from the nation's cultural experience as initiated by Forster and Harris in 1898. The book's first chapter entitled "The Beginnings of Art in Canada" commences with the following statement: "In searching for the beginnings of art in the vast territory that now composes the Dominion of Canada one turns with first thoughts to the aboriginals...there are but few records and no traditions to show that in art he experienced anything beyond his first impulses."[9] The absence of art collections, written records, and formal academies among the First Nations are deployed as axiomatic proof for the necessity of a Canadian devaluation. MacTavish then buttresses this intrinsic truth by contriving an "aesthetic" separation between Aboriginal "handicrafts" and Western "fine arts," where the former merely stand as an arrested or primitive phase of the latter.[10] The evolutionary science behind such a cultural perception is revealed in the anthropological discourses examined later, which will also account for the author's understanding of Indian art as a uniform and static phenomenon.

Beaded clothing designs, carved totem poles, and incised birch bark scrolls are listed by MacTavish as "valuable curiosities or documents of history."[11] More generous assessments of these same Aboriginal works profess how artists in North America absorbed materials, tools, and subject matter from Western sources for over three hundred years to advance their practices.[12] However, during the building of Canada's master narratives instances of cultural exchange and hybridization were obliterated by the desire to achieve a totalized neo-colonial Western art."The aboriginal we here credit

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[8]see Robert Bothwell et al, Canada, 1900-1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).
[9]Newton MacTavish, The Fine Arts in Canada (Toronto: MacMillan Company Ltd., 1925) 1.
[10]Ibid.
[11]Ibid.
[12]see Berlo, Janet C. and Ruth B. Phillips. Native North American Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

with but little artistic accomplishment in the modern sense."[13] The possibility that non-Western arts could be adjusted to suit the conditions of middle-stage capitalism in Canada is thus denied, and this narrative pressure will be mirrored later in the Government of Canada's renewed efforts to wipe out tribal arts in the 1920s. MacTavish's sweeping anti-modern indictment of utilitarian, heraldic, and shamanistic creations also renders these operative arts in opposition to static pictorial conventions, which further justified both his, as well as the NGC's fine-art contexts of exclusion. Conversely, the same restrictive criteria could interrupt a principal trajectory of Western art history which views carved ivory book covers produced in Europe during the Middle Ages as the linear antecedents to Renaissance masterpiece paintings.[14]

At the end of The Fine Arts in Canada's first chapter, the Toronto-based writer completes his relegation of indigenous North American peoples outside modern Canadian life by mounting an attack on the Indian subject's artistic currency."There have been from time to time a number of painters and sculptors who have used the Indian as a model or accessory, and a few have made pictures of savage life as they have seen it in the forest, on the plain and at the hunt....Perhaps they should not be admitted into the exclusive and jealous realm of the fine arts, but should be placed, quite properly, in the greater domain of history."[15] While the problematic nature of such colonial symbols of Euro-Canadian difference has been noted, they also served to maintain at least a mediated presence of Aboriginal arts within the nation's budding public art-gallery system in the 1920s. Perhaps the cavernous art-historical void generated by Newton MacTavish via his 1925 survey can be best described as a fear engendered by the inevitable psychological state of aggression.

The placement of Native peoples into a homogeneous category is problematic, as it maintains a totalized Western knowledge that justifies acts of oppression according to post-colonial criticism. "By 'knowing' the native population in these terms, discriminatory and authoritarian forms of political control are considered appropriate. The colonized population is then deemed to be both the cause and effect of the system, imprisoned in the circle of interpretation."[16] Recognizing the heterogeneity of

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[13]MacTavish, 3.
[14]see Joan Vastokas,"Native Art as Art History: Meaning and Time from Unwritten Sources," Journal of Canadian Studies winter 1986-87: 96-101.
[15]MacTavish, 3.
[16]Homi K., Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994) 83.

bands, tribes, or nations is therefore critical to understanding indigenous North America artistic developments, and will be exercised throughout the course of this dissertation. The overview quality of art-historical surveys present a similar dilemma, as their very format can only accommodate broad categories of medium and style from a chronological perspective. For this reason, many artists, regardless of their ancestry or gender, who operate outside mainstream practices and linear progressions remain undocumented. Therefore, the key to deconstructing the master narratives under review, with regard to post-modern theory, is in tracing how they perform specific cultural negotiations of Canada over time."They [grand narratives] thus define what has the right to be said and done in the culture in question, and since they are themselves part of that culture, they are legitimated by the simple fact that they do what they do."[17]

The search for a unique Canadian art is maintained by Graham McInness, a London-born writer and filmmaker, in his 1939 publication A Short History of Canadian Art. Like Forster and MacTavish, McInness opens his narrative inquiry by dispelling the cultural relevance of Native peoples in Canada."The Indian could and did produce works of art because his life was atuned to the tempo of the land about him. But the white was grafting a highly complex civilization on to a primitive land, subduing the earth and taming the countryside."[18] The First Nations are thus characterized as underdeveloped or primitive because their respective relationships with local environments did not adhere to the underlying principles of Western capitalist resource exploitation. This economic bias then leads the author to make the following assumption in his comparison of art created by individuals of European and Aboriginal ancestry."The difference between their work and that of certain contemporary Canadians is fundamentally one of degree only."[19] Such an inference of lesser aesthetic status or degree invested the nation's art history with a constant neurosis over the first half of the twentieth century, which has yet to be fully alleviated. By the 1960s, when Native activists began publishing literary criticisms of Euro-North American values, this master-narrative condition was proof of moral destitution. "The white man must no longer project his fears and insecurities onto other groups, races, and countries...The white man must learn to stop viewing history as a plot against himself."[20]

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[17]Jean-François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. 1979. trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1984) 23.
[18]Graham McInness, A Short History of Canadian Art (Toronto: MacMillan Company Ltd., 1939) 3.
[19]Ibid, 10.
[20]Vine Deloria Jr., Custor Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto (New York: MacMillan Company Ltd., 1969) 175.

The socio-political treatment of minority and underprivileged groups in the Dominion of Canada began to shift following the end of the Second World War in 1945, when the nation emerged as a middle power on the international scene and joined the United Nations (UN). Furthermore, by accepting the UN's "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in 1948, Canada agreed to provide for the preservation of civil and political liberties as well as the protection of social, economic, and cultural rights from state-sponsored oppression.[21] The full development of a welfare state also occurred during the post-war period, as consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments introduced Medicare, the Canadian Pension Plan, the Canada Assistance Plan, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement.[22] Unfortunately, the adoption of a greater social and economic responsibility for its citizens by federal authorities did not fully affect the alienating motive behind Indian policies for decades. Canadian art historians were similarly resistant to ethical change as indigenous North-American arts continued to be placed in an inequitable relationship with those produced by Euro-Canadians through the 1960s.

R.H. Hubbard, the NGC's chief curator from 1954 to 1975, based The Development of Canadian Art on a series of public lectures he gave in 1959. In the preface to this 1963 publication, he states that it is "essential" to compare developments in Canadian art with those of Europe.[23] While such a statement bears relevance, the author's wont of references to Aboriginal artistic practices signifies an officially sanctioned and complete absence within Canada's cultural identity. His survey then proceeds in a chronological fashion from colonial architecture to contemporary painting. Chalices, sashes, and furniture from New France, Lower Canada, and Quebec offer pre-confederation examples of how Western ritual and utilitarian arts make up a vital part of the nation's patrimony. The inclusion of such operative works by Hubbard marks a slight broadening in the master-narrative format beyond painting to more fully accommodate French-Canada's history, while creating yet another paradox of omission with regard to pre-twentieth-century First Nations art forms. Furthermore, Native people are represented solely as subject matter in The Development of Canadian Art, and painters including Paul Kane are lauded for producing "extremely valuable records of their time."[24] The curator's narrative

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[21]United Nations,"Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights," Jun. 15, 2001<<www.un.org>>.
[22]see James T. Rice, Changing Politics of Canadian Social Policy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).
[23]R.H. Hubbard, The Development of Canadian Art (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1963) 7.
[24]Ibid, 61.

locking of the Indian into a romanticized pre-twentieth-century circumstance thus completed a narrative foreclosure predicated on the authority of Canada's premier public gallery. In 1992, this policy of blatant exclusion became the site of atonement for *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada.*

The chapter entitled "The Period of the National Movement" in The Development of Canadian Art is of particular interest here, for it communicates how painting on canvas was put to the service of generating a Canadian identity. Hubbard's description of landscapes by the Group of Seven as "expressing the essence of Canada" signifies an aesthetic crescendo in the nation's modern art history.[25] The author's reference to A.Y. Jackson's work as "decidedly Canadian," also reverberates the official support this Toronto collective received during its formative years.[26] Eric Brown, the National Gallery's first Curator, was instrumental in promoting the Group of Seven, as he purchased their works for the NGC's collection, wrote magazine articles, and organized national and international touring shows.[27] The Group of Seven, which remained active from 1920 to 1933, included Frank Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and F.H.Varley, while A.J. Casson, Lemoine Fitzgerald, and Edwin Holgate joined later. Lismer's 1924 painting *McGregor Bay, Georgian Bay*, reproduced in The Fine Arts in Canada, is typical of the seemingly uninhabited forests, rock outcroppings, and waters in northern Ontario featured in the Group's early works. (ill. 2) Newton MacTavish, Graham McInness, and R .H. Hubbard all championed such oil-on-canvas wilderness scenes in their respective surveys, and attempted to confer an iconographic-like status upon them. It is no coincidence then that these painters and art historians were of direct British or English-Canadian descent, as the nation's official cultural structure had come to mimic Canada's political ruling class which was now striving to tame the land.

The power relations generated by English-Canadian master narratives could be similarly used to reveal the problematic locating of artistic practices in New France as well as Quebec from the past to the present. Just the same, enunciations of the ideal Indian subject conjoined with the negation of Native

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[25]Ibid, 91.
[26]Ibid, 99.
[27]see Charles Hill, The Group of Seven: Art for a Nation (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1995).

arts have persisted in both English- and French- language art-historical surveys.[28] More importantly, this bi-lingual academic neglect of general knowledge encouraged an identity fracturing among successive generations of Aboriginal readers through the twentieth century. Such texts thus evoke a common strategy of colonial authority. "Colonialism is not satisfied with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it."[29] Hence, the devaluation, fixing, and eventual absence of Native arts and peoples was integral to a thinly guised positioning of English-Canadians as a dominant race in North America from the 1890s to the 1960s. However, at the very moment when this socio-political project seemed complete, a hybrid aesthetic was being developed by Native artists.

## Political Manoeuvres and Legal Subjugation

The art-historical foreclosure described above was symptomatic of a gradual marginalization faced by the First Nations who entered into territorial agreements with colonial and federal authorities over the course of three centuries. These geo-political manoeuvres which followed a general east- to-west pattern in British North America eventually brought about the outright subjugation of Native peoples across the Dominion of Canada in the early-twentieth century. Federally elected officials and civil servants subsequently enacted as well as enforced laws which severely limited or denied Aboriginal cultural, social, and political rights. However, it is important to recognize that these neo-colonial ordinances were regularly contravened in order to avoid an exclusively victimized perspective on such matters. The following analysis thus depends upon a retelling of North American history with regard to the Government of Canada's role in perpetuating oppression, while continuing to intimate contexts for Aboriginal resistance.

The First Nations along the Atlantic seaboard and in Saint Lawrence River Valley established relationships with traders from Spain, Holland, France, and Britain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Aboriginal tribes and bands were primarily interested in exchanging furs for a variety of European metal wares. In the 1700s, this region became the site of colonial wars between

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[28]see Gérard Morisset, Coup d'oeil sur les arts en Nouvelle France (Québec: Presses de Charrier et Dugal, 1941).

[29]Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, ed. François Maspero. 1961. trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Evergreen Black Cat, 1968) 210.

the British and French, who were vying for unilaterally assumed rights of occupation in North America. Numerous treaties of peace and friendship were offered by these foreign powers to local nations including the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, and Abenaki as a means of securing military alliances. These pacts did not include land settlements, but did establish hunting, fishing, and gathering rights.[30] Following the final capitulation of New France to the British in 1760, King George III issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763 declaring: "That the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with Whom we are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds."[31] The Indian territory outlined in this declaration represented an effort by the British Empire to gain economic favour in the lucrative fur trade as well as military support from North America's indigenous political entities; particularly the Iroquois League and the various united Ojibwa nations. It also superseded any previous agreements made with other European nations, and addressed Native concerns regarding the westward expansion of America's Thirteen Colonies.[32] By the 1960s, when the First Nations had been denied their promised sovereignty for almost a century within the Dominion of Canada, King George the III's proclamation was redeployed as a legal precedent for Aboriginal claims to inherent rights and freedoms.

Following the American Revolutionary War (1775 to 1783), the Thirteen Colonies were officially recognized by the British Crown as a republic. The Treaty of Paris of 1783 established the boundaries between British North America and the United States, however much of the land reserved as Indian territory in 1763 was lost. The various Aboriginal nations who had fought against the Americans were upset by this betrayal of trust, so British officials made efforts to quell their anger by granting them reserve lands north of the new international border.[33] From 1783 through the late-nineteenth century, the American government proceeded to launch a series of westward assaults on Native-held territories as a means of increasing its domain. This expansionism was expressed through the new republic's belief in a manifest destiny to rule the continent, which was fuelled by an emerging monopolistic capitalism. Meanwhile, the British continued to gain access to Aboriginal lands and resources for its

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[30]see J.R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 23-80.
[31]King George III, Royal Proclamation of 1763.
[32]Olive Patricia Dickason, Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997) 150-165.
[33]Miller, 57-98.

slowly growing colony via negotiated settlements and gifts. During the War of 1812, when the United States mounted assaults on the Canadas around the southern Great Lakes, and the upper Saint Lawrence River, Native warriors joined with British troops to withstand American advances. However, following the final resolution of grievances between Britain and the United States via the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, the military importance of the First Nations in Upper and Lower Canada began to wane.

In 1830, jurisdiction over Indian affairs was transferred from army officers to civil administrators in Canada's two provinces. By 1850, the colonial governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island had appointed Indian Commissioners to survey reserve lands. However, British immigrant squatters, the influx of United Empire Loyalists from the United States, and a general apathy on behalf of government officials severely diminished the territorial base of Aboriginal nations in the Maritimes. In Upper and Lower Canada Indian legislation passed in 1850 and 1851, as a result of the Bagot Commission's recommendations, initiated the unilateral process of defining Indian status.[34] This threatening legal condition compounded the adversities faced by Algonquin and Iroquoian speaking peoples who had yet to recover from two centuries of depopulation brought on by imported diseases and the fur trade's economic decline. In such a fragile state, the First Nations were ill equipped to withstand the racial subjugation and political isolation brought on by Eastern- and Central-Canadian colonial authorities. The process of Western erasure was well under way, and in 1898, it received a final master-narrative ascent in Canada: An Encyclopaedia of the Country.

The British North America Act of 1867 transferred the responsibility for Indian peoples and their lands in the newly confederated provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Ontario, from the British Crown to the Dominion of Canada's federal government. Many of the Indian reserves in present-day Quebec - including Kahnawake, Akwasasne, and Kanesatake - were set up by Christian orders as missions during the French colonial regime. Following the conquest, most of these reserves remained intact, while new ones were created to compensate bands and tribes whose lands were being utilized for mineral and timber extraction. Officials in Canada's Maritime provinces (which included Prince Edward Island after 1873) followed a pre-confederation trend of unilaterally designating reserves as a means of coercing Native communities to remove themselves from land that was suitable

[34]Dickason, 199-247.

for agricultural pursuits. On Vancouver Island and the lower mainland of present-day British Colombia, colonial officials negotiated treaties, such as the Sanich Treaty of 1852, at the behest of indigenous communities. Reserves in Upper Canada came into existence through a variety of processes, including mission-based reserves founded by Methodist sects in the southern parts of the province during the early-nineteenth century. In 1850, Anishnabai bands in present-day northern Ontario requested treaty agreements before they would allow mineral explorations to continue on their lands, and the resulting Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior treaties served as a template for future federal agreements.

Between 1871 and 1921, Canada entered into a series of numbered treaties with bands and tribes located in what are now Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories. These contracts normally featured the federal government's promise, as a representative of the British Crown, to provide annual payments, medical care, housing, educational services, agricultural equipment, hunting, gathering, and fishing privileges, as well as reserved lands. In exchange, Aboriginal signatories gave up legal title to large tracts of land which their respective peoples had often occupied from time immemorial.[35] However, it is vital to remember that such treaties did not entail the relinquishment of self-rule. Thus, the contracts that led to Canada's formation possessed mechanisms of compromise devised by both the First Nations and Euro-Canadians, with the resulting negotiated space between Western and Aboriginal world views offering the potential for malleable considerations of nationhood and identity. Such a socio-political possibility for difference and its consequent extinguishment over the Dominion's modern history set the tone for *Beyond History* at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1989, which featured radical aesthetic reconsiderations of the past brought forward by contemporary artists of Aboriginal ancestry from across the country.

The most germane example of a culturally fluid geo-political entity in nineteenth-century North America concerns the Métis of the Red River Colony, in what is now southern Manitoba and northern North Dakota. The New Nation, as it came to be called, originated from settlements composed of male French-Canadian and Scottish traders who intermarried with females from local Anishnabai, Assiniboine, and Cree tribes. In 1871, these Métis, country-born, half-breeds, or bois-brulé numbered approximately 10,000 people. They were active buffalo hunters as well as fur traders, and maintained

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[35]Miller, 136-188.

farms.[36] Difficulties for the Red River Métis first arose in the 1850s, when the Hudson's Bay Company surrendered their control of Ruperts Land, (present day Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and parts of Ontario, Quebec, and Nunavut), to the Province of Canada. Louis Riel was among the Métis leaders who formed a provisional government in 1869 to counter the influx to the Red River Colony of Canadian and American settlers who ignored Métis claims to occupancy and nationhood. During the Red River Rebellion (1869 to 1870), the Métis held Canadian homesteaders prisoner, captured local Hudson Bay Company trading posts, and prevented federal authorities from entering the settlement. Using such means, Riel was able to negotiate the entry of the province of Manitoba into the Dominion of Canada and ensure the protection of Métis rights.

Over the ensuing fifteen years, the New Nation's land claims remained unresolved, and waves of settlers from Ontario continued to encroach upon the most desirable territories around the Red River. Furthermore, the systematic decimation of buffalo herds by Euro-American and Euro-Canadian hunters had reduced both the Métis and Native peoples on the Great Plains to poverty. Such grave social and economic factors were compounded by epidemics of smallpox, which ravaged entire tribes and settlements in the late 1800s. The apocalypse brought on by Western European diseases was now reaching across the North American continent. Louis Riel responded to these urgent circumstances by aligning the Métis with Plains Cree tribes under Chiefs Big Bear and Pound Maker. This combined force mounted military assaults on settlers and Canadian army posts throughout Manitoba and the Districts of Saskatchewan, Assiniboia, and Alberta. However, the same negotiating strategy that resulted in the Red River Rebellion's success failed to sway federal authorities in the spring of 1885. The Government of Canada strengthened its militia and, along with the North-West Mounted Police, eventually overcame Métis and Plains Cree insurgents during the North-West Rebellion's various battles and skirmishes. Riel received a death sentence for his part in the uprising, and the Métis nation was soon dispersed. Big Bear and Pound Maker were placed in prison, while their peoples were confined to reserved lands.[37] In the 1980s, Edward Poitras called upon his own mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry to heal Canada's nineteenth-century loss of a hybrid reality and the racial alienation that ensued.

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[36]Dickason, 131.
[37]see Bruce Sealey, The Métis: Canada's Forgotten People (Winnipeg: Manitoba Metis Federation Press, 1975).

Ultimately, the insatiable expansionist programs of both the Canadian and American governments proved to subsume any underlying possibilities for a true sharing of the continent. Indigenous populations across North America who refused to acquiesce to these burgeoning capitalist nation-states faced prolonged military assaults and economic sanctions. Concurrent coercive legal strategies were first introduced by the Province of Canada's legislature in 1857 via the Gradual Civilization Act, which denied Indians full citizenship until they could provide proof of sufficient education, financial solvency, and good moral character.[38] Following confederation, Canada's Department of Indian Affairs, a bureaucratic entity set up in 1873, intensified the so-called civilizing process while attempting to remove all forms of Aboriginal determinism. The Indian Act of 1876 gave civil servants, who were dispatched across the country in their capacity as local Indian agents, immense control over events on reserves including: overseeing the actions of local councils and chiefs, watching for evidence of non-Christian activities, and administering the sale of timber or tracts of reserve land deemed expendable.[39] The unilateral passage of such legislation by federal politicians contradicted the faith of nation-to-nation treaty agreements, and Canada officially established its role as that of an oppressor. Thus, the master-narrative format of the Canadian art-historical surveys cited earlier effected a parallel cultural injustice through most of the twentieth century by denying the value of indigenous North American arts.

An 1884 revision to the Indian Act banning social and spiritual ceremonies essential to various indigenous peoples on the Northwest Coast and Great Plains was indicative of the fledgling nation's desperate attempts to eliminate Aboriginal difference from its cultural identity. "Every Indian or other person who engages in or assists in celebrating the Indian festival known as the 'Potlatch' is guilty of a misdemeanour, and shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than six nor less than two months in any gaol or other place of confinement."[40] Potlatches, such as those of the Kwakwak'wakw tribes, established social status among neighbouring chiefs through gift-giving, and often featured the raising of totem poles. These gatherings provided artists in each community with a major impetus for the creation of new textiles, masks, utensils, monuments, and performances. An 1895 revision to the Indian Act placed a similar ban on Sun Dances.[41] The Sun Dance, or Thirsty Dance, was a religious

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[38]Miller, 111.
[39]Statutes of Canada, Indian Act 1876, chap. 18, sec. 1-25.
[40]Revisions to the Statutes of Canada, Indian Act, 1884, chap. 27, sec.3.
[41]Revisions to the Statutes of Canada, Indian Act, 1895, chap. 28, sec.8.

festival that took place when tribes including the Plains Cree, Piegan, or Sioux gathered in large encampments during the summer months. It involved public self-mutilation by adult males, who were sponsored by individuals seeking or paying tribute to spiritual forces. This redemptive performance, which often lasted several days, also featured chanting, the use of charms, body painting, and the raising of temporary structures.[42]

From the late-nineteenth century onward, the Potlatch and Sun Dance prohibitions were regularly contravened, as Native peoples openly defied the warnings and admonishments of local DIA agents. However, in the 1920s, policing was increased and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) began conducting raids that included the confiscation of art. Much of this booty was later redistributed among Canada's public institutions, including Ottawa's National Museum of Man and Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum. Such constant strains on cultural activities were compounded by rising levels of Indian poverty which, by the 1930s, had reduced ceremonial arts to a chronic state.[43] During this same period a pronounced shift towards the production of Native souvenir art occurred as a result of an ever increasing Euro-Canadian tourist market at fairs, stampedes, and expositions.[44] Fortunately, the commodification of Aboriginal aesthetics also ensured that certain analogous skills and symbolism required for the creation of shamanistic and heraldic arts were passed onto younger generations. In the 1970s, Indian artist-educators began to gather these remnants of artistic knowledge from people and museums across the country. This represented a professional effort to reverse the longstanding effects of state-sponsored assimilation.

In 1887, Sir John A. MacDonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, claimed that the purpose of the Indian Act was to: "...do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the inhabitants of the Dominion."[45] Such social engineering was predicated on the legal treatment of status Indians who were considered as minors within Canadian society. Indian agents vigorously encouraged their charges to apply for enfranchisement via the Franchise Act of 1885; however, this

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[42]see Allan D. McMillan, Native Peoples and Cultures of Canada, 2cnd ed. (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1995) 203-204, 148-149.
[43] Tom Hill, "Canadian Indian Arts - Its Death and Rebirth," Art Magazine, summer 1974:10-11.
[44]see Gerald McMaster, "Tenuous Lines of Descent: Indian Art and Craft of the Reservation Period," in Canadian Museum of Civilization, In the Shadow of the Sun: Contemporary Perspectives on Contemporary Indian Art (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1993) 93-120.
[45] MacDonald quoted in Miller, 253.

means of gaining full citizenship entailed the loss of their communal treaty rights and proved unpopular. Perhaps the most destructive of the numerous nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century revisions to the Indian Act was passed in 1894. It granted the governor-in-council with absolute authority over Aboriginal children in the provinces and districts of the Dominion: "...to make whatever regulations on the school question that he thought necessary and empowering him to commit children to the boarding and industrial schools founded by the government."[46] Indian day schools had existed since the 1830s in Upper and Lower Canada, as Indian nations wanted their youngsters to become familiar with Western forms of knowledge. However, as these institutions adopted more aggressive programs of assimilation, Aboriginal parents removed or kept their children away from such educational coercion.

By the 1890s, Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist sects had assumed full responsibility for civilizing Aboriginal youth throughout the Dominion via residential and industrial schools, which received financial support from the federal government. Compulsory attendance was more strictly enforced as Indian agents and religious officials removed children from homes; isolating them in institutions located far from reserves for months at a time. Christian ideology and routines were central to the majority of curricula, and young minds were coerced by priests, nuns, and ministers into a sense of disbelief regarding the spiritual views of their ancestors. Indigenous North-American languages, clothing, and ways of knowing were forbidden in classrooms as well as living quarters, and teachers often used excessive corporal punishment.[47] Growing Aboriginal resistance to such abhorrent doctrines mounted throughout the early-twentieth century, particularly in light of the fact that only a small fraction of students advanced beyond a grade-six level. In the 1960s, most residential schools had been eliminated in favour of bussing children to provincially-run public institutions. Officials at the Department of Indian Affairs parlayed their pedagogical negligence into cost-cutting measures. However, the price paid by over three to four generations of Native peoples was a cultural loss, particularly in the areas of language skills, learning aptitudes, spiritual values, and self-image.

"The residential schools even failed in their first purpose -turning out good little Christians. They

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[46]Revisions to the Statutes of Canada, Indian Act, 1894, chap.30, sec.7.
[47]see Celia Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School (Vancouver: Tillacum, 1988).

alienated the child from his own family; they alienated him from his own way of life without in any way preparing him for a different society; they alienated him from his own religion and turned his head resolutely against the confusing substitute the missionaries offered. Worst of all, perhaps, the entire misconceived approach....turned the child against education."[48] Harold Cardinal's childhood experience as a member of the Sucker Creek Cree First Nation during the 1950s compelled him to cite the violence of Euro-Canadian domination in his 1969 manifesto. By 1992, the painful facts surrounding Aboriginal pedagogical alienation were being staged by Joane Cardinal-Schubert at the Canadian Museum of Civilization via her installation for *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives.*

The deterioration of First Nations sovereignty in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was therefore a primer for the systematic denial of Aboriginal human rights through the twentieth century. Perhaps the most foreboding sign of this trend occurred in 1871, when British Columbia entered confederation and the new commissioner of Crown Lands, Joseph W. Trutch, refused to acknowledge Aboriginal title over most of the new province's territory.[49] With the designation of Saskatchewan and Alberta as provinces in 1905 the project of confederation was virtually complete, and central to it was an ever intensifying effort by the Department of Indian Affairs to obliterate particularly strong tribal practices on the Northwest Coast and Great Plains.[50] If the nation's art-historical master narratives and public galleries can be held up as cultural propagators in a corresponding aesthetic expulsion of all Aboriginal sensibilities from Canada's official identity, then anthropological discourses and institutional practices will now reveal an interrelated scientific strategy. Ironically, these most conspicuous sites of past oppression doubled as immediate conceptual and physical locations from where a new art celebrating Aboriginal difference was manifested across the country in the 1980s and 1990s.

## A Science of Superiority

The tradition of anthropology in Canada, like art history, is heavily dependent on a methodology imported from the British Empire in the nineteenth century. Perhaps the earliest supposition of this scientific discipline dealing with the origin, development, and customs of human beings was the deployment of Western European physical, social, political, and religious standards to fabricate

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[48]Harold Cardinal, The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1969) 46.
[49]Dickason, 234.
[50]The Province of Newfoundland did not become part of Canada until 1949.

universally applied forms of measure. Using such criteria, anthropologists charted the stages of humanity from savagery to civilization; an approach that proved detrimental to indigenous populations that came in contact with colonizing forces from the West. Of particular relevance here is the overlap between Canadian art-history, politics, and anthropology, as well as the dissemination of general scientific knowledge about Native peoples. The latter process is intimately tied to the National Museum of Man's role in collecting indigenous North American arts; reaffirming their exclusion from the National Gallery of Canada's purview.

Anthropology in London during the early-nineteenth century focused on cataloguing the various human populations of the world according to physical and moral traits. This burgeoning science entertained theories of polygenesis and monogenesis to describe the reason for variations between races. However, both operated under the premise that Western Europeans were at the top of a mammalian hierarchy which often placed Indians, Mongolians, and Africans in closer proximity to orangutans. The supposed larger crania of Westerners was commonly used as a physical determinant to prove indigenous peoples' sub-human character, and among the more prominent early-nineteenth-century British phrenological authorities was William Lawrence. According to Lawrence, "The retreating forehead and the depressed vertex of the dark varieties of man make me strongly doubt whether they are susceptible of ...high destinies; -whether they are capable of fathoming the depths of science; of understanding and appreciating the doctrines and mysteries of our religion."[51] Similar Western intellectual antecedents of this anthropological reasoning, combined with a Roman Catholic abhorrence for pagan beliefs, also generated French perceptions of the world's so-called savage races. The most grievous endorsement of such new science was legalized bondage, as New France's population included slaves imported from Africa while members of the Pawnee First Nation were owned by seigneurs and the clergy.[52] United Empire Loyalists fleeing the American revolution in 1783 also brought slaves to British North America, and the practice of treating colonized peoples as property remained legal throughout the British Empire until 1834. Thus, theories of racial superiority functioned to retroactively absolve Western Europe of its ongoing crimes against humanity around the globe. Such theories legitimated the immense economic benefit of unpaid labourers working on lands stolen

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[51]William Lawrence, Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man (London: J. Callow 1822) 433.

[52]see Harold Adams, A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization (Penticton: Theytus Books , 1995) 47-60.

and borrowed by colonists.

Anthropological studies in Canada, aside from the accounts of European missionaries as well as explorers, date to the 1850s, and its early practitioners came from a number of associated disciplines.[53] The Canadian Institute of Toronto was among the first forums for amateur anthropologists such as Daniel Wilson, a professor of history and English at University College of the University of Toronto from 1859 to 1892. Wilson, who was born in Scotland and educated at Edinburgh University, considered the indigenous populations of North America as the "living present" of Europe's ancient past.[54] His model effectively characterized sedentary and nomadic tribes, ranging from the Mohawk to the Plains Cree, as representing a stage of human infancy. Such treatment therefore corresponds with J.W.L. Forster's previously mentioned consideration of Indian art as childish in "Art and Artists in Ontario." The parallels between arts-and-science scholarship in late-nineteenth-century Canada can be further traced to the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), founded in 1882 under the auspices of the Governor General, the Marquis of Lorne. It represented the nation's most prestigious learned body, which also oversaw the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts' activities. Daniel Wilson, who served as the RCA's president in 1885, firmly believed that the "Red Man," as an inferior race, was destined to be absorbed by Euro-Canadian society.[55] Thus, the mother country's institutional expansion into North American propagated an all-pervasive neo-colonial academic environment.

Among the most renowned nineteenth-century scholars to determine the direction of anthropology in Western Europe and North America was Charles Darwin. The Scottish-born naturalist, educated at Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities, issued two texts that are of particular interest here. His 1858 publication, The Origins of Species by Means of Natural Selection, was based on evidence gathered from an incredible range of plants and animals located within the British Empire. This information was used by Darwin to propose universal laws of existence affecting all beings equally; centering on "the survival of the fittest" species.[56] This concept made it necessary for living entities to conquer their

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[53]see Douglas Cole, "The Origins of Canadian Anthropology, 1850-1910," Journal of Canadian Studies winter 1973: 33-45.
[54]Daniel Wilson, Prehistoric Man: Researches into the Origin of Civilization in the Old and the New World (Cambridge: McMillan,1862) vol. I: 9
[55]Ibid, 5.
[56]Charles Darwin, The Origins of Species by Means of Natural Selection ,1858, 6th ed. (London: John Murray, 1901) 97-163.

environments as a means of flourishing, and pitted all species in an unending struggle against nature as well as themselves. Under such circumstances, Western Europe's territorial expansion into North America was a natural advancement, while the resulting extinction or subjugation of the continent's indigenous peoples could be sanctioned as an unavoidable consequence of their biologically subordinate state. "And as foreigners have thus in every country beaten some of the natives, we may safely conclude that the natives might have been modified with advantage, so as to have better resisted the intruders."[57] In 1992, George E. Sioui asserted a biological reversal of such nineteenth-century British evolutionary theory from an Aboriginal perspective. His book entitled For An Amerindian Autohistory, cites the apocalyptic history of Western European diseases brought to the New World during colonial times as clear evidence of an Old World "degeneration."[58]

The Geographic Survey of Canada (GSC), founded in 1842 through a grant from Queen Victoria, was another important forum for the development of Canadian anthropology. Its primary mandate was the amassing of geological, archaeological, and biological data regarding the Province of Canada to support a growing mineral industry. In the late-nineteenth century, this scientific institution's collecting activities expanded to include botanical, zoological, and ethnographic materials that would eventually form the basis of the National Museum of Man's (NMM) holdings. George Mercer Dawson, who studied at McGill University and the Royal School of Mines in London, joined the GSC in 1875 and went on to become its director from 1895 to 1901. Included in his early work for the Survey was the collection of ethnographic material from tribes and bands across Canada. In 1891, Dawson published an article in the Canadian Naturalist Magazine entitled "Sketches of the Past and Present Conditions of the Indians of Canada." The Nova Scotia-born geologist characterized Indians as "the veriest savages" who in their current state "can not very much longer survive."[59] Such a fatal outlook by a leading authority in the Dominion's scientific community, and a charter member of the RSC, also recalls his RCA colleague, J.W.L. Forster's art-historical assessment of Native peoples as a decaying race in 1898.

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[57]Ibid, 100.
[58]George E. Sioui, For An Amerindian Autohistory, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992) 5.
[59]George Mercer Dawson, "Sketches of the Past and Present Conditions of the Indians of Canada," Naturalist Magazine, IX, 1891: 131-132.

Dawson's father, Sir John William, is worthy of mention here as he was a founding member of the Royal Society of Canada and principal of McGill University from 1855 to 1893. The elder Dawson earned an international reputation for his modern scientific and pedagogical approaches, as well as being a leading anti-Darwinist Christian scholar. The British naturalist's theory that man evolved from apes, outlined in the 1876 publication The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex, was vehemently rejected by Western religious authorities and academics because it denied God's role as the creator of humanity according to The Holy Bible's Old Testament.[60] While Darwin's science threatened scriptural authority, his claim that civilized nations possessed an "advanced standard of morality" did not deviate much from Christianity's assumption of spiritual supremacy over Aboriginal world views.[61] Accordingly, civilized man's moral sense also led to the extension of his peerless "social instincts and sympathies" to the lowest barbarians.[62] Such colonial science easily coalesced with social programs imposed upon the First Nations by the Government of Canada. In 1892, the superintendent general of the DIA defended increased spending for residential schools because they brought about "not only the emancipation of the subjects thereof from the conditions of ignorance and superstitious blindness...but converting them into useful members of society."[63] The nation's relentless unilateral directives to civilize Aboriginal peoples were thus set in a popular humanitarian rhetoric that also echoed the 1863 release of Afro-Americans from slavery in the United States via the Emancipation Proclamation. However, the sympathetic intent of Euro-Canadian legislation was conditioned by an underlying modern Western religious tenet that social action could counter the mental and moral deficiencies of savage races. An excellent example of how neo-colonial science and Christian politics in Canada were merged to satisfy the guilt of racist oppression is revealed by Owen Scott's report in 1900 on the "Pagan Indians of Canada" for The Canadian Magazine. "But civilization is winning its way. The best strains of Indian blood are sending in their young to be educated in ever-growing numbers. The most debased of the old pagans of inferior blood are dying out faster than men of good race who wish to improve themselves."[64]

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[60]see The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952) chap.1, ver.26-31.
[61]Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex, 1874, 2nd ed. (New York: J.A. Hill and Company, 1904) vol. I: 134.
[62]Ibid, 119.
[63]Superintendent General, Department of Indian Affairs, "Canada Sessional Papers," no.14, 1892.
[64]Owen Scott, "The Pagan Indians of Canada," The Canadian Magazine, summer 1900: 204-205.

The long presumed death of Aboriginal difference brought with it a concerted move by anthropologists and ethnographic collectors to amass holdings of heraldic, shamanistic, and utilitarian arts from the mid-nineteenth century onward. In 1910, the Geological Survey of Canada established an Anthropology Division, which featured Native art displays and a public collection housed in Ottawa's Victoria Memorial Museum. Edward Sapir, a German-born anthropologist and linguist, served as the first head of the newly formed division until 1925. Sapir studied at Columbia University in New York under Franz Boas, an internationally renowned authority on the art and mythology of tribal peoples along the Northwest Coast. These two scholars helped usher in a new professional and institutional era of anthropological studies, which emphasised the urgency of collecting Aboriginal material specimens before their impending disappearance in Canada as well as the United States.[65] In his 1927 publication, Primitive Art, Boas sought to appreciate the artistic value of technical perfection in: "the forms of manufactured objects of all primitive people that are not contaminated by the pernicious effects of our civilization and its machine-made ware."[66] His criteria for authenticity supplants centuries of innovations by indigenous North American artists who readily absorbed Western products and tools in order to support an idyllic pre-capitalist cultural condition. The impossible aesthetic intercession between Boas' celebration of the frozen-past and Newton MacTavish's consideration of Aboriginal arts as anti-modern is exactly the place installation-based productions came to occupy.

In 1926, Diamond Jenness, a New Zealand-born scholar who studied at Oxford University, succeeded Edward Sapir as chief anthropologist for the Geological Survey of Canada. The following year the National Museum of Canada was formed via an Act in Parliament, and Jenness was responsible for its research, display, and collecting activities in the fields of anthropology, ethnology, and archaeology. His most lasting contribution to public scholarship in Canada is undoubtedly The Indians of Canada. It was first published in 1932 as Bulletin number 65 in the National Museum of Man's Anthropological Series, and subsequently issued in seven editions and two reprints between 1934 and 1977. The immensely popular text offers "a general sketch of the social, political, and religious life of the Indians considered *en masse*" from the mid-seventeenth to the early-twentieth century. [67] Hence, Jenness' narrative bear out a methodological resemblance to the art-historical surveys by McTavish,

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[65]Cole, 43.
[66]Franz Boas, Primitive Art, 1927, 2nd ed., (New York: Dover Publications, 1955) 19.
[67]Diamond Jenness, The Indians of Canada, 7th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977) 16.

McInness, and Hubbard, in that he deploys a singular national directive to guide the totalizing analysis of human activities.

Jenness, who also served as president for the Society of American Anthropology in 1937, opens his chronological survey by reiterating the mortal prediction that countless anthropologists and art historians in Canada have decreed since confederation."It is not possible now to determine what will be the final influence of the aborigines on the generations of Canadian people still to come. Doubtless all the tribes will disappear."[68] Such an unyielding academic premise ignored the fact that the total Native population in the provinces and territories had begun to rise from 1901 onward, and by the time The Indians of Canada's 1977 revised edition was issued, status Indians numbered over 295,000.[69] The accompanying reinvigoration of tribal art traditions that followed the Second World War, as well as the development of new visual arts among Native peoples are also completely unaccounted for. Therefore, the task for modern scientific scholars and institutions, including the NMM, was to paralyse and trivialize Native peoples' contemporary existence along the historic margins of a homogeneous Euro-Canadian identity."Culturally they have already contributed everything that was valuable for our own civilization beyond what knowledge we may still glean from their histories concerning man's ceaseless struggle to control his environment."[70]

In Part I of his survey, the internationally acclaimed anthropologist offers a brief art-historical discussion lamenting the loss of "Indian characteristics" due to the impact of civilization.[71] Jenness' narrative blindness to the aesthetic losses caused by the Indian Act's cultural bans, which were most rigorously enforced during his text's first printing, effectively hides the contemporary facts of assimilative violence behind a false yearning for authenticity. He then goes on to assess the First Nations in Eastern Canada as having "practically abandoned the ancient styles," while on the Great Plains there was "no sculpture worthy of mention, and the realistic painting on robes and tents were pictorial records rather than expressions of artistic impulse."[72] This anthropological downgrading of

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[68]Ibid, 264
[69]Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1977-78 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services 1978) 980, 138.
[70]Jenness, 264.
[71]Ibid, 208.
[72]Ibid.

art is strikingly similar to Newton MacTavish's pronouncement that the "red man" created lesser specimens of "artistic conscience."[73]

## Neo-colonial Collusion

"Every effort is made to bring the colonized person to admit the inferiority of his culture...to recognize the unreality of his 'nation' and in the last extreme the confused and imperfect character of his own biological structure."[74] Franz Fanon's statement accurately identifies the sites where colonialist programs reveal their violence. These have been charted here via art history, politics, and science in Canada. The fixing of the Native subject in art and the impossibility of the Indian as producer of art, were predetermined Euro-Canadian projections of an inferior race set within an aesthetic framework. By 1939, Graham McInness' concerted push of "Indian work" to "outside the mainstream of Canadian art" had become a standard of art history, and presaged R.H. Hubbard's 1963 textual foreclosure on all artists of Aboriginal ancestry.[75] Hubbard's position as the National Gallery of Canada's curator attests to the institutional dissemination of these racial perceptions for public consumption, and their ongoing presence in academic and professional circles throughout the twentieth century. The common link between the authors of the arts-and-science texts discussed in this chapter to the Royal Society of Canada's various divisions confirms a master narrative born of the British mother country; infused with nationalist implications exported to North America.

The passing of the Indian Act in 1876 by the Dominion of Canada's government produced the necessary conditions for the transformation of the First Nations into a political unreality. Colonial measures policed by the Department of Indian Affairs for over a hundred years denied generations of Native peoples access to constitutional rights and freedoms. Prohibition of the Potlatch, Sun Dance, non-Christian activities, and ultimately self-government, articulated the legal limits of cultural experience in Canada, while contributing to the destruction of the social, spiritual, and political contexts for Native art practices. Paradoxically, Canada's own bid to be recognized as a sovereign entity among Western nations following its participation in the First and Second World Wars, exposed the nation's oppression of Aboriginal peoples to international scrutiny. In the 1950s, the Government

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[73]MacTavish, 2.
[74]Fanon, 236
[75]McInness, 10.

of Canada's role as a conflict mediator for the United Nations during the disengagement of colonial powers in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, brought about an overhaul to Indian policies. These circumstances, combined with the vigilance of leaders from Louis Riel and Pound Maker to Vine Deloria Jr. and Harold Cardinal, eventually obliged Canadian and American authorities to acknowledge the legacy of their ethical dilemma. "The Indian people of Canada are convinced, after many bitter experiences with the federal government, that the situation of the 1960s is only different in surface detail from the situation that existed in the nineteenth century."[76]

Perhaps the most obvious academic discipline to emerge as a panacea for the human acrimony generated by the attempts of Western nations to conquer indigenous populations around the globe was anthropology. With the subsequent emergence of daughter countries such as Canada from the British Empire, colonial science's biological grading of civilizations doubled in North America as validation for an aggressive assimilation of the less advanced Aboriginal nations. By the early-twentieth century, when many Native communities had both absorbed new Western values as well as relinquished various indigenous customs in the face of persecution, anthropologists, including Diamond Jenness, identified them in 1932 as lacking purity, in ruin, and soon to disappear.[77] This dire scientific forecast fostered an enthusiastic effort by public institutions such as the National Museum of Man to gather, preserve, and authenticate only those heraldic, utilitarian, and ceremonial arts that had resisted civilization. Museum officials also became involved in commissioning the reproduction of these artefacts, as well as gleaned works confiscated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police during raids on social and ceremonial gatherings. The levelling of cultural attributes to such an impossible and contradictory space meant that the original inhabitants of Canada were suspended in an unreal past and disqualified from the nation's future.

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[76]Cardinal, 95.
[77]see Jenness, 306, 350, 368.

## Chapter II: Twentieth-Century Indian Empowerment

In the preceding chapter, I examined the neo-colonial condition as it existed for Native peoples of Canada. An analysis of the resultant socio-political tensions constitute the opening section of this chapter. This provides the contextual requisite for the lengthy discussion of Indian activism during the twentieth century. The following section is dedicated to an overview of the 1967 *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* (*Expo 67*) in Montreal. In this, we will see how the nation's identity was updated within a global celebration of human betterment through technology. National, provincial, and regional pavilions projected an optimistic future that is contrasted with the present-day demands for historical retribution inside the *Indians of Canada* pavilion. Such an empowering atmosphere inspired Native artists participating in the fair to withstand paternalistic interference from Euro-Canadian bureaucrats, who attempted to veil the ongoing realities of oppression in Canada. Claims for Aboriginal rights and freedoms also achieved a literary front during the late 1960s, as critiques of Euro-Canadian and Euro-American values by Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr. will reveal. This oppositional context for North American cultural determinism is then aligned with Frantz Fanon's prognosis for post-colonial resistance in North Africa, as the final ethical lead into the analysis of a particular socio-political aesthetic developed by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada.

### Acts and Statements of Self-Determination

Contrary to the racist directives of art history, politics, and science examined in Chapter I, the First Nations did not perish or vanish into the body politic of Euro-Canadian society. Native leaders on the Northwest Coast were among the earliest to organize modern inter-tribal associations, which petitioned various Western government bodies for the return of stolen lands and rights. Territorial disputes in Eastern and Central Canada harkened back to the mid-eighteenth century, and a particularly tense situation developed among the Mohawks near Montreal during the post Second World War era. The Indian Act's outlawing of cultural events, including the Potlatch and Sun Dance, also met with constant defiance in the twentieth century. Such Aboriginal resistance, combined with the impressive contribution of Native soldiers from Canada in the First and Second World Wars, initiated the federal government's attempts to redress the Indian problem it had created. Meanwhile, provincial and national Native political organizations had began to take shape, and they placed steadfast pressure on the Government of Canada to break with an unjust past.

Four years after Confederation, the official population of the provinces and territories that were part of or soon joined the Dominion of Canada, excluding Newfoundland, was 3, 485, 761; and 102, 358 of these people were recorded as Indians.[78] This figure represents only status and treaty Indians according to the narrow definitions of the 1876 Indian Act, while the Métis were entirely discounted as a distinct group.[79] Such counts also excluded Indian women who automatically relinquished status upon marrying a non-Indian or non-status Indian, and this official loss was passed on to their progeny. However, the reverse was not true for Indian men and their children.[80] In 1992, the legacy of such enforced identity-loss gained a critical national voice via Teresa Marshall's installation at *Land, Spirit, Power.* Perhaps this was a signal that the nation's new public gallery was willing to break with its totalizing past.

Despite the federal government's various paternalistic programs to alienate, assimilate, enfranchise, and ultimately impoverish Indians, they continued to exist as a heterogeneous cultural entity through the early-twentieth century. At the end of the 1930s, official Indian population figures hovered around 100,000, and by the 1940s their numbers had begun to steadily increase. In 1959 status Indians were "the fastest growing ethnic group in the country" with an official count of 174, 242.[81] As the population swelled many reserves began to experience overcrowding, and Indian residential schools were ill equipped for the dramatic rise in students. The Government of Canada's efforts to decrease the Department of Indian Affairs's expenditures (which it effected in part through the unilateral sale of reserve properties and access to natural resources) were thwarted by the demands of flourishing tribes and bands who refused to relinquish treaty rights or break up communally held lands.[82] However, a far more threatening phenomenon for federal politicians and bureaucrats during the first half of the twentieth century was the surge in Native political activity. Band councils and emergent

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[78]Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1930-31 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1931) 980.

[79]Status Indians and treaty Indians are legally subject to the Indian Act, however the latter group receives special benefits from the federal government according to specific binding agreements. In Quebec, the Yukon and Northwest Territories, most of British Colombia, parts of Ontario, as well as areas in the Prairie and Atlantic provinces entire nations of legally registered Indians did not sign or were refused treaties following the expropriation of their territorial possessions by municipal, provincial, and federal governments.

[80]Statutes of Canada, Indian Act, 1876: chap. 7, sec. 4.

[81]Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1960-61 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services 1961) 201.

[82]Miller, 211-215.

inter-tribal collectives had begun to legally inundate various levels of government with persistent claims for the return of stolen lands and greater sovereignty.[83]

Among the most problematic legacies of Canada's treaty-making process was that large sections of British Columbia, northern Quebec, the Yukon and Northwest Territories, Labrador, and Newfoundland remained unceded through much of the twentieth century. As mentioned previously, the situation was particularly difficult in British Columbia due to Joseph Trutch's denial of Aboriginal title, and his attempts in the 1850s and 1860s to reduce the lands previously granted by the British Crown to tribes in Victoria, Nanaimo, and Fort Rupert. This was a blatantly undemocratic circumstance considering that people of Aboriginal ancestry outnumbered those of European descent in Canada's westernmost province until the 1890s.[84] Following its entry into Confederation in 1871, a Joint Commission for the Settlement of Indian Reserves in the Province of British Columbia sat from 1876 to 1910. Native participants eventually withdrew from the process after the commission repeatedly refused to acknowledge the concept of Aboriginal rights. However, Native leaders in British Columbia remained defiant and devised new strategies to combat such modern Western machinations.

In 1906, Chief Joe Capilano led a delegation to London, England, demanding that King Edward VII stop the encroachment onto Squamish land in North Vancouver by Euro-Canadians. Two years later, the Nisga'a of Northwestern British Columbia petitioned the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London to address the provincial government's refusal to discuss Aboriginal rights or to lay out more reserves. Both cases were ignored by the British Crown and government officials, who were unwilling to admit to the consequences of their former empire's colonial obligations. By 1915, a number of tribes had united under the leadership of the Squamish Chief, Andrew Paull, and the Haida Reverend Peter Kelley, to form the Allied Tribes of British Columbia. This inter-tribal political collective unsuccessfully lobbied the federal and provincial governments for over a decade to gain legal title to unceded lands, and hunting and fishing rights. Following a 1927 amendment to the Indian Act, which prohibited the raising of money by Indian organizations for legal matters related to land claims,

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[83]Band council refers to elected officials charged with governing a reservation in accordance with the Indian Act of 1876.

[84]Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1930-31 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services 1931) 980.

the Allied Tribes of British Columbia was formally dissolved.[85]

By 1931, Chief Andrew Paull had established a new organization called the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, and its membership eventually encompassed First Nations from the northern, southern, and interior parts of the province. In 1936, the Pacific Coast Native Fisherman's Association, a union-like group of Kwakwaka'wakw fishing-industry workers, joined the Brotherhood. However, the legal avenues of such collectives were extremely limited until 1938, when British Columbia in fulfilment of clause 13 regarding the province's act of union with Canada, transferred its authority over Indian peoples and lands to the federal government.[86] This administrative shift gave Indian organizations access to the Supreme Court of Canada through appeals to unsatisfactory verdicts handed down by the province's courts. Major changes to the Indian Act in 1951 (discussed later) also provided emerging Native political bodies with more latitude; including the power to spend band-council finances on litigation.

Among the most comprehensive land claims to be made in British Columbia was that of the Nisga'a Tribal Council which, under the leadership of Frank Calder, repeatedly asserted their territorial bid between 1955 and 1974. Calder maintained that the Nisga'a had never ceded any territory to the British Crown, British Columbia, or Canada. He also reiterated what a Nisga'a spokesman had told the Joint Commission for the Settlement of Indian Reserves in 1888."What we don't like about the government is their saying this: 'We will give you this much land.' How can they give it when it is our own?...They have never bought it from us or our forefathers. They have never fought or conquered our people and taken the land in that way."[87] 101 years later, Mike MacDonald's video-installation for *Beyond History* asserted these same peoples' enduring land claim, which had a particularly regional resonance considering the 1989 show's location at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

One of the longest-standing Aboriginal land claims in North America stems from a seigneury thirty kilometres west of Montreal, which Louis XV of France granted to the Seminary of Saint Sulpice in

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[85]Revisions to the Statutes of Canada, Indian Act, 1927: chap. 41, sec.4.
[86]Miller, 219.
[87]Calder quoted in Wilson Duff, The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the White Man (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997) 67.

1717 for the settlement and religious instruction of Mohawk and Algonquin peoples.[88] Following the conquest of New France by the British in 1759, a dispute ensued regarding proprietorship of the seigneury. Indian residents claimed the area that came to be known as Kanesatake in 1781, according to the *Two-Dog Wampum* belt. Dog images on each end of the belt symbolize the Native peoples as protectors of the land, which is depicted by twenty-seven beads between the dogs.[89] British officials rejected this mnemonic art's legal relevance, just as English-Canadian art historians would refute the general aesthetic value of all Aboriginal cultural productions a century later. By the mid 1800s, after various government relocation attempts, Indian residents of Kanesatake were being imprisoned for selling wood and staking out lots. In 1868, Iroquois Chief Joseph Onasakenarat petitioned colonial authorities to gain clear title to the growing village and surrounding lands. This action landed him in jail.

The Sulpicians' exclusive claim to title over a greater territory that encompassed Kanesatake was brought before the Queen's Privy Council of Canada in 1912. The council supported the religious order. In 1936, the Seminary sold most of its land holdings to a Belgian real estate company which opened a sawmill. After World War II, the new owners sold subdivided plots to residential and commercial buyers. These events infuriated the now predominately Mohawk population, which the DIA placated by purchasing the remaining Seminary lands in 1945, providing Indian residents with reserve-like services. The Kanesatake band council petitioned the federal government in 1961 to have their subdivided territory officially declared a reserve, but were ignored. In 1975 and 1986, the council made comprehensive and specific land claims to the federal Office of Native Claims. Both were rejected by federal authorities.[90] During the fall of 1990, Mohawk artist Joseph Tehawehron David was incarcerated for his part in an armed stand-off that ensued from this longstanding territorial dispute with the Government of Canada. Two years later, while awaiting charges from Crown prosecutors, his *untitled* installation for *Indigena* allowed viewers to re-visit the now famous *Oka Crisis* at the nation's new official museum.

The focus of Native leaders on legally repossessing and establishing reserves in the twentieth century

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[88]McMillan, 84.
[89]Dickason, 27.
[90]McMillan, 95.

was primarily due to the incredible growth rate of their respective peoples. In 1967, the status Indian population of Canada was over 230,000, and by 1981 it reached 413,000.[91] This population explosion resulted in overcrowding on reserves, and placed the government's long history of unilaterally expropriating reserved territories in a more questionable light. While land issues were of paramount concern to the First Nations in post-Confederation times, the Indian Act's cultural censorship also met with vigilant resistance (as mentioned in the previous chapter). For example, in 1896, a group of Na'as elders publically enunciated their repugnance regarding the 1884 Potlatch law."If we wish to perform an act moral in its nature, with no injury or damage, and pay for it, no law in equity can divest us of such right. We see the Salvation Army parade through the streets of your town with music and drum, enchanting the town...We are puzzled to know whether in the estimation of civilization we are human or fish on the tributaries of the Na'as River, that the felicities of our ancestors should be denied to us."[92] The socio-political strength of indigenous peoples along the Northwest Coast also generated a resurgence in tribal carving and graphic traditions from the 1950s onward, which contrasts with the development of hybrid arts from Aboriginal and Western sources examined later in Chapters III and IV.

Indian appeals for basic human dignities were summarily disregarded by the DIA, whose agents, along with Christian educators, became increasingly frustrated during the early-twentieth century with the endurance of indigenous North-American spiritual beliefs and social practices. During the 1930s, when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were regularly raiding Sun Dances in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, Indian participants remained defiant. "Resolved that as Canada has freedom of religious worship we Indians would earnestly petition you to grant our request to worship in our own way and according to our past customs the Most High God...we should not be prohibited from holding our ancient Sun Dance, which should be called the Thirsty Dance and the Hungry Dance; a religious ceremony which has been dear to us for centuries and still is dear to us."[93] In the early 1970s, Sarain Stump re-asserted the value of objects, ceremonies, and beliefs associated with tribal worship on the Great Plains through his art and teachings at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College.

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[91]Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1980-81 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services 1981) 123.

[92]unnamed Na'as elders quoted in Dickason, 287.

[93]unamed Thirsty Dancers quoted in Jean Cuthand Goodwill, John Tootoosis: Biography of a Cree Leader (Winnipeg: Golden Dog Press, 1982) 156.

Calls by Indian leaders for the full privileges of Canadian citizenship were reinforced by the military sacrifices of Native men and women on behalf of the British Commonwealth during the First World War. From 1914 to 1918, over 4,000 status Indians, who were not legally bound to enlist, served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force's European campaigns. This figure represented 35% of those individuals eligible for service, and was commensurate with the rate of Euro-Canadian enlistment.[94] Indian serviceman were permitted to vote during the war, however this right was taken away upon their return to civilian life. The hypocrisy of such a temporary franchise led Lieutenant Frederick Ogilvie Loft, a Mohawk from the Six Nations reserve, to take a stand against the federal government."As peaceable law-abiding citizens in the past, and even the late war, we have performed dutiful service to our King, Country and Empire, and we have the right to claim and demand more justice and fair play as a recompense."[95] During the autumn of 1919, Loft successfully convened the League of Indians of Canada's first conference in Sault Ste Marie. By the 1920s, this organization had attracted Native leaders from across the country, many of whom were Christian converts educated at residential schools in the Prairie provinces.

The economic depression that swept over North American and Europe during the 1930s exasperated poverty-stricken First Nations, as federal funding to reserves was dramatically reduced. In 1936, the Department of Indian Affairs was made a branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, resulting in a more apathetic approach to the Native peoples' social and political dilemmas. Such an administrative change also facilitated flagrant incursions onto reserved lands by mining, lumber, and hydro-electric companies. This trend steadily increased due to the Second World War. However, status Indians continued to exhibit their patriotism, as over 6,000 joined Canada's armed forces from 1939 to 1945 in support of the Allied nations' effort. Furthermore, Native enlistment was proportionately higher than that of Euro-Canadians. The war years also gave rise to the founding of two new Native political organizations: the Indian Association of Alberta and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. Meanwhile, Andrew Paull made another bid to form the Canada-wide inter-tribal body known as the North American Indian Brotherhood. Requests for basic cultural freedoms by these and other similar organizations carried greater weight among Euro-Canadians following the impressive war contribution of Native soldiers. Nazi Germany's attempt to exterminate Europe's Jewish population also served as

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[94]Dickason, 242.
[95]Loft quoted in Miller, 319.

a stern historical reminder regarding the atrocities committed against Aboriginals in the name of Western nationhood in North America. Canada could no longer enforce institutionalized racism at home while making pleas for international humanitarianism via its role in the newly formed United Nations. The establishment of a Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on the Indian Act ,which met from 1946 to 1948, was thus an attempt to address the most blatant forms of Canadian legislative oppression and the urgent calls by Indian leaders for justice. In 1950, the Indian Affairs Branch was transferred to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, where it remained until 1966.

The most definitive step taken by the Government of Canada towards social justice for the First Nations was an overhaul of the Indian Act in 1951. This followed a series of consultations with political organizations including the North American Indian Brotherhood. Band councils were granted greater decision-making powers and more control over their finances, while the Potlatch and Sun Dance bans were lifted. In 1960, Indian and Métis leaders from across the country came together to found the National Indian Council of Canada, and status and treaty Indians were granted the right to vote in federal elections without losing their special privileges or benefits. The new national lobby group, which now represented over 200,000 full-fledged Canadian citizens, proved to be instrumental in developing an Office of Native Claims that a second Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee for the review of Indian Affairs policy recommended in 1961.[96] This inter-tribal political momentum soon gave way to an aesthetic resurgence among artists of Aboriginal ancestry during the 1970s. These artists gained solidarity through the founding of the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry.

### The 1967 *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition*

The master narratives presented in Chapter I are revisited in an updated setting through a review of the Government of Canada's site at the 1967 *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* in Montreal. Provincial and regional pavilions are shown to reflect an uneven national identity, which fixated on the country's geo-political maturation from former French and British colonial holdings. Such temporary spaces also invoked a Canadian bearing on global relationships at the modern era's climax. At the same moment, the federal government had yet to fully resolve a place for the First

[96]Miller, 329.

Nations in Canada. This is made evident in an analysis of the *Indians of Canada* pavilion.

*Expo 67* was to be the high point in Canada's one-hundredth anniversary celebration of Confederation as overseen by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson's Liberal Party. Among the myriad of publically funded events that year were: a Confederation train complete with thematic cars which stopped in every province except Newfoundland, a series of centennial tattoos featuring over 1,600 officers who travelled to major cities across the country, and the construction of over 1,000 rural and urban community buildings financed by federal centennial grants. The year 1967 was officially ushered in on Parliament Hill with a live address by Queen Elizabeth II from Buckingham Palace transmitted by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. On an eight-by-twelve-foot outdoor television screen, Her Royal Majesty declared "Canada's example gives hope to free men everywhere that this world of such vast cultural, and political, and social diversity can also learn to live in harmony and peace."[97]

Such diversity referenced the unprecedented wave of Eastern and Western European immigrants who arrived in Canada during the 1940s and 1950s to escape the Second World War's ravages.[98] Many of these people were non-Anglophone and non-Francophone, and their growing communities across the country in the decades that followed initiated a re-consideration of Canadian identity narratives. Among the results of this modernizing process was the new Maple Leaf flag adopted by the federal government in 1965. (ill. 3) The standard marked a symbolic distancing of Canada from Britain, whose Union Jack had been flown as the former colony's official flag since Confederation in 1867. Two years later, O Canada became the nation's anthem, and it featured an official bi-lingual version. English-Canadian master-narrative conditions were seemingly giving way to a bi-cultural image that increasingly accommodated French-Canadians, while the reality of a multicultural nation-state lingered on the horizon.

*Man and His World* was selected as the overriding theme for the *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* at a 1962 meeting in Montreal. In attendance were: Progressive Conservative Senator, Mark Drouin, Associate Defence Minister, Pierre Sevigny, and Montreal's

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[97]Queen Elizabeth II quoted in Time, Birthday of a Nation (Montreal: Time International of Canada, 1968) n.p.

[98]see Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1960-61 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services , 1960).

Mayor, Jean Drapeau. The term is an English translation of Terres des Hommes, and refers to a book written by Antoine de Saint-Exupé ry in 1939. This early-twentieth-century French author and aviator, who died during a WWII flying mission in 1944, maintained a heroic belief that: "To be a man is to feel that one's own stone contributes to building the edifice of the world." [99] In 1967, the production of humanitarian space on two islands in the Saint Lawrence River invoked a dawning Western "cultural dominant."[100]

*Expo 67* opened to the public from April 28 to October 27, and the Government of Canada's pavilion occupied the largest site at the fair. (ill.4 & 5) It comprised a series of low, interconnected buildings with translucent vinyl roof tops, a nine-storey inverted steel pyramid, a 'people tree'; and an outdoor band shell. (ill.6) Displays inside the vinyl-topped buildings emphasized the nation's abundance of fossil fuel reserves which had attracted massive post-war investment by American and British corporations. The bubbling oil patch and natural gas flames that audiences encountered were thus tangible representations of the nation's growing multinational economy. Among the pavilion's most spectacular features was a five-screen revolving cinema that played a twenty-two-minute history of Canada in both English and French. These low buildings also included an art gallery with a survey exhibition of Canadian art, highlighting contemporary works by Marcel Barbeau, Jack Bush, Guido Molinari, and Arthur Mackay. Their massive non-objective paintings spoke of a growing American cultural influence in Canada, particularly New York movements including Abstract Expressionism and Post-Painterly Abstraction. Meanwhile, the absence of contemporary painters of Aboriginal ancestry in the same space silently marked an ongoing neo-colonial condition.

The massive inverted pyramid called *Katimavik* was the Canadian site's architectural focal point, and visitors could ascend its nine stories to an exterior walkway for an excellent view of the entire fairgrounds. *Katimavik* is derived from Inuktitut, a language used by the Inuit peoples of Nunavut, and it means 'meeting place' in English. This addition to the site's official bi-lingual presentation was artificial in the sense that it did not extend beyond mere titling, as Inuktitut is reduced to an exotic effect. Situated in front of the pyramid was a sixty-foot-high wood-and-plastic 'People Tree.' While

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[99]Antoine de Saint Exupery quoted in Robert Fulford, This Was Expo (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968) 12.

[100]Fredric Jameson, Post-modernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (Durham: Duke University Press) 4.

climbing its interior stairwell, visitors witnessed fifteen-hundred tinted plexi-glass leaves with photographic images representing a multi-racial mix of individuals engaged in leisure as well as work activities. The site's simulated natural settings, multi-screen projections, and dramatic architectural settings evoked a "neotechnic environment," hinging on an ambiguous convergence of bi-cultural and multicultural signs.[101]

Such a sub-text was most evident in the Government of Canada pavilion's official guide My Home, My Native Land, available to visitors in English and French. In the introductory notes, H. Leslie Brown, the pavilion's commissioner general, states that differences in the publications' two essays "reflect the broader diversity that is a trait of the Canadian people."[102] Robin Bush's essay entitled "The Land and the Growth," related to a theme area with movie clips, sound tracks, models, photographs, and graphic illustrations plotting the origins and development of Canada. His survey begins with a prehistory; when the land "belonged to the Indian and Eskimo," with a vague lamentation that indigenous Northwest Coast peoples were "ultimately dispersed by the abolition of the Potlatch in the mid-19th Century."[103] Next was an account of how European explorers "discovered" the continent, followed by the conflicts of "Indian versus white" and "French versus British."[104] Confederation dominates the author's fourth and fifth episodes in Canadian history, as national unity is tied to the completion of the railway system from coast to coast. The First and Second World Wars are then presented as critical events when the young nation-state "took her place in the world," while the resulting flow of immigrants changed Canada's communities "and enriched their culture."[105] Bush's essay closes with an analysis of the multi-media exhibition's intent, which was to place "visitors on the stage and forming part of the illusion as they spiralled upwards on the pathway through history."[106] Unfortunately, the first steps in this virtual ascent were littered with the frozen remains of Aboriginal peoples consumed by nation-state capitalism in North America.

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[101]James Acland, "Expo: The Canadian Buildings,"Artscanada special insert spring 1967: 4-11.
[102]H.L. Brown, "Introduction" in Robin Bush and Norbert Lacoste, My Home and Native Land (Ottawa: Queen's Printer) 2.
[103]Robin Bush, "The Land and the Growth,"in My Home and Native Land (Ottawa: Queen's Printer 1967) 8-9.
[104]Ibid, 10, 11.
[105]Ibid, 12, 13.
[106]Ibid, 14.

Norbert Lacoste's essay, entitled "The People Tree," charts Canada' s demographics and history using the tree as "a symbol of our diversity."[107] Lacoste begins with totem poles created by Canadian Indians as an example of how nations express themselves, and his generalization of an artistic tradition exclusive to Northwest Coast peoples is followed by a similar etymological lapse. The author gives exclusive credit to French settlers in the Saint Lawrence Valley during 1600s for the invention of the word Canada, which British colonial officials perpetuated to describe Upper and Lower Canada. He thus discounts the term's Iroquoian origin and reference to "houses in a village," that Jacques Cartier misinterpreted in the early-sixteenth century as a territorial reference to Hochelaga.[108] Post-Confederation transportation systems such as canals, railways, and airways devised by the two Western European cultures in North America mark "a century of life together," while strengthening the nation's trunk.[109] Canada's "bicultural character" then becomes a problematic for Lacoste, and if solved could lead to a more tolerant society.[110] Finally, he considers recent immigrants from "other ethnic groups" as adding "novelty" to the people tree's growth during a period of technological revolution.[111] Thus, the national identities forwarded by Bush and Lacoste for *Expo 67* were mere remodelling of an English-Canadian master-narrative format that easily absorbed French Canada. Cultural presences from outside this Western European rubric are curiosities rather than actual content; as is most evident in the enduring contextual malignment and displacement of the First Nations.

Euro-Canadian dualism also echoed through the size and positioning of provincial pavilions on the southern tip of Ile Notre-Dame. The fair's fifth largest site situated just east of *Katimavik* belonged to Ontario, representing the country's largest concentration of Anglophones and the geo-political territory that evolved out of British North America and Upper Canada. Its innovative tubular-steel-framed structure covered in plastic skins formed a rambling series of parabolically shaped areas, which included a display of bi-lingual robots called Mr. Business and Miss Arts and Letters. (ill. 7) Located beside the Ontario pavilion, in the middle of an artificial lagoon, was Quebec's cube-like pavilion, delineating the country's predominately Francophone population who occupied a land base that had grown from New France, British North America, and Lower Canada. The gleaming building of tinted

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[107]Norbert Lacoste, "The People Tree," in My Home and Native Land (Ottawa: Queen's Printer 1967) 19.
[108]"First Nations Histories," Mar. 15, 2001<<www.tolatsga.org>>.
[109]Lacoste, 22-23.
[110]Ibid, 24.
[111]Ibid, 25.

glass rose from an open ground storey at water level, and the second floor featured flourescent-light trees, bird sounds, and electronic music. (ill.8) The dominant roles of Ontario and Quebec within the Dominion of Canada as the most populated and economically strong provinces were thus signified by each pavilion's respective size, complexity, and close proximity to *Katimavik*. However, from historical and contemporary perspectives, the descendants of British and French peoples were not the exclusive contributors to Canadian nationhood. Therefore, the two pavilions, not to mention Bush's and Lacoste's narratives, represent the inseparable state of capitalist production and cultural value in an enduring modern Western cultural logic increasingly determined by new technology.

The collective pavilions created for the Western provinces, the Atlantic provinces, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories paled in comparison to the Ontario and Quebec sites. Inside the Western provinces pavilion's boot-like structure was an artificial rain forest featuring transplanted pine trees and an actual logging truck. (ill. 9) During the fair, ship builders from Nova Scotia constructed a two-masted schooner on the Atlantic provinces site, and inside the pavilion, aromas from the seafood restaurant were complemented by recordings of screeching gulls, fog horns, and clanking anchors. The location of these pavilions at a greater distance from the Government of Canada's site, as well as their modest scale, were indicative of the country's regional population disparities. For example, the combined number of people living in the Western and Atlantic provinces in 1967 represented less than 35% of Canada's 21,568,000 inhabitants.[112] Similarly, since Confederation, the Western provinces' natural and agricultural resources served to feed the manufacturing industries and workers of Ontario and Quebec, while the Atlantic region's colonial fishing and shipbuilding traditions were increasingly dependent on federal subsidies issued from Ottawa. As such, the West and the East were presented as singular environments from the present and past at *Expo 67*, particularly when compared to the generalizing character of Quebec's, Ontario's, and Canada's sites. Not surprisingly, the Yukon and Northwest Territories did not warrant an official pavilion, as their official displays were housed in an innocuous single storey building next to *Katimavik*. Perhaps, the fact that Inuit and Aboriginal peoples outnumbered Euro-Canadians in these territories contributed to their marginal treatment or that capitalist interests from the south had yet to begin a concerted exploitation of Canada's far north.[113]

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[112]see Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada Year Book 1966-67 (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1967).
[113]Ibid, 456.

The production of space as a function of cultural logic in Canada is central to this dissertation, and the focus on selected pavilions at *Expo 67* offers an aesthetic preview to the installations created for exhibitions featured in the forthcoming chapters. More specifically, the orchestration of architectonic, graphic, sculptural, photographic, and electronic elements represents a contextual act that invites dramatic appreciations or embodiments on the viewer's behalf. While the above analytic emphasis on selected pavilions has demonstrated national imbalances, their projections of an optimistic Canadian future were overwhelming. The discussion now turns to the Montreal fair's international implications.

Among the largest national pavilions on the southern half of Île Notre-Dame were France's three-storey circular building clad in a mass of metal fins, and beside it Britain's two-hundred- foot concrete tower, capped with a three-dimensional Union Jack.(ill.10 & 11) Quebec's island pavilion was strategically situated on the other side of the French site, while the most elevated view available of the entire fair grounds was from the bar atop the British tower. Canada's popularly perceived advent from the colonial histories of New France and British North America was therefore evoked by the proximity and relationship of its pavilions to those of France and Britain. The scale of these two national sites also matched *Katimavik,* implying that Canada had grown to become a significant capitalist nation-state in the 1960s. Bi-lingualism and cultural dualism imported from Western Europe to North America were thus the principal identity markers of *Expo 67*'s host country, whose abundance of natural resources and advanced technology made it prime territory for a burgeoning American multinational economy. This zealous self-image was crucial because such expositions "...are not only international shows of achievements of mankind but also sharp ideological struggles."[114]

Among the most telling socio-political contests to be played out at the Montreal world's fair was between communism and capitalism, via the participation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. (ill.12 & 13) Both countries had emerged from the Second World War's aftermath as new economic and military superpowers. From the 1950s to the 1980s, they engaged in an international Cold War, underlined early on by a race to gain superiority in nuclear armaments and outer-space travel. The Soviet site was the second largest on Île Notre-Dame, and its pavilion featured aluminium-and-glass curtain-walls topped with a sloping concrete roof supported by two giant diagonal steel cantilevers. Looming over the building's interior was a massive bas-relief bust

[114]Yuri Zhukov quoted in Fulford, 26.

of Vladimir Lenin, the philosophic leader of Russia's 1917 Bolshevik revolution. (ill. 14) While inside the U.S.S.R.'s site, visitors were able to take a simulated space ride followed by a weightless stroll on a moon-like surface; activities related to the republic's Luna space-research missions that had begun in 1959. Thus, the pavilion invoked a participatory understanding of the world's most advanced technology; projected as the direct outgrowth of communism's intellectual origins in the early-twentieth century.

From a waiting station beside the Soviet site, fair-goers could board a mini-rail train that traversed the Cosmos Walk bridge to Île Sainte-Hélène, and then passed through United States of America's pavilion. As they were transported on immense escalators to the giant dome's uppermost floor, passengers witnessed huge photographic portraits of twentieth-century Hollywood film stars, including Marlene Dietrich, Humphrey Boggart, Marilyn Monroe, and Elizabeth Taylor. (ill.15) America's geodesic dome or "big bubble" measured two-hundred-and-fifty feet in diameter and was constructed of aluminium tubes covered with curved plastic lenses, making it the most imposing structure at *Expo 67*.[115] Among the highlights of its multi-level interior displays was the space capsule, space suits, and other equipment used during America's 1965 Gemini moon mission. Audiences could also view New York artist, Barnett Newman's massive 1967 oil-on-canvas *Voice of Fire*, purchased by the NGC in 1989. (ill.16) The American site therefore emphasized scale as a measure of capitalism's global power; reinforced by physical evidence from the nation's success in conquering space. Hence, the greatest technological breakthroughs to be lauded at *Man and His World* were the newly found ability of both superpowers to leave the earth's atmosphere, and the possibility that humanity would soon set foot on the moon.

## The *Indians of Canada* pavilion

The *Indians of Canada* site at *Expo 67* stood in stark ideological contrast to those of Canada, Ontario, Quebec, the Western provinces, and the Atlantic provinces, as it did not focus exclusively on human achievement. Didactic displays inside the pavilion revised the modern master-narrative history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, underlining Western colonialism's oppressive legacies through textual and spatial means. Its exterior featured site-specific contemporary art created by twelve artists of Native ancestry selected from across the country. The participation of painters Alex Janvier and Norval

[115]James Acland, "Expo: The Space Frame Fair," Artscanada, special insert spring 1967: 5.

Morrisseau in *Expo 67,* as well as that of various Native consultants, was marked by a struggle to gain freedom of expression. What these individuals reacted to were attempts by non-Native officials from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) and the Centennial Indian Advisory Committee (CIAC) to control the pavilion's public voice. This situation reflected an official desire to project a favourable picture of Native life to both local and foreign audiences, one hundred years after Confederation. "Canada's first citizens - the Indian people - are playing a prominent and enthusiastic role in the nation's Centennial celebrations."[116]

As President of the United Nations General Assembly and then Prime Minister of Canada, Lester B. Pearson gained the country an international reputation for humanitarianism via foreign peace-keeping missions and welfare state initiatives during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1966, his Liberal Party minority government transformed the Indian Affairs Branch into the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. This change reflected the federal government's expanding role as a guarantor of social standards, as well as the increasing contact between northern reserve communities and the booming multinational natural resource industry. The new department's Social Programs division featured a Cultural Affairs section, which was to guide the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's conception.

During the early stages of planning for *Expo 67,* the Cultural Affairs section engaged the National Indian Council of Canada as a consulting body. However, the council was experiencing organizational difficulties and was sidelined from the process.[117] In NICC's place, the DIAND put together a Centennial Indian Advisory Committee comprised of non-Native bureaucrats, and this body hosted forums across the country to gather Native input. The Indian Advisory Council (IAC) grew out of these meetings and it included Native political leaders who were to help the CIAC determine the type of information to be disseminated at the upcoming world's fair. Issues related to the art commissioned for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion were dealt with by a sub-committee of the Indian Advisory Council, and its membership was composed of Native artists from across the country. Throughout the complex negotiations that ensued between the aforementioned bureaucrats, councils, and committees, Native peoples were able to realize an unprecedented level of empowerment at *Expo 67.*

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[116]Centennial Commission, "Canada's Indians and the Centennial - A Guide to Indian Events in 1967," (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967) 1.
[117]Ruth Phillips," 'Arrow of Truth': The Indians of Canada pavilion at Expo 67," unpublished manuscript, Carleton University, Ottawa, 1993: 8.

In 1965, the DIAND announced that it would use the *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* to "symbolize the great heritage of the Indians of Canada and to describe the contribution of the Indian people."[118] This press release by the Honourable John R. Nicholson, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, had been preceded by years of careful planning as to how the Indians should be publically represented. The government wanted to minimize the reality of Aboriginal oppression, without inspiring protests at the fair. An internal report issued by DIAND in 1964 entitled "Participation in Canada's Centennial by People of Indian Ancestry" is exceptional in its admission of colonial guilt, "...until recently the Branch was a true reflection of the blind attitude of cultural superiority from which Indians were viewed by other Canadian groups."[119] Unfortunately, such post-war social consciousness did not prevent the DIAND from continuing its long-standing tradition of making unilateral decisions about the fate of Native peoples.

J.W. Francis, the DIAND's in-house architect, proposed a one-hundred-foot-high steel-framed and aluminium-clad teepee-like construction linked to three trapezium-shaped lower buildings for the *Indians of Canada* site. (ill.17) These structures were to be complemented by a sixty-five-foot totem pole that Kwakwaka'wakw carvers Henry and Tony Hunt received a commission to create in November of 1966. Francis designed what he called an "obviously 'Indian' " site, as the main edifice referenced buffalo-hide tee pees used extensively by nomadic Aboriginal nations on the Great Plains in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The lower buildings were a fusion of the Iroquoian long house and indigenous Northwest Coast post-and-beam dwellings; both designs which flourished among these sedentary tribal peoples during colonial times. Such a non-Native expropriation and conflation of pre-twentieth indigenous North American architecture produced an "ahistorical" pavilion, not unlike the frozen Native cultural condition in Canada's art-historical narratives.[120] Furthermore, Francis' positioning of an immense totem pole beside a giant tee pee evoked a memorabilia-like visual experience. The miniature tee pee and totem-pole combination remains a "classic souvenir" sold to tourists by Native and non-Native retailers, and its reproduction thus completed the DIAND architect's

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[118]John R. Nicholson, "Canadian Indian pavilion at Expo 67," press release, Ottawa, DIAND Indian Art Centre files,1965: n.p..
[119]DIAND,"Participation in Canada's Centennial by People of Indian Ancestry -- Some Policy Considerations," Ottawa, Sept. 24, 1964, National Archives of Canada..
[120]Deloria Jr., 2.

collapsing of Native cultural differences.[121] (ill.18)

Alex Janvier was hired by the DIAND as an arts and crafts consultant in 1965, and he played an important role during the developmental stages of the *Indians of Canada* pavilion. The Dené artist helped organize the Indian Artists' Symposium in 1965. The symposium was sponsored by the department's Cultural Affairs section as a precursor to its participation in the world's fair. Jackson Beardy, George Clutesi, Tom Hill, Norval Morrisseau, Duke Redbird, Bill Reid, and Gerald Tailfeathers were among the painters and carvers in attendance at the Ottawa event, and they proved to be a critical faction within the Indian Advisory Council for *Expo 67*. These artists rejected J.W. Francis' metal-clad teepee concept during the first meeting between the Centennial Indian Advisory Committee, the DIAND, and the Indian Advisory Council. However, non-Native officials and bureaucrats insisted that looming construction deadlines would not allow the time necessary for a complete re-design of the site.[122] In a subsequent meeting held by the DIAND and CIAC, which the IAC was not invited to attend, Janvier noticed that the fair's monorail had been routed directly through the tee pee structure. He objected to the new feature as it had not been approved by Native consultants and stated: "Isn't that the way it really is...you put your highways right through the reserves, you put your powerlines right through the reserves...you never ask the Indian...just leave it right there, the world will finally see the picture."[123] The monorail was rerouted around the *Indians of Canada* site, and the DIAND posted Janvier to Calgary until his contract with the Cultural Affairs division expired.

Perhaps the best example of Native authority at *Expo 67* was the pavilion's interior story line, which, according to Chief Andrew T. Delisle, would be guided by "what the Indians wish to say."[124] The DIAND hired Robert Majoribanks, a non-Native from the Toronto firm Design Craft Ltd., to chronicle over five-hundred years of Native history via didactic panels accompanied by photographs and maps. Snowshoes, corn-husk masks, feather head-dresses, and canoes from the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum and the National Museum of Man were also featured in this multi-mediatic display.

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[121]Phillips, 15.
[122]Sherry Brydon, "The Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo 67," honours thesis, Department of Art History, Carleton University, Ottawa, 1991: 29.
[123]Janvier quoted in Brydon, 30.
[124]Chief Andrew Delisle, "Indians of Canada pavilion - Expo 67," open correspondence to Native band councils, Ottawa, DIAND Indian Art Centre files, July 29, 1965: 1.

Upon passing through a reception room, visitors to the *Indians of Canada* pavilion entered the first of eight theme areas entitled "The Awakening;" which presented an Edenic perspective on the time before European arrivals in North America. "All the creatures of the world lived, one with another, in harmony and order."[125] The next area, called "The Arrival of Europeans," reflected the critical role that Native knowledge played in the Western exploration of North America, and called for a revision of Canada's master narratives. "The heroic figures of Canadian history made their epic explorations of the wilderness in Indian canoes...wore Indian snow-shoes, ate Indian food, lived in Indian houses...Many Indians of today believe the White Man betrayed their fathers' trust. They are not ready to accept the story of Canada written by people of European ancestry."[126] Thus, the deployment of the ROM's and NGC's holdings to visually authorize this pavilion's highly politicized message represented a critical contextual shift for the selected objects. During the 1980s and 1990s, snowshoes, canoes, and beaded clothing became central to the vocabulary of installations by artists of Aboriginal ancestry who mimicked and reproduced their forms to create empowering sites in galleries and museums across the country.

Majoribanks' storyline evolved from his collaboration with the Indian Advisory Council, followed by a series of meetings in Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal, and Amherst with local Native leaders. Their collective expression contested the inadequacies of Euro-North America's modern history. On a panel in the "Wars and Treaties" area, visitors were met with an Indian admonishment of colonial treachery: "our fathers were betrayed." In the "Religion" area, Christian missionaries were targeted for attempting to "wipe out the native Indian culture."[127] Situated near the latter panel was a life-sized bear, carved from wood by Delaware artist Gilbert Montour. It stood on a Latin-cross-shaped shaft of light falling through the pavilion's roof. (ill. 19) Such a key animal within many Aboriginal belief systems was thus married to the definitive symbol of Christianity as an evocation of spiritual overlap in North America. This visual synthesis produced by Design Craft Ltd. lacks the contestatory socio-political charge expressed in the accompanying text, but it achieved a certain hybrid aesthetic quality that is key to the spaces featured in Chapters III and IV. The pavilion's polemical tone concluded on a hopeful note in the "Future" area, as Majorbanks' storyline posed the following question for visitors to *Man and His*

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[125]Indians of Canada Pavilion, "Expo 67, Story line," Ottawa, DIAND Indian Art Centre files, 1967: 2.
[126]Ibid, 4.
[127]Ibid, 4-5.

*World* in reference to Saint Exupé ry's maxim. "What stone does the Indian of Canada have to place in the edifice of the world? Often his answer seems to suggest that he can show how to participate in the mass technology of the modern age while preserving his personal integrity and the virtues of his fathers."[128]

The site-specific paintings created for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's exterior did not carry overt messages of Native discontent, however the commissioned artists were faced with attempts by the DIAND and CIAC to control their work. Norval Morrisseau (b. 1932), who was born on the Sand Point reserve north of Thunder Bay, painted one of three wall murals on the wooden longhouse-like building adjoined to the giant tee pee. In 1962, this self-taught artist of Anishnabai ancestry became an overnight success following his first solo exhibition at Toronto's Pollock Gallery. The Canadian edition of Time magazine reported that: "Few exhibits in Canadian art history have touched off a greater immediate stir than Morrisseau's."[129] His images of legendary Anishnabai beings such as thunderbirds, misshipeshoos, and sacred bears were based on ancient pictographs in the Thunder Bay region, as well as incised birch bark scrolls created by members of the Midewiwin medicine society. From the early 1960s onward, numerous artists of Native ancestry, primarily from Ontario and Manitoba, including the Cree painter Carl Ray who assisted Morrisseau at *Expo 67*, adopted the 'Woodland School' style.[130]

The *Earth Mother With Her Children* mural that Morrisseau created for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion was typical of his early work. (ill. 20) It offered an aboriginal North American world view in which humans and animals are spiritual equals. The bodies of a human child and a bear cub were rendered in white with black outlines, and pools of yellow inside each being depict their respective life forces. These infants share a common linear bond to three divided circles that also links them to a much larger hooded female figure with white hair. She holds the child, and the bear is positioned just behind her. The painter often worked according to inspirations derived from dreams or altered states of consciousness; a practice not unlike those used by Native shaman to make prophesies. [131] According

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[128]Ibid, 10.
[129]Time magazine, "Myth and Symbol," Time Sept. 28, 1962: 28.
[130]see Elizabeth McLuhan and Tom Hill, Norval Morrisseau and the Emergence of the Image Makers (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1984).
[131]see Joy Carroll, "The Strange Success and Failure of Norval Morrisseau," Canadian Art winter 1964:21

to fellow artist Tom Hill such unpredictable methods troubled DIAND officials, who demanded that Morrisseau create preliminary sketches of the mural during the construction period. Morrisseau accused the site co-ordinator of trying to tell him what to paint. " 'When I paint,' he said to a hushed audience, 'it is as if a force inside me - starts pouring out. I don't know what my mural will look like. It could be a thunderbird, wolves, or a moose.' "[132] During the early 1970s, this same shamanistic approach was central to the art classes taught by Domingo Cisneros at Manitou College in La Macaza, Quebec, and he played a key role in the development of an installation aesthetic among the artists discussed later.

Alex Janvier (b.1935), who was born on the Cold Lake First Nation reserve in northen Alberta, was among the five artists commissioned to create circular panel paintings that were affixed to the giant tee pee's exterior. This painter of Dené ancestry studied at the Alberta Institute of Technology (now the Alberta College of Art) in Calgary, and graduated in 1960 with a fine-arts diploma. During the early 1960s Janvier taught art to children on reserves in northern Alberta, and had his first one-person show at Edmonton's Jacox Gallery in 1964. The artist's early paintings possess a graphic quality achieved through various combinations of geometric and linear colour elements set against monochromatic backgrounds. His vocabulary looks to nineteenth-century symbols found in quill work, moose-hair embroidery, and bead work created among the Dené, Blackfoot, Sioux, and Assiniboine peoples. Throughout the 1960s and most of the 1970s, this painter signed his works 'Janvier 287'; in reference to the DIAND's status Indian classification system. "For years he used his 'Treaty band Number' to mock a 'colonial structure' where people were the numerical symbols of a distant government bureaucracy and reflected his deep concern with the depersonalization, and paternalistic attitude toward his people."[133] The Dené artist's socio-political stance served as an inspiration to young Native painters including Robert Houle, whose art and curatorial work initiated a new art history in Canada during the 1980s.

Janvier's trademark signature adorned the lower section of his 9 ½-foot-in-diameter painting for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion. This may have led DIAND and CIAC officials to move it from a highly

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[132]Hill quoted in Brydon, 52.
[133]Robert Houle,"Alex Janvier; 20th century Native Symbols and Images," The Native Perspective fall 1978: 17.

visible area on the giant teepee to a less noticeable location, shortly after the fair opened.[134] The work, entitled *Beaver Crossing - Indian Colours,* depicted a collection of dark and light coloured jigsaw-puzzle-like shapes converging in the circular painting's upper half. His zigzag and whiplash lines running through these interconnected shapes which converged at the central axis, produced a swirling effect. (ill.21) Such non-objective painting is without literal narrative, however the artist regularly added a critical commentary to his work via titling. Janvier's *Expo 67* piece was originally titled the *The Unpredictable East,* and made reference to how constant shifts in DIAND policies issued from Ottawa confounded Native peoples in Western Canada. After Janvier had completed the mural and returned to northern Alberta from Quebec, he received a telephone message at the local general store in Beaver Crossing from a CIAC official named Joe Garland. Upon returning the call, Garland requested that the artist rename the painting, and Janvier responded with a new title based on the nine-mile walk he made from his home on the reserve to the nearest telephone in Beaver Crossing, Alberta.[135]

Canada's media outlets unanimously praised the fair. "For one beautiful and unforgettable summer, Expo took us into the future that can be ours." [136] Countless international publications were also full of praise, including Paris' L'Express magazine, which described the event as "Le Rêve Moderne." [137] The headline on the cover of America's popular culture periodical, Life, exclaimed:"Tomorrow Soars In at The Fair."[138] London's most widely read daily newspaper, the Observer, confirmed *Expo 67*'s success:"It has a glitter, sex appeal, and it's given impact and meaning to a word that had neither: Canadian." [139](ill. 22 & 23) The Dominion of Canada had convincingly proclaimed itself to be a modern bi-cultural Western nation-state with the future capitalist-based potential for international greatness. Conversely, the fair also foreshadowed regional economic disparities and identity politics that would paralyse the Government of Canada's efforts to achieve national unity in the 1980s and 1990s. On a more global scale, *Man and His World* encapsulated the growing struggle between capitalist and communist interests for world domination. The U.S.A.'s site glorified economic and

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[134]Lee-Ann Martin, The Art of Alex Janvier: His First Thirty Years (Thunder Bay: Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1993) 17.
[135]Phillips, 45.
[136]Fulford, 8.
[137]as pictured in Fulford, 29.
[138]Ibid, 27
[139]as quoted in Fulford, 25.

entertainment largess, while the U.S.S.R.'s pavilion flaunted an intellectual prowess.

Space travel ultimately served as a common sign between the world's opposing superpowers of new territorial manifest destinies that were being facilitated by what would come to be known as post-modern technology. Centuries earlier such expansionist sentiments had inspired the monarchies of Spain, France and England to attempt a conquering of the New World and its peoples. Liberal American and Canadian democracies then carried on this oppressive process through their modern nation-building desires. Native artists and politicians approached *Expo 67* as an opportunity to re-assert First Nations sovereignty, while exposing neo-colonial oppression to an international audience. The following passage in the Winnipeg Tribune newspaper regarding the *Indians of Canada* pavilion is proof that Euro-Canadians were successfully confronted with their humanitarian dilemma."Those Indians of Canada have bowed...an arrow of truth at the Canadian government and white men -- telling 'le monde entier' just what they think of us."[140] However, this critical act at the 1967 *Canadian Universal and International Exhibition* was not without celebration as Alex Janvier's and Norval Morrisseau's works spoke of a post-colonial cultural resurgence in Canada.

## Voices of Decolonization

The momentum of empowerment engendered by Native leaders in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century cemented the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's ideological foundation. However, it was not until 1968 that a national inter-tribal voice gained full articulation via the establishment of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). Harold Cardinal, a young lawyer and political activist from the Sucker Creek First Nation in Alberta, soon became the NIB's most vocal member. His 1969 manifesto, entitled The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians, is a record of Indian oppression in Canada, and was inspired by the federal government's attempt to extinguish the constitutional rights of status and treaty Indians. Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau's plan to create a just society served as the premise for the "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy" issued in 1969. Indian leaders unanimously rejected the so-called 'White Paper' and questioned the federal government's moral authority over the First Nations. Vine Deloria Jr., a Sioux academic and political activist from South Dakota, expressed similar disdain for America's history of unilateral Indian

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[140]Winnipeg Tribune, "Indians Speak with Strait Tongue,"Winnipeg Tribune (Weekend Showcase) Jun.24, 196: 3.

policies in a 1970 publication entitled Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto. Such voices of decolonization in the post Second World War era had implications beyond North America as revealed through Frantz Fanon's 1961 collected writings on an indigenous peoples revolution in Norhtern Africa.

In December of 1967, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson announced his retirement from politics, and the following spring, Pierre Elliot Trudeau was selected as the new leader of the Liberal Party. The Harvard University educated lawyer first gained notoriety as Minister of Justice from 1967 to 1968, when he reformed Canada's divorce law and amended the Criminal Code to assure greater tolerance for abortions and homosexuality. During the 1968 federal election campaign, Trudeau, who was seeking re-election in Montreal's Mount Royal riding, emphasized the importance of a strong federal government which could stabilize Quebec's place within Canada. The Liberal Party also touted their new generation of candidates, such as 39-year-old John Napier Turner and 34-year-old Joseph-Jacques-Jean Chrétien. The country's youthful electorate, a result of the 'baby boom' in Canada during the 1940s and 1950s, embraced 'Trudeaumania' and the Liberals won a majority government in 1968. Trudeau thus began his Prime Ministership at age forty-nine and led Canada for the next sixteen years, with the exception of Prime Minister Joe Clark's brief term in 1979.

Undoubtedly, the most significant piece of legislation passed by the Trudeau administration during his first term in office was the 1968 Official Languages Bill. It promoted the use of English and French by civil servants and politicians in "a country which has learned to speak two great languages," while guaranteeing "the fundamental language rights of our citizens."[141] This bill became law the following year and served as an important part of Trudeau's bid to quell the growing tide of separatism in Quebec, particularly after the 1968 creation of the nationalist Parti Québécois. The Official Languages Act also proved to be the cornerstone of the Prime Minister's larger social goal for Canada, which spanned his entire political career."I have long believed that freedom is the most important value of a just society...And deprived of its freedom, a people could not pursue its own destiny that best suits its collective will to live."[142]

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[141]Pierre ElliotTrudeau, "Statement on the Introduction of the Official Languages Bill - October 17, 1968,"Jun.1, 2001 <<www.collections.ic.gc.ca>>.
[142]Pierre Elliot Trudeau and Thomas. Axworthy, eds., Towards A Just Society: The Trudeau Years (Markham: Viking, 1990) 357.

In 1968, Trudeau's democratic vision inspired the Government of Canada to engage in a one-year consultation process with Indian leaders; reviewing the effects of its programs as well as the "present situation of the Indian people."[143] On June 25, 1969, Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced an end to the federal government's "highly paternalistic" relationship with Indian peoples. Chrétien's policy paper called for a complete repeal of the Indian Act, a transfer of the responsibility for status Indians to provincial and territorial governments, fifty-million dollars in economic development funds over five years for reserve communities, and the DIAND's gradual dissolution.[144] Such radical changes to the lives of Indian peoples were perceived to be a political necessity in Trudeau's "pluralist" understanding of Canada.[145] The DIAND's proposal also intended to provide status Indians with "the right to full and equal participation in the cultural, social, economic and political life of Canada."[146] Vehement opposition to the policy proposal was immediately voiced by the Indian Association of Alberta, the Union of Ontario Indians, the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, as well as the newly formed Union of British Columbia Chiefs. Within a year, the Government of Canada had recanted on its new plan; however the most significant consequence of this proposed legislation's defeat was that: "Indian leaders found a basis for pan-Canadian unity they had long sought but failed to achieve."[147] This same inter-tribal solidarity marked the advent of a new artistic community in Canada during 1970s, which by the 1990s, was laying claim to the nation's premiere cultural institution.

Harold Cardinal, who in 1969 was a recent law graduate from the University of Saskatchewan and the new president of the Indian Association of Alberta, published a detailed rejection of the DIAND's so-called 'white paper.' In The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians, Cardinal challenges the federal government to address its legacy of oppression before any new relationship between Canada and the First Nations can be accomplished. His manifesto begins by identifying Prime Minister Trudeau as the person responsible for the latest attempt to remove Indian difference from Canadian society. "Now, at a time when our fellow Canadians consider the promise of the Just Society, once

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[143]Jean Chrétien, "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy," DIAND Press Release, June 25, 1969: 1.
[144]Chrétien, 1-5.
[145]Pierre Elliot Trudeau, "Statement on the Introduction of the Official Languages Bill - Oct. 17, 1968,"Jun.1, 2001 <<www.collections.ic.gc.ca>>.
[146]Chrétien, 2.
[147]Miller, 232.

more the Indians of Canada are betrayed by a programme which offers nothing better that cultural genocide."[148] This passage from the opening chapter, entitled "The Buckskin Curtain" is followed by fifteen chapters in the form of briefs, each focussing on the 'white paper's' imprudent solutions to problems ranging from Indian identity to the future of Indian peoples in a modern society. Terms such as 'buckskin curtain' were derivative of the 1960s Cold War rhetoric that capitalist nation-states including the U.S.A. and Canada used to generate a public image of communist social evils hidden behind the U.S.S.R's 'Iron Curtain.'

In the second chapter, called "Red Tape," the author points to the embarrassing state of Canada's democratic system which affords politicians and civil servants the ability to arbitrarily manipulate the identity and legal status of indigenous North Americans. This contradiction was most pronounced during the post-war period, when immigrants fleeing war-torn Europe immediately gained the basic human rights that Indian leaders had been demanding for almost a century. The co-existence of new German and Ukrainian enclaves as well as long established French communities in Canada during the 1960s are proof for Cardinal of the country's capacity to adopt multiple "cultural identities."[149] Yet the Indian identity which he defines as "automatically Canadian" continues to be placed under siege via the DIAND's new directives.[150] However, the task of establishing a renewed position for Indian peoples in Canada is their own responsibility according to the young activist."The challenge to Indians today is to redefine that identity in contemporary terminology. The challenge to the non-Indian society is to accept such an updated definition."[151] Installation art eventually proved to facilitate this re-identification process in public forums across the country.

Cardinal furthers his diatribe with a series of legal assessments based on Canada's historical commitments to the First Nations; including treaty making and the 1876 Indian Act. The binding nation-to-nation agreements signed between Native leaders and British Crown representatives during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early-twentieth centuries are presented as a Western legitimation of Indian rights. In the author's ancestral language, lands reserved for the Cree according to such accords

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[148]Cardinal, 1.
[149]Cardinal, 24.
[150]Ibid.
[151]Cardinal, 25.

were known as: "the land that we kept for ourselves...skun-gun."[152] He then evokes British history to further justify the reading of treaty agreements as "an Indian Magna Carta."[153] However, the personal and political liberties granted to Indian peoples in treaties were later reinterpreted and reapplied by federal authorities as tools of oppression. Cardinal also emphasizes the lost oral components of agreements that held greater meaning for Indian signatories (most of whom were illiterate), and how such information was eventually ignored by the white man. Similarly, the author describes the 1876 Indian Act as a crucial document from which the "legal rights of Indians flow," and without it, the paradoxical benefits of colonialism's unethical framework would be unsalvageable. Examples of religious persecution and racial bigotry endured by Indians throughout the twentieth century are then cited as definitive evidence of the white man's universal hypocrisy. "In his social doctrines he stresses his belief in equality and elaborates on the need for and the value of diversity, but confront him with a diversity in colour of skin, confront him with some different values and see how long he stays a champion of diversity."[154]

"The Little Red Schoolhouse" is among the most important chapters in The Unjust Society, for it documents a cultural violence that shattered the identities of countless Indian children who attended residential schools. The author remembers when he was referred to as "an ungrateful little savage" in the eighth grade by a cleric-teacher.[155] His story is analogous with Norval Morrisseau's residential-school memory of Sister Lorenzia strapping him for not being "a developed man."[156] Cardinal's experience also parallels Alex Janvier's recollection of a "brainwashing" educational system that characterized the beliefs of his parents and grandparents as "evil."[157] The transfer of authority for Indian education from various governmentally funded Christian orders (which focussed more on religious conversion than scholastic values), to the Indian Affair Branch in the 1950s, did not "achieve educational parity with non-Indian society."[158] Cardinal insists the federal government recognize an independent report it commissioned in 1967 from H.B. Hawthorn, entitled A Survey of the

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[152]Ibid, 29.
[153]Ibid, 28.
[154]Ibid, 75.
[155]Ibid ,54.
[156]Morrisseau quoted in James Stephens,"Interview with Norval Morrisseau," Art Magazine summer 1974: 31.
[157]Janvier quoted in David Staples,"Artist Alex Janvier," The Edmonton Journal Jan.31, 1988:7.
[158]Cardinal, 53.

Contemporary Indians of Canada, which criticized the residential school system's devaluation of Native languages and cultural values.[159] The vigilant reiteration of Indian residential school travesties therefore became an essential process in overcoming their multi-generational detriment. Joane Cardinal-Schubert's series of installations, entitled *Preservation of a Species,* maintained the same unyielding and repetitive focus on educational racism in Canada throughout the 1980s.

Chapter ten of Cardinal's manifesto, "Hat in Hand," charts the history of Indian political organizations in Canada through the twentieth century, and the financial, emotional, social, and legal hardships faced by the early volunteer leaders. He chastises both the DIAND's continual efforts to undermine Native political bodies, and unscrupulous federal Indian agents who delayed relief payments or rations to politically active people on reserves. The author exposes the DIAND's practice of selecting unelected or unrecognized Indian advisors solely to justify their unilateral policy decisions, and describes the consulting process that proceeded the 'white paper' as "government doubletalk."[160] Chapter eleven, entitled the "Quiet Revolution," draws a parallel between the new era in Indian politics and the radical changes in Quebec society enacted by the provincial Liberal government of Premier Jean Lesage, from 1960 to 1966. Lesage's accomplishments included: a dramatic reduction of the Catholic church's control over education, the conglomeration of private electric companies into the provincially owned Hydro Québec, and a withdrawal from several cost-sharing programs with the Government of Canada. For Cardinal, the 1969 founding of the National Indian Brotherhood was a "significant milestone," similar to the emergence of Quebec nationalists and their philosophy of 'maîtres chez nous.'[161] The fledgling organization provided Indian peoples with a forum to talk to each other and "negotiate from strength with the federal government."[162]

In the closing chapters of The Unjust Society the author warns of an angry new leadership element within Native nations which had lost faith in peaceful solutions to myriad contentious issues facing their constituents. The 1964 armed occupation of a park in Kenora, Ontario, by the Ojibwa Warriors Society in response to a long-standing land dispute with the federal government is a good example of

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[159]Harry B. Hawthorn, A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affair and Northern Development, 1967) vol. I: 44-89.
[160]Ibid, 104.
[161]Ibid, 107.
[162]Ibid.

the escalating tensions described by Cardinal.[157] He also charges Trudeau's government with "Legislative and Constitutional Treachery" in the thirteenth chapter, and compares the 'white paper' to the Indian termination program of 1953 in the United States. This failed American policy was designed to relieve federal and state authorities of their legal responsibilities to tribal councils. Poverty-stricken non-status Indians and Métis peoples in Canada are cited as evidence of what would happen to status and treaty Indians if they lost their special rights and benefits. The Prime Minister's Official Languages Act is then used by Cardinal as a legal precedent for the state's cultural obligation to defend Indian peoples."The French Canadian has his language rights protected by the Canadian Constitution."[158] The final chapter, entitled "When the Curtain Comes Down," outlines a transfer of power from the DIAND to the NIB that must occur before Native peoples can fully participate in Canadian society. Cardinal's manifesto then closes on a cautionary note regarding the future. "The present course of the federal government drives the Indian daily closer to the second alternative...despair, hostility, destruction."[159] Growing incidents of violence between the First Nations and Canadian authorities gradually entered the cultural milieu, and by the early 1990s, specific clashes involving the Lubicon and Mohawk peoples were being quoted through manipulations of space.

The trajectory of Vine Deloria Jr.'s 1969 book, Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto, is similar to that of The Unjust Society, as he asserts Indian sovereignty against a history of Euro-American injustice. Deloria, who obtained a Master of Theology from the Lutheran School of Theology in Illinois and a Doctorate of Law from the University of Colorado, served as executive director of the National Congress of American Indians from 1968 to 1976. His manifesto questions the moral and legal credibility of the United States through a redeployment of mainstream heroic narratives, such as the death of the Seventh Calvary's General George Custer in 1876, at the hands of Sioux warriors during the battle of Little Bighorn. The author's ancestral connection to the tribe that halted the renowned nineteenth-century Indian-hunter's murderous exploits is used to validate Deloria's present-day demands for Indian retribution and a cessation of Euro-American aggression. Edward Poitras was drawn to this same moment of American brutality on the Great Plains, and his site productions through the 1980s and 1990s echoed the literary criticism charted here. Deloria goes on

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[157]Dickason, 370.
[158]Cardinal, 141.
[159]Ibid, 171.

to hold the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) responsible for a contemporary campaign to wipe out Indian peoples, and stresses the need for greater inter-tribal unity as a means of resistance. Thus, strategies of cultural genocide are at the nexus of his lament. "To be Indian in modern American society is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical."[160] In 1992, the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilization jointly addressed this same paradox in Canadian society that persisted through the post-modern era.

Like Cardinal, Deloria remedies the downgrading of Indian political history within the master narratives of America by celebrating pre-twentieth century indigenous North American governing structures such as the Iroquois League and the Cree town system. Next, he charts the re-emergence of tribal councils during the 1930s, which culminated in the advent of nation-wide organizations including the 1943 foundation of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Youth Council, which was established in 1962. In the second chapter, entitled "Laws and Treaties," the author uses the Cold War's ideological battle between American capitalism and Soviet communism to emphasize the former system's underlying hypocrisy:"It would take Russia another century to make and break as many treaties as the United States has already violated."[161] Such despotic occurrences are then traced back in time to the colonial avouchments of England, France, Spain, and Holland in the New World. Their respective regimes shared a common spiritual support according to Deloria, as the churches of Western Europe justified unilateral land claims in the name of God."Christianity thus endorsed and advocated the rape of the North American continent."[162] This scrutiny of Euro-North American ethics through literary means continued through the twentieth-century's close; taken up by a new generation of visual artists, film makers, and writers from Aboriginal nations across the continent.

Harold Cardinal attacked the DIAND's 'white paper' comparing it to the "disastrous" American policy of termination carried out during the 1950s.[163] Much of Deloria's discontent is directed at this same unilateral plan, and he describes the moment in 1953 when the United States House of Representatives introduced Concurrent Resolution 108 to terminate services promised to tribes in various treaty

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[160]Deloria Jr., 2.
[161]Ibid, 28.
[162]Ibid., 30.
[163]Cardinal, 133.

agreements as: "The first shot of the great twentieth century Indian war."[164] Nineteenth-century efforts to usurp Indian lands, including military campaigns headed by American heros like Custer and biological warfare carried out by federal agents who gave Indian peoples blankets infected with smallpox, were now being affected through bureaucratic means.[165] Examples cited by the author of how Indian nations were forced into termination agreements range from the BIA's withholding of tribal funds gained through natural resource development, to denying diseased Native peoples access to medical services. Deloria considers the aggressive methods of this agency within the Department of the Interior as a modern outgrowth of its colonial foundation by the Secretary of War. After the Second World War, both the BIA and the DIAND focussed on reducing expenditures rather than fulfilling their obligations to Native nations.[166] At the close of the sixth chapter, entitled "Government Agencies," the author insists on a radical re-orientation of the BIA, echoing Cardinal's demands for changes to the DIAND. The Sioux activist charges that tribal organizations must be permitted to cut into the federal bureau's superstructure, so that America could begin to honour its most fundamental treaty principle of "free and undisturbed use" by Indians on reservation lands.[167] In the 1970s, Manitou College and the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College were successfully cutting into Canada's educational bureaucracy, and during the 1980s the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry carved out a place for its membership in the nation's cultural institutions and funding agencies.

In chapter seven, called "The Red and the Black," Deloria carefully differentiates between First Nations struggles for sovereignty and attempts by African-Americans to gain full civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s. He indicates that while Black leaders sought parity with Euro-Americans in accordance with constitutional amendments dating to the 1861 Civil War, Native leaders concentrated on establishing a greater degree of autonomy from the American 'melting pot' as per eighteenth- and nineteenth-century treaty agreements. The present-day treatment of Indians by the white man is characterized as an ongoing process of assimilating "ex-wild animals," which contrasts with the exclusion of Blacks from mainstream society because of their "ex-draft animal" status.[168]Deloria asserts that race relations in the United States during the post-war era were dominated by African-

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[164]Deloria Jr., 62.
[165]Miller, 124.
[166]Deloria Jr., 125- 145.
[167]Ibid, 143.
[168]Ibid, 172-173

American interests, which made the problems of all minority groups, including Indians, synonymous with the civil rights movement. The National Congress of American Indians' refusal to participate in mass urban demonstrations such as the 1963 'Poor Peoples March' on Washington (organized by high-profile civil rights activists including Martin Luther King Jr.) was an example of how Native leaders maintained the distinct nature of their cause. However, the incredible advancements of African-Americans in the 1960s did proffer some important lessons for the First Nations. "We are learning from others about the forces that can be assembled in a democratic society to protect oppressed minorities."[169] Harold Cardinal draws a similar parallel with regard to strategies for emancipation shared among "black power" and "red power" activists in North America.[170] Like the conclusion to The Unjust Society, Deloria's manifesto warns the United States of America's leaders that any further bureaucratic attempts to terminate tribal existence would result in civil disorder. "Tampering with the present legal status of Indian tribes will only bring change faster and tinge it with potential violence."[171]

The appearance of post-colonial literature in North America by authors such as Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr. echoed a similar phenomenon on the African continent. Following the Second World War, the indigenous inhabitants of numerous British, French, German, and Belgian colonial possessions - including Kenya, Angola, Rhodesia, Madagascar, the Congo, and Algeria - sought to re-establish their sovereignty. Among the most celebrated African national freedom activists of the period was Frantz Fanon, who published several manifestos supporting the Algerian Liberation Front's war of independence from France. Born in the French West Indian colony of Martinique in 1925, Fanon travelled to Lyon as a young man to study medicine and psychiatry. From 1953 to 1956, he served as the head of the psychiatry department at the Blida-Joinville Hospital in Algeria, a post from which he resigned to protest the French government's military campaign in North Africa.[172] His 1961 manifesto Les damnés de la terre, which was republished four years later in English as The Wretched of the Earth, is a collection of writings that diagnose colonialism's logic while providing a prescription for Algerians, Africans, and all indigenous peoples to cure themselves of Western domination.

The state of violence that both Cardinal and Deloria Jr. predict for Canada and America is consistent

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[169]Ibid, 187.
[170]Cardinal, 35.
[171]Deloria Jr., 266.
[172]see David Caute, Frantz Fanon (London: Fonatana-Collins, 1970).

with what Fanon outlines as a preliminary condition for empowerment. In the opening chapter of The Wretched of the Earth entitled "Concerning Violence," the author claims "decolonization is always a violent phenomenon."[173] However, as a minority population in North America during the 1960s, Native peoples lacked the sheer strength in numbers of African nationalists. For example, during the 1950s, approximately eight million people of indigenous North African descent were dominated by roughly one million people of predominately French origin. The French 'settlers,' like their Euro-North American counterparts, gradually exerted complete control over the colony's politics, economy, and land holdings. This inequitable nineteenth-century situation in North Africa became the catalyst for a twentieth-century war between France and the Algerian Liberation Front. While there is an obvious physical difference between native-white relations in Algeria and Canada during the post-war era, such indigenous struggles for freedom share an essential psychological reckoning of the oppressor.[174] "The violence which has ruled over the ordering of the colonial world...will be claimed and taken over by the native at the moment when, deciding to embody history in his own person, he surges into the forbidden quarter."[175] Violence is a key quality that will take on artistic ramifications in Chapters III and IV, as artists of Aboriginal ancestry immersed Euro-Canadians in a process of national reflection.

In the second section of his manifesto, "Spontaneity: Its Strength and Weakness" Fanon likens the impending decolonization of Africa with trade unionism's rise in Western Europe and North America during the early twentieth century.[176] The labour movement is depicted as a class struggle resulting from the unequal distribution of wealth fostered by capitalist systems. In his comparison, the native is substituted for the proletariat and colonial governments are replaced by factory owners. Armed insurrections thus become commensurate with wildcat strikes. The Pacific Coast Native Fisherman's Association, the Allied Tribes of British Columbia, and the National Indian Brotherhood represent examples of such conjoined ideologies in Canada, as each was established via union-like consolidations of workers, band councils, and provincial organizations. Fanon furthers his discussion of socio-economic activism with a description of the internal tensions between urban workers and rural peasants. Urbanites are portrayed as more apt to "change old customs" and pursue "modern ideas," while the more conservative peasantry "constitutes the only spontaneously revolutionary force."[177]

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[173]Fanon, 35.
[174]The word native in Fanon's text is not capitalized, while contiguous references to Native, Aboriginal, Indian, Amerindian and First Nations peoples throughout this dissertation remain in upper case. Both methods are used accordingly here.
[175]Fanon, 40
[176]Ibid, 107.
[177]Ibid, 109, 123.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, Indian leaders experienced similar difficulties in their attempts to unite status and treaty Indians on rural reserves with non-status Indians from predominately urban areas, as well as the Métis in both rural and urban settings. Enforcing treaty rights was paramount to conventionally minded reserve communities, while non-reserve activists were concerned with the modern redefinition of basic Aboriginal rights. Radical cultural practices such as installation and performance art presented similar difficulties for non-urban Native peoples and leaders, and some of the urban-based artists mentioned later faced criticism in the 1980s from reserve communities. [178]

The author moves from prescribing the means available to indigenous Africans for defeating colonialism to outlining the dangers and mentality of a liberated native nation. In chapter three of his manifesto, entitled "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," Fanon, like Cardinal and Deloria, acknowledges the urgent need for an educated middle class. This "national bourgeoisie" is the critical conduit between the nation and capitalism, a position which leaves it open to the most serious threat to freedom,` that of "decadence."[179] According to Fanon, corruption of the native middle-class has the potential to transform nationalism into racism, which ultimately results in the creation of single-party dictatorships which pander to the "former mother country" and "foreign capitalists."[180] Colonialism was thus regaining power, however Western authority had been forever "shaken to its very foundations by the birth of African unity."[181] Neo-colonialism could not prevent the nurturing of a new native cultural existence as described by Fanon in the fourth chapter, entitled "On National Culture," which he initially presented at the Second Congress of Black Artists and Writers in Rome, in 1959. Much of the writer's discussion is devoted to advising intellectuals and artists on how they can "rehabilitate" a national culture from the past, which will "serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture."[182] At *Expo 67,* the site-specific creations of Norval Morrisseau and Alex Janvier for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion advanced such a mandate. Their respective references to birch-bark scroll drawings and beadwork designs redeemed traditions that predated the usurpation of Aboriginal cultural sovereignty by Euro-North Americans. These preliminary signs of inter-tribal nationalism prepared subsequent generations of Native artists in Canada to seek the "seething pot out of which the learning of the future will emerge."[183]

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[178]Tom Hill and Karen Duffek, Beyond History (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1989) 7-11.
[179]Ibid, 152-153.
[180]Ibid, 165.
[181]Ibid, 160.
[182]Ibid, 210.
[183]Ibid, 225.

## The Erosion of Modern Western Authority

The Native population explosion in the 1950s contradicted the assumptions of Canadian anthropologists who, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, unanimously predicted the demise of tribal societies. Scientific authorities did not readily accept such a phenomenon, as the dire forecasts contained in Diamond Jenness' The Indians of Canada were maintained by the National Museum of Man until 1977. For example, in the seventh edition of his widely distributed text (published eight years after the internationally renowned anthropologist's death) it is stated that the Ojibway would be "helplessly cast adrift," the Iroquois were sure to "disappear," the Coastal Salish faced "catastrophe," and the Plains Cree had become incapable of "regeneration."[184] Beginning in the late- nineteenth century, the Government of Canada facilitated such jealously guarded anthropological assumptions via the development of Indian residential schools, where children were forcibly assimilated to Anglo-Canadian norms. However, the perpetuation of these brutal institutions until the 1950s also produced paradoxical benefits.

English had become a common second language among most Native peoples by the early-twentieth century, and activists such as Chief Andrew Paull, Reverend Peter Kelley, and Lieutenant Frederick Ogilive Loft used it as a tool to foster inter-tribal unity across Canada. Moreover, the knowledge of Christianity that these Aboriginal leaders and others gained through their childhood indoctrination also enabled them to initiate an informed questioning of Canadian legal mores. The First Nations' major contribution to the British Commonwealth's cause in the First and Second World Wars further justified such reckoning; particularly at a moment when the depravity of Europe lay exposed."Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them...Look at them today swaying between atomic and spiritual disintegration."[185] Euro-Canada's inhuman relationship with First Nations and their growing impatience could not withstand international scrutiny during an era when Canadian diplomats such as Lester B. Pearson were leaders of the United Nations' humanitarian directives.[186] Hence, the federal government's 1951 repeal of the Indian Act's most oppressive sections can be read as a public admission of neo-colonial guilt. Just the same, the more contentious legal issue of Aboriginal land claims was not to be addressed by the Government of Canada until 1974.[187]

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[184]Jenness, 283, 307, 350, 326.
[185]Fanon, 311.
[186]Lester B. Peason was awarded the Nobel Peace prize in 1957 for his United Nations peacekeeping program in Egypt.
[187]McMillan, 320-324.

Perhaps the greatest irony of *Man and His World*'s celebration of humanity was its actualization on an island in the Saint Lawrence River which had been expropriated by the federal government from the Iroquois shortly after the Second World War.[188] Accordingly, the socio-political dilemmas resulting from one-hundred years of Canadian Confederation gave way to grand nationalistic gestures that broke with the past at *Expo 67*. Giant geometric architectural forms including *Katimavik* and huge non-objective paintings such as Guido Molinari's *Bi-sérial orange-vert* were the new signifiers of a burgeoning country with strong cultural ties to American-style capitalism. (ill. 24) Experimental cinematography, simulated natural environments, and robotic displays defined the post-modern potential of Canada and its provinces. Totalized evocations of Quebec, Ontario, the Western and Atlantic provinces represented the relative densities and economic might of Euro-Canadian populations, and emphasized the supremacy of Anglophone and Francophone values. Similarly, the proximity and importance of Great Britain's and France's pavilions demarcated their respective contributions to a unique North American nation-state, whose democratic ideals had become dependent on diversity and multiculturalism. However, the lack of an official pavilion for the Northwest and Yukon Territories where Inuit peoples far outnumbered non-Native Canadians in 1967, was proof of this strategy's contradictory enunciation. Exclusive narrative definitions of nationhood inside the Government of Canada pavilion also misrepresented the First Nations as a homogeneous people trapped in the nineteenth century, who lacked any larger relationship with contemporary Western society. "Cultural diversity is also the representation of a radical rhetoric of the separation of totalized cultures that live unsullied by the intertextuality of their historical locations, safe in the Utopianisms of a mythic memory of a unique collective identity."[189] Thus, the nation's bi-cultural rhetoric at *Expo 67* can be characterized as a mere modern retooling of Western totalizing directives that date to colonial times.

A notable absence among the twenty-six participating nations at the Canadian Universal and International Exhibition in Montreal was that of the People's Republic of China. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung since 1949, this most populous communist republic had no desire to participate in an event which glorified capitalism.[190] Perhaps China's presence would have heightened the global ideological contest that did get played out for the over fifty-million people who attended *Expo 67*. Socio-political differences between the world's two new superpowers were underlined by the

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[188]Dickason, 334.
[189]Bhabha, 34.
[190]Fulford, 26.

symbolic placement of their respective sites across from each other and separated by a body of water. The legion of film stars inside the United States of America's pavilion communicated a faith in individualism, while the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' pavilion served as a memorial to the founder of its collective philosophy. More importantly, their simultaneous emphasis on space travel as a true indicator of global supremacy did not reveal this new science's immediate relevance to the Cold War's nuclear threat. More overt signs of the international tension between communism and capitalism also permeated the fair; as is evident from the inflammatory statements on banners inside the Cuban pavilion regarding American aggression. 'Poison Gas, Bacteriological Weapons, Bombs, Napalm, Death, Central Intelligence Agency', were the charges levied against the United States for its ongoing efforts to depose President Fidel Castro Ruz's communist regime. (ill. 25) On a national level, France's President General Charles de Gaulle infuriated Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and inspired Quebec separatists during his official visit to *Expo 67*when he publically declared: "Vivre le Québec Libre."[191] Such a questioning of Canadian rule resonated throughout the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's interior, as the federal government's oppressive history was clearly enunciated to visitors."The government really wanted a positive image in that pavilion and what they got was the truth. That's what really shocked them the most."[192] Indian representatives at the world's fair refused to let the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development or the Centennial Indian Advisory Committee quell their collective will. Similarly, paintings created by Norval Morrisseau and Alex Janvier contested the site's retrograde anti-modern exterior, while affirming the presence of new artistic practices among Native peoples. The unravelling of Canada's official cultural intolerance had begun, at a defining moment in the nation's post-modern future. "It brought a sense of power to the artists, people all of a sudden realized what they could do, as artists, to communicate ideas."[193]

Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau's vision of a 'just society' had a profound effect on the Government of Canada's public mandate in the late 1960s, as it assumed a more proactive role in addressing the nation's inequitable social legacies. The 1968 Official Languages Act recognized the linguistic rights of over five million French-Canadians and represented a symbolic curative for contemporary geo-political disparities stemming from Confederation and the absorption of New France into British North America. In contrast, the 1969 "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy" made by the DIAND's new minister, Jean Chrétien, quashed the First Nations'

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[191]de Gaulle quoted in Time International of Canada Ltd., Birthday of a Nation (Montreal: Time International, 1968) n.p.
[192]Hill quoted in Phillips, 1.
[193]Hill quoted in Brydon, 43.

constitutional distinctions according to the British North America Act of 1867, and ignored the debilitated state of Indian existence that had resulted from over a century of state sponsored oppression The poorly crafted 'white paper's' unanimous rejection by provincial Indian organizations marked a convergence of political wills, while its eventual defeat confirmed the National Indian Brotherhood's inter-tribal mandate. A new generation of Indian politicians like Harold Cardinal, were fully versed in Western academic thought and carried the battle of their nineteenth- and twentieth-century predecessors to new heights. "The history of Canada's Indians is a shameful chronicle of the white man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust."[194] Cardinal's manifesto, The Unjust Society, was part of a continent-wide Native assault on Euro-North American authority, in an age when neo-colonialist directives were being veiled by the modern democratic posturing of Canada and the United States. Vine Deloria Jr.'s 1970 publication, Custer Died for Your Sins, drew uncomfortable lines between racial prejudices that plagued America, and undermined the superpower's international claim that it was the land of freedom and equality. "The white man systematically destroyed Indian culture where it existed, but separated blacks from his midst so that they were forced to attempt the creation of their own culture."[195] Deloria's denunciation of the white man contributed to a larger post-war anti-colonial chorus among non-white peoples, who in Africa, South America, and Asia transformed their discontent into successful armed revolutions. As an Algerian Liberation Front activist in 1961, Frantz Fanon posits that the fundamental task for colonized peoples throughout the world is to build national identities. However, physical and cultural violence always precede such constructions as a mirror of the process which implanted Western values on foreign soil."In the period of decolonization, the colonized masses mock at these very values, insult them, and vomit them up."[196] In 1992 Joseph Tehawehron David performed these very acts for the benefit of visitors to the Canadian Museum of Civilization. "Strong emotions came with the realization that in Canada, the 'colonial attitude' is alive and well, that 'Might is Right' is still the doctrine practised."[197]

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[194]Cardinal,1.
[195]Deloria Jr., 173.
[196]Fanon, 43.
[197] David quoted in Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin, Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1992) 146.

## Chapter III: Inter-tribal Considerations

This chapter opens with an overview of *Canadian Indian Art 74* at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum, which signals the beginning of a new national art history. Selected works by Sarain Stump and Guy Sioui represent an emergent socio-political stance within the growing Aboriginal cultural community. Native-run art programs and collectives founded in the 1970s are shown to foster inter-tribal links across the country, while initiating greater contemporary possibilities for indigenous North American aesthetics. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's sponsorship of cultural activities by status Indians is examined according to its propagation of official Indian art narratives. Barry Lord's The History of Painting in Canada: Towards A People's Art and selected writings from Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada then evoke rereadings of Aboriginal cultural identities through the early 1980s. In 1982, *New Work By A New Generation,* at Regina's Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, established a critical hybrid aesthetic discourse, whose most innovative manifestation is reflected in Edward Poitras' spatial production for this show. The writings of Walter Benjamin and Renato Poggioli then serve as avant-garde reference points for the description of an increasingly radical inter-tribal artistic movement. Installation-based practices enabled both Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Edward Poitras to maintain this stress on the limits of identity contexts, as examined via their works for the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's *Stardusters: New Works by Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Edward Poitras* show, which toured across Canada in 1987.

### *Canadian Indian Art 74*

The *Canadian Indian Art 74,* exhibition held at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto from June 4th to July 14th, 1974 was a seminal event in the establishment of contemporary narratives for arts and crafts created by artists of Native ancestry. As curator, Tom Hill brought together a wide variety of works in an attempt to represent both individual and tribal cultural practices from regions across Canada. The works exhibited by Sarain Stump and Guy Sioui are of particular interest here, for they signify a type of socio-political commentary analogous to that voiced in the previously mentioned manifestos of Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr . Stump's and Sioui's respective employment of mixed media techniques also represent crucial hybrid interpretations of indigenous North American and Western European artistic traditions that were infused with a post-colonial Canadian politic.

By the 1970s, the National Museum of Man and the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) began to expand their ethnographic collections and exhibition programs to acknowledge the resurgence of cultural productions by artists of Aboriginal ancestry who had assimilated Western formats. For example, in 1972, the NMM acquired 15 works-on-paper by Alex Janvier, and in 1978, the ROM organized a major solo show of his paintings. In 1967, the Musée du Québec organized an exhibition of commissioned works by Norval Morrisseau, and in 1972 the ROM purchased 11 paintings by the same immensely popular Anishnabai artist. By the mid 1970s, Native cultural industry professionals were also entering the public museum system, and directing the collecting, exhibiting, and analysis of contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry.

Tom Hill has played a critical role over the past thirty-five years in defining and promoting visual arts in First Nations communities. This Seneca curator, artist, and teacher from the Six Nations reservation near Brantford, Ontario, attended the Ontario College of Art in Toronto from 1963 to 1967, and during his final year of study received a museology scholarship from the National Gallery of Canada. He participated in *Expo 67*, creating a circular panel painting for the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's exterior entitled *The Tree of Peace.* In 1970, while serving as an administrator for the Cultural Affairs section of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Hill was appointed co-ordinator of the Indian pavilion at the world's fair in Osaka, Japan. Three years later, the budding artist-curator was assigned the task of co-ordinating *Canadian Indian Art 74* in co-operation with Dr.E.S. Rogers of the Royal Ontario Museum's ethnology department. The impetus for this exhibition occurred during the planning of the 10th annual World Craft Conference at York University, when Elizabeth McCutcheon of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (CGC) suggested that a national Indian arts-and-crafts showcase be staged in concert with the international event. The CGC then secured support from the Royal Ontario Museum, as both a venue and sponsor, as well as from the DIAND's Cultural Affairs section, which underwrote Hill's work and provided him with acquisition funds.[198]

In preparation for *Canadian Indian Art 74,* Tom Hill travelled across Canada purchasing recently produced works by artists of Aboriginal ancestry on reservations and in urban centres. His final selection featured one-hundred-and-seventy-seven pieces organized under the following headings in the

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[198]Tom Hill, Canadian Indian Art 74 (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1974) n.p..

exhibition catalogue: paintings, modern sculpture, traditional-contemporary sculpture, argillite sculpture, jewellery, weaving, beadwork, basketry, ceramics, miscellaneous, and masks. The catalogue entry for each artist's work also included his/her tribal ancestry as Hill attempted to maintain a heterogeneous context for the appreciation of Aboriginal cultural productions. The reduction of both historical and contemporary arts created by Native peoples to "scientific areas," most notably anthropology, had in the co-ordinator's view "ignored the inherent aesthetic qualities" of such work.[199] In addition to this obstacle of appreciation, the creation of paintings and sculptures "in the Western sense" was a relatively new phenomenon among "Indian artists," making them more prone to misinterpretation by both Native and non-Native viewers.[200]

Perhaps the greatest dilemma for Hill was that the "highly individual styles" of painters rendered the work of traditional-contemporary sculptors in a somewhat "anachronistic" condition.[201] The collective aesthetic quality of the latter category is most evident in the cultural traditions of the Northwest Coast, which withstood Euro-Canadian attempts to wipe out Aboriginal difference such as the Potlatch ban. At *Canadian Indian Art 74,* works by 'Ksan (flourishing artists' co-operative in Hazelton, British Columbia, established in 1966 to maintain the integrity of Gitksan, Tsimshian, Tlingit, Carrier, and Haida carving and graphic traditions) dominated the traditional-contemporary sculpture and mask sections. The collective's works were easily accommodated within the ROM's anthropological setting, which included vast holdings of nineteenth-century works by their ancestors. Furthermore, in Hill's opinion, the heraldic-utilitarian function of sculptures such as Freda Diesing's 1973 Alderwood *Beaver Bowl* set the "modern media" used by painters including Norval Morrisseau and Alex Janvier, into a contradictory position. The detachment by these two artists of shamanic and symbolic visual devices from their tribal origins to accommodate a Western European format is at the centre of Hill's "ambiguous artistic" problematic.[202] Conversely, the absorption of painting's commodity aesthetic had gained these two artists and others access to mainstream commercial and public art venues across Canada in the 1970s.

The most unorthodox work to be classified as a painting by Tom Hill in the *Canadian Indian Art 74*

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[199]Ibid.
[200]Ibid.
[201]Ibid.
[202]Ibid.

catalogue was Sarain Stump's 1973 acrylic-on-split sheepskin with a mounted wooden mask, entitled *The Pain of the Indian*. (ill. 26) His use of an irregularly shaped hide support recalls the painted buffalo robes worn by nomadic Native peoples who travelled the Great Plains during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Similarly, Stump's application of unmixed blue, black, and brown acrylic paints to depict arrows, leaves, and abstract configurations as flat forms recall the graphic vocabularies of nineteenth-century artists on the Great Plains including Crop-Eared Wolf. Wolf's 1882 *Coups Counted* painting on buffalo hide evokes a narrative of his military exploits versus the Sioux and Plains Cree. (ill. 27) Stump thus brings the graphic traditions of his Shoshone and Plains Cree ancestors forward, while the substitution of a buffalo hide for that of domesticated animals imported from Western Europe places this work in the 1970s, when the formerly free-roaming beasts had become a protected species in Canada. His stylistic devices can also be related to the Santa Fe Indian School artists of the 1950s, particularly Alan Houser's sculpture which impressed Stump as a young man growing up in Fremont County, Wyoming.[203] The 1973 the painting-assemblage's mass of arrows also visually penetrate a wooden mask mounted in the centre of the sheepskin. The anxiety-ridden, life-sized human face with thongs for hair, squinting eyes, and an open mouth curving downward at the corners is a general derivation of indigenous mask carving traditions from the Northwest Coast. As such, it relates to the artist's purported Salish descent. Stump's synthesis of divergent tribal sources were indicative of his own mixed heritage, which is charged with an individual expression of pain related to the unending psychological abuses committed against Aboriginal peoples by Euro-North Americans. His modern lament therefore parallels Vine Deloria Jr.'s 1970 sentiment that Indians simply desired to be: "free and undisturbed."[204]

During the 1960s Sarain Stump (1945-1974) moved from the United States to the Eden Valley reservation in Alberta, and worked as a ranch hand in the foothills area southwest of Calgary. The self-taught artist sold figurative drawings and carvings to local residents during his spare time, and in 1970, with the support of Gray's Publishing Limited in Sidney, British Columbia, issued a book of drawings and poetry called There is my People Sleeping. [205] The title poem is divided into nine sections each with an image. In the fourth section, a pen-and-ink drawing of a bald man wearing a suit and

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[203]Sarain Stump, There Is My People Sleeping (Sidney: Grey's Publishing Ltd, 1970) n.p.
[204]Deloria Jr., 143.
[205]Sarain Stump (1945-74), unpublished resumé, Indian Art Centre files, DIAND.

holding up a pen stands in front of a colonial officer with his sword drawn. Behind these Euro-North American figures is a kneeling Native man clad in a loin cloth with his hands bound behind his back. (ill.28) The prose accompanying this image states: "and doesn't wanna remember what he owes you."[206] Stump thus makes a conjoined literary-graphic reference to the treaty promises forgotten by Ottawa's and Washington's pen-wielding bureaucrats in modern times, and the Western constraints placed on Indian peoples through military means since the 1800s. This same bound and kneeling man is painted in black on a small white oval background on the lower right side of the 1974 sheep skin work mentioned earlier, adding yet another narrative layer to *The Pain of the Indian.* Such a visual aside also bears comparison to a 1973 statement by its creator regarding the condition of oppression in North America. "If you keep a man tied for years and then let him go - for a while he won't be able to walk straight for sure. He'll have a hard time standing up. That's what's happened to us. But I think we are headed in the right direction now."[207] Sarain Stump had begun to exert a significant inter-tribal aesthetic politic in Canada which was enhanced by his position as director of the art department at the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College.

Guy Sioui's 2.6 metre-high giant arrow, entitled *La Direction,* metaphorically pierced the Royal Ontario Museum's floor at the *Canadian Indian Art 74* show, and Tom Hill considered it within the modern sculpture category. (ill.29) This artist of Huron-Abenaki ancestry studied fine arts at the École des Beaux-Arts in Montreal and Quebec City's Université de Laval. He worked primarily in stone, silver, and wood during his brief professional career. He produced over 8,000 pipes by the late 1970s, incorporating centuries-old Huron and Abenaki designs in an effort to create: "new forms of expression for the traditional styles."[208] The lead arrow-head of this 1973 piece resembles chipped-stone projectile points commonly found at ancient North American archeological sites, and it is bound with thongs onto an Ashwood shaft that appears to break through its supporting base. (ill. 30) Sioui splattered the arrow's tip with red acrylic paint to underscore the sculpture-installation's injurious potential, while a feather tied on a thong just below it may have fluttered as upward-looking viewers moved past. The simulated violence of Sioui's oversized weapon thus echoes the shrill warning of impending "hostility" that Harold Cardinal issued to Euro-North Americans in 1969.[209]

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[206]Sarain Stump, There Is My People Sleeping (Sidney: Grey's Publishing Ltd, 1970) n.p.
[207]Stump quoted in "Sarain Stump Artist-Poet," Saskatchewan Post Weekend Reader, Aug. 1973: 11.
[208]Sioui quoted in "Guy Sioui," The Native Perspective spring 1978: 72.
[209]Cardinal, 171.

A press release issued by the Royal Ontario Museum prior to *Canadian Indian Art 74*'s opening predicted that the show would, "dash even the most soft-spoken stereotyped misconceptions."[210] However, the small display of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century indigenous North American art organized by the ROM from its permanent collection (which viewers had to pass through before reaching Hill's selection) contradicted such an adamant intention and diminished the contemporary work's autonomy. The Toronto institution's reluctance to supersede the confines of its colonial scientific authority is conversely revealed in an overstatement of the show's modern context."Our visitor might ask himself --this is Canadian Indian art?...No birchbark canoes, beadwork belts, or 'cute' totem poles here."[211] Pat Dixon's 1973 miniature argillite carving, entitled *Totem,* and a full range of beaded apparel including belts by Doris Favell, Juliette Favell, and Rosemary Nothing contradicted the museum's press release and also disregarded the curator's emphasis on acknowledging temporal differences within contemporary indigenous North American cultural productions. The ROM's authority was tested by *Canadian Indian Art 74* as the institution struggled to define a temporary position between art and science. This terrain was made more ambiguous by the co-existence of tribal traditions alongside a new hybrid aesthetic which had the capacity for socio-political comment. "We know that the limits the institution places on potential language 'moves' are never established once and for all (even if they have been formerly defined)."[212]

Much of the media attention around *Canadian Indian Art 74*'s focussed on the painters of Aboriginal ancestry, and their role in fostering a nation-wide cultural community during the post-war era. James Hickman's 1975 article, "The quiet birth of the new Indian art," for the Imperial Oil Review noted Alex Janvier's contribution in bringing artists together, along with the "political" commentary evoked through his work.[213] Robert Houle is cited among the young painters showing promise, "who wish to express themselves through their Indian heritage and their place in western society."[214] Hence, the central practice in Canada's art-historical master narratives soon provided a window of entry for Aboriginal cultural difference within multiculturalism's officially sanctioned rhetoric. In his retrospective view on inter-tribal art community achievements from the 1960s to the 1980s for the

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[210]Royal Ontario Museum,"Press Release - Canadian Indian Art 74," 1974, DIAND Indian Art Centre files: 1.
[211]Ibid
[212]Lyotard, 17.
[213]James Hickman, "The quiet birth of the new Indian art," Imperial Oil Review summer 1975: 3.
[214]Ibid.

*Beyond History* exhibition catalogue, Hill emphasized how installation-based productions would come to facilitate a more radical space outside such mainstream accommodations."Guy Sioui was perhaps the first Native artist to mount an installation of what he referred to as 'une construction traditionelle' in a Canadian museum."[215] Physical presences from the past were beginning to be placed in an aesthetic confrontation with the present.

Inter-tribal Links

The *Indians of Canada* pavilion at *Expo 67* and *Canadian Indian Art 74* at the Royal Ontario Museum served to counter exclusive Euro-Canadian art-historical directives, while initiating personal and professional links between artists of Native ancestry. Art programs developed at Native-run post-secondary institutions in early 1970s served as more intensive meeting places for young and mid-career artists from across North America. The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College and Quebec's Manitou College are noted for nurturing a cross- tribal cultural pollenation, and training a new class of art-industry workers. Three publically sponsored conferences for artists of Native ancestry ( 1978, 1979, and 1983) were also critical to this growing solidarity, which culminated in the foundation of the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry.

In the 1940s, the ongoing failure of residential schools to assimilate Native children led the Christian orders who managed them to question their viability, while the federal government had always been dissatisfied with the escalating costs of residential and industrial schools.[216] As this brutal educational system was gradually phased out by the DIAND during the 1950s and 1960s (with the exception of a few schools that lasted until the late 1980s), Native children were enrolled in provincially run public schools. Unfortunately, the rate of secondary school graduates among Native students remained low as they were unable to relate to strictly Euro-centric curricula, and in 1967, only 200 status Indians were enrolled in university programs out of a total student population of over 60,000.[217] This situation was deemed unacceptable by Native leaders, including Harold Cardinal, who insisted that: "The Indian people must have total control over the education of their children."[218] By 1972, the Government of

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[215]Tom Hill and Karen Duffek, Beyond History (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1989) 9.
[216]McMillan, 329-331.
[217]James Marsh, ed. The Canadian Encyclopaedia (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1985) vol.II: 213-214.
[218]Cardinal, 60.

Canada's appalling record in delivering educational services to the First Nations obligated the DIAND to accept the National Indian Brotherhood's proposal "Indian Control of Indian Education." In 1975, fifty-three band councils were operating on-reserve schools funded by the DIAND. Federal sponsorship of post-secondary institutions administered by provincial Native political organizations also occurred during this time, resulting in the establishment of Native-run art programs at the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College in Saskatoon and Manitou College in La Macaza, Quebec.

In 1972, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians received a grant from the DIAND to establish a college in Saskatoon that would be affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College's objective was to: "create educational programs in such areas as history, philosophy, religion, art, literature, and the social sciences in order to help our young people develop a proud Indian identification."[219] Sarain Stump was hired by the college in December 1972 to set up a diploma program featuring instruction in drawing, painting, assemblage, collage, and handicrafts. Students also learned how to teach art, with the hope that they would go on to instruct Aboriginal youth across the province as well as pursue a teacher's certificate from the University of Saskatchewan's College of Education. Stump regularly called on elders and crafts people from local Aboriginal communities to impart their knowledge of indigenous North American world views and art techniques to students, while he continued to gather various tribal stories, ceremonies, and dances from "our older people."[220] Furthermore, classes in video and performance art exposed pupils to the most recent art-making practices emanating out of urban centres in Canada and the United States. Gerald McMaster, an aspiring artist and educator of Plains Cree ancestry from the Red Pheasant reservation in Saskatchewan, assisted Stump in developing the art program's curriculum which became known as 'Indart.' The program also included a crucial touring component that enabled Stump and McMaster to teach art to children in Native communities across the province. McMaster eventually became a central figure in promoting an inter-tribal identity for Canada, and his curatorial efforts are discussed in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

The difference between Western and North American aesthetic philosophies that Sarain Stump

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[219]Rodney Soonias, "Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College," (Saskatoon: Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, 1973) 6 .
[220]Stump, n.p.

imparted to students in the Indart program is summed up in his 1973 publication for the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, entitled Two Forms of Art. "We can maybe say that while European art traditionally tries to portray forms, American Indian art concentrates most in reproducing feelings and ideas."[221] Perhaps, *The Pain of the Indian*'s emotive human face and organic as well as synthetic element combinations can be considered an early hybrid of such disparate traditions. Local settings or situations were a critical source of intellectual, spiritual, and material inspiration for Stump, who encouraged his pupils to bring forward the "closeness to nature" of tribal arts.[222] The artist-poet created an illustrated guide to accompany his discussion of Indian art, which includes Hopi pottery images and Cree quill work designs. (ill. 31) Ceremonial arts were also central to Indart's focus on retracing and reinventing ancient relationships between humans and their environments. During the spring of 1974, Stump travelled with a group of his students to the Moose Woods reservation in North Dakota, where they performed the deer dance, round dance, and scalp dance in an open field. (ill. 32) Dressed in hide clothing with beadwork and carrying drums, spears, and rattles they had made in classes over the winter, this group immersed themselves in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ritual acts of the Great Plains. Stump later entitled this event "Ancient Mobiles" for a photographic documentary-and-prose piece in Tawow magazine. "Today we can look at some of these objects through the glass of museum cases and admire their colours, design compositions and volumes, too often unaware of the fact that here they are perfectly still, while in the mind of their makers they had been conceived as mobile art."[223] Edward Poitras, a young artist of mixed Métis and Plains Cree ancestry from Regina, was among the Indart students who participated in *Ancient Mobiles*. Stump's art and teachings influenced Poitras' turn to installation-based practices as a means of fusing various tribal art traditions, while looking to Western avant-garde aesthetics.

The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College's objectives were similar to those of Manitou College in La Macaza, Quebec, which provided a unique type of training for Aboriginal students from across Canada between 1972 and 1976. This innovative school received funding through the DIAND's Cultural Education Centres Program, whose activities focussed on language training, history, and the development of educational materials. Manitou College was also integrated into Quebec's Centre

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[221]Sarain Stump, "Two Forms of Art," (Saskatoon: Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, 1973) n.p.
[222]Ibid.
[223]Sarain Stump,"Ancient Mobiles," Tawow fall 1974: 3.

d'Enseignement Général et d'Education Permanente system, while the Indians of Quebec Association served as its principal administrative authority. Robert Houle, a young painter and art-education student at McGill University, was contracted to produce a feasibility study for the creation of an arts program at the new post-secondary institution. He visited the Institute of American Indian Arts in Sante Fe, New Mexico, and recommended adopting a comparable curriculum for La Macaza which would emphasize the reinterpretation of indigenous North American art traditions according to modern contexts.[224] In 1972, Manitou College began offering a three-year program in Native Arts and Communications that: "encouraged artists not only to address issues of political and social relevance, but also gain a deeper understanding of traditional spiritualism."[225]

Domingo Cisneros, an artist of mixed Tepehuane and Métis ancestry, was hired by Manitou College in 1974, to serve as head of Native Arts and Communications. From 1959 to 1961, he studied in the Faculty of Architecture and the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at Mexico's University of Nuevo Leon. Cisneros then enrolled in the University of Mexico's Cinematographic Studies program from 1963 to 1966, however by 1969, he was forced to seek refuge in Canada due to his leftist political activities.[226] Prior to his employment at the college, the artist began investigating the cultural traditions of Woodland Cree and Algonquin peoples in Quebec through the study of local museum collections and by visiting reserves where he talked "to the old people about how they did things."[227] At the college, the Mexican Métis artist communicated this cross-tribal information-gathering to students via courses in ritual arts which emphasized a knowledge of life forces known as 'manitou'. Guy Sioui, who was not officially registered at the school, participated in pipe-making classes and attended seminars given by local elders on ceremonial traditions.[228] Cisneros also designed a class that entailed living in the woods near La Macaza for an extended period of time. "I opened a course for survival in the bush, sort of a shamanistic type of thing, spiritual. We invited medicine men and went into the sweat lodges. And fasting in the woods, the wilderness."[229] As a student in the Native Arts and Communications

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[224]Bruce Bernstein,"Context for the Growth and Development of the Indian Art World in the 1960s and 1970s," in W.J. Rushing, ed., Native American Art of the Twentieth Century (London: Routledge, 1999) 57-71.
[225]Hill and Duffek, 9-10.
[226]Diana Nemiroff, "Artists" in Diana Nemiroff et al, Land, Spirit, Power: The First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada 1992) 128.
[227]Cisneros quoted in Ted Lindberg, "Art Form Critical of Society," Leftwords fall 1979: 12.
[228]Hill and Duffek, 9.
[229]Cisneros quoted in Lindberg, 13.

program at Manitou College in 1976, Edward Poitras used such experiences to produce spaces of hybrid spiritual awareness.

The first National Native Artists Conference in the fall of 1978 was hosted by the Ojibway Cultural Centre on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, and jointly organized by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Secretary of State. David General, a sculptor of Mohawk ancestry and head of the DIAND's Cultural Affairs Department, stated in his opening remarks for the conference that its purpose was to "create lines of communication between artists across Canada."[230] Among the more established artists in attendance was Alex Janvier, who questioned the federal government's authority to guide cultural initiatives by First Nations people and made artists cognizant of their combined professional and social obligations."I think we have a commitment to ourselves as artists, to our tribes and to Indian people in general." [231] The second National Native Artists Conference took place in 1979 at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in Regina which, two years earlier, had evolved out of the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College. Topics of debate were similar to those of the previous conference and included: "museums vs. galleries, traditional vs. contemporary, and ethnology vs. art history."[232] The Manitoulin and Regina events ultimately led to the proposed creation of the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry (SCANA) at the third conference held in 1983 at 'Ksan, British Columbia.

SCANA was formally incorporated in 1985 with start-up funds from the DIAND, and the new collective's mandate was "to improve the recognition and representation of contemporary Canadian art by artists of Native Indian ancestry."[233] The society lobbied public galleries and museums in Canada to begin the process of rewriting collection and exhibition policies that acknowledged the importance of work created by contemporary artists of Native ancestry. Perhaps the most tangible result of such efforts was the participation of representatives from the National Gallery of Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, and the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, in the fourth National Native Indian Artists Symposium. During this event,

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[230]General quoted in "Manitoulin '78 the art conference," The Native Perspective winter 1978: 47.
[231]Janvier quoted in "Manitoulin '78 the art conference," The Native Perspective winter 1978: 48.
[232]David General, "Would It Carry More Weight If It Were Written In Stone?" Artscraft summer-fall 1989: 31.
[233]"SCANA Takes Control," Artscraft winter 1989: 16.

held at Alberta's University of Lethbridge in the summer of 1987, SCANA members held such public institutions accountable for their role in marginalizing and misinterpreting the arts of the First Nations. The society also impressed upon the public servants in attendance a need for immediate reparations.[234] Edward Poitras, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Carl Beam, Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, and Bob Boyer were the key artists at the Lethbridge symposium, as they represented a generation of professionally trained artists whose work had gained recognition in artist-run, university, public, and private galleries. Carl Beam, a painter of Objiwa ancestry from Manitoulin Island, was the most critically acclaimed and commercially successful artist on the panel. He made the following demand for the consideration of cultural productions in First Nations communities during twentieth century. "The manufacture of that piece of work uses all the operatives of my ancestors at any time in their history. 500...years ago, 1,000...10,000...it doesn't really matter! I'm here! I'm interpreting my reality....If you can understand that then you can see me as a Native Artist with a larger mandate for the people that I paint for, including myself."[235]

## Indian Art and First Nations Art History

The term Indian art is linked to the Government of Canada's post-war cultural initiatives, particularly those taken by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's Cultural Affairs Division from 1966 onward. This DIAND agency's mandate to promote both arts and crafts was dominated by various marketing strategies that treated cultural productions primarily as national commodities. In the early 1980s, the Cultural Affairs Division had also assumed the role of an arts granting body as well as an art bank, while Native-run organizations struggled to secure control over public funding for the promotion of arts and crafts. The art history of the First Nations in Canada during the post-war era is thus intertwined with the DIAND's directives, as demonstrated in Olive Patricia Dickason's 1972, federally sponsored publication, Indian Arts in Canada. Barry Lord's 1974 text, The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art, then represents the first national survey to consider First Nations arts as equal in value to those of Euro-Canada. The ongoing revision of Canada's art-historical master narratives in the 1980s was taken up by a collective of editors and writers who issued Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada. This 1983 cross-sectional overview featured works by Alex Janvier,

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[234]see Alfred Young Man, ed., Networking: The Fourth National Native Indian Artists Symposium (Lethbridge: University of Southern Alberta, 1988) 8-20.
[235]Beam quoted in Young Man, 85.

Daphne Odjig, Sarain Stump, and Bill Reid, as Aboriginal identities are considered vital to the project of expanding Canada's cultural context.

In 1949, the Government of Canada established a Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, headed by Vincent Massey. Massey's 1951 report recommended that the federal government take an active role in supporting the cultural and scientific activities of Canadians through an arms-length funding agency. With the subsequent establishment of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1957, artists, galleries, and museums gained access to public funding; however the future Governor General's findings made only a fleeting reference to the cultural worth of the First Nations. Conversely, Audrey and Harry Hawthorn's 1950 Report of Contemporary Art of the Canadian Indian, which the Royal Commission contracted, suggested that Indians were capable of re-establishing their contribution to Canadian art.[236] Responsibility for such artistic recuperation was eventually delegated to the DIAND, and it established a Cultural Affairs section in 1964, with a mandate to "promote and facilitate the development of various forms of Indian cultural expression in the arts, arrange for scholarships and assist in the organization of Indian art exhibitions."[237] The Indian Art Centre was created the following year to document the new section's support of artists, exhibitions, and programs, as well as to administer to the DIAND's growing art collection. As mentioned in Chapter II, the Cultural Affairs section guided the *Indians of Canada* pavilion's genesis, and Alex Janvier played an important role in establishing a sovereign voice for the First Nations at *Expo 67*. In his capacity as an arts-and-crafts consultant for the DIAND from 1965 to 1967, Janvier also expanded the Indian Art Centre's collection of paintings and sculptures, while encouraging young artists to produce "individualistic" work.[238] In 1969, the DIAND established the Indian Eskimo Economic Development Branch, and it set in motion a five-year Indian arts-and-crafts marketing plan administered by the Central Marketing Service (CMS).

The CMS purchased both arts and crafts in bulk from reserve communities across Canada at wholesale prices, and then re-distributed works ranging from moccasins to prints to retail outlets run by Native

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[236]Audrey and Harry Hawthorn, "Report on Contemporary Art of the Canadian Indian," Royal Commission on National Development in Arts, Letters, and Sciences, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1950) 17.
[237]K.D. Uppal, A Review and Analysis of the Cultural Development Division (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1973) 10.
[238]Janvier quoted in "Indian Artist Has New Post," Edmonton Journal Sept. 24, 1965:10.

and non-Native entrepreneurs. During the 1970s, this service agency also reintroduced the stretched-beaver-pelt symbol, originally used by the DIAND in the 1960s, to authenticate a limited-edition print series featuring images by Alex Janvier, Norval Morrisseau, Daphne Odjig, and Jackson Beardy. The actual rubber stamping of art led these artists and others to found the Professional Native Indian Artists Incorporated, which objected to the mass marketing of Indian art for Euro-Canadian buyers. Meanwhile, the Cultural Affairs section continued to build its collection as well as administer grants to artists and institutions, including direct funding to exhibitions such as *Canadian Indian Art 74*, *Stardusters,* and *Beyond History.*

By 1975, the Canadian Indian Marketing Service (CIMS) replaced the CMS, taking control of over $400,000.00 worth of inventory which had been accumulated since the 1960s. The CIMS attempted to secure Native input and approval for their operations through the National Indian Arts Council, which featured Tom Hill, Alex Janvier, Jackson Beardy, and Bill Reid. This council was disbanded on short notice in 1977 because its objectives regularly conflicted with those of the Canadian Indian Marketing Service.[239] The following year, the Canadian Indian Marketing Service was dissolved by the federal government and its stock sold off. Thereafter, the promotion of arts and crafts was taken up by the National Indian Arts and Crafts Corporation (NIACC), a non-profit Indian-run body that received funding from the DIAND, the Native Citizens Directorate, the Secretary of State, and private foundations. In 1989, NIACC began publishing Artscraft, a quarterly magazine mandated to facilitate communication between arts-and-crafts people, as well as heighten the profile of "contemporary Native cultural expression."[240] The appearance of this periodical therefore denotes yet another instance when an inter-tribal body successfully cut into the DIAND's superstructure.

First Nations art discourse in Canada extends back to the neo-colonial collusions of art historians, anthropologists, and political leaders. Consequently, if new national narratives were to re-emerge in the 1970s, it would necessitate rejecting nineteenth-century concepts that treated "Indian Art" as a timeless phenomenon.[241] Unfortunately, the DIAND's post war-efforts to create a market for Indian arts and crafts would only veil such modern Western prejudices. Perhaps the most germane example

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[239]Tom Hill, "A Retrospect of Indian Art," The Native Perspective spring 1978: 37.
[240]Claudette Fortin,"From the Editor's Desk,"Artscraft summer, 1989: 4.
[241]see Forster, 347-367.

of this problematic link between methodology and economic interests can be found in Olive Patricia Dickason's 1972 publication, Indian Arts in Canada. Dickason, an academic of Métis ancestry, was contracted by the DIAND to write an art history intended for "persons engaged in the buying and selling of Indian arts and artifacts." [242] The introduction to this governmentally financed book sets out a polarizing task for contemporary artists of Native ancestry."Canada's Indian artist is faced with the necessity of making a decision: should he accept his own culture as the wellspring for his inspiration, or should he assimilate into Western culture and express his creativity in art forms that give no indication of his particular cultural background?"[243] Dickason's isolation of Aboriginal North American and Western-European aesthetics in Canada effectively denies over five-hundred years of cultural exchange, while setting an impossible standard for cultural purity in the present. This criterion echoes the levels of acculturation assigned to tribal peoples across Canada by the anthropologist Diamond Jenness, who used such racist measurements to predict the amount of time before their inevitable demise in the late-twentieth century.

Dickason's first chapter, "The Setting, and Some Early Impressions," offers a comparative timetable for the appreciation of Native cultural evocations according to developments in Europe, and it begins in the twelfth century B.C. with Greek murals and concludes in the nineteenth century with sculpture by the Parisian artist August Rodin. This diametrical approach to artistic practices precipitates the next chapter's violence, as "Two Worlds Collide" makes no account for the co-dependant relationship between Western European imperial objectives and the eventual subjection of the First Nations to foreign rule. The "European cultural tidal wave" therefore represents an apolitical and amoral force that must by necessity consume weaker cultures.[244] However, Dickason is unable to maintain the textual separation of Indian and Western arts throughout, allowing for the fact that Native art forms during colonial times were "sometimes interwoven with the new forms" introduced from France and England.[245] Chapter three, entitled "Passionate Observers," assures buyers that such passive contaminations "do not affect the 'Indianness' of the finished product."[246] Therefore, the numerous pre-twentieth-century works reproduced in chapters one through three, most of which are from the

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[242]Tom Hill, "Introduction" in Olive Patricia Dickason, Indian Arts in Canada, (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1972) 6.
[243]Dickason, 3.
[244]Dickason, 44.
[245]Ibid, 38.
[246]Ibid, 74.

National Museum of Man's collection, provide readers with an opportunity to visually authenticate the post-war items catalogued in the final two chapters.

In chapter four, "Readjustment and Rebirth," the author urges contemporary artists of Native ancestry to address the "problem of bridging the gap between the world of yesterday and the world of today," and find a "new *raison d'etre*" for their work.[247] She then downplays the most radical artistic shift to occur in tribal communities across Canada during the post-war era, as only five paintings of the traditional oil-on-canvas format are reproduced among the thirty eight works featured in the final two chapters. In the fifth chapter, "Coming to Terms," the author makes a superficial reference to the "unforseen consequences" of the Potlatch ban.[248] However, she makes no mention of the federal government's responsibility for such attempts at cultural genocide. This strategy effectively distances current "Indian art styles" from any connection to modern Euro-Canadian assimilative directives, including the Trudeau government's failed 1969 'white paper' on Indian policy. Furthermore, Alex Janvier's practice is described as lacking cultural relevance because it supposedly "eschewed both Indian style and subjects."[249] His prominent 287 Indian status number signature on *Little Britches Rodeo*, an 1966 oil-on-board reproduced from the DIAND's collection, is a symbolic affront to Western neo-colonialism that Dickason seems to purposefully evade. Thus, the author empties twentieth-century First Nations art history of a growing inter-tribal trend in which Western art formats were infused with new Aboriginal identities. Perhaps such art's emerging demands for socio-politcal change illustrated a threat that the DIAND was unprepared to face.

Barry Lord's History of Painting in Canada: Towards a People's Art is the only national survey text to begin with an art history of the First Nations and Inuit; establishing a contemporary context for works by Norval Morrisseau, Allen Sapp, and Ashevak Kenojuack. Issued in 1974 by New Canada Press, the Canadian Liberation Movement's publishing arm, this book calls out to patriotic Canadian, Québecois, and Native peoples for a new art that breaks with colonialism's legacies in North America. In the first chapter, entitled "Painting of the Native Peoples," works ranging from ancient pictographs rendered by unknown Ojibwa shaman-artists in northern Ontario to a buffalo-hide painting created by

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[247]Ibid, 91.
[248]Ibid, 113.
[249]Dickason, 95.

an elderly Sarci warrior in 1929, offer examples of "an art of the people."[250] The author's Maoist sentiments then lead him to emphasize how such artistic endeavours reflect "the struggle for production, that pitted tribes against nature as well as imperial rulers from France, Britain, the United States, and Canada."[251] Nineteenth-century painting, carving, and weaving traditions on the Northwest Coast are described according to indigenous social class and property systems. The decline of such heraldic arts in the early-twentieth century is attributed to Euro-Canadian "oppressors," as Lord chastises the federal government and Christian missionaries for conspiring to destroy tribes.[252] He also holds the Royal Ontario Museum and the National Museum of Man morally accountable for Kwakiutl works in their holdings that were confiscated during a Potlatch raid executed by Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Alert Bay, B.C. in 1922. The Dominion's despotic past was catching up with its liberal present, as organizations including the National Indian Brotherhood were effectively stirring the collective conscience of Euro-Canadians through the 1970s.

The Ojibwa Warriors Society's 1964 occupation of Anicnabe Park near Kenora, and a current confrontation between the Province of Quebec and the Cree peoples over the James Bay hydro-electric project are cited by Lord as political struggles that can feed a cultural renewal. In the late 1980s, this author's prophetic words were realized through installation practices, as selected artists produced urgent responses to increasingly violent clashes between Canadian authorities and the First Nations. Norval Morrisseau's legend-based paintings are then used by Lord to represent another facet of Native cultural potential which entails the re-establishment of a lost history. This innovative art historian is reluctant to embrace such contemporary work because he sees it as lacking a "material or social base."[253] Soapstone carvings, lithographic prints, and drawings created by Inuit artists also serve to maintain ancient belief systems in the Canadian arctic. From the 1950s onward, these practices were gradually exploited by the federal government via economic subsidies to a point where Lord claims they became an empty form of "cultural nationalism."[254] Public funding for the arts is thus a subtle means for gaining control over the Inuit and First Nations, while denying them the political power to regain their sovereignty and stolen lands. The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art's

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[250]Barry Lord, The History of Painting in Canada: Toward a People's Art (Toronto: NC Press, 1974) 9.
[251]Ibid, 11.
[252]Ibid, 17.
[253]Ibid, 19.
[254]Ibid, 20.

narrative poignancy as related to Native peoples therefore lies in its deliberate breach of Canadian arthistory's exclusive methodology, combined with the ambiguous terrain, aesthetic pitfalls, and socio-political potential that the author lays out for future Native artists.

The National Museum of Man started to address the problematic context of its overwhelming authority over Native peoples' cultural patrimony through the 1977 creation of a permanent curatorial post devoted to contemporary Indian art. Robert Houle, who graduated with a Bachelor of Education from McGill University in 1975, had just begun to show his paintings at public and commercial galleries in Central Canada when the NMM hired him for this new position. In 1978, Houle wrote an essay for The Native Perspective, a Native-run quarterly published by the National Association of Friendship Centres in Ottawa. His essay in the newly established periodical uses the paintings of Alex Janvier to examine a significant gap in the nation's identity. In "Alex Janvier: 20th century native symbols & images," Houle opens by commending the NMM for opening a long overdue dialogue between Canadian Indians and Euro-Canadians through its expanded mandate. He claims these two peoples "Both somehow have remained and have developed intellectually separate from one another for over four hundred years."[255] Art as a form of communication can thus be employed to bridge this rational divide, and for Houle, the paintings of Alex Janvier represent an innovative blend of Native awareness and Western traditions. However, access to redefining Canada's identity is also contingent on rejecting the bi-cultural master narrative that was lauded at *Expo 67*. "One characteristic of the Native perspective is the irrelevance of the technical argument of Canada's two founding groups, i.e., the English and the French. The moment has arrived to develop a new combination using Native sensibilities and western tradition."[256] In 1980, Houle resigned from his post at the NMM, claiming the institution refused to abandon an anthropological approach to the collecting and programming of contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry.[257] The possibility of a nationally sanctioned place for First Nations art and discourses in Canada appeared to have experienced a false start.

A growing discontent with the pervasiveness of Canadian art history's master narrative model inspired co-editors Robert Bringhurst, Geoffrey James, Russell Keziere, and Doris Shadbolt to assemble

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[255]Robert Houle, "Alex Janvier: Twentieth Century Native Symbols and Images," The Native Perspective fall 1978: 16.
[256]Ibid.
[257]Victoria Henry, "Breaking the Bonds of History," Artscraft summer 1990: 24

Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada in 1983. This publication examines post-war art from a thematic perspective that breaks with the national art survey texts discussed thus far. Its collective discourse purports "a synoptic, pluralist view on the diversity and vigour of contemporary art in Canada."[258] However, such an altruistic goal does not supersede the overarching English-Canadian standard evident in each essay; particularly with regard to the treatment of artistic developments among the First Nations. Terrence Heath, a playwright, poet, and critic from Saskatoon, attempts to gauge the reactions of selected artists to physical and psychological settings in "A Sense of Place." Such a long-standing art-historical concern in Canada may account for his regurgitation of the "deux nations" concept; a decidedly anti-Native political and cultural position considered irrelevant by post-war writers ranging from Harold Cardinal to Robert Houle.[259] Furthermore, Heath's attempt to incorporate Native sensibilities are prefaced by discussions of the Vancouver painter, Jack Shadbolt's "transformations of the Indian spirit world," and Toronto sculptor Liz Magor's "totems of a contemporary kind."[260] Upon discussing Bill Reid's 1980 *Raven and the First Men*, from the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology's collection, Heath adamantly states that the artist of Haida ancestry's work is: "clearly a piece of gallery sculpture."[261] Ironically, the author then turns to the Vancouver-based anthropologist Wilson Duff for a quotation to confirm the art-historical value of Reid's carvings.

Charlotte Townsend-Gault, a curator, anthropologist, and authority on Kwakiutl art, offers a more tenable place for work by artists of Native ancestry in Canada. Her essay in Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada, "Redefining the Role," explores how some artists invest their respective practices with overt socio-political co-ordinates as a means of self-definition. Alberta-born painter William Kurelek's art is said to conjure up a rural Ukrainian immigrant experience on the prairies in the1950s, while Ontario artist, Jamelie Hassan's objects evoke the state of Argentinian refugees in exile from that nation's military junta during the 1970s.[262] Her discussion then shifts to a focus on the collective dilemma faced by Alex Janvier, Daphne Odjig, Norval Morrisseau, and Sarain Stump."Consequently the role of the native artist in Canada today extends from the preservation of traditional culture - bringing artists' talents to bear on traditional forms for traditional purposes - to the task of identifying

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[258]Robert Bringhurst et al., edts., Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1983) 9.
[259]Terrence Heath, "A Sense of Place," in Bringhurst et al., 41.
[260]Ibid, 69 , 70.
[261]Ibid, 76.
[262]Charlotte Townsend-Gault, "Redefining the Role," in Bringhurst et al., 131, 141.

new images relevant to their people in a changing world."[263] The problematics of traditional art are further equated with carving as well as printmaking among the Northwest Coast tribes, as works by Robert Davidson, Joe David, and Lyle Wilson seem to be granted only a tentative Canadian context. Fortunately, the author does accurately note the endemic "anger, frustration, and despair" of the First Nations' current socio-political situation in Canada, with regard to how Stump and Janvier evoke such emotions through their art.[264]

It was almost decade after the issue of Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada before the National Gallery fully recognized the rise of a hybrid indigenous North American and Western European aesthetic in Canada. The tide of Canadian art history had only begun to shift with the appearance of The History of Painting in Canada: Towards a People's Art in 1973, and the perpetuation of exclusionary survey discourses through the 1980s is noted in Chapter IV. Early contributions to First Nations art-history by Tom Hill and Robert Houle are thus critical to this study as they convey a direct involvement in stories that they write.

*New Work By A New Generation*

"I would like to suggest that a group of us malcontents get together and perform the sacred ritual of the Dadaists for the origin of a new name. We will choose a new language that nobody can identify with and we will purchase a dictionary for it. We will shoot an arrow at this dictionary and the word upon which the tip of the arrow touches will be our new name. This will give us freedom because nobody will know what to expect."[265]

This statement by Edward Poitras in the *New Work By A New Generation* catalogue, indicated a growing frustration among certain young artists of Native ancestry in Canada. The aesthetic limitations prescribed by official Indian art narratives were at the nexus of their lament, as underlined by curator Robert Houle in his essay for this 1982 show at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina. Paintings, sculptures, and assemblages by sixteen artists from across Canada and the United States were assembled for the exhibition, which was a co-operative venture between the gallery, the Indian

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[263]Ibid, 151.
[264]Ibid.
[265]Poitras quoted in Robert Houle, New Work By A New Generation (Regina: Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1983) 63.

Federated College, and the World Assembly of First Nations.[266] The show also functioned as a cultural component for the Assembly's international meeting of indigenous leaders in Regina that summer, and was officially opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne of Great Britain. In her catalogue foreword, the gallery's director, Carol Phillips, underlines the need for corrective Euro-North American discourses. "Although the purpose of the exhibition is to look only at younger Indian artists, the selection of pieces was made in terms of contemporary judgements and not ethnographic values."[267]

Robert Houle's curatorial essay "The Emergence of a New Aesthetic Tradition," describes the conditions from which the selected artists had emerged, and how they negotiate the differences between North American and Western European aesthetic traditions. The problems of paternalistic support and anthropological reading are common pitfalls which in Houle's opinion threaten to relegate the works in question to a position outside the art gallery environment. Through their respective art school experiences each of the exhibiting artists has acquired an individual "plastic language" that is inherently cross-cultural.[268] Educational factors also help to explain a shift away from conventional tribal vocabularies such as those used by carvers on the Northwest Coast, or the constantly recycled cosmological imagery of self-taught artists like Norval Morrisseau and the Woodland School painters he inspired. Houle cites the work of two post war New York artists who influenced his practice as a painter, however this artistic terrain is reversed in his curatorial role through a discussion of how indigenous North American arts have informed these same leaders of Western modernism.[269] Jackson Pollock's method of painting on the floor is revealed as indebted to Navajo sand painting rituals, while Barnett Newman's strategies for undermining pictorial concepts of Western beauty are related to his interest in indigenous carving and graphic traditions on the Northwest Coast.[270]

The artists in *New Work By A New Generation* are honoured by the curator for their collective contribution to: "the reconstruction of cultural and spiritual values eroded by faceless bureaucracy and

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[266]In 1977 the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College moved from Saskatoon to Regina and was transformed into a Bachelor of Fine Arts program at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College which was associated with the University of Regina.
[267]Carol Phillips, "Foreword," in Houle, 1.
[268]Houle, 3.
[269]Marie-Jeanne Musiol, "Houle and the Ojibway leaves," The Native Perspective spring 1978: 21.
[270]Houle, 3.

atheistic technology."[271] Houle's contempt simultaneously refers to the racist directives of Canada's Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as well as America's Bureau of Indian Affairs, but he also places a responsibility for addressing humanity's sufferings in the late-twentieth century with the selected artists. Such a link between political activism and cultural expression among oppressed peoples is reminiscent of Frantz Fanon's claim for the building of national cultures among oppressed peoples. "We believe that the conscious and organized undertaking by a colonized people to re-establish the sovereignty of that nation constitutes the most complete and obvious cultural manifestation that exists...This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others."[272]

In 1980, the National Indian Brotherhood transformed itself into the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), and the new organization successfully lobbied the federal government to have provisions for Aboriginal peoples' rights included in Canada's repatriated Constitution Act of 1982.[273] The most vehement opposition to the proposed enshrinement of this privilege in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms came from the premiers of the Western provinces, an indication that Aboriginal empowerment had yet to be fully accepted by Euro-Canadians.[274] This lack of political currency among non-Native leaders parallels Houle's lament regarding the reluctance of patrons to invest in the "new aesthetic" on display at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, for fear that it was not "a genuine indigenous expression."[275]

Robert Houle's selection of Domingo Cisneros and Edward Poitras for *New Work by A New Generation* underlined the importance of their shared contact with Manitou College which, by 1976, had become a hotbed of "Indian nationalism."[276] The re-authorization of both materials and themes derived from nineteenth-century Aboriginal sources was central to the multi-media practices of these two artists. Their respective creations at this 1982 group show also served to offset the predominance of paintings and drawings, while marking a direct aesthetic progression from Stump's and Sioui's works in *Canadian Indian Art 74*. Hence, the gradual adoption of installation-based practices by a

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[271]Ibid.
[272]Fanon, 245-246.
[273]Aboriginal is defined as Indian, Inuit, and Métis in the Constitution Act, 1982: chap.15, sec.1.
[274]Miller, 236-240.
[275]Houle, 4.
[276]Tom Hill, "A Retrospect of Indian Art," The Native Perspective spring 1978: 37.

select group of artists in Canada is shown to be conditioned by an inter-tribal experience.

Domingo Cisneros (b. 1942) continued to reside in La Macaza after Manitou College's unexpected closing in 1976, and the surrounding Laurentian forest served as the wellspring for his art. The artist's 1980 work, *As Cultures Pass By,* in the Regina show was constructed from birch slabs, ash, babiche, rabbit fur, bear and moose bones, and cow tails. (ill .33) As a hunter-scavenger artist, Cisneros creates an assemblage directly linking art to nature, while the techniques of his practice range from tanning hides to making cedar oil. His combinations of both wild and domesticated animal parts acknowledge a Western European existence on the North American landscape. Such a subtle contrast between the continental origins of organic elements thus ties his work to Sarain Stump's, with regard to the American-born artist's use of a buffalo robe painted on split sheepskin for *The Pain of the Indian.* Cisneros' elaborate snowshoes also relate to his teachings at Manitou College, where students learned how to reproduce ancient Native technology including modes of transportation, weaponry, architecture, and clothing.[277] The display of such footwear in a striding position on the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery's wall, combined with the artist's substitution of moose bones for feet, invoked the existence of a physically incomplete being suspended between life and death. This ambiguity can be read as pertaining to the ongoing alienation of Aboriginal peoples by Euro-North American society, and the simultaneous advancement among Native peoples in developing post-colonial cultural resistance movements. Such enigmatic circumstances are further defined by Cisneros in his artist's statement for *New Work by A New Generation.* "There is no name for this kind of art as yet. Due to the nature of the materials, there is an immediate tendency to label it 'primitive' or 'ethnic.' It is neither of these. The origins of all of us, physical and artistic, lie in nature. I think a bear, or a bird, is as contemporary and as cross-cultural as an automobile."[278]

The most innovative work in *New Work By A New Generation* was Edward Poitras' *Stars in Sand,* as it invited viewers to witness a highly charged spiritual space. (ill. 34) Dated June 1982, this installation was created just prior to the exhibition's official opening on July 9th, and occupied a room separate from the other works in the show. Poitras' materials included stones, ribbons, plexi-glass, canvas, cheese cloth, fibre-fill, an old army stretcher, electric fans, strobe lights, and a tape-recording.

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[277]Cisneros quoted in Lindberg, 13.
[278]Cisneros quoted in Houle, 23.

The stage-like setting of *Stars in Sand* began on the floor with a ring of stones, some of which were randomly spread both inside and outside of its loosely defined parameters. Suspended from the ceiling just above the stone ring was an oversized shirt fashioned from cheese-cloth, whose form mimicked that of garments worn by men for the Ghost Dance ceremonies on the Great Plains during the late-nineteenth century. Hanging off the replicated shirt's outstretched arms were various lengths of coloured ribbon, which fluttered in the breeze produced by two electric fans on the floor below. An old army stretcher secured to the ceiling, supported two large sheets of plexi-glass that hung down just above the floor on either side of the opaque garment and stone circle. Painted onto the surface of each sheet, as though transposed onto the shirt, were silhouettes of soaring eagles. Along the entire top length of both sheets, where they met the ceiling, were painted silhouettes of giant eagles in profile, hovering within a mass of spotted strato-cumulus clouds and looking down onto the space below. Located below one of the giant bird's neck's and affixed to the shirt's surface was a morning or daybreak star, and this symbol is regularly found on hide paintings and shirts used in the Ghost Dance as well as the Sun Dance .(ill. 35) The artist spread fibre-fill among the rocks on the floor, and stuffed it along the top of the stretcher just below the ceiling in a metaphoric continuation of the painted clouds. Finally, strobe lights flashed, while the sounds of thunder resonated through the small room occupied by *Stars in Sand* in the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery over the summer of 1982.

*Stars in Sand* was undoubtedly related to the Regina-born artist's contact with both Sarain Stump and Domingo Cisneros; more specifically, on the emphasis of their teachings on using visions and dreams as a source for artistic production.[279] Poitras' circle is the most obvious reference to a "visionary symbol," that Houle describes in the exhibition catalogue essay as central to much of "traditional North American Indian art."[280] The stones and fibre-fill scattered outside this shape's outline also suggested an action-in-progress; further emphasized by the upward diagonal flight of the eagle silhouettes around the replicated Ghost Dance shirt. Viewer's looking through this layered work might have considered the prospect of a human-like entity ascending from the stone circle on the ground into the thundering sky scene occupied by the giant spotted eagle. Such static elements gained theatrical effect via the fans, strobe lights, and thunder sounds which ultimately placed the space in a perpetual

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[279]Poitras quoted in Robert Enright, "The Incomparable Rightness of In Between," Border Crossings fall 1995: 30.
[280]Houle, 4.

state of visual and auditory sensation.

Poitras' interest in the prophecies of Black Elk, an Oglala Sioux visionary born in the mid- nineteenth century, help explain the installation's action.[281] In the Sioux prophet's "Great Vision," which occurred in the 1860s when American and Canadian military forces were attempting to exterminate the nomadic nations of the Great Plains, the six powers of the world revealed themselves to him. The story begins with Black Elk facing west, a position indicative of a thunder vision which prepares a person to become a warrior. Each of the powers, who take the form of human grandfathers with transformative capacities, then approach him offering their respective strengths as well as advice and power objects. For example, the third grandfather from the East, where the sun shines continually, gives Black Elk the daybreak star and peace pipe to encourage wisdom. The fifth grandfather, representing the spirit of the sky, grants him the ability to watch over the people. "He stretched his arms and turned into a spotted eagle hovering...You shall go across the earth with my power."[282] The sixth grandfather, representing the spirit of the earth, follows with a warning about the future."My boy, have courage, for my power shall be yours, and you shall need it, for your nation on the earth will have great troubles."[283] Throughout Black Elk's prophecy, the Sioux nation is referenced by a hoop. Hence, it would appear that the suspended ritual space produced by Poitras was one of metaphysical transformation based on the "Great Vison," as he invites viewers to witness the spiritual process of a dancing entity gaining power for the protection of Aboriginal nationhood.

Edward Poitras' reiteration of Aboriginal spiritual beliefs is intimately tied to twentieth-century Western avant-garde aesthetics. His aversion to the term 'Indian art' in the *New Work By a New Generation* catalogue was extracted from a letter he sent to the curator Houle, and it reveals an appreciation of Western Europe's anti-art traditions. "The word Dada was accidentally discovered by Hugo Ball and myself in a German-French dictionary, as we were looking for a name for Madame le Roy, the chanteuse at our cabaret. Dada is French for wooden horse. It is impressive in its brevity and suggestiveness. Soon Dada became the signboard for all the art that we launched in the Cabaret

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[281]Curtis J. Collins, "Black Horse Offerings: An Interview with Edward Poitras," Artscraft winter 1991: 27.
[282]John Neihardt, ed., Black Elk Speaks 1932 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961) 29.
[283]Neihardt, 30.

Voltaire."[284] This movement originated out of Zurich, Switzerland during the First World War, and its adherents rejected the manner in which Western society treated painting and sculpture as a commodity. Marcel Duchamp was a leading proponent of Dada's revolutionary concepts, and his manipulations of domestic and industrial objects for gallery settings had a profound impact on the development of installation art in North America. The French artist's work served to guide Poitras' choices of both materials and contexts for years to come.[285] Fibre-fill, plexi-glass, cheese-cloth, an old army stretcher, fans, audio equipment, and strobe lights were therefore placed in a somewhat contradictory function of reproducing a non-Western spiritual space.

*Stars in Sand* can thus be viewed as constantly wavering between the aesthetic poles of Western Europe's most radical twentieth-century development and what will be demonstrated later as the closing moment in a hybrid nineteenth-century North American tradition on the Great Plains. Houle considers Poitras' construction of this temporary state for *New Work By A New Generation* according to a larger "trans-cultural" phenomenon among the selected artists, whose personal experiences do not preclude "tribal" considerations.[286] Such a precarious cultural situation was well beyond the unsullied qualities that official Indian art had demanded in 1972. "Canada's Indian artist is faced with the necessity of making a decision: should he accept his own culture as the wellspring for his inspiration, or should he assimilate into Western culture and express his creativity in art forms that give no indication of his particular cultural background?"[287]

## Avant-Garde Conditions

During the 1970s, works by Sarain Stump, Alex Janvier, Norval Morrisseau, Daphne Odjig, and Guy Sioui were most accurately portrayed as a "wholly new and sometimes ambiguous artistic expression."[288] By the 1980s this assumption led to the treatment of assemblages and installations by Domingo Cisneros and Edward Poitras from the perspective of a "new aesthetic language."[289] If the above art assumptions by Tom Hill and Robert Houle are set within the discourse of Western cultural

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[284]Richard Huelsenbeck, "A History of Dadaism," in Herschel B. Chipp, ed., Theories of Modern Art (Berkley: University of California Press, 1968) 377-378.
[285]Poitras quoted in Enright, 27.
[286]Houle, 3,2.
[287]Dickason, 3.
[288]Tom Hill, Canadian Indian Art 74 (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1974) n.p.
[289]Houle, 3.

politics, which both curator's acknowledge as central to the art in question, then the possibility for an inter-tribal avant-garde can be intimated. Such an art-historical objective is advanced according to the theories of Walter Benjamin and Renato Poggioli, in order to confirm this model's Western European progress and relevancy to indigenous North Americans. Literary examples drawn from those authors of Native ancestry previously mentioned then provide further proof of vanguard qualities that were absorbed by the First Nations during the post war period. The avant-garde potential outlined here also returns in Chapter IV as a primer for the post-colonial and post-modern strategies taken up by the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery of Canada in 1992.

The avant-garde is a military term which originated in France, and it describes the troops moving at the head of an army who are responsible for preliminary skirmishes with enemy forces. Such shock troops were often sent to slaughter so that the soldiers following them had a solid position from which to carry on the battle. Although Walter Benjamin does not discuss the avant-garde's semiotic shift from a military to an artistic reference, his essay entitled "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" provides an insightful perspective on the "formulation of revolutionary demands in the politics of art."[290] The German-Jewish author from Berlin first published this discussion of the new relationship between art and politics in 1939, as an emigrant man of letters living in Paris where he came into contact with Dada, Surrealist, and Futurist art and literature. He sees the existence of these reactionary movements as directly related to the "tremendous shattering of the traditions of art" that image and sound-recording technology precipitated in Western Europe.[291] This same aesthetic shattering can be prescribed to the First Nations during the latter half of the nineteenth-century in most circumstances, and it also involved a damaging by way of the Western neo-colonial forces described in Chapter I. The installations under review are thus relevant to Benjamin's avant-garde frame of reference in that they represent a commensurate artistic recovery.

Ancient drawings of elk on cave walls, presumably in the Occident, represents the point at which Benjamin establishes art's original function as an instrument of "magic," and it is this quality that Dada artists in the early-twentieth century sought to recuperate.[292] Sarain Stump's *Ancient Mobiles*

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[290]Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in Hannah Arendt, ed., Walter Benjamin: Illuminations (New York: Schoken Books, 1968) 218.
[291]Ibid, 221.
[292]Ibid, 225.

performance in the spring of 1974 pursued a comparable ritual retrieval, as he turned to pre-twentieth-century indigenous North American sources for ritual inspiration. The author then moves from ancient pictographs to religious paintings and sculptures created in the Middle Ages, asserting that art's original mystical context gradually merged with the needs of Christian institutions. He portrays the European Renaissance as the beginning of "the cult of beauty," which affected a simultaneous decline in the ritual presence of art over three centuries.[293] The advent of socialism and photography during the mid-nineteenth century are enjoined by Benjamin to account for the final transformation of art's purpose in the early-twentieth century. "Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice - politics."[294]

Undoubtedly, the most stringent application of such a beauty politic can be found in Western art-historical surveys that support nationalistic ideologies. In 1925, Western beauty was thus placed at the service of colonialism by Newton MacTavish, whose art-historical survey, The Fine Arts in Canada, reduced aesthetic productions of Native peoples to an "almost" art.[295] Furthermore, such suppression of tribal art's magic traditions occurred at the same moment when the First Nations had been stripped of their political rights by the Canadian and American governments. In 1969, this devitalized cultural circumstance prompted Vine Deloria Jr. to assert the modern Indian's relation to Euro-North American society as "unreal and ahistorical."[296] More than twenty years later, Maliseet artist Lance Belanger described his assemblage-installation at the Canadian Museum of Civilization for *Indigena* as "A beacon of cultural paradox in 1992."[297] The Western denuding of Aboriginal human rights in North America marks a critical difference between the possibility for an inter-tribal avant-garde and its modelling on a revolutionary space within Western Europe's middle classes.

Benjamin goes on to claim the invention of sound-tracked film and its rapid growth as a mass-entertainment industry in Western Europe and North America over the first half of the twentieth century caused a diminishment in the "aura" of painting.[298] The "representation of reality by film" was the ultimate mechanical permeation of human existence, which could be made available to large groups

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[293]Ibid, 224.
[294]Ibid.
[295]MacTavish, 1.
[296]Deloria Jr., 2.
[297]Belanger quoted in McMaster and Martin, 124.
[298]Benjamin, 222.

of people at the same time and thus brought about a "decrease in social significance of art."[299] *Expo 67*'s plethora of experimental films and new screening techniques is an excellent example of how this medium came to dominate Western society's vision of itself during the post-war era. Cinema audiences, he suggests, reacted in a progressive manner to alterations in the format and content of film, whereas the dream imagery, subconscious exe'rcises, and fantastic gestures introduced by Parisian Surrealist painters and writers solicited more "reactionary" responses among gallery viewers and readers.[300]

The "hard" reaction of Jean Chrétien, in his capacity as Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, to Guy Sioui's giant blood spattered arrow on the opening night of *Canadian Indian Art 74* therefore marks a similar antagonistic relationship between the viewer and the work. [301] According to Benjamin, the avant-garde's extreme position thus pre-empts "market values," and he cites the recycled objects and materials used by Dada artists in Zurich during the early 1900s as an example of anti-capitalist art.[302] This same cultural-economic logic is linked to installation art's American advent in the next chapter. It also has a bearing on the artistic circumstance in Canada claimed by Robert Houle. In the *New Work By A New Generation* catalogue, the curator-artist states that the paintings, sculptures, assemblages, and installation on display are "not readily marketable" because of their collective hybrid aesthetic.[303] Furthermore, these differences between material and symbolic avant-garde resistances are shown to collapse in selected temporal settings produced by artists of Aboriginal ancestry during the late 1980s.

Walter Benjamin concludes "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" by asserting architecture as the perfect model for art because it is received in "a state of distraction."[304] Such experiencing of space is critical here with regard to installation art's emancipatory potential. "For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation alone."[305] A turning point in Canada's history happened in 1992, and it will be firmly linked to Aboriginal sites of difference.

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[299]Ibid, 234.
[300]Ibid, 235.
[301]Tom Hill, "A Retrospect of Indian Art," The Native Perspective spring, 1978: 36.
[302]Benjamin, 237.
[303]Robert Houle, New Work By a New Generation (Regna: Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1982) 3.
[304]Benjamin, 239.
[305]Ibid, 240.

Renato Poggioli, an Italian theorist who immigrated to the United States and taught comparative literature at Harvard University, first issued his comprehensive study of avant-garde art in 1962 entitled The Theory of the Avant-Garde. The author states that this phenomenon is clearly French in origin and dates to the time of King Louis-Philippe I's abdication in the 1848 Revolution, making it a sociological as opposed to an aesthetic fact. Industrialism also accounted for concurrent shifts in Europe's larger political structure from autocratic to democratic rule by the mid-nineteenth century; which fostered an inseparable joining of art and society. However, Poggioli declares the most crucial transformation in Western cultural thinking was: "the doctrine of art as an instrument for social action and reform, a means of revolutionary propaganda and agitation." [306] The term avant-garde's earliest non -military use is then attributed to a 1878 Swiss periodical of political agitation called L'Avant-garde. According to the author, the avant-garde's chronology as a cultural entity parallels that of "modern art."[307] Both Hill and Houle invoked a general sense of modern art as the contexts for *Canadian Indian Art 74* and *New Work By A New Generation*, and it becomes a narrative connecting point to Western art history for artists ranging from Norval Morrisseau to Edward Poitras.

Modern art history is possessed of both schools and movements in Poggioli's estimation, with the former producing variants of traditional poetics while the later makes hostile proclamations and issues manifestos. The author credits the Parisian poet and theorist André Breton, who wrote the "Manifeste du Surréalisme: Poisson soluble" in 1924, with defining the activist nature of movements "par excellence" when he proposed firing a volley shot into a crowd.[308] By the mid 1980s the inter-tribal art community in Canada had begun to experience an internal polarization, as the publically subsidized proponents of Indian art (including the Woodland School Painters) were targeted by younger artists who were delving into socio-political issues. Robert Houle was publically critical of the Art Gallery of Ontario's first major show of contemporary Native art, *Norval Morrisseau and the Emergence of the Image Makers* co-curated by Tom Hill and Elizabeth McLuhan. "I think the AGO exhibit should only have been Morrisseau; the rest was self-serving neo-nativism. Neo-nativism is a lack of will, a lack of character, a lack of independent free spirit - it all depends on nostalgia, it's very naive, and I

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[306]Renato Poggioli, The Theory of the Avant-Garde 1962. trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968) 9.
[307]Ibid, 15
[308]Ibid, 33.

think fundamentally it caters to the dominant concept of what natives should be."[309] Houle's attack thus squarely placed him in opposition to both what had become mainstream Canadian art, and to Hill's championing of the "Woodpecker School."[310]

Another central quality of the avant-garde for Poggioli is its fury, and he uses the Italian Futurist movement as an ideal example. In the 1910s, this group of painters and sculptors called for the destruction of museums and libraries, and this "moment of agonism" represents an inherent psychological tendency within modern Western society.[311] Such a cultural logic of violent protest parallels the decolonizing process called for by Frantz Fanon, who insisted that North Africans subject their European oppressors to "searing bullets and bloodstained knives."[312] Guy Sioui's bloodied arrow at the Royal Ontario Museum will come to signify an avant-garde precursor to the armed stand-off space produced by Joseph Tehawehron David for the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1992. Art, activism, and violence constitute an intertwined quality that ran through the inter-tribal community in Canada via installation-based practices from the 1970s through the 1990s.

The avant-garde can only prevail where liberty exists according to Poggiolli, and he submits government prohibitions on Futurism in Italy, Constructivism in Russia, and Dada in Germany through the twentieth century's first half as proof of this socio-political necessity.[313] The author then turns to modern art in North America, which he characterizes as lacking in militancy due to an absence of longstanding Western cultural systems. "By way of relative demonstration, one might point to the fact that the break between avant-garde culture and traditional culture is less sharp in North America than in continental Europe where the social system is more closely tied to the past, to ancient institutions and traditional customs, rigid and age-old structures."[314] The relative ease and quickness in which installation-based practices were absorbed by mainstream American institutions will bear out Pogglio's observations. Undoubtedly, the author's European bearing did not allow him to take notice of the rise in inter-tribal political organizations, with regard to their cultural impact on Canada and the United States after the Second World War. Nor could he have accounted for the influence of activists such

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[309]Houle quoted in Jay Scott, "I Lost it at the Trading Post," Canadian Art winter 1985: 37.
[310]Houle personal interview June 14, 1986.
[311]Poggioli, 65.
[312]Fanon, 37.
[313]Poggiolli, 101.
[314]Ibid, 107.

as Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr., who provided artists of Native ancestry with an intellectual lead for the rejection of Western authority. "We will not trust the government with our futures any longer. Now they must listen to and learn from us."[315]

Benjamin's and Poggioli's definitions of the avant-garde's aesthetic origins and manifestations in Western European therefore serve a twofold purpose in this study. First of all, as a way of recognizing an oppositional state between official Indian art and a hybrid First Nations art, and secondly to prepare a Western art-historical foundation for signifying artistic activism in the late-twentieth century. Furthermore, the avant-garde is soon taken up as a synonymous term of reference for installation-based practices by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada.

## *Stardusters*

The Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry's conferences in 1979, 1983 and 1987 served to solidify communications among an inter-tribal community that emerged from cities, towns, villages, and reservations across the country. The *New Work By A New Generation* exhibition brought together the most innovative practitioners of a hybrid North American aesthetic who, by the mid 1980s, were achieving regional acknowledgment in public institutions ranging from the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery to the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. Commercial venues such as the Ufundi Gallery in Ottawa and the Brignall Gallery in Toronto had also established a steady market for paintings, prints, and drawings by artists including Robert Houle, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Bob Boyer, Gerald McMaster, and Carl Beam, during the late 1980s. The 1986 *Stardusters: New Works by Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Edward Poitras* exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery in Ontario will thus demark the beginning of an officially sanctioned radical Aboriginal voice.

The Thunder Bay Art Gallery's dual mandate as a National Exhibition Centre and Centre for Indian Art provided the impetus for its production of the *Stardusters* exhibition, symposium, and cross-country tour. Financial support for this ambitious project came from a wide variety of sources including: the federal Department of Communications, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Communications, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern

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[315]Cardinal, 17.

Development, Great Lakes Forest Products Ltd., the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the Royal Bank of Canada, and Air Canada. Such financing signals a shift in government that occurred in 1985 as the Progressive Conservative Party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, encouraged corporate support of the arts. This show thus stands as the sole example among the six exhibitions under review where the Euro-Canadian business community stood alongside the federal government in supporting an urgent call for cultural empowerment.

Curator Gary Mainprize makes a strident charge in his introduction for the elimination of conventional cultural references with regard to the works created by the four artists featured in the show. "But, they are not Indian artists, nor are they representatives of any new school of Indian art."[316] However, the Aboriginal curator's claim seems to stand in contradiction to the catalogue's "Message" from the Honourable Flora MacDonald, Minister of Communications, who reveals that the six featured individuals were chosen from over two hundred Native painters, sculptors, and multi-media artists from across the country.[317] Selected works by Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Edward Poitras for this show, which travelled to Regina, Burnaby, Lethbridge, Ottawa, Rivière-du-Loup, and Sherbrooke, will now offer a perspective on how installation practices served to heighten such contextual tensions in Canada.

Joane Cardinal-Schubert (b. 1942), who grew up in Red Deer, Alberta, graduated from the Alberta College of Art in 1968 and went on to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Calgary in 1977. This artist-curator of Blood and German-Canadian ancestry began exhibiting her art at professional venues in Alberta during the mid 1970s. In 1978, she worked as an assistant curator at the University of Calgary Art Gallery, and then from 1979 to 1985 served as the assistant curator at the Nickel Arts Museum in Calgary. Much of Cardinal-Schubert's early art focussed on nineteenth-century historical figures including the Métis leader Louis Riel and the Plains Cree chief Pound Maker, both of whom played key roles in the 1885 North-West Rebellion. Archival photographs of these individuals were a crucial source of information for the artist. She transformed them into single and multiple oil-on-canvas portraits. These paintings of rebel leaders were her response to the manner in which Canada's identity was dominated by Euro-Canadian personalities. "In 1969, at 27, I, like many

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[316]Mainprize, 7.
[317]Flora MacDonald, "Message," in Gary Mainprize, Stardusters: New Works by Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, Joane Cardinal-Schubert,Edward Poitras (Thunder Bay: Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1986) 4.

Native People had begun to realize that there was little or nothing celebrated about our People, by our people, in this Nation Country."[318]

The year of Cardinal-Schubert's cultural realization corresponded with a moment of heightened tensions between the First Nations and Canada, when Harold Cardinal issued his first manifesto and Native political associations unanimously voiced their rejection of the Liberal Party's "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy." Like Stump, Cisneros, and Poitras, Cardinal- Schubert was not raised on an Indian reservation, and so her search for Aboriginal identity comes from a greater collective distance than maybe equated with artists such as Robert Houle, Guy Sioui, and later Rebecca Belmore. This gap proved troublesome for Cardinal-Schubert when the town of Gleichen, Alberta, invited her to create a temporary work for its Art Park in 1984. The Calgary-based artist's resulting *Hommage to Smallboy* installation, which combined elements from tee pee, sweat lodge, and Sun Dance structures indigenous to great Great Plains, was criticized by local Plains Cree elders as disrespectful to the memory of the recently deceased Chief Robert Smallboy.[319] The charging of installation art with North American shamanistic references had become a treacherous task not always embraced or appreciated by First Nations leaders, elders, and communities it aspired to serve.

Indigenous architecture and technology from the Great Plains also inspired Joane Cardinal-Schubert's new work for *Stardusters* entitled *Preservation of a Species: The Drying Rack.* (ill. 36) Her temporary construction is of particular interest here as it represents an early version from a series of *Preservation of a Species* installations examined in the next chapter. This 1986 work mimicked an ancient form of technology commonly used by nomadic tribes to prepare animal skins, and was constructed by Cardinal-Schubert from pine poles lashed together with thongs. Hanging from a rack were two pieces of canvas cut to resemble the drying hides of an eagle and a human. The artist painted skeletal or X-ray patterns on each hide-like canvas using brown, red, and black oil paint as well as graphite. These were reminiscent of ancient pictographs she had studied at Writing-on-Stone, Alberta.[320] Finally, the eight-foot-high by eleven-foot-long rack was set atop two sheets of plexi-glass.

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[318]Joane Cardinal- Schubert, "Glancing back..." in Kathyrn Burns, Joane Cardinal-Schubert: Two Decades (Calgary:Muttart Public Gallery, 1997) 19.
[319]Brad Teeter, "Insulting the Elders - A Cree Chiefs Memorial Angers the Blackfoot," Albert Report fall 1984: 16
[320]Godin, Deborah. This is My History: Joane Cardinal Schubert (Thunder Bay: Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1985) 5.

*The Drying Rack* is listed as a work in progress in the exhibition catalogue, for the artist was in the midst of creating a larger *Perseveration of a Species* project. This exhibition series would ultimately link the loss of sovereignty among Aboriginal peoples in Canada to the authority held over First Nations' ritual arts by Western museums. "These ceremonial objects are an important link in the cultural practice of most ceremonial rituals. Without them life was meaningless, they were the cultural videos and bibles of the time. If someone were to remove the chalice from the tabernacle in the Catholic ritual, the ceremony could not continue...This is our heritage!"[321] In her 1986 component piece, the canvas hides thus symbolized a death of rights for indigenous North American peoples and animals, which are affixed to a temporary structure so viewers can witness the process of Western oppression in a more visceral way. Skeletal images of a turtle and a coyote on the reverse side of the eagle- and human-like canvases evoke the transformative power that Native peoples have exercised in their social adjustment and cultural rebirth during the late twentieth century."The old ways will teach us.....and preserve us.....meaning Indian people....we are the transformers....able to survive all....despite all."[322]

This installation also functions on a more personal level, and recalls the artist's childhood fascination with her father's trapping and tanning skills. "He used to stretch muskrats across boards and tack them in long rectangles along the wall. As a kid, I was curious of how the hides had been scraped, their smell, colours, and fur."[323] The conceptual interplay between personal history, indigenous North American aesthetics, and Euro-Canadian scientific authority prompts the curator to caution viewers that this work of art extends "beyond the literal."[324] Such an enigmatic message was further underlined by her placement of *The Drying Rack* on a plexi-glass base that signifies Western "technology/oil/chemicals etc" as somehow supporting Aboriginal loss.[325]

In the *Stardusters* catalogue, Edward Poitras' practice is characterized by Gary Mainprize as dependent on the service of rituals. "His art is about magic, spiritual enlightenment, personal

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[321]Joane Cardinal-Schubert,"In the Red," Fuse magazine fall 1989: 22.
[322]Cardinal-Schubert electronic mail interview, Mar. 15, 2001.
[323]Cardinal-Schubert quoted in Gerald McMaster,"Responding To Everyday Life: An Interview with Joane Cardinal-Schubert," in Burns, 15.
[324]Mainprize, 23.
[325]Cardinal-Schubert electronic mail interview, Mar. 15, 2001.

experiences and visions, the survival of the individual and the endurance of cultural values."[326] Poitras' direct turn to the Sun Dance and Ghost Dance for inspiration, as demonstrated by *Stars in Sands,* increasingly exposed him to criticism from Aboriginal elders in the Regina area. In the early 1980s, the artist is reported to have suspended his most experimental performance-installation works "rather than be misunderstood by his own community."[327]

Among the eight new works by Poitras featured in *Stardusters, Internal Recall* offered viewers an opportunity to witness a ritual-like act in suspension.(ill. 37) Seven life-sized male figures constructed from wire mesh covered with linen strips dipped in polymer resin glue were situated on the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's floor in a circular configuration. These kneeling figures with bowed heads and horse hair manes have their hands tied behind their backs, and each restraining length of rope was further affixed to the gallery's ceiling. Such a pose recalls the bound black and white figure in Sarain Stump's *The Pain of the Indian* at *Canadian Indian Art 74.* Stump's imagery and teachings would prove to exert an enduring influence over Poitras through the 1980s and 1990s. "I might have outgrown it on the surface, but I'm still trying to grow into it, the process that he was trying to teach us."[328] Furthermore, Poitras' return to the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College from 1976 to 1978 as an Indian Art Instructor, followed by his tenure as a lecturer for the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College from 1981 to 1984, indicates a pedagogical commitment to the advancement of Stump's Indart philosophy.

As viewers walk amongst the life-size figures of *Internal Recall*'s circular space, they may have been struck by a sense of suffering conveyed through their bound hands and prone positioning. Poitras conceptual reference here is to the colonial contracts that legally bound the First Nations to Canada, which were unilaterally transformed during the modern era by the federal government into tools of oppression.[329] This evocation of human restraint can also linked to another previously discussed work by Stump, as the title poem-text of his 1970 publication There is My People Sleeping features a sword-wielding colonial officer and a modern pen-carrying bureaucrat ominously positioned in front of a

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[326]Mainprize, 27.
[327]Hill and Duffek, 11.
[328]Poitras quoted in Mainprize, 28.
[329]Poitras personal interview, Mar. 27, 2000.

Native man who has been bound "since a long time."[330] However, Poitras' 1986 installation is possessed of a ceremonial quality not possible in print reproduction, due to the bodily relationship that viewers establish with a human grouping seemingly frozen in a moment of agony or as the title infers personal reflection. The multiple readings possible here, as in Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of A Species: Drying Rack* installation, account for the curator's suggestion that *Internal Recall* provokes: "pre-vision-quest rituals such as the shaking-tent or spirit-call."[331] Such indigenous North American ceremonial practices are reinforced through a subtle material association, as the black-and-grey horse hair adorning each figure's head was a substance commonly used by nomadic tribes on the Great Plains for the production of ritual objects including horse sticks and war shirts. Poitras' firm belief in a return to the "Holy-Man as artist," continued to prefigure the healing intent of his art through the 1990s. [332]

On July 1st, 1987, the *Stardusters* touring exhibition opened at Lethbridge's Southern Alberta Art Gallery in conjunction with the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry's fourth symposium entitled "Networking." The convergence of these two events at the University of Lethbridge signified that the post-war inter-tribal art community in Canada was now under the direction of highly politicized artists. Carl Beam, Robert Houle, Gerald McMaster, Bob Boyer, Domingo Cisneros, Jane Ash Poitras, Pierre Sioui, and Edward Poitras were central to this movement in the late 1980s, which Joane Cardinal-Schubert recalls as critical to her artistic development because they shared the same concerns.[333] Similarly, when Edward Poitras announced at the SCANA symposium's artist dialogue session that his existence as a disenfranchised person of Métis and Indian ancestry in Canada was finally over, due to a 1985 revision to the Indian Act known as Bill C-31, the other discussants responded with applause and congratulations.[334]

## Inter-tribal versus Multicultural

In 1969, Vine Deloria Jr. proudly announced "The awakening of tribes is just beginning." This resurgence came to take the form of an inter-tribal political movement across North America, and in

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[330]Sarain Stump, There Is My People Sleeping (Sidney: Grey's Publishing Ltd, 1970) n.p.
[331]Mainprize, 29.
[332]Poitras in Matthew Teitelbaum, Edward Poitras: Indian Territory (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 1988) 24.
[333]Cardinal-Schubert in Nancy Tousley, "Native art is in demand," The Calgary Herald (April 19, 1992), C1.
[334]Young Man, 92.

Canada, it ultimately led to the Assembly of First Nations advent in 1982. Over the same period Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's Liberal Party government moved to marry a bi-cultural English-French model of the nation officially established in the 1960s, with that of an all encompassing multicultural concept. "A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians." [335] The subsequent infusion of federal finances into such a pluralist vision through the 1970s came in the form of programs and grants administered through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Secretary of the State, and the Ministry of Communications.

The same public funding for cultural initiatives in Aboriginal communities was siphoned through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, as it had been since Vincent Massey's 1951 report for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. *Canadian Indian Art 74* at the Royal Ontario Museum thus serves to mark a tension between official DIAND mandates to produce a singularly identifiable and marketable Indian art, and the emergence of a hybrid Aboriginal aesthetic often tinged with socio-poltical commentary. Sarain Stump's *The Pain of the Indian*'s expressed a contemporary condition of collective alienation produced through an individualistic cross-tribal artistic mixing. The most forceful statement at the Royal Ontario Museum came from Guy Sioui, whose sculpture-installation *La Direction* awakened Euro-Canadians to neo-colonialism's residual violence and the reality of post-colonial voices. These artists refused to let their tribal strength be expropriated by the DIAND, and curator Tom Hill commenced the precarious task of creating an inter-tribal discourse that tentatively staves off multiculturalism's totalizing condition."The job could not have been accomplished without the aid of Indian people who inhabit the total mosaic of Canadian life."[336]

The National Indian Brotherhood's victory in gaining control over education funding from the DIAND during the early 1970s, was critical in initiating a resistance among young Native peoples to the homogenizing effects of official Canadian diversity. The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College and it predecessor the Indian Federated College, were a critical training ground for artist-teacher-curators

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[335]Pierre Elliot Trudeau, "Statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons - October 8, 1971," Jun.15, 2001 <<www.collections.ic.gc.ca.>>.
[336]Hill, n.p.

including Sarain Stump, Edward Poitras, and Gerald McMaster, as well as Bob Boyer and Lance Belanger (examined in Chapter IV), who invested indigenous North American aesthetics with a socio-political sense of purpose. "But it also gave us a sense of belonging and identity. It gave us pride."[337] Domingo Cisneros' teachings at Manitou College also contributed to a reconnecting with tribal identities, which can be further viewed through Poitras', Sioui's, and Houle's link to this Native-run institution. Cisneros' particular focus on shamanistic means were critical to the development of an anti-Western cultural context. However, the increasing political activism among students at the college, as related to the negotiations between the Province of Quebec and the Cree peoples over territorial matters, resulted in the college's sudden closure in December 1976. The Mexican-Métis artist believed the school's termination was due in part to Aboriginal political corruption. "There were some rotten chiefs involved in that closing down."[338]

Inter-tribal conditions in Canada were not always harmonious, and an emerging avant-garde movement soon created internal tensions among Aboriginal peoples. Similar strains arose at the moment when the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry was achieving an unprecedented level of cultural unity among the First Nations, as the 'Ksan artists group stated that their longstanding artistic traditions from the Northwest Coast were seemingly unappreciated at the national organization's 1983 annual meeting.[339] The dangerous cultural issues facing SCANA did not deter its prime supporters from a rising class of professionally trained artists which included Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Lance Belanger, Carl Beam, Bob Boyer, and Edward Poitras. Their collective will at the society's 1987 conference in Lethbridge commanded the National Gallery of Canada's future commitment to changing its policy of excluding Aboriginal peoples.[340]

The constant move to validate an absolute Indian culture has been underlined by Indian Arts in Canada, issued under the authority of the Honorable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. This 1972 publication's art-historical narrative charts troublesome aesthetic territory, as its Métis author Olive Partricia Dickason presents Western art traditions as having an entirely negative impact on the practices of selected contemporary artists. The impossibility for an authentic

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[337]Poitras quoted in Robert Enright, 28.
[338]Cisneros quoted Lindberg, 12.
[339]Hill and Duffek, 13.
[340]see Youngman.

Indian voice to occur through modern art formats thus relegated work by artists ranging from Alex Janvier to Sarain Stump to a position well outside the multicultural rubric; for such a policy's realization tended to separate cultural production into totalized and unmixed ethnic categories. Barry Lord's 1974 survey, The History of Canadian Painting: Toward's a Peoples Art, acknowledged First Nations art for the first time within a national narrative, and prophetically announced the need for young artists of Aboriginal ancestry to draw on "any style" to evoke "the conflicts, dangers, and victories the people experience."[341] Lord is also wary of federal cultural subsidies which can hide the continuing realities of oppression.

The National Museum of Man's pro-active multiculturalism entailed hiring Robert Houle to guide the institution in its new role as the nation's guardian of contemporary indigenous North American arts. Houle's efforts to maintain a wholly artistic bearing at the NMM proved too radical a shift for the institution's enduring anthropological context. Although his intentions should not be interpreted as an overwhelming Aboriginal approval of deconstructive strategies, as revealed by the Indians News assistant editor, Gilbert Oskaboose's reaction to the new curator's first public speech in 1978. "Well its finally happened. Indians have arrived in the wonderful wacky world of the avant garde art scene...I think there's something rotten in Indian Country."[342] A growing post-modern impetus to break down Canadian master narratives served as the catalyst for Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada's thematic approach to art discourse in 1983, but it occasionally falls into standardized two nations or bi-cultural rhetoric. This collectively produced text also brushes up against the problematic treatment of contemporary work by Native artists, particularly indigenous graphic and carving traditions on the Northwest Coast, as frozen anthropological facts rather than aesthetic developments. Fortunately, Charlotte Townsend-Gault is able to identify the emergence of a socio-politically informed hybrid art practices using works by Sarain Stump and Alex Janvier, whose tribal identities are not completely lost under the standard monoliths of Indian or Canadian art.

*New Work By A New Generation*'s co-presentation by the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery and Indian Federated College in Regina marked the maturation of an inter-tribal cultural strength on the Prairies, and both institutions continue to play a key role in promoting Aboriginal values throughout the region. The 1982 show also received funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, which represented a slight displacement in the DIAND's traditional control over First Nations cultural initiatives. Of paramount

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[341]Lord, 21.

[342]Gilbert Oaskaboose, "More than a lack of couth: 'There's something rotten in Indian Country,'"letter to the editor, Globe and Mail July 7, 1978. A6.

importance here was the World Assembly of First Nations' sponsorship of *New Work By A New Generation* for it signifies a complimentary political and artistic alignment that had yet to occur in an ongoing Aboriginal crusade against Western neo-colonial forces. As curator, Robert Houle speaks for a new class of professionally trained artists from across North America, who simultaneously engaged their tribal inheritances and modern art as instruments of "innovation and radicalism."[343] Domingo Cisneros' manipulation of organic materials ranging from hides to bones for *As Cultures Pass By,* re-established nature's authority over art in contradistinction to academic art traditions. The Mexican Métis-Tepehuane artist's focus on shamanistic practices exerted a strong influence over Edward Poitras, and his *Stars in Sand* signalled a new direction for hybrid combinations of Aboriginal and Western European aesthetics. Poitras' multi-sensory space in the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery asserted the potential that ancient tribal rituals possessed in waging contemporary battles for First Nations sovereignty, and reverberated Harold Cardinal's 1969 call to "Bring Back the Medicine Man."[344]

The Western art-historical implications of describing a radical inter-tribal art in Canada, as well as the concerted look to Surrealism, Dada, and to a lesser extent Abstract Expressionism, by the artists and curators examined throughout this chapter and the next has warranted the review of avant-garde theories proposed by Walter Benjamin and Renato Poggioli. Benjamin's assignment of art's "original use value" to ritual and various efforts by avant-garde collectives to retrieve it in the age of mechanical reproduction, or what will be referred to later as monopolistic capitalism, parallels the recuperative project initiated by Sarain Stump via the Indart program.[345] His 1974 *Ancient Mobiles* can thus be understood as the nascent stage in an avant-garde process that leads to Edward Poitras' productions of ritualized space in the early 1980s, and by the decade's end, Robert Houle, Domingo Cisneros, and Joane Cardinal-Schubert will be shown to take up similar tactics. Installation's architectonic and temporary qualities, which are expanded upon in Chapter IV, will also come to bare on Benjamin's theory that pronounced shifts in perception can be most effectively produced through combinations of contemplation and distraction. Poggioli's perspective on the avant-garde is most useful in comprehending how such a cultural phenomenon is destined to "oscillate perpetually among the various forms of alienation - psychological and social, economic and historical, aesthetic and stylistic."[346] The ambiguous identity intervals occupied by Edward Poitras between his Métis and

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[343]Houle, 4.
[344]Cardinal, 80.
[345]Benjamin, 224.
[346]Poggioli, 127.

Plains Cree ancestry, as well as Joane Cardinal-Schubert between her Blood and German-Canadian background are relevant to the tensions they raise in both Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal communities through installation-based practices. Finally, the Italian author's claim that the avant-garde "renews itself in the consciousness of each successive avant-garde" prepares the way for a younger generation of artists of Aboriginal ancestry to take up new spatial strategies in the 1990s. [347]

The 1986 *Stardusters* show at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery illustrates a determined effort by the federal government to subsidize some of the most urgent voices in Canada's inter-tribal community, at the same moment when multicultural policy had become law via the Multiculturalism Act of 1985. Three years earlier the Trudeau government had repatriated Canada's constitution from the British Crown, and Native leaders successfully lobbied to have their "existing aboriginal and treaty rights" written into the Constitution Act's "Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms."[348] Such a tenuous condition between Aboriginal recognition and Canadian diversity guided curator Gary Mainprize's claim that individuals such as Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Edward Poitras "are not Indian artists."[349] However, the show's selection process, as revealed in the catalogue by the Minister of Communications, Flora MacDonald, seems to betray the curator's insistence on a cultural anonymity. Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species: Drying Rack* was indicative of her growing interest in Western anthropological contexts which served to separate Aboriginal peoples from their cultural patrimony. This premise soon came to occupy her work throughout the remainder of the 1980s and led to more elaborate installations featured in Chapter IV. Edward Poitras' *Internal Recall* emphasized the artist's ongoing reverence for the teachings of Sarain Stump, as well as his fascination with creating spaces that evoke a simultaneous healing and purging of neo-colonial history in North America. The "Art Tribe" was well on its way to changing the politics of national representation in Canada.[350]

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[347]Ibid, 223.
[348]Statutes of Canada, Constitution Act 1982: chap. 35, sec.1.
[349]Mainprize, 7.
[350]Joane Cardinal-Schubert electronic mail interview, Mar. 15, 2001.

## Chapter IV: Contextual Art and Contentious Narratives

Chapter IV opens with a survey of installation art's development in the United States according to publications by Brian O'Doherty and Julie H. Reiss. Their respective narratives are then related to Canada by way of L'installation pistes et territoires. These three sources provide a relevant art-historical bearing for consideration of the works in review. Installation-based productions were the predominant feature of *Beyond History* at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1989, which endeavoured to describe an avant-garde movement among contemporary artists of Aboriginal ancestry. Selected works exhibited an urgent condemnation of neo-colonial legacies in North America, which are compared to the post-colonial literary criticisms of George E. Sioui and Homi K. Bhabha. In 1992, the *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives* show issued a concerted moral challenge to the celebratory stories of North America's supposed discovery by Christopher Columbus. Installation provided selected artists with the means to mount a contextual attack spanning five-hundred years of Euro-American history from within the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The institutional questioning of modern master narratives is central to the post-modern condition revealed via the theories of Jean-François Lyotard and Fredric Jameson. Such intellectual awakening provided the catalyst for *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada.* This exhibition is used to summarize the public achievement of Aboriginal difference through sites of installation which coincided with the Government of Canada's inability to redefine the nation's political identity in the fall of 1992.

### Installation Practices and Discourses

Brian O'Doherty's 1986 publication, Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of Gallery Space, is based on a series of essays he wrote for the American contemporary arts periodical, Artforum, in 1976. The Irish-born artist, art historian, and art critic documents the logic of installation art's advent in the United States. His focus on the art gallery as an "archetypal image of twentieth-century art" is directly related to a dramatic shift from content to context in Western aesthetics after the Second World War.[351] This artistic rupture in the Euro-American cultural mainstream provides another location from which the practices of the artists in question could emerge.

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[351]Brian O'Doherty, Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of Gallery Space (Santa Monica: University of California, 1986) 14.

Abstract-expressionist and colour-field paintings produced by New York artists from the 1940s to the 1960s are cited by O'Doherty as an early threat to the art gallery's formulating capacity. Such art's emphasis on non-objective imagery and surface effects compromised academic pictorial conventions of foreground, middle ground, and background. The massive dimensions of unframed paintings by artists including Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman also interrupted both the artist's and viewer's established "psychological" containers.[352] As mentioned in Chapter III of the present dissertation, the "new aesthetic language" described by Robert Houle in *New Works by a New Generation* is closely bound to the painting innovations of both Pollock and Newman.[353] Houle would re-assert this link between America's achievement of a post-war avant-garde movement and the contemporary work of those artists selected for *Land, Spirit, Power* who "open and reopen the discussion over the nature of beauty."[354]

O'Doherty also traces the origin of installation's visual logic through Surrealism in Europe. He uses Marcel Duchamp's *1,200 Bags of Coal* (conceived for the 1938 *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris) as a critical departure point. (ill.38) The coal sacks suspended from the gallery's ceiling affected an expanded spatial field for viewers who now had to consider their own presence underneath the work of art. "Duchamp develops the modernist monad: the spectator in his gallery box."[355] Edward Poitras' 1982, *Stars in Sand,* at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, was among his earliest manipulations of space using the ceiling as a visual support. The temporary quality of these one-time creations by Duchamp and Poitras also raise questions regarding the survival of installation within art-historical narratives. O'Doherty claims that photographic records and documents can only serve to present an "art that is already dead." Consequently, most installations generate fiction-like "afterlives."[356] For example, the violent impression that Guy Sioui's "bloody arrow coming out of the floor" left on visitors to the Royal Ontario Museum in 1974 was heroically reiterated by Tom Hill in a variety of publications through the 1970s and 1980s.[357]

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[352]O'Doherty, 18.
[353]Robert Houle, New Work by a New Generation (Regina: Norman McKenzie Art Gallery, 1982) 3.
[354]Robert Houle,"The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones," in Diana Nemiroff et al., Land, Spirit, Power: The First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada 1992) 46.
[355]O'Doherty, 72.
[356]Ibid, 70.
[357]Tom Hill, "A Retrospect on Indian Art," The Native Perspective, spring 1978: 36.

The fleeting quality of 'Happenings' warrant a return to New York in any search for installation's historical parameters according to O'Doherty. Jim Dine's November 1961, *Car Crash*, featured painted white junk distributed over the ceiling, floor, and walls of the Reuben Gallery. (ill.39) These objects doubled as the set and props in an evening's event which mimicked a hospital emergency ward situation, and O'Doherty claims such creations mediated a careful stand-off between "avant-garde theatre and collage."[358] Installation and performance art's mutual outgrowth from Happenings also parallelled the entry of indigenous North American ritual acts into a new aesthetic context during the 1970s. Sarain Stump's spring 1974, *Ancient Mobiles,* is an early example of a ritual-performance hybrid. This Indart project was intended to re-invigorate ancient Aboriginal objects and actions, as well as promote greater contact between art and "all spheres of life."[359] O'Doherty also attributes a similar alteration in artistic intent to Happenings. "They conceived the spectator as a kind of collage in that he was spread out over the interior."[360] This participatory principle became increasingly important to artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada who sought to implicate audiences in spaces of cultural contest and affirmation.

Julie Reiss' 1999 publication, From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art, is useful in the advancement of O'Doherty's American installation narrative through the last quarter of the twentieth century. The New York-based independent scholar chronologically traces a selection of exhibitions from the 1940s to the 1990s according to the following categories: environments, situations, spaces, and installations. Of particular interest here is how she employs such shows in gauging the "historical relationship between the avant-garde and the museum."[361]

In Reiss' estimation the exodus of artists from Paris to New York during the Second World War including Marcel Duchamp, Andre Breton, Fernand Léger, Frederick Kiesler, and Man Ray had a significant impact on the American contemporary art scene from the 1940s onward. Like O'Doherty, she credits Surrealism as an important source for installation practices, and refers to the 1942 *First Papers of Surrealism* in New York as a precedent-setting event.[362] Marcel Duchamp's *One Mile of*

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[358]O'Doherty, 47.
[359]Sarain Stump, "Ancient Mobiles," Tawow fall 1974: 23.
[360]O'Doherty, 41.
[361]Julie H. Reiss, From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1999) xv.
[362]Ibid, 6.

*String* at the Madison Avenue show is considered an aesthetic innovation that resounded through the work of young American artists during the early 1960s. (ill.40) Duchamp's single length of string affixed to the ceiling, walls, and partitions prevented viewers from moving freely about the rented space which featured mostly paintings. He thus visually undermined the show's conventional display methods. Such "tools" of space manipulation that sprung from a European avant-garde presence in New York are cited by curator Tom Hill as having a significant influence on the artists selected for *Beyond History.*[363]

The Martha Jackson Gallery's 1961 show, *Environments, Situations, Spaces* guides Julies Reiss' effort to classify the New York art scene up to the mid 1970s. It also marked the initial move of key artists including Alan Kaprow, Claes Oldenburg, and Jim Dine from rented store-fronts and fledgling commercial galleries in downtown New York, to the established commercial galleries uptown. However, the author unduly generalizes an incredible range of experimental practices during the 1960s; Dine's *Car Crash*, Oldenburg's 1963 *Bedroom Ensemble*, and Kaprow's 1962 *Words* are considered in the first chapter entitled "Environments." This term is awkwardly defined as "a democratic attempt to engage the viewer in a way that differed from previous expectations of experiencing art."[364] For example, the space of *Bedroom Ensemble*, which featured a bed, pillows, lamps, night tables, a chest of drawers, and various other domestic components emblazoned with matching patterns, was roped off, preventing viewers from walking through it at the Sidney Janis Gallery in 1964. Oldenberg's creation contradicts Reiss' particpatory viewing politic, and mimics the traditional picture space in a three dimensional format that O'Doherty refers to as the "tableau."[365] This work also has a related Canadian history; being among the earliest purchases by the National Gallery of Canada of installation-based production. It was re-created in the gallery's new facility during the late 1980s. (ill. 41)

The instability of installation practices often confounds both Reiss' and O'Doherty's attempts to construct exacting art-historical categories and progressions; a problem that has been addressed in a threefold manner throughout this dissertation. Hyphenated descriptors such as sculpture-installation, painting-installation, assemblage-installation, performance-installation, and video-installation are

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[363]Hill and Karen Duffek, 5.
[364]Reiss, 35.
[365]O'Doherty, 49.

intended to provide a sense of aesthetic fluctuation which departs from or arrives at another artistic mode. Similarly, the term installation-based productions suggests a requisite process of construction prior to any display or re-display period. Meanwhile, installation and installation art stand alone as general references to such a phenomenon's art-historical identity, but often seem inadequate when examining individual works. Use of the term 'work' is problematic, and should be considered as referring to a conjoining of objects, images, and architectural features that could also include electrically produced sounds, images, and effects.

The collapsing of painting, sculpture, performance, and other disciplines within installation art exemplify its ability to accommodate various artistic movements and schools. Reiss makes reference to Pop Art's tangential relationship with Environments via Dine and Oldenburg, and then moves onto the connection between Situations and Minimalism. Donald Judd's 1965 wedge-shaped perforated steel work, *untitled*, is said to "question the relationship of the object to its surrounding space."[366] (ill. 42) Spectators at the Dwan Gallery, where Judd's piece was first exhibited, also had to determine whether to walk on, or move around the art on display. This architectonic blurring of gallery spaces achieved by Minimalist sculpture-installation is labelled by Reiss as a unique "situational aspect," which was most obvious in Robert Morris' 1965 show at the Green Gallery.[367] (ill.43) His seven white geometric forms, including *untitled (Corner Beam)* and *untitled (Cloud)*, evoke structural changes in the room's character. Such sophisticated plays on the gallery as an ideal white box began entering mainstream American commercial and public venues in the early 1970s.

From December 30, 1969, to March 1, 1970, New York's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) hosted *Spaces,* its first comprehensive installation art exhibition featuring fives artists and an artists' collective. Reiss views this show as "a concession to political pressure" by the MOMA from an increasingly vocal arts community that included: the Art Workers' Coalition, Guerilla Art Action Group, and Women Artists in Revolution.[368] These organizations were united in their opposition to America's role in the Vietnam War, staging protests aimed at the link between corporations who profited from the conflict and were major benefactors of New York's cultural institutions. *Spaces* was

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[366]Reiss, 54.
[367]Ibid, 56.
[368]Reiss, 87.

a gesture of assuagement, as the MOMA opened its doors to radical young artists and allowed them to create new works on site. The "free rein" given to Robert Morris, Michael Asher, Dan Flavin, Larry Bell, Franz Walther, and Pulsa was an unprecedented move by the conservative institution, which until then had ignored the most recent trends in New York's contemporary art scene.[369] However, according to Reiss the art community's pronounced militancy during the 1960s and 1970s "did not erupt into widespread instances of explicitly political art."[370] Consequently, the installation-based productions in *Spaces* focussed mainly on expanding the parameters of artistic perception. In contrast, the art to be discussed later sought to raise socio-political awareness in Canada, as their creators immersed visitors into fields of visual protest.

Challenging the context of viewing and objecthood in New York City eventually led many artists to establish new venues; resulting in outdoor installations and the advent of artist-run venues. Robert Smithson's 1970 *Spiral Jetty*, although not located in New York, is among the better known contemporary "Earthworks" in the United States.[371] (ill. 44) His massive project, constructed of local soil and stone on the Great Salt Lake in Utah, offers an ironic interpretation of humanity's attempts to control nature. Its also looks to more ancient land formations created by Aboriginal peoples for inspiration; most notably the *Serpent Mounds* in Locust Grove, Ohio. (ill.45) Robert Houle later quoted Navajo art traditions in his production of a temporary outdoor work for *Beyond History,* which combined "healing and aesthetic" to symbolically cure the earth of post-modern military depravity.[372] By the close of the 1970s, "integrated" art had achieved an embryonic history at artist-run galleries, and the Clock Tower and Artists Space, Public School 1 (P.S.1), and 112 Green Street are listed by Reiss as pivotal venues.[373] "The two phenomena - installation and alternative spaces - blossomed simultaneously."[374]

Brian O'Doherty was a staunch supporter of public funding for artist-run galleries in his capacity as visual arts director at the National Endowment for the Arts from 1969 to 1996. However, by late 1970s alternative spaces in New York were becoming institutionalized, and Reiss notes it as a brief

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[369]Ibid, 88.
[370]Ibid, 77.
[371]Ibid, 110.
[372]Hill and Duffek, 29.
[373]Reiss, 111.
[374]Ibid.

period of hibernation for installation art. Perhaps the most consistent aspects of installation art after its return to prominence in the late 1980s was its resistance to commodification. This is undoubtably a quality that has enabled the art to retain a somewhat anti-capitalist bearing for so long. Such non-commercialism did not prevent installations from becoming common events at large mainstream American institutions in New York by the early 1990s, as artists increasingly received commissions from the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Jewish Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art.

Reiss closes her American history of installation art with the 1991 *Dislocations* show at the MOMA, which featured seven new installations by artists of mixed "gender, race, and nationality."[375] She notes "the pain of stereo typing" conveyed through Adrian Piper's *What It's Like, What It Is, #3.*[376] (ill.46) It featured a four-sided monitor situated in the middle of a brightly lit white room with a strip of mirrors at eye level on each wall. An African-American man on the screens announces to the viewers: "I'm not stupid...I'm not lazy."[377] In 1992, Joane Cardinal-Schubert would write: "I AM LOOKING AND I AM SEEING WITH THE EYES YOU TAUGHT ME TO USE...RACISM - IT IS ALWAY 100%" on the miniature walls of her re-installation at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. (ill. 47 & 48) Installation had come to serve as a highly politicized vehicle for an aesthetic of difference by the late 1980s, but could such a supposed avant-garde presence at mainstream cultural institutions affect real change in the legacy of Canada's hegemonic identity?

In 1997, the Centre des arts actuels Skol, a Montreal artist-run centre, published L'installation: Pistes et Territoires. Its collection of essays and annotated index, edited by Anne Bérubé and Sylvie Cotton, chart installation art's practices and discourses in Quebec from 1975 to 1995. The following selected writings from Skol's survey thus help define a larger North American setting for this aesthetic phenomenon, which intersects with the artists, works, and shows under review.

Patirice Loubier's "L'idée d'installation. Essai sur une constellation précaire" examines the range of terms used to describe the practices and sites encompassed by installation. He cites situations, environments, and site-specific projects that developed in New York during the 1960s, side-by-side

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[375]Ibid, 138.
[376]Ibid, 140.
[377]Piper quoted in Reiss, 140.

more recent hyphenated references including installation-peinture and installation-vidéo. The concept of a "pratique hybride" is central to installation art's existence in Quebec, which also applies to a discourse that flourished around it in the 1980s.[378] He singles out Parachute magazine, a publically funded contemporary art review launched in Montreal in 1976, as an important forum for the discussion of installation practices. Of particular note is the magazine's spring 1986 issue, which was entirely devoted to this burgeoning art form across Canada.

Exhibition coverage in Parachute, Intervention, Esse, and Espace of installation-based productions by Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Edward Poitras, Mike MacDonald, Domingo Cisneros, Theresa Marshall, and Rebecca Belmore are featured in L'installation: Pistes et Territoires'annotated index. Such exposure in art reviews of shows in Quebec represented a crucial breakthrough for artists of Aboriginal ancestry into the contemporary art discourse of Canada. This phenomenon also stands as literary proof of a larger "transition du moderne au postmoderne" that occurred in North America during the late-twentieth century.[379]

Guy Sioui Durand, Intervention magazine's co-founder and a member of the artist-run gallery Le Lieu in Quebec City, presents an art history guided by a "stratégie d'occupation" in "Les déterritorialisations de l'installation."[380]He makes reference to the *Rooms* exhibition in 1976 at P.S.1, which featured seventy-eight installations created by New York-based artists, as a precedent setting event. The "zones imaginées" distributed throughout the defunct public school's interior also figure prominently in Julie Reiss' installation history. This link between contemporary art practices and narratives emanating from Quebec and New York also overlapped with artistic circumstances among the First Nations in the 1980s and 1990s.[381] The author goes on to identify the capacity for sensibility exchanges that installation-based productions possess; listing issues including regionalism, globalization, and feminism as contributing to the practice's impact. Sioui's claim to this art's potential for aesthetic emancipation also extends to its cross-cultural function."Entre autres, l'installation s'avère un genre favorable aux phénomènes transculturels, notamment à la resurgence

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[378]Patrice Loubier, "L'idée d'installation. Essai sur une constellation précaire," in Anne Bérubé and Sylvie Cotton, edts., L'installation: Pistes et Territoires (Montreal: Centre des arts actuels Skol, 1997) 13.
[379]Ibid, 24.
[380]Guy Sioui Durand,"Les déterritorialisations de l'installation," in Bérubé and Cotton, 56.
[381]Ibid.

de l'art amerindien."[382]

The ill-fated *Corridart* outdoor installations along Sherbrooke Street in Montreal, presented in conjunction with the 1976 Olympic Games, and Francine Larivée's *La Chambre nuptiale* at the Complexe Desjardins in Laval are consistent points of departure for the essays in L'installation: Pistes et Territoires. (ill.49) Larivée's work featured life-sized polyurethane figures emerging from the walls and ceiling in a hall-like space. Viewers become privy to various intimate encounters between young couples while passing through the work, and according to Loubier, installation art may have marked the "retour à la figure et à la narration."[383] The *Aurora Borealis* show in 1985 organized by the Centre International d'art contemporain de Montréal (CIAC) is then presented as a culminating moment in Quebec's "socio-artistique" milieu from 1975 to 1995 by Sioui.[384] This group exhibition celebrated the installation practices of thirty artists from across Canada, who were invited to create works in the Place du Parc's underground mall. CIAC's existence as a major alternative venue to the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal was ideally suited to the show's theme, as such art had emerged from outside mainstream institutional settings in Canada.

Artist-run centres including Le Lieu, La Chambre Blanche, Espace virtuel, Articule, Skol, Powerhouse, Optica, Language Plus, and Axe Neo-7, are considered inseparable from installation art's flowering during the 1980s according to the author. These alternative galleries in Quebec, and their counterparts in cities across the country, gained funding through the Canada Council for the Arts as well as provincial and municipal art councils by organizing themselves as visual arts charities serving local cultural needs. The non-commercial art that they supported made them logical venues for the hybrid spaces of indigenous North American and Western aesthetics being developed by artists including Poitras, Cardinal-Schubert, and Cisneros. The defiant questioning of modern values that their respective productions exercised was also consistent with the counter-culture views of those Euro-Canadian artists born in the 1950s and 1960s, who for the most part laid the foundations for Canada's artist-run network in the 1970s.

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[382]Ibid, 63.
[383]Loubier,16.
[384]Sioui, 57.

## *Beyond History*

Co-curators Tom Hill and Karen Duffek brought together the work of ten contemporary artists from across Canada for *Beyond History* at the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) in the summer of 1989. Jointly sponsored by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Government of British Columbia, this show underlined the importance of installation practices among artists of Aboriginal ancestry who shared a highly politicized mentality. Willard Holmes, the VAG's director, articulates their collective circumstance as posing "questions of identity and belonging, questions of tradition and future."[385] More pointed affronts to the Canadian context of their inquiries can be revealed through selected works from the exhibition.

Tom Hill's catalogue essay provides a history of Native art dating back to the 1960s wherein he charts a "complex transition from modernism to postmodernism."[386] Central to this shift among the ten featured artists are strategies of production that can be equally rooted in their tribal heritage and the "European avant-garde."[387] The co-curator parallels Pablo Picasso's assemblage techniques and diverse material sources - which included newspaper clippings, pieces of rope, and found objects - with ancient indigenous North American art practices of building images in three dimensions from disparate materials and objects. The exhibit, *'Primitivism' in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and Modern*, at the Museum of Modern Art in 1984, is offered as a prime example of an authorized interplay between Western and non-Western aesthetic traditions. Thus New York City provides both curatorial and artistic contexts from which to consider the positioning of installations by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada.

Hill turns to the "anthropological validation" in post war discourses concerning Norval Morrisseau, the Woodland School painters, and Northwest Coast carvers as a problematic circumstance of Canadian art history. Unlocking so-called Indian art from an unmoving past therefore becomes part of reiterating artistic value for the author, as it has throughout this dissertation. His chronicle also hinges upon the "rediscovered nationalism" that Manitou College and the Saskatchewan Indian

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[385]Willard Holmes, "Acknowledgements," in Hill and Duffek, 3.
[386]Hill and Duffek, 5.
[387]Ibid.

Cultural College inspired in the 1970s.[388] The growing "political point of view" among a contingent of artists from urban and reserve communities across the country is noted as being both provoked and supported by the Government of Canada.[389] *Beyond History*'s curatorial impetus therefore rests with the paradoxical circumstances surrounding Aboriginal existence during the 1980s, and how ten artists "resolved" their shared inheritance of oppression through aesthetic innovations.[390]

Co-curator Karen Duffek, from the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology, refers to the "dominant culture" in Canada and the United States, and the "re-reading" of Native art history that must continue to stem the Euro-North American tradition of misrepresentation.[391] She asserts the collection of works assembled for the VAG show as an occasion for the participating artists to contest their collective past, present, and future. Duffek's analysis of each artist's work in the show then attempts to locate "the conjunction of ancestry and contemporary experience."[392] The particular absence of artists from Northwest Coast tribes in *Beyond History* is due to a prevailing "contrast to the individualists' stance," and their focus on perpetuating unbroken aesthetic traditions within closed tribal contexts.[393] This factor also accounts for the marginal presence of installation techniques among carvers, painters, and print makers from reserve and urban communities in British Columbia through the 1980s and 1990s.

Artists of Aboriginal ancestry from the Prairies and Central Canada would later prove to generate the strongest tradition of installation-based productions, and this visual analysis begins with a work created just prior to *Beyond History*'s opening on the evening of May 31st, 1989. Robert Houle used the south east corner of the VAG's front lawn, along Robson and Howe Streets in the city's core, to create a painting-installation as part of his *Zero Hour* series. (ill.50) It took the form of a medicine wheel outlined in sand, measuring approximately seventy-five feet in diameter.[394] At the wheel's centre was a small solid sand circle featuring black, white, red, and yellow swatches of pigment mixed with sand, running perpendicular to the shape's circumference. These colour bars corresponded with ancient

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[388]Ibid.
[389]Ibid, 7.
[390]Ibid, 14
[391]Ibid, 27.
[392]Ibid, 38.
[393]Ibid.
[394]Houle personal interview, May 30, 1989.

Aboriginal cardinal direction designations as follows: white for north, yellow for south, red for east, and black for west. Towards the centre of the circle, four purple crosses referenced the morning star, the same sign used by Edward Poitras on the Ghost Dance shirt for *Stars in Sand.* Houle completed this ephemeral painting that incorporated symbols used by his ancestors by piling four bricks onto a green area within the smaller circle.

Houle's participation in *Beyond History* confirmed both his rising intellectual role and aesthetic influence on Canada's contemporary art community. He had exhibited almost exclusively through commercial and public venues in the 1980s, while his association with the artist-run network was somewhat limited when compared to Poitras, Cardinal-Schubert, and Cisneros. Houle's outdoor creation for the VAG responded to the mining of uranium in the American southwest during the Second World War, which facilitated the U.S. military's first atomic bomb tests in New Mexico in 1945. Photographs and written documentation revealed to him that such experimental detonations turned the desert floor green at ground zero. He then interpreted this information according to the region's tribal knowledge combined with his own Aboriginal beliefs. The medicine wheel has been used for centuries among the Saultaux to induce healing and protection, and ranges in construction from beaded versions on clothing to ancient land formations created with rocks found in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta (ill.51). Houle's performance-installation also simultaneously referenced Hopi legends warning against uranium extraction, while his adoption of sand painting referenced centuries-old Navajo shamanistic techniques. (ill.52) Such references to inter-tribal medicine augmented the work's temporary curative intent, and also related longstanding Aboriginal objections to capitalism's insatiable appetite for natural resources.[395] "The last stage before the Great Purification will be when the white man comes into the Four Corners area and tries to take it. If we dig precious things from the land we will perish."[396]

Houle's crisscrossing of indigenous North American aesthetics and beliefs purports to rehabilitate the earth by personifying a site of Western destruction. The original blast is also brought forward in time to 1989, when nuclear arms proliferation in Europe and North America posed an even greater threat to all of humanity's future. Both the immediacy and potential violence of such circumstances were

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[395]see Gladys Amanda Reichard, Navajo Medicine Man: Sandpaintings (New York: Dover Publications, 1977).
[396]Frank Waters, ed., The Book of the Hopi (New York: Penguin Books, 1977) 133.

summarised by the bricks located at the medicine wheel's centre, which Houle obtained from a recently imploded building site adjacent to the VAG. Within hours of the outdoor work's completion a rainstorm passing over the city initiated its erosion.

Like Houle, Bob Boyer (b.1948) established himself as a painter of note on the Canadian art scene during the 1980s via exhibitions at both university and municipal galleries, and rarely showed at artist-run venues. He also elected to create an installation-based production for *Beyond History* entitled *Huey, Dewey, and Louie Wannabee*, which was a departure from much of the work he had exhibited to date.(ill. 53) This artist of Métis ancestry was born near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and graduated from the University of Saskatchewan's fine arts program at the Regina Campus in 1971. Douglas Morton and Ted Godwin, members of the Regina Five painters, had a considerable impact on the young artist's employment of non-objective imagery. Boyer became known for the use of blankets as a painting support on which he created geometric configurations that incorporate nineteenth-century Aboriginal beadwork designs from the Great Plains. Since 1981 Boyer has been the head of the Department of Indian art at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in Regina, and an outspoken advocate of Aboriginal rights. In 1992 he offered the following perspective on Christopher Columbus' historical significance in the *Indigena* catalogue."Since this hero of European self-worship has come to America, this land has been visited by plagues, famine, and pollution....The first peoples of these continents have been forced into a position of second class citizens."[397]

Boyer's 1989 assemblage-installation at the Vancouver Art Gallery focussed on the shameless "playing Indian" that middle-class Western society has promoted since the mid-twentieth century through stereo type commodities.[398] Inside a small plastic tee pee the artist placed commercial items including: Red Man chewing tobacco, a plastic tomahawk with 'Made in Canada' stamped on it, and a Navajo-like patterned shirt. Located beside the tee pee was a totemic stack of four televisions with advertisements for Jeep Comanche and Dodge Dakota trucks pasted onto their screens. Situated atop the uppermost television, which broadcast dancing at a recent pow wow, was a Cleveland Indians baseball cap. The Regina artist's ironic twist on America's corporate expropriation of tribal names alongside the Indian subject's trivialization are inspired by New York Pop Art devaluations of the art object and plays on

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[397]Boyer quoted in McMaster and Martin, 129.
[398]Boyer quoted in Hill and Duffek, 35.

mass production. Furthermore, the contemporary cultural presence of Native dancers on the television screen is almost lost to viewers amid the plethora of products with appropriated Indian names. Finally, Boyer's title joins Walt Disney's famous animated duck brothers (Huey, Louie, and Dewey) with Euro-North-American society's commercialized 'want to be' (Wannabee) Indian desires.

Joane Cardinal-Schubert's creation for *Beyond History,* entitled *Preservation of the Species: Deep Freeze*, also depended upon a collection of mass-produced and common objects. (ill. 54) However, an overwhelming sense of anger regarding the destruction of Indian identity in Canada was communicated to viewers as they walked amid her "ten island-based installation."[399] Her *Preservation of the Species* series began in 1977, and by the mid 1980s featured sculpture-installation components such as *Drying Rack.* During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the series developed into thematic spaces constructed for artist-run and public venues across the country including: Montreal's Galerie Articule, Calgary's Muttart Gallery, the Ottawa School of Art Gallery, Banff's Walter J. Phillips Gallery, and Kingston's Agnes Etherington Art Centre. Cardinal-Schubert's growing public and commercial popularity was buoyed by her inclusion in *Cross Cultural Views,* a major contemporary Canadian art survey show organized by the National Gallery of Canada in 1989. By 1992, the Calgary artist's importance gained her a sizable allotment of space in the CMC's Indian and Inuit Art Gallery, as curator Gerald McMaster commissioned the re-construction of *Preservation of the Species*'s most involved version.

*Preservation of the Species: Deep Freeze* at the Vancouver Art Gallery represented an early attempt by Cardinal-Schubert to claim an entire room. She filled it with found objects uniformly painted in black, ranging from a children's school desk to kites hanging from upright poles, carefully positioned on ten rectangular sheets of masonite (also painted black). "They are black and made of throw-away items because this is a dark time in our history, and we must re-cycle ourselves."[400] Like Boyer, Cardinal-Schubert references the anti-art or "anti-museum" traditions of the Western avant-garde to which she adds very specific cultural locators.[401] For example the word ABUSE appears in white paint on one of the kites, a reference to the atrocities faced by Native children in the residential school system. Similarly, printed across the suitcase is CULTURAL BAGGAGE and a box beside it was

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[399]Cardinal-Schubert electronic mail interview, March 15, 2001.
[400]Joane Cardinal-Schubert, "Glancing back....," in Burns, 41.
[401]Cardinal-Schubert quoted in Allan Ryan, The Trickster Shift (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999) 143.

labelled ACCESSION #420822. (ill. 55) Both terms insinuate the "frozen stereotypes" of First Nations peoples produced through modern anthropological methods, that are held in contention by the artist.[402]

Two sarcophagal-like forms, fashioned out of wire mesh, plaster, oil, and varethane emphasized this installation's ominous tone. Cardinal-Schubert situated one atop the school desk, while she surrounded the other with black-and- white grave-site fencing. Such fictionally interned human remains signified how Canada's Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development eradicated countless tribal peoples and customs across North America. Therefore, as viewers moved around each static museum-like display area they became witnesses to a larger process of cultural genocide. "Who were Dick and Jane?" is a question written in white on the school-desk's flooring. This is yet another allusion to the alienation and bewilderment Native children experienced via Euro-Canadian educational systems. The racist codes imbedded within such presumably innocent sources as elementary school books also inspired the artist's decision to create ten island units alluding to the 'Ten Little Indians' nursery rhyme.[403] While some visitors may not have fully understood Cardinal-Schubert's most subtle conceptual references, her collection of contemporary artefacts (a trash can, beer bottles, a construction helmet, a cabinet) clearly compromised the VAG's role as a guardian of precious objects. More importantly , this institutional parody assimilated the viewer, as a camera simultaneously broadcast each person's movement through the work onto a monitor bearing the word ARTIFACT on its screen. Thus, the artist conceives the spectator "as a kind of collage," which O'Doherty suggests is central to how installations are set in motion.[404]

Mike MacDonald's (b.1941) video-installation *Seven Sisters,* at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1989, hinged upon a similar displacement of scientifically produced knowledge. (ill. 56) Born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, this self-taught artist claims Mi'kmaq, Beothuck, Scottish, Irish, and Portuguese ancestry; underlining a mixed genealogy particular to the Atlantic provinces.[405] The artist moved to British Columbia when he was thirty-six, and began making environmental and anti-nuclear video tapes. In Hazleton, B.C., he produced a documentary video of the Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Tribal Council's effort to gain legal title to territory in northwestern B.C. During the late 1980s and early

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[402]Ibid, 140.
[403]Cardinal-Schubert, "Glancing back....," in Burns, 40.
[404]O'Doherty, 47.
[405]McMaster and Martin, 152.

1990s, MacDonald exhibited regularly at public galleries and artist-run centres including the 'Ksan National Exhibition Centre, the Walter J. Phillips Gallery in Banff, Toronto's Mercer Union, Galerie Optica in Montreal, and Halifax's Eye Level Gallery. The artist later re-installed *Seven Sisters* in 1992, at *Indigena.*

Seven television monitors of varying sizes positioned side-by-side on the floor along a wall in *Beyond History,* flipped between images of a mountain range and museum dioramas featuring stuffed animals. Chanting, drumming, and wildlife sounds playing in the background provided an audible cue for viewers regarding the tribal values in dispute. During the late 1980s, the Seven Sisters coastal mountain range in northern British Columbia was being threatened by American and Canadian lumber companies which wanted to clear-cut the area. At the same time, the Gitksan had submitted a land claim to the Government of Canada based on their ancestral rights to the Crown-owned lands. Images of lifeless mountain goats, a deer, a squirrel, a cougar, a bear, an ermine, and a fox suggest the potential environmental loss that would result from intense human exploitation of their habitat. Panoramic views of the majestic snow-covered mountains served to contrast the dead animals in their artificial settings."One of the things I'm trying to do with [the Seven Sisters] is to suggest that if we don't change our methods of resource extraction then the only place our grandchildren are going to see the wildlife is stuffed in museums or on laser disks....The people in a geography must have more control over the management of it."[406]

In a third set of interspersed images, totem poles bearing animal crests set against the same mountainous backdrop, represent a Gitksan-inspired perspective on the besieged local fauna and its social relevance. Such heraldic art stood in stark contrast to the detached state of the glassy-eyed taxidermic specimens, marking a profound difference between Western and Aboriginal productions of nature. Furthermore, as viewers begin to notice how both the mountain peaks and the poles at Kitwanga compliment the monitor arrangement, the museum scenes appear increasingly claustrophobic and awkward. The Gitksan healing song, animal calls, and sweeping through the trees soundtrack that emanated throughout the room also confirm MacDonald's effort to rehabilitate humanity's relationship with the earth, according to local tribal values and rights. His "electronic shamanism" thus takes its charge from a combined environmental and socio-political basis for contemporary claims to

[406]MacDonald quoted in McMaster and Martin, 155.

sovereignty.[407]

Edward Poitras' "attack on the dominant bourgeois" in North America at *Beyond History* took the form of two installations.[408] During the 1980s and early 1990s, this artist established himself as one of the most renowned installation practitioners in Canada. His extensive exhibition history at artist-run and public galleries includes shows at: the A.K.A.Gallery in Saskatoon, Vancouver's Artspeak Gallery, Toronto's Mercer Union, Galerie Articule in Montreal, Quebec City's Le Lieu, Saskatoon's Mendel Art Gallery, the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Toronto's Power Plant, the Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff, and the Ottawa School of Art Gallery. Poitras' participation in the NGC's *Cross Cultural Views* and the 1989 *Canadian Biennial of Contemporary Art*, secured his national status. Furthermore, the Centre international d'art contemporain de Montreal's 1990 show, *Savoir-Vivre, Savoir-Faire, Savoir-Être* granted the Regina-based artist an international status, alongside Germany's Joseph Beuys, Robert Rauschenberg and R. Buckminster Fuller from the United States, and Japan's Saburo Muraoka.

*Big Iron Sky* was first created by Poitras for a 1984 two-person show with Bob Boyer at the Norman McKenzie Art Gallery. Over the next five years, he recreated the installation at a variety of venues across Canada including the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1989, and it remains among his most successful room-sized works. (ill.57) Suspended from the ceiling of the VAG via an elaborate block-and-tackle were four blue-grey constructions resembling saw-horses. On these were mounted the skulls of horses, all bearing manes of eagle feathers and ermine furs. Rows of transistors were imbedded within the orange-spotted skeletal heads, and each was secured to its body by a system of wires. The arrangement of the four horses in a T-formation corresponded to a giant arrow rendered in sand on the gallery's floor. Nearest to viewers was the front horse, which hung approximately twenty centimetres above the ground. It appeared to lead an upward flight among the three rear horses that were about to break contact with the white sand beneath them. In Vancouver, a cordon prevented viewers from entering the small rectangular-shaped room occupied by *Big Iron Sky;* however, previously in Toronto and Regina, one enjoyed free circulation around the entire work.

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[407]Ibid, 155.
[408]Hill and Duffek, 15.

Like *Stars in Sand* and *Internal Recall,* this 1984 production delves into nineteenth-century Aboriginal aesthetics among nomadic tribes on the Great Plains, and can be viewed within installation-art's history. Hill comments upon the manner in which Poitras's practice "moved dangerously close to traditional [Plains Cree] rituals" during the 1980s, while Duffek purports his ability to bridge cultural polarities "ancient versus modern, traditional versus acculturated, Indian versus non-Indian."[409] The artist's decorated horse-skulls are directly influenced by sources such as the black-and-ochre-dotted buffalo skull with sweet grass stuffed in its eyes and nostrils, by an unknown Arapaho shaman for an early twentieth-century Sun Dance ceremony. (ill.58) Similarly, his employment of ermine furs mimic their function as power symbols on a circa 1900 Plains Cree warrior's shirt, as they endowed its wearer with the rodent's ferociousness. (ill.59) Such Aboriginal aesthetic codes were reiterated to occupy gallery spaces, and as such, Poitras' work straddles installation art's Euro-North-American history.

The linear delineation of volume stated in *Big Iron Sky* via ropes is not unlike the method in which Marcel Duchamp employed string to affect the room on Madison Avenue in New York for the 1942 *First Papers of Surrealism* show. His efforts to control the viewer with *One Mile of String* had a profound impact upon American artist-critic Patrick Ireland's installation-art and discourse. His rope drawings in New York's Greene Gallery and Betty Parsons Gallery during the 1970s are mentioned by Julie Reiss as an example of how installation artists sought to control viewers' movements and perspectives.[410] Ireland's transparent spaces share a rectilinear quality with *Big Iron Sky*'s block-and-tackle support network, while Poitras' Navajo-inspired sand-painted arrow on the floor served to prevent viewers from passing through his visionary production. (ill.60) Hence, the quoting of shamanistic art is brought into the late capitalist era via its fusion with electronic parts and industrial hardware, as the artist wages a conceptual-ritual battle against cultural hegemony.

Poitras consistently used Black Elk's prophecies during the 1980s to initiate a temporal aesthetic, and *Big Iron Sky* is yet another interpretation of the Great Vision. The Sioux visionary's claim that the six powers or grandfathers of the world would bring about an end to Euro-American and Euro-Canadian authority in North America, includes a series of offerings involving their transformation into four

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[409]Hill and Duffek, 11, 32.
[410]Patrick Ireland was the artist pseudonym used by Gary O'Doherty during the 1970s.

horses. The first grandfather turns into the black horse from the west, who takes "the power to make live" and "the power to destroy,"[411] while the third grandfather from the east becomes the sorrel or red horse, who "shall walk upon the earth, and whatever sickens them you can make well."[412] Such aspirations for renewal reflected the desperate circumstance that tribes on the Great Plains or horse cultures faced as Western expansionism extinguished their nomadic way of life by the 1890s. Thus, Poitras uses horse imagery to re-enact a hope for autonomy at a time when the First Nations had regained some strength and were still "trying to defend their beliefs against overwhelming odds."[413]

Poitras' envisioning of prophesies also makes references to Christian apocalyptic beliefs, and *Big Iron Sky*'s four horses are related to The Holy Bible's Book of Revelations. St. John the Divine's end-of-the-world forecast features a white horse, black horse, pale or yellow horse, and a red horse, which provide their respective riders with particular roles when "the great day of His wrath is come."[414] For example, the white horse's mount has the power to "conquer" and the red horse's ride was able to "take peace from the earth."[415] Poitras was intrigued by the equine parallels in Black Elk's and St. John's visions.[416] Furthermore, interpretations of the latter narrative by Christian theologians often associate it with the Roman Empire's fall at the third century's close. "Tremendous revolutions terminated the pagan power...emblematical of that more terrible day when all the enemies of Christ, and the persecutors of his Church, shall stand trembling before his judgement-seat."[417] Hence, *Big Iron Sky* operated as a hybrid space of warning for those attending *Beyond History*, produced by an artist who seeks to remedy multinational corporations of their insatiable appetite for land and resources. "I see our civilization as a big machine that can't stop." [418]

Tribal losses are central to another work Edward Poitras re-installed for the Vancouver group show in 1989. *Small Matters* was created in 1985 for a group show at Regina's artist-run gallery, Neutral

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[411]Neihardt, 26.
[412]Ibid, 28.
[413]Poitras quoted in Curtis J. Collins,"Black Horse Offerings," Artscraft winter 1991: 26.
[414]"Book of Revelations," in The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952) chap. VI, ver. 17.
[415]Ibid, verses 1 and 4.
[416]Poitras quoted in Collins, 27.
[417]"Book of Revelations-Reflections,"in The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1952) chap. VII.
[418]Poitras quoted in Collins, 26

Ground, and then re-created as well as documented in 1988 for his *Indian Territory* solo exhibition at Saskatoon's Mendel Art Gallery. (ill.61) Its modest wall-sized scale contrasted *Big Iron Sky's* occupation of an entire room, while recalling the common materials and simple constructions of Marcel Duchamp's ready-made sculptures from the 1920s. (ill. 62) Using nails, wire, pages from a book, and vinyl lettering, the artist fabricates a temporary memorial to the First Nations who were slaughtered or dispossessed of their lands by the United States military. Situated inside each tiny corral-like configuration (composed of four nails wrapped with wire) was a crumpled page from Dee Brown's 1971 publication, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West. This semi-documentary text charts how America's westward expansion over three centuries was prefaced by the systematic oppression of Native peoples across the continent. Brown's immensely popular book promoted a re-consideration of U.S. nationhood according to the overwhelming violence that accompanied its fulfilment.[419] Poitras thus appropriates a radical Euro-American literary source to communicate his perspective on cultural genocide.

Wounded Knee, Summer Snow, Trail of Tears, and Sand Creek are locations and events in Brown's book that the artist employs in title-like fashion, stencilled below each of the four wire corrals. Wounded Knee marks the tragic narrative's end, and its last page provided Poitras with yet another historical connection to both the Ghost Dance phenomenon and Black Elk. The Sioux visionary was among the children who survived the massacre of approximately three-hundred-and-fifty people by the U.S. military's Seventh Regiment at Wounded Knee, South Dakota on December 29th, 1890. Chief Big Foot of the Sioux and his band were among the growing number of tribes that had taken up the Ghost Dance. The Paiute prophet, Wavoka, initiated the new dance-oriented religion which swept across the Great Plains during the late-nineteenth-century. However, this pacifist movement was perceived as a threat to America's westward expansion, which entailed gaining control over the First Nations and their lands. The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs' agents were particularly hostile towards the Ghost Dancers."Indians are dancing in the snow and are wild and crazy...The leaders should be arrested and confined at some military post until the matter is quieted, and this should be done at once."[420] The phrase "PEACE ON EARTH GOOD WILL TO MEN", from Brown's book, is legible

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[419]Over five million copies of Dee Brown's Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West have been sold, and it has been translated into fifteen languages. see www.amazon.com.
[420]Dee Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West (New York: Dover Books, 1971) 409.

within *Small Matters*' first enclosure, and it was printed on a banner in the church where the survivors of Wounded Knee, including Black Elk, were sheltered.[421] Such hypocritical circumstances guided Poitras' reconfiguring of North America's past through the 1990s.

The first page of Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee occupied the Regina artist's second enclosure and the caption, Summer Snow, stencilled in white letters below it, is derived from Brown's opening quotation of the Shawnee Chief Tecumseh. "Where today are the Pequot? Where are the Narragansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and many other once powerful tribes of our people? They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the White Man, as snow before a summer sun."[422] This quotation also motivated Poitras to list the names of ten vanquished tribes just below the Summer Snow titling, and their disappearance from American history is conceptualized by the barely perceivable white lettering against the gallery's white wall. The third enclosure, Trail of Tears, refers to the forced removal of tribes (including the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) from their ancestral lands in southeastern United States during the 1830s, while his fourth miniature corral, Sand Creek, was the site where approximately one-hundred-and-fifty Cheyenne men, women, and children were gunned down by U.S. Colonel Chivington's troops.[423] Both *Small Matters* and Dee Brown's book reverse the amnestic effect of the dominant society's chronicles. However, each time Poitras recreated this assemblage-installation, the newly oriented crumpled pages disclosed different textual snippets of Aboriginal genocide to viewers. The inherent "malléabilité" of his practice is thus revealed via the work's exhibition history.[424]

Among the most timely responses to ongoing Western strategies of cultural destruction in North America at *Beyond History* was Ron Noganosh's (b.1949) *Lubicon.* (ill. 63) This artist of Ojibwa ancestry from the Magnetawan reserve near Parry Sound, Ontario, studied graphic design and welding at George Brown College in Toronto. He then went on to receive an undergraduate degree from the University of Ottawa. Beginning in the mid 1980s, Noganosh exhibited at artist-run and public galleries including Ottawa's SAW Gallery, Axe Neo-7 in Hull, and the Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff. His work was selected from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's art

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[421]Ibid, 418.
[422]Tecumseh quoted in Brown, 1.
[423]Brown, 85-91
[424]Loubier, 14.

collection for *Strengthening the Spirit* in 1991 at the National Gallery of Canada's new multi-million dollar facility on Sussex Drive.[425] This display, for which there was neither catalogue nor opening, was among the NGC's earliest attempts to group particular artists of Aboriginal ancestry within an exclusively contemporary context. It also included works by Houle, Cardinal-Schubert, Boyer and Cisneros.

Noganosh's 1988 sculpture-installation at the Vancouver Art Gallery, like much of his more sculptural work, employed found objects to evoke highly contentious Aboriginal situations. Numerous assorted liquor bottles set against a large hand-painted half Canadian flag standing on its side, spelled out the tribal name Lubicon in capital letters. Clear liquid continuously descended through these interconnected bottles finally passing into a plastic skull, which served as the head for a beaded Woodland Indian costume laid out on a burial platform constructed of tree branches. Such combinations of materials contributed to the work's "vernacular existence in the world," and according to O'Doherty, makes installation-based productions "appeal to untrained as well as trained sensibilities."[426] At its most fundamental level, the plywood flag signifies Canada as the modern site of an alcohol-induced death, and the victim's Aboriginal identity or body is represented by the nineteenth-century beaded suit of clothing. The sound of people laughing and crying separated by brief silences added a haunting immediacy to *Lubicon*'s visual effect and reverberated into the adjacent spaces occupied by Cardinal-Schubert's and Poitras' works. Noganosh ultimately claimed to deal with "issues that affect everybody."[427] In the new introduction to the 1999 reprint of The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians, Harold Cardinal later maintained a similar perspective on the importance of Aboriginal issues. "The enlightened segment of Canadian society appears willing to break away from its past colonial mind set."[428]

Due to their isolated location in northern Alberta, the Lubicon Lake Cree were omitted from the 1899 Treaty Number Eight negotiations which ceded the northern parts of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, as well as the southern Northwest Territories to the British Crown. However, in

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[425]The National Gallery of Canada's new $150 million facility opened on May 21, 1988, its first permanent home in the institution's one hundred and three year history.
[426]O'Doherty, 71.
[427]Noganosh quoted in Hill and Duffek, 37.
[428]Harold Cardinal, The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians, 2cnd ed. (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre Ltd., 1999) xx.

1940, after realizing its failure to extinguish such aboriginal title, the federal government promised to create a reservation and sign a treaty adhesion with Lubicon.[429] By 1979, neither had occurred, while the provincial government was opening up areas around the disputed territory for natural resource development via the construction of exploration roads. From 1979 to 1983, over four- hundred oil wells were drilled by multinational corporations, including Shell Oil, within a fifteen mile radius of the community's land base. The local ecosystem suffered greatly, as did the Lubicon peoples' traditional hunting and trapping lifestyle."The number of moose we killed for food dropped from 219 in 1979 to 19 by 1983. Average income from trapping during the same period dropped from over $5,000 per trapper to less than $400. Dependence on welfare increased from under 10% to 95%. Social and medical problems of all kinds proliferated, including family break-down, still-born and prematurely born babies, suicide and alcohol-related violent deaths."[430]

On October 19, 1988, after numerous failed attempts to secure an agreement with the Government of Canada, the Lubicon set up peaceful road blocks to keep oil companies off their ancestral lands. By this time, the band had gained support for its cause from Aboriginal leaders across North America, the World Council of Churches, and a non-Native group called the Friends of the Lubicon. Lubicon leaders also submitted a complaint against the federal government to the United Nations Human Rights Committee.[431] The Royal Canadian Mounted Police stormed the band's roadblocks after five days, and charged twenty-seven people with defying a court order. Noganosh's 1988 sculpture-installation effectively distills an immediate legacy of colonial expansionism in North America, while lobbying viewers to support a tribe whose social, political, and cultural differences were being jeopardized by multinational corporate interests. By the summer of 1989, when *Beyond History* was closing the Progressive Conservative Party government, under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, had resumed negotiations with the Lubicon. However, incursions by federally licenced lumber companies, particularly Japan's Daishowa, were posing a new ecological threat to the disputed lands.

Co-curators Tom Hill and Karen Duffek ensured that the Vancouver Art Gallery's representation of work by artists of Aboriginal ancestry maintained both a cohesive and critical aesthetic perspective.

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[429]MacMillan, 256.
[430]"The Lubicon of Northern Alberta," Mar. 15, 2001 <<www. nativenet.uthsca.edu>>.
[431]Ibid.

Hill's viewpoint provided the show with a sense of historical development dating back to the 1960s, while accurately describing an ongoing "polarization" process within the larger Native art community.[432] The differences between unbroken tribal traditions, modern Indian art, and the rise of an inter-tribal avant-garde are carefully unravelled by Hill. Similarly, Duffek's curatorial contribution as a member of the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology acknowledged the necessary gravitation of contemporary art by artists of First Nations ancestry from museums to art galleries. Her attention to "personal aesthetic visions" pre-empted the show's lack of artists from Northwest Coast tribes, and adeptly rejected any possibility for a taxonomic approach to the art in question.[433]

Such a carefully measured take on issues relating to subjugated cultural identities in Canada gained the VAG praise in the art media for *Beyond History.* In C magazine, Ray Hartley suggests that the ten participating artists' creations transcend any vestiges of anthropological validation. "Their work is finally gaining recognition for the importance of its artistic contribution...And Canada's art galleries are beginning to show signs of recognition."[434] Allan Ryan's review for Parachute describes the artists selected by Hill and Duffek as a "loose alliance," whose "hybrid artform" was gaining a discourse in Canada via the growing body of exhibition-related literature. [435] Furthermore, the most uniform reaction to the show as a whole in these two art reviews as well as the mainstream media centred on an atmosphere of anger. "Most of the native Indian artists represented bare their wounds and scream their fury at a system they felt has ignored and reviled them." [436] The conveyance of this intense emotional state to viewers via such an incredible range of visual and audio effects was a defining moment for post-colonialism in Canada's artistic milieu. "The native cures himself of colonial neurosis by thrusting out the settler through force of arms."[437]

The predominance of installation-based productions at *Beyond History* by Robert Houle, Bob Boyer, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Mike MacDonald, Edward Poitras, and Ron Nonganosh also reflects a greater diversification within both the contemporary Native and Canadian art scenes during the 1980s.

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[432]Hill and Duffek, 12.
[433]Ibid, 27.
[434]Ray Hartley, "Beyond History," C magazine fall 1989: 75.
[435]Allan Ryan,"Beyond History," Parachute winter 1990: 48.
[436]Ed Godley, "Beyond History Shows Native Fury," The Vancouver Sun Jun. 7, 1989: 45.
[437]Fanon, 21.

Such a shift is most apparent in the way that Houle, Cardinal-Schubert, and Boyer, who first established themselves as painters, used the show as an opportunity to broaden their respective oeuvres. Similarly, MacDonald grafted a spatial element onto his video art, while Noganosh extended his normal sculpture conventions using audio equipment and a water pump. Poitras' re-creation of two installations dating back to the mid 1980s asserted his role as leader within the VAG's definition of a new aesthetic phenomenon. Furthermore, each re-reading, re-structuring, or re-visitation demanded by the aforementioned "champ[s] de l'art," was grounded in an Aboriginal experience outside the middle-class Euro-Canadian norm.[438] Perhaps the emergence of such an artistic practice in the nation's public, university, and artist-run galleries can be treated as a somewhat theatrical occurrence, where role reversals, electronic effects, and stage-like settings temporarily immersed non-Native viewers in a context of cultural difference.

## Post-colonial Positioning

In Chapter II, the manifestos of Frantz Fanon, Harold Cardinal, and Vine Deloria Jr. were offered as foundational writings in post-colonial criticism, as well as useful tools for the analysis of how acts of colonization and neo-colonization are artistically contested. By the 1990s, post-colonial criticism had secured a widespread academic credibility among Western nation-states, and Homi K. Bhabha has played a critical role in such an international educational shift. His The Location of Culture summarizes the discipline's political means and theoretical ways, while providing a framework for how Canada's national museum and art gallery would manifest celebrations of contemporary First Nations art in 1992. However, before proceeding to such a text that emerges from India's colonial ordeals, it is important to establish a contemporaneous North-American literary footing. George E. Sioui's 1992, For An Amerindian Autohistory, presents a framework for the study of history from a perspective that is directly related to the creative methods employed by the artists discussed thus far.

George E. Sioui was born just outside of Québec City, and studied at Université Laval where he received a Ph.D. in history. He went on to become an associate professor of history at Regina's Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. The author draws upon his Wendat ancestry to present a chronological rereading of Amerindian social ethics in the English translation of Pour une auto-histoire amérindienne published by McGill-Queen's University Press. This text revolves around the refutation

[438]Sioui, 63.

of Western narrative prejudices, many of which are embedded in the modern national narratives described in Chapter I. The want of the "capacity of language" is cited by Sioui as a primer to the colonial misconception that the First Nations had no historical sense.[439] Such a premise was extended by Newton MacTavish in 1925, to deny Aboriginal aesthetics both a history and a "modern sense," thereby stalling the possibility for a truly cross-cultural art history of Canada .[440] However, the exhibition catalogue essays by Tom Hill, Robert Houle, and Gary Mainprize, as well as Lee-Anne Martin and Gerald McMaster's *Indigena,* would gradually dislocate such Anglo-Canadian norms at the century's close. Moreover, the incorporation of English language text by Boyer, Cardinal-Schubert, Poitras, and Noganosh via installation practices made writing a critical artistic tool in countering its immoral applications."In your territory I use your language, your materials behind the white walls of advanced cultural expression. It is here that I wonder if I am really understood or if I am just filling space and time."[441]

Sioui focusses on the arrival of imported diseases to North America as an essential starting point for the retelling of history; claiming that the "bacteria that made them leave their own world" was the main culprit for an incredible depopulation.[442] He asserts that Amerindian numbers plummeted from eighteen- million people at the time of Western contact in the late-fifteenth century, to approximately three-hundred-thousand by 1900. Hence, the bacteria must be "tried" according to its origins in a rupture between the immigrant society and nature.[443] This perspective tests conventional anthropological accounts and conclusions in Canada, which used such statistical information to suggest Aboriginal peoples had an inferior relationship with land. "A quarter of a million people can not effectively occupy an area of nearly four million square miles."[444] Such claims by anthropologist Diamond Jenness, whose 1932 Indians of Canada study was reprinted by National Museum of Man for the second time in 1977, served as scientific justification for Euro-Canada's territorial displacement of Indian nations. However, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the ethical reversals demanded by Aboriginal academics like Sioui were an ever present subject in installation-based productions by artists including Joane Cardinal-Schubert. Her *Preservation of a Species: DECONSTRUCTIVISTS*

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[439]Ibid.
[440]MacTavish, 3.
[441]Poitras in Teitelbaum, 24.
[442]Sioui, 3.
[443]Ibid.
[444]Jenness, 2.

*(This is the house that Joe Built)* installation at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1992 would offer yet another take on Aboriginal demographics in Canada."What does part Indian Mean?... You don't get 50% or 25% or 16% TREATMENT WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE RACISM - IT IS ALWAYS 100%." (ill.64) Among the most important cultural burden for Sioui's promotion of new inter-racial bonds rests on land ownership. He points to how Western nation-states assumed the "moral obligation and hence the right to dispossess savage peoples of their lands," while Aboriginal tribes "had an obligation to share their continent with the newcomers."[445] In many respects, installation-based productions allowed artists of Aboriginal ancestry to symbolically take back territory at publically funded venues, while imposing a moral tax on Euro-Canadian viewers for the tragic consequences of tribal dispossession.

The post-colonial return to ancient indigenous symbols including the "sacred circle" recognized by Robert Houle in the 1982 *New Work For A New Generation* show, is consistent with For An Amerindian Autohistory's second chapter, entitled "The Sacred Circle of Life."[446] Sioui's belief in how the "power of universe always acts according to circles" also coincides with Edward Poitras' stone circle in *Stars in Sand.*[447] Both seek to reinvigorate the circle's spiritual force as part of a necessary perceptual change to human existence in North America. Robert Houle's *Zero Hour* advanced a similar type of healing contingent upon the circle's spiritual dynamic as revealed by Sioui."The sacred circle of life...is divided into four quarters. Four is the sacred number in America: there are four sacred directions, four sacred colours, four races of humans,...as well as four ages of human life...four seasons, and four times of day which are also sacred."[448] Hence, the Toronto-based artist's cross tribal borrowing from Hopi legends and Navajo aesthetics to create a temporary medicine-wheel installation, is reinforced through colour, directional, and numerical codes common to many Aboriginal belief systems including those of his Saultaux ancestors. Such hybrid art bears a close resemblance to the quality of Sioui's narrative, which utilizes Wendat history as a principal departure point for a contemporary Aboriginal knowledge that also celebrates inter-tribal associations with ancient Iroquois, Ojibwa, and Sioux beliefs.

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[445]Sioui, 39.
[446]Robert Houle, New Work By A New Generation (Regina: Norman McKenzie Art Gallery, 1982) 4.
[447]Sioui, 8.
[448]Ibid, 10.

Black Elk, Bruce Trigger, and Father Joseph-François Lafitau represent the range of scholarly fields that Sioui draws upon in his contemporary re-configuration of Amerindian social ethics. Black Elk, Hehak Sapa, or Nickolas Black Elk's visions offer an understanding of humanity's connection to the universe, and their poignancy rests in part on the orator's experience as a Wounded Knee survivor. The Sioux prophet's stories circulated across North America and Europe from 1932 onward via John G. Neihardt's interpretation Black Elk Speaks (quoted earlier). Such theology vetted through the violence of oppression served as an ideological primer for a post-war generation of Aboriginal professionals including Sioui and Poitras. However, information-gathering by non-Natives has been frequently criticized by First Nations leaders in the post-modern era, as anthropologists are often considered "ideological vultures."[449] Similarly, both Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Rebecca Belmore came to employ installation-based practices in a concerted attack through the late 1980s on institutions which fostered "a world view that Native culture was dead."[450]

Sioui's auto-history, with its foreword by Bruce Trigger, chair of McGill University's department of anthropology during the 1980s and 1990s, transcends this intellectual schism between Native and non-Native peoples by insisting upon and formulating new "strategies for intercultural action."[451] Trigger's academic work is noted for generating a more complex and respectful understanding of Aboriginal history, which serves to "right the injustices of the past and present."[452] Such revisionist or new anthropology is utilized by Sioui in concert with textual evidence from New France. The Jesuit Father, Joseph-François Lafitau's observations during his missionary work among the Iroquoian and Wendat nations in the 1740s supply proof of "the remarkable social equilibrium of Amerindian societies."[453] However, Christianity's eventual displacement of the "Great Spirit" followed by the residential school travesties mentioned in Chapter II produced generations of Native peoples in the late twentieth century who considered the church a "poison."[454] Thus, the author attempts to reverse the predominately negative impact of scientific and religious master narratives through a historical rehabilitation that incorporates the West's most candid and innovative interpretations of Aboriginal knowledge.

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[449]Deloria, 95.
[450]Joan Cardinal-Schubert, "In the Red," Fuse magazine fall 1989: 23.
[451]Sioui, 37.
[452]Bruce Trigger, "Foreword,"in Sioui, xv.
[453]Ibid, 16.
[454]Cardinal, 80

Sioui's extractions from divergent sources over time also celebrate an inter-tribal strength, while bridging epistemological disparities. Perhaps this process can be best described as not only an intellectual revision, but a moral healing. "This book was written because conventional history has been unable to produce a discourse that respects Amerindians and their perception of themselves and the world, one that would be appropriate to harmonizing society."[455] From the spring through to the fall of 1992, co-curators Gerald McMaster and Lee-Anne Martin provided visitors to Canada's national museum with an opportunity to witness and enact the aesthetic ramifications of such a perceptual empowerment. "To be an Aboriginal person, to identify with an indigenous heritage in these late colonial times, requires a life of reflection, critique, persistence and struggle."[456]

The colonial experience of India's indigenous population is the location from which Homi K. Bhabha speaks, and since the 1980s, his theories have opened new fields of academic awareness. Bhabha graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Bombay and completed a Doctor of Philosophy at Oxford University. He taught English at Sussex University from 1979 until joining the University of Chicago, and in fall of 2001 joined Harvard University where he presently teaches in the English and Afro-American Studies departments. The celebrated author's interdisciplinary interests have often extended into the visual arts via London's Institute of Contemporary Art and New York's Artforum magazine, and his concept of "cultural difference" is key to this study's art historical trajectory.[457]

In 1994, Routledge editions of New York and London, re-issued a selection of Bhabha's essays originally published during the late 1980s and early 1990s, along with some new work, under the title The Location of Culture. Like Sioui's autohistory, this seminal reader in post-colonial literary criticism combats past Western oppression, which in its contemporary form threatens to victimize the future of underprivileged peoples around the world. "There is a sharp growth in a new Anglo-American nationalism which increasingly articulates its economic and military power in political acts that express a neo-imperialist disregard for the independence and autonomy of peoples and places in the Third World."[458] Aboriginal nations represent Third World islands in the First World, or in the NIB's former

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[455]Sioui, 99.
[456]McMaster and Martin, 11.
[457]Bhabha, 2.
[458]Ibid, 20

president, George Manuel's words a 'Fourth World' whose limited land holdings and political autonomy continue to be jeopardised by Euro-American public and corporate incursions.[459] Installation-based productions at *Beyond History* invoked tribal histories from across North America as longstanding evidence of such Western disregard for human rights.

Bhabha characterizes oppressed peoples resistance to colonial and neo-colonial pressures according to articulations of "cultural difference."[460] He acknowledges Fanon's concept of "culture-as-political-struggle," which imparts post-colonial discourses with a "Realpolitik." [461] The works discussed thus far engaged viewers in this very cultural-political process through aesthetic means where technical and conceptual separations between European and indigenous North-American art are commonly traversed. Houle, Poitras, Cardinal-Schubert, MacDonald, and Noganosh thus carry out the "hither and dither" movement between non-Western and Western sources that Bhahba claims as paramount to understanding how subaltern voices emerged during the late-twentieth century.[462] "I accept that cultural differences exist...Members of the dominant culture can't always rely on what they have been taught before, that system does not always work. "[463] The possibility for untranslatable Aboriginal knowledge easily rested within the perpetually open parameters of installation art.

Bhabha considers cultural hybridity as an essential method for breaking the "epistemological 'edge' of the West," and he identifies Christianity and the English language as providing key source material for India's Brahmans.[464] In North America, Christian imagery has been used by Aboriginal artists for centuries, and in 1973, Norval Morrisseau depicted Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Joseph, and St. John the Baptist as Native people in a series of acrylic-on-canvas portraits. Similarly, Edward Poitras turned to The Holy Bible for conceptual references in *Big Iron Sky*; a move that was inspired by Wavoka's absorption of Western religion in an effort to renew Aboriginal spiritualism. The Paute prophet's Ghost Dance movement depended in part on concurrent Christian evangelical trends that were sweeping across North America in the 1880s. Black Elk's subsequent perpetuation of Ghost Dance beliefs

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[459]see George Manuel and Michael Posluns, The Forth World: An Indian Reality (Don Mills: Collier-Macmillan, 1974).
[460]Bhabha, 2.
[461]Ibid, 35, 25.
[462]Ibid, 4.
[463]Poitras quoted in Collins, 28.
[464]Bhabha, 30.

among the Sioux through the twentieth century also related to his profession as a catechist for the Roman Catholic Church of Nebraska. "I learned that many believed that Black Elk and white assistants sat down and invented what was practically a new religion, explicitly designed to blend teachings of Christianity and Lakota spiritualism." [465]

The English language has also been ingeniously manipulated throughout the twentieth century by Aboriginal leaders, authors, and artists. As mentioned in Chapter II, both Harold Cardinal and Vine Deloria Jr. used their respective writings to hold Euro-North-American society accountable for its socio-political dilemmas, while promoting the usefulness of Western knowledge among Aboriginal youth in asserting their sense of difference. "Accommodation to white society is primarily in terms of gaining additional techniques by which they can give a deeper root to existing Indian traditions."[466] The infusion of English words with an Aboriginal perspective became more specialized at the twentieth-century's close, through the efforts of professionals ranging from Georges E. Sioui to Joane Cardinal-Schubert. The Calgary-based artist's *Preservation of a Species* installation series often featured blackboard-like walls inscribed with a narrative that she built upon over time. *The Lesson, Cultural Currency,* which first appeared at Montreal's Galerie Articule in 1990, featured phrases enunciating the inherent violence of Indian-White relations in Canada. YOU ARE KILLING OUR PEOPLE, AND YOU ARE KILLING THE LAND. (ill. 64) Cardinal-Schubert also developed this same narrative in a variety of publications, including her Thunder Bay Art Gallery exhibition catalogue, This Is My History, and an article entitled "In the Red" for Fuse magazine's 1989 fall issue.

What is particular to post-colonial acts in Canada is that they commonly pivot around moments just prior to the socio-political subjugation of tribal societies. These followed east-to- west growth patterns among immigrant populations from the fifteenth-century onward. For example, Sioui's auto-history is heavily influence by links between the French and Wendat at the outset of the 1700s, whereas the art of Cardinal-Schubert and Poitras frequently recalls the close of the 1800s, when Britain, Canada, and the United States of America came into intense contact with the Blackfoot, Blood, Plains Cree, Métis and Sioux nations. In Bhabha's estimation, the "emergence of Western modernity" during the late- eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries was commensurate with colonialism's mandate to

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[465]Paul Chaat Smitt, "Home of the Brave," C magazine summer 1994: 39.
[466]Deloria Jr., 239.

establish "civility" abroad. After almost three centuries of indigenous peoples' resistance to the imposition of colonial and neo-colonial order, from locations ranging from Africa to North America, there has arisen an intellectual crisis in Western knowledge. "Between Western sign and its colonial signification there emerges a map of misreading that embarrasses the righteousness of recordation and its certainty of good government."[467] The artists of Aboriginal ancestry under review exploited such a hypocritical space during the 1980s and early 1990s, and their respective installation-based productions frequently disgraced the Government of Canada's actions in very direct terms.

Perhaps the post-colonial goal for writers ranging from Frantz Fanon to Homi K. Bhabha can be best summarized as a re-inscription of Native, indigenous, or Third-and-Fourth-World identities, which have been rendered dormant or impugned under the power-knowledge couplet of modern Western authority around the globe. Although Bhabha's rehistorizing effort seems to soften the ongoing fact of violence , which Fanon, Cardinal, and Deloria Jr. claim in graphic terms as an ever present colonized condition. This may be due to the author's temporal distance from India's struggles for independence during the 1940s, and the academic hindsight he uses to carefully build a historical argument. Conversely, a riotous and personal urgency springs from The Wretched of the Earth, The Unjust Society, and Custor Died for Your Sins, which may be attributed to each writer's respective involvement in the Algerian Liberation Front, the Indian Association of Alberta, and the National Congress of American Indians. George E. Sioui's narrative is similarly charged with a real life experience as he was arrested during the spring of 1982, along with three other members of the Wendat nation for performing an annual "purification and thanksgiving" ceremony in a Quebec provincial park.[468] Sioui thus joins theory and activism at a real site of cultural identity. Such an act brings the same "profound significance" to For An Amerindian Autohistory that the literary and visual productions of Joseph Tehawehron David conferred upon the *Indigena* show.[469]

### *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives*

The *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives* exhibition was a co-production between the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC), the DIAND's Indian Art Centre, and the Society of

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[467]Bhabha, 95.
[468]Sioui, 110.
[469]McMaster and Martin, 140.

Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry, with financial assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts' visual arts section. It represented a critical convergence of Indian activism and post-colonial theory set within an institution which, as examined in Chapter I, had scientifically authorized Western cultural superiority in Canada for a over century. The nineteen contemporary artists chosen by co-curators Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin were asked to address issues of "discovery, colonization, cultural critique and tenacity" as they related to the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' landing in the Americas.[470] Thus, the Italian mariner's famed voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was symbolically transformed into an Aboriginal rallying cry from the spring through to the fall of 1992.

*Indigena*'s joining of art and politics is made immediately apparent in the exhibition catalogue, which opens with a poem by Joseph Tehawehron David. His participation in the 1990 armed struggle at Oka, Quebec, inspired a range of multi-disciplinary cultural productions that espoused a highly politicized Aboriginal mentality. "We are the dried husks, the empty shells. As Native, men, women, raped and sodomized - angry yet...So very tired."[471] This expression of ire and fatigue mirrors that enunciated in a 1989 excerpted statement by George Erasmus, the Assembly of First Nations' National Chief from 1986 to 1991, which followed David's poem."What are WE going to celebrate? I don't like what has happened over the last 500 years, 125 years...We want to do something different. We are sick and tired of being your conscience."[472] The conscience Erasmus describes belongs to middle-and upper-class Euro-Canadians who throughout 1992, were reminded by Aboriginal politicians, elders, academics, and artists that Western society had yet to gain their trust after five-hundred years.

The exhibition catalogue thus surpasses a strictly curatorial function, and reads more like a cultural manifesto summarizing Aboriginal resistance to European immorality since the moment of Columbus' arrival. The scholarly topics redressed beyond the spectre of art history by the six guest essayists include anthropology, history, and political science. As such, the *Indigena* publication reveals a post-colonial literary trend in Canada whose inherent cross-disciplinary quality is not unlike installation's all-encompassing potential and "trajectoires multiples."[473] This project was a dramatic shift for the CMC, which now assumed the role of sponsoring contemporary art that tore away at its institutional

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[470]Ibid.
[471]Joseph Tehawehron David in McMaster and Martin, 7.
[472]George Erasmus, "Statement," in McMaster and Martin, 9.
[473]Loubier, 13.

authority over the history of Canada's first peoples.

Co-curators Gerald McMaster and Lee-Martin represented the second generation of professionally trained cultural workers of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada; following the lead of Alex Janvier and Tom Hill. McMaster, who assisted Sarain Stump in founding the Indart program in 1973, studied at the Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico and went on to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. From 1977 to 1981, he returned to the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College serving as the Indian Art program co-ordinator. After Robert Houle's resignation from the National Museum of Man in 1981 (which was renamed the CMC), he became the institution's curator of contemporary Indian art. Lee-Ann Martin was born in Toronto and received her Bachelor of Arts from University of Maine, where much of her studies focussed on anthropology. She graduated from the University of Toronto's museum studies program in 1989, and served as the CMC's curator in residence from 1989 to 1990, when the *Indigena* show was conceived. In 1991, she also organized a show at the SAW Gallery entitled *Solidarity: Art After Oka* in response to the Oka Crisis, and it featured works created during or immediately after the seventy-eight day armed standoff by Lance Belanger, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Domingo Cisneros, Joe David, Robert Houle, and Gerald McMaster.[474]

McMaster's and Martin's collective essay in the *Indigena* publication celebrates how artists of Indian, Inuit and Métis ancestry in Canada produce a contemporary indigenous North-American aesthetic of identity. It also opens with a quotation by the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs at a land-claim hearing in British Columbia's Supreme Court, who demanded that Canada's Eurocentric "systems and processors" be placed under "attack."[475] This need for dramatic socio-political eradication is linked by the co-curators to the Western ills that arrived in North America five centuries ago."In 1492, Europe was a world in decay."[476] Fanon expressed a similar sentiment in 1961, when he called the United States a "monster," where "the taints, the sickness, and the inhumanity of Europe had grown to appalling dimensions."[477] The exhibition's theme was therefore rooted in a post-colonial literary process of expunging modern Western history; an exercise which was played out through

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[474]Lee-Ann Martin, Solidarity: Art After Oka (Ottawa: SAW Gallery, 1991) n.p.
[475]Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw quoted in McMaster and Marin, 11.
[476]McMaster and Martin, 11.
[477]Fanon, 313.

Canadian contexts by the guest writers and selected artists to be discussed.

Much of this show's combined visual and textual strategy hinges upon local examples, as the co-curators facilitated a plural reading of First Nations history with an overt political intent. "The artists and especially the writers in INDIGENA reject the ethnocentric language of conquest and dominance, and the denial of Aboriginal identity and sovereignty that it implies."[478] Gloria Cranmer Webster, an academic and curator from Alert Bay who studied anthropology at the University of British Columbia, recounts how her community has taken back their cultural sovereignty in "From Colonization to Repatriation." As a member of the 'Namgis people, she presents a personal perspective on the social and aesthetic "loss" caused by the 1884 Potlatch law mentioned in Chapter I.[479] However, the inequitable status or "dark years"assigned for over a century to those peoples who were "not English and not Christian" on Canada's Northwest Coast, was now being reversed as public institutions including the CMC and the Royal Ontario Museum were giving back misappropriated Aboriginal ceremonial gear.[480] Alootook Ipellie's essay "The Colonization of the Arctic" while beyond the scope of this dissertation, is worthy of note here because he too speaks of the "incalculable injustices" wrought upon the Inuit by outsiders. [481]

The relevance of George E. Sioui's writing to the post-war inter-tribal artistic community in Canada is affirmed by his presence in the *Indigena* catalogue. Sioui's essay "1992: The Discovery of Americity" sheds doubts on the claims of mainstream Euro-Canadian history that the Hodenosaunee (Iroquois) systematically destroyed the Wendat (Huron) during early colonial times. He emphasizes how this crucial Western narrative of Northeastern North America became an intellectual template for the consideration of all Aboriginals as "an essentially irrational set of human beings."[482] His rethinking of Huron-Iroquois relations then proffers a universal "Native American thought system," that can contribute to stemming as well as curing of the West's current ideological bankruptcy.[483] The year 1992 consequently marks a moment when "white America" had reached the same level of decadence

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[478]McMaster and Martin, 16.
[479]Gloria Cramner Webster, "From Colonization to Repatriation," in McMaster and Martin, 30.
[480]Ibid, 36.
[481]Allotook Ipellie, "The Colonization of the Arctic,"in McMaster and Martin, 47.
[482]George E. Sioui, "1992: The Discovery of Americity," in McMaster and Martin, 60.
[483]Ibid.

as "ancient Europe" in 1492, which warrants Sioui's call for the "resurrection of red America."[484] Since the early 1980s, these same sentiments have guided a contingent of artists of Aboriginal ancestry from across Canada to place their respective practices in the service of an aesthetic uprising. An excerpt from a 1981 artist's statement by Domingo Cisneros, republished in the *Indigena* catalogue foreshadows a particular quality that installation had come to embody. "The only cure is an art that is exorcist and warrior."[485] In many respects, the colonial and neo-colonial collusions of art history, politics, and science that motivated the CMC's inception were being actively expelled in 1992 via this show's adjuratory nature.

Loretta Todd, a Vancouver-based television and film producer of Métis ancestry, questions how contemporary cultural constructions emanating out of First Nations communities are being consumed through the rubric of post-modernism, in her essay "What More Do They Want?" The post-Second World War "rupture" in Western thought is viewed with scepticism, and she abhors the resulting reduction of Aboriginal issues by non-Natives to "badges of the politically correct."[486] Todd explicitly maintains the right to prioritize autochthonous perspectives in North America, and questions any possibility that the First World can produce a genuinely interwoven aesthetic-political radicalism. She cites the "Fourth World" as a place where twentieth-century Aboriginal peoples are "caught in the grasp of neocolonialism."[487] The term Native according to Cramer, has increasingly become an interdisciplinary academic "discourse" inscribed by non-Natives, not unlike Western anthropology's longstanding ownership over the Indian of the nineteenth century.[488] North American museums, including the CMC, began to alter their exclusive authority by giving voice to the First Nations in the 1980s; however, the West's post-modern co-options often facilitated a continuance of Aboriginal powerlessness.

Subjectivity also concerns Alfred Young Man, a graduate of London's Slade School of Fine Arts and Assistant Professor at the University of Lethbridge since 1977. In his essay "The Metaphysics of North American Indian Art," he asserts that the "Native perspective" on Native art may make many

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[484]Ibid, 64
[485]Cisneros quoted in McMaster and Martin, 138.
[486]Loretta Todd, "What More Do They Want?," in McMaster and Martin, 72.
[487]Ibid, 75.
[488]Ibid, 77.

Euro-Canadian readers both "uneasy" and "culpable," as it demands that the descendants of Europeans in North America take responsibility for the legacy of colonialism's immorality. The works of art amassed for *Indigena* served an analogous function, while sharing a common ground with post- war avant-garde movements in the United States and Canada."In the past, conflict in the political world has served some very noble and useful purposes in Euro-America's art and Native American art has clearly turned it to a similar purpose."[489] Young Man offers Vine Deloria Jr.'s work as a key literary source in "liberating the metaphysical world of the Amer-ican Indian." His recognition of such a highly politicized aesthetic task, and its development since the late 1960s, matches the chronological trajectory of this study. The central problem for Young Man, who was the coordinator of the fourth National Native Indian Artists Symposium sponsored by SCANA, consists of breaking anthropology's institutional stranglehold on the consideration of Aboriginal cultural practices in the late twentieth century.

The considerable presence of installation art at *Indigena* indicated that it had achieved a particular historical significance in Canada among artists of Aboriginal ancestry born during the 1940s and 1950s.Such a contextually oriented practice was particularly well suited to the exhibition's post-colonial theme, which not only salvaged North America's maligned indigenous past but sought to establish a new position of future strength for Native peoples. However, concurrent political negotiations between the Government of Canada and First Nations political bodies lagged behind the major successes reached in artistic forums such as the VAG and CMC. Installation would prove to be a timely and effective tool for a growing contingent of artists including Poitras, Cardinal-Schubert, Houle, Boyer, and Nonganosh to maintain public awareness of unsettled Aboriginal issues within the nation's identity.

Lance Belanger (b.1956), an artist of Maliseet ancestry from the Tobique reservation in New Brunswick, re-installed his 1991 tribal memorial, entitled *Lithic Spheres,* for *Indigena.* Belanger studied at Manitou College in 1976, and then at Saskatchewan Indian Federated College from 1977 to 1979. During the early 1980s, he began to exhibit his paintings and sculptures at public and commercial venues in Canada and the United States. Belanger served on the board of directors of SCANA in 1990, and was a founding member of the Om niiak Native Arts Group located in Ottawa.

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[489]Alfred Young Man,"The Metaphysics of North American Indian Art," in McMaster and Martin, 85.

In 1989 he organized an exhibition, entitled *Decelebration,* at the SAW artist-run gallery in Ottawa. It included his art as well as works by Shirley Bear, Domingo Cisneros, Peter J. Clair, and Ron Noganosh. The show functioned as "a native North-American counter-offensive to the grandiose celebrations which will mark the legendary 'discovery' by Christopher Columbus."[490] Two years later, during an artist's residency at Tranaeker Castle in Denmark, Belanger began creating the enigmatic spheres that occupied his work for years to come.

*Lithic Spheres* (at the CMC ) in 1992 featured five-hundred variously sized gold and silver balls carved from Styrofoam. (ill.65) These spheres, with their metallic paint surfaces, were piled on the museum's floor and surrounded by the four lengths of a gilded wooden frame. The frame's corners were left open or unattached and the entire assemblage-installation occupied an area measuring approximately twenty-five squared feet. However, it should be noted that his presentation of these spheres both at indoor and outdoor locations throughout the 1990s was altered to accommodate each venue. For example, a spring 1993 installation of *Lithic Spheres* at Gallery Connexion, an artist-run centre in Fredericton, New Brunswick, did not include the above-mentioned frame and the numerous balls were laid atop a bed of soil.

The idea for such a continuously evolving installation-based production was inspired by Belanger's visit to the Taíno Museum in the Dominican Republic during the late 1980s. It was there that he observed displays of stone balls removed from ancient grave sites. The Taíno were among the first indigenous peoples of the Americas encountered by Christopher Columbus on the island of Hispaniola (currently the Dominican Republic and Haiti) in 1492.[491] However, by the mid 1500s they were virtually extinct as a direct result of Spain's colonial endeavours in the Carribean. "The Indians of Hispaniola were thus the first in the New World to experience the avarice of the Europeans, their violent character and overwhelming military superiority, and the devastating assortment of diseases they carried."[492] The stone balls or lithic spheres found during nineteenth- and twentieth-century archeological excavations in the Dominican Republic are part of a larger unexplained Native cultural

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[490]Jacqueline Fry, "Decelebration," in Lance Belanger, Decelebration (Ottawa: Saw Gallery, 1989) 6.
[491]This tribal designation is also commonly applied to the ancient indigenous inhabitants of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Bahama Islands, and the Virgin Islands. see Irving Rouse, The Tainos (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[492]Samuel M. Wilson, Hispaniola: Caribbean Chiefdoms in the Age of Columbus (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990) 2.

phenomenon of the West Indies and Central America. Massive ground-stone spheres measuring twenty feet in circumference and weighing more than fifteen tons have been found in the jungles of Costa Rica, while the smaller versions such as those created by Taíno are found more commonly around grave sites.

The Maliseet artist's fascination with these mysterious ancient objects was due in part to their "lost meaning," which provided him with a tribal aesthetic that had resisted anthropological interpretation. His *Lithic Spheres* thus celebrate the incompleteness of Western knowledge, while protesting the tragic commencement of European colonization in the Americas.[493] Their gold or silver surfaces designate the search for precious metals that Columbus carried out on behalf of the Spanish monarchy, and led to the enslavement, torture, and massacre of countless Native peoples."Five hundred funerary spheres in commemoration of an indigenous race we will never know."[494] The finely moulded open-ended frame situated on the floor further signified the inability of Western artistic values to wholly contain or accommodate Aboriginal cultural practices; and yet Belanger's profession as a contemporary artist in Canada is dependent on such imported traditions. Perhaps the artist's description of *Lithic Spheres* could double as a characterization of his role within Euro-North-American society five-hundred years after the infamous Italian mariner's arrival.

The *Indigena* theme and the increasing presence of contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry at the CMC during the last decade of the twentieth century disjointed its modern function as a repository for "Canadian history in the broadest sense."[495] Installations like Belanger's seized upon such contextual gaps in Canada's cultural institutions, asserting an aesthetic presence that can not be fully comprehended without a greater challenge to Western intellectual boundaries and ethical legacies.

The serial quality of Belanger's *Lithic Spheres* installations are similar to Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species* productions from the mid 1980s to the early 1990s, and for *Indigena,* she re-created *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)* (ill. 47,48, 66,& 67). The 1989-1990 work occupied a prime site at the entrance to the CMC's Indian and Inuit Art Gallery, which was

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[493]Lucy Lippard,"Lost Meanings, Kept Secrets: Lance Belanger's Neo Lithic Tango" in Lance Belanger, Tango (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 1995) 34.
[494]Belanger quoted in McMaster and Martin, 124.
[495]National Museum of Man, Annual Report (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1964) 21.

indicative of the prominent role Cardinal-Schubert had assumed by 1992 in voicing post-colonial concerns."[This] is an installation that visually discusses RACISM through an examination of labels and imposed stereotypes that I have experienced growing up in a non-Native society."[496]

Text was the most prominent feature in the 1992 version of *Preservation of a Species: DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)*, as the artist filled numerous chalk-board walls that surrounded viewers with personal commentaries. The mini house-like structure served as a memorial to the artist's father Joe Cardinal, who was of Piegan ancestry. It featured a death-bed statement he made to his children. IF I HAD MADE A STAND-YOU wouldn't have to you've got to stand up to them - Don't let those bastards get you. Just Stand up and Never give in. (ill.66) Cardinal-Schubert's stand for Aboriginal rights is laced with anger conveyed by the writing which dominates this work, and is part of a larger running narrative mentioned earlier. Much of her activism is aimed at gaining public funding for artists of Aboriginal ancestry and demanding control over the artistic patrimony of the First Nations in public museums. The Canada Council for the Arts and Calgary's Glenbow Museum were among the institutions she held directly accountable for the "white" power-money dynamic of exclusion in North-American cultural industries.[497]

Photographic images of the artist's family also figured prominently in *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built),* as multiple copies of her portrait and a snapshot of her parents are placed in rows on a board that focusses on contradictions in the federal government's Indian-status-granting methods. Her brother, Douglas Cardinal, is honoured on another wall via pictures and text for his achievements as the architect who designed the Canadian Museum of Civilization's new multi-million-dollar facility on the Rideau River. The profound interconnection of these siblings' oeuvres at *Indigena* represents a critical moment for Native cultural empowerment in Canada. It also marks the entrance of a hybrid knowledge into the nation's professional class, as indicated by a passage from the Edmonton Journal about the architect which Cardinal-Schubert copied in chalk. NOW HE HAS SHORT HAIR A FASHIONABLE SWEATER AND AN OTTER SKIN COAT. BUT HE CONTINUES TO VISIT HIS SWEAT LODGE AND PERFORM NATIVE RITUALS. (ill. 68) The artist never lets up on a personal claim to cultural difference, nor the vigilance that it demands from

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[496]Cardinal-Schubert quoted in McMaster and Martin, 132.
[497]Joane Cardinal-Schubert, "In the Red," Fuse magazine fall 1989: 22.

her and her family.

The pronounced campaign of Native and Métis oppression waged by federal authorities in the late-nineteenth century, as mentioned in Chapter I, did not escape Cardinal-Schubert's temporal presentation in Hull. Louis Riel's image occupied the lower section of a rectangular assemblage affixed to a black wall, and an actual open lock hangs from the clasp imbedded in his face. (ill.69) The word 'diary' appears below the famous Métis leader's likeness, and above it was a section of braided rope. Her incorporation of this 1987 assemblage, originally entitled *Keepers of the Vision: Diary Book 1* into a larger installation, conceptually recalls Riel's 1885 death-by-hanging for his part in the Red River and North-West rebellions. However, he is not treated as a criminal but rather a visionary who sought to formulate a geopolitical entity where peoples of Aboriginal, European, and Métis ancestry could maintain their respective cultural differences. The symbolic unlocking of his diary relates to the artist's research in the Glenbow Museum's archives, where she found the last letter written by Riel before his execution in which Riel calls for the reader to pray for him.[498]

Death permeates the *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS* installation at a variety of levels, and the grave site in the centre of Cardinal-Schubert's space was reminiscent of a similar construction in her *Deep Freeze* production for *Beyond History.* (ill.70) Inside the black fencing were five freestanding female stick figures constructed from wooden branches and sporting kerchiefs on their heads. (ill. 67) The artist also grouped the same type of figures just outside the fencing, and, using paint, rendered seemingly screaming faces on all of them. Such human pain stems from the Canadian government's 1876 Indian Act, which divided and destroyed Native families and communities via bureaucratic definitions of Indian status. These prop-like beings also relate to how Native children were separated from their relatives in residential schools where many of them died from the psychological and physical ailments such institutions induced. (ill. 71) Each figure seems to embody the crying out communicated through the artist's written narratives, which are reminiscent in tone to the manifestos discussed in Chapter II by Cardinal and Deloria Jr.. She, like they, brings the facts of Aboriginal tragedies in North America's history to bear on viewers, as *Preservation of a Species: DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)* surrounds them with textual and conceptual cues."The spectator is harassed. Every bit

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[498]Deborah Godin, This is My History: Joane Cardinal Schubert (Thunder Bay: Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1985) 4.

of space is marked."[499]

Cardinal-Schubert used her artist's statement in the *Indigena* catalogue to draw a further relationship between "the invasion of our land and our people" initiated by "a man from Spain" in 1492 with instances of contemporary injustices faced by tribes such as the Lubicon.[500] During the late 1980s, their "suffering" was a touchstone for Aboriginal activism; just as the 1990 Oka Crisis would come to qualify the simmering violence of First Nations communities across the country.[501]

Joseph Tehawehron David's (b.1957 ) participation in *Indigena* heightened the show's "Realpolitick," as he created an installation evoking the final days of the armed stand-off at Oka that pitted Mohawks and Warrior Society members against the Canadian Armed Forces and the Sûreté du Quebec (QPP).[502] (ill. 72 & 73) David was born and raised on the Kanehsatake Mohawk territory, where he followed the Longhouse teachings first established by the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake in the early 1800s. Prior to his direct involvement in what has become known as the Oka Crisis (July to September 1990) he was studying art education at Montreal's Concordia University. In October 1990, David, or Stonecarver (a Warrior code name he received during the stand-off), was charged by the Crown's prosecutor in the St. Jerome provincial courthouse with obstruction of justice, participating in a riot, and possession of a weapon dangerous to the public peace.[503] Following his release on bail, the Mohawk artist created a series of paintings, sculptures, and installations related to the summer's events in Kanehsatake, often using materials he collected during the seventy-eight day siege such as: razor wire, army trip flares, and surveyor's markers. These creations appeared in a variety of group shows including *Solidarity: Art After Oka* mentioned earlier, and *Okanata* (parts 1 and 2) at the Workscene Gallery and A Space in Toronto. The latter project's combination of new works by artists of non-Native and Native ancestry also featured the art of Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Robert Houle, and Rebecca Belmore. Thus, in 1991 these particular artist-run centres functioned as sites for what Lee-Ann Martin described as: "a healing process that must begin now."[504]

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[499]O'Doherty, 72.
[500]Cardinal-Schubert in McMaster and Martin, 132.
[501]Ibid.
[502]Bhabha, 25.
[503]Loreen Pindera,"The Making of a Warrior," Saturday Night magazine Apr. 1991: 39.
[504]Lee-Ann Martin, Solidarity: Art After Oka (Ottawa: SAW Gallery, 1991) n.p.

On March 11, 1990, residents of Kanehsatake and the Mohawk Warrior Society placed a series of roadblocks around a small pine forest that the town of Oka had begun to stake out for an expansion to its golf course. Unsuccessful Aboriginal claims for title over the lands in the region dated back to 1781, and by the 1980s, *the Pines,* as well as an adjoining Mohawk cemetery, functioned as a buffer zone between the local municipality and the unrecognized reservation. Many of Joseph Tehawehron David's relatives were buried in the threatened graveyard, which was within metres of the golf course's ninth hole. The Sûreté du Québec's attempt to storm the Mohawk roadblocks using assault rifles, concussion grenades, and tear gas on July 11, ended in tragedy as Corporal Marcel Lemay was fatally wounded. On August 14, following a meeting involving Quebec's premier Robert Bourassa and the federal public security minister, Sam Elkas, the Government of Canada deployed more than 2,500 military personnel in locations around Oka and nearby Chateauguay."Guns, warriors in masks, barricades, police, posturing national leaders, and finally the army, tanks, choppers, and razor wire. I've grown up in Kanehsatake and this situation has been coming on for years."[505] Over the course of the summer, the international media descended upon Oka, while various human rights groups stationed observers in Kanehsatake and Kahnawake. By September 1st, Canadian soldiers had removed all of the barricades around the *Pines*, cornering the remaining thirty or so Kanehsatake residents and Warrior Society members, including Joe David, in the Omen' to:kon Alcohol Treatment Centre. On September 26th, the Mohawk holdouts walked out of the centre, surprising police and army authorities who scrambled to arrest them.[506]

"The catalyst for strong expression, logically, is direct involvement. I would not be compelled to make a strong statement, whether it be in print, paint or spoken word, had there not been this outrage, this anger engendered by an attack on my people."[507] David's work, *untitled,* at *Indigena* implicated visitors to the CMC in this state of emergency, as they were symbolically located at the focal point of the Oka Crisis during its final month.(ill. 72&73) The artist placed three five-foot-high potted pine-trees in a row in front of a three-sided clapboard structure, which stood approximately three feet above the floor on metal support posts inside a small room. This stilted wooden construction's main wall was spot lit from above, and viewers were limited in their perspective on the work to a perimeter area just

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[505]David quoted in Martin, n.p.
[506]For a more complete account of the Oka Crisis see Geoffrey York and Loreen Pindra, People of the Pines: The Warriors and the Legacy of Oka, 1991, rev. ed.,(Toronto: McArthur and Company, 1999).
[507]David quoted in McMaster and Martin, 141.

before the trees.

David's installation-based production mimicked the confinement he experienced from September 1st to the 28th, when the Canadian Armed Forces surrounded the Omen'to:kon Alcohol Treatment Centre, eventually cutting off food, water, and power supplies to those inside. Helicopters also hovered day after day over the Centre, shining bright lights onto the wooden building. "We thought, at any minute, the shooting is going to start. I still don't know why it didn't."[508] Hence, viewers at *Indigena* unwittingly assumed the position of power held by soldiers who watched and waited among the pine trees. The Mohawk artist carefully avoided making any literal references to the clash, such as the Warrior Society's flag, Canada's military insignias, or Quebec's fleur-de-lis. Ultimately, the work's stark simplicity conveyed a sense of something being contained and observed within the small structure, while at the same time, this unseen and dominated subject scrutinizes its captors. David's work also symbolically reverberates the role museums across the country have played in amassing and interpreting indigenous North American cultural expressions for the study and pleasure of Euro-Canadians throughout the 1900s. These institutions paid little or no heed to contemporary Native perspectives on their respective collections, however by the century's end, the observed were successfully reversing the spotlight.

Installations by Belanger, Cardinal-Schubert, and David at *Indigena* thus emphasized the show's mandate to transpose the tide of post-Columbian Aboriginal oppression in North America, as each artist provides viewers with a culturally problematic context. The architectonic qualities of *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)* physically situate viewers in a space where they tacitly perform "the relations of exploitation and domination" critical to the legitimation of post-colonial discourse.[509] The act of reading demanded by Cardinal-Schubert becomes an act of guarding in Stonecarver's *untitled* creation, as the spectator inherits Western humanity's insatiable appetite for land and its military consequences. This same legacy of power exerted by the First World over the Third and Fourth Worlds also informs Belanger's work, as the viewer becomes a witness to an act of tribal genocide induced by the West's most celebrated explorer. Such affectations to the viewer's socio-political perspective were key to how installation-based practices enabled artists of Aboriginal ancestry

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[508]David quoted in York and Pindra, 39.
[509]Bhabha, 20.

to peel back the Euro-centric layering of Canada's national identity in the late- twentieth century, while asserting hybrid signifiers of tribal selfhood.

*Indigena*'s three year tour, which included showings at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Dalhousie University Art Gallery in Halifax, the Windsor Art Gallery, Phoenix's Heard Museum, Calgary's Glenbow Museum, and the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art in Norman, Oklahoma, confirmed the professional recognition and mainstream appeal that the nineteen featured artists were gaining by the early 1990s. It also marked the irregular way that this contemporary work straddled museum and art gallery environments, a phenomenon that can be attributed in part to the success which organizations such as SCANA had achieved in redressing the inequitable politics of cultural representation in North America. Aboriginal voices were now being validated rather than predicated by museums and the CMC took a leadership role in this process of empowerment.

The mainstream media response to *Indigena* coincided with the treatment of *Beyond History,* as reviewers were quick to identify a common denominator of anger. Cardinal-Schubert's *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)* became a frequently cited example of how this emotional state was aesthetically achieved. Nancy Baele claims in the Ottawa Citizen that the Calgary artist recounts a "personal history as communal history" in her effort to tear down the inherent racism of Western knowledge ranging from sociology to museology. [510] For Beale "reality and redirection" are synonymous with "native art."[511] John Bentley-Mays, the Globe and Mail newspaper's visual arts critic, dismisses *DECONSTRUCTIVISTS* as: "an unfocussed rant about everything from water pollution to Christian missionaries to Lubicon land claims."[512] The exhibition catalogue's "aggressive tone" is also placed in question as Bentley-Mays wonders if the "anti-white prejudice" espoused by Cardinal-Schubert is a prevalent or significant "opinion" among people of Aboriginal descent.[513] These diametrically opposed readings can be best understood as revealing the treacherous socio-political terrain installation-based productions by artists from Canada's inter-tribal community would come to occupy during the 1990s. Normalizing such temporal constructions threatens to

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[510]Nancy Baele, "Native Artist Portray Their Own Reality," Ottawa Citizen Apr. 19, 1992: C1.
[511]Ibid.
[512]John Bentley-Mays, "Native Artists Seize the Moment to Display Anger Against History," Globe and Mail May 16, 1992: C4.
[513]Ibid, C5.

consume their emancipation aesthetic under the larger and undifferentiated monolith of Canadian diversity propagated since the 1960s. Conversely, a disbelief in the state of oppression that prompted the production of such reactionary hybrid art suggests it lacks any lasting connection to the nation's future and promotes a longing for pre-war Anglo-Canadian conformity. Add to this the co-curators thematic effort to obscure the West's heroic conception of Christopher Columbus' voyage, and the result was a show not easily reconciled within the parameters of a national institution whose own history is riddled with an anthropological bias. "Indigenous peoples reiterate that 1992 has no special significance that deserves to be celebrated, that the reasons being put forth to justify celebration are inconsequential." [514]

## Post-modern Discourses

The emergence of post-colonial artistic expression in Canada is contiguous with the post-modern condition, which involves a self-imposed questioning of modern Western narratives. Jean-François Lyotard was among the earliest European theorists to apply the term to a new cultural logic dating back to the mid-twentieth century. His publication, La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir provides a theoretical source from the First World that is valuable for the analysis of the Fourth World cultural awakening under review. This study's focus on national narratives makes it equally important to consider such interrogative tendencies in Euro-North-American discourse. Fredric Jameson's Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism advances post-modernism as a social, political, and cultural barometer of America from the 1940s onward. His perspective is thus pertinent to the First Nations art history traced so far, and provides a relevant theoretical lead into the discussion of *Land, Spirit, Power*.

Jean-François Lyotard studied at the École Supérieure in Paris, where he received an agrégation in philosophy followed by a doctorat ès lettrès in 1971. He taught philosophy at the secondary school level for over a decade, including a two year period in Algeria from 1950 to 1952, and went on to become a professor at the University of Paris. He then joined the French department at the University of California, Irvine, and later moved on to Emory University in Atlanta where he was a professor of philosophy and French until his death in 1998. The English translation of Lyotard's 1979 book La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir was published in 1984 as The Postmodern Condition: A

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[514]McMaster and Martin, 22.

Report on Knowledge. This publication announces the obsolescence of master narratives in Western society, and demands an intellectual resistance to hegemonic traditions. As such, it corresponds with the consideration of a socio-political aesthetic insurgency in Canada at the twentieth-century's close.

Post-modernism dates back to the late 1950s according to Lyotard, and in Europe is marked by the completion of the reconstruction effort that followed the Second World War. He notes that the "seeds" of delegitimation and nihilism were present in the "grand" or master narratives of the 1800s.[515] The intense narrative venture carried on by Canadian art historians, from the late-nineteenth century onward to find a "national" art held this same potential for knowledge failure.[516] As discussed in Chapter I, the devaluation, fixing, and presumed absence of First Nations' artistic production was central to constructing a modern Western identity for Canada. Anthropologists provided a commensurate and unrelenting scientific legitimation by assuring Euro-Canadians that it was "doubtless all tribes will disappear."[517] However, the endurance of Aboriginal imagery, works, artists, and communities denied the seamless grafting of a singular Anglo identity onto the new nation. Before the "truth-value" of these married artistic and scientific facts collapsed in the early-twentieth century, the Government of Canada intensified its Indian assimilation strategies as mentioned in Chapters I and II.

The Second World War's end also marks the "aegis of a modern welfare state" for Lyotard, as nation-states began collectively to recognize minimum levels of human rights.[518] In 1951 the repeal of the Indian Act's most repressive sections, including the Potlatch and Sun Dance bans, was a tacit admission by federal politicians that the mono-cultural initiatives of their nineteenth-century predecessors were flawed. Indian empowerment initiatives were also concurrent with shifts in the distribution of authority that occurred among Western governments. "Even now it is no longer composed of the traditional political class, but of a composite layer of corporate leaders, high-level administrators, and the heads of the major professional, labour, political, and religious organizations."[519] The trade union model was often adapted by early twentieth-century chiefs to gain public influence, such as Andrew Paull's founding of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia and

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[515]Lyotard, 38.
[516]MacTavish, 159.
[517]Jenness, 264.
[518]Lyotard, 11.
[519]Ibid, 14.

its predecessor the Allied Tribes of British Columbia. Beginning in the 1960s, Native leaders including Harold Cardinal, the Indian Association of Saskatchewan's president, steadfastly inserted themselves within the expanding stratum of the nation's political leadership. Hence, the cacophonic voice that the *Indians of Canada* pavilion sounded at *Expo 67* typifies a "nascent state" of post-modernism in North America, which Lyotard claims existed within the modern.[520] "They are not ready to accept the story of Canada written by people of European ancestry."[521]

National histories which take the Western grand-narrative format are by necessity an enunciation of the present according to Lyotard's perspective."The narratives' reference may seem to belong to the past, but in reality it is always contemporaneous with the act of recitation."[522] This accounts for the virtual silence of First Nations' art history at the National Gallery of Canada through the mid-twentieth century with regard to R.H. Hubbard's 1963 publication, The Development of Canadian Art. Native peoples had lacked full citizenship privileges for so long that their aesthetic accomplishments were correspondingly written out of Canadian art history. However, the existence of anthropologically inspired public collections across the country provided a chink in an otherwise impervious armour of closed Eurocentric cultural narratives. The *Canadian Indian Art 74* exhibition's avowal of the "the more modern media" therefore signifies a move on Western language that Lyotard prescribes, while establishing post-modernism's emergence in North American institutional terms.[523] The Royal Ontario Museum's placement of an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century indigenous North American art display from its permanent collection in an area that visitors were required to pass through before reaching the contemporary works, limited their aesthetic autonomy. Such a juxtaposition mirrors Lyotard's understanding of the natural resistance to change engendered by state-sponsored authority."An institution differs from a conversation in that it always requires supplementary constraints for statements to be declared admissible within its bounds."[524]

By the 1980s, installation practices had increasingly provided artists of Aboriginal ancestry with a unique potential to develop what Lyotard calls an "unexpected 'move' (a new statement)." Guy Sioui's

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[520]Lyotard, 79.
[521]Indians of Canada Pavilion, "Expo 67 - Storyline,"Ottawa, DIAND Indian Art Centre files, 2.
[522]Lyotard, 22.
[523]Tom Hill, Canadian Indian Art 74 (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1974) n.p.
[524]Lyotard, 17,.

1974 sculpture-installation, *La Direction,* at *Canadian Indian Art 74,* was thus a prophetic announcement, for it symbolically thwarted the ROM's attempt to present twentieth-century Native art as a smooth apolitical transition from the past. His giant blood-splattered arrow brought the violence of Western oppression to bear on the institution, and marked the beginning of an Aboriginal visual vocabulary rooted in contemporary socio-political issues. Western traditions of painting, sculpture, and printmaking were also put to use as the "revolt against existing conventions" gained momentum via *New Work By A New Generation.*[525] Edward Poitras' *Stars in Sand* thus occupies another foundational moment in the emergence of a new spatial aesthetic which generated a particular convergence between Aboriginal ceremonies and installation art's embryonic Western vocabulary. Similarly, Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species* series, which was still in its early stage at the *Stardusters* show, gradually evoked the "meta-arguments" Lyotard calls for to undermine modern totalitarian authority. By 1992, her production of space addressed issues ranging from forced assimilation to cultural appropriation in Canada.[526] Furthermore, the ephemeral quality of most of the installation-based productions discussed thus far carried the "time and space" limitations which Lyotard suggests can prevent a loss of efficaciousness.[527]

The French theorist's celebration of post-modernism's ideological multiplicity or small (petits) narratives concludes by defending its debt to the avant-garde. Western cultural innovations in art and literature shifted emphasis from questions of beauty to that of reality in so far as movements including Dada, Futurism, and Surrealism assigned aesthetic importance to the "unpresentable."[528] Lyotard's commitment to what art says matches Benjamin's observation regarding the pronounced redirection in European art from a ritual to a political function during the early-twentieth century. The task for an ailing society then becomes one of bringing artists and writers "back into the bosom of the community" as healers, which is also consistent with Poggioli's view of art movements as instruments for social action.[529] At *Beyond History,* in 1989, such prescriptions gained cross-cultural implications as the avant-garde works on display were financially supported by both First Nations and Euro-Canadian governmental sources. Robert Houle's 1989 *Zero Hour* epitomized the show's rehabilitative potential,

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[525]Houle, 4.
[526]Lyotard, 66.
[527]Ibid.
[528]Ibid, 79.
[529]Ibid, 73.

as his ritual-political act aimed at relieving the late capitalist world's most powerful nation-state of its morbid obsession with nuclear war.

The "contemporary decline of narratives of legitimation" is a relatively recent and tenuous phenomenon within Canada's art history.[530] Publications such as the 1983 Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada denoted the beginning of a post-war context that asserted the "different" as a condition of understanding painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, video, performance, and installation practices.[531] This book's collected essays allowed for multiple points of access to artistic production, accommodating both the maintenance of tribal traditions by Haida carver Bill Reid and the new inter-tribal art developed by Sarain Stump. Almost a decade later, *Indigena* increasingly pressed for the "abandonment" of master narratives, whose "emancipation of humanity" and "realization of the Idea" are for Lyotard only thin veils of a forced consensus.[532] The CMC's show revealed a theoretical militancy among the selected artists and writers of Aboriginal ancestry from across Canada, as they waged an ideological war on one of the most celebrated events in European and North American history. Co-curators Gerald McMaster's and Lee-Anne Martin's claim to "indigenous history" represents a post-colonial act of empowerment, which morally commands the post-modern break up of exclusive Western authority in Canada. Columbus' 1492 landfall is transformed into "a five-hundred-year legacy of religious, cultural, social, economic and political intolerance."[533] Native peoples' ongoing marginalised condition in 1992 thus becomes a prime example of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century "terror" that Lyotard asserts as the price humanity has paid for "the whole and the one."[534] Joseph Tehawehron David's *untitled* installation, which was rarely mentioned in media reviews, metaphorically transported viewers to the exact site of an intensely unpresentable moment in Canada's current events. Perhaps his staging of neo-colonial terror was too close to reality for mainstream public consumption.

The Cleveland-born philosopher Fredric Jameson's writings provide a relevant American perspective on post-modernism, and his 1991 book, Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,

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[530]Lyotard, 65.
[531]Bringhurst et al, 9.
[532]Lyotard, 65.
[533]McMaster and Martin, 12.
[534]Lyotard, 81.

features a series of essays previously published between 1984 and 1990. Jameson received a Doctor of Philosophy from Yale University in 1959, and taught French and literature at Yale, Harvard, and the University of California from the early 1960s to the mid 1980s. Since 1986, he has been the chair of comparative literature at Duke University, and currently directs the institution's Centre for Cultural Theory. Much of this author's work charts the shift in Western cultural practices according to socio-economic evolution of multinational capitalism. Painting, video, architecture, and installation are featured in Jameson's 1991 text, wherein he tests the quality of aesthetic productions during the 1980s. Such analysis can thus be logically extended to determine how selected artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada had charged installation-based art with a collective socio-political task by the early 1990s, and further, how they defined their collective relationship to the nation's identity politics.

Like Lyotard, Jameson considers the incredible human toll associated with Western modernism and its concomitant domination of Third World countries. However, he goes further in suggesting that post-modern substitutes for master narratives indicate an equally troubling and pronounced American aspect of international relations."This whole global, yet American, postmodern culture is the internal superstructural expression of a whole new wave of American military and economic domination throughout the world: in this sense, as throughout class history, the underside of culture is blood, torture, death, and terror."[535] Such sentiments are also present in Jean-Paul Sartre's preface to Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth, as the philosopher and former member of the French underground during the Second World War scoffs at Western values abroad."And that super-European monstrosity, North America? Chatter, chatter: liberty, equality, fraternity, love, honour, patriotism, and have you."[536] This crossover between post-colonial and post-modern politics echoes in a visual way throughout the aesthetic productions discussed thus far, as artists including Edward Poitras regularly brought Euro-American history forward as an act of contemporary empowerment. For example, his *Small Matters* re-installation at *Beyond History* targets the government of the United States for its original military suppression of Native sovereignty, while honouring those tribes that perished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."It is the difference between a colonial and indigenous reality, its past being inseparable from its present."[537]

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[535]Jameson, 5.
[536]Jean-Paul Sartre, "Preface," in Fanon, 26.
[537]Poitras quoted in Teteilbaum, 24.

Technological advancements and their link to "fundamental moments in capitalism" are central to Jameson's description of where the post-modern condition extends from.[538] The European industrial revolution during the late-eighteenth century is used as the starting point in his Marxist-inspired understanding of Western society. Machine-made steam, electricity, and combustion motors then mark the next major shift in both European and North American economics during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Steam-engine train lines constructed across the continent were integral to the evolution of American and Canadian corporate monopolies which stretched from sea to sea by 1900. The gradual displacement of Aboriginal tribes and bands in various western and northern regions throughout the Dominion corresponded with this middle stage of capitalism. For instance, Louis Riel's effort to assert Métis and Plains Cree sovereignty during the 1885 Northwest rebellion was thwarted by the arrival of Canadian troops in the District of Saskatchewan from Ontario via the newly constructed Canadian Pacific Railway.[539] Hence, Jameson's perspective on Western machine technology reveals the physical means that Euro-Canadians and Euro-Americans used to overwhelm the political and social differences that Aboriginal and Métis nations represented. The American author's alignment of modernism's master narratives with this second stage of capitalism therefore adds an economic motivation to the gradual intellectual erasure of all non-Western or non-capitalist aesthetic evocations from Canada's art history.

Fredric Jameson claims that the third or late period of capitalism commences with the machine production of electronic and nuclear driven devices during the 1940s. This predates Lyotard's post-modern condition by roughly a decade. However, this minor discrepancy in post-modernism's historic trajectory as a "cultural dominant" may be due to its inherent ambiguity which Jameson describes in terms of "a conception which allows for the presence and coexistence of a range of very different, yet subordinate, features."[540] The development of multinational capital in Canada following the Second World War can thus be viewed as the economic catalyst for a gradual shift in federal cultural policies. For example, the bi-cultural rhetoric of the Government of Canada pavilion at *Expo 67*, alongside the *People Tree*'s images of multiple racial contrasts, discerned a public loosening in Anglo-Canadian cultural dominance. In 1971, when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau introduced the Multicultural Act,

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[538]Jameson, 35.
[539]see Joseph Kinsey Howard and Nicholas Vrooman, Strange Empire: A Narrative of the Northwest (Montreal: Borealis Books, 1994).
[540]Jameson, 4.

Canada became the first Western nation-state to officially acknowledge ethnic diversity as a fundamental circumstance of its existence. Tom Hill's reference to "the total mosaic of Canadian life" occupied by the participants in *Canadian Indian Art 74* implicated the Royal Ontario Museum and the DIAND in this new era of official plurality.[541] However, works by Sarain Stump and Guy Sioui confirm the residue of pain and violence which Western post-modernism had inherited from modernism's hegemonic orientation. Furthermore, the awareness of socio-political inequities expressed by artists of Aboriginal ancestry via installation from the 1970s onward, would increasingly involve a recoil to middle capitalism's most suppressive moments and destructive aftermath for North America's indigenous nations.

The highly politicized Aboriginal aesthetic reference system that surfaced among the selected artists' practices during of the 1980s can thus positioned near what Jameson describes as post-modernism's "problem of micro politics."[542] Ethnic, gender, race, and religious differences are among the many signs of late capitalism's simultaneously oppositionist as well as totalizing cultural state. However, there is a definite economic correlative to the way in which First World nation-states such as Canada facilitate non-Western artistic or literary imprints on their official identity. This occurrence parallels Jameson's observation regarding how the "First World produces a Third World within itself by its own inner dynamic."[543] By the late 1980s, when the work of artists ranging from Alex Janvier to Edward Poitras was becoming a much sought after cultural commodity in North American and European public venues, their Fourth World social status also surfaced. Joane Cardinal-Schubert characterized the post-modern disparity faced by artists of Aboriginal ancestry as follows: "We have become part of the GNP of Canada. The Canadian Government is pushing our work in international exhibitions, but they still are not inviting us to the openings."[544]

Another pertinent and similarly uneven adoption of post-modern values in Canada is revealed via the second edition of Dennis Reid's A Concise History of Canadian Painting, which received financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts. Reid's immensely popular survey text was first published in 1973, and it followed the standard art-historical master narrative. The author, who was

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[541]Hill, n.p.
[542]Jameson, 17.
[543]Ibid, 159.
[544]Cardinal-Schubert, 24.

then the NGC's curator of Canadian art, initially omits First Nations art from the nation's cultural heritage, while celebrating the evolution of painting primarily by male artists of European ancestry in New France, British North America, the Dominion of Canada, and ultimately contemporary Canada. In the new 1988 edition there is an apparent effort to expand the survey's cultural limitations as Reid introduces work by "Indian artists" including Norval Morrisseau, Alex Janvier, Daphne Odjig, and Bill Reid.[545] Unfortunately, the absence of any narrative link between these individuals and pre-twentieth-century tribal aesthetics denies such art its crucial sense of historical and contemporary difference from imported Western traditions. His survey thus depicts a rudimentary example of how modernism's exclusionary tactics are artificially updated by a post-modern "co-existence with resistant and heterogeneous forces which it has a vocation to subdue and incorporate."[546]

Much of Jameson's theory focusses on defining post-modernism's aesthetic qualities, which can be directly related to the installation-based phenomenon in question. Marcel Duchamp is named by the author as among those artists who represent "genealogical precursors" to the late capitalist experience.[547] The French artist's *1,200 Bags of Coal* and *One Mile of String* thus foreshadow what Jameson calls "a culture increasingly dominated by space and space logic."[548] If installation art is driven by this post-modern architectonic fixation, creating multiple sensory distraction rather than a singular visual effect sets it apart from academic painting, sculpture, and printmaking traditions. For example the sound, light, graphic, and sculptural elements of Edward Poitras' *Stars in Sand* offered more information than visitors could process during a cursory viewing. Similarly, Cardinal-Schubert's text-laden walls at the CMC could only be fully deciphered by visitors as they moved through her work. Such staged creations present a formal challenge to Western art's traditional focus on the object and visual containment. Similarly, there was no single commodity, point of convergence, or imagistic stability to Mike MacDonald's *Seven Sisters*. His video installation offered three very different sets of recorded scenes on variously sized monitors that viewers had to correlate for themselves while passing through a corridor at the VAG. The accompanying audio track's healing songs, voices in conversation, and environmental sounds complemented the artist's visual collages. No single object,

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[545]Dennis Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting, 2cnd ed., (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988) 337.
[546]Jameson, 159.
[547]Ibid, 5.
[548]Ibid, 25.

sound, image, or word can typify such work of art, rather it is the state of diversion they induce which qualifies as an irreproducible "aura."[549]

Acrylic paint, lead, split sheepskin, birch slabs, fibre-fill, graphite, canvas, sand, glass bottles, televisions, horse hair, animal bones, bricks, a baseball hat, wire mesh, beads, pine trees, chalk, and polystyrene highlight the unlimited number of material combinations used by the artists in question. They also attest to "strategies of the pastiche" which Jameson believes is a central characteristic of post-modern logic.[550] For instance, the application of transistors - an archetypal product of late capitalism - onto feathered horse skulls, which function as remnants of nomadic nationhood on the Great Plains, underline the temporal expanse of Edward Poitras' *Big Iron Sky.* His material combinations brought a bygone era of Aboriginal sovereignty forward into the late-twentieth century at the Vancouver Art Gallery. This is an artistic practice which suggests a "post-modern emphasis on nostalgia."[551] Other examples include Ron Noganosh's placement of a hand-crafted Woodlands costume against a backdrop of mass-produced liquor bottles for *Lubicon*, as well as Joane Cardinal-Schubert's employment of an ancient hide-processing device situated atop a plexiglass base for *Preservation of a Species: The Drying Rack.* Hybrid treatments of pre-twentieth-century Aboriginal signs and objects to create situations that resist the totality of Western authority and technology in the present is thus a common aesthetic factor among the artists in this study.

The entry of artists of Aboriginal ancestry into official public forums from the 1967 *Indians of Canada* pavilion to the 1992 *Indigena* show marks an intellectual erosion of the nation's modern master narratives. The gradual shift from a uni-cultural to a bi-cultural, and then a multicultural Canadian identity maybe attributed to the larger ramifications of Western multinational capitalism. Although it is critical to acknowledge the post-colonial ethic that permeated First Nations political, social, and cultural realms beginning in the 1960s, and the ensuing decades of inter-tribal solidarity. By the mid 1980s, Native leaders and professionals had wrestled a considerable amount of control over the lives of their peoples away from Euro-Canadian bureaucrats. And yet the 1990 Oka Crisis seemed to confirm the unilateral nature of such power-sharing with regard to territorial rights, especially in light

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[549]Benjamin, 221
[550]Jameson, 25.
[551]Ibid, 19.

of the federal Office of Native Claims general intransigency since its inception in 1973.[552]

Installation-based practices enabled a growing radical contingent of artists of Aboriginal ancestry with the unique ability to engage post-modernism's roots via Western avant-garde aesthetics, while implicating viewers and venues in urgent post-colonial spaces of empowerment. The return of indigenous North American healing symbols and rituals played an integral in such cross-cultural productions. However, if the rewriting of Canadian art narratives was to have any greater meaning beyond mere tokenism or feigned decentering. it had to take place beyond the confines of anthropologically oriented venues and regional galleries.

*Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*

The *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* show in the fall of 1992 responded to the increasing presence of contemporary artists of Aboriginal ancestry at public galleries and museums, artist-run centres, and commercial venues in Canada and the United States. It also reflected SCANA's intense lobbying efforts of public institutions for equitable representation, and Diana Nemiroff's presence at the society's 1987 Lethbridge symposium mentioned in Chapter III. This major exhibition was first approved by the NGC in 1988, as co-curators Nemiroff, Robert Houle, and Charlotte Townsend-Gault gradually envisioned a project that would present viewers with an opportunity to understand "a distinct cultural difference within mainstream North American art."[553] The eighteen chosen artists' respective connections to their ancestral homelands and the spiritual qualities of these places proved to be the show's overarching theme. Installation-based productions figured prominently in the collective curatorial selection, and creations by Domingo Cisneros, Teresa Marshall, and Rebecca Belmore are analyzed to offer a closing perspective on this critical aesthetic development in Canada's art history.

The *Land, Spirit, Power* catalogue, like the publication for *Indigena*, is a substantial document that extends well beyond a visual analysis of the art on display or biographical sketches of the artist participants. In her foreword, Dr. Shirley L. Thomson, the NGC's executive director since 1987,

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[552]see Miller, 352 - 363.
[553]Diana Nemiroff, Robert Houle, Charlotte Townsend-Gault, "Land, Spirit, Power" in Nemiroff et al., 9.

depicts the show as an effort to "broaden the traditionally accepted parameters of art."[554] Each of the co-curators' essays that follow set the fact and interpretation of art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry into the problematic context of such Western authority in North America. The show thus functioned as a national exercise in post-modernism, which is both acknowledged and questioned at the same time. This tenuous theoretical relationship between Canada and the First Nations during the late twentieth century also echoed the contextual problematic viewers entered via selected installations.

Diana Nemiroff received her Master of Arts in Canadian art history from Concordia University in 1985, and was the Quebec editor of the Vancouver-based contemporary art magazine, Vanguard, during the early 1980s. In 1984, she was appointed head curator of contemporary art at the NGC. For almost twenty years, Nemiroff has played a key role in opening up the nation's largest art gallery to post-modern identity politics. This became most pronounced following the NGC's move to a new multi-million-dollar facility in 1988. Her essay in the *Land, Spirit, Power* catalogue, entitled "Modernism, Nationalism, and Beyond: A Critical History of Exhibitions of First Nations Art," reconciles the ethical dilemmas faced by Western art institutions in North America over the course of the late-capitalist era.

Nemiroff claims the CMC's collecting of contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry caused the NGC's reluctance to create a national public holdings overlap. However, she admits that this absence of place was considered "clearly discriminatory" by the emerging inter-tribal artistic community of the 1980s and in 1984, the NGC revised its collecting policy to include contemporary Indian art.[555] Two years later, the gallery acquired Carl Beam's 1985 acrylic paint, photo-serigraph, and pencil on plexi-glass work *The North American Iceberg.* Beam, whose paintings and prints appeared in all of the shows discussed thus far except the *Indians of Canada* pavilion, is noted by the curator for his visual collapsing of the "past and present."[556] His works juxtapose nineteenth-century Aboriginal subjects, including Chief Sitting Bull, against photographs of post-war rocket launches in America. This same temporal and cultural jumping is vital to the expanded spaces and material sources of installation-based productions in review.

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[554]Shirley Thomson, "Foreword" in Nemiroff et al, 7.
[555]Diana Nemiroff, "Modernism, Nationalism, and Beyond," in Nemiroff et al, 16.
[556]Ibid, 17.

Nemiroff then turns to the NGC's origins via the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, and refers to the institution as a product of "Victorian Canada."[557] The gallery's exclusion of First Nations cultural heritage from the nation's official identity for over a century is characterized as a normative Western exercise, not unlike the 1876 Indian Act's segregationist orientation. These conjoined cultural, social, and political injustices are given a more contemporaneous bearing by the author in reference to how indigenous Peoples' organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations were "Excluded from the Meech Lake round of talks on constitutional reform, which they later helped to defeat in 1990."[558] Such a reproach directed by a public employee at the reigning Progressive Conservative Party and ultimately toward the accord's architect, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney reflects Jameson's micro politics of post-modernism. It is important to note that Nemiroff's position is tempered by associating the current participation of Native leaders in the ensuing 1992 constitutional negotiations that led to the Charlottetown Accord as commensurate with *Land, Spirit, Power*'s objective to "deconstruct ethnocentric assumptions of universality in art discourse." [559]

The Canadian shows cited in Nemiroff's exhibition history include the NGC's *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern* in 1927, which toured to the Art Gallery of Toronto and Art Association of Montreal. Curator Eric Brown is held accountable for hanging a "contradictory show," where paintings by Emily Carr were displayed alongside an indifferent cross-tribal mixing of nineteenth-century carvings and weavings from the National Museum of Man's collection.[560] This joint collaboration between the two national institutions conceived by the NMM's Marius Barbeau is problematic because indigenous North west Coast art traditions were "portrayed as dead and dying," with no account for the cultural adversity caused by their colonization and modern oppression.[561] She then charges *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada* (an exhibition jointly organized by the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and NGC in 1969), with perpetuating a "primitivizing attitude" toward Native art, analogous to the historiographic issues covered in Chapter I.[562] Most importantly, this show's lack of contemporary work situated the historic work in a cultural vacuum, during an era when artists such as Norval Morrisseau were leading a shift from modern to post-modern painting in Canada.

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[557]Ibid, 18.
[558]Ibid, 19.
[559]Ibid, 19.
[560]Ibid, 22.
[561]Ibid, 26.
[562]Ibid, 35.

*Land, Spirit, Power* is thus cast in a somewhat overdue light, as it summarizes an avant-garde artistic wave that gained momentum through the 1980s in spite of the NGC's lethargy. Nemiroff concludes her exhibition survey by applauding the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery and the Indian Federated College for their foresight in co-mounting *New Work By a New Generation.* The Vancouver Art Gallery is also recognized for *Beyond History,* while Tom Hill, Gerald McMaster, Robert Houle, Jane Quick-to-See Smith, Rick Hill, and Alfred Youngman are lauded for their curatorial leadership. Perhaps in an effort to avoid any possible accusations of intellectual appropriation, the NGC curator downplays her own contribution to institutional change via *Cross-Cultural Views*, *Strengthening the Spirit,* and *Land, Spirit, Power,* as "a result of a complex conjuncture of circumstances."[563]

Robert Houle's dual profession as curator-artist, like Gerald McMaster and to a lesser extent Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Lance Belanger, places him directly within the art-historical discourse that he writes. It should be noted that neither Houle's nor McMaster's art appeared in *Indigena* or *Land, Spirit, Power*. The co-curator's essay for the NGC catalogue entitled "The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones," advances a maligned heritage from the moment of Christopher Columbus' 1492 landing on the Taíno peoples' homeland. This thematic similitude with the CMC's show also counters the often blinded Western celebratory rhetoric of 1492, which coincided with Canada's one-hundred-and-twenty-fifth anniversary as a nation-state. For Houle, 1992 marks the longstanding detachment of an "ethnic specificity" from its territorial origins via "Western European ethnocentricity."[564] He then asserts that a cultural reconnecting be conjured up in "local and temporal narratives, and personal identities."[565] Installation-based practices facilitated this task with an infinite number of dramatic possibilities. For example, *Lithic Spheres* brought the mystery of the extinct Taíno tribe's ancient stone-art to viewers. Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species: DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)* inserted observers within her family's anger towards racism in Alberta. Boyer's *Huey, Dewey, and Louie Wannabee* used comedic combinations of mass-produced goods in a fleeting redress of middle-class Euro-North American consumer values. Hence, these works demonstrate a shared desire among their makers to disrupt modern Western authority in the assertion of a new inter-tribal identity that rests squarely on the past.

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[563]Ibid, 41
[564]Robert Houle, "The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones," in Nemiroff et al , 45.
[565]Ibid.

Houle's own progress as a curator-painter comes into play as he celebrates the American artist Barnett Newman's role in bringing indigenous North American art principles to the attention of New York dealers, critics, patrons, and the public during the 1940s. Newman is credited with steering painting "away from the Renaissance imagery of figures and objects" that project a literal beauty, and toward a more animate aesthetic status best characterized by the graphic creations of Kwagiulth artists on the Northwest Coast. [566] This critical juncture between Western and Aboriginal perspectives at the modern era's close and post-modernism's beginning also harkens back to Houle's "trans-cultural" assessment of the artists in *New Work By A New Generation*.[567] The co-curator eventually draws upon his Saultaux ancestry to express fully how the link between land and spirit is a source of strength for the selected contemporary artists of Aboriginal ancestry. His 1989 suite of four non-objective paintings in the NGC's collection entitled *The Place Where God Lives* make reference to the narrows of Lake Manitoba. For centuries the location has been considered sacred among the Saultaux who refer to it as Manito-waban; and they believe the sound emitted from the water striking the cliffs "to be the voice of Manitou."[568] Houle's oil-on-canvas works, not unlike his 1989 installation on the Vancouver Art Gallery's front lawn, are simultaneously informed by an ancient tribal knowledge and the tradition of Abstract Expressionism. These artistic syntheses invoke Jameson's understanding of the cultural logic overlaps which occur during the shift from middle to late capitalism. "Modernist styles thereby become post-modernist codes."[569]

The Saultaux curator-artist prescribes a very clear ethical debt that non-Native visitors to *Land, Spirit, Power* must atone for if they seek fully to comprehend Aboriginal artistic empowerment. Euro-Canadians are held responsible for the "entrenched hatred" that erupted around the Oka crisis, when Chateauguay residents pelted cars containing men, women, and children of Mohawk ancestry with rocks as they were evacuated from nearby Kahnawake.[570] He demands an end to the modern Western misconception of "aboriginal people as an impediment to nation building."[571] Aboriginal indignities perpetuated in the name of American nationhood are also contested. The Mount Rushmore National

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[566]Ibid, 46.
[567]Robert Houle, New Work By A New Generation (Regina: Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, 1982) 3.
[568]Houle in Nemiroff et al, 62.
[569]Jameson, 17.
[570]Houle, 69.
[571]Ibid.

Memorial in South Dakota is a glaring sign for Houle of tribal humiliation, as the Teton Sioux's sacred Black Hills were unilaterally annexed by the federal government during the late-nineteenth century. The hills were subsequently defiled, from 1921 to 1949, via the carving of gigantic busts of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and T.Roosevelt. Of the sixteen artists from across North America in the NGC's show, Houle acknowledges that not all carried out overt socio-political messages through their respective practices. However, the co-curator suggests the following overriding premise of appreciation: "It must be pointed out that the New World as America (since the United States is today the global hologram, with Canada as part of that image), still needs a violent decoding and recoding, if the artists in this exhibition are to be seriously understood."[572] Such a reflected Western violence places the weight of Houle's analysis within the fundamental post-colonial condition that Frantz Fanon outlined for Africa during the late 1950s.

Post-modernism's advent is viewed with suspicion by *Land, Spirit, Power*'s Aboriginal co-curator, as he postulates whether the late-capitalist era has produced nothing more than a new middle class from the 1960s revolutionary generation. According to Houle, America is the West's supreme cultural model, while Canada seems to be inferred by association."There are too few true innovations in its dominant culture to cast it as making a real break away from the past."[573] In the *Indigena* catalogue, Loretta Todd raises similar concerns regarding the theoretical positioning of contemporary artists of Aboriginal ancestry, especially when terms such as post-modernism are applied from the outside."I have to question the power relationship between those who are naming us and our own naming process."[574] Ultimately, Houle claims there is a common "cynical rhetoric" among the exhibiting artists towards late-capitalism's cultural logic, and the only completely reliable basis for their art comes from indigenous North American values.[575] Curative acts and symbolic devices derived from tribal belief-systems are exactly what unites the installations featured throughout this study in a very distinct manner. These same qualities are also manifest, although through different means, via the paintings, prints, sculptures, films, videos, photographs, and carvings in *Land, Spirit, Power*. The artist-curator's references to the show's collective expression as "the new aestheticism that can be found in invoking

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[572]Ibid, 46.
[573]Ibid, 53
[574]Todd in McMaster and Martin, 73.
[575]Houle, 52.

the ritualistic and shamanistic art of the ancient ones."[576] Undoubtedly, the NGC's most daunting task would be how to maintain a respectful place for the First Nations within Canada's cultural identity in the decades to come."Is this exhibition the beginning of a dialogue?"[577]

Charlotte Townsend-Gault, who was a key contributor to the Visions: Contemporary Art in Canada publication, brought her combined art-historical and anthropological background to the curatorial challenges of *Land, Spirit, Power*. She seeks to renegotiate the relationship of such Western disciplines to contemporary cultural productions emanating out of Aboriginal communities in her exhibition essay "Kinds of Knowing." Townsend-Gault begins by firmly locating the show's sixteen artists according to the general precepts laid out by theorists such as Lyotard and Jameson who, by the early 1990s, had become central to the rewriting project of art history in Canada. "Their explorations are done in ways that position the artists within the discourse of post-modern art."[578] However, she too is wary of the deconstructivist space where artists including Domingo Cisneros, Teresa Marshall, and Rebecca Belmore are granted privileges that have been the exclusive domain of Euro-Canadians for so long. The co-curator suggests these individuals can "stop" their respective practices from being carelessly consumed under late capitalism's deceptive multicultural premise through reasserting the authority of tribal knowledge.[579]

Nemiroff's avowal of how the NGC's "distanced" First Nations art from the Canadian mainstream parallels Townsend-Gault's effort to reconcile the tenets of anthropology.[580] In many respects, her criticism also compliments Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species* installation series, as both seek to unlock pre-twentieth-century indigenous North American artistic traditions from the modern Western logic "that has purloined and labelled and enclosed them in museum vitrines."[581] However, the "horrified" emotional response to standard anthropological holding methods that inspired the Calgary artist's work is substituted by Townsend-Gault's academic desire to somehow salvage the pursuit of cultural awareness.[582] "But, anthropology can be defended: its practitioners have always

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[576]Ibid, 70.
[577]Ibid, 71.
[578]Charlotte Townsend-Gault, "Kinds of Knowing," in Nemiroff et al, 76.
[579]Ibid, 79.
[580]Nemiroff, 41.
[581]Townsend-Gault, 78.
[582]Joan Cardinal-Schubert in Burns, 41.

known both that there were things it could not know, and that there were things accessible to its researchers worth finding out."[583] Canadian anthropologist Diamond Jenness is lauded for revealing to his readers the distinct characteristics of Native perception, including the Wendat belief that "every object, not man alone, possessed a soul."[584] In Townsend-Gault's estimation, the recuperable value of such early-twentieth-century research can be shared among Aboriginal and Western peoples. Furthermore, the increasingly self-conscious nature of anthropology during the post-modern era encourages a betrayal of habits from the past, and McGill University's Bruce Trigger is again cited for his keen observation regarding the academic treatment of Indians as "more like props than actors."[585] Perhaps, the move by artists of Aboriginal ancestry into director-like roles via installations created for Euro-America's middle and upper classes to participate in and feel observed can be contemplated as a keen anthropological reversal.

The *Land, Spirit, Power* co-curator summarizes her view on knowledge by making a claim for ambiguity, where the differences between Aboriginal and Western perceptions are readily accepted and occasionally non-transferable. "It is finally dignified by protecting all sides from zealous over-simplification, by acknowledging a final untranslatability of certain concepts and subtleties from one culture to another." From a political perspective, Townsend-Gault, like Nemiroff, gains hope for Aboriginal difference in Canada through the presence of the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi, at the 1992 First Ministers Conference on constitutional reform.

Selected works by Domingo Cisneros, Teresa Marshall, and Rebecca Belmore at *Land, Spirit, Power* conclude the visual analysis component of this perspective on installation art in Canada dating back to the early 1970s. The participation in the NCG's show of these particular individuals exemplifies two generations of artists of Aboriginal ancestry who have maintained installation-based practices to establish signs of cultural difference. Furthermore, each creation by Cisneros, Marshall, and Belmore offers an occasion to summarize the collective ethical stances and material qualities of this innovative movement within the larger contemporary inter-tribal artistic community.

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[583]Townsend-Gault, 84.
[584]Jenness, 296.
[585]Trigger quoted in Townsend-Gault, 86.

Domingo Cisneros' presence in the NGC's show confirmed the relevance of shamanic knowledge to installation-based practices in Canada, and his 1991 *Quebranto* attempted to heal the intense severing of nature from humanity brought about by late capitalism. (ill.74) As former students of Cisneros', Edward Poitras, Lance Belanger, and Guy Sioui adopted a similar hybrid deployment of indigenous North American spiritualism through art. The Tepehuane-Mexican artist's longstanding use of organic materials most notably animal bones, pelts, and hides-to restate ancient Aboriginal beliefs also places his work alongside Sarain Stump's assemblages and performances of the early 1970s. Cisneros and Stump can thus be credited with nurturing a collective reckoning of ritual arts via their direction of the respective curricula at Manitou College and the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College. Ultimately, installation provided their students with a context where Aboriginal and Western traditions could conceptually and physically co-exist.

During the 1980s, Cisneros exhibited throughout North America at public, artist-run, and university venues. *New Work by A New Generation* and *Beyond History* solidified his reputation as a leader among artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada. For his 1988 solo show at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, entitled *Laurentian Bestiary*, the artist explored the mythical-spiritual potential of the scavenged and hunted organic materials from the forest around his home in La Macaza, Quebec. In 1990, he was selected for the *Savoir Vivre, Savoir Faire, Savoir Être* show at the Centre international d'art contemporain in Montreal, which focussed on the relationship between art and ecology. At that time, Cisneros characterized the purpose of his work as follows: "Je ne suis pas traditionaliste. J'essaie de créer de nouvelles traditions, de nouvelles cérémonies, de changer ce qui a été arrêté au temps de la colonisation. Seulement ainsi pourra-t-on faire revivre l'esprit autochtone qui est tellement blessé. Seulement l'art peut nous aider."[586] Such a curative goal for a socio-political situation led him to investigations of space, and he was the only artist to be represented by installations at both *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power.*

Cisneros' *Quebranto* featured the remnants of animals which often seemed at odds with a collection of man-made objects, as the work's title also refers to lamentation or loss in Spanish. Hanging in ladder-like fashion from the ceiling near the wall on one side of the room were a pair of tire chains, with

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[586]Cisneros quoted in Claire Gravel, "Domingo Cisneros: Au Centre international d'art contemporain," Le Devoir, Sept.1, 1990: C5.

a variety of small animal leg bones interspersed among their linked sections. Centred on the back wall, also hanging from the ceiling via a cowhide strap, was a sheepskin draped over a pointed length of tree branch. (ill.75) Coiled around one end of the branch was a leather whip, whose handle rested against the sheepskin's surface. On the wall opposite the tire chains, a large hook-shaped length of branch capped with a cow horn supported a pair of snow shoes. In the centre of the floor were two assemblages situated atop sections of Holstein cow hide. The first featured a skull and other bones set inside a leather cow collar, and the second was composed of a wooden cage containing a severed deer hoof and bones. (ill.76) Both directed the viewer's eye and movement towards the whip and sheepskin assemblage. Situated just behind this suspended work were a pair of skeletal legs set atop a section of tree trunk.

The combined effect of *Quebranto*'s component pieces was that of an altar-like space, where viewers could move between a range of strategically placed sacrificial objects. Nemiroff states that the tire-chain-and-bone creations suggest two beings climbing "to heaven."[587] Meanwhile, the floor works convey a sense of burden that has been imposed upon animals through human domestication and entrapment. Cow hides and bones have figured prominently in Cisneros' work, most often as symbols of European colonial settlement in North America which over time displaced indigenous flora, fauna, and peoples. Hence, the cow's collar as an implement of animal enslavement compliments the caged deer hoof, as they alluded to Western humanity's ever-increasing containment and diminishment of natural environments. The abandonment of environmentally sensitive Aboriginal technology during modern times was also intimated by the hanging snowshoes, while the whip and sheepskin reinforced a master-slave colonial dialectic. The truncated being at the altar's end may be said to have represented the injured state of Aboriginal peoples during the late-twentieth century, who watch as multinational corporations defile the planet."The Earth's agony is a pain inside you. You weep for the daily rape of your muse. You're enraged by the senseless wounds, the scars, the sadism in the aggression. All this unconscious egotism. This fatuous, pedantic superiority."[588]

Cisneros thus creates a repetitive and "closed system of values," which, according to O'Doherty, elicit a viewer experience not unlike the "sanctity of the church" or the "formality of the courtroom."[589]

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[587]Nemiroff, "Artists" in Nemiroff et al, 132.
[588]Cisneros unpublished artist's statement for the *Cronica Boreal* show, Saidye Bronfman Centre, Montreal, 1983. n.p.
[589]O'Doherty, 14.

However, this artist's focus on producing an atmosphere based on the values of what Robert Houle calls the ancient ones also stands in contradiction to such Western settings, as he attempted to "return to a shamanic state."[590] *Internal Recall,* and *Big Iron Sky* by Edward Poitras, revealed a similar ancient shamanic grounding, where a pain-healing visual couplet is directed through manipulations of space. Organic materials, particularly bones, as indicative of tribal loss, are central to an anti-Western aesthetic politic that supercedes mere binary opposition to assert Aboriginal cultural differences. Cisneros and Poitras, as well as Joane Cardinal-Schubert, embrace the paradox of their mixed European and North American ancestries to negotiate public spaces that can speak of Canada's true hybrid identity.

Teresa Marshall's (b.1962) 1990 *Elitekey* at *Land, Spirit, Power* affirmed the lasting relevance of installation practices within Canada's inter-tribal art community, as she was the youngest artist to be featured at the NCG's show. (ill.77) Born in Truro, Nova Scotia, Marshall studied at Dalhousie University and then the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1991. The artist described her mixed Mi'kmaq (MicMac) and Scottish ancestry, when she was using the name MacPhee, as "MicMacPhee."[591] During the early 1990s, while still an art-school student, she began to show her work at artist-run and public venues across the country; including Vancouver's Pitt International Gallery, Halifax's Eye Level Gallery and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, as well as the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford. In 1992, Marshall's solo exhibition-installation *Monopoly* was featured at Ottawa's SAW Gallery. The period from the mid 1980s up to the early 1990s may be described as a crucial era when artists of Aboriginal ancestry who engaged in installation-based practices gained a national profile through a flurry of group and solo exhibitions at artist-run and public venues. Installation art shows and discourses in Quebec over this same period highlight such a Canadian phenomenon, as references to Marshall, Cisneros, Poitras, Cardinal-Schubert, MacDonald, Houle, and Rebecca Belmore in L'installation pistes et territoires confirm a history over two generations.

Anne Whitlaw's review in Parachute magazine of *Land, Spirit, Power* uses Marshall's work as an example of "the current impossibility of First Nations people to consider themselves fully Canadian

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[590]Cisneros quoted in McMaster and Martin, 138.
[591]Marshall quoted in Lee Parpart, "Concrete Statements," Artscraft winter 1991: 39.

citizens."[592] *Elitekey*'s three sculptural components included a life-sized MicMac figure, a MicMac canoe, and a Canadian flag at half mast- all constructed from mesh frames filled and coated with cement. The figure *Eta Joe* was inspired by the artist's childhood memories of her maternal grandmother, whose most prized costume included a high peaked hood and a long coat tied at the waist. Centuries-old double curve motifs and plant-like patterns are rendered in low-relief cement on the hood as well as the coat's fringes and cuffs. (ill.78) The British Museum has in its possession a nineteenth-century original of such women's caps, made from beads and fabrics obtained by the Mi'kmaq from European traders. (ill.79) Marshall's decorative details are complimented by monotone cement impressions of necklaces and medals hanging around the listing figure's neck, which also denote her grandmother's political stature as the first female chief in the Maritimes. However, this *Eta Joe* effigy also lacks an identity, due to her handless arms and a headless hood. Positioned approximately two metres away from this mysterious absent being, and in line with the flagpole, was a large ocean-going canoe. The upturned bows of this cement vessel bear another ancient Mi'kmaq design, that of the eight pointed star, although the canoe, like the figure, is defective. It has no seats. Marshall completes her sculpture-installation triad with a cement flag pole, bearing a half hoisted Canadian flag in a frozen flapping motion The standard's maple leaf has been cut out also making it defective, but at the same time allows viewers to site the figure and canoe through a modern national absence.

The installation's title *Elitekey,* translated from Mi'kmaq to English means: I fashion things or these are the things that I make. This artist's conceptual approach and weighty materials reflect the influence of her sculpture instructor at NSCAD, Halifax artist John Greer, whose carvings of oversized fruit pits as well as grains of rice in marble also designate conceptual situations. The grandmother figure relates to Marshall's urban upbringing and precarious connection to her Aboriginal relatives who lived on a nearby reserve."At the time of my most passionate and urgent quest to discover what of my past had been denied, Eta Joe, as she was named by an elder, came to represent that."[593] This lack of a cultural identity thus accounts for the figure's missing head and hands. Furthermore, the sea-going vessel relates to an ancient Mi'kmaq myth involving a deity named Glooscap, who was predicted to deliver Aboriginal people from harm in a stone canoe. Marshall completed the canoe when the Oka Crisis was being

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[592]Anne Whitelaw, "Land, Spirit, Power: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa," Parachute spring 1993: 39- 40.

[593]Marshall quoted in an interview with Nemiroff "Artists," in Nemiroff et al, 201.

played out and she claims in the *Land, Spirit, Power* catalogue it changed her intention for the work. "While I had originally set out to produce a vessel of hope, the tides changed and so too, did my intent. The canoe became an oxymoron, a crypt rather than a cradle."[594] Without seats and a lacking buoyant construction such an improbable boat would surely endanger its passengers. The cut-away flag thus completes a visual syntax and alignment between the three cement-cast objects. It provides the installation with a definitive political bearing that questions the completeness of the nation's supposed multicultural identity and like Jameson's understanding of late capitalism's cultural logic, generates a "complex new conception of the relationship between culture and pedagogy."[595] Euro-Canadians moving through *Elitekey* at the NGC were being taught a lesson in the modern history of Aboriginal exclusion, whose poignancy rested in the fact that such a situation was being perpetuated through post-modern times.

Rebecca Belmore's (b.1960) *Mawu-che-hitoowin: A Gathering of People for Any Purpose* installation at *Land, Spirit, Power* pushed the socio-political aesthetic of space and experience in a new direction. (ill.80) Born in Upsula, Ontario, Belmore moved to Toronto to study experimental arts at the Ontario College of Arts from 1984 to 1986. The following year, after returning to Northern Ontario, she was among a group of young artists who founded the Definitely Superior Gallery in Thunder Bay. This artist-run centre was critical to Belmore's early work, as her exhibitions there often hovered between installation and performance art. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, she participated in a variety of group shows at artist-run centres including the A.K.A. in Saskatoon, Toronto's A Space, the SAW Gallery in Ottawa, and the Niagara Artists Centre in Saint Catherines, Ontario. The artist's Ojibwa (Anishnabai) ancestry was central to the artistic contexts she created at these venues, which simultaneously affirmed Aboriginal values and contested Canada's enduring lack of cultural space.

In January 1988, Belmore became *Exhibit #671B* in a performance-installation that took place on the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's grounds. (ill.81) Her one-day work was a response to the *Spirit Sings* exhibition at the Glenbow Museum. The artist's support of the Lubicon Cree peoples' urge for a boycott of the show targeted the Shell Oil company's drilling operations on lands claimed by the band. In -18°Celcius weather, Belmore sat cross-legged and covered in blankets beneath a sign that said:

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[594]Ibid.
[595]Jameson, 50.

"Glenbow Museum Presents." A smaller sign in front of her read:"*The Spirit Sings* sponsored by Shell Canada." She wore an athletic shirt in reference to the larger Calgary Winter Olympic Games boycott called for by the Lubicon, and on it painted the multinational oil company's logo. Also hanging in front of Belmore was a plaque identifying her as artifact #671b in reference to the Glenbow show's lack of contemporary art. This anthropologically oriented criticism was further infused with humour, as the number also referred to a cheap wine according to the Liquor Licencing Board of Ontario's retail ordering system. The support that the Lubicon Cree received from contemporary artists such as Belmore, Noganosh, and Cardinal-Schubert reverberated Harold Cardinal's 1969 proclamation that "a new era in Indian politics" had begun. [596] Inter-tribal unity on cultural, political, and social fronts thus served the First Nations well during the late capitalist epoch.

Creating art to "benefit the people" was central to Belmore's *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mother*, and a photograph of this performance was used as the cover image for the *Land, Spirit, Power* catalogue. [597] (ill.82). The event, which originally took place in a meadow in Banff, Alberta on July 27, 1991, featured a two-metre wide megaphone that thirteen Native speakers used to express their concerns on topics ranging from environmental destruction to social equality. In 1992, Belmore toured the giant megaphone across the country with a stop in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. At this site, local Cree elders, who were facing criminal charges in connection with a road blockade at Wiggin's Bay to prevent clear cut logging, were invited by the artist to enunciate their relationship with the land. Such artistic activism was originally inspired by the Oka Crisis as Belmore became increasingly concerned about the voice of First Nations communities in Canada."I liked the idea of letting people speak truthfully in protest to the land, which has always heard our voices and reaffirmed our strength and our connections to it, rather than to the government, which ignores us."[598]

Asserting cultural difference through language and experience also guided Belmore in her creation of a new work for the NGC's 1992 show. The *Mawu-che-hitoowin: A Gathering of People for Any Purpose* installation featured seven chairs with accompanying headphones set on a section of flooring. The chairs were borrowed from Native women whom the artist knew and respected in her Northern

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[596]Cardinal, 107.
[597]Belmore quoted in Townsend-Gault "Artists," in Nemiroff et al, 114.
[598]Belmore quoted in "Rebecca Belmore," Ms. magazine summer 1994: 44.

Ontario community. Each set of headphones played recordings made by Belmore of the chair's owners, as they recounted stories about their lives in both Ojibwa and English. The floral patterns on the floor's linoleum surface were somewhat reminiscent of beadwork styles common to Ojibwa, Cree, and Métis. Visitors were expected to encounter the work by metaphysically placing themselves in contact with the seven women, as the artist acted as a conduit for their appreciation of Aboriginal mentalities. (ill. 83)

Belmore's combination of Ojibwa and English in the titles and content of the aforementioned audio-oriented productions reveal an attempt to reverse a linguistic legacy of assimilation in Canada, while promoting real cultural exchange. The banning of indigenous North American languages during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries via the federal government's forced education policies created gaps of knowledge in Aboriginal communities across the country. The artist, like most Aboriginal people of her age, does not speak the language of her elders. Members of this older generation, who managed to resist the draconian measures imposed upon them as children at Christian-run residential schools, did not pass on linguistic skills to their offspring for fear that they too would be persecuted."Born 1960. I do not speak Indian. Assimilation: I almost accepted it, but in adolescence I experienced a disguised oppression. I am now beginning the process of claiming my true identity and shall learn the language in my time."[599] Such works therefore function on an implicit resistance to Western norms in North America, and a desire to recover knowledge that has been lost to the socio-political imposition of a modern cultural logic. The self-affirming strategy of *Mawu-che-hitoowin: A Gathering of People for Any Purpose* at the NGC also enunciated "an authentic vocabulary" in a location where Aboriginal aesthetics had been disallowed for over a century.[600] Furthermore, it was designed to take specific advantage of the gallery's national authority and impress upon Euro-Canadians and Canadians of all ancestries an acceptance for local values.

The tattered reclining chair, the wooden dining room chair, the metal kitchen chair with a pelt on it, and the various other chairs invoke a personalized "fusion de l'art et de la vie," which has often been described as a common contextual denominator of installation art.[601] Belmore's artistic life in the non-

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[599]Belmore quoted in "Do You Speak Indian?" unidentified source, DIAND Indian Art Centre files, circa 1989.
[600]Houle, 52.
[601]Loubier, 19.

Native and inter-tribal art communities of Canada is brought into direct contact with an imaginary grouping of people that "enable her to establish a sense of continuity with her own past without resorting to the use of traditional art forms."[602] The cultural autonomy she achieved in *Mawu-che-hitoowin* can be considered as an innovative outgrowth of an aesthetic vocabulary and art-historical discourse that spans from *Canadian Indian Art 74* to *Land, Spirit, Power*. The overt pain and anger that predominated among the installation-based productions documented in this study was transformed into a space where Aboriginal difference becomes an introspective act of participation for gallery visitors. Such cultural confidence on Belmore's behalf could not fully escape the political shackles from which Canada had yet to release the First Nations in 1992.

*Land, Spirit, Power*'s brief tour to the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina, Housten's Contemporary Art Museum and the Nickle Arts Museum in Calgary suggests a tentative commitment on the NGC's part in promoting the "expression of cultural difference."[603] It would appear as though the institution conceded this responsibility to the CMC, whose extensive tour of *Indigena* had a much greater presence in Canada and the United States. This conundrum of representation seemed to spill over into the political arena as the federal government's Charlottetown Accord, which acknowledged a limited form of Aboriginal sovereignty and received the support of the Assembly of First Nations, was overwhelmingly rejected by both Native and non-Native Canadians in a national referendum on October 12th, 1992.[604]

The constitutional decisions facing Canada in the fall of 1992 were also linked by the mainstream media to the possibility that *Land, Spirit, Power* was merely a federally sponsored and adeptly timed "public-relations gesture."[605] This observation by John Bentley Mays, in his review of the show for the Globe and Mail, prior to Charlottetown Accord vote, carried a strong suspicion of the NGC's ability to accommodate post-modernism's supposed breakdown of master narratives. His reference to the curatorial efforts of Nemiroff, Houle, and Townsend-Gault as "a white-guilt exhibition of 'first nations' artists" subsumes any possibility for aesthetic merit among the sixteen featured artists.[606] Similarly, the

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[602]Whitelaw, 39.
[603]Thomson in Nemiroff et al, 7.
[604]see Miller, 377-379.
[605]John Bentley Mays, "Breaking Traditions," Globe and Mail Oct. 16, 1992: C5
[606]Ibid.

visual arts critic's steadfast refusal to consider their respective works beyond "Western traditions" ignores how installation-based practices empowered Cisneros, Marshall, and Belmore to create spaces where Aboriginal aesthetics gained equal footing. Anne Whitlaw's review in Parachute of *Land, Spirit, Power* indicates how the nation's art media was generating a more informed discourse on contemporary art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry. She deploys *Eliteky, Quebranto*, and *Mawu-che-hitoowin* as examples of a cultural "heterogeneity" that "challenges spectators who expect a homogeneous totality," and in doing so confirms installation art's inherent ability to sustain difference.[607] Perhaps, this is the very quality which motivated a concerted move by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada towards ephemeral and spatial productions during the 1980s and early 1990s.

## A Slackening Momentum

The socio-political force of installation art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry that was engaged by Canada's network of university galleries, artist-run centres, and regional galleries in the 1980s commanded vigorous responses from the nation's official gallery and museum in 1992. This phenomenon can also be said to represent a profound slackening in the nation's identity during the late capitalist era. Beginning with Guy Sioui's 1974 *La Direction* and culminating in Rebecca Belmore's 1992 *Mawu-che-hitoowin: A Gathering of People for Any Purpose,* installation-based productions became essential sites for exposing and expelling Aboriginal tensions within the dominant society. Euro-Canadians were increasingly confronted by a radical inter-tribal art in venues across the country, as fleeting spaces and situational creations immersed them in a destructive colonial history signified by present-day warnings of a neo-colonial future. If the descendants of Canada's British and French immigrants have been used as the assumed activators in such aesthetic plays, it is because they are well represented by Western institutional frameworks in North America. This premise also supports the necessity of bringing in national policies generated during the reigns of Prime Ministers Pierre Elliot Trudeau and Brian Mulroney. After all, there can be no doubt that the sense of urgency in both the works and exhibitions under review was frequently driven by current events involving the First Nations and the Government of Canada.

As places of celebration, publically sponsored venues not only validate individual and collective achievements, they reveal power relations within late-capitalist society as a whole. "Never was a space,

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[607]Whitelaw, 39.

designed to accommodate the prejudices and enhance the self-image of the upper middle classes; so efficiently codified." [608] The First Nations had undoubtedly been forced into Canada's lowest classes during the modern era, and it would take over a century before they were accorded a rightful presence in the nation's institutional spaces and narratives. Tom Hill, Robert Houle, Edward Poitras, Lance Belanger, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and Domingo Cisneros took an early command in this process which amounted to an artistic and intellectual empowerment. Perhaps the lack of political reference points in Brian O'Doherty's as well as Julie Reiss' art-historical discourses indicate that installation's original practitioners in New York including Marcel Duchamp, Alan Kaprow and Claes Oldenberg, were more concerned with altering perceptual modes than challenging social contexts. During the late 1970s, when a new generation of Native artists, who were born in a nuclear era and pursued post-secondary education, began experimenting with non-commercial art, it soon became an effective tool for public activism in Canada. Lacking the modern Western baggage of imported painting, sculpture, and printmaking traditions, installation was quickly, easily, and directly infused with indigenous North American aesthetics through the 1980s.

When the Government of Canada moved to replace its bi-cultural policies of the 1960s with official multiculturalism in the 1970s, it indicated the beginning of an official Canadian post-modern logic. The subsequent public subsidization of diversity resulted in projects such as *Canadian Indian Art 74*, as Native artists were ideally positioned to test a "just" society's limits.[609] By the 1980s, the Canada Council for the Arts' role in sustaining funding for university and public galleries, as a legacy of the 1951 Massey Commission, increasingly dovetailed with the DIAND's cultural initiatives and direct support for artists. The 1986 *Stardusters* show at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery demonstrates how venues in urban locations with a considerable Aboriginal constituency took advantage of these dual public funding sources to promote a rising professional class of artists. Although the problematic situation which prevented both status and non-status Indians from being considered for individual Canada Council visual arts grants persisted through this same decade, as applications were "marked 'Indianne,' and cast aside."[610] Artist-run venues served a unique role as places where individuals who maintained a regular installation practice during the 1980s - most notably Poitras, Cisneros, Cardinal-

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[608]O'Doherty, 76.
[609]Trudeau and Axeworthy, 358.
[610]Joane Cardinal-Schubert, "In the Red," Fuse magazine fall 1989: 24.

Schubert, and Belmore - were able to hone their context-creating skills. The presence of their respective installations within the programming history of both Quebec's and Canada's extensive artist-run gallery network represents a formidable meeting between art activism and Aboriginal politics.

*Beyond History* can be credited with capturing the aesthetic phenomenon under review when it had reached a climactic moment, as attested by the overwhelming number of artists who created or recreated recent installations in this 1989 show. Furthermore, co-curator Tom Hill provided the selected works on display with a post-colonial and post-modern art-historical backing. Meanwhile, Karen Duffek contended with the anthropological problematic of claiming "more than a salvaged past" for artists who traversed modern aesthetic and temporal borders. Such was the daunting task in a province and city where tribal arts had steadfastly resisted the contaminates of modern Western art for centuries.[611] The infinite stylistic poles of installation at the VAG were best represented by Robert Houle's and Bob Boyer's works. *Zero Hour* extended from Houle's infusion of American avant-garde painting traditions in the early 1950s with a concern for the environment, that looked to an inter-tribal melange of ancient shamanic arts for cultural power. In contrast, Boyer's *Huey, Dewey, and Louie Wannabe* was a humorous co-opting of Indian kitsch commodities from late capitalism, which countered the painful consequences of their falsehood with electronic documents of contemporary pow wows. Such a diverse field of expression similarly placed the video technology of Mike MacDonald's *Seven Sisters* off against the folksy construction of Ron Noganosh's *Lubicon*, while both addressed pressing Native land-claim situations. Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species: Deep Freeze,* with its electronic surveillance of viewers walking among islands of assorted common objects, developed a greater spatial logic located somewhere between MacDonald's and Noganosh's respective material vocabularies. The unequal relationship between Aboriginal peoples and modern anthropology is the site of her discontent. European avant-garde legacies at *Beyond History* were no more evident than in Edward Poitras' *Small Matters* and *Big Iron Sky* as both works evince a specific debt to the conceptual rigours of Marcel Duchamp's assemblages and spatial affectations. This Regina-born artist's consistent and innovative deployment of installation-based productions over the 1980s and early 1990s, eventually gained him entry into major international art forums. In 1995, Poitras was selected to represent Canada at the XLVI Venice Biennale, where he transformed the entire Canada pavilion into a curative space for the nation's forgotten Aboriginal veterans of World Wars I and II. Such a healing-and-anger visual couplet

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[611]Hill and Duffek, 27.

evoked through spatial and ephemeral means predominated the Vancouver Art Gallery in the spring and summer of 1989, and it is central to how Houle, Boyer, Noganosh, MacDonald, Cardinal-Schubert, and Poitras collectively asserted sites of Aboriginal difference. The following year, Joane Cardinal-Schubert characterized the *Beyond History's* ten featured artists as an "Art Tribe" via yet another installation in the *Preservation of a Species* series entitled *Cultural Currency: The Lesson* constructed for Montreal's Galerie Articule.[612]

The discourses of post-colonialism and post-modernism have been essential to this art-historical analysis because they represent larger intellectual shifts of the post-war-era in Canada which in a combined condition, could release the nation from the dilemmas of unilateral identity politics. Homi K. Bhahba's ability to celebrate a hybrid state of cultural existence among colonized peoples grants an authority to synthesized aesthetic combinations of Aboriginal and Western traditions. He also evokes post-colonial criticism's catalytic effect on the fracturing of modern logic. "The grand narratives of nineteenth-century historicism on which its claims to universalisms were founded - evolutionism, utilitarianism, evangelism - were also in another textual and territorial time/space, the technologies of colonial and imperialist governance." [613] Fleeting time and space are what differentiate the potential of the installations selected throughout to make the necessary re-iterations of a socio-political contest without it being wholly consumed in late-capitalist terms. George E. Sioui's cutting and pasting from textual sources over time to generate an authentic indigenous North American affront to the righteousness of Western modern thought is thus a germane literary comparison. "American societies could benefit from demythologizing."[614] The ethical edge that the Wendat author invokes over Euro-Canadian readers is also exactly the circumstance which Euro-Canadian viewers at art venues across the country would come to know by the early 1990s.

Post-modern theory locates Western humanity within a similar process through the necessity for it to overcome a crisis in values, and Jean-François Lyotard shudders at the inevitable catastrophe of maintaining a view towards society as an unstoppable "giant machine."[615] What if these works by artists of Aboriginal ancestry were considered a ping in the machine's engine? Is there any way to make

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[612]Domingo Cisneros, Carl Beam, and Pierre Sioui were also featured in *Beyond History*.
[613]Bhabha, 195.
[614]Sioui, xxxiii.
[615]Lyotard, 13.

multinational corporations and emerging unelected world government bodies listen to such knocking being made by indigenous peoples around the globe? "The answer is: wage a war on totality; let us be witnesses to the unpresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honour of the name." The very concept that art can continually act as a tool for social change among Western theorists from Walter Benjamin to François Lyotard, had increasing placed the possibility for avant-garde aesthetics at the twentieth century's end, under suspicion. In the United States of America, which by the close of the 1980s had achieved its post- war dream of world economic and military supremacy with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic's collapse, cultural apathy begins to take a literary root. Fredric Jameson's search for hopeful resistance through works of art, beginning with the painting of Vincent Van Gogh up to Nam June Paik's video-installations, appears to be a doomed exercise."One would want to begin to wonder a little more seriously about the possibilities of political or critical art in the postmodern period of late capital."[616] The post-colonial ethic of installation-based productions by artists of Aboriginal ancestry are never factored into his desire for real change, which seems to indicate the inheritance of a modern narrative blindness. Indigenous North American knowledge maybe considered both as an unavoidable consciousness or purposeful failure in the cultural logic of late capitalism. The fourth Biennale of Havana, located on an island of communist dissent in the shadow of America, offered a corrective overture to such an enduring Western problematic and consequent apathy in 1991. Entitled *Challenges to Colonization,* and organized by the Centro de Arte Wilfredo Lam, the biennale featured works by contemporary artists from over one-hundred-and-forty countries including Africa, Asia, the Carribean, Latin America, and the Middle East. The participation of Edward Poitras, Domingo Cisneros, Rebecca Belmore, and Joseph Tehawehron David in this exhibition was a indicator that their artistic activism had come simultaneously to represent and contest Canada's cultural identity on an international level.

The combined impact of *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives* and *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* was a concerted discussion about current relations between the First Nations and Canada in the mainstream press, contemporary art reviews, and academic settings. In a 1993 article for The Canadian Forum, Ruth B. Phillips, an associate professor of art history at Carleton University in Ottawa, reveals the pedagogical momentum which the participants in these two 1992 shows had generated over the course of two decades. "The two shows also invert the conventional

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[616]Jameson, 9.

practices of ethnographic museums and art galleries. This time the Gallery that shows "artifacts" among the easel paintings and sculpture-masks and dance blanket-made not only for display, but also to be worn in important ceremonials. The Museum, however, includes only works that fit Western 'fine art' genres."[617] While the binary institutional opposition proposed by Phillips somewhat oversimplifies each work's individual context, she does make pertinent inquiries about modern Western authority which are drawn from a genuine acceptance of contemporary Aboriginal perspectives. If the paintings, sculptures, blankets, films, prints, carvings, videos, and photographs on display in Ottawa and Hull in 1992 represent a collective aesthetic with Canadian ramifications, then how and why can installation-based productions be singled out for attention? An answer to this question lies in the field of artistic purpose engendered by the selected works from both shows.

Installation art at *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power* exerted a common contextual exercise in reshaping ideas of Canadian nationhood, while evoking the interdependent state of post-modern and post-colonial strategies in North America. The physical syntheses between Aboriginal and Western arts via installation practices exhibited a full play of effects, where the creator and viewer are engaged in a dramatic socio-political exchange. Lance Belanger's *Lithic Spheres* memorialized the 500 year old sin of Western values in the New World, as his artistic mimicry conveys an untranslatable and unframable Aboriginal knowledge. The viewer becomes a witness to the artist's temporarily assembled argument in support of a reconsidered history. In Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species: DECONSTRUCTIVISTS (This is the house that Joe built)*, individuals were architectonically drawn through a narrative of anger. Her writing on wall surfaces becomes a spatial tool for redressing Aboriginal oppression that stems from the enforcement of modern logic in Canada, while functioning as a cathartic process of personal identity reconstruction for all to see. The presumed Euro-Canadian, and to a lesser extent Euro-American, audiences targeted by these artists at the CMC and NGC anticipates how and why the nation's identity has been designed as an antithesis to Native cultural accomplishments since confederation. Installation practices are therefore deployed to create microcosms of resistance, and Joseph Tehawehron David's *untitled* work at the CMC manifested the urgent need to negotiate a new relationship between the First Nations and Euro-America. His intimate rendition of the Oka Crisis's final days implicated viewers in the violent underbelly of contemporary Western democracy. The anti-Western current that flowed through *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power* at the

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[617]Ruth B. Phillips, "Making Space," The Canadian Forum winter 1993: 20.

moment of their simultaneous existence in the national capital region during the fall of 1992 was epitomized by the presence of Domingo Cisneros' art on both sides of the Ottawa River. *Quebranto* at the NGC lamented the colonial and neo-colonial displacement of ancient Aboriginal worlds, via a ritualized space where bones, skins, and manufactured items re-signify nature's power over late capitalism's detached state of human existence. Teresa Marshall's sculpture-installation *Elitekey* placed the battle for First Nations rights and freedoms in a distinctly Canadian framework. The area occupied by her symbolic references to the past and present were indicative of how contextual art had evolved over two generations to become a conventional vocabulary among artists of Aboriginal ancestry. Self-affirmation as a new strategy of hegemonic resistance inspired Rebecca Belmore's *Mawu-che-hitoowin: A Gathering of People for Any Purpose*, where post-modern technology facilitated a post-colonial rebuilding. The healing process of her art was projected from a local Aboriginal strength for the betterment of all peoples, and while I sat and listened to the English and Ojibwa soundtracks of her installation it made me a participant as well as a believer in the real value of cultural difference.

## Conclusions

In the introduction, I indicated that the installation-based productions by artists of Aboriginal ancestry in recent decades has proved provocative and controversial. The analyses of exhibitions in Chapters III and IV revealed that the selected artists were very effective in their use of space and media, and that they speak in a complex language of legal, political, social, and spiritual terms indicative of their post-colonial position. The extensive contextualization that I have provided as a complement to the works discussed in Chapters II-IV of this dissertation has readily indicated that the rise of a political voice through installation-based practices was concurrent with a greater rise in political activity among the First Nations in Canada. Moreover, we have seen that, over the period of almost two-hundred years, there has been a significant shift in official colonial mentality in this country, and that this movement is consistent with global post-colonial conditions. Now, as I conclude my dissertation, I think it important to observe a certain paradox in these circumstances. On the one hand, the gradual recognition, and more wide-spread acceptance of pluralism and multiculturalism as a Western social reality has made way for the expression of political views by peoples once completely subjugated by colonial and neo-colonial oppressors, while on the other hand, the contribution of the political activists and artists discussed in this dissertation has, in no small way, forced this same post-colonial recognition. That acknowledgment has been achieved is easily demonstrated when we consider the long path official museums have travelled from the time when 'artefacts' of a race of people supposedly on a course to extinction were catalogued and filed, to the staging of major exhibitions featuring artists of Aboriginal ancestry at the nation's most prestigious public venues.

Colonial mentality, and its equally brutish child in neo-colonialism, has been one of the most important political themes running through this dissertation. When Western Europeans first started to dominate North America, their interest in First Nations history, traditions, politics, social structure, economy, and spiritualism did not extend beyond that which their mercantilist and expansionist aspirations. As the colony was consolidated, Native peoples were increasingly dehumanized by the colonial mentality, to the point where, contrary to scientific evidence, leading researchers were propagating extinction for tribes across the continent. Legitimized through racist writings of the nineteenth-century's leading anthropologists, colonialism defined the inferiority of indigenous North Americans, and systematically imposed this definition. Expropriations of territory, bans on religious and social practices, forced assimilation, residential schools, band-numbers, minority status: all these were control measures that

stripped away at identity. In retrospect, one is left wondering how federal authorities in Canada failed to precipitate the most expectable reaction to their aggressive attacks on Aboriginal identity; an urgent compulsion for self-identification and self-definition by Native peoples. Such a mirroring proved central to installation art's contextual orientation.

Neo-colonial conditions persisted through the twentieth century, but the course of the century saw increasing political activism among inter-tribal organizations. In the last half of the century, an international trend in anti-colonialism gave succour to Native aspirations, and it is then that we see the most concerted efforts by these peoples to recover identities stripped away by legalized oppression in Canada. This was particularly true in artistic circles. We have seen that self-run education centres were established by Aboriginal political organizations, and that their curricula place heavy emphasis on tradition; ritual productions, religious ceremony, shamanism, story telling etc. Sarain Stump and Domingo Cisneros thus stand as leaders in such a pedagogical revolution. Furthermore, the paintings, sculptures, carvings, baskets and other works at *Canadian Indian Art 74* concretized the artistic recapture of an identity rooted in tradition and yet open to the future. Pain and violence also make their early appearance in this show as a critical visual couplet in multi-mediactic works.

Recapturing identity was a very important process in a collective Native self-confidence. Once re-identified and self confident, Aboriginal peoples came to terms with the fact that their collective identity, like that of practically all groups in the post-colonial world, was fluid and subject to redefinition. With this we also see the rise of cross-cultural inclusion via installation art by artists of Aboriginal ancestry, and a parallel occurrence in the writings of Native curators. In this respect *New Work By A New Generation* was a pivotal show, as Robert Houle sets the tone for a radically new discourse while Edward Poitras produces a space that was unprecedented in the history of art in Canada. The increasing tensions of bouncing between the poles of post-colonialism and post-modernism were most evident at *Stardusters,* where public and private funding sources seemed at odds with heterogeneous definitions of culture. It was also at this time that Joane Cardinal-Schubert made her presence known, as she continues to be a formidable advocate of Native rights and freedoms through her artistic and literary achievements.

By the late 1980s, a radical aesthetic voice was ringing clearly through post-colonial Canada, and as

my study has shown selected artists of Aboriginal ancestry positioned themselves between indigenous traditions of North America and the avant-garde trends of Western Europe. *Beyond History* established the volatile terrain where art collided with activism at sites of Euro-Canadian privilege. The Lubicon land claim and the Oka Crisis were soon personified in spaces that demanded non-Native viewers perform the urgent frustrations, fears, and violence of contemporary Native experience. In 1992 *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power* jointly signified a five-hundred year purging and healing, which installation-based practices had come to facilitate in a unique manner at the nation's new era spaces for cultural authority. Rebecca Belmore's installation-based practice thus represents a voice of difference that continues to move forward. The question which remains today is: are these artists being heard? "There is the reality of a highly developed, just society that the world knows, and then there is the harsh and deadly reality which aboriginal peoples endure."[618]

[618]Assembly of First Nations Chief Matthew Coon Come quoted in Simon Tuck, "Natives suffer 'deadly reality,' chief says,"Globe and Mail, Aug. 27, 2001: A12.

## Epilogue

"Geronimo had a Cadillac and used to drive it to church where he'd sign autographs."[619]

The realization of new identities for First Nations peoples across North America is a necessary project for both Canada and the United States of America, if these nation-states are genuinely interested in tackling ethical questions with the potential to generate real democracies rather than those that have been feigned for so long. As a person of mixed French- and Irish-Canadian ancestry I can only speak from a position within the dominant Western society's middle class, which has yet to grasp fully the need for Aboriginal sovereignty and thus perpetuates subjectivity. My academic knowledge and curatorial experience have been fused in this doctoral dissertation, as a means as of bringing the reader closer to an art form contingent on bodily experience. With this in mind I must admit to not having witnessed Guy Sioui's *La Direction,* Edward Poitras' *Stars in Sand,* and Joane Cardinal-Schubert's *Preservation of a Species: Drying Rack* beyond photographic reproductions. However, my good fortune enabled me to be present at the openings of *Beyond History, Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives,* and *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*, where I sensed a cultural community in action. Furthermore my personal and professional links to some of the artists featured in this study have provided me with a privileged view on installation-based practices, as well as a profound respect for the socio-political issues at hand. I can only hope to convey these same qualities in my writing.

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[619]Paul Chatt Smith, "Home of the Brave," C Magazine summer, 1994:39.

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June 4 - July 14, 1974.

*New Work By A New Generation*
Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan.
July 9 - August 29, 1982.

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September 24 - November 27, 1994.

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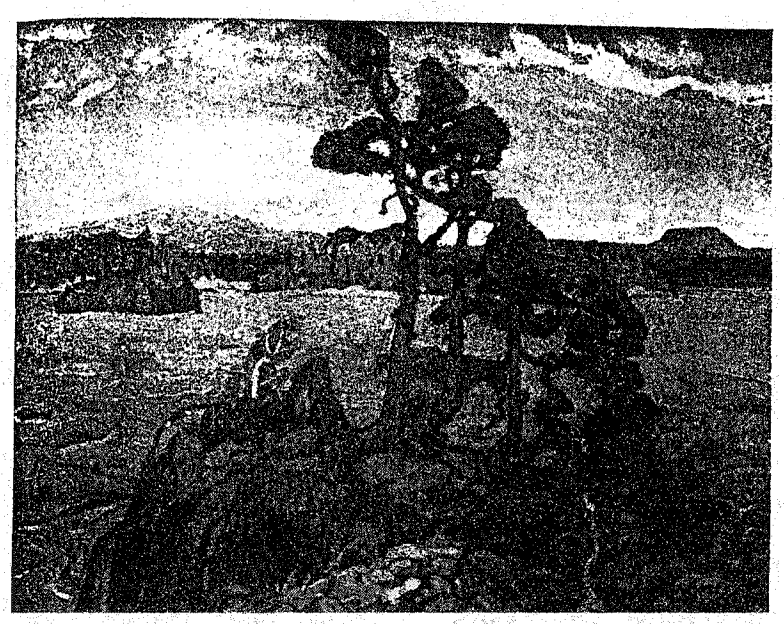
**illustration 1**



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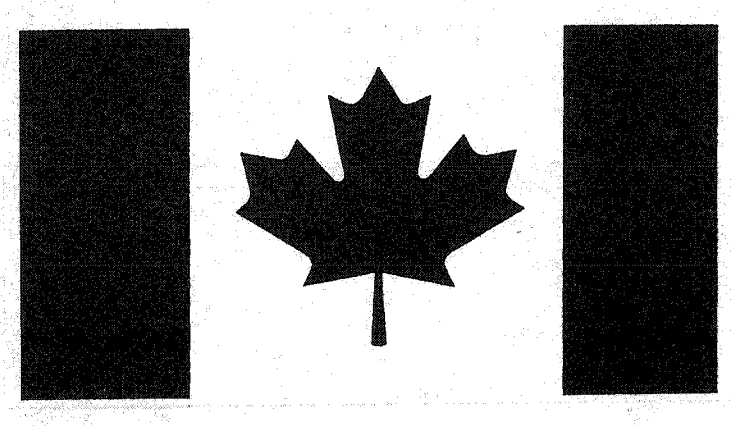

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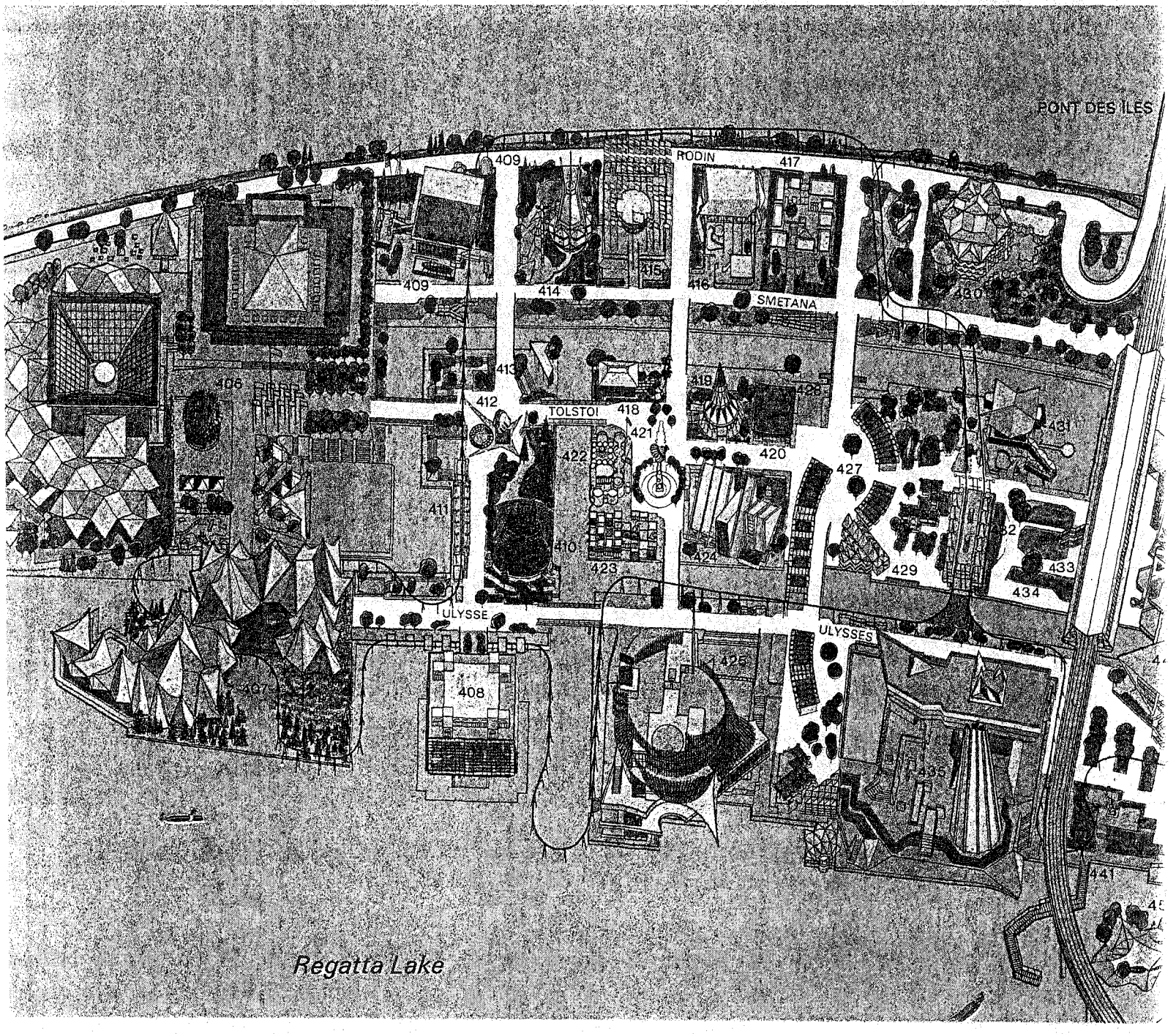


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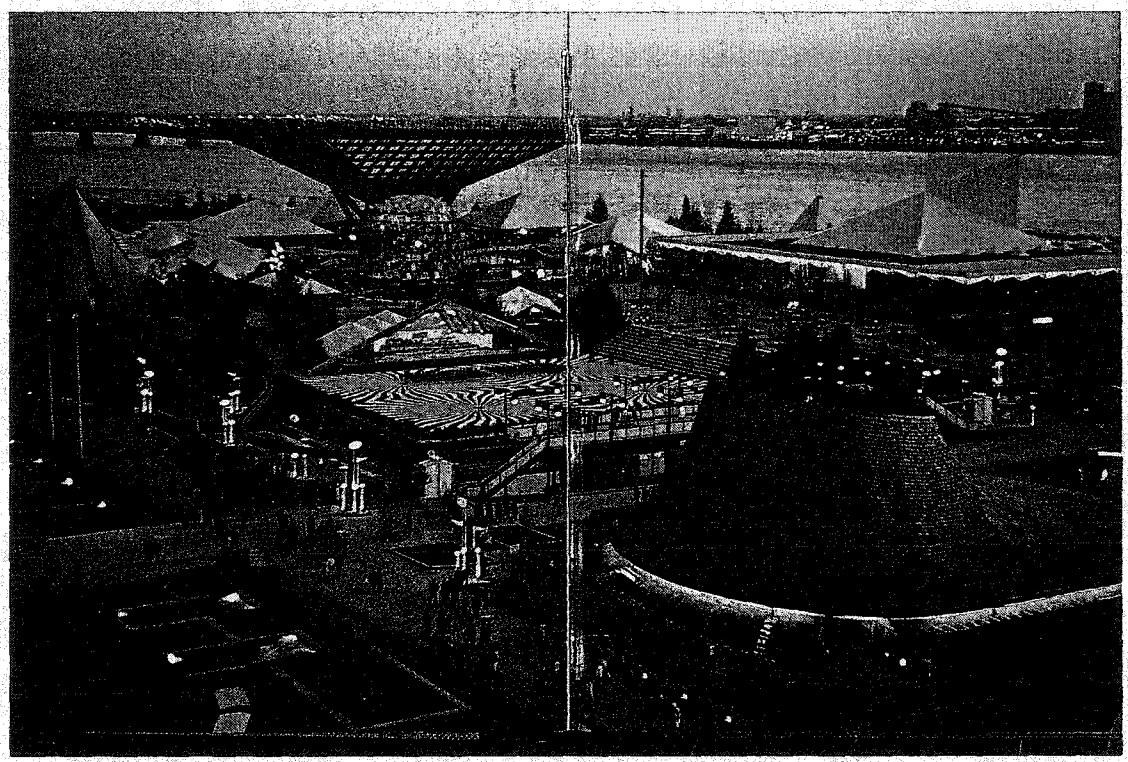

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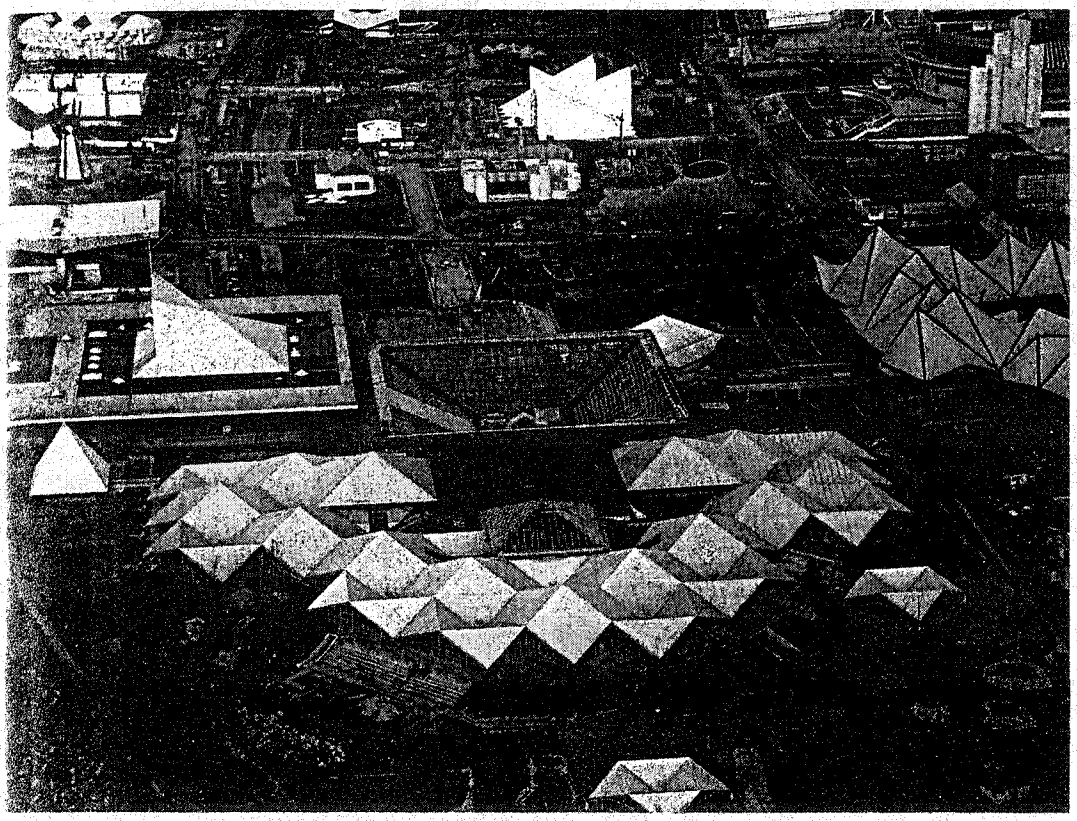

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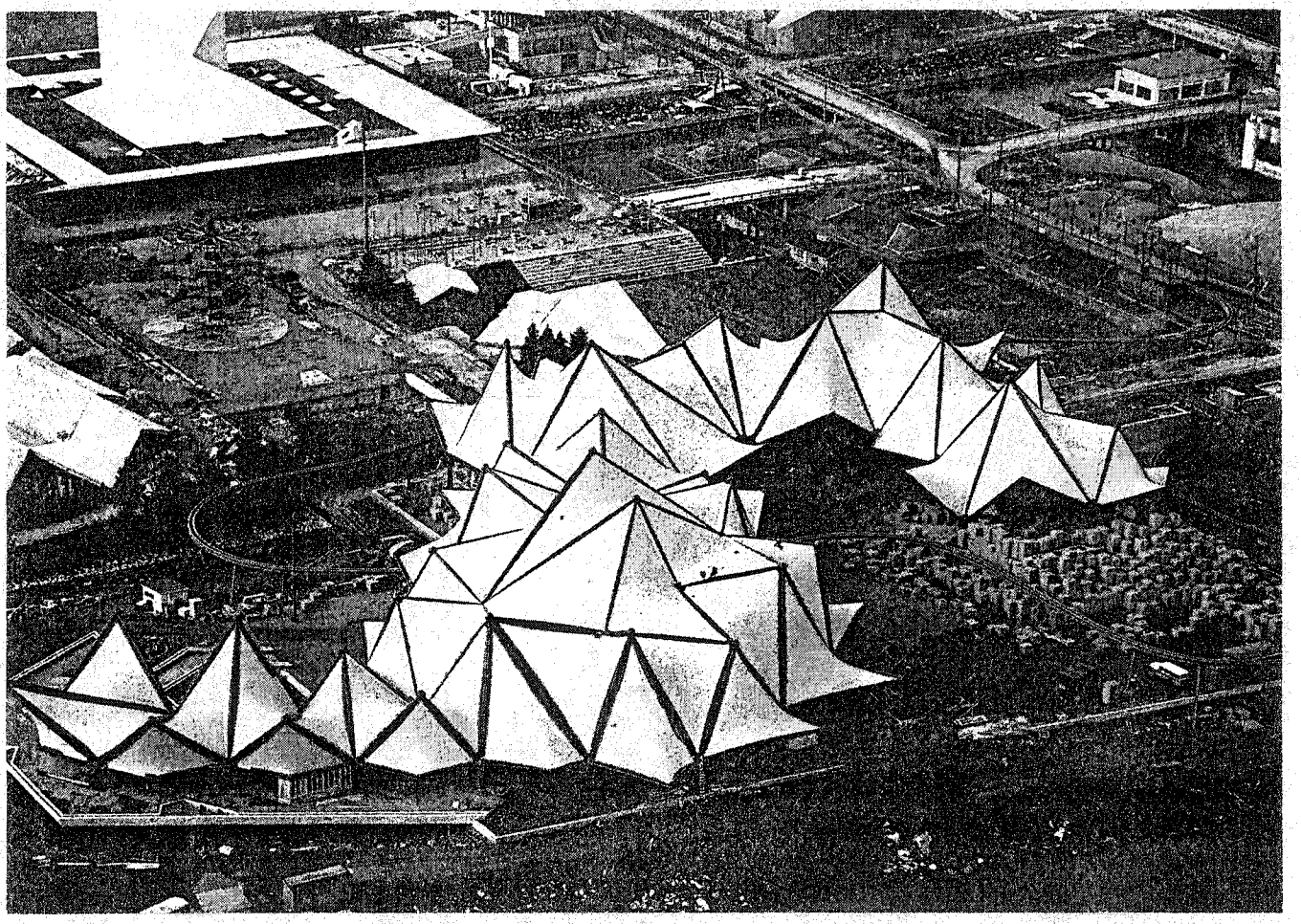

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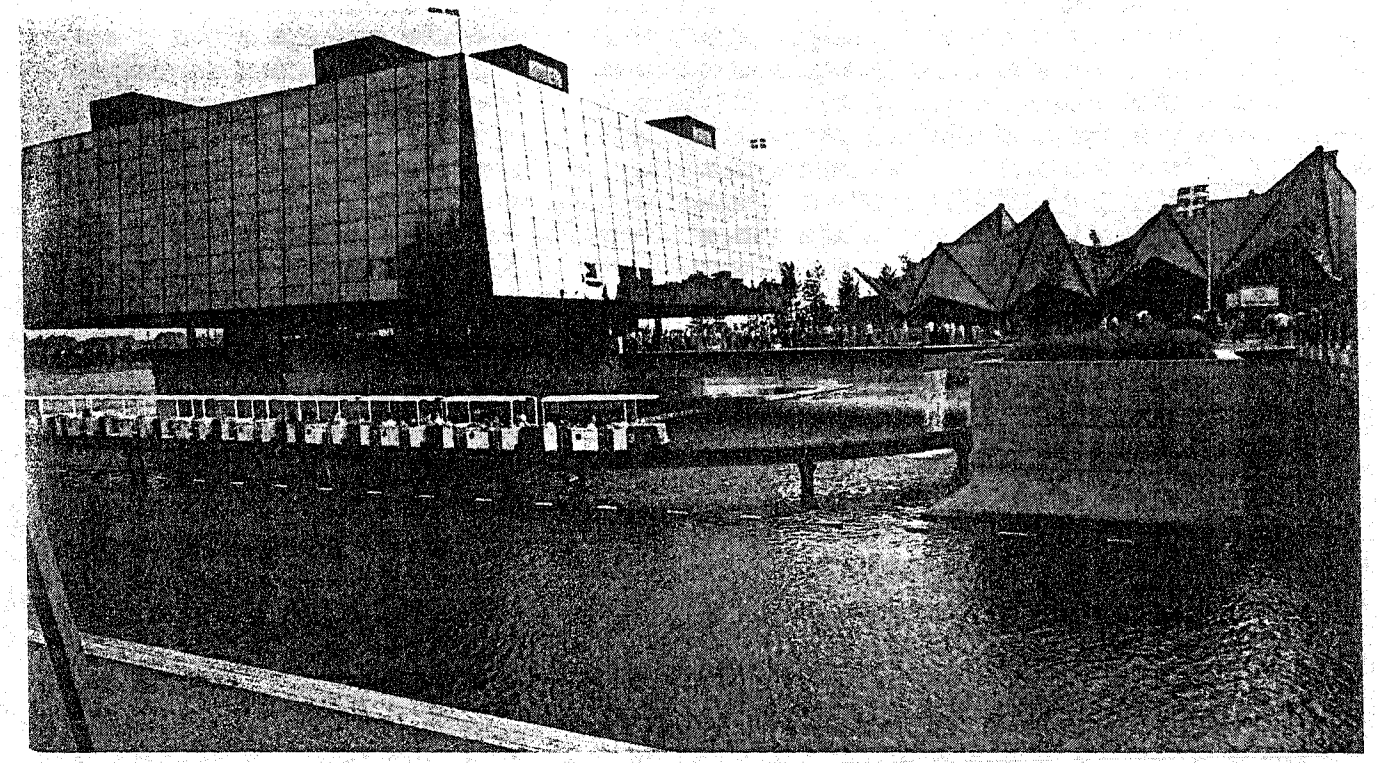

**illustration 8**

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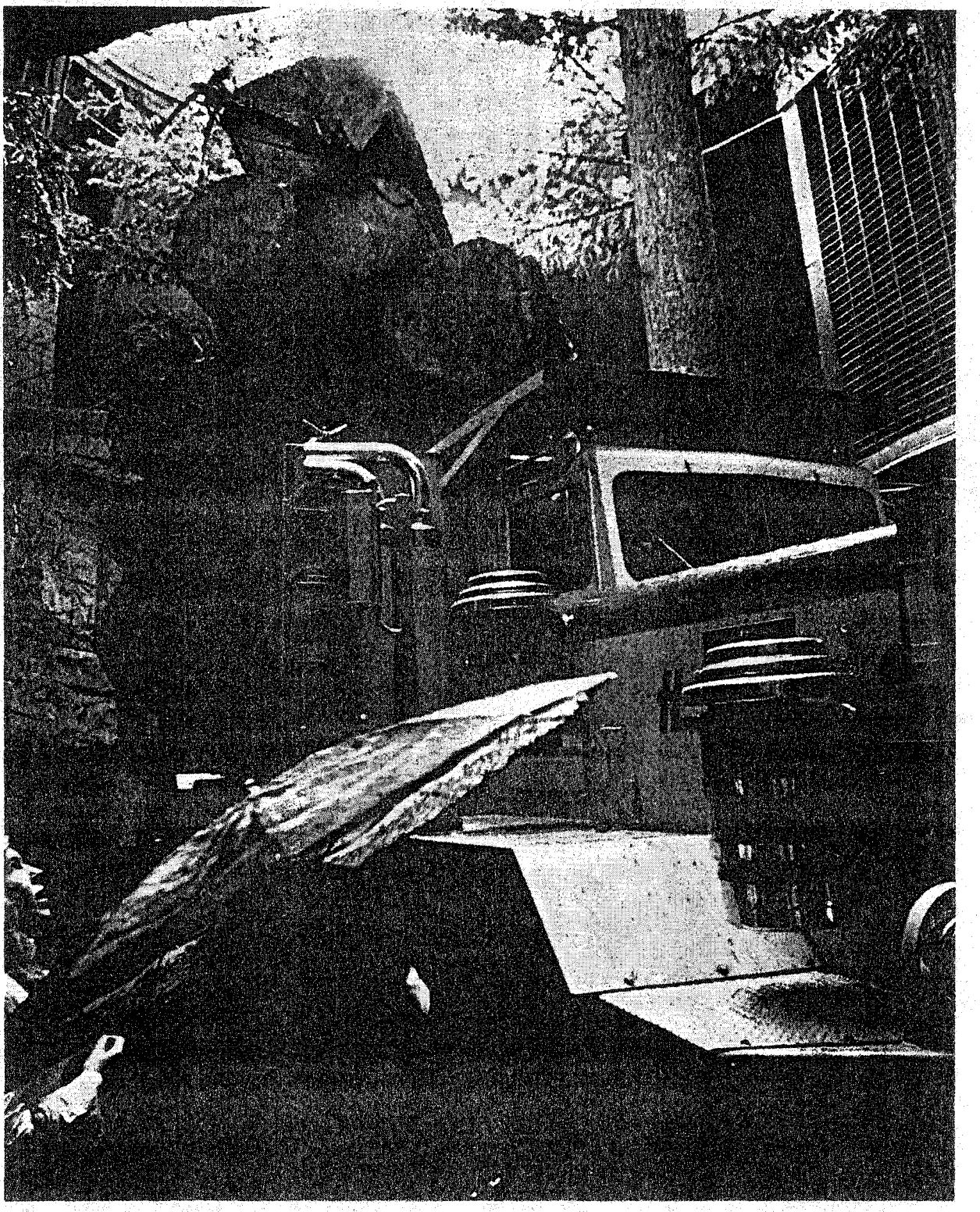

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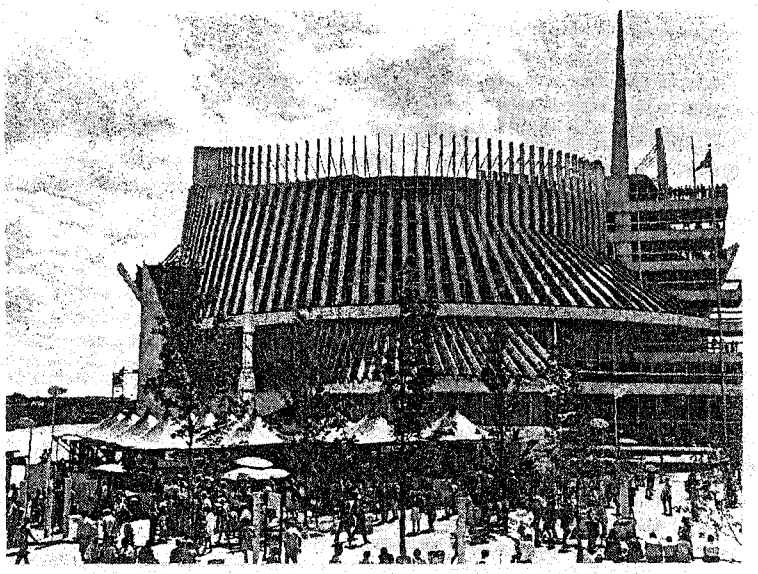

**illustration 10**

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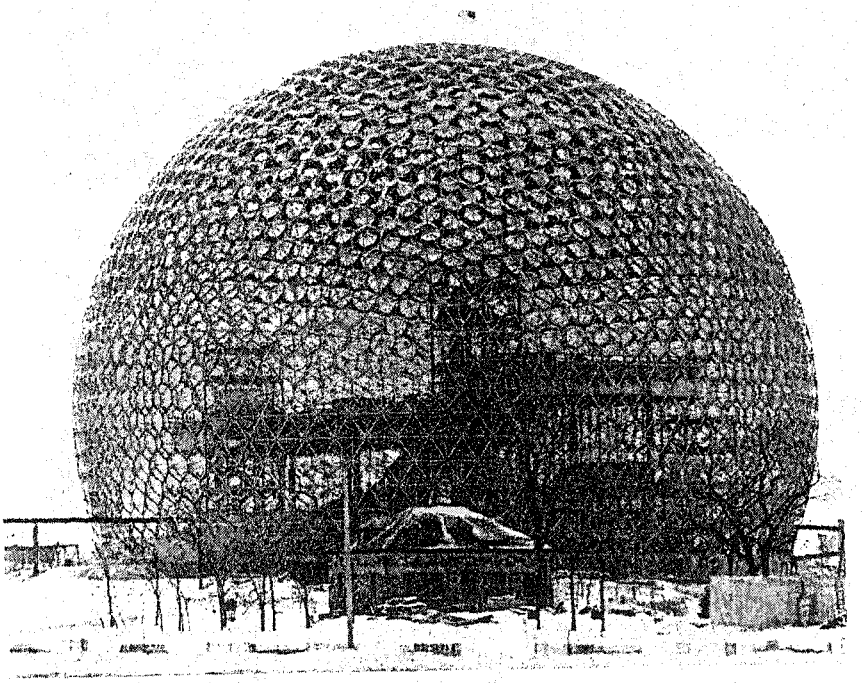
**illustration 11**



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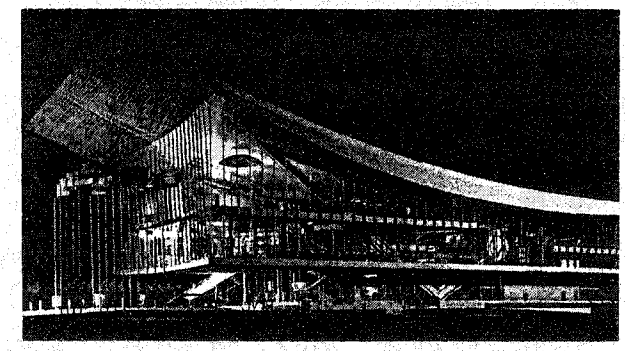

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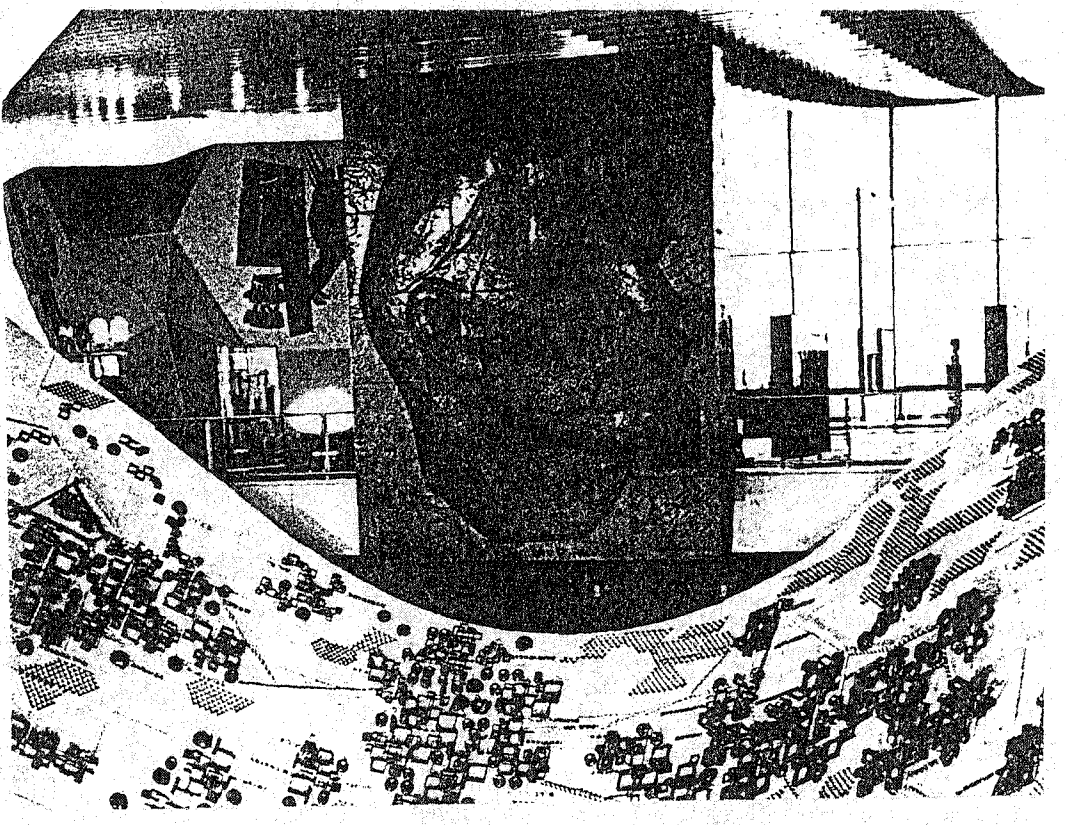

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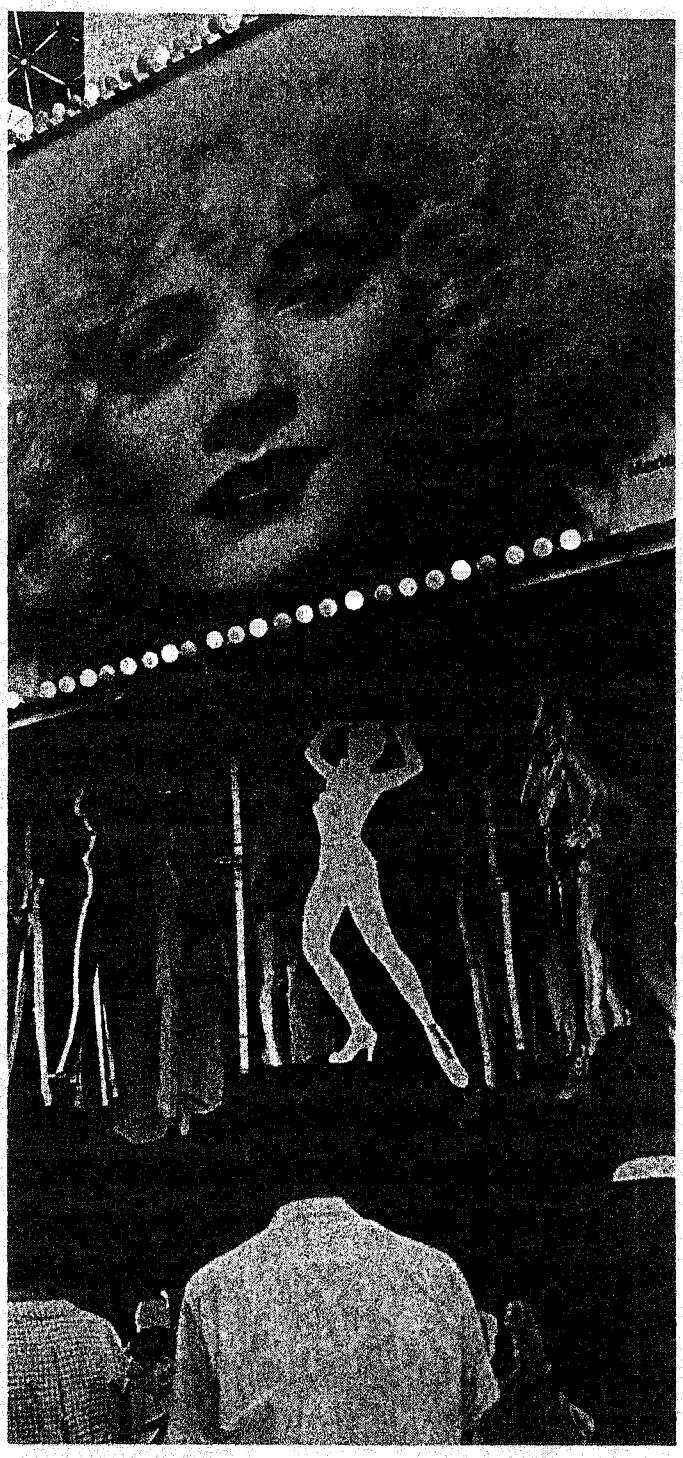

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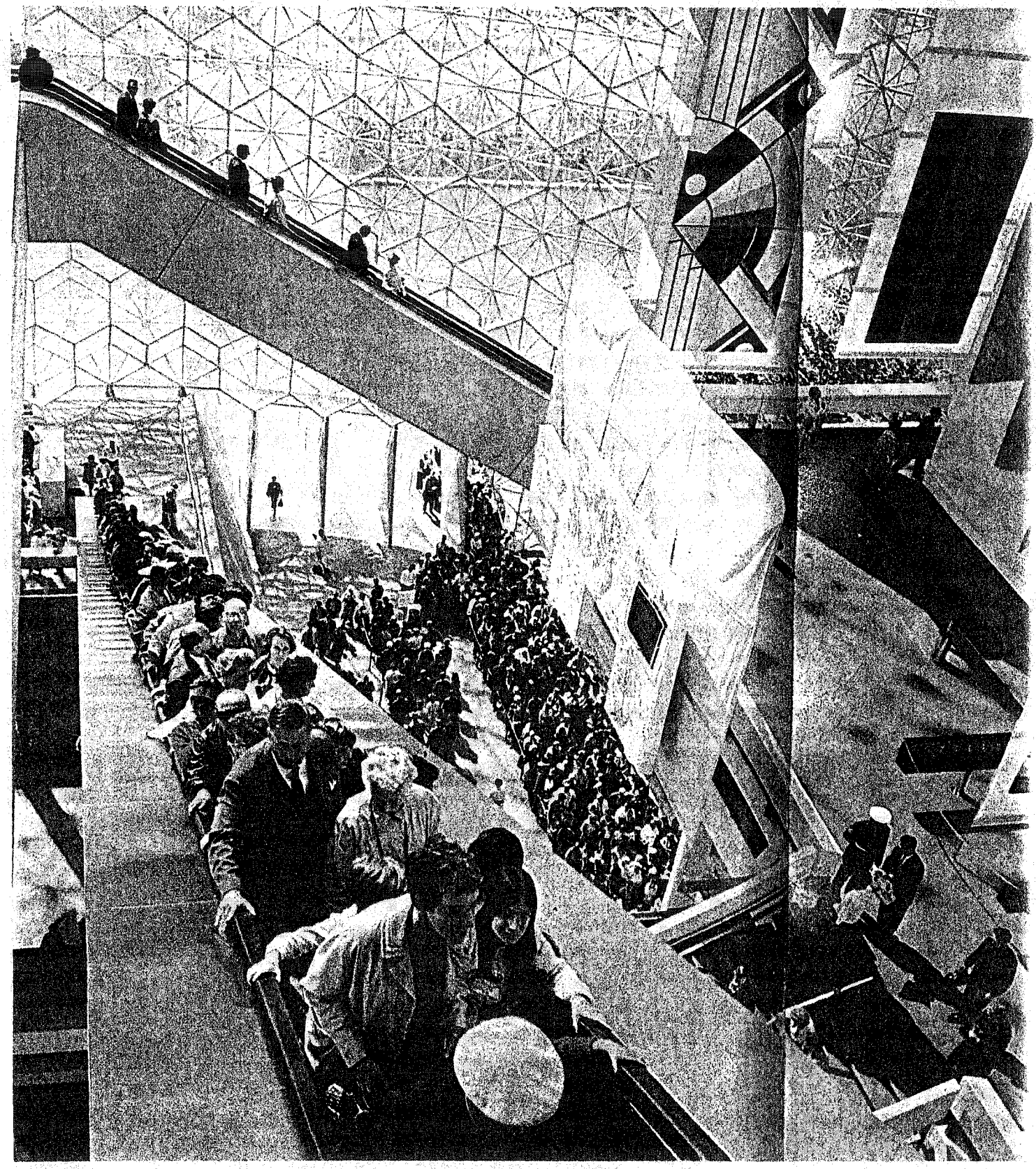

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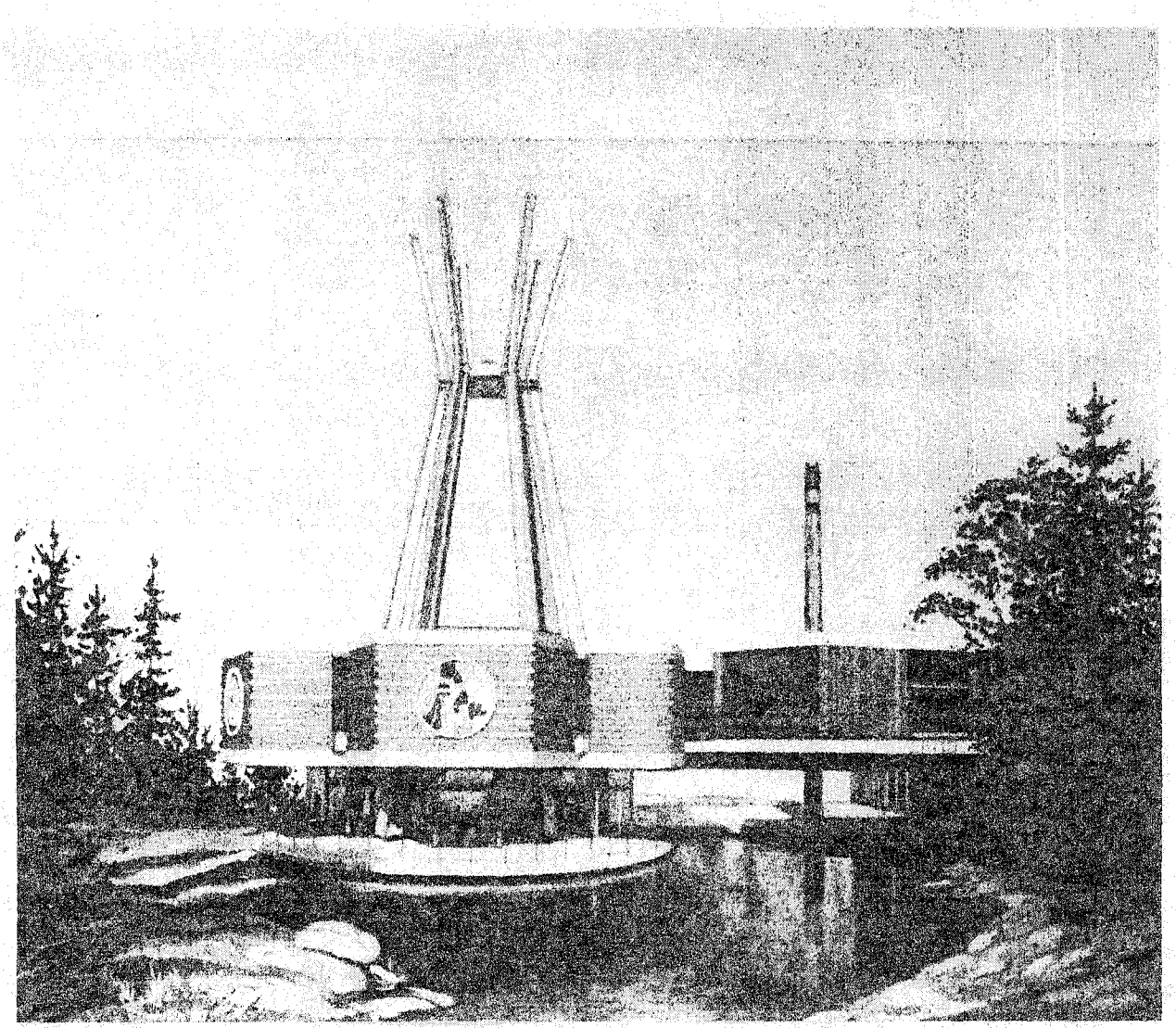

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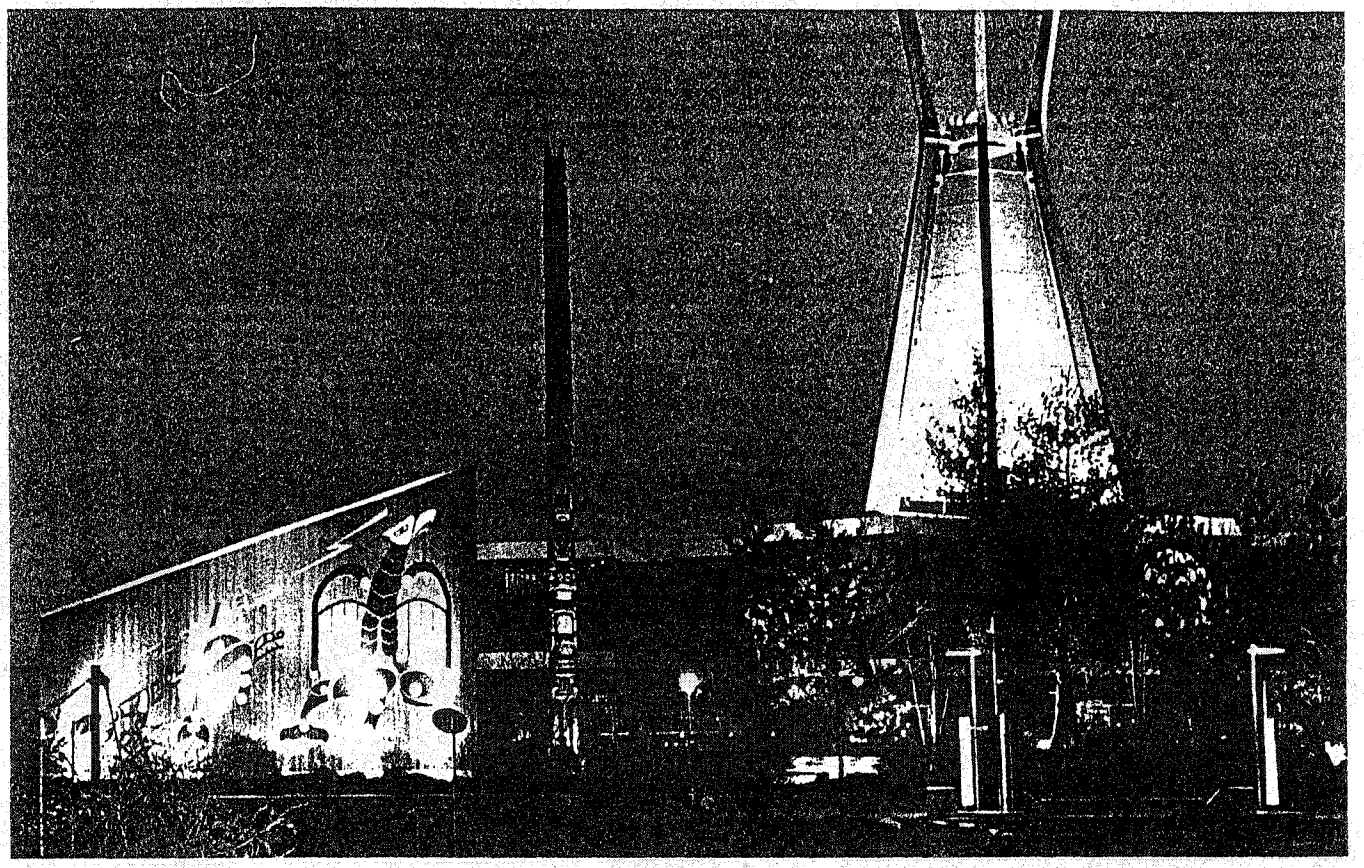

**illustration 18**


**illustration 19**

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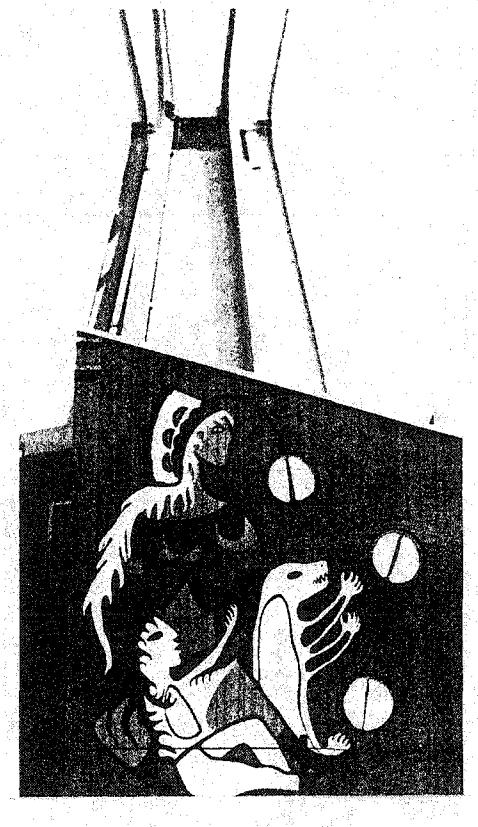

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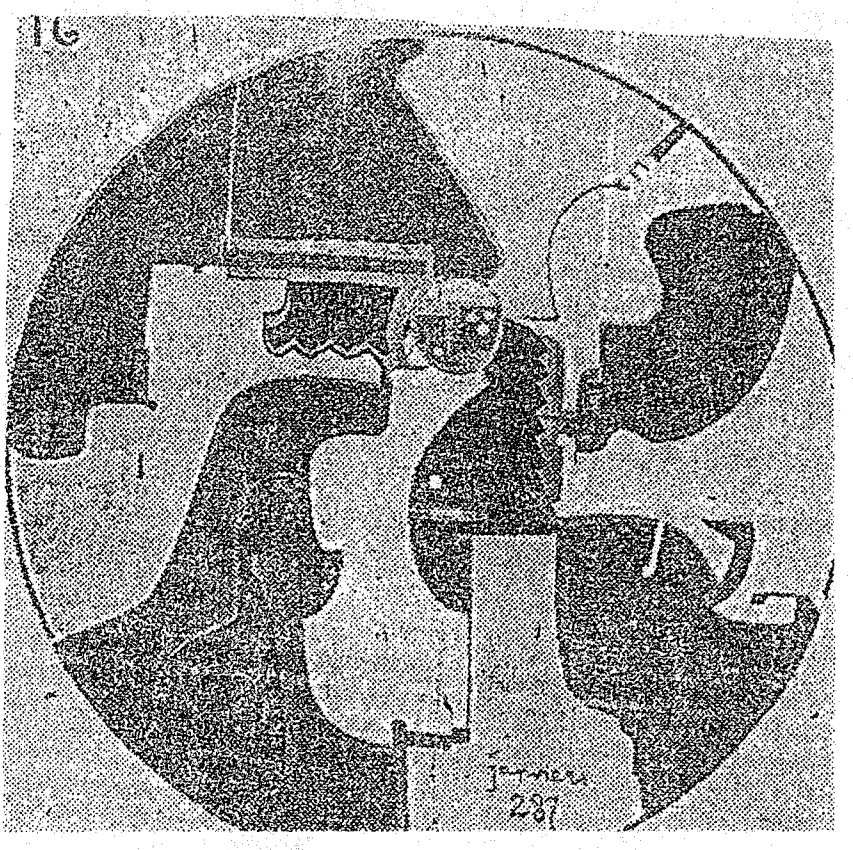
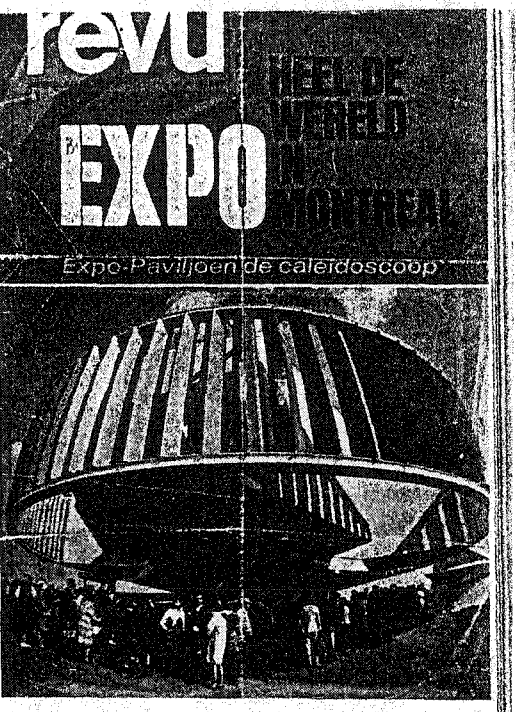


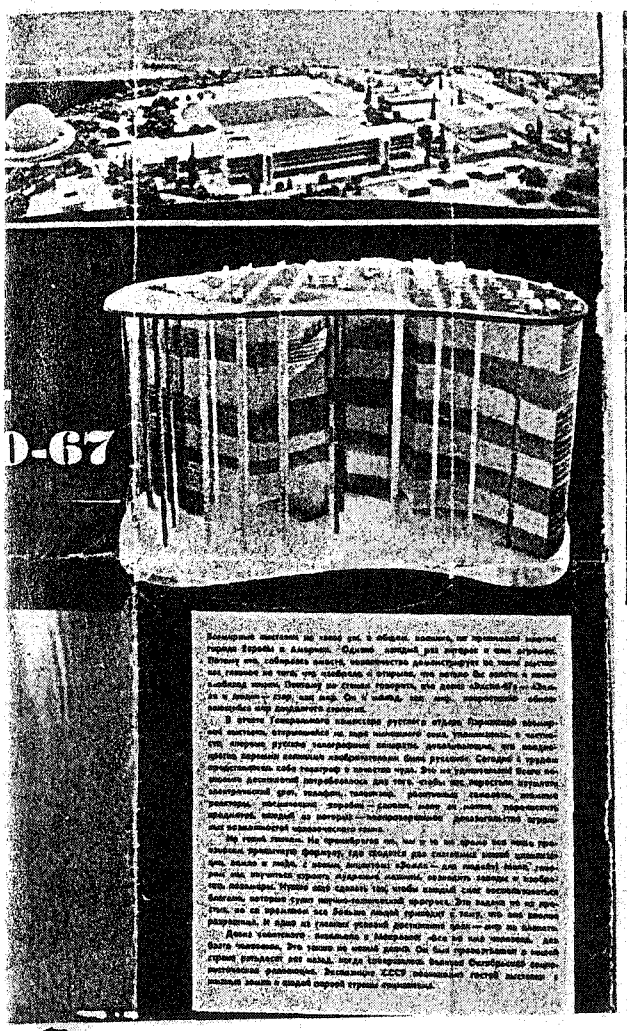
illustration 21


Britain


Switzerland

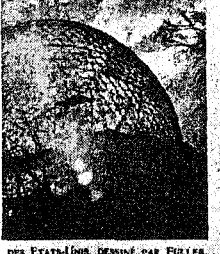



Netherlands



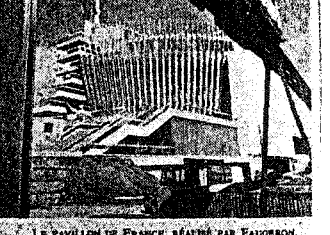
JEAN DRAPEAU, MAIRE DE MONTRÉAL...
*...formes imprévues, presque gratuites...*

...DEVANT LES PAVILLONS DE L'ONTARIO ET DU CANADA.
*...capables de surprendre, d'amuser, de donner à rêver.*



DES ETATS-UNIS, DESSINÉ PAR FULLER.

# EXPO 67 MONTREAL
# LE REVE MODERNE



LE PAVILLON DE FRANCE, RÉALISÉ PAR FAUGERON.
*Sur la terrasse, un jardin fantastique.*

m'a-t-on expliqué. L'eau, c'est seulement un lac. Pour des régates. »

Un lac artificiel, inclus dans l'île, qui a été aménagé, entièrement construite sur le fleuve pour recevoir, avec l'île Saint-Hélène agrandie trois fois, l'Expo 67.

Comparé au Saint-Laurent, la Seine mérite tout juste le nom de rivière. Comme, d'ailleurs, le Danube et la Tamise.

« Nous avons eu assez de mal à faire comprendre aux architectes européens qu'ici tout change d'échelle », m'a expliqué M. Yves Jasmin, directeur des Relations publiques de l'Expo.

L'argent non plus n'a pas tout à fait la même valeur de ce côté de l'Atlantique. Le Canada a investi dans l'entreprise deux milliards de francs. Sans compter les aménagements de la ville, ponts et tunnels d'accès. Dès le départ, un défaut a été envisagé: contenti, voilà un défaut, énorme, qu'on évalue aujourd'hui à cinq cents millions de francs. Pour la plus grande gloire de Montréal et de la nation canadienne, qui fête cette année son centenaire.

Après Bruxelles. Mais tout l'argent du monde ne suffit pas encore à bâtir un rêve. Il y faut aussi de l'imagination. De la passion. Peut-être un grain de folie. Etre soi-même capable de rêver. Comme à Montréal. Palpable, tangible, matérialisée en portées de ciment, en échafaudages de poutrelles, en voiles de plastique à travers le dédale de l'exposition, on perçoit la mesure du rêve du Nouveau-Monde. Comme me l'a déclaré M. Richard Gaudreault, Canadien français de la province de Québec, et séparatiste convaincu : « Nous sommes français, d'accord, mais ici, voyez-vous, nous sommes avant tout américains. C'est-à-dire convaincus qu'il n'y a jamais rien d'impossible. »

Les choses avaient mal commencé. Au lendemain de l'Exposition de Bruxelles de 1958, quand le Canada avait posé sa candidature au Bureau international des Expositions, à Paris, il s'était trouvé en concurrence avec l'U.R.S.S., qui entendait marquer ainsi le cinquantième anniversaire de la Révolution d'Octobre. Il fallut quatorze tours de scrutin pour départager les deux pays. Finalement, le Canada fut battu.

Soudain, en avril 1962, coup de théâtre : l'Union soviétique déclare forfait. Sans explication. En fait, il semble que l'énorme succès de l'Exposition française à Moscou ait ébranlé le gouvernement. Comment protéger la population aux séductions de la société d'abondance, à l'étalage des richesses de tous les pays capitalistes rassemblés ?

« Pour nous, commençait une course contre la montre, m'a raconté M. Jean Drapeau, maire de Montréal. Il fallait présenter un dossier complet, en règle, convaincant, dès la prochaine session du Bureau. Prendre tout le monde de vitesse. Je suis parti pour Bruxelles, je me suis fait communiquer le dossier préparé par Moscou. »

Par — 30° à Paris, le 25 octobre 1962, Montréal est officiellement chargée d'organiser la première Exposition Internationale et Universelle de première catégorie qui se soit jamais tenue sur le continent américain. Il lui reste quatre ans pour tenir ses promesses.

« Tout naïvement, m'a dit l'un mes amis. C'est l'occasion de prouver que Montréal est capable de relever n'importe quel défi... »

Les yeux plissés, la calvitie distinguée, des lunettes, M. Jean Drapeau, 52 ans, fait penser à Bernard Blier. Mais sous cette apparence débonnaire, un peu terne, il cache une énergie farouche. Cette exposition, son exposition, il l'a créée littéralement arrachée du néant. →



vie moderne

**illustration 22**

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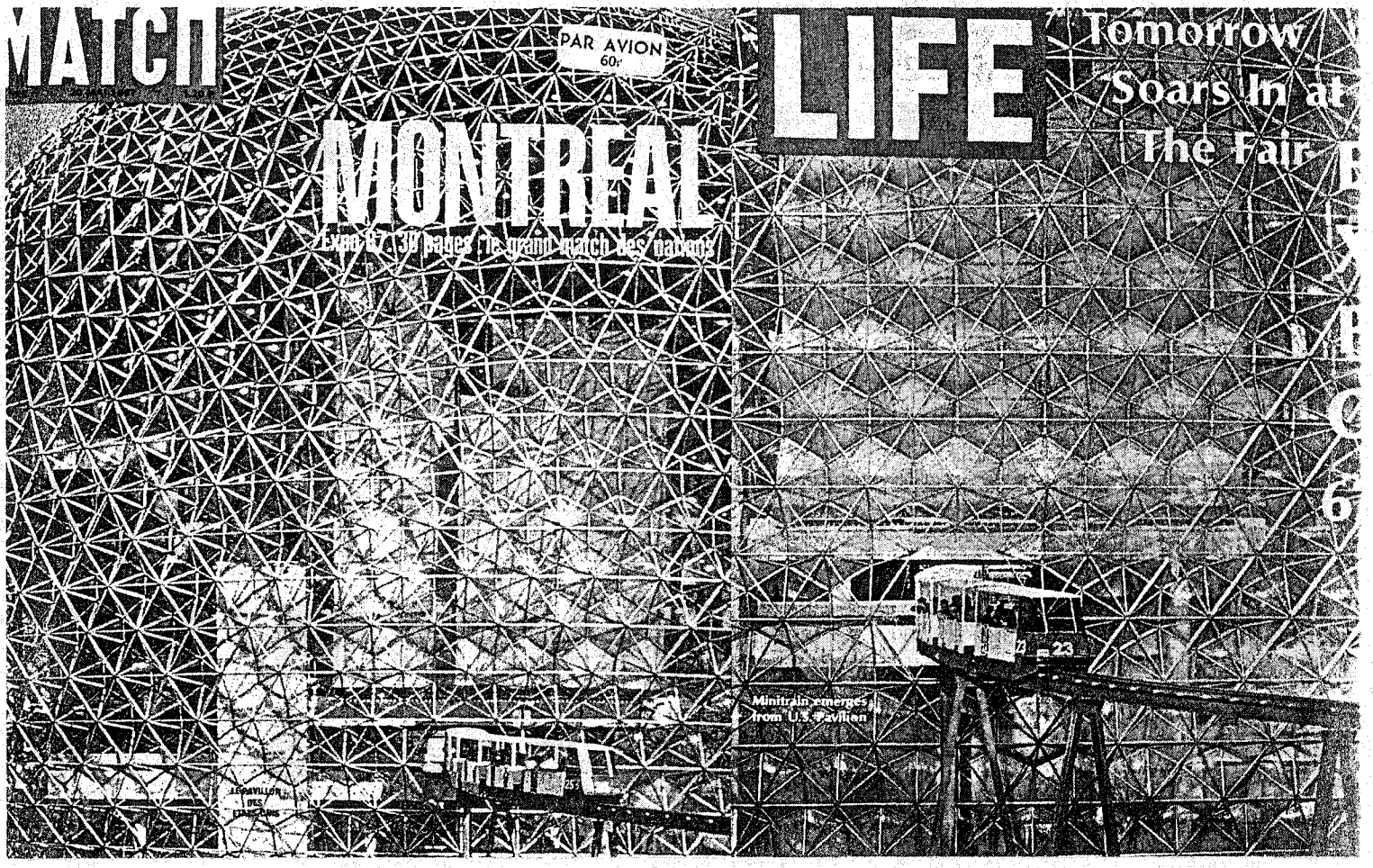


illustration 23

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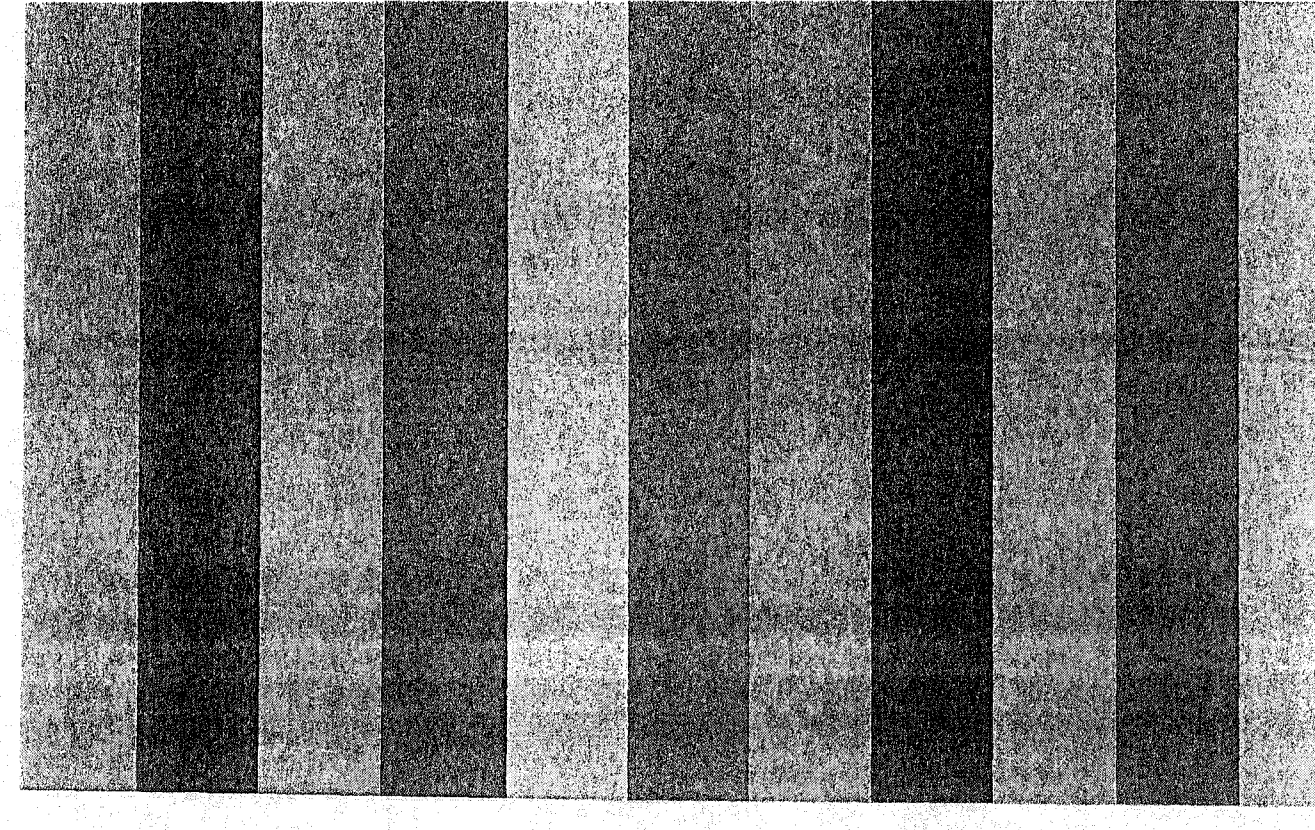


**illustration 24**

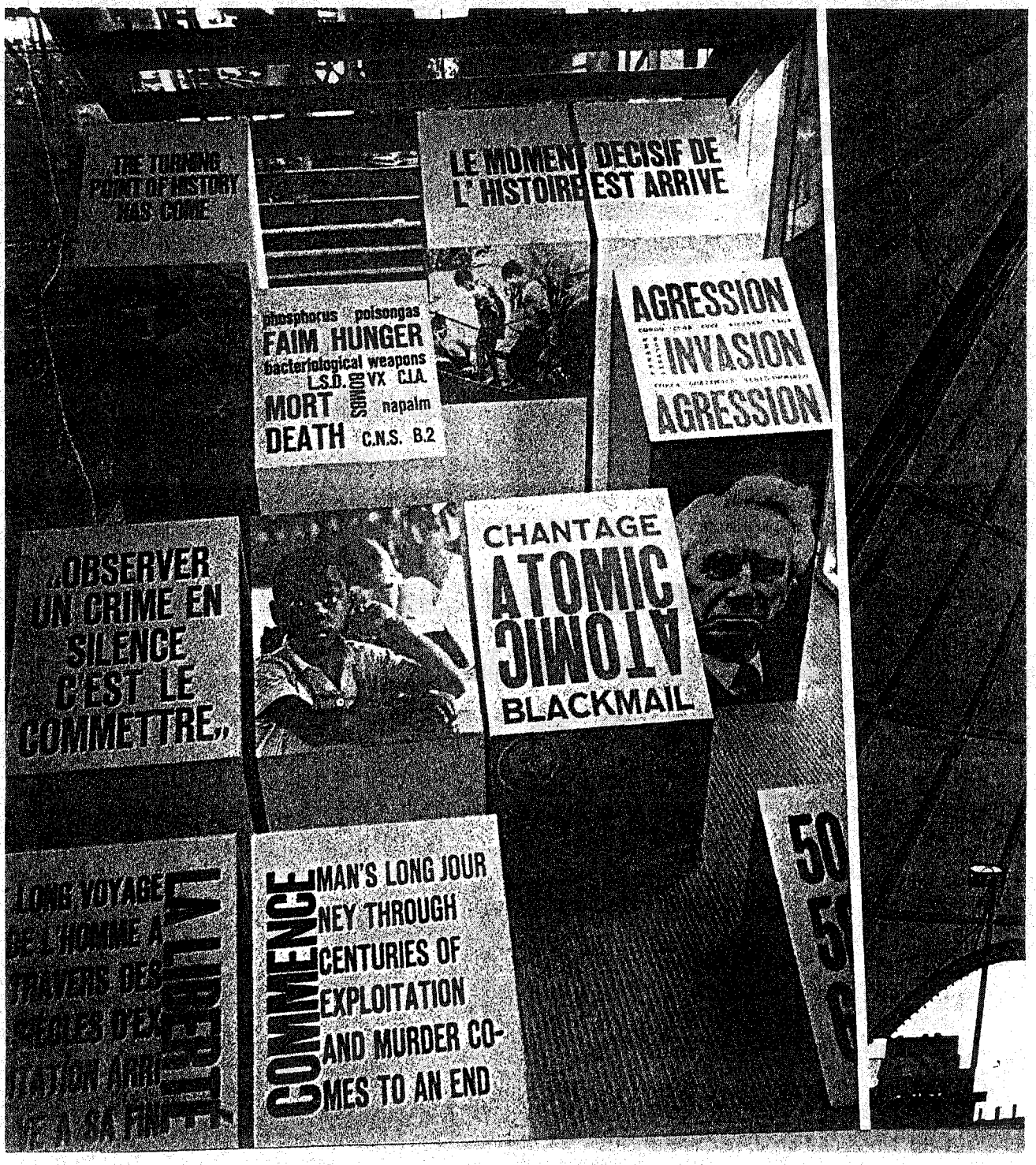
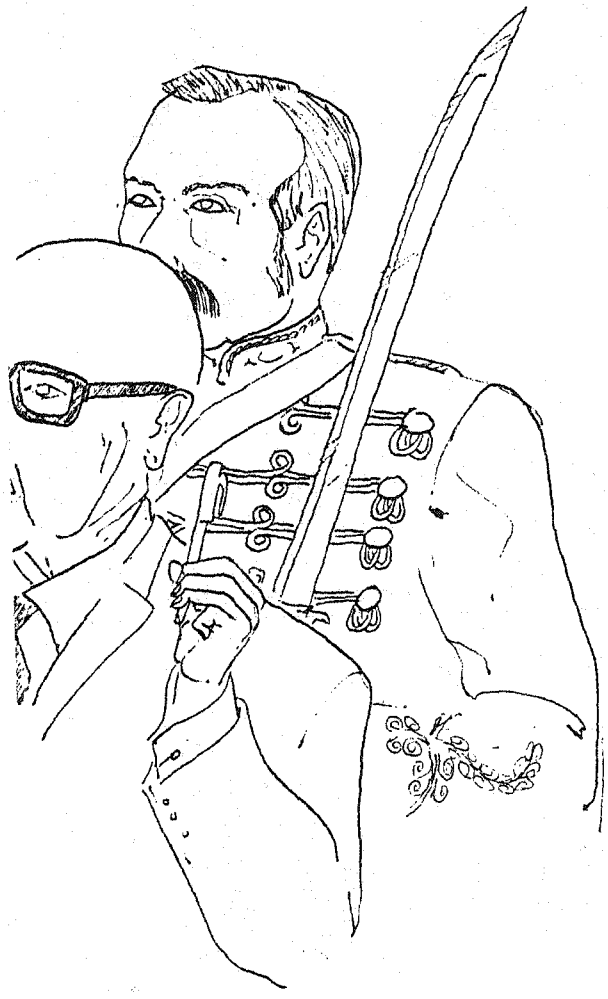
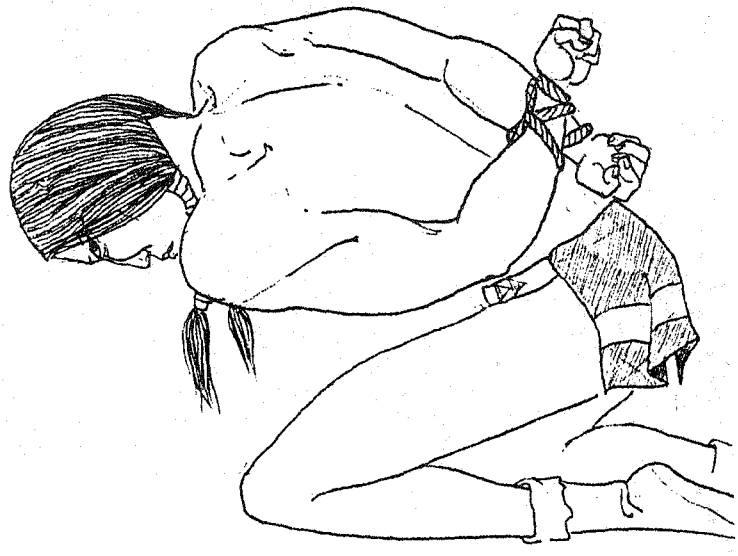



illustration 25

**illustration 26**

**illustration 27**





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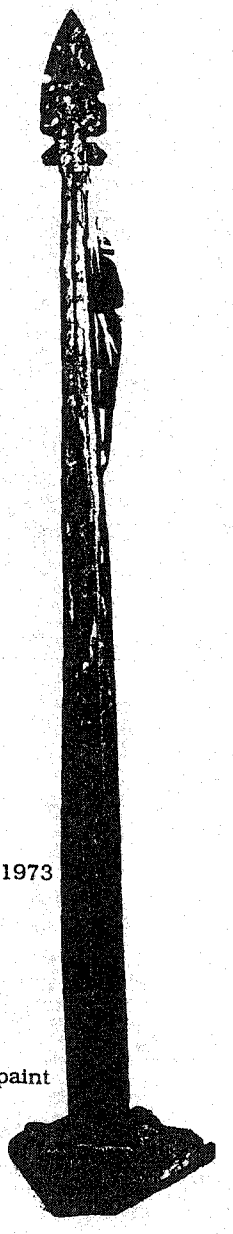

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**illustration 29**

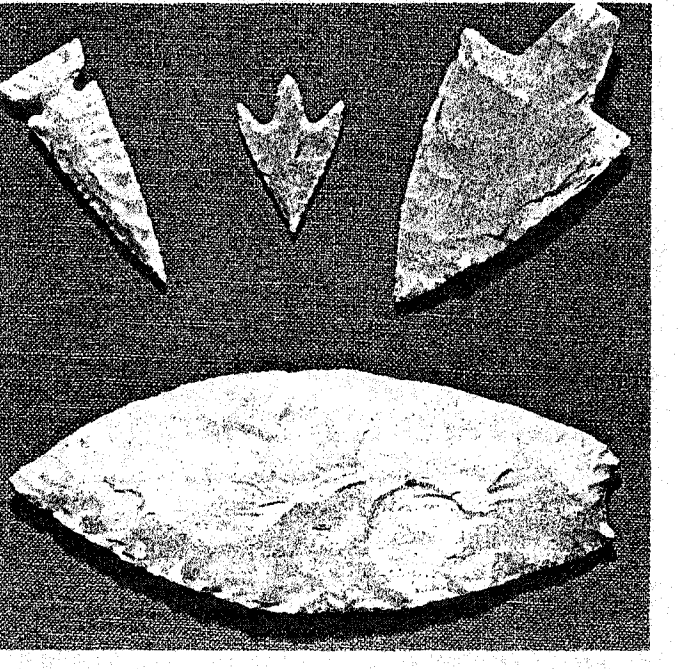
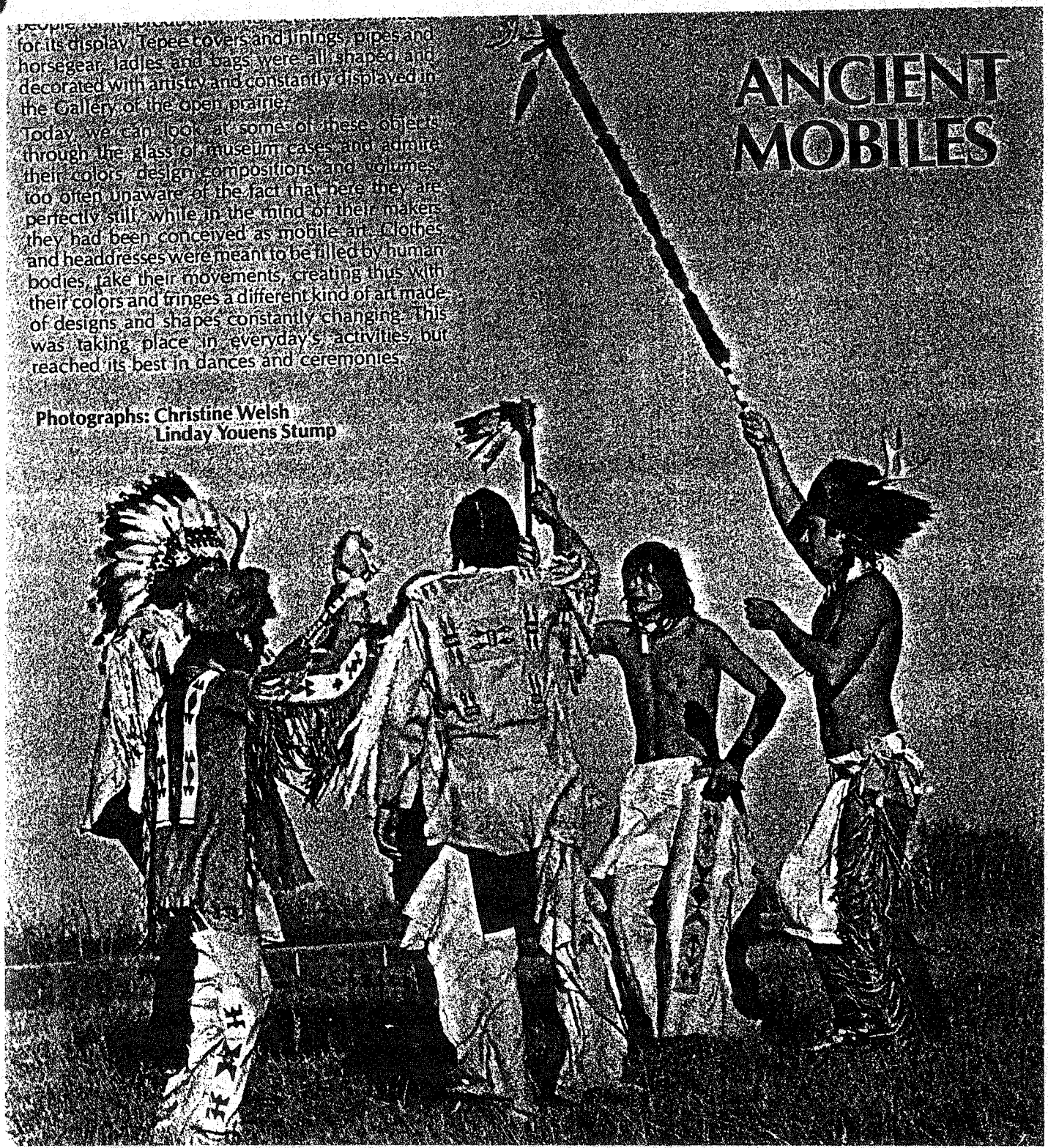


illustration 30

PUEBLO POTTERY DESIGN

illustration 31

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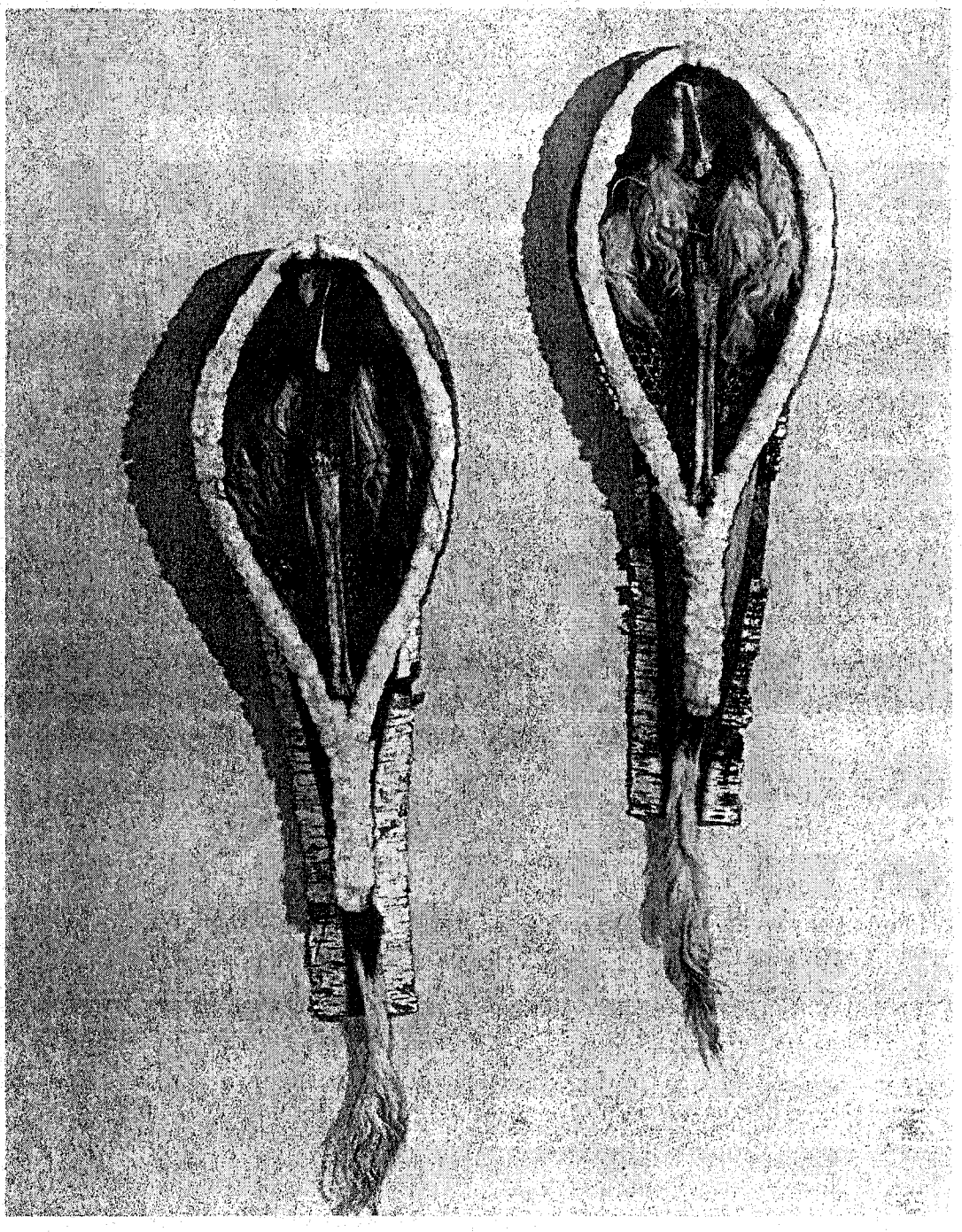

illustration 33

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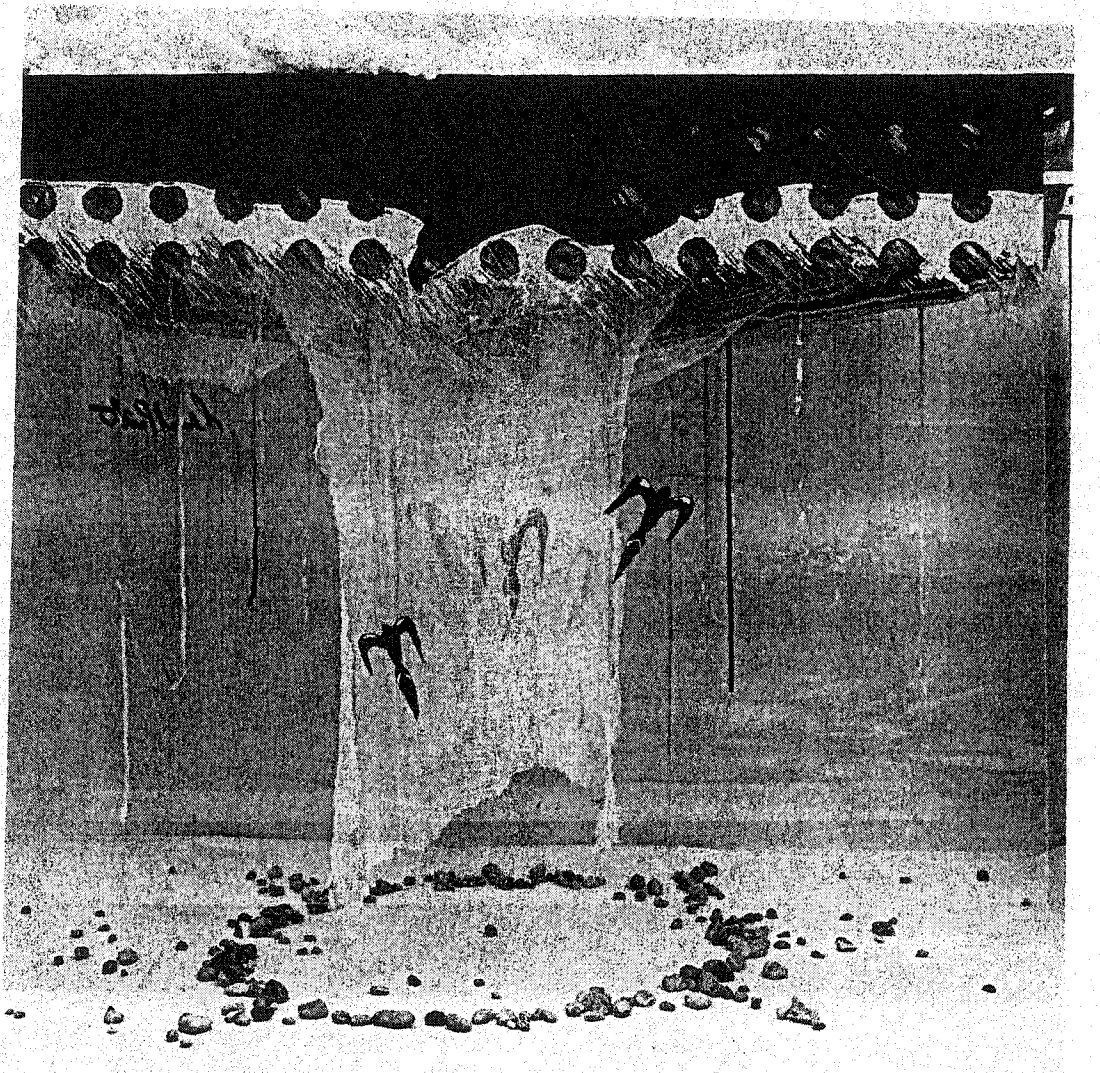

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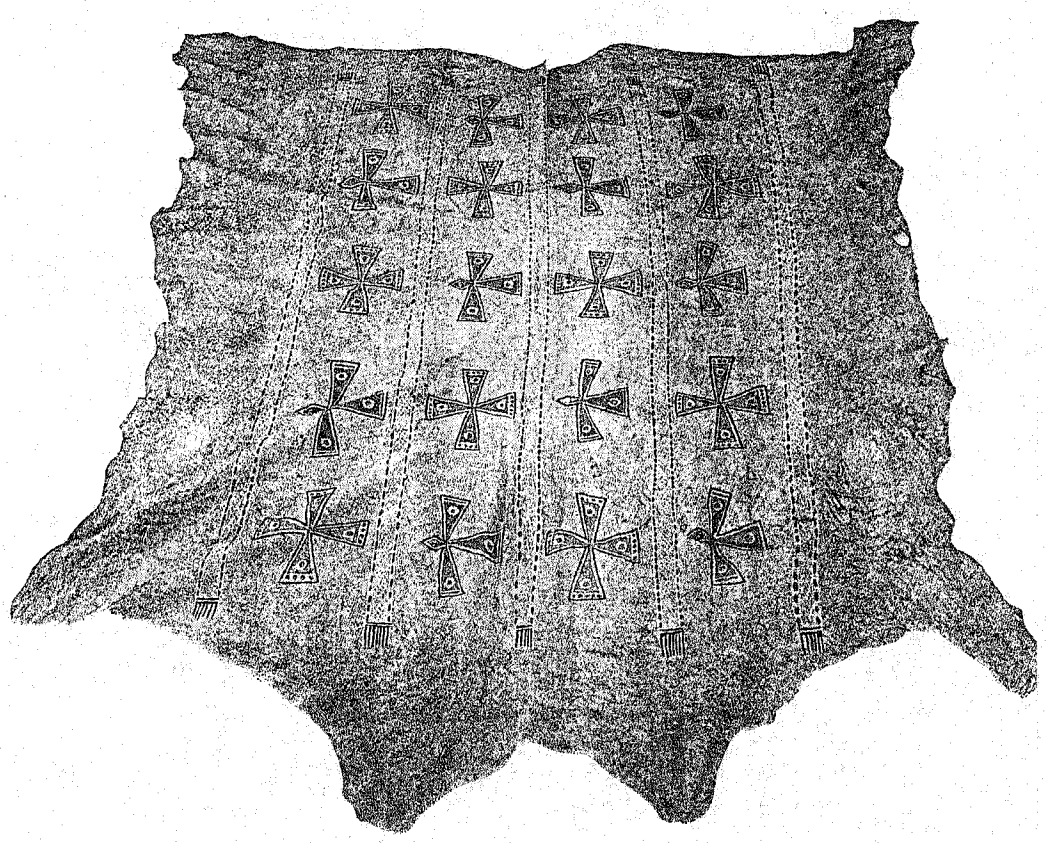

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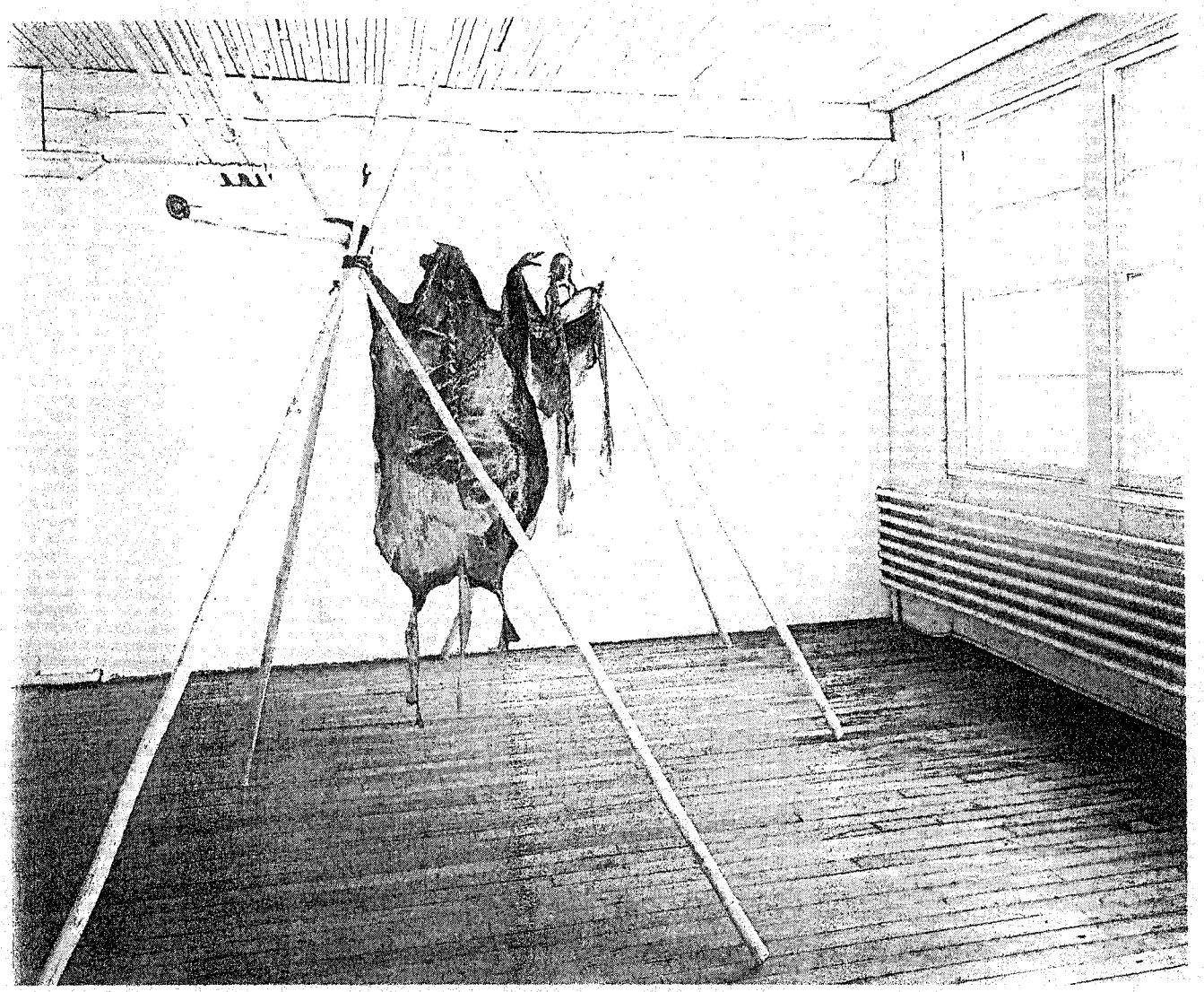

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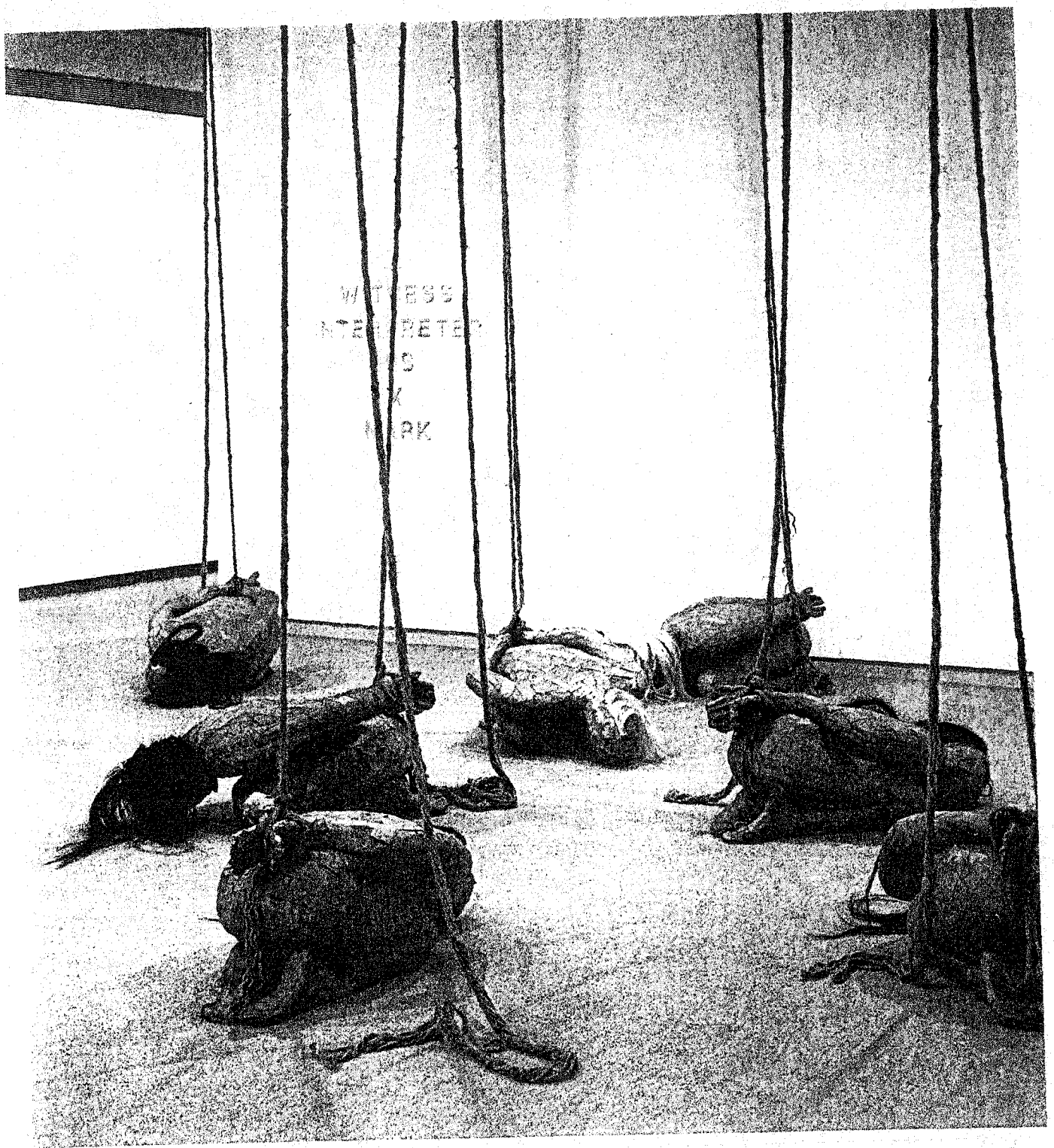

illustration 37

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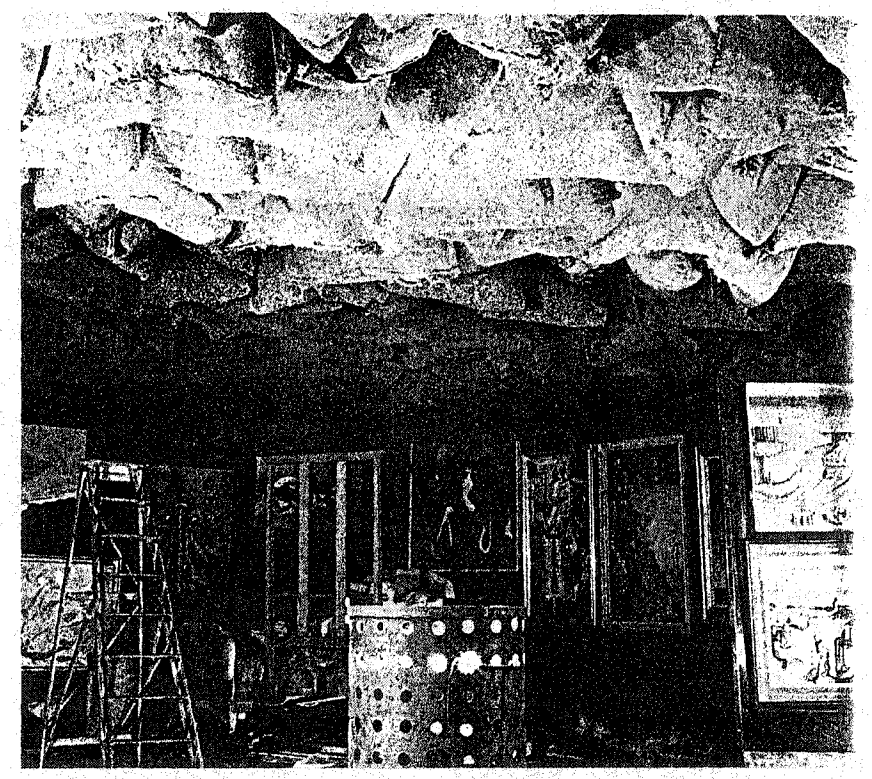

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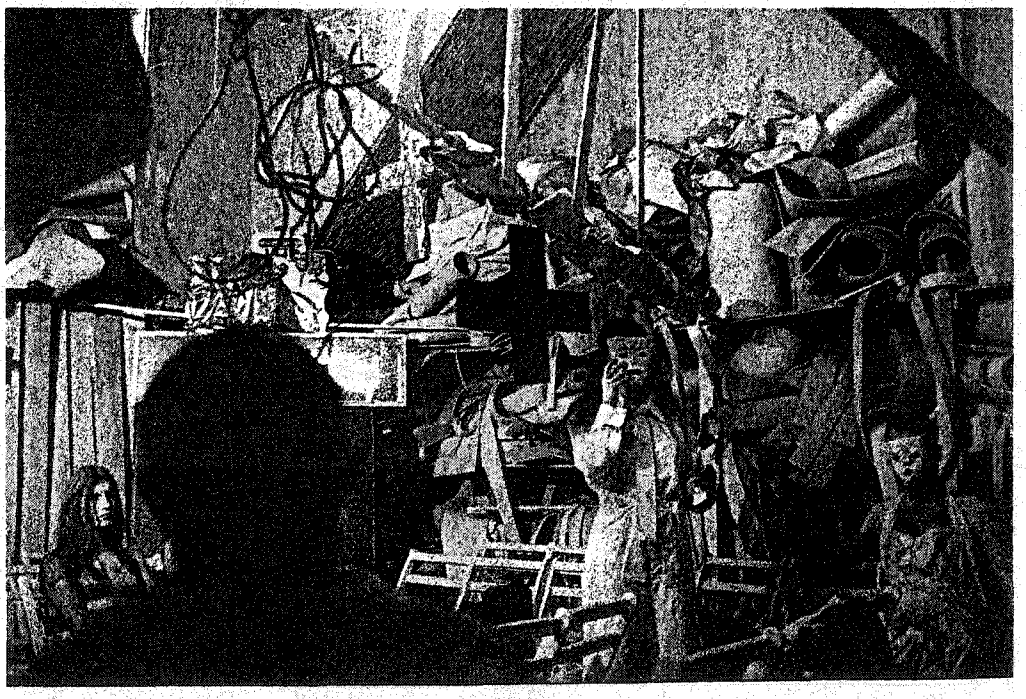

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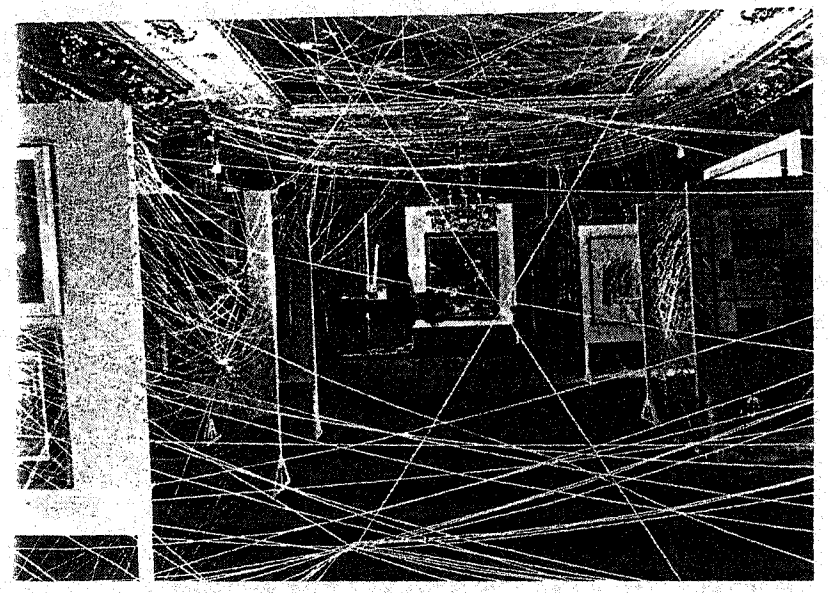

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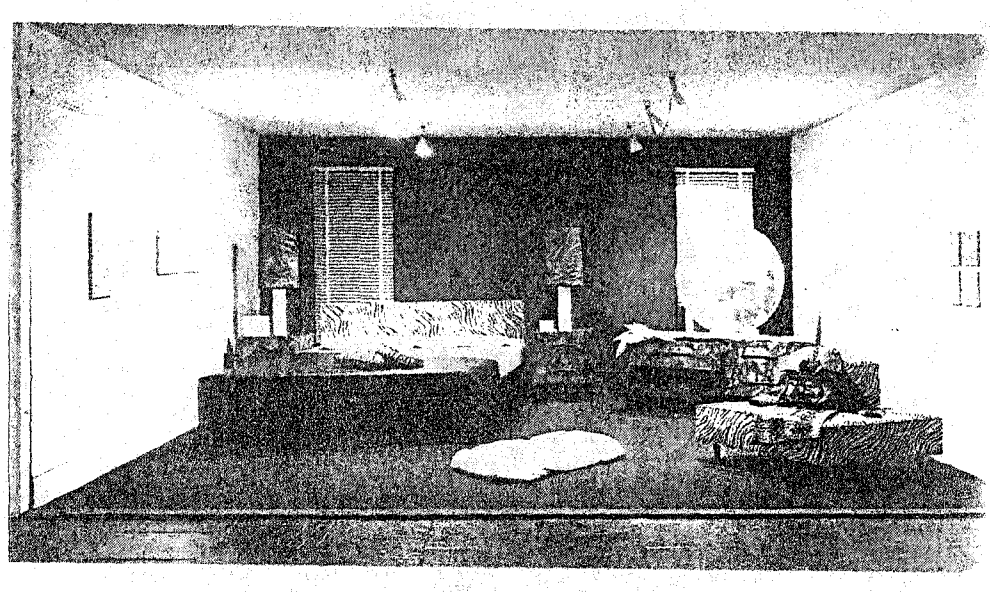

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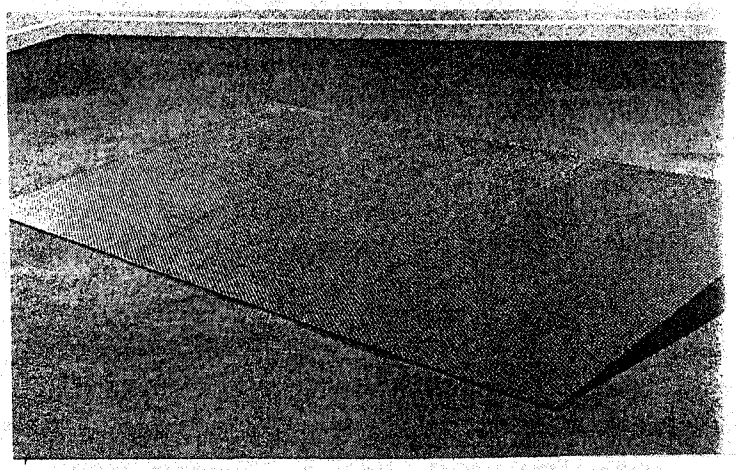

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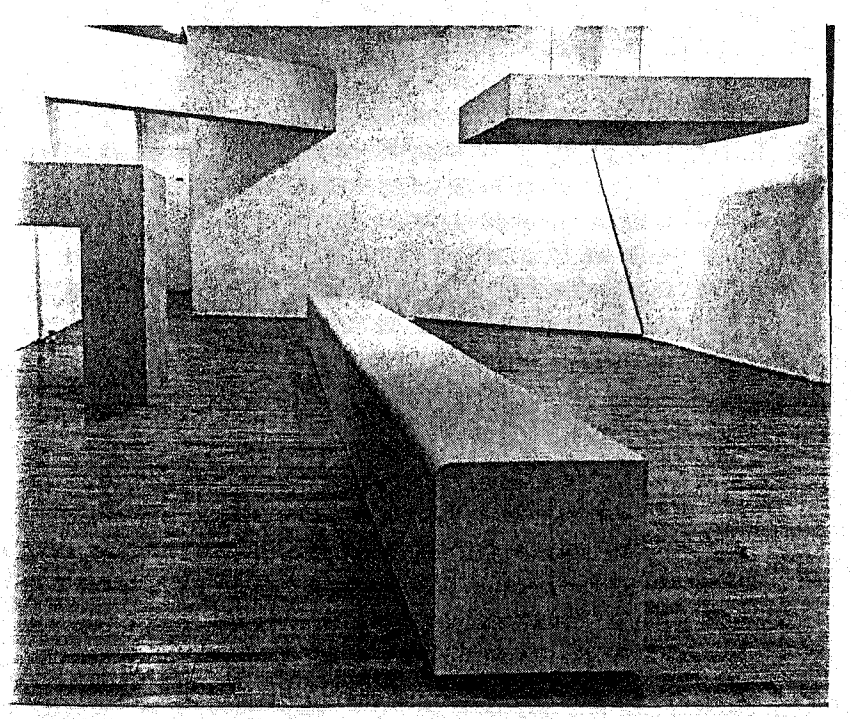

illustration 43

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**illustration 44**

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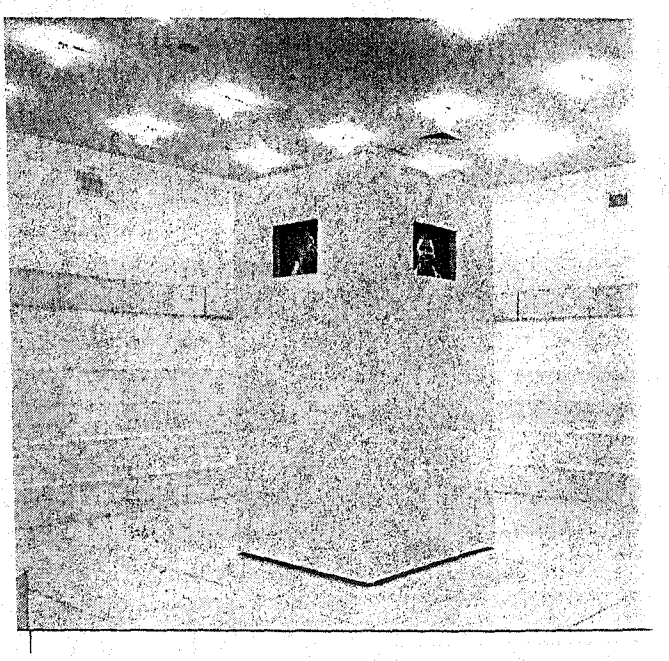
**illustration 45**



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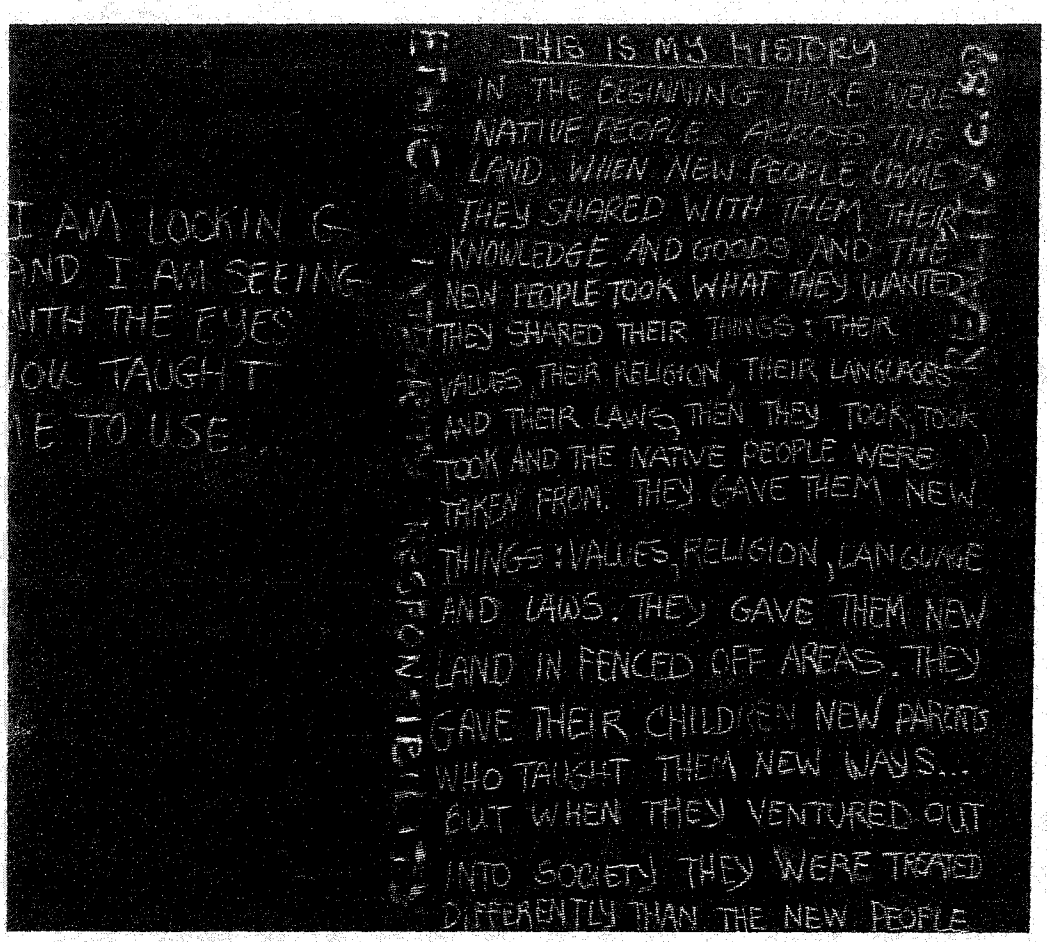


**illustration 47**


**illustration 48**

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illustration 49


**illustration 50**

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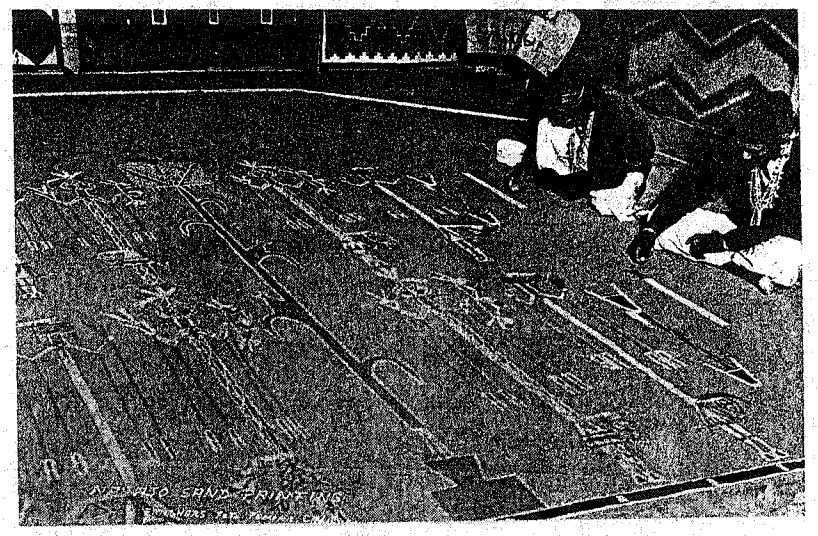
illustration 51



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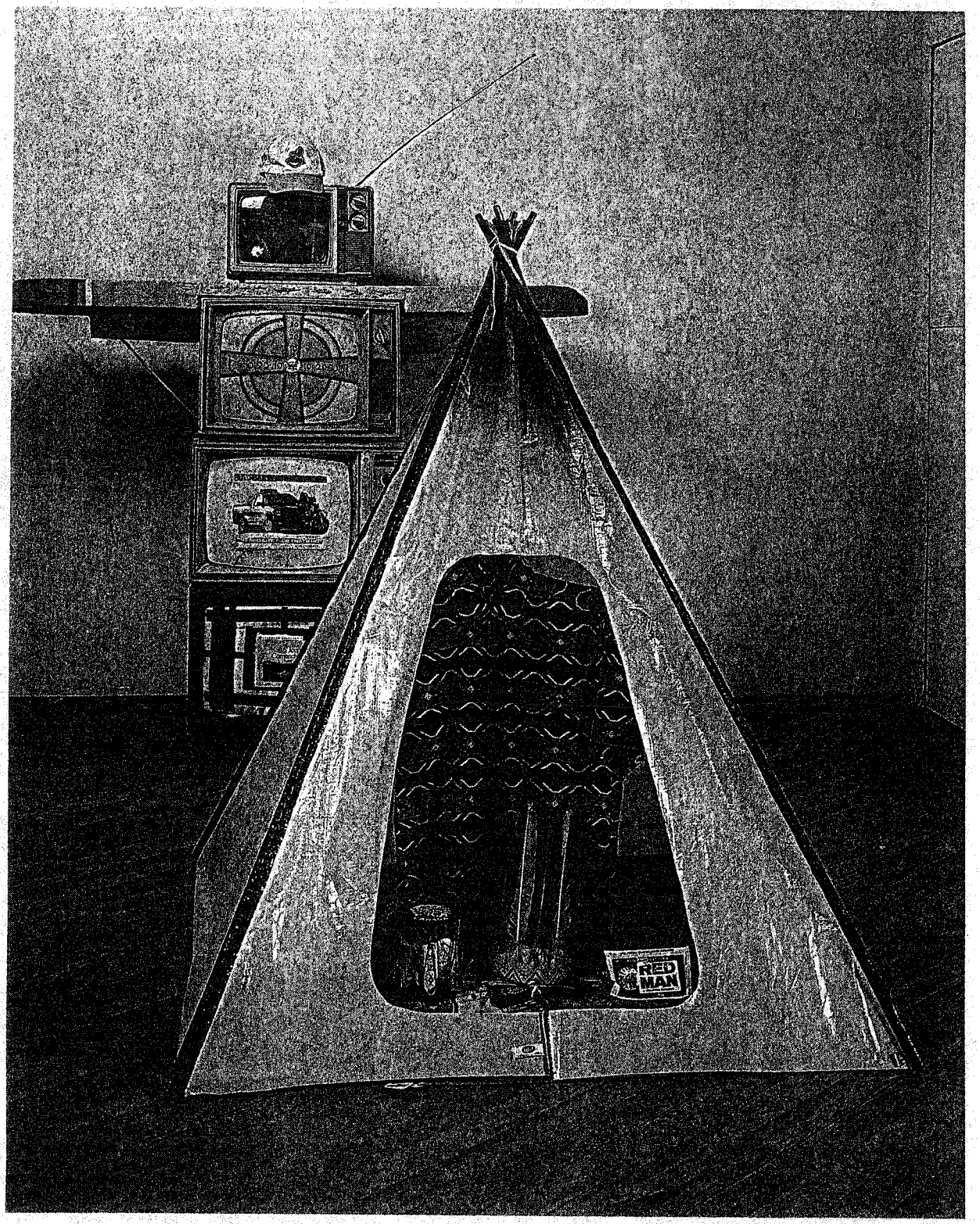


**illustration 53**


illustration 54

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**illustration 55**

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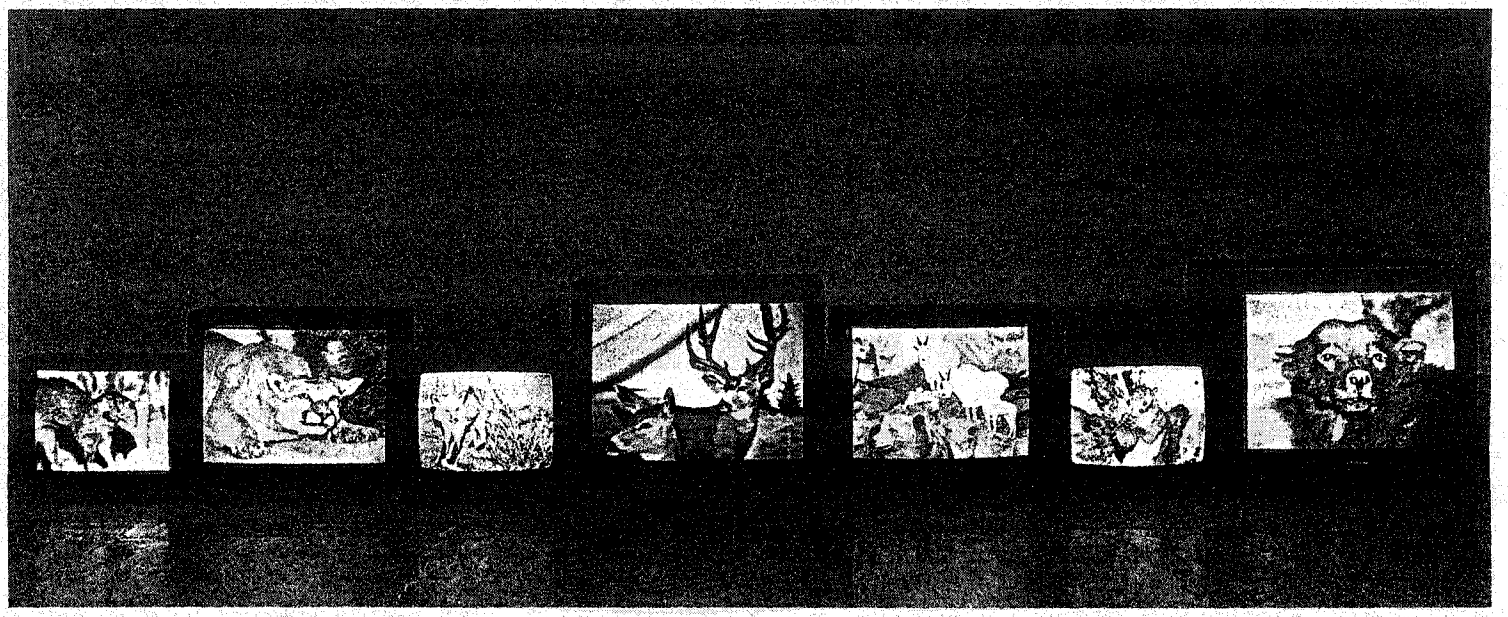

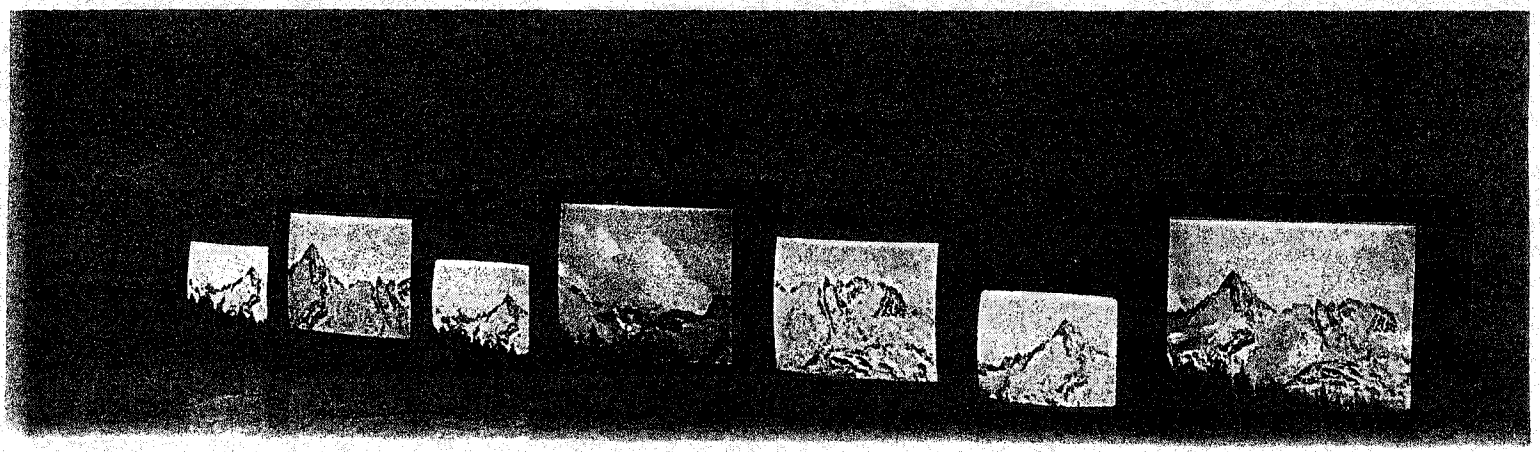

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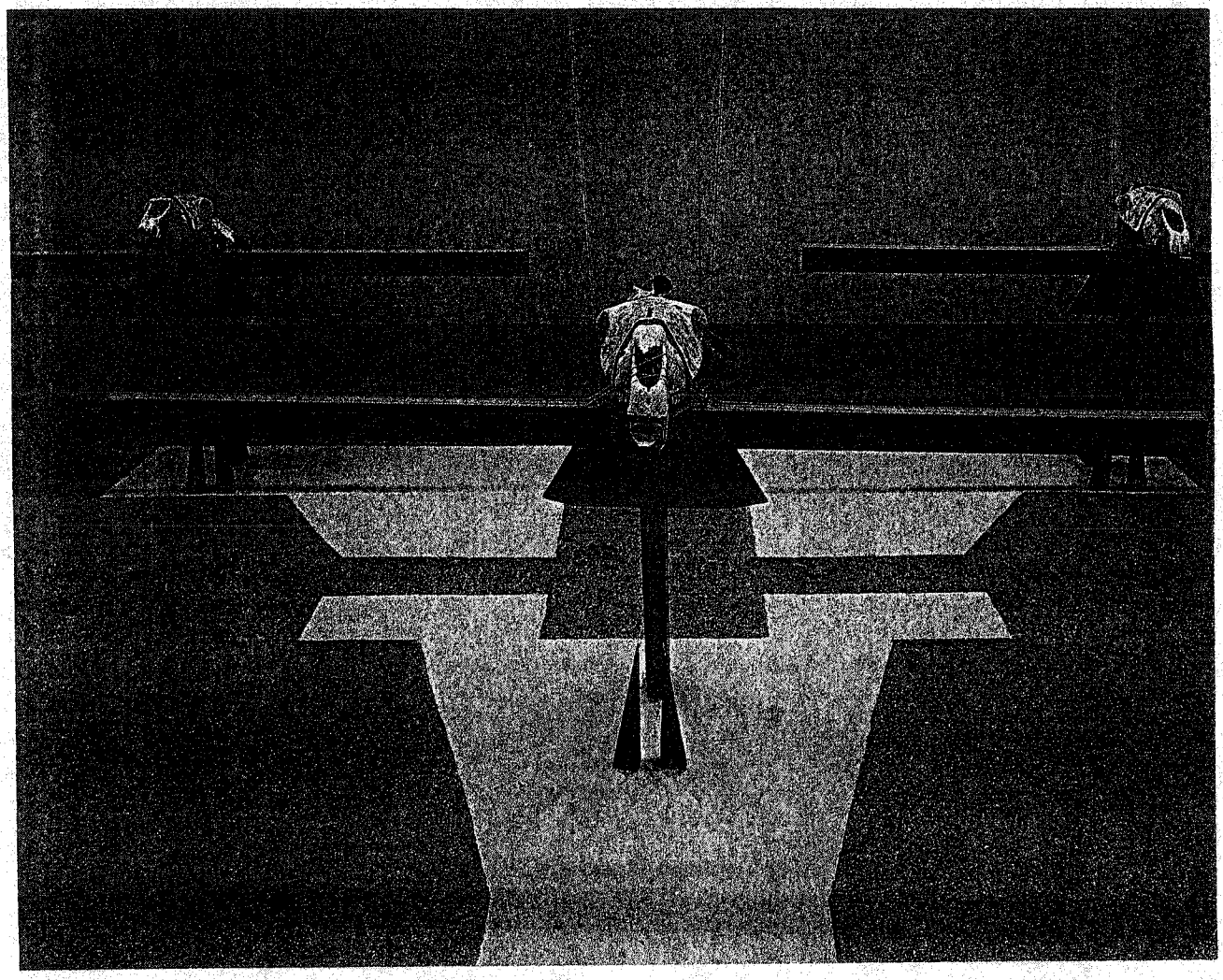

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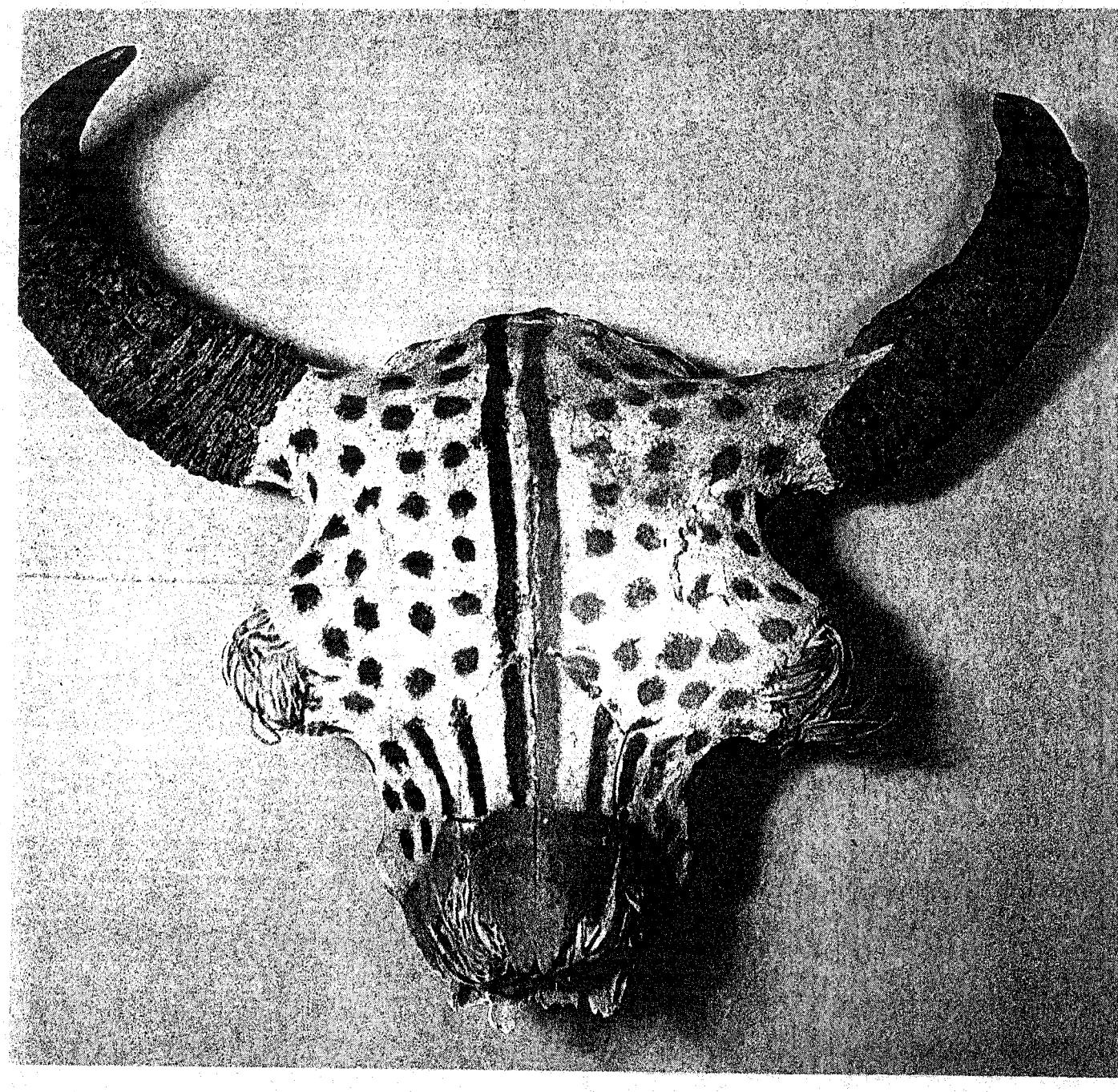

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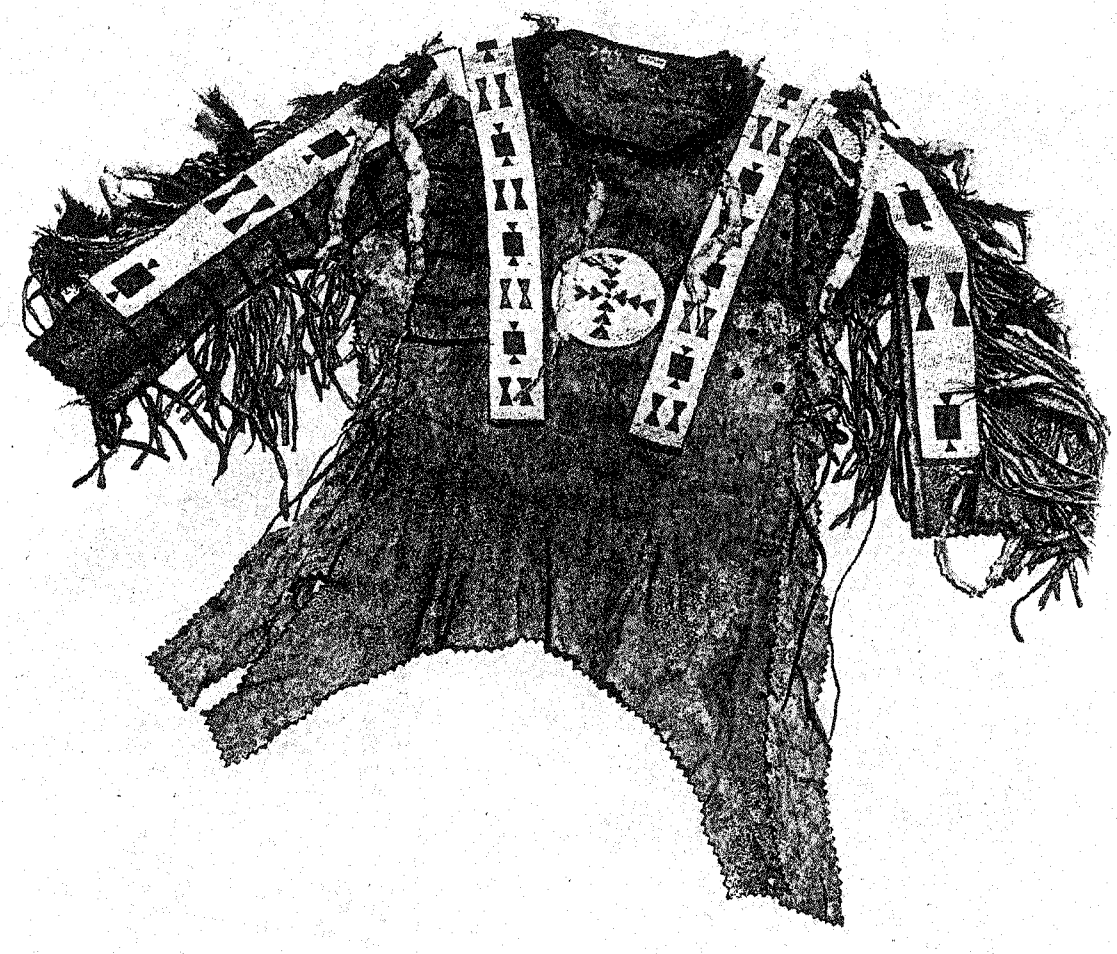

illustration 59

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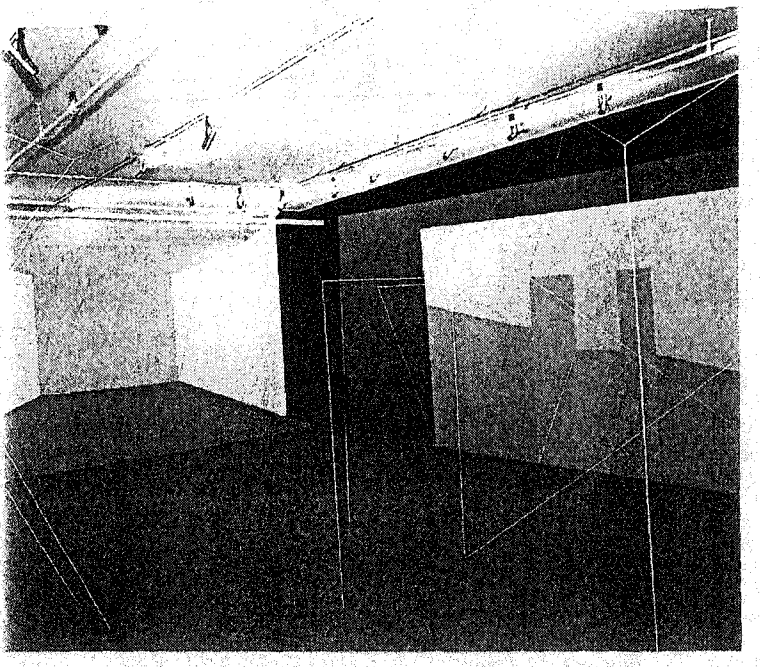

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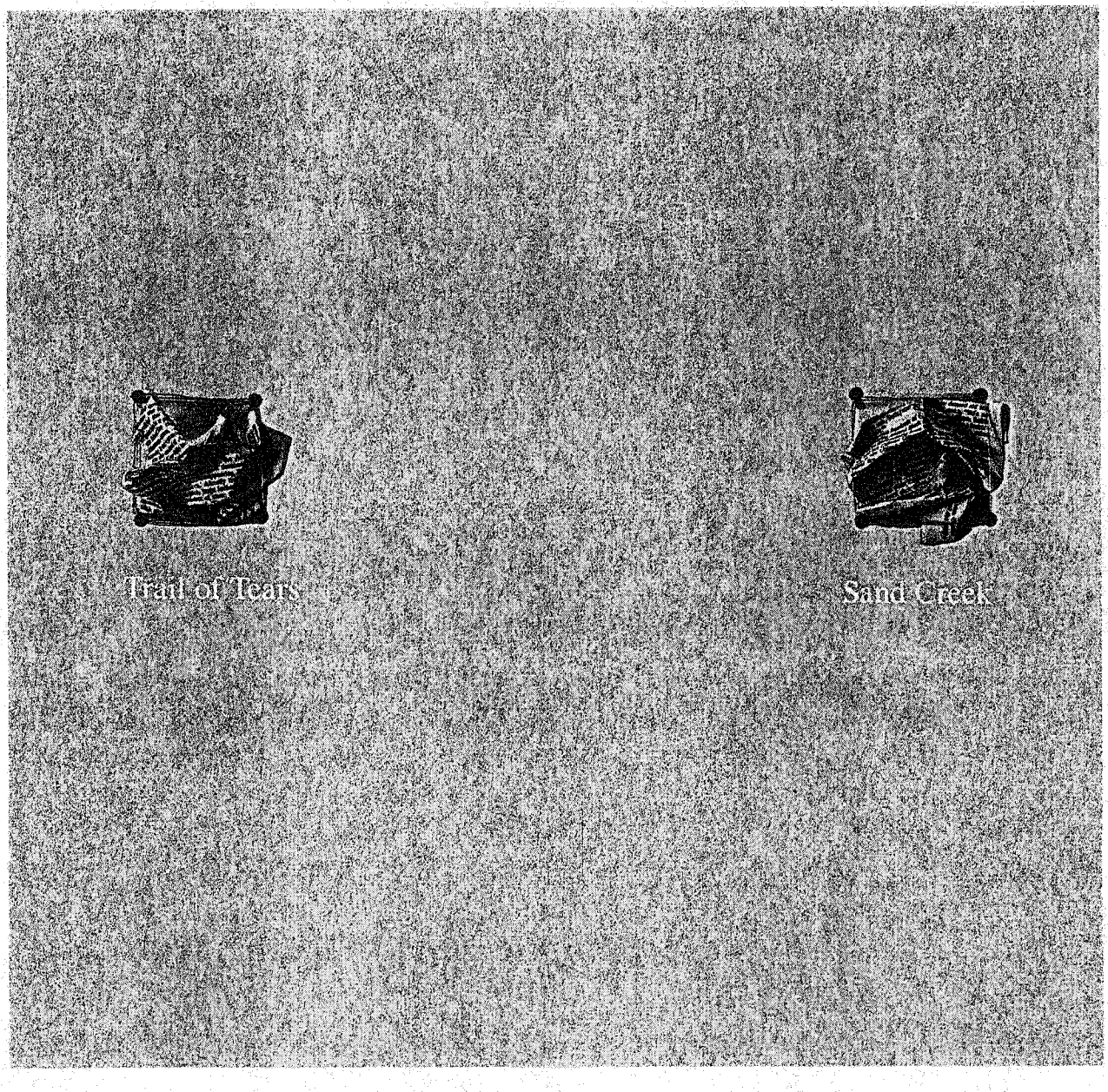


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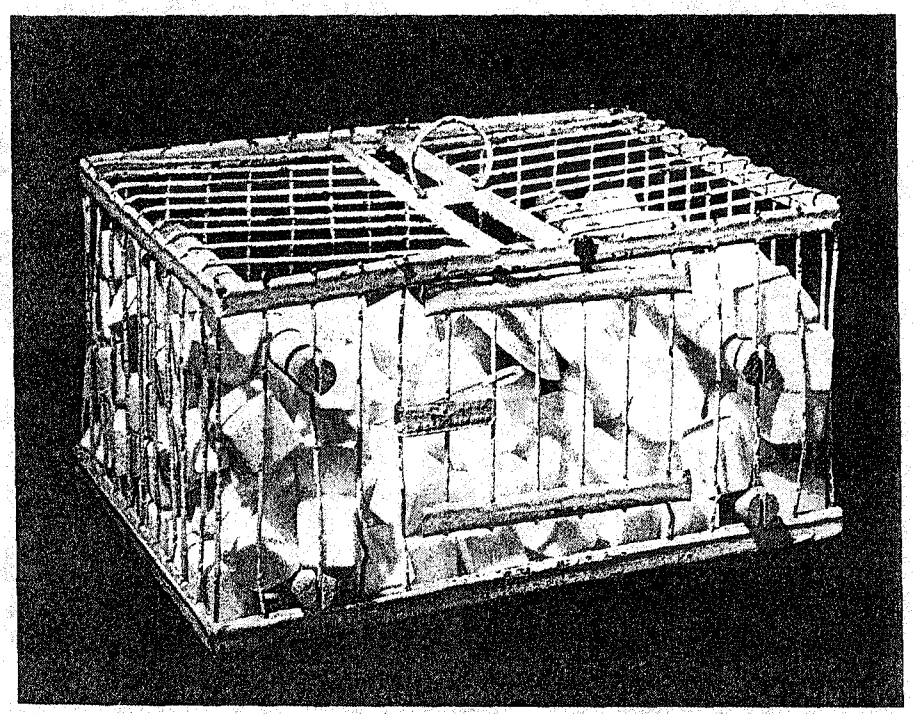

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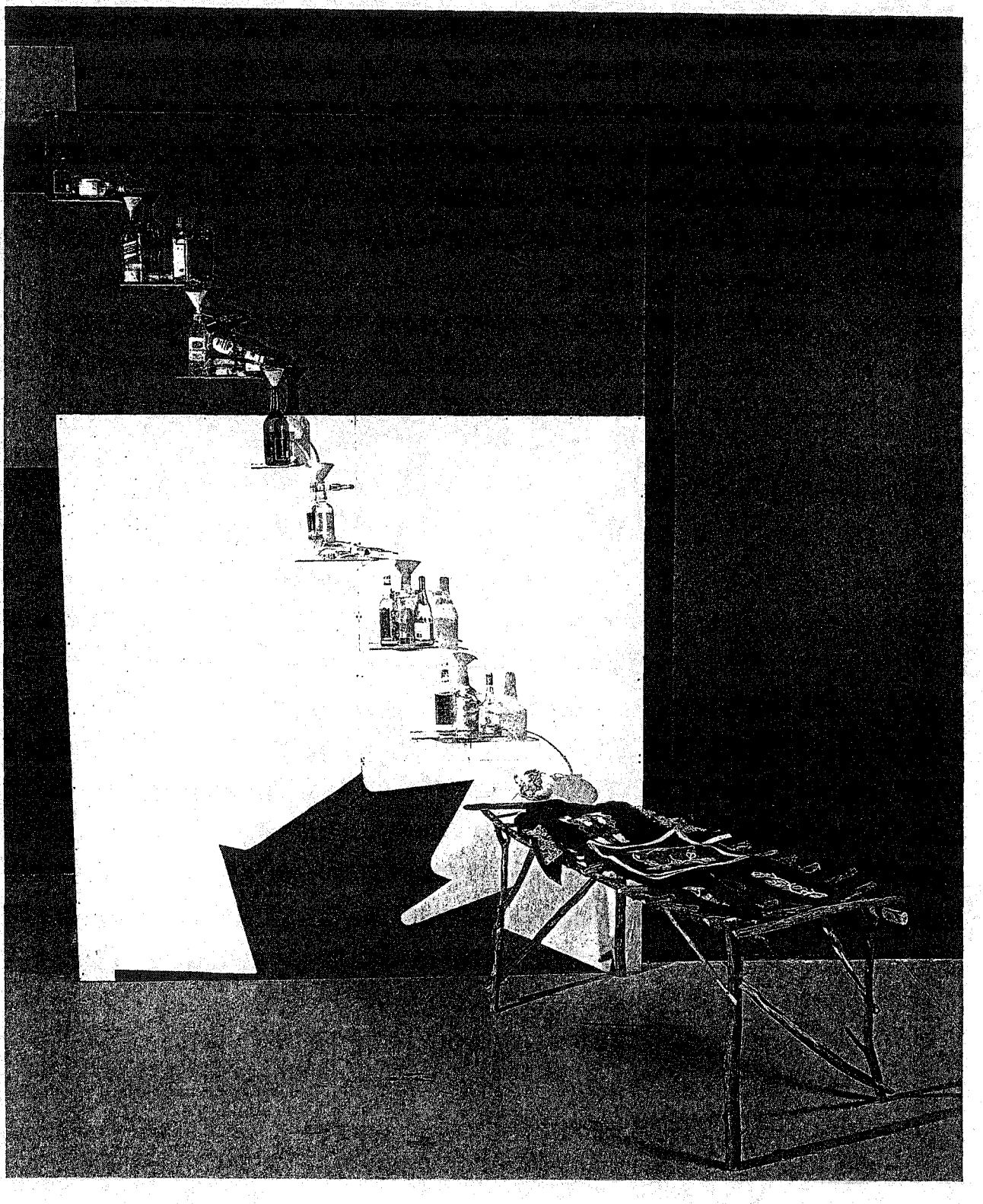

illustration 63

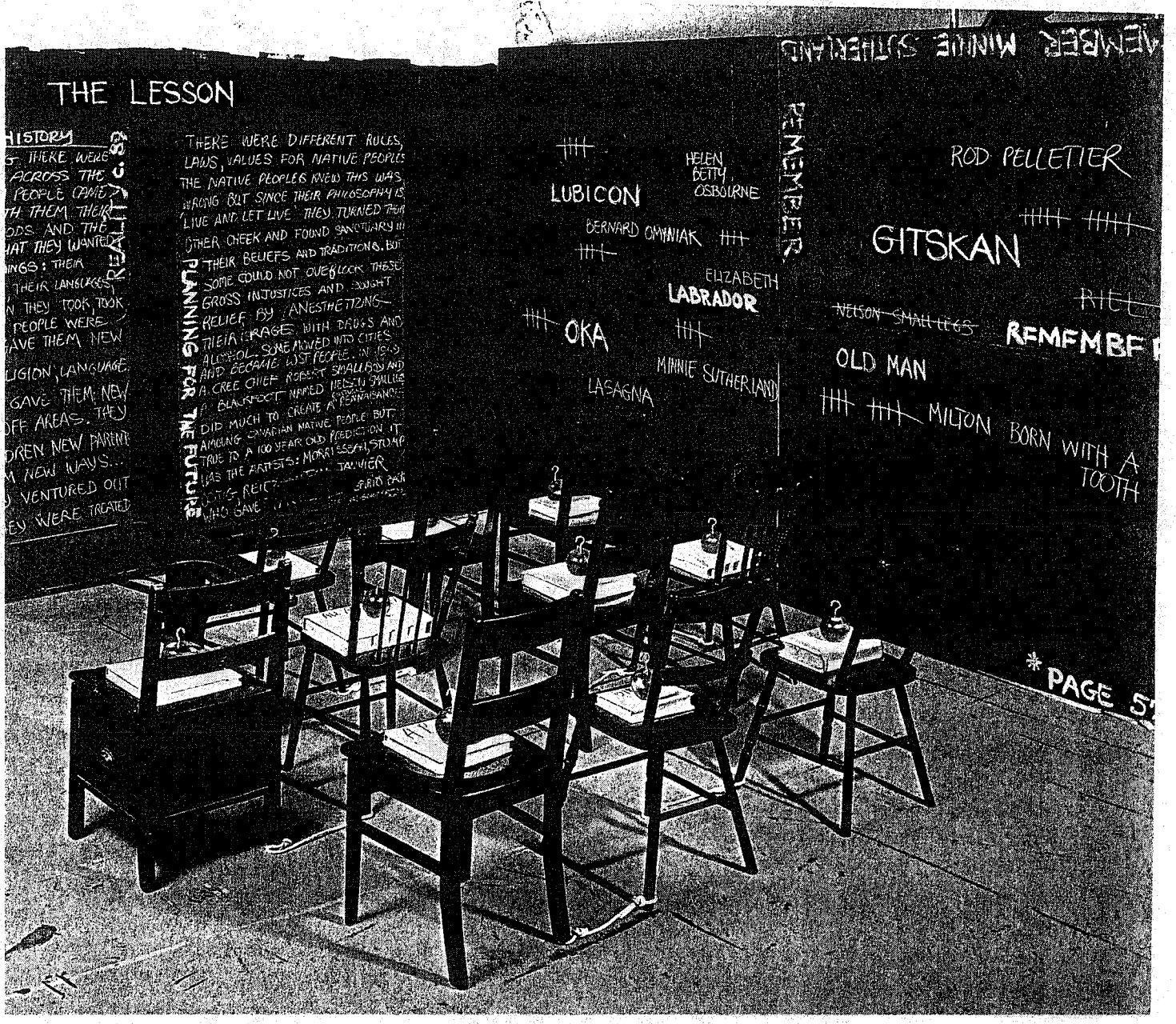


**illustration 64**

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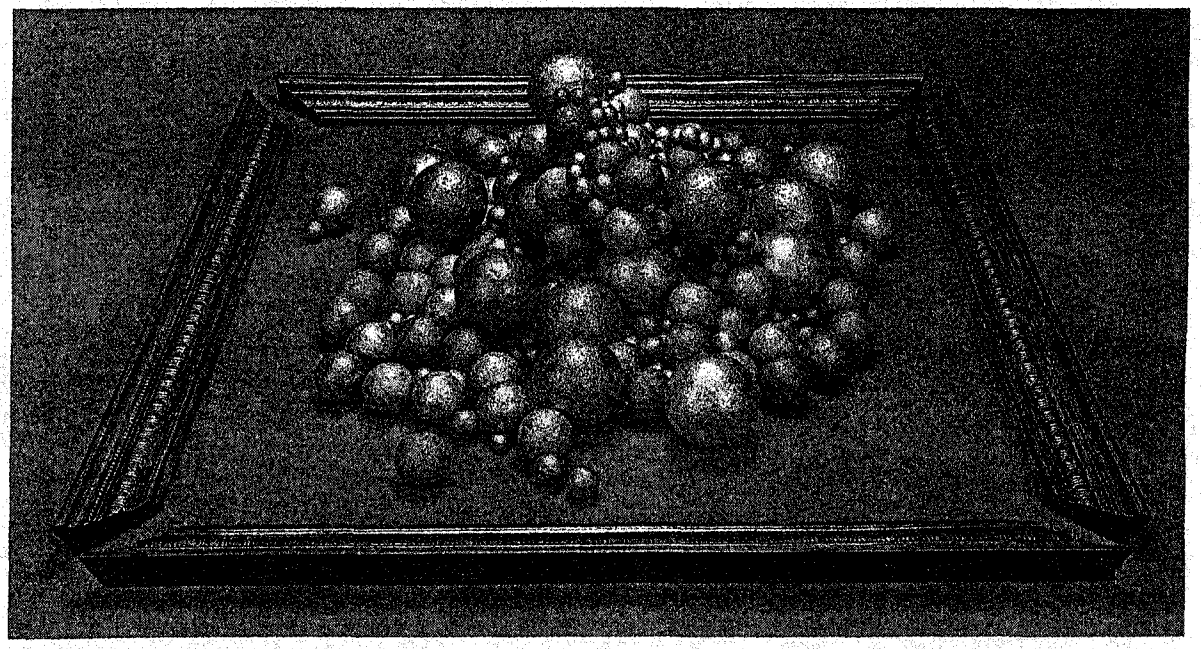

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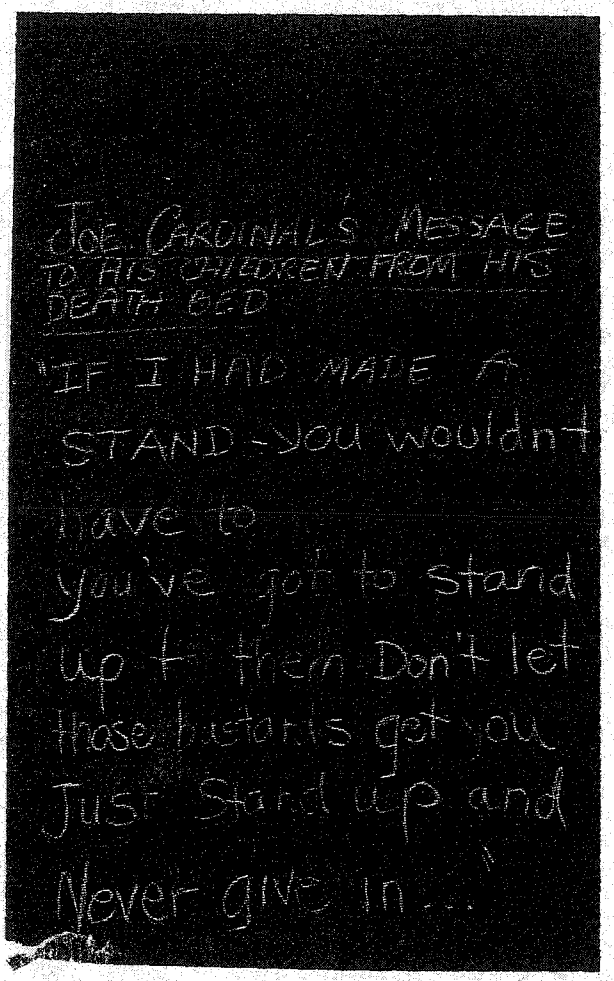


**illustration 66**

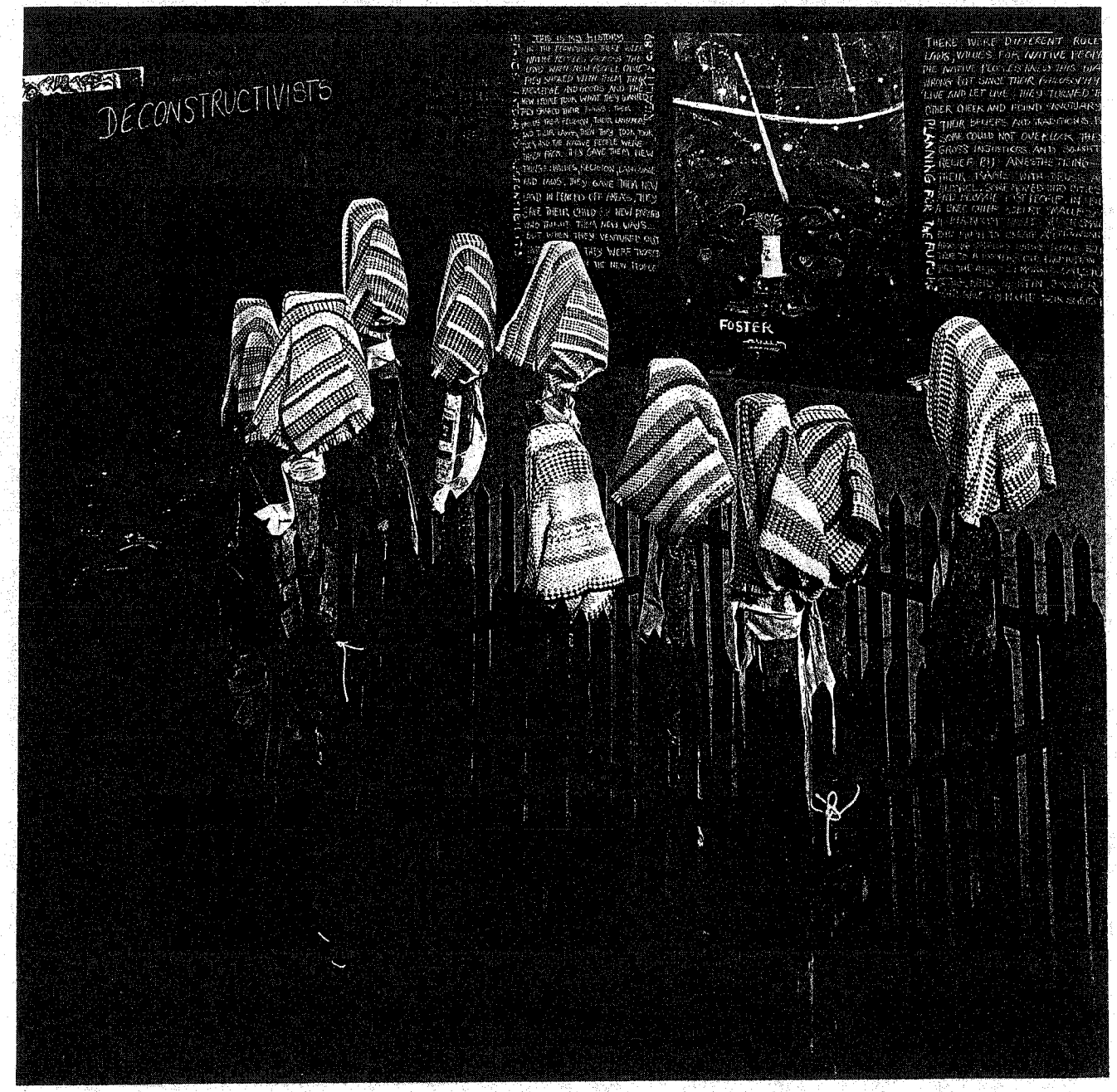


**illustration 67**

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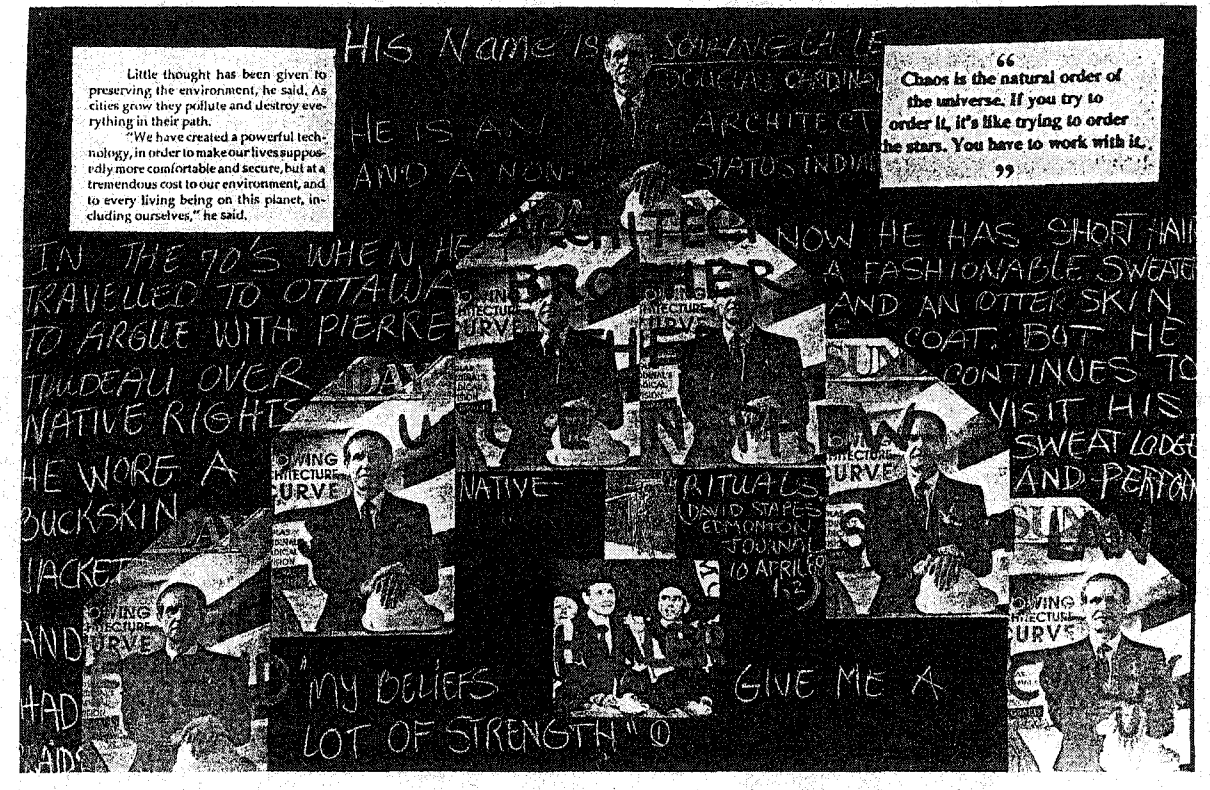


**illustration 68**

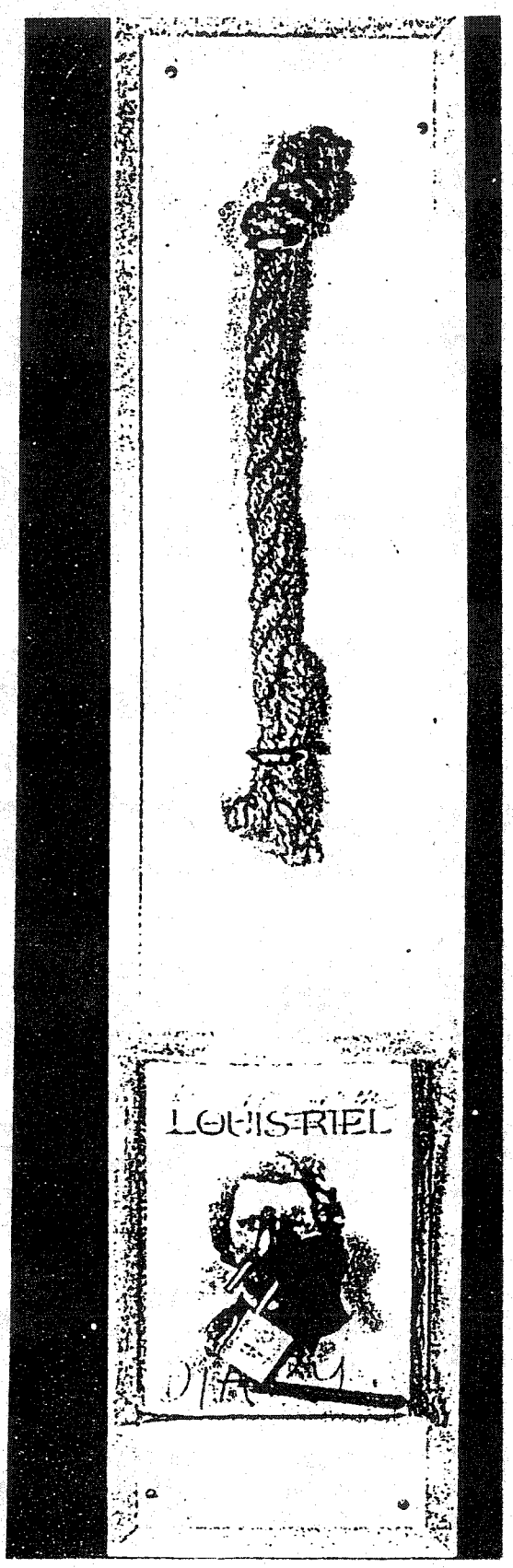


illustration 69

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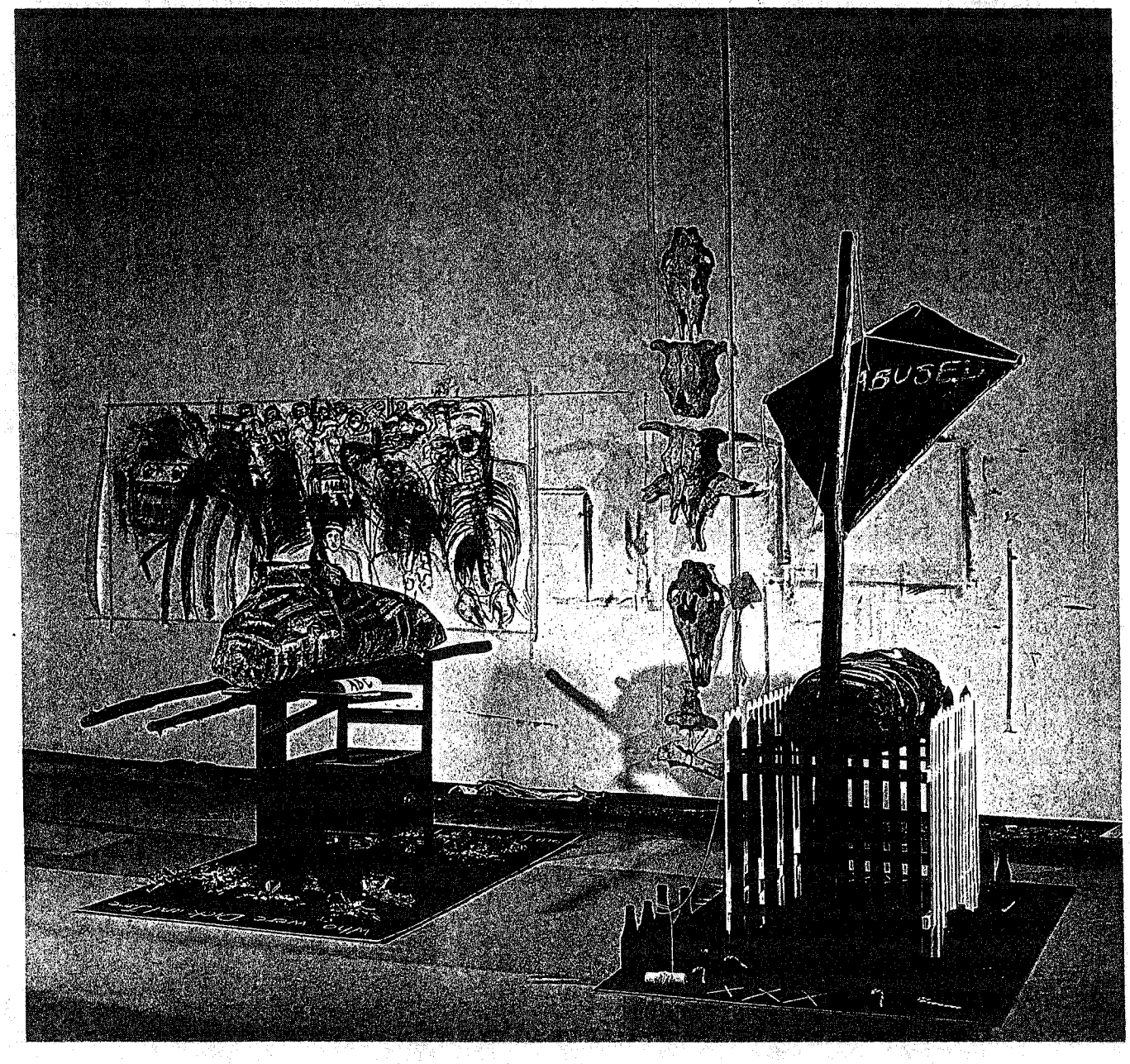


illustration 70


illustration 71

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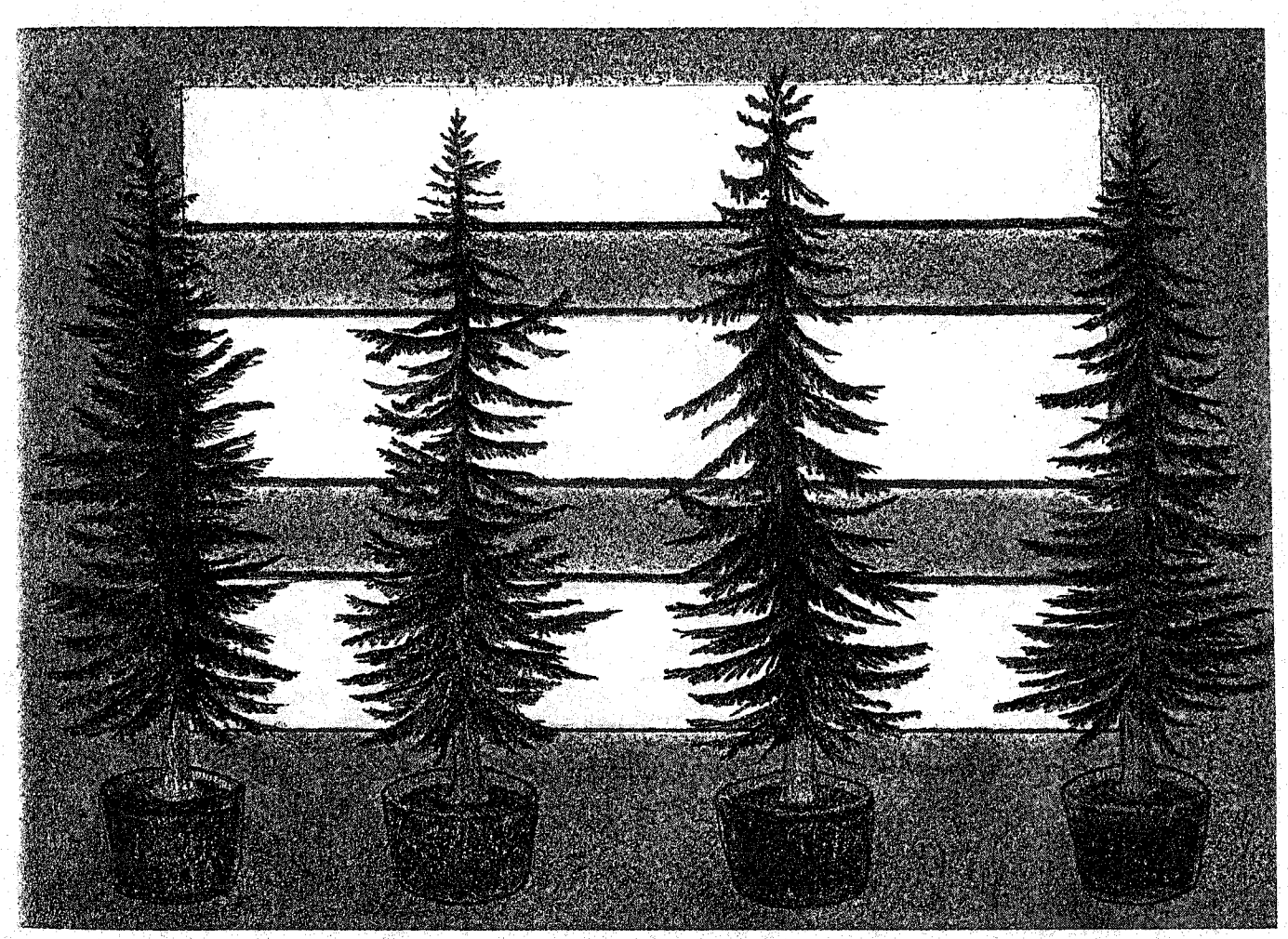

**illustration 72**

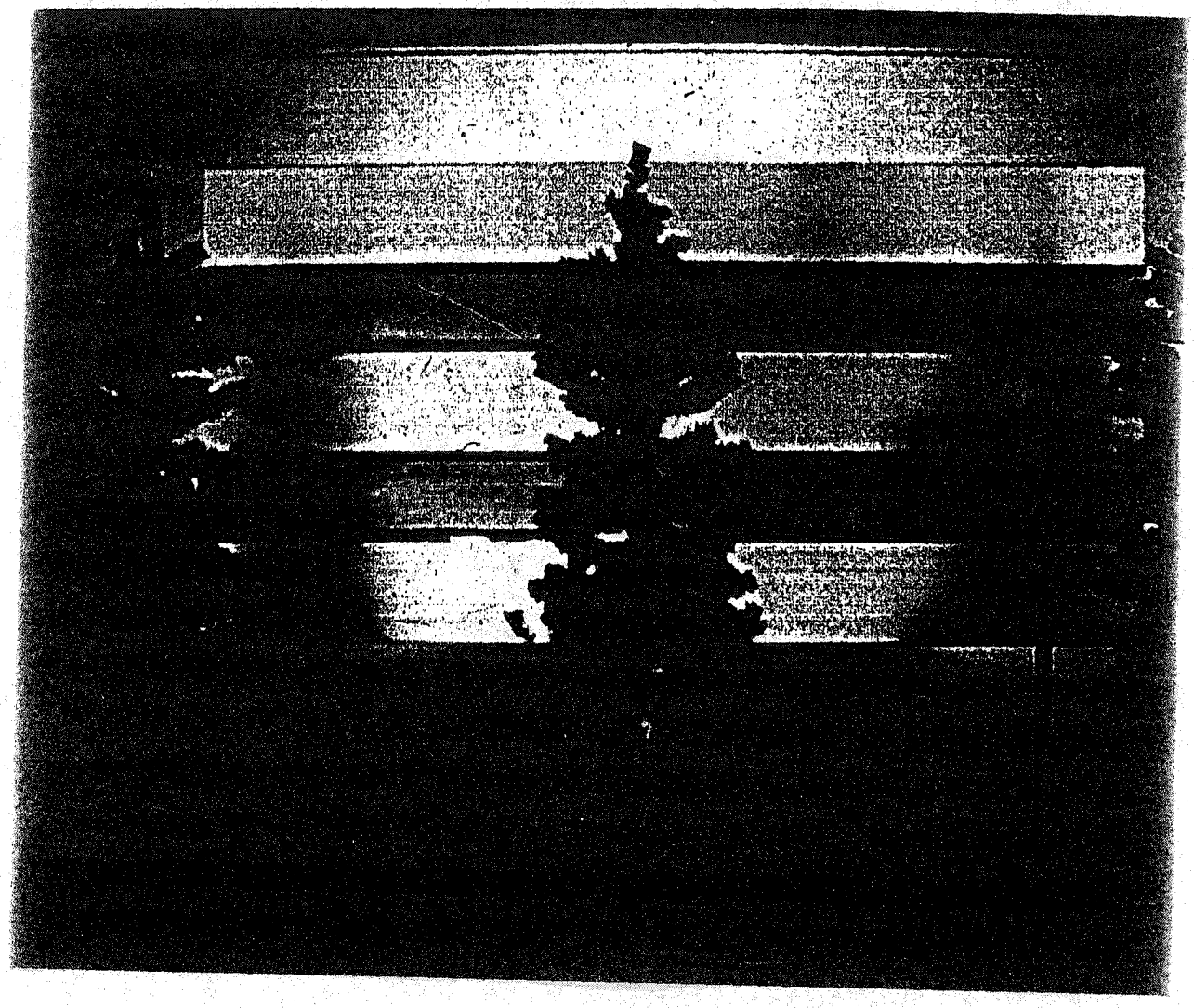

illustration 73

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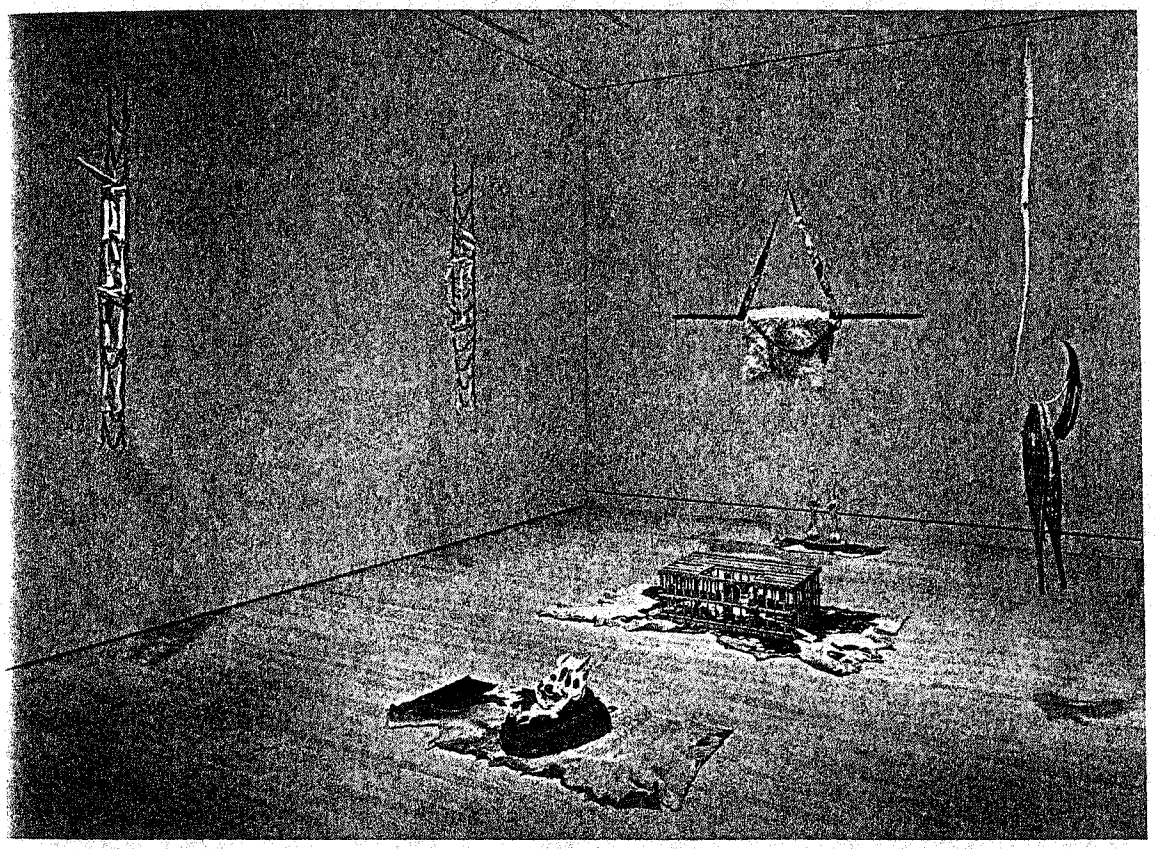

**illustration 74**

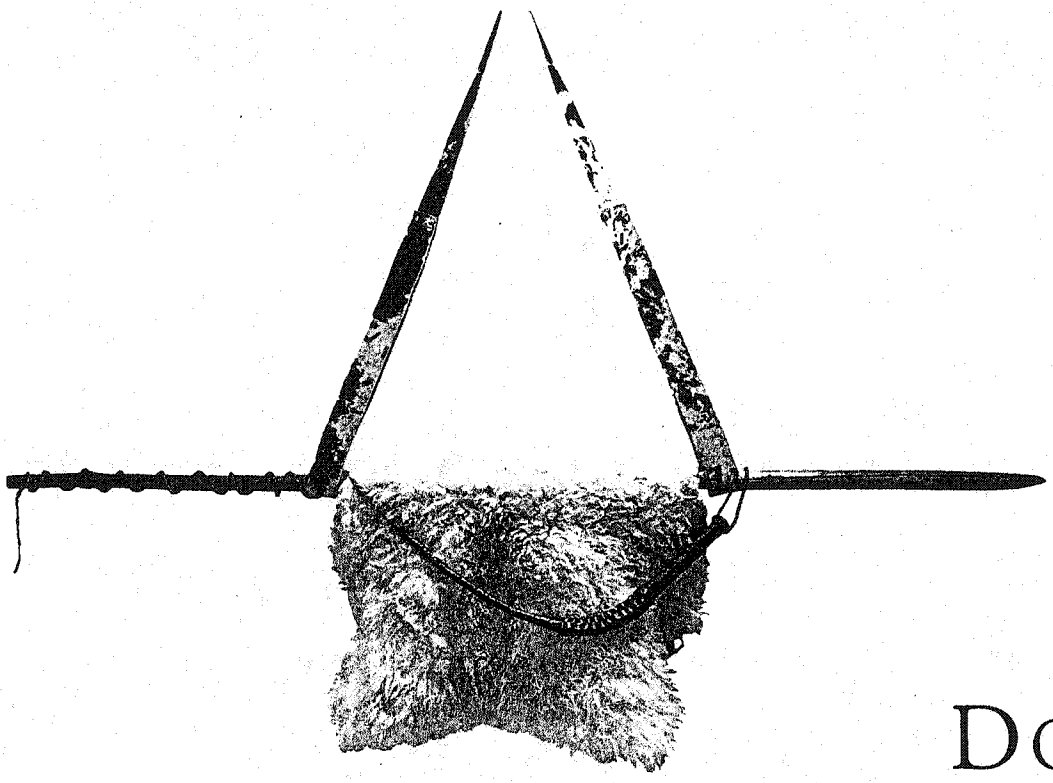

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illustration 75

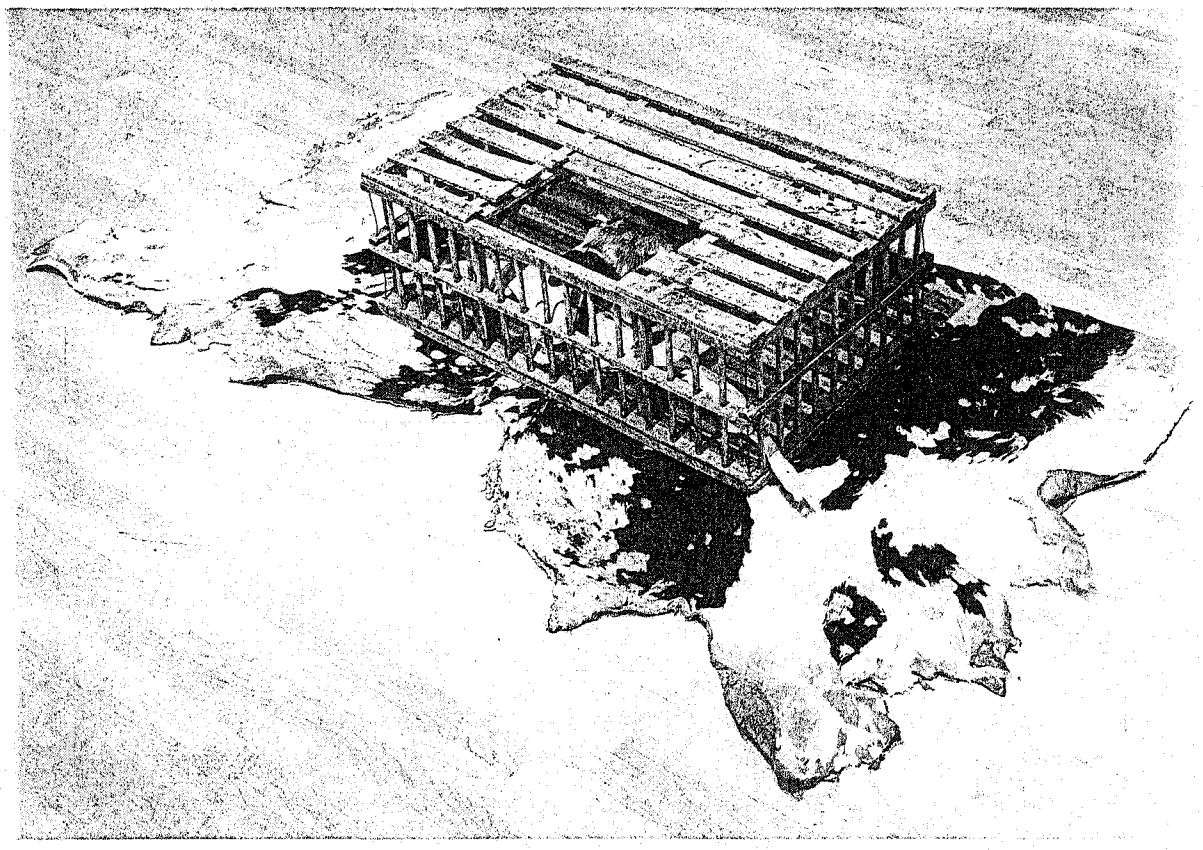

**illustration 76**

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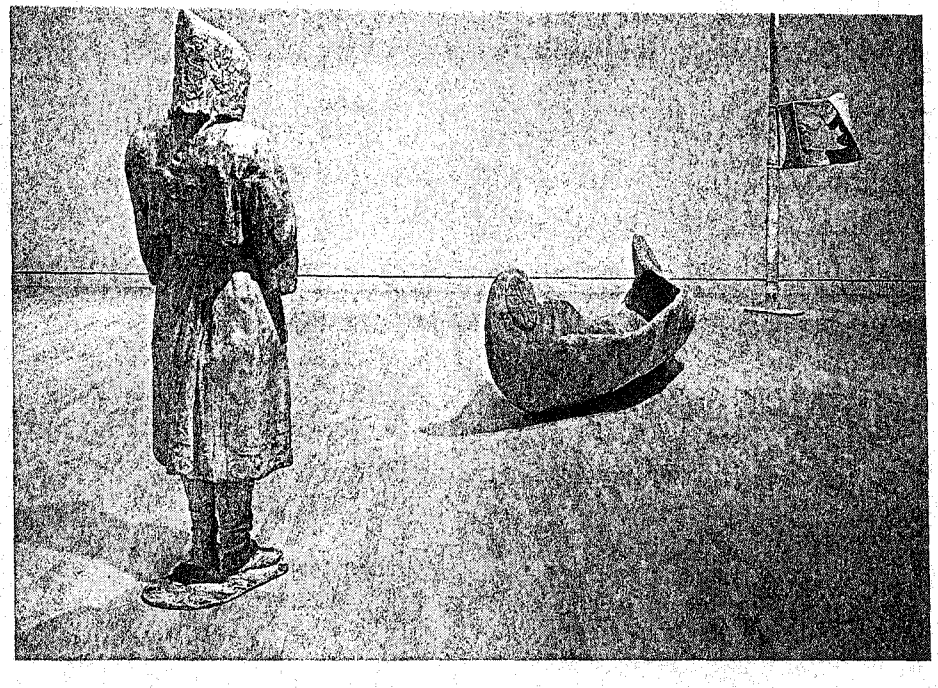

**illustration 77**

**illustration 78**

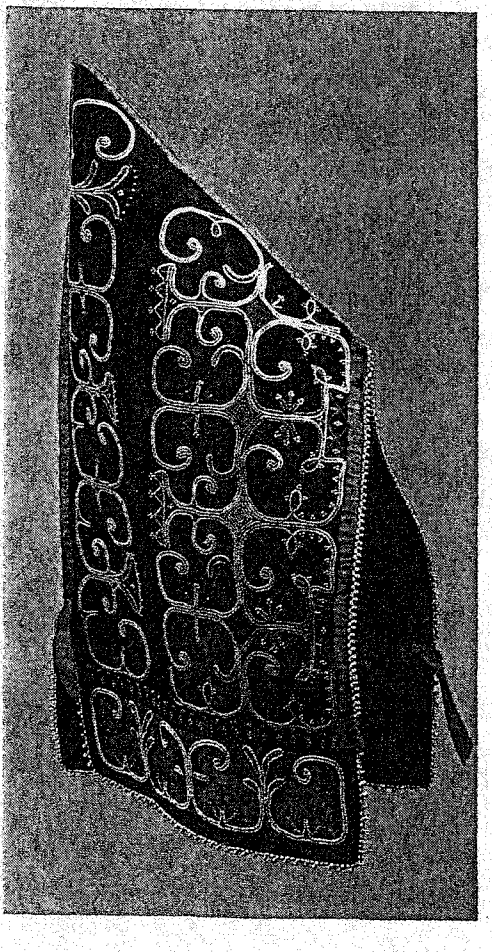

illustration 79

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**illustration 80**


illustration 81

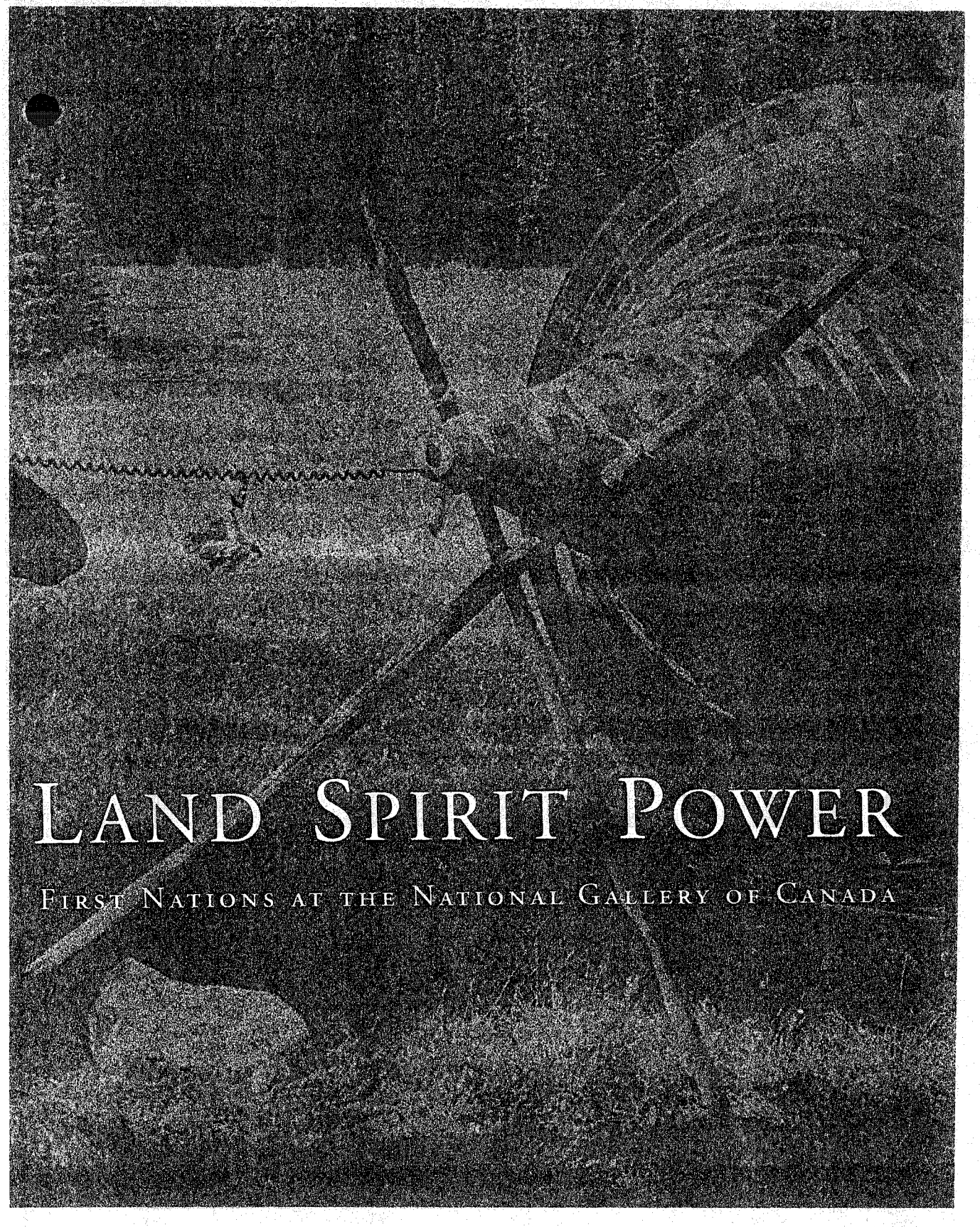


**illustration 82**

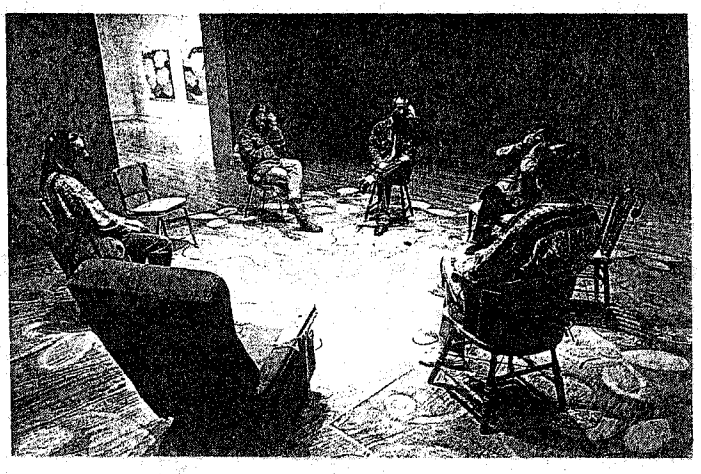

**illustration 83**