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Creation Story Motifs as Expressions of Identity and Resiliency in the Visual Culture of KAHNAWÀ:KE

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CREATION STORY MOTIFS AS EXPRESSIONS OF IDENTITY AND RESILIENCY IN THE VISUAL CULTURE OF KAHNAWÀ:KE

by

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Abstract

Kahnawa:ke is a First Nations reserve near Montreal in Quebec, Canada, with a rich history of creative expression. This is a Kanien'kehá꞉ka (Mohawk) community, a part of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, a prominent First Peoples group of the Northeast Woodlands. Like many other Indigenous communities, Kahnawa:ke is in the process of revitalizing and renormalizing their culture after centuries of assimilation efforts and pressures to separate them from their traditions. Their creation story, known as the Sky Woman Epoch, is foundational to this culture. While there are a number of creation symbols, this study will focus on the Sky Dome, a representation of the heavens and our earthly connection to it, corn, one of the traditional dietary staples, and flowers, considered special gifts from the Creator, in works by two artists at Kahnawa:ke. Fashion designer Tammy Beauvais is from a long-established family at the reserve, while bead artist Leith Mahkewa, a member of another branch of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Oneida on the Thames, came to the community with the marriage of her mother and stepfather. An examination of the presence of the Sky Dome in *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan* and of corn in *Blue Corn Skirt* by Beauvais, and the presence of flowers in *Supporting Each Other and Creation* and *Saucy* by Mahkewa, will demonstrate how, through iconography, formal qualities, and context, these First Nation artists utilize traditional creation symbols as assertions of this community's enduring Haudenosaunee identity.

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Background

Before delving into the body of this paper, some background information may be helpful for those unfamiliar with the culture of focus. Kahnawà:ke is a First Nations reserve located on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River across from Montreal in Quebec, Canada. (It must be noted that many residents of the reserve do not consider themselves Canadian.) Prior to 1980 it was known as Caughnawaga, a European corruption of the name. In 2023, Kahnawà:ke had a total of 11,332 registered members, consisting of 8,079 residents of Kahnawà:ke, known as Kahnawa'kehró:non, plus 3,447 additional members living outside of the reserve.[1] Living on the reserve is restricted to registered members with strong familial and cultural ties to the community. Marriage or common-law cohabitation follows a "marry out, move out" rule. Acknowledging some members may not find a life partner of the same heritage, this restriction does allow for choosing a spouse from another recognized Indigenous group and residing with them on the reserve.

"First Nations" is a term Indigenous people of Canada began using in the 1970s to refer to themselves in place of the word "Indian." In the 1980s, the Canadian government adopted the term First Nations to refer to Indigenous people who are neither Inuit nor Métis. This is a Kanien'kehá꞉ka (Mohawk) community, belonging to one of the six member nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, united by many cultural similarities and a system of democracy for handling matters of mutual interest. The Mohawk (Kanien'kehá꞉ka), Oneida (Onyota'a:ka), Onondaga (Onöñda'gaga'), Cayuga (Guyohkohnyoh), and Seneca (Onödowá'ga) founded the Confederacy prior to European contact, when these five nations all lived in and around the region now known as New York state. In 1722, the Tuscarora (Skaruhreh), who previously

[1] "Indigenous Communities in Quebec: The Nations 2023," Government of Canada, accessed February 24, 2024, sac-isc.gc.ca.

lived further south, became the sixth member nation. Current and Historic Haudenosaunee Territory is shown in Figure 1. The Haudenosaunee are among the First Nations of the Northeast Woodlands.

Quebec is a French-speaking province, and many of Kahnawà:ke's early European contacts were French. Later dealings were with the British, then with Canadians. During Canada's Indian Residential School era, many children from Kahnawà:ke were sent to the Mohawk Institute in Ottawa where they were required to speak English. The most used language at Kahnawà:ke became English, putting many residents at a disadvantage when dealing with a determinedly francophone society just outside of the reserve. Today, the Kanien'kehá꞉ka language, Kanien'kéha, is taught in schools on the reserve (as is French and English). This is a polysynthetic language, and thus what would typically be a sentence in an Indo-European language is often communicated through one long word composed of multiple small parts that create meaning. Spelling in Kanien'kéha is not fully standardized and thus variations are found from source to source.

Terms for Indigenous peoples are in a state of change and interested parties do not always agree on what constitutes correct or respectful language. For example, Kahnawà:ke was referred to as a "band" for many years and is still classified as such by the Canadian government, although currently terms such as "band" and "tribe" are falling out of favor among many First Nations communities. Names of people groups are given in the culturally appropriate language whenever possible. However, some sources and individuals use older terms such as "Indian," or the European-assigned names for people groups and locations.

Introduction

The Haudenosaunee have vibrant traditions of creative expression. Their creation story, known as the Sky Woman Epoch – the foundation of their oral tradition and the basis for much of the culture of each branch – is filled with vivid imagery. Through changes and challenges faced over the centuries, the story endures, and that is reflected in the visual arts. This study examines iconic images from the Haudenosaunee creation story as powerful symbols of cultural survival and revitalization at Kahnawà:ke.

In the cosmology of the Haudenosaunee, long before this world was formed, there were people who lived on an island in the sky. One day, a beautiful pregnant woman fell through a hole created by a tree root. She tried to hold onto the surface of the Sky World but was unable to stop her fall into a dark void. However, just as she began her descent towards what would become planet Earth, she managed to grasp important plants, including corn and flowers.[2]

A distinctly Haudenosaunee symbol, the semicircular Sky Dome motif is a visual reminder of the Sky Woman Epoch, representing the connection between Earth and a celestial realm far away. All aspects of the Sky Woman Epoch, including Sky Woman herself and the various creation story motifs are contained, so to speak, under the umbrella of the Sky Dome. Sky Woman, the ancestress, is coded into all Haudenosaunee creation motifs. Corn and flowers are the most iconic of the sacred plants given to the Earth's first inhabitant. Sky Woman was known as Mature Flower as a young adult in the Sky World, and one of her later names is the Corn Mother. These three motifs – Sky Dome, corn, and flowers – strongly affiliated with this culture, are examined in representative works by two contemporary artists at Kahnawà:ke.

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[2] Canada Museum of History, "Origin Stories – Sky Woman," accessed February 7, 2024, https://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/exhibitions/aborig/fp/fpz2f22e.html.

Like many creation accounts, the Haudenosaunee story of Sky Woman speaks to the hardships and joys of mortal existence, giving dignity and meaning to the very human need to sustain life while also feeding the imagination and the spirit. Creation stories can also provide a sense of identity to a people group, a way to connect with their culture. While all societies have their traditional narratives, Indigenous stories offer a cultural legacy for First Peoples artists to draw from by providing iconography and other source material not of European or Judeo-Christian origin. Writing about the importance of traditional Kanien'kehá꞉ka storytelling, Otsi'tsakén:ra Charlie Patton and his colleagues state, "Creation stories ground people." The lessons and cultural continuity created through such stories serve a vital role in healing from damage wrought by settler colonialism.[3]

This paper examines how two artists at Kahnawà:ke, fashion designer Tammy Beauvais, and bead artist Leith Mahkewa, incorporate Haudenosaunee creation motifs in their work, reflecting the strong value of cultural survival and revitalization in this community. The rich imagery of the Sky Woman Epoch includes the iconic representation of the heavens and our earthly connection to it, known as the Sky Dome, along with sacred plants, including corn -- a dietary staple -- and flowers, which are viewed as special blessings from the Creator. Consideration of the presence of Sky Dome imagery found in *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan* and of corn in *Blue Corn Skirt* by fashion designer Beauvais, and the use of floral imagery in the vase *Supporting Each Other and Creation* and in the *Saucy* purse by bead artist Mahkewa, will argue that the presence of these creation symbols may be viewed as an assertion of Haudenosaunee identity. These

[3] Otsi'tsakén:ra Charlie Patton, Alicia Ibarra-Lemay, and Louellen White, "Karihwatéhkwen and Kanien'kehá꞉ka Teachings of Gratitude and Connection," *Genealogy*, vol. 5, no. 81 (2021): 3-4, https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy5030081.

symbols, less prevalent in cultural productions from most of the 20th century, proliferate by the 21st century as traditions regain strength at Kahnawà:ke.

Aspects of Haudenosaunee culture, including motifs from the creation cosmology – the Sky Dome and gifts from the Creator in the form of flowers and corn – are referenced repeatedly in fashions by Beauvais, and floral designs dominate beadwork by Mahkewa. Both Beauvais and Mahkewa are prominent members of the community, committed to their creative work and to the cultural revival taking place at the reserve. They are both steeped in Haudenosaunee culture, and undoubtably aware of the significance of the symbols they incorporate into their respective works. Even formal qualities and materiality of their works can be related to the symbols they incorporate, the worldview drawn from the Sky Woman story, and the enduring nature of the culture. While additional creation story images are found in their work and that of other artists at the reserve, the selection for this study is deliberately limited.

The Sky Dome has been a recurring theme in the fashion designs of Tammy Beauvais throughout her career, and two variations of the iconic image -- a half circle or rounded mound shape topped by a stylized tree -- are featured in her *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan,* circa 2021, in purple and white chiffon, in Figures 2 and 3. Beyond the title of her pieces and their materials, Beauvais has not supplied information about imagery and meaning in her fashions, but all the motifs chosen for this garment have traditional symbolism to be discussed in more detail in the Analysis section.

Measuring from the neck area at the top, the drape cardigan measures almost 39 inches at its longest points in the front, and 23.5 inches long in the back. The back view, seen in Figure 3, best shows the design for formal analysis, revealing seven horizontal rows of traditional motifs, with a series of Sky Domes on the first and fifth registers. The fifth tier, falling at or below the

waist, depending on the height of the wearer, has Sky Domes in a wider design. The Sky Domes and the volutes on the third and seventh registers have curving lines, while the other motifs are primarily linear.

Lines throughout the composition are of even thickness, and the motifs are neatly and uniformly rendered and laid out without being rigid. All these elements convey order and balance, important aspects of many philosophies and religions, and are integral to the Haudenosaunee worldview rooted in the Sky Woman Epoch.[4] Balance and order come from a holistic approach to wellness, seeking to have body, mind, and spirit function in peace and health, with gratitude for all we have, and respectful relationships with all forms of life. This is an ideal to strive for, despite the chaos and violence in the world.[5]

The stylized human figures holding hands on the fourth register are traditional unity symbols. The rich purple background with white lines creates effective contrast, and the limited color scheme calls attention to the motifs. Purple and white are also the colors of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, its flag, and wampum belts. For the material of the *Unity Sky Dome Cardigan Drape*, Beauvais chose chiffon, a light, airy fabric with a luminous quality, well suited to conveying a symbol of the heavens. Thin and flexible, it drapes well on the body. This is polyester chiffon, known for being resilient.

Beauvais frequently utilizes other cosmology images including flowers and corn in her work. Corn has both a practical role as a traditional dietary staple and a spiritual or mystical aspect as a sacred plant of otherworldly origin given to Sky Woman. *Blue Corn Skirt* (Figure 4), from 2022, is a traditional First Nations ribbonwork skirt. This garment is approximately 34 inches in

[4] Barbara Alice Mann, *Iroquoian Women: The Gantowisas* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2011), 97.
[5] Richard W. Hill, Sr., "Whither Art History? The Fine Art of Being Indigenous," *The Art Bulletin*, 97, no. 1 (2015): 7, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43947716.

length, falling below the knee, and has an adjustable waist. The skirt is made of cotton, satin, and silk, with three iconic stylized corn images of blue satin on the brown matte fabric background that forms the main part of the garment. A matching band of blue satin forming a ground for the three corn silhouettes, with a band of brown satin below it, are also appliquéd to the brown body of the skirt. Each of the corn images has a single central vertical stalk, breaking with the horizontality of the ribbons and harmonizing with the verticality created by the length of the skirt. The center corn image is the tallest, and the corn images on each side are of the same shorter height, balancing the composition. Below this appliqué work, the bottom 8 inches of the skirt is of a different fabric with a Southwestern print. Brown and blue, the main colors of the skirt, are earth and sky colors, and together they suggest the connection between the earthly realm and the Sky World.

Flowers are the predominant recurring motif in Leith Mahkewa's raised beadwork, including her *Supporting Each Other and Creation* beaded vase from 2020 (Figures 5 and 6), measuring 6.2 inches high by 5.5 inches wide on each of the four sides. Haudenosaunee raised beadwork has a three-dimensional aspect, with areas of beading built up in low relief, as opposed to the more common flat beadwork either sewn flush to fabric or leather or created with a small loom. A statement on the artist's website notes this vase was created in support of environmental protection efforts of the Wet'suwet', a First Nations community in the interior of British Columbia, opposing a gas pipeline project on their land. Visual analysis shows the main design –

with a large purple and white flower with six petals and bright green and yellow leaves on the left, and a large red and white flower with green leaves to the right, with two slightly smaller pink flowers with metallic brown leaves with red accents in the middle – is the same on all four panels,

adding unity and balance to the piece. Here we see brightly colored beads, some smooth, others faceted, against the rich texture of a black velvet background so characteristic of Haudenosaunee beadwork since the 1800s, and the hanging beaded loops, which are especially associated with Kahnawà:ke and two sister Kanien'kehá꞉ka communities in the region. However, the three-dimensional vase is an innovative take on traditional forms Mahkewa first introduced five years earlier with *Holding Tradition* (Figure 7).

The only variations found in each panel of *Supporting Each Other and Creation* are in the little human unity figures holding hands on the upper part of the piece, standing on a pattern of light blue lines composed of triangles and inverted triangles. Given that the artist created this work in support of Wet'suwet' protecting their river and lakeland territory, this blue pattern can be read as water. In keeping with the Haudenosaunee view of the natural world derived from the Sky Woman Epoch, the hierarchic scale here is significant, for humans are seen holistically as part of nature, not as something separate or superior to it.[6] The human figures are small, created with simple lines in a single color, red, while the largest, most ornate elements are the striking, multi-color flowers. A white flower edged with blue at the lower part of each side of the vase can be seen more clearly in Figure 6. Flowers are, as noted, seen as divine gifts, and like all lifeforms, they need a healthy environment to thrive. In this work, flowers powerfully personify and celebrate the beauty and balance of creation.

Mahkewa's beaded purse titled *Saucy* from 2021 in Figure 8 also features raised beadwork flowers on the front, including the flap. The back is hand-tanned hide. It is 7.25 inches long by 7.50 inches wide, with a 9-inch handle. Formal analysis shows two large, star-like flowers with

[6] Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017), 25.

six points each in full bloom, accompanied by four blossoms, each with three petals, along with swirling stems, graceful leaves, berry buds, and berries. The lines of the six-pointed flowers stand out against all the curves. In this work, she restricts the hues to greens and garnet to pink tones, with touches of mustard ochre for contrast, against the maroon velvet background. The outer edge is ochre silk bias, with garnet color beads at the very edge. The raised beadwork flowers, the use of hand-tanned hide, and the scallop shape of the flap itself are all firmly rooted in tradition but executed with a streamlined, contemporary feel. The bold, jewel-like flowers, sumptuous materials, and clean design, including the focus of the color scheme, give the work a confident feel, as the title suggests. The star shape of the largest flowers may be viewed as a visual connection between the Earth and the Sky World.

Creation symbols and the stories they represent have survived settler colonialism and its aftermath, including drastic land loss and assimilation efforts aimed at eradicating First Nations cultures. Furthermore, Sky Woman, known by multiple names, is generally understood to ultimately become the "Grandmother" or "Grandmother Moon" figure who, when her life on Earth is complete, is taken by one of her twin grandsons to the moon, where she does quillwork. Should she ever complete her quill embroidery, the world will end, so every night a large dog unravels her work.[7] Thus, in this cosmology, the creative process keeps the world going and preserves humankind.

Scholars generally agree that the Haudenosaunee originated in and around the area now known as southwestern New York and northwestern Pennsylvania, then migrated in different

[7] Barbara A. Mann,"The Lynx in Time: Haudenosaunee Women's Traditions and History," *American Indian Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1997): 424-25, https://doi.org/10.2307/1185516.

directions, an assessment in general alignment with Haudenosaunee oral tradition.[8] Some of this migration occurred due to the arrival of Europeans. Kahnawà:ke was originally established in 1667 by Jesuit missionaries, offered as a home for Indigenous people who had converted to Catholicism and faced prejudice from their own communities as well as those of the French. Although the settlement was intended for all First Nations converts, those from other groups left early on, and it has remained a Kanien'kehá꞉ka (Mohawk) community ever since.[9] While the community stayed heavily Catholic well into the 20th century, the spiritual makeup of the population is much more varied today, with Catholicism and other forms of Christianity having fewer adherents. Traditional spirituality, expressed through Longhouse beliefs and rituals, is now embraced and observed by many, and influences much of the art and design at Kahnawà:ke. This is very apparent in the creation motifs found in the work of Beauvais and Mahkewa. Both artists cite Longhouse participation as early motivation and inspiration for their work.

Like other Indigenous communities impacted by settler colonialism and its aftermath, Kahnawà:ke has survived many threats to its very existence, as well as its identity and culture, including devastating epidemics brought by Europeans, and progressive loss of land, which made traditional means of sustenance impossible. Government-mandated assimilation efforts from the establishment of the Indian Act of 1876 to 1951 were designed to force Natives to give up their cultures while still denying them citizenship. During this era and beyond, the infamous Indian Residential School system and even, for many years, day schools, had profound negative effects on culture, individuals, families, and communities. One of the most impactful changes started in the late 1960s when Kahnawa'kehró:non began regaining control over the education of their

[8] David Blanchard, "Patterns of Tradition and Change: The Re-Creation of Iroquois Culture at Kahnawake" (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1982), 2-3. Bound copy.

[9] Blanchard, "Patterns of Tradition and Change," 134-135.

children and youth. The culture and eventually the language became part of the curriculum at all schools on the reserve, significant factors in the cultural revival that is still in progress. While exact translation of Kanien'kéha is not possible in many cases, *wakonhaní:ron* is similar to resilient, and this is a resilient community. The concept of finding comfort, healing, and renewal by recalling one's origins and carrying on tradition is part of everyday life, and this is reflected in the visual culture through the presence of the Sky Dome, corn, and flowers in the work of Tammy Beauvais and Leith Mahkewa.

Literature Review

Until relatively recently, academic views of the cultures of all First Peoples were usually through the lens of outsiders. Early studies of the Haudenosaunee, including the community of Kahnawà:ke, were carried out by Joseph-François Lafitau (1681-1746), a French Jesuit missionary, ethnologist, and naturalist. Pere Lafitau recorded traditional Haudenosaunee dress and adornment, as seen in Figure 9, and noted marked differences from European society, including the status given to women, but the bulk of his writings concerned "pagan" practices.[10] His determination to make connections, no matter how general or thin, between the cultures of Indigenous North America with those of the classical world was caustically critiqued by Voltaire. Lafitau even assumed rituals he was not allowed to observe to be like Dionysian orgies.[11] Some later missionaries slanted the Sky Woman Epoch, presenting Sky Woman's literal fall as a punishment, akin to Adam and Eve being cast out of Eden.

The problem of how Indigenous cultures have been represented in the past still has weighty implications for how it is researched today. Audra Simpson, a political anthropologist from Kahnawà:ke, describes how Lewis Henry Morgan, author of the influential 1851 book, *The League of the Iroquois*, began his interest in Native Americans as a member of the Gordian Knot, a club in Aurora, where he and other White men without any serious knowledge of First Peoples cultures liked to pretend to be "Indians."[12] After he met and befriended a Seneca teenager, Ely S. Parker, Morgan made the leap from club member to ethnologist, becoming a respected "expert" on

[10] Mary Helen McMurran, "Rethinking Superstition: Pagan Ritual in Lafitau's Moeurs Des Sauvages," in *Mind, Body, Motion, Matter: Eighteenth-Century British and French Literary Perspectives*, ed. Mary Helen McMurran and Alison Conway (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 112. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctt1kk660b.9.

[11] McMurran, "Rethinking Superstition," 119.

[12] Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014), 76-77.

Iroquoian society.[13] Morgan mistakenly believed Parker's branch of the Seneca represented the whole Haudenosaunee Confederacy.[14] Furthermore, Parker's extant writings consist of perhaps seven pages of letters, so the scope of his contributions to Morgan's book cannot be gauged.[15]

John Napoleon Brinton Hewitt (1859-1937), a Tuscarora ethnologist and linguist who visited Kahnawà:ke in 1928, asserted that the residents had lost their way, lacking "trustworthy" knowledge of the "ancient League" and the teachings of Seneca philosopher Handsome Lake.[16] A minor prophet, Handsome Lake was active in his later years, beginning in 1799. Thanks to the efforts of a small but fervent group of followers, Handsome Lake gradually gained a larger following in the decades after his death in 1815, with his philosophy referenced in governmental proceedings, Longhouse ceremonies, and even a religion based on his teachings that attracted many unchristianized Haudenosaunee.[17] However, while Handsome Lake and the "new religion" created from his teachings was influential in much of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, he did not have a strong following in Kahnawà:ke and its sister communities of Ahkwesáhsne, and Kanehsatà:ke, or for that matter among all of Hewitt's own group, the Tuscarora.[18]

It should be noted that Longhouse traditions and beliefs blend earlier teachings and practices with those of Handsome Lake, and Longhouse participation has increased at Kahnawà:ke since Hewitt's visit nearly a century ago. Nonetheless, while members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy have much in common, the various branches and communities are not the same. Differences in language, dialect, art styles, and more distinguish each branch. Scholarship in this

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[13] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 79.
[14] Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of*, 17-18.
[15] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 80.
[16] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 68.
[17] Elisabeth Tooker, "On the Development of the Handsome Lake Religion," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 1 (1989): 35-37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/987160.
[18] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 29.

area requires an extra layer of scrutiny, for even relatively recent literature may be drawing upon older sources containing inaccurate information or unreliable assumptions and interpretations.

The Enlightenment notion that placed Europeans at the top tier of civilization and graded societies by their "progress" has had profound and lasting impact on Indigenous people groups and scholarship about them. J.N.B. Hewitt, viewing the world through the prevailing Eurocentric lens of his time, sought a definitive, canonical version of the Sky Woman Epic. Despite his roots, he did not understand that in the Haudenosaunee oral tradition, there is no official text, for each person relating the Sky Woman Epoch does so in their own words.[19] However, the many versions he collected are of interest to modern academics. As Haudenosaunee scholar Susan M. Hill observes, while Hewitt was not ashamed of his ethnic background, he would not have considered Haudenosaunee societies to be on the same level as "civilized" American society, "where he placed himself."[20]

Views of Native cultures and studies of Native North Americans (and Indigenous people worldwide) began to change for the better in the 1970s, although that shift is still in progress fifty years later. Philip J. Deloria of Harvard University, writing about perceptions of the American West and Native Americans, observes how perspectives have evolved during this period. He credits the founding of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) with its global interest in Indigenous cultures, and the increasing number of Native American academics as key influences.[21]

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[19] John C. Mohawk, *Iroquois Creation Story: Arthur John Gibson and J.N.B. Hewitt's "Myth of the Earth Grasper,"* (Buffalo: Mohawk Publications, 2005), iv.

[20] Hill, *The Clay We are Made Of*, 18.

[21] Philip J. Deloria, "Transnational Frontiers: The American West in France, by Emily C. Burns," *The Art Bulletin*, 102, no.1 (February 2020), 114-116. DOI: 10.1080/00043079.2020.1670590.

With these changes, Indigenous scholars began to bring in new perspectives. In *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge*, Indigenous historian Donald L. Fixico contrasts Native American worldviews and cultures with that of the mainstream "Western" population. For the former, history is based on oral traditions and experiences, while in the latter, the focus is on archival documentation. Most contemporary Native Americans, he acknowledges, live in both worlds, and Native American and First Nations academics create bridges between both ways of thinking. (The two worlds do have overlapping concepts. For example, the Haudenosaunee value and teach critical thinking, encouraging students to ask questions and challenge ideas and viewpoints.[22]) Traditional stories of Indigenous people are being elevated by Native academics such as Daniel Heath Justice by showing the deep significance of stories and knowledge from oral traditions. Indigenous perspectives also shed needed light on Indigenous cultural productions, including art and design.

Most contemporary writing by Haudenosaunee scholars has focused on socio-political topics and cultural anthropology. The oral tradition of the Sky Woman, as well as the Thanksgiving Address – an expression of gratitude for all of creation that opens all Haudenosaunee ceremonies and events – is often used to frame chapters or sections of their writings. In "Whither Art History? The Fine Art of Being Indigenous," art historian, curator, and knowledge keeper Richard W. Hill, Sr. relates the Thanksgiving Address to artists and the creative process, one of the life-changing concepts taught to him early in his career by his mentor Jake Thomas. During the Thanksgiving Address, after each segment or stanza delivered by the speaker, the listeners respond in unison

[22] Louellyn White, *Free to Be Mohawk: Indigenous Education at the Akwesasne Freedom School (*Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2015), 162.

"now our minds are one." He explains that in addition to expressing gratitude for the gifts of the world around us and for our senses, that act of "putting our minds together" is a creative force, enhancing our individual powers and abilities. Hill finds that this also helps him appreciate and connect with our ancestors and their creativity.[23]

Jake Thomas's influence on Richard Hill began in 1973, when they were both members of the all-Haudenosaunee group of artists curating a major exhibit of Haudenosaunee art for the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse. An Indigenous art exhibit at an art museum as opposed to a natural history museum, curated by Indigenous people from the appropriate groups, was a major development at the time. A 2008 exhibit at the Ottawa Gallery of Art entitled *Kwah I:ken Tsi Iroquois = Oh so Iroquois/Tellement iroquois* presented works by two dozen contemporary Haudenosaunee artists. The fully trilingual exhibit catalogue was published in Kanien'kéha, English, and French.

While progress has been made in how Indigenous art is viewed and presented, the cultures of the First Peoples of the Americas are still categorized, absurdly, as "Non-Western," and prejudice, especially in the form of unconscious bias, remains deeply rooted. One of the books in the series "The Iroquois and Their Neighbors," *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Botanical Anishinaabe Teachings* by Wendy Makoons Geniusz, discusses how Anishinaabe botanical knowledge has been collected and presented by academics from outside of the culture, and addresses the larger and very profound problem of how Indigenous knowledge and cultures have been distorted and trivialized. A truly global, less Eurocentric approach to art history remains an aspirational concept not fully realized.

[23] Hill, "Whither Art History?," 7-9.

Parallel with the rising number of Indigenous academics writing about their cultures, scholarship related to feminist movements has raised the profile of the so-called minor arts, including cultural productions such as clothing and beadwork traditionally created by women. Ruth B. Phillips brought attention to First Nations art of the Northeast Woodlands, including traditional crafts made for settlers and tourists. These souvenir goods, previously dismissed as unimportant, were generally well made and in many cases, beautiful. Beaded shoulder bags and handbags were extremely popular souvenirs, becoming the “status purses” of their era. Many of these goods were produced at Kahnawà:ke.

The Artists

Tammy Beauvais

Museums displaying fashions by Tammy Beauvais include the Kunst-und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany) in Bonn, known as the Bundeskunsthalle, the Heard Museum in Phoenix, the McCord Museum in Montreal, and the permanent collection of the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. The McCord Museum's Encyclopedia of Fashion profile for Tammy Beauvais describes her as a fourth-generation fashion designer from Kahnawà:ke.[24] Beauvais learned to sew from her mother and grandmother. Making traditional Haudenosaunee clothing was part of her education at the reserve. In an interview in *The Nation*, she explains cultural traditions were part of the curriculum at the Indian Way School she attended while growing up in Kahnawà:ke. This included making traditional clothing for children. Beauvais began making such garments as gifts and by the age of 13, was selling them. As a young adult, she worked for well-known Canadian designer Linda Lundstrom in Toronto before establishing her own fashion business on the reserve in 1999. Lundstrom contracted Beauvais to provide artwork for fashions incorporating Native symbols, but also served as a mentor, giving her an overview of the entire company and sending her to the Aboriginal Achievement Awards, fashion shows, and trade shows.[25] All of this would be valuable experience for her own business. Many Indigenous people make T-shirts or elaborate powwow regalia, but fewer are fashion designers. While many of her designs can certainly be worn as

24 "Tammy Beauvais Designs," Encylo Fashion Quebec, McCord Museum, https://encyclomodeqc.musee-mccord-stewart.ca/en/entry/tammy-beauvais-designs/.

25 "Tammy Beauvais Native Fashion," *The Nation Archives,* http://www.nationnewsarchives.ca/article/tammy-beauvais-native-fashion/.

regalia, she focuses on contemporary fashions and accessories incorporating traditional First Nations symbols.[26]

Beauvais also does commissioned designs. A 2011 article in the *McGill Reporter*, "Ancient Roots recognized in new First Nations graduation scarves," describes stoles bearing Native symbols she designed for McGill University to present to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis graduates of degree and certificate programs. (Kahnawà:ke is the reserve geographically closest to the University.)[27] Examples of her creations have been acquired by museums and worn by celebrities and public figures such as Robert De Niro, Pierce Brosnan, and Pope John Paul II. Newspaper and magazine articles about her are often headlined by these high-profile works, but also contain biographical details and insights into her influences and work as an Indigenous designer. A 2013 profile of Beauvais in *SAY Magazine* notes the visibility of her creations led to Beauvais receiving a commission to design capes for the First Lady of Canada, Madame Aline Chretien. The "Sky Woman Capes" Beauvais designed were given as gifts to all the First Ladies of North, South and Central America. First Lady Laura Bush was among the recipients. The article also states Beauvais is "one of the Top Ten Indigenous Designers in Canada," and describes multiple ways the designer gives back to her community and supports and encourages other Indigenous artists.

In "Native Designers of High Fashion: Expressing Identity, Creativity, and Tradition in Contemporary Customary Clothing Design," Jessica R. Metcalfe observes that in Canada, unlike the United States, "First Nations Designers are celebrated for their unique cultural contribution to

[26] "Tammy Beauvais Fashions," Encyclo Fashion, McCord Museum. https://encyclomodeqc.musee-mccord-stewart.ca/en/entry/tammy-beauvais-designs/

[27] Tamarah Feder, "Ancient roots recognized in new First Nations graduation scarves," *McGill Reporter,* June 3, 2011, https://reporter.mcgill.ca/ancient-roots-recognized-in-new-first-nations-graduation-scarves/.

the Canadian fashion world and are not considered primarily ethnic artists but national artists."[28] This pride in Indigenous design and appreciation for the work of Tammy Beauvais was further demonstrated in 2016 with a commission to create a floral cape as a gift from Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, wife of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, to Michelle Obama, who was First Lady of the United States at the time. This brought Beauvais a great deal of media attention, including through the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, known as CBC, the national television and radio broadcaster. An article on the CBC website, "Quebec Mohawk designer's beaded cape gifted to Michelle Obama," is dated March 10, 2016, the day Mrs. Obama received the cape.

Many other news outlets picked up the story of the Michelle Obama cape, and, as *The Montreal Gazette* reported on March 21, 2016, Beauvais was "inundated" with telephone inquiries and orders from her online boutique. The *Gazette* article "Mohawk designer Tammy Beauvais: From Kahnawake to the White House" by Christopher Curtis reveals the background story with text, photos, and video footage. While at a trade show two years before this commission, Valerie Galley, the partner of Assembly of First Nations national chief Perry Belgarde, bought a cape from Beauvais. Galley then ordered a custom cape, which she presented to Sophie Grégoire Trudeau when the Trudeaus visited the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). Later, Galley contacted Beauvais to say Madame Trudeau wished to commission a special piece for an important gift. Galley would not say who the recipient would be, but Beauvais, knowing the Trudeaus were scheduled to visit Washington DC, easily read between the lines when she was told to design a cape for a tall, dark-

[28] Jessica RheAnn Metcalfe, "Native Designers of High Fashion: Expressing Identity, Creativity, and Tradition in Contemporary Customary Clothing Design" (Dissertation, University of Arizona, 2010), 17. Bound copy.

skinned woman. Reflecting on the honor, Beauvais acknowledges her heritage, her late father, and the generations of women in her family before her for making this possible.[29]

Leith Mahkewa

Leith Mahkewa is a member of another branch of the Haudensaunee Confederacy, the Oneida First Nation of the Thames in southwestern Ontario, near London, but has lived at Kahnawà:ke most of her life, having moved there when her mother married her stepfather. The artist's website notes she has received numerous awards at the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market and the Southwestern Association for the Indian Arts (SWAIA) Santa Fe Indian Market. Her award-winning raised beadwork mask, *Protecting you from me*, is featured in an article in *First American Art Magazine* from April 28, 2020. The red mask, inspired by the face masks worn during the COVID-19 pandemic that gripped the world by the spring of 2020, is in the permanent collection of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art in Overland, Kansas. An article on the museum's website, "Evocations – Celebrating the Museum's Collection," talks about the "Evocations" exhibit that introduced this mask and other new acquisitions. Although the mention of Mahkewa is brief, it does state that one of her mentors was Gail Albany Montour.[30]

Gail Kanerahtenta Albany Montour, 1940 – 2017, was a prominent Kahnawà:ke artist in the raised beadwork tradition. Her signature motif, a stylized bird, is another creation symbol from

[29] Christopher Curtis, "Mohawk designer Tammy Beauvais: From Kahnawake to the White House," *The Montreal Gazette*, March 21, 2016. https://montrealgazette.com/business/local-business/mohawk-designer-tammy-beauvais-from-kahnawake-to-the-white-house.

[30] Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, "Evocations: Celebrating the Museum's Collection," accessed January 27, 2024, https://www.nermanmuseum.org/exhibitions/2021-04-20-evocations.html.

the SkyWoman Epoch.[31] [32] In 2009, Montour placed second in the "Functional Objects" category of the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair & Market juried competition for a vase entitled "Traditional Beadwork."[33] The only available photograph, shown in Figure 10, appears on the cover of the April 2009 issue of a Kahnawà:ke health and wellness newsletter, under the banner "Wellness Through Cultural Teachings." Montour's vase, with downward-pointing corners making a star-like shape at the top, is a wider variation of one of the urn shapes identified by Dolores N. Elliott's classification of 80 basic types of Haudenosaunee beadwork. Specifically, Elliott categorizes the similar urn form as 61Mb, and places it in the "Mohawk" style column.[34]

The April/May 2023 issue of *Native American Art* magazine, dedicated to beadwork, includes a four-page article about Leith Mahkewa, illustrated with color photos of her work. It notes her creations have been seen on New York Fashion Week models and worn by actress Jana Schmieding in her role as Reagan Wells on the television series *Rutherford Falls*. Mahkewa took up beading while in college after her mother opened a bead store in Kahnawà:ke. What began as a casual interest evolved into a passion. Her first substantial beadwork project was regalia for her wedding. Then came requests and commissions to make graduation outfits and other beadwork for life events. Taking her work to juried Indian markets inspires additional creative pieces. While much of her work is commission based, she always tries to make something original for herself to

[31] "Obituary: Gail Kanerahtenta Montour," Montreal Gazette, July 26, 2017, https://montrealgazette.remembering.ca/obituary/gail-montour-1066286886.

[32] Memorial Hall Museum Online, "American Centuries: Beaded cuffs, Gail Montour, 2004," accessed March 26, 2024, http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=17344.

[33] "Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair & Market 2009 Juried Competition Award List," March 2009. https://www.heardguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2009-list.pdf

[34] Dolores N. Elliott, *Iroquois Beadwork Volume 2: An Identification Guide* (Johnson City: Dolores N. Elliott, 2009), 20.

show at the markets. Mahkewa is very involved in community life at Kahnawà:ke, sharing her knowledge of beadwork, and is an active participant in the language revitalization movement.[35]

Leith Mahkewa was appointed the Indigenous artist-in-residence at Western University in London, Ontario for September 2023 to September 2024. An article dated August 2, 2023 by Jo Jennings on *Western News*, the university news website, points out "Mahkewa's roots are through the Oneida of the Thames. She has family in the area and attended Brescia University College, so coming back to London will be a return to a familiar setting." [36]

Beadwork is traditionally done at home, often with household responsibilities competing for one's attention. Mahkewa's position at Western University has allowed her to set up a dedicated studio for the first time. She finds the new separation between home and work beneficial both as an artist and as a mother. Although her role at Western University requires her to live away from her family most of the time, she is now able to devote more attention to her children when she is home at Kahnawà:ke. "Before, I would be beading at the kitchen table and trying to do all that stuff and cooking. I would be short with my kids sometimes because I was so focused on what I wanted to do because that was feeding my soul and purpose," Leith recalls. "I could be in the same room as somebody and not be present."[37] This ability to focus on her work, without competing demands or financial restraints, has been transformational.

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[35] Erin Rand, "Evolving Style: After moments of self-discovery as an artist, Leith Mahkewa flourished in the art world." *Native American Art*, April/May 2023, 62-65.

[36] Jo Jennings, "Western's new Indigenous artist-in-residence brings multi-hued approach to traditional creations," *Western News*, August 2, 2023, https://news.westernu.ca/2023/08/westerns-new-indigenous-artist-in-residence-brings-multi-hued-approach-to-traditional-creations/.

[37] Paniz Vedavarz, "Leith Mahkewa, Western's Indigenous Artist-in-Residence, is weaving a path home," *Western Gazette*, January 19, 2024, https://westerngazette.ca/culture/visual_arts/leith-mahkewa-western-s-indigenous-artist-in-residence-is-weaving-a-path-home/article_14d80382-b70e-11ee-8354-23834689e500.html#google_vignette.

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Analysis

The Sky Dome, corn, and flowers – the Creation motifs explored – are examined in specific works by each artist: the *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan* and *Blue Corn Skirt* by Tammy Beauvais, and *Supporting Each Other and Creation* and *Saucy* by Leith Mahkewa. Analysis also includes some of the factors contributing to the preservation and revitalization of the culture at Kahnawà:ke. One of the turning points in the life of the community, the ability to run its own school system, is discussed as an especially profound influence.

The Sky Dome

Around the world, and for many centuries, various cultures have depicted the heavens as a dome, particularly in architecture. In Haudenosaunee culture, the Sky Dome is a two-dimensional form representing the Sky World. Of the many variations, some of the most popular are capped with a stylized fern, trefoil, or fiddle-head design, representing vegetation. In this context, that top design is interpreted as the Celestial Tree or Tree of Life, which gave life and sacred plants to the world after its root made the hole that Sky Woman fell through.[38] As Susan M. Hill explains, "the scrolls on top of the dome mark the tree of the Sky World and the connection between the two worlds."[39]

Examples of Haudenosaunee clothing with Sky Dome motifs date from the 18th century to the present. Figures 11, 12, and 13 contain historic examples of Sky Dome motifs. Patterns for border designs from *Traditional Mohawk Clothing* are very similar and are likely drawn from these sources. Clothing and beadwork created by Towanda Seneca fashion designer Gah-hah-no Caroline Parker (approximately 1826 to 1892) seen in a circa 1850 portrait in Figure 13, blending

[38] The Tree of Life is not to be confused with the Tree of Peace, a pine tree planted when the Haudenosaunee Confederacy was founded. The Tree of Peace is at the center of the Haudenosaunee flag.

[39] Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of*, 24.

European and Haudenosaunee elements, has been especially influential throughout the Confederacy.[40] [41] The Sky Dome, where the creation story begins, is a strong recurring motif in the fashion designs of Tammy Beauvais, from early in her career through the present.

Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan

Beauvais combines two powerful Haudenosaunee motifs in her *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan* (Figures 2 and 3), the Sky Dome from Haudenosaunee cosmology, and figures holding hands reminiscent of those in many wampum belts, including the *Two Dog Wampum Belt* in Figure 14. The colors are the same as the Haudenosaunee flag: a rich purple ground with symbols in white. The white in the drape looks silvery in some light. White and silver both symbolize light to the Haudenosaunee.[42] The sheerness of the chiffon material of the cardigan drape reinforces the celestial theme, and the drape is made with the expertise and perfectionistic attention to detail seen in all the designer's creations.

The Haudenosaunee flag is based on a wampum belt symbolizing the Confederacy. Created by binding shell beads onto strings to form patterns, wampum belts originated centuries ago to serve many purposes, including guiding narration of Haudenosaunee history, laws, and traditions, and calling for mourning, condolence, or a council.[43] Wampum belts are also badges of

[40] Gerry Biron, "Iroquois Regalia During the 18th and 19th Centuries," *Historic Iroquois and Wabanaki Beadwork* (blog), October 21, 2014, https://iroquoisbeadwork.blogspot.com/2014/10/iroquois-regalia-during-18th-and-19th.html.

[41] Debra R. Holler, "The Remarkable Caroline G. Parker Mountpleasant, Seneca Wolf Clan," *Western New York Heritage,* 14, no. 1 (Spring 201), 9.

[42] George R. Hammell, "The Iroquois and the World's Rim: Speculations on Color, Culture, and Contact," *American Indian Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (Autumn 1992), 455-456, accessed May 4, 2021, doi:10.2307/1185292.

[43] Haudenosaunee Confederacy, "Wampum," accessed April 20, 2024, https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/wampum/.

office, such as Clan Mother or Chief.[44] "From the beginning of the seventeenth century, perhaps even earlier," Turgeon states, "these belts became central objects in diplomatic encounters. Wampum belts were made up of several hundred and even thousands of shell (and sometimes glass) beads, tightly woven together by women to express the 'words' or 'voices' of the group. When a diplomatic action was agreed on, individuals and family clans contributed beads; and, once assembled, the belts metaphorically signified the assembly of people and their voices."[45] The people holding hands in the "Unity Sky Dome" drape mirror the "unity" linked stick figures holding hands in the Haudenosaunee wampum belt in Figure 14, in which each human represents a nation or community.[46]

The tradition of family representation through contributing beads to an important diplomatic work is expressed in the navy-blue floral cape Beauvais made for Michelle Obama. To honor previous generations of women in her family who sewed, especially her great-grandmother Elizabeth Hemlock who supported a family of twelve children by toiling as a seamstress for a department store, Beauvais took three amber color glass heirloom beads from a very limited collection passed down to her and sewed one into the center of each of the three beaded flowers.[47]

The name for this cardigan drape points to the symbols mentioned. Further interpretations not stated by the designer may be inferred from additional traditional designs. Below the Sky Domes at the top of the garment, the second register has a diagonal pattern of triangles standing for mountain ranges.[48] The third and seventh registers are volute mother earth motifs, signifying

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[44] Mann, *Iroquoian Women,* 330.

[45] Laurier G. Turgeon, "Material Culture and Cross-Cultural Consumption: French Beads in North America, 1500-1700." *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 9, 1 (2001), 100. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40662800.

[46] *Traditional Mohawk Clothing* (Akwesasne: Native North American Travelling College, 2017), 18.

[47] Chris Curtis, "Mohawk designer Tammy Beauvais: From Kahnawake to the White House," *Montreal Gazette*, March 16, 2016, accessed January 9, 2024, https://montrealgazette.com/business/local-business/mohawk-designer-tammy-beauvais-from-kahnawake-to-the-white-house.

[48] *Traditional Mohawk Clothing,* 19.

the cycle of growth.[49] The stick-figure humans holding hands on the fourth register are, as stated, unity figures, with each figure traditionally representing a community or group. Below the wider Sky Domes on the fifth register, the sixth tier is another row of triangles that again can represent a range of mountains.[50] Thus, this overall design may be read as people groups or nations from different geographic areas standing together in unity, thriving, surrounded by vegetation and nature on Earth, and connected to the heavens.

Corn

Corn is the most prominent of the "Three Sisters" of dietary staples that accompanied Sky Woman to her new home. One of the names for Sky Woman is the Corn Mother.[51] Traditionally the work of women, the Haudenosaunee planting system involves growing corn, beans, and squash together, a model of balance and replenishment of soil chemistry. Grown by itself, corn depletes nitrogen from the soil, but the beans allowed to climb the corn stalks fix that problem by providing nitrogen. Squash vines covering the ground supply mulch.[52] Traditional Haudenosaunee corn, grown in mounds rather than in more labor-intensive tilled soil, is also more nutritious and has a lower glycemic index than sweet yellow corn.[53]

There are 21st century sculptures with personifications of corn or corn imagery by Stephen McComber and MC Snow, two other prominent artists at Kahnawà:ke. While corn husk dolls, some with beaded clothing, are a long-standing tradition, finding historic works with actual corn

[49] *Traditional Mohawk Clothing*, 18.
[50] *Traditional Mohawk Clothing*, 19.
[51] Barbara A. Mann,"The Lynx in Time: Haudenosaunee Women's Traditions and History," *American Indian Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1997): 433, https://doi.org/10.2307/1185516.
[52] Bill Weinberg, "Grandfather Corn and the Three Sisters." *Earth Island Journal* 9, no. 3 (Summer 1994): 34–35. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43883000.
[53] "White Corn Project, *Ganondagan*, https://www.ganondagan.org/white-corn-project, accessed April 5, 2024. https://www.ganondagan.org/white-corn-project.

imagery is difficult. Although some museums have stated that corn was a common motif in Haudenosaunee beadwork, Northeast Woodlands bead expert Gerry Biron has never seen any such examples and believes stylized flowers have been misidentified as corn.[54] (The design in question, resembling a stylized flower, leaf, or feather, is found in many in late 19th or early 20th century Kanien'kehá꞉ka picture frames.) Nonetheless, corn is woven into the Haudenosaunee cultural fabric, and the Corn Ceremony in mid-August is one of the thirteen Haudenosaunee ceremonies of the lunar year.[55] The prominent corn imagery used in the work of Beauvais speaks to the strengthened awareness of this at the reserve.

Blue Corn Skirt

Blue Corn Skirt by Beauvais is a ribbon skirt. In the late 18th century, French traders introduced silk ribbons to Indigenous peoples of the Northeast Woodlands. Ribbon-bedecked garments, associated with aristocratic frivolity, fell out of favor after the French Revolution.[56] However, being colorful, cheap, lightweight, and easy to transport, ribbons became popular trade items. First Nations women of this region began using silk ribbons to decorate skirts, shirts, and leggings with simple bands of trim. Early examples of such clothing are scarce, for they were simply worn until they wore out, but art provides visual documentation. Menominee women from the Great Lakes area, wearing ribbon-trimmed skirts and shawls, are subjects of 1858 painting by Samuel M. Brooks in the collection of the Milwaukee Museum of Public Art in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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[54] Email from Gerry Biron, November 18, 2023.

[55] "Ceremonies," *Haudenosaunee Confederacy*. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/ceremonies/.

[56] Alice Marriott, "Ribbon Applique Work of North American Indians, Part I," *Bulletin of the Oklahoma Anthropological Society*, VI (March 1958): 54.

The Milwaukee Public Museum web page on ribbon garments states in the 19th century, ribbonwork migrated from its Great Lakes "epicenter" to some Prairie, Plains, and Northeast communities before a rapid decline by the early 20th century, coinciding with the separation of many First Peoples groups from their ancestral lands and cultures.[57] After nearly disappearing, in the 21st century ribbon skirts and shirts revived, and have been adopted by many Native North American groups. When Deb Haaland, a member of the Pueblo of Laguna, wore a ribbon skirt when she was sworn in as Secretary of the Interior in March of 2021, members of many Native American communities took notice and applauded her choice.[58]

Typically ribbon garments feature horizontal bands of colorful ribbon. Dangling vertical ribbons are often added to ribbon shirts. Ribbon skirts and shirts made by Tammy Beauvais include additional elements of visual interest created with beading or appliqué.

Blue Corn Skirt by Tammy Beauvais, made of silk, satin, and cotton, features a dominant design of three large iconic images of blue corn appliqued on a brown background. The 7-inch corn image in the center is the tallest, flanked by 6.25-inch-high corn images on each side. Three is a meaningful number in Haudenosaunee culture, for the Three Sisters, and for the three epic story cycles in the oral tradition. The Kanien'kehá꞉ka have three clans. Below the corn is a wide band of matching blue ribbon, followed by a wide band of brown ribbon, while the bottom panel of the skirt is of printed fabric with bands of southwestern designs in turquoise, orange-red, gray, brown, and white.

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[57] Milwaukee Public Museum, "History of American Indian Ribbonwork," https://www.mpm.edu/research-collections/anthropology/online-collections-research/ribbonwork-woodland-indians/history-an.l.

[58] Hallie Golden, "'She's representing all of us': the story behind Deb Haaland's swearing-in dress," *The Guardian*, March 23, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/23/deb-haaland-swearing-in-skirt-dress-agnes-woodward.

Characteristically, the Haudenosaunee creation motifs that pervade fashions by Beauvais are bigger and bolder than those seen in historic fashions. Strong as references are to her own culture, other influences are seen at times. Beauvais left the reserve following the Oka Crisis, or Kanehsatà:ke Resistance of 1990, a 78-day standoff between First Nations peoples and Quebec law enforcement, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Canadian military personnel. Residents of the Kanehsatà:ke reserve were protesting a golf course and condominium project about to be built on a Kanien'kehá꞉ka burial ground. Supporting demonstrations took place at Kahnawà:ke, where protestors blocked vehicular access to the Mercier Bridge, a conduit of traffic 60,000 commuters depended upon.[59] Tensions ran high, supply lines were heavily impacted, and outbreaks of violence occurred, including some perpetrated by hostile civilian Québécois against women and children trying to leave the reserve for safety. Although ultimately the controversial development did not move forward, the violence and hardships experienced during the standoff left many Kahnawa'kehró:non traumatized. Beauvais lived among other Native groups during her time away and found healing through experiencing and learning about their cultures. Eventually, she returned to Kahnawà:ke and opened her fashion business. While her designs celebrate and are heavily influenced by Haudenosaunee motifs and traditions, like most creatives, she incorporates personal experiences and interests into her work. She is married to a member of the Navajo **(**Diné) nation, and southwest and Navajo themes and color palettes can be found in some of her designs, including in *Blue Corn Skirt*.

Flowers

[59] P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Carrying the Burden of Peace: The Mohawks, the Canadian Forces, and the Oka Crisis," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 10 (Winter 2008) issue 2, 17, https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/journals/jomass/v10i2/f_0027895_22729.pdf.

During her life as a young woman in the Sky World, Sky Woman was known as Mature Flower (or Mature Flowers) and flowers are among the sacred plants she receives on the journey to the new home being prepared for her. While flowers are often featured in the work of Tammy Beauvais, they absolutely dominate the creative output of Leith Mahkewa, continuing a long beadwork tradition. Floral motifs are found in countless examples of Haudenosaunee beadwork and other forms of traditional needlework from the 19th century. These cultural productions from the 1800s, often found in Natural History collections with little information on them, may be largely unstudied partly because imagery such as flowers were assumed to be purely decorative. Indeed, this assumption likely allowed some traditional iconographic images to evade censorship in works created during years of heavy assimilation efforts. For example, schools run by nuns, including orders found in Quebec, routinely taught embroidery to female students. First Nations girls from Haudenosaunee communities could embroider creation story symbols, such as birds, stars, flowers, and berries, without censure. Haudenosaunee goods made for sale to tourists also may include these types of covert cultural references as a way of expressing identity in forms outsiders would not find offensive. Some, or even most, of these efforts could in fact be purely decorative, but in others, references to the cosmology may be read, including in borders of tiny repeated "V" or "L" shapes, a Sky Woman symbol.

Supporting Each Other and Creation

Flowers, symbols of blessing, and figures holding hands, representing unity, appear in bead artist Leith Mahkewa's 2020 work, *Supporting Each Other and Creation*, an elaborate fabric vase embellished with Haudenosaunee-style raised beadwork (Figure 5). The work features many bright colors, prominent flowers, and small red figures holding hands. On her website, the artist

explains the vase was completed "during the Indigenous Solidarity movement that supported the Wet'suwet'en people in early 2020." She named it "to honor the men and women upholding their responsibility as caretakers of the land."[60] This refers to opposition to a gas pipeline led by Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs alarmed about the environmental impact of the project.[61] The concerns Mahkewa expresses are part of the traditional Haudenosaunee reverence for nature, our dependence upon it, and our mutual need to protect it.

Elaborating further, Mahkewa states:

> The panels of the vase are practically identical with [the] exception of the red figures that grace the top of the vase. Two sides of the vase depict three females holding hands representing the strength that women have when united, supportive of one another and defending the land. The opposite two sides have three figures, two males and one female. The men are on either side of the female and they are holding hands. This represents the importance that both men and women hold within their Nation/Community and the necessity for them [to] honour, respect and support one another.[62]

The hand-constructed raised beadwork vase is made from black cotton velvet with red calico lining, glass seed beads, and some vintage, 24-karat gold, and gemstone beads. On each of the four sides, the small red human figures at the top vary as the artist describes, but otherwise the composition of each panel, including the dominant floral designs, is the same.[63] A large six-petalled flower in purples and bright green and yellow leaves on the right, and a red and blue flower with green leaves on the left, which also incorporates clear beads that read as white due to the thread. The pink flowers in the center are lined with 24k gold, all in antique size 20 beads, with

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[60] Leith Mahkewa, "About," *Leith Mahkewa* (artist's web site), accessed May 4, 2023, https://www.leithmahkewa.com/biography.

[61] Maham Abedi, "Wet'suwet'en protests and arrests: Here's a look at what's happening now," *Global News*, February 7, 2020, ttps://globalnews.ca/news/6517089/wetsuweten-bc-pipeline-protests/.

[62] Leith Mahkewa, "Supporting Each Other and Creation," *Leith Mahkewa* (artist's web site), accessed May 4, 2023, https://www.leithmahkewa.com/artwork/277998-3606164/Supporting-Each-Other-and-Creation--Beaded-Vase/Bead-Work-and-Quill-Work/supporting-each-other-and-creation.html.

[63] A European term for First Peoples of North America, in use until relatively recently, was "red men."

stems and leaves in size 18 antique metal beads and size 20 brown beads, accented with red "white heart" beads, a variety of red glass beads with a white core, first produced in 1600.

Above and below the flowers lies primarily blue work in linear designs similar to some used in pottery, which the small red figures stand on towards the top, accented with red beads. As seen in Figure 6, the lower part of each panel has a feathery white flower with a sapphire blue and yellow-gold interior, next to a curving slender green stem, with a border of red beads below.

The expertly executed colorful raised beadwork set against a black velvet background reflects Haudenosaunee traditions and aesthetic preferences dating back to the 1800s. The four upper corners of the vase are embellished with beaded hanging loops, identified closely with Kahnawà:ke. Describing different Haudenosaunee beadwork styles, Dolores N. Elliott states, "The *Mohawk Tradition* is made in the St. Lawrence River valley, primarily at Akwesasne, Kahnawake, and Kahnasatake…In the late 19th century Mohawk beadwork featured extremely raised beadwork and hanging loops weighted down with bugle beads."[64]

Homage to Haudenosaunee raised beadwork traditions is further evidenced in *Supporting Each Other and Creation* of 2020 and the earlier *Holding Tradition* of 2015 by their shape, similar to a style of 19th century beaded boxes and boxy purses created by Kanien'kehá꞉ka women, but fancier. Simpler, narrower beaded vases have been made by a few other contemporary Native bead artists. The wide, elaborate vase by Mahkewa's mentor Gail Montour almost certainly influenced these two sophisticated beaded vases, combining old, new, and original elements into masterfully executed, museum-quality works.

[64] Dolores N. Elliott, "Two Centuries of Iroquois Beadwork," *Beads: Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers* 15, (2003), 10.

Saucy

Flowers are also prominent in Leith Maekawa's beaded *Sau*cy purse of 2021, an elegant continuation of the Haudenosaunee raised beadwork handbag tradition. The front of the purse is maroon velvet with beadwork and silk bias. The back is hand-tanned hide. The main colors are greens with flowers in pink to garnet red hues with pink berries growing from graceful green stems or vines, accented with mustard yellow ochre. There are two large six-petalled flowers, resembling six-pointed stars, with green centers and leaves, four flowers or flower buds, each with three petals divided into dark pink and lighter pink shades, and three buds towards the upper left. The pink berries resemble raspberries. Towards the edges are bronze sequins, then a simple gadroon rope border of ochre beads. The outermost edge has two rows of small garnet color beads. The handle has rows of two matte mustard ochre beads alternating with three garnet-hued beads. Towards the top of the handle are decorative knots in the leather, with the beads wrapped around and attached to that leather. Identical leather knots are at the handle bases, along with handing loops with matte gold beads embellished with small red beads.

The bottom of the purse is slightly scalloped, with lines that tie in with the curving lines of the vines and flowers. Examples of 19th century Haudenosaunee beaded purses with more deeply rounded scalloped edges include some from around the 1840s that may have been made by Caroline Parker. Gerry Biron states these represent "a distinct style of Iroquois bag with scalloped edges and a tight band of beads along the perimeter."[65]

While Mahkewa's *Supporting Each Other and Creation* employs a very traditional Haudenosaunee color scheme, with bright multicolor beads set off against a black velvet

[65] Biron, *A Cherished Curiosity*, 78-79, 95.

background, her interest in other color palettes is evident in other works, including the *Saucy* purse. Mahkewa's early beadwork was very much in the bright multicolor tradition but has evolved over time, and now she enjoys working within more limited, sometimes even monochromatic, color ranges. She states, "I find keeping things in the same color family to be a little more challenging, and it's a way to stretch myself."[66]

An announcement of Mahkewa's art in residency at Western University mentions the artist's ties to the Southwest through her late father, a Hopi and Tewa from Arizona. Speaking to how her background influences her work, Mahkewa states, "I created a unique niche to Oneida/Chippewa/Hopi/Tewa family lineage. My personal style often juxtaposes the geometric shapes found in my Hopi family pottery patterns, and Haudenosaunee inspired floral designs. The complexity of both cultures and design styles, when combined and manipulated, creates a one-of-a-kind form of beadwork."[67]

Cultural Revitalization

During the 19th century and well into the 20th century, the culture of Kahnawà:ke was impacted by various sources, from assimilation education to popular entertainment. Wild west shows, followed by film and television productions inspired by them, fostered the assumption that all First Peoples of North America dressed and lived like Plains people. This erroneous narrative of one monolithic "Indian" culture heavily influenced public perceptions and expectations of First Peoples. Further complicating the issue, many entertainers from Kahnawà:ke worked in wild west shows during

[66] Erin E. Rand, "Leith Mahkewa: Evolving Style," *Native American Art*), April/May 2023, 63.

[67] Jo Jennings, "Western's new Indigenous artist-in-residence brings multi-hued approach to traditional creations," *Western News*. August 2, 2023. https://news.westernu.ca/2023/08/westerns-new-indigenous-artist-in-residence-brings-multi-hued-approach-to-traditional-creations/

that era and made their own regalia, a look carried over to the "Indian Village" tourist attraction founded at the reserve during the Great Depression. Recalling this era, elder Johnny Beauvais insists the "Sioux look" was adopted purely for entertainment business purposes.[68] However, traditions became blurred to the point that quite a few members of the group believed this way of dress represented their actual heritage. For example, photos of Kahnawà:ke church choirs from the 1940s into the 1960s show the members clad in Plains-style regalia, the "Pan-Indian" look many First Peoples took on at the time. When authentic traditions began to be taught in schools on the reserve, the tide started to shift. Tammy Beauvais learned how to make traditional Haudenosaunee clothing at school, and her fashion business is built on creating contemporary clothing that combines the old with the new.

By the 1990s, beadwork at Kahnawà:ke was dying out. Fortunately, the growing cultural revival at the reserve created new interest in the art of beading. A few elders were able to directly share their knowledge of beading with younger members of the community. The new bead workers have, in turn, taught others. Leith Mahkewa had multiple mentors, and is now an authority in her own right, sharing her expertise. "The Beading Table," a monthly podcast, is co-hosted by Leith Mahkewa and fellow professional bead artist Tekaronhiahkhwsucha Margaret Standup at Kahnawà:ke. Saving the art form from oblivion even led Standup to literally deconstruct older works. In a 2017 news article, she recalls, with a pang of regret, taking apart raised beadwork pieces created by her great-grandmother, to learn how they were made. Standup's grandmother and mother had never learned beading, and she did not want the tradition and its techniques to be lost. Her grandmother and mother, like many others, never learned how to bead because they did

[68] Johnny Beauvais, *Kahnawake: a Mohawk Look at Canada and Adventures of Big John Canadian 1840-1919*, (Montreal: publication assisted by the Secretary of State, 1985.), 136-138.

not consider beading worth the effort.[69] This notion of monetary return on labor, while a valid economic consideration, does not factor in the value of carrying on cultural traditions, or the importance of creating art. It is also at odds with First Nations values, and this is why 20th century attempts by the Canadian government to implement assembly-line production of First Nations crafts failed.[70]

Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, many Native North American communities became increasingly vocal about their needs for self-determination, including in education. In 1968, a committee representing Catholic, Protestant, and Longhouse factions at the reserve began working together to take back the education of their own children and youth, in what became the Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee. Through their efforts, non-denominational schools teaching shared values and traditional culture were established.[71] Opposition to the Catholic day schools at Kahnawà:ke grew in the 1980s, and the last nuns left in 1988.[72] As a result of these changes, curriculum at all schools on the reserve now include Kanien'kehá꞉ka culture classes, and Kanien'kéha, the Mohawk language, is taught.

The role of language cannot be underestimated, for the culture and its stories are deeply embedded within it. For example, in Kanien'kéha, the numbers from one to ten contain references to the Sky Woman Epoch – one means "one story," the word for two also means "twins," signifying the twin grandsons of Grandmother Moon, and so on. Doug George-Kanentiio states,

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[69] Todd Lamirande, "Mohawk women in Ottawa demonstrate the lost art of raised beadwork," *OPTN National News*, August 4, 2017, accessed December 4, 2023, https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/mohawk-women-in-ottawa-to-demonstrate-the-lost-art-of-raised-beadwork/

[70] McMasters, "Indian Arts and Crafts of the Reservation Period," 208.

[71] "History of Kahnawà:ke Education,: Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee," accessed March 25, 2024, https://www.kecedu.ca/kcsc/history_of_kahnawake_education .

[72] Ka'nhehsi:io Deer, "120 Years of Indian Day Schools leave a dark legacy in Kahnawake Mohawk Territory," *CBC News*, May 12, 2019, https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/kahnawake-indian-day-schools-1.5127502.

"In everyday life the prime way in which we recall her is by the numbers one to ten. As I know it the following are those numbers as translated into English:

One: Enska (ehn-sgah): which is eh n-sga-lohn-yia: One Story
Two: Tekini (de-gi-nee): De-ni-gah: Twins
Three: Ah:sen: the center (middle of the sky world)…"[73]

Implementing the desired cultural elements in schools at the reserve took time due to the need for language classes for teachers and the realities of budget limitations, but by 2013, a full program was in place. Information on this significant educational shift is documented on the Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee website and in CBC News articles. Commenting on moving the community away from the days of the Indian residential schools and day schools, Robin Delaronde, director of education at the Kahnawà:ke Education Centre, sees the reserve "on the road to undoing someone else's vision, and putting in our vision of what we want for our children, for our community, for our people." She credits the parents for driving this change of direction.[74] Thus, traditional stories, imagery, and language skills are now taught to all children attending school on the reserve, restoring cultural connections that were broken in many families.

Now that Kanien'kehá꞉ka myths, stories, and symbols are taught in all Kahnawà:ke schools, they are becoming part of the community knowledge base again, restoring and strengthening the sense of collective identity. Writing about the use of puppetry and filmmaking productions at Kahnawà:ke to renormalize the language and culture across generations, Marion Konwanénhon Delaronde states, "I have found the telling of legends to have a cohesive quality in

[73] Doug George-Kanentiio, "Mohawk Numbers and Creation Story, Indianz.com, November 6, 2020. https://indianz.com/News/2020/11/06/doug-george-kanentiio-mohawk-numbers-and-creation-story/

[74] Deer, "120 Years of Indian Day Schools."

a community. We can all hear the same legend and each person will respond more to characters and events that speak to their experience on a personal level."[75]

The sense of identity at Kahnawà:ke is evidenced in the renewed interest in traditional clothing and motifs. In the revitalizing environment, the practice of one tradition often fosters others. "When I started going to ceremonies at our Longhouse, almost no one wore clothing based on traditional designs," Tammy Beauvais recalls in a 2002 article in *Native Peoples Magazine*. "I decided that would be my focus: incorporating traditional symbolism and styles into contemporary clothing."[76] Similarly, beadwork at Kahnawà:ke was nearly extinct by the latter part of the 20th century, then it was saved by a new wave of interest.[77] Leith Mahkewa was also inspired by Longhouse participation. In a social media post from the Department of Visual Arts & ArtLab Gallery at Western University regarding her artist-in-residency, she recalls, "As a new mother, my passion grew for the Haudenosaunee beadwork that often adorned the clothing of newborns and some of the older people I met in the longhouse."[78]

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[75] Marion Konwanénhon Delaronde, "Tóta Tánon Ohkwá:ri: A Community-Driven Production and the Renormalization of the Kanien'kehá Language." *Revue Canadienne d'Études Cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020): 52–68, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26977660.

[76] "Fashion Forward," *Native Peoples Magazine*, January/February (15, 2) 2002, 15, accessed January 16, 2024, https://eds.p.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=4b6f97f0-9bb3-45fb-b6d0-df0f12deeedc%40redis.

[77] Todd Lamirande, "Mohawk women in Ottawa," *OPTN National News*, August 4, 2017. https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/mohawk-women-in-ottawa-to-demonstrate-the-lost-art-of-raised-beadwork/

[78] "We are excited to announce…" Department of Visual Arts & ArtLab Gallery at Western University, Facebook, July 25, 2023. https://www.facebook.com/westernuVisArts.

Conclusion

The Haudenosaunee creation story is the foundation of Kanien'kehá꞉ka culture and shapes the worldview of its people. Reminders of the story are all around in everyday life, at milestone events, in Longhouse ceremonies, embedded in oral traditions, the number system, and the visual culture. Doug George-Kanentiio affirms: "We recall Skywoman in our ceremonies when we put tobacco to fire, when we sing or dance. She is in our skydome beadwork, the direction in which we dance, the rituals we use at our birth and death...When one of us dies they are, as the funeral speaker says, returned to the embrace of Iethinistenha Ohontsia-the Mother and her creation the Earth."[79]

The Sky Woman Epoch and the traditions stemming from it have endured centuries of attempts to eradicate First Nations culture. Creation story motifs, including the Sky Dome, corn, and flowers, persist and flourish in the cultural productions of Kahnawà:ke, as seen in fashions by Tammy Beauvais and beadwork by Leith Mahkewa, standing as symbols of both endurance and revitalization. Grounded as it is in tradition, this is not a static culture, but one that adapts to different times and circumstances and allows for individual expression. Change is recognized as essential to maintaining a living culture. Tom Porter recalls being taught in childhood, "If tradition does not bend or change, it dies."[80] Anthropologist Audra Simpson views Haudenosaunee artists as vital contributors to a living culture. Tradition is important, she states, but, she also sees it as a means "to subvert and play with the present, to remind us of who we are, to suggest to us where we are going."[81]

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[79] George-Kanentiio, "Mohawk Numbers and Creation Story," https://indianz.com/News/2020/11/06/doug-george-kanentiio-mohawk-numbers-and-creation-story/

[80] Tom Porter (Sakokwenionkwas), *And Grandma Said…Iroquois Teachings as Passed Down Through the Oral Tradition* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation), 2008, 9.

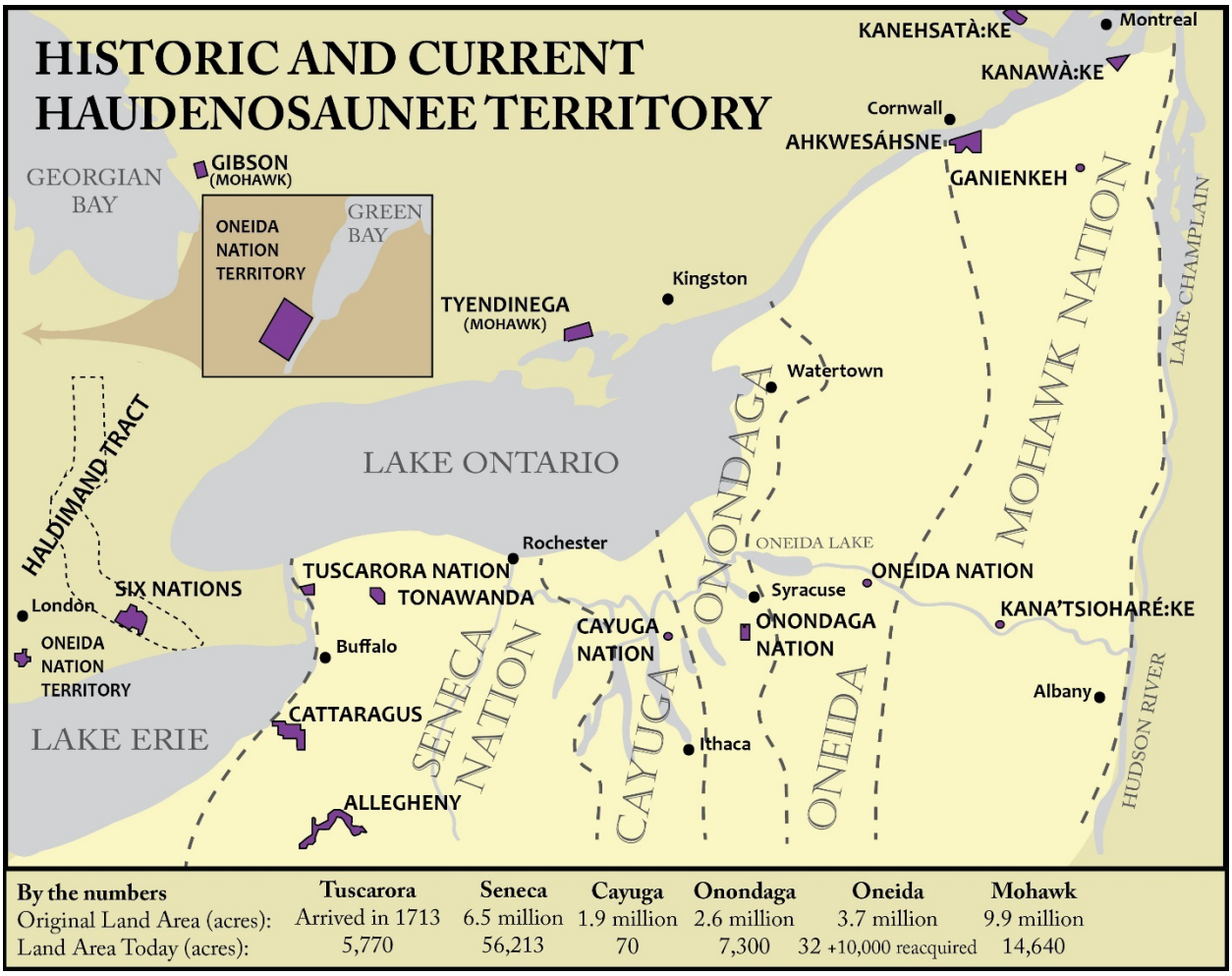
[81] Ryan Rice, "Iroquois Identities" in *Kwah I:ken Tsi Iroquois = Oh so Iroquois,* ed. Ryan Rice (Ottawa: The Ottawa Art Gallery, 2008). 24.

Jean Dominique Leccia, a hospital psychiatrist at Kahnawà:ke and a McGill University professor – making special note of the wide recognition of Tammy Beauvais for her fashions – sees the cultural revival at the reserve, including the creative output it inspires, as a positive influence on mental health.[82] Through all the changes this community has seen, the Sky Woman Epoch is an enduring element, a nurturing and stabilizing force to return to for connection and reinvigoration that both grounds the culture and propels it forward. Intergenerational trauma is very real and persistent, but cultural restoration offers hope for intergenerational healing.

The creation story and its symbols are a major part of the cultural survival and revitalization of this reserve. The traditional Haudenosaunee raised beadwork Kahnawà:ke was known for nearly died out towards the end of the 20th century. Today, Kahnawà:ke has a thriving beadwork community, with many members displaying their work in juried shows and markets, and motifs from traditional cosmology are widely referenced. Clothing based on and inspired by Haudenosaunee traditions and symbols have replaced the Plains-inspired regalia seen for much of the 20th century. Fashions and beadwork created at the reserve are displayed in museums and worn by high-profile figures. Visual representations of authentic Northeast Woodlands, Haudenosaunee, and Kanien'kehá꞉ka culture, including the creation symbols the Sky Dome, corn, and flowers, are reflected in various creative productions at Kahnawà:ke, as evidenced in the contemporary fashion designs of Tammy Beauvais and the beadwork of Leith Mahkewa.

[82] Jean Dominique Leccia,"Kahnawake, un autre regard…" *Journal Le Devoir* (Montreal), July 10, 2020., https://www.ledevoir.com/opinion/idees/582208/kahnawake-un-autre-regard.

Figures



By the numbers	Tuscarora	Seneca	Cayuga	Onondaga	Oneida	Mohawk
Original Land Area (acres):	Arrived in 1713	6.5 million	1.9 million	2.6 million	3.7 million	9.9 million
Land Area Today (acres):	5,770	56,213	70	7,300	32 +10,000 reacquired	14,640

Fig. 1 Historic and Current Haudenosaunee Territory.

Fig. 2 Tammy Beauvais, *Unity Sky Dome Drape Cardigan* (front view), polyester chiffon, circa 2021. Length approximately 39” at the longest points from the neck. Image courtesy of the designer.

Fig. 3 Tammy Beauvais, *Unity Sky Dome Chiffon Drape Cardigan* (back view), polyester chiffon, circa 2021. Length pproximately 23.5” from the neck. Image courtesy of the designer.

Fig. 4 Tammy Beauvais, *Blue Corn Skirt*, 2022, ribbonwork skirt, cotton, satin, silk. Length, approximately 34," width 12.5" at the waist, 33.5" at the hem. Image courtesy of the designer.

Fig. 5 Leith Mahkewa, *Supporting Each Other and Creation*, 2020, hand-constructed Haudenosaunee raised beadwork-style vase, black cotton velvet with cotton calico lining, glass seed beads, with some vintage, 24k gold and gemstone beads, 6.20” x 5.50” 5.50”. Image courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6 Leith Mahkewa, lower panel detail, *Supporting Each Other and Creation*, 2020, Haudenosaunee raised beadwork on black cotton velvet. Image courtesy of the artist.

Fig.7 Leith Mahkewa, *Holding Tradition,* circa 2015, hand-constructed Haudenosaunee raised beadwork-style vase, black cotton velvet with cotton calico lining, glass seed beads, approx. 6.20” x 5.50” 5.50.” Image courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 8 Leith Mahkewa, *Saucy* 2021, raised beadwork purse, velvet, silk bias, beads, hand-tanned hide. 7.25” x 7.5,” with 9” handle. Image courtesy of the artist.

Fig 9 Pere Joseph Lafitau, *Representations of traditional Iroquois dress and jewelry*, illustration, 1731. Library of Congress, Rare Book Identifier 1T04R06. https://jstor.org/stable/community.14673749.

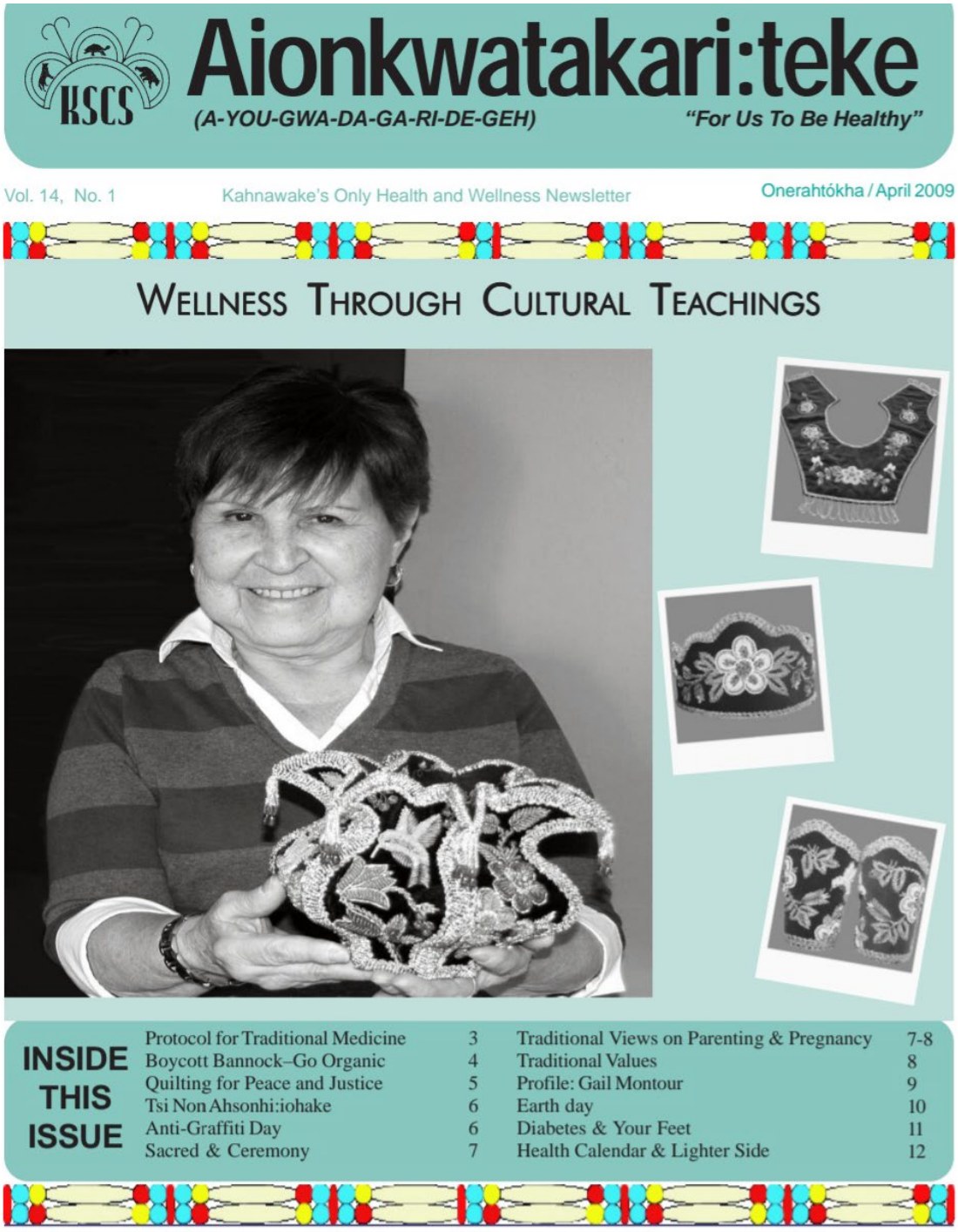


Fig.10 Photo of Gail Kanerahtenta Albany Montour with beaded urn (along with beaded collar, crown, and cuffs) on the cover of the April 2009 edition of the health and wellness newsletter *Aionkwatakari:teke/"For Us To Be Healthy."*

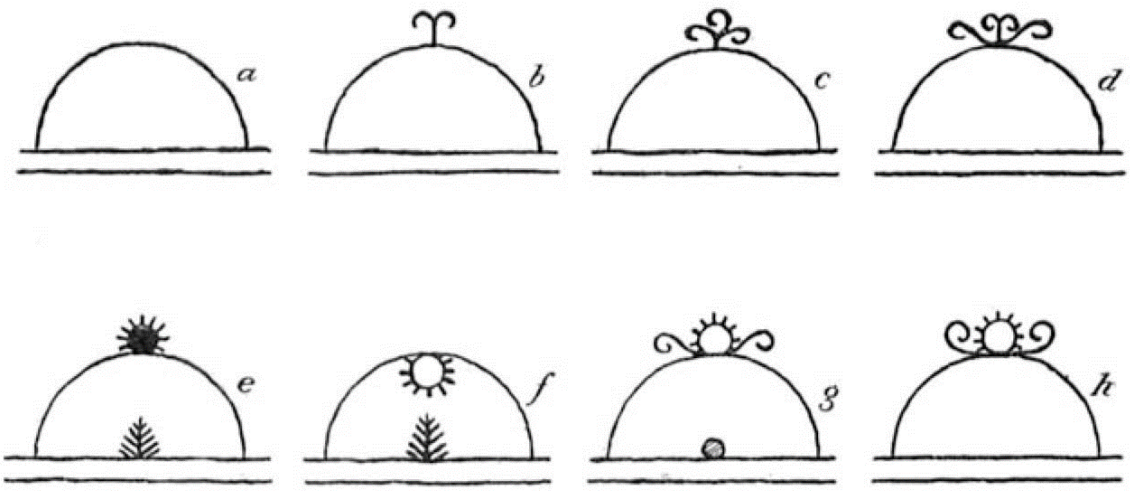


FIG. 62.—Various forms of the sky-dome symbol as employed in Iroquois moose-hair and quill embroidery.

Fig. 11 Sky Dome symbols from Arthur C. Parker's journal article,"Certain Iroquois Tree Myths and Symbols," published in *American Anthropologist* 14, no. 4, 1912.

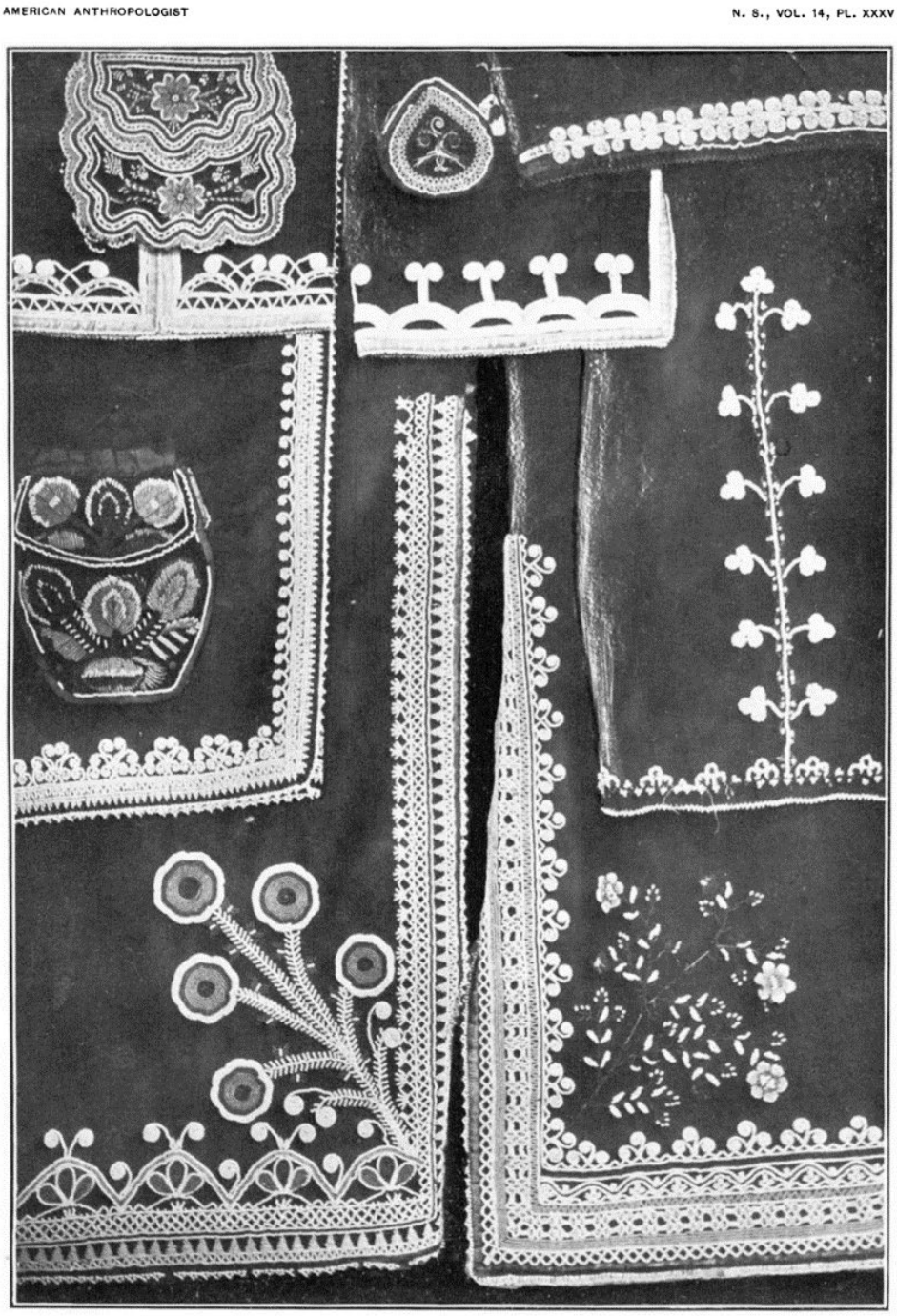


Fig. 12 Examples of 18th and 19th century Haudenosaunee clothing with beaded Sky Dome imagery, published by Arthur C. Parker in 1912.

Fig.13 Portrait of Caroline Parker, circa 1850, image from a glass plate negative of a tintype copy of an original daguerreotype taken for Lewis Henry Morgan.

Fig 14 *Two Dog Wampum Belt,* Haudenosaunee: Kanien'kehá:ka, 1775-1780. Shell: northern quahog (Mercenaria mercenaria), knobbed whelk (Busycon Carica), deer hide (Odocoileus virginianus), red ochre, 19 x 153.7 cm. Gift of Mr. David Ross McCord. M1904, McCord Museum (musee-mccord.qc.ca). From the McCord Museum's public database of images.

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