CLOSE ENCOUNTERS
THE NEXT 500 YEARS

Teacher’s Resource Guide
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INTRODUCTION

About this guide

This guide provides general information, artist biographies, key terms and discussion points for selected works in the show. Each tour will focus on the works described in this package, but will also include information about other Close Encounters artworks, depending on the type of tour chosen. We recommend that teachers use this package to encourage discussion with their students on the themes addressed in Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years, making reference to the key terms and discussion points found at the end of this guide.

The information in this guide is a compilation of texts from artist and curators, text taken from other sources (noted on the last page) and original material. If you wish to find out more, please contact jaya@plugin.org.

Relevant Terminology

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

In the United States, Native American is more common.

Indian is antiquated but is still used by the Canadian Government.

The term Indigenous is used to reference any ethnic group who inhabits the geographic region with which they have the earliest historical connection – the term has a global scope, linking North American Indigenous groups with peoples from all over the world with similar post-colonial struggles, such as the Maori of New Zealand.
About this exhibition

**Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years** is an international exhibition of contemporary Indigenous art, being presented as a part of the Winnipeg Cultural Capital of Canada ARTS FOR ALL program. It is organized by Plug In ICA and other partnering organizations.

**Curators:** Lee-Ann Martin, Steve Loft, Candice Hopkins, Jenny Western

**Featuring work by:**
KC Adams, Maria Thereza Alves, Shuvini Ashoona, Mary Anne Barkhouse, Michael Belmore, Rebecca Belmore, Postcommodity, Colleen Cutschall, Wally Dion, Jimmie Durham, Rosalie Favell, Jeffrey Gibson, Brett Graham, Faye HeavyShield, Marja Helander, Jonathan Jones, Brian Jungen, James Luna, Kavawaow Mannomee, Tracey Moffatt, Kent Monkman, Reuben Paterson, Archer Pechawis, Edward Poitras, Pudlo Pudlat, Lisa Reihana, Paul Anders Simma, Doug Smarch Jr., Skawennati, Christian Thompson, Marie Watt, Linus Woods and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

Now is the moment to reconfigure our notions of time to reveal alternative ways of thinking and being for the future. In *Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years*, Indigenous artists imagine the future within the context of present experiences and past histories. By radically reconsidering encounter narratives between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, Indigenous prophecies, possible utopias and apocalypses, this exhibition proposes intriguing possibilities for the next 500 years.

“We all in different measure have carved out the future,” observes Hopi photographer and filmmaker Victor Masayesva in his book *Husk of Time*. "We are all clairvoyants, soothsayers, prophets, knowingly assuming our predictions."

*Close Encounters* brings together over 30 Indigenous artists from across Canada, the United States, South America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, including new work by Rebecca Belmore, Michael Belmore, Faye HeavyShield, Kent Monkman, Jeffrey Gibson, Jonathan Jones, Skawennati, Postcommodity, Linus Woods and Edward Poitras. Jimmie Durham’s long-term sculptural work *A Pole to Mark the Centre of the World (at Winnipeg)* will be an ongoing critique of widely held ideas surrounding space and location, while James Luna’s poignant installation *The Spirits of Virtue and Evil Await my Ascension* addresses issues of ritual and the passing of time. *Close Encounters* showcases artists and artworks that collectively invent provocative futures from a diversity of perspectives and practices.

Encounters today are less a “shock of the new” that defined first encounters in the early modern era; rather they are about possibilities of positive outcomes for the future. Lisa Reihana interweaves Maori prophecies and mythologies with personal history and people into a Digital Marae where she connects her past with an imagined future. Choices and possibilities—and ambiguities—for the future are contained in Michael Belmore’s *Smoulder*—a hearth of carved stones and copper inlay. The work alludes both to an extinguished flame and the hope of regeneration through fire, the site of beginnings and ends.
Other works take on current colonial conditions. In a slightly tongue-in-cheek gesture, Postcommodity’s Repellent Eye (Winnipeg) 2011 consists of a custom-made ten-foot-diameter “scare-eye balloon.” It replicates balloons popular with environmentally-conscious gardeners who want to keep away annoying birds. The artists speculate that if a 16 inch diameter scare-eye balloon is effective in repelling pesky birds then perhaps something on a much larger scale might be effective in repelling Western civilization.

In another mediation on end-times, Mary Anne Barkhouse’s installation The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation brings new perspective to the riders of pending doom. Here the nightmarish myth of the Book of Revelation is represented by four immaculately restored coin-operated toy horses - the kind of 60s era kiddie rides—outfitted in custom-made regalia. Each horse bears a different animal crest: bats and vultures; pelicans, a walrus, and an oil drum; a wolf-creature carrying a chainsaw and a fish and a mer-lion. Clearly it is the animals who have come back to wage war. In a much darker mediation on the psychological hell brought about by assimilation policies and other symptoms of colonial encounters, Tracey Moffatt’s experimental film Night Cries presents an Australian Aboriginal woman trapped in the daily cycle of caring for her ailing adoptive mother. The final scene sees her overcome with grief, curled up beside her dead mother in a barren landscape where the only sound is of a baby’s cry. Other works go back in time to re-write history. Archer Pechawis’s performance Horse begins with one of the most devastating moments in North American history—the Sand Creek Massacre—only to turn it on its head. Horse attempts to conjure a reversal of hierarchies and power relationships and revels in the potential of one small action to change the course of the world.

With its myriad histories, trajectories, tensions, collisions and self-image(s), the city of Winnipeg offers an intriguing juxtaposition for these artistic mediations. Close Encounters: The Next 500 Years presents international Indigenous perspectives in a city that in many ways also epitomizes the future of Aboriginal people in Canada. Works in multiple venues throughout the city will serve as catalysts to invent different ways of thinking, acting and being in the world of our shared future. At this pivotal moment in time, Close Encounters invites engagement with the speculative, the prophetic and the unknown.

Close Encounters curators
Lee-Ann Martin, Steve Loft, Candice Hopkins and Jenny Western

**ARTS FOR ALL**

The mission of Winnipeg Cultural Capital of Canada 2010 (WCCC 2010) is to ensure that all people have access to the arts, are able to participate in the arts, and value and are enriched by the arts. In other words: ARTS FOR ALL. Close Encounters is a materialization of that vision, by providing a massive multi-site exhibition of groundbreaking work free of charge to the public, and by providing a platform to present work by leading Indigenous artists.
SELECTED ARTWORKS
Mary Anne Barkhouse
*The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation, 2008*

Main Exhibition Site, 109 Pacific Avenue
Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

**ARTIST BIO**
Mary Anne Barkhouse was born in Vancouver, BC, and belongs to the Nimpkish band, Kwakiutl First Nation. She is a descendant of a long line of internationally recognized artists that includes Ellen Neel, Mungo Martin and Charlie James. She graduated with honours from the Ontario College of Art and Design and has exhibited widely across Canada. Working with a variety of materials and processes, Barkhouse examines environmental concerns and Indigenous culture through the use of animal imagery. A member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art, Barkhouse’s work can be found in the collections of the Art Bank of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, The Banff Centre and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. In addition she has public art installations at Thunder Bay Art Gallery, University of Western Ontario in London, McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre in Guelph and the Millennium Walkway in Peterborough.

Website:

**ABOUT THE WORK**
Partly inspired by the Book of Revelations, this work is a cheeky exploration of apocalyptic metaphors within the grand narrative of Canadian colonialist history – it presents the story of the four horses of the apocalypse, which the artist names Conquest, War, Pestilence and Death. The luxurious silken banners behind the horses have been perversely ornamented with intentionally rough, hand-drawn heraldic crests, each personifying a different stakeholder in the colonization of Canada.

With her usual wit, however, Barkhouse has turned the horses into children's toys, coin-operated kiddie rides from the '50s and '60s, which have been beautifully restored. In a potentially hilarious twist, viewers may actually ride the horses, taking an adventure in carnival-grotesque humiliation. Barkhouse is being a bit sneaky here – she must know that the majority of visitors will simply play with the horse rides and not look too closely at the banners and the signs found in each crest. And isn't that exactly how disasters start, when people overlook the details?

Across from the horses, a donkey observes the scene. From the "low" perspective of an ass, the arrogance of human idealism is easily apparent, as well as its ability to inspire mass destruction. Salvation is a donkey, not a war machine. Brought down to a more manageable heft and scale, the story brings the audience's attention down to the obvious fact that ecologically and socially, the planet is well past its due date.
ARTIST BIO
Michael Belmore is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and graduated with an A.O.C.A. in sculpture/installation from the Ontario College of Art & Design in 1994. Belmore works in a variety of media including plastic, metal and wood. He also works with graphite on matte film, which he incorporates into large-format light boxes. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is represented in the permanent collections at the Indian Art Centre in Gatineau, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, Agnes Etherington Art Gallery in Kingston and in numerous private collections. He has also shown at several artist-run centres and collectives across Canada and has created site-specific installations for Thunder Bay Art Gallery and the City of Peterborough.

Website:
74.205.99.190/cms/content/9TB-6HW/binary/article/attachment/ARQ-61/normal
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/michael_belmore

ABOUT THE WORK
“At its essence, my work is about capturing warmth...or solace.” The circular stone hearth is fairly inconspicuous until you get close and notice that the rocks have a copper inlay which seems to glow like dying embers. “It suggests a certain ambiguity,” says curator Lee Ann Martin. “What will the future hold? Will the fire die, or will it rise again?”. The work alludes both to an extinguished flame and the hope of regeneration through fire, the site of beginnings and endings.
Colleen Cutschall
2012 Synchronization with the Beyond, 1996
Milky Way Spirit Trail, 1996
The Androgynous Landscape, 1996
Sighting Cyrius and the Ammunaki Through Smoke Flags, 1996
www@blackhills.sd, 1996
Sons of the Wind, 1996
Main Exhibition Site, 109 Pacific Avenue
Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

ARTIST BIO
Colleen Cutschall’s tribal
affiliation is Oglala-Sicango
Lakota, Pine Ridge, SD. She
received her BFA from Barat
College, Lake Forest, IL in 1973
and a MS Ed, from Black Hills
University, Spearfish, SD. She
currently teaches at Brandon
University in the Visual Arts
Department on Native Issues.
Her solo exhibitions include
Voice in the Blood, organized by
the Art Gallery of Southwestern
Manitoba in Brandon, which toured to Oscar Howe Art Centre in Mitchell, SD; Dakota
Gallery in Sioux Falls, SD; Minnesota State University in Moorhead; Thunder Bay Art
Gallery; MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina; North Dakota Heritage Centre in Bismarck, ND;
Art Gallery of Mississauga, and Wauskewen Heritage Centre Art Gallery in Saskatoon. Her
work is represented in the collections of the Manitoba Arts Council Art Bank, The Canada
Council Visual Art Bank, the Government of Manitoba, the MacKenzie Art Gallery, Indian and
Northern Affairs, the Oscar Howe Art Centre, the Sioux Indian Museum and the Winnipeg Art
Gallery.

Website:
www.sisterwolf.com
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/colleen_cutschall

ABOUT THE WORK
Cutschall’s work has investigated the cosmologies of her Oglala Lakota ancestors for
several years. The work in this exhibition is from a series under the title House Made
Of Stars, exhibited first at the Winnipeg Art Gallery in 1996.

Colleen Cutschall’s portals serve as an entry into the future through prophecy. 2012
Synchronization with the Beyond refers to the winter solstice end date of the Mayan
calendar that has kept near perfect time for 5000 years. For the Mayan this corresponds to
an astronomical event that occurs as the ellipses of the planets cross over the galactic
centre in the Milky Way. A relatively recent discovery that there is a black hole in the
Milky Way serves in this painting as the galactic centre where ignorant star-soul-skull
images are sucked in and thrown out as transformed and enlightened beings.
Milky Way-Spirit Trail is a literal translation of the broadly held Plains belief that the Milky Way is the trail that the soul takes on its journey into the spirit realm. It is the way of all our ancestors, both the remembered dead and those whose names we no longer remember. The artist has included the actual images of the recently deceased and the remembered dead along with a multitude of other relatives as star/skull/soul images.

The Androgynous Landscape is a profile view of a sacred mountain in the northern Black Hills that is known as Devil's Tower, Wyoming. It is one of several mountains in the Black Hills that are correlated to star constellations by the Lakota who made spring pilgrimages to these sites before losing the Black Hills in the 19th century. This particular site is at the centre of political issues about religious freedom and the right to practice Aboriginal traditions with some degree of privacy. The Lakota saw the stars as giving specific instructions to them about where they should be and what they should be doing at a specific time. The painting depicts the Sundance that would be held there at the time that the constellation known as the Bear’s Lodge (Den) appeared over the mountain.

www@blackhills.sd is a star map with an aerial view of sacred land, the earth below as seen through the cosmic web and the Lakota ethical structure of the universe. More specifically it illustrates named constellations of the Lakota including Thunderbird, Elk, a sweatlodge fork, a hearth, a turtle and a salamander, a serpent, a dipper, the pole star and the Bears Lodge. The Lakota people have an elaborate geometric order to explain how Wakan Tanka, the Great Mystery, reveals itself. The sky world is viewed as intrinsically male and the earth as female. The two worlds are interdependent—while they are separate they are also one. The separateness begins and ends at the centre which is the star shape created by the web at the centre. The Lakota trickster, the shape-shifting spider, is at work here, creating a cosmic joke by gendering both human life and nature in general.

Sons of the Wind represents the central points of the Plains world-view anchored in the cardinal directions of the cosmos. They hold up the earth in the underworld and hold up the sky from the earth. They are also the central pillars in earthlodge dwellings and also in tipis that form the basic structure of homes. They represent balancing forces in the universe. In Lakota cosmology, when the sons of the wind finish establishing the order of the universe, the deities cease to communicate directly with the human world except for shaman. They communicate primarily through dreams, visions and animal messengers, particularly the birds.
Doug Smarch
Lucinations, 2004
Main Exhibition Site, 109 Pacific Avenue
Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

ARTIST BIO
Doug Smarch is from the Tlingit nation and grew up in Teslin, a small Yukon community. He attended San Francisco Arts Institute and earned a BFA. He then went on to earn a Graduate Degree in Design Media Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles. Smarch is an emerging artist and has had his work shown in several significant national and international exhibitions including Traditions of Change in the Nordamerika Native Museum in Zurich and The Road: Constructing the Alaska Highway, which has been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Yukon Arts Centre Public Art Gallery. His work is in several collections including the North West Territories Arts Centre in Iqaluit, NWT and the Museum of Civilization.

Website:
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/doug_smarch_jr

ABOUT THE WORK
Lucinations is based on a legend from Doug Smarch’s community that comes from a time before the arrival of the Alaska Highway. According to this legend, a man was looking for a lost relation and went to ask the help of a medicine man. The medicine man put his spirit into a fox, which allowed him to travel more easily to look for the lost man. He found the man in the next community, but on his way home he came down into Teslin from the top of a hill and saw a cloud hanging over the community. When he came back into his body he told everyone that life was going to change for the Teslin people forever – a change that came with the Highway.

As the creator of this work, Doug Smarch considers himself a catalyst for re-telling this story. Using a magical, modern computer program called Maya, he has tried to remake the scene of what that vision might have been and what the medicine man might have dreamed while he slept. The feather screen was made to represent the cloud in this story. The piece is like nature, playing charades with the medicine man, showing him the drastic changes to come, but using local imagery from the era of when the vision was to have occurred. It is a beautiful dream but it is equally puzzling and disturbing.
Wally Dion
Thunderbird, 2008
Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art, 460 Portage Avenue
Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

ARTIST BIO
Wally Dion lives and works as an artist in Saskatoon, SK. Dion is a member of Yellow Quill First Nation (Salteaux). In 2004, he graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a BFA. His work has typically consisted of large-scale painted portraiture sometimes working with themes including social-realism and First Nations class struggles in modern Canadian life, specifically in Saskatchewan. More recent work has involved the use of recycled computer circuit boards for large sculptural pieces. As an active artist, Wally Dion has been met with positive support from both the local and national art communities. He is the recipient of numerous grants from agencies including the Canada Council for the Arts and the Saskatchewan Arts Board. In the summer of 2008, Dion held his first major solo exhibition: Wally Dion at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina. His work has been included in several group shows: Flatlanders (2008), Honouring Tradition (2008) and No Word for Good Bye (2006). His work can be found in several prominent public collections including the Saskatchewan Arts Board, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Canada Council Art Bank and the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina.

Website:
www.epicindian.com
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/wally_dion

ABOUT THE WORK
For First Nations People, the Thunderbird is a powerful creature with supernatural abilities. Wally Dion’s interest in the image of the Thunderbird was first informed by the consistencies of its description across geographic regions and over time. Assembled from recycled computer circuit boards and resembling fossilized creatures or urban landscapes, Dion's work in the Thunderbird series evokes an exploration of contemporary society’s attitude towards consumption. In an era when we are capable of moving entire mountains and gouging deep into the Earth for resources to provide us with modern technologies, Dion questions whether the archeological discovery of the Thunderbird would be interpreted as sacred revelation or wasteful profit.
ARTIST BIO
Brett Graham is one of New Zealand’s most exciting and accomplished sculptors, highly regarded for his ability to abstract complex historical and cultural ideas into formally strong and beautiful sculptural forms. Graham places strong emphasis on materiality and surface with the formal simplicity of his sculptural pieces and predominant use of wood and stone. Graham’s work engages in a dual dialogue of Maori and European histories whilst adhering to the modernist emphasis on form and material quality. Although his works may not directly invoke Maori sculptural tradition, they nonetheless speak of that tradition in their titles and concept. His work is accessible on an aesthetic, personal and historical level, enabling both the object and viewer to occupy a common ground. In the last decade Graham has exhibited extensively, locally and internationally, and is regarded as a leading authority on contemporary Maori sculpture.

Website:
www.brettgraham.co.nz
http://two rooms.co.nz
http://www.bartleyandcompanyart.co.nz
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/brett_graham

ABOUT THE WORK
Te hokioi is from a series of works that were part of the 17th Biennale of Sydney. They are versions of Western “weapons of mass destruction”—sculptures which are mainly made from MDF, steel and rubber tires. Te hokioi (2008) is a stealth bomber with its identity reformed by carved maori symbols. The carving into MDF on te hokioi took Brett Graham three months, a process which he describes as meditative.

Graham skillfully juxtaposes the likes of a mythical man-eating bird, Te Hokioi, with the stealth bomber that reigns terror upon various lands in the name of abstract ideas of right and wrong. In particular, the work alludes to a 2007 incident in which terror raids in Ruatoki caused much pain and anguish, leading Graham to take a political, historical and cultural stance by creating sculptures of statement.
ARTIST BIO
Whether in discrete sculptural forms or large-scale installation works, Jonathan Jones activates spaces between light and its absence, between the material and ephemeral – spaces that are also distances to be traversed between cultures, between history and memory and between past, present and future.

Jonathan Jones is a Sydney-based artist of Kamilaroi/Wiradjuri heritage. His major solo exhibitions include Jonathan Jones: untitled [the tyranny of distance] at Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation in Sydney (2008) and Jonathan Jones at Newcastle Region Art Gallery (2007). His work has been included in a range of group exhibitions both around Australia and internationally, including NEW08 at Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in Melbourne (2008), Adventures with form in space at Art Gallery of NSW (2006), Primavera at Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney (2003) and the 2002 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art. Jones was the recipient of the Xstrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Art Award from the Queensland Art Gallery in 2006.

Website:
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/jonathan_jones

ABOUT THE WORK
Jonathan Jones claims his interest in the power of light stems from his reading of Australian colonial history. He cites passages from the work of Watkin Tench, a British marine officer, about the Cadigal people, who lit fires on mud bases within their canoes while fishing and cooking the evening’s catch. “Wherever you are, light follows you and travels across the harbour,” Jones says, recalling the passages. “Light connects things, connects people—in this case, people who are quite different.”

Jonathan Jones consulted with the Métis community in Winnipeg and took the Métis flag as inspiration for untitled (infinity). The Métis flag is the oldest Canadian patriotic flag indigenous to Canada. As a symbol of nationhood, the Métis flag predates Canada’s Maple Leaf flag by about 150 years! The flag bears a horizontal figure eight, otherwise known as the infinity symbol. The infinity symbol represents the coming together of two distinct and vibrant cultures, those of Europe and Indigenous North America, to produce a distinctly new culture, the Métis. The flag symbolizes the creation of a new society with roots in both Aboriginal and European cultures and traditions.

Jonathan Jones thus links this symbol of unity with his preferred medium of light—unifying distinct light sources into a stronger, more vibrant whole in the same way as individuals can be brought together to form a community.
Lisa Reihana

Mahuika, 2001
Ranginui, 2001
Marakihau, 2001
Hinepukohurangi, 2001

Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art, 460 Portage Avenue

Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

ARTIST BIO
Lisa Reihana is a Maori artist who has played a leading role in the development of film and multimedia art in Aotearoa, (New Zealand). Her work demonstrates a keen interest to communicate complex ideas about Indigenous identity and bi-cultural living. Reihana’s desire to address and engage with contemporary experience through diverse media is expressed in installations that are collages drawn from eclectic sources. Her examination of cultural histories utilizes photography, sculpture and time-based arts. She represented New Zealand in Paradise Now? at the Asia Society Museum in New York, the 2000 Sydney Biennale, the Noumea Biennale (2002) and the Asia Pacific Triennial (1996 and 2003). The significant work Native Portraits was commissioned for the opening of Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington, NZ, and has received much critical acclaim. Reihana has undertaken residencies at the Institute for Modern Art in Brisbane and at the Banff Centre. She was the Digital Artist-in-Residence at Waikato University in New Zealand (2006).

Website:
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/lisa_reihana

ABOUT THE WORK
These four photographs come from a series entitled the Digital Marae. In Maori culture, the marae is a place where people come together, and is traditionally bound by complex protocols. Architectural components of the marae serve to pass on family knowledge and to create a sense of belonging. The wharenui (physical structure of the meeting house) represents the body of the ancestor, while the poupou (carved figures) that line its sides represent individual ancestors. With this work, Reihana has created her own virtual marae. In Digital Marae 2001, Reihana presents powerful female mythological figures as life-size photographs, rather than the traditional poupou. The figures encapsulate Maori tribal stories — of gods and demons, pain and revenge, and greed and lust. Reihana’s highly theatrical images are also influenced by figures in computer games, advertising, childhood stories and fantasy films.
Faye HeavyShield
slivers, 2011
Winnipeg Art Gallery, 300 Memorial Boulevard
Photo by Scott Benesiinaabandan

ARTIST BIO
Faye HeavyShield was born and raised on the Blood Reserve in the southern Alberta foothills. She has studied at the Alberta College of Art and Design and the University of Calgary. Since the early 1990s her work has been exhibited throughout Canada in numerous important solo and group exhibitions including: Land, Spirit, Power at the National Gallery of Canada; Heart, Hoof, Horn at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary; She: A Roomful of Women at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery; Nations in Urban Landscapes at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver; Spiral and Other Parts of the Body at La Centrale/Powerhouse in Montreal; In My Lifetime at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau; and Blood at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery in Lethbridge. HeavyShield’s work is held in public and private collections throughout North America, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Kelowna Art Gallery and the Heard Museum in Phoenix, AZ.

Website:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faye_HeavyShield
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/faye_heavyshield

ABOUT THE WORK
Because of where she grew up, river imagery composed a significant aspect of Faye HeavyShield’s early surroundings. The thematic of this environment has informed her artistic practice since 2003, finding its way into previous projects such as Camouflage, Rock Paper River, and This Is Not A River. With an ongoing interest in site-specificity and the use of the multiple, slivers is an installation made from carefully folded photographs of the Assiniboine and the Red rivers. Operating like a small window within the largeness of the Winnipeg Art Gallery’s Eckhart hall, the subtle movement of slivers asks viewers to pay attention to the quietly shifting ecology of our rivers.
ARTIST BIO
Postcommodity is a contemporary American Indian artist collective comprised of Raven Chacon (Navajo), Kade L. Twist (Cherokee), Nathan Young (Delaware/Kiowa/Pawnee) and Steven Yazzie (Laguna/Navajo) that was founded in 2007. Postcommodity combines their intertribal Indigenous worldview with interdisciplinary actions and conceptual art practices as a means to engage in Indigenous human rights advocacy and decolonize the geographies and discourse of the Western Hemisphere. Postcommodity is a proud descendent of the American Indian self-determination movement that seeks to contribute to the larger postcolonial Indigenous narrative of social, cultural, political and economic perseverance.

Website:
www.postcommodity.com
www.artsforall.ca/index.php/AFA/article/postcommodity

ABOUT THE WORK
Repellent Eye (Winnipeg) 2011 currently keeps watch from a perch inside the new Manitoba Hydro Place. "It's an attempt to ward off the effects of Western Civilization," says Postcommodity member Raven Chacon. "It's a reminder of how we manage our natural resources and that carries on into the future. So instead of it scaring away anything, it can also be more of a watchful eye over how we manage these resources on the land."

One of the defining challenges of the past 500 years in Canada and the rest of the Western Hemisphere has been the balance of competing public interests (colonizers versus Indigneous) regarding the perception of land and the management of its resources. Repellent Eye (Winnipeg) 2011 memorializes this history, while at the same time holding the present accountable and it provides a vision for repelling future devastating expressions of this logical framework as a means of achieving a more respectful and sustainable balance of land, culture and community.
KEY TERMS AND DISCUSSION POINTS
2012 MAYAN PROPHECY
Related Artist(s): Colleen Cutschall
The 2012 Mayan Prophecy is a range of eschatological beliefs that cataclysmic or transformative events will occur on December 21, 2012 – the end of a 5,125-year-long cycle in the Mayan Long Count calendar. It is believed that the Earth and its inhabitants may undergo a positive physical or spiritual transformation and 2012 may mark the beginning of a new era. Others suggest that it will mark the end of the world or that an apocalypse will occur.

ANCESTOR
Related Artist(s): Lisa Reihana, Brett Graham, Colleen Cutschall, Doug Smarch
Many cultures believe that the deceased have a continued existence in the present and in the future. Ancestors are honoured and respected to ensure the ancestors’ continued well-being and positive disposition towards the living and sometimes to ask for special favours or assistance. The social or non-religious benefit of ancestor veneration is to cultivate kinship values, such as filial piety, family loyalty and continuity of the family lineage.

APOCALYPSE
Related Artist(s): Mary Anne Barkhouse
The term “apocalypse” is often referred to as a complete devastation of the world, or Armageddon, through, for example, environmental disaster or global pandemic. It is noted in many cultures including Jewish and Christian texts from the second century BC, such as The Book of Revelations, in which the wicked are judged and the righteous are saved from eternal damnation. In religious texts, visions of an apocalypse are often revealed through a prophetic apparition or a symbolic dream. Alternatively, the term “apocalypse” can also refer to a revelation or “lifting of the veil” – a disclosure of something hidden from the majority of mankind in an era dominated by misconception.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Close Encounters addresses future potentialities good and bad. Is it coincidental that the show takes place a year before this significant prophecy? Consider how Colleen Cutschall’s work alludes to this prophecy even though the work was completed decades earlier.

Many of the artists in Close Encounters are paying respect to the culture of their ancestors. Is this something that is unique in aboriginal art?

Mary Anne Barkhouse’s work explores apocalyptic metaphors within the grand narrative of Canadian colonialist history by juxtaposing the devastating stories of an ecological and social apocalypse (pestilence, war, famine, death) with children’s playthings. Talk about apocalyptic prophecies and the four horses as Mary Anne reconfigures them for this installation.
KEY TERMS

CARDINAL DIRECTIONS
Related Artist(s): Colleen Cutschall, Mary Anne Barkhouse
There are four principal or main directions on the points of a compass: north (N), south (S), east (E), west (W). In Mesoamerica and North America, many traditional Indigenous beliefs include four cardinal directions and one centre. Each direction was associated with a colour, which varied between groups. Within the Medicine Wheel are the Four Cardinal Directions and the Four Sacred Colours. The Circle represents the Circle of Life and the Centre of the Circle, the Eternal Fire. In Lakota cosmology, there were quadripartite divisions of everything: four colours (red, green, blue, yellow), four superior mysteries (sun, sky, earth, rock), four classes of gods (superior, associate, subordinate, spirits), four elements in the sky (sun, moon, sky, stars), four parts of time (day, night, month, year), and four winds corresponding to the four cardinal directions. All of these are symbolized by the Lakota cross-within-a-circle, a symbol which appears throughout the Americas. For the Lakota, it is the “sacred hoop” and represents the totality of their people.

CINEMATOGRAPHY
Related Artist(s): Lisa Reihana
When used to refer to still photography, cinematography denotes a staged drama and high level of production that is more common in cinema than in still photography, which may include elaborate casting, costuming or a great deal of digital editing.

COLLABORATION
Related Artist(s): Postcommodity
Collaboration is a recursive process where two or more people or organizations work together to realize shared goals. It is a deep, collective determination to reach an identical objective by sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Find all of the “fours” that Colleen Cutschall uses in her work.
Do any other Close Encounters artists make use of this colour system?

Talk about Lisa Reihana's artistic process and the works' cinematic and theatrical qualities.

Postcommodity is a collective of four artists who each bring a different history and skill set to their collaborative work. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of artists working as a collective.
KEY TERMS

COLONIZATION
Related Artist(s): Postcommodity
Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. The term colony comes from the Latin word colonus, meaning farmer. This root reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the new arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin.

The legitimacy of colonialism has been a longstanding concern for political and moral philosophers in the Western tradition. At least since the Crusades and the conquest of the Americas, political theorists have struggled with the difficulty of reconciling ideas about justice and natural law with the practice of European sovereignty over non-Western peoples. In the nineteenth century, the tension between liberal thought and colonial practice became particularly acute, as the domination of Europe over the rest of the world reached its zenith. Ironically, in the same period when most political philosophers began to defend the principles of universalism and equality, the same individuals still defended the legitimacy of colonialism and imperialism.

One way of reconciling those apparently opposed principles was the argument known as the “civilizing mission,” which suggested that a temporary period of political dependence or tutelage was necessary in order for “uncivilized” societies to advance to the point where they were capable of sustaining liberal institutions and self-government.

FOUND OBJECTS
Related Artist(s): Mary Anne Barkhouse
The term "found object" can be used to describe an item discovered by an artist and displayed with little to no alteration as (or as an element in) a work of art. It may be a natural or a man-made object; the finder-artist recognizes this chance find as an aesthetic object and displays it for appreciation by others as she would a work of art.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Discuss the way in which many of the Close Encounters artists address this issue.
Why would Postcommodity choose to confront the idea of Western Civilization?

Why do you think artists choose to utilize found objects?
How can displacing a found object from one environment to another shift its meaning?
KEY TERMS

HEARTH
Related Artist(s): Michael Belmore
A hearth is a brick or stone-lined fireplace or oven used for cooking and/or heating, creating a place of warmth, heat and fire. Alternatively, it can be used to describe the home, where family life resides. Lastly, the term “hearth” has been used to describe a vital or creative centre.

LIGHT
Related Artist(s): Jonathan Jones
In art, light has the possibility to represent many different things such as enlightenment, truth, spirituality, inner light, opinions, revelations, openness, transference, a beacon, knowledge, radiance or illumination.

Jonathan Jones’s work often deals with light. The accumulation of light is, in Jones’ idiom, an attempt to map the network of relations between communities and individuals. Independent light sources come together to create a larger body of illumination, whose interlocking nature—we cannot tell where light begins or where it ends—signals the artist's interest in areas of commonality and connection, in overlap and symbiotic flow. Jonathan Jones’s lines of light signify not the linearity of Western historicism but illuminate instead spaces of exchange, symbiosis and optimism.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Describe how Michael Belmore’s Smoulder relates to a hearth as a place of warmth, a representation of home or a site of creativity.

Discuss Jonathan Jones' interest in the relationship of light and darkness and how it relates to Close Encounters.
MAORI
Related Artist(s): Lisa Reihana, Brett Graham
Maori are the Indigenous people of Aotearoa (New Zealand). On the basis of oral records, archaeological finds and genetic analyses, historical treatises place the arrival of Maori in New Zealand in the thirteenth century AD. Art has always been an integral component of Maori culture. Traditional Maori art was created using the materials available at the time, such as wood, bone, pounamu (jade or greenstone), paua (abalone) shell, flax and feathers. Today, a greater variety of materials are used, although many artists continue to use these traditional materials. A marae is a communal or sacred place which serves religious and social purposes in Polynesian (Maori) societies. In Maori society, the marae is a place where the culture can be celebrated, where the Maori language can be spoken, where intertribal obligations can be met, where customs can be explored and debated, where family occasions such as birthdays can be held and where important ceremonies, such as welcoming visitors or farewelling the dead, can be performed.

NATURAL RESOURCES
Related Artist(s): Faye HeavyShield, Michael Belmore, Wally Dion
Natural resources are material source of wealth, such as timber, fresh water or a mineral deposit, which occur in a natural state and have economic value. Technically speaking, a property only becomes a resource when it is exploited by humans.

PHOTOGRAPHY
Related Artist(s): Lisa Reihana, Faye HeavyShield
Photography is the method of recording an image through the action of light or related radiation on a light-sensitive material. The word, derived from the Greek photos (“light”) and graphein (“to draw”), was first used in the 1830s. In the early part of its history, photography was sometimes belittled as a mechanical art because of its dependence on technology. Although the camera usually limits the photographer to depicting existing objects rather than imaginary or interpretive views, the skilled photographer can introduce creativity into the mechanical reproduction process.

DISCUSSION POINTS
Talk about concepts of time from the Maori perspective—i.e. “go forward toward the past”.
Discuss the similar stylistic and cultural references used in te hokioi and the Digital Marae.

How are Close Encounters artists using their practice to address issues around the exploitation of non-renewable resources?

With the rapid advancement of technology in the 21st century, can photographs still be regarded as “authentic” representations of the visible world?
What is the role of the photographer as artist?
**KEY TERMS**

**PORTRAITURE**

Related Artist(s): Lisa Reihana

Portraiture is defined as the art of producing a portrait, either as a painting, photograph, sculpture, or other artistic representation. It is an artistic representation of a person, in which the face and its expression is predominant. The intent is to display the likeness, personality and/or mood of the person. It often shows a person looking directly at the artist, in order to engage the subject with the viewer. Portraiture dates back to ancient civilizations.

**SCULPTURE**

Related Artist(s): Brett Graham, Michael Belmore, Faye HeavyShield, Doug Smarch

Sculpture is a three-dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining hard materials, often stone, marble, metal, glass or wood. Softer materials can also be used, such as clay, textiles, plastics, polymers and softer metals. The term also extends to works including sound, text, light, water or land. For example, environmental art employs expansive site-specific areas to create and feature work. Installation art, as well as pieces assembled from found objects, are also regarded as sculpture. Materials may be worked by removal (carving), or they may be assembled (welding), hardened (firing), molded or cast.

**SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATION**

Related Artist(s): Faye HeavyShield, Postcommodity, Doug Smarch

The term installation can be applied very generally to the disposition of objects in an exhibition (the hanging of paintings or the arrangement of sculptures), but can also have the more specific meaning of a one-off work (often a large-scale assemblage) conceived for and usually more or less filling a specific interior (generally that of a gallery). The term came into common use in the 1970s; the work was often impermanent and could be seen as part of the movement against the collectable art object. By the 1980s, visual artists started to specialize in this kind of work, creating a genre of “installation art.” A site-specific installation is intended for a particular space, either in a gallery or outdoors, transforming an exterior environment.

**DISCUSSION POINTS**

In what ways are Lisa Reihana’s Digital Marae portraits, in what ways are they not? Are they accurate depictions of the persons represented?

Talk about the process of shaping and combining rocks in Smoulder. What is the significance behind Michael Belmore’s use of copper? Discuss the process Faye HeavyShield used to make slivers: photographing, cutting, folding and assembling.

Talk about how the space around the artwork contributes to slivers and Repellent Eye. Describe the difference between the experience of a painting and the experience of an installation.
TECHNOLOGY

Related Artist(s): Wally Dion, Brett Graham, Jonathan Jones, Doug Smarch

Technology is the usage and knowledge of tools, techniques, crafts and systems or methods of organization in order to solve a problem or serve a purpose. The word technology means art, skill, craft, the study of something or the branch of knowledge of a discipline. It is a branch of knowledge that deals with the creation and use of technical means and their interrelation with life, society and the environment, drawing upon such subjects as industrial arts, engineering, applied science and pure science. The term is often used to describe 20th century inventions that are meant to make the world more efficient.

TE HOKIOI

Related Artist(s): Brett Graham

In Maori legend, Te Hokioi is a mythical man-eating bird, likely modeled after a bird that did exist. Sir Julius von Haast discovered the remains of a large bird in the swamps of New Zealand in the 1870s. Because its bill was much like the one of a vulture, the bird was believed to be a scavenger, not a predator—but modern technology has now showed that Haast’s eagle was capable of killing large prey, and was likely Te Hokioi. Te Hokioi had a wingspan of nearly ten feet (3 meters) and weighed 40lbs (18kg), twice the size of Steller’s Sea Eagle—the largest living eagle. It fed mainly on moa, birds which were incapable of flying, and weighed as much as 550lbs (250kg). Humans hunted the moa to extinction after their arrival in New Zealand around 1,000 years ago, killing Te Hokioi at the same time.

THUNDERBIRD

Related Artist(s): Wally Dion

The Thunderbird is a powerful spirit in the form of a bird, which was responsible for nourishing the earth and growing vegetation. Lightning was believed to flash from its beak, and the beating of its wings was thought to represent the rolling of thunder. Many traditional myths mention the Thunderbird and it carries a spiritual significance in numerous cultures.

DISCUSSION POINTS

How do the artists featured in Close Encounters use technology and in what way do they contrast technology with traditional culture? Discuss the use of computer chips and why this may be significant for Thunderbird. How does Lucinations try to break away from the technological tools it uses?

Describe the juxtaposition of Te Hokioi and a stealth bomber.

Why did Wally Dion choose to depict a Thunderbird? What is the relevance to this show?
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