Native Art of the Northwest Coast

A HISTORY OF CHANGING IDEAS

EDITED BY CHARLOTTE TOWNSEND-GAULT, JENNIFER KRAMER, AND KI-KE-IN
Interpreting Cultural Symbols of the People from the Shore

This chapter will focus on traditional knowledge of what is now known as "Northwest Coast Native art." The word art is not in the vocabulary of my nation, the K'ak'akwak'. My goal is to demonstrate how my people saw their own culture and traditions and how these traditions often clashed with those of the newcomers. I will endeavour to divulge the knowledge of cultural symbols, history, and legends given to me by my mentors, my two grandmothers, Daisy Roberts and Agnes Alfred. The traditions and culture that I will focus on will be those of my own people, the K'ak'akwak'. Protocol states that you must speak only about your own customs, practices, and doctrines. Many people of other Indigenous groups, however, will relate to the ideas, principles, and teachings that I mention in this chapter.

The K'ak'akwak' was an oral society living on the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, Canada. The closest we ever got to a writing system was through picture writing on rocks and wood. You had to possess the knowledge of how to interpret symbols to be able to read them, and for the most part this knowledge has faded into antiquity as more and more of our knowledgeable ones have passed on.

In 1884, the Canadian government passed a law forbidding us, as Indigenous people, from practising our cultural heritage. This law was not dropped until 1951. Many K'ak'akwak' went to prison because they were defying this legislation. They did not feel a foreign government had a right to prevent them from practising their ancient traditions, including what they now call the potlatch and the ceremonial dances performed during this event. The K'ak'akwak' believed that these ancient traditions were given to them by the Creator of humanity and the universe, and no one but the Creator could take them away. The only time our people were permitted to wear their traditional regalia and masks in this period was when the government was trying to impress a visiting dignitary or dignitaries. We became an exhibition for the world, enticing and entertaining the general public, usually with words like "come and see the vanishing race."
The following generations no longer followed the ancient ways because of the influence of the churches, governments, and residential schools. They no longer followed our ancient laws or protocols because they were taught that it was evil to do so. This applied to our language as well. Many parents no longer passed cultural knowledge to the next generation for fear of being arrested. This was the beginning of the deterioration of ancient Kʷakʼakʷakʼ knowledge.

When it comes to Northwest Coast paintings and carvings today, there are two views. The first view is that of the non-Indigenous and the non-traditionalist. They view the paintings and carvings merely as Northwest Coast art, and it gives pleasure to the senses. The second view is that of our ancestors and our traditionalists. These paintings and carvings are our “kik̓as?uw,” our ancestral treasures. They are so valuable, precious, and rare because they reveal the secrets of the past.

When non-Indigenous people, and some of our own non-traditionalists, take cognizance of what we now know as “Northwest Coast Native art,” they scrutinize and they analyze the object or painting as you would a Rembrandt. They study the light, the shade, the brush strokes, and then they proceed to interpret what they are viewing in European art terms. They see the paintings, carvings, and dances as visual art and nothing more. As with a Rembrandt painting, the carver or painter determines the value of his creation; and as with a Rembrandt, the appraisal of the object or painting becomes greater in value after the artist’s death. These objects and paintings are coveted and collected throughout the world as works of art.

To the traditional Indigenous Kʷakʼakʼakʼakʼ, our carvings and representations are not just art objects or paintings. They are alive: they teach, they reveal knowledge of the past. The symbols and carvings cause a spasmodic action in the brain, and torrents of stories and meanings flow to the surface of our remembrance. They explain our existence in the universe. They reveal who we are, where we originated, who our ancestors were, and whom and what they encountered.

One of my mentors, Daisy Roberts, once said to me that non-Indigenous art was “mute”; in other words, it did not tell one’s history or story. In non-Indigenous art, it is the artwork that is important, not the person, model, or scenery that has been captured on canvas or sculptured in wood, clay, plastic, metal, or stone. Otherwise, we would not be asking these questions: Who was Mona Lisa? Why is she smiling? What is her secret?

The non-Indigenous people are no longer the only ones creating “mute” objects and paintings; many of the Kʷakʼakʼakʼakʼ no longer follow protocols of the
ancient carvers or painters. Like the non-Indigenous people, their paintings and carvings no longer tell a story. Very seldom do you now see a human face on the chest of a Thunderbird carving or painting or on the tail of a Killer Whale. To the ancients, this design expressed the humanism of our first ancestors and the understanding that they could transform at will from human to bird, mammal, or other animal. Many contemporary K’ak’akawak’ painters and carvers seem to feel that they must please the public. Because these painters and carvers no longer follow the ancient ways, we are not only deprived of the ancient styles of painting, carving, and dancing, but we are also deprived of the ability to interpret and reveal the true history of our people as signified by such objects and presentations.

Indigenous carvers and painters started creating their work for the many tourists that came into our country. For this market, they made small objects such as painted clamshells, miniature paddles, miniature masks, and totem poles — insignificant objects. Although some carvers and painters secretly worked for the underground potlatch network during the potlatch prohibition, many were no longer hired by chiefs to carve and paint for them, as they had in the past, for fear that they would be arrested. When some of them were caught creating a ceremonial object, they quickly passed it off as tourist art. The Indian agents offered to market these objects for them, and soon many larger items found their way into the tourist trade. This opened the door to commercialism, and soon even older ceremonial masks, screens, totems were being sold to meet the demands of art collectors and curio seekers. From this potlatch prohibition period, many carvers and painters became well known as “Northwest Coast artists.” Willie “Smokey Top” Seaweed and Art Shaughnessy came out of the underground potlatch network, and later other well-known artists emerged, such as Ellen Neel, Mungo Martin, Jimmy Dick, and Chief Henry Speck. For the most part, these old Northwest Coast artists have been forgotten and are never referred to when contemporary Northwest Coast artists are mentioned. There were, and are, many other talented individuals, but there are too many to list in this chapter.

Many young artists have come to take on the mindset of their European counterparts. In 1998-99, a few of them decided to go to court to see how they could copyright their work. I received a telephone call from a very distressed elder wanting me to meet with him immediately. He reminded me that no emblem, crest, or design from our people belonged to any individual artist, because that particular individual did not create it. Rather, such designs belong to the people as a whole. They belong to all the K’ak’akawak’ still living today.
This elder wanted us to look into this situation and to see how we could prevent this from going to court. A few of us met to discuss what kind of problem it would create, not only for our own people, but also for the other nations in Canada and the United States who also have a claim to the Thunderbird, Eagle, and Frog. Word got out that we were concerned about this court case and the ramifications that would follow. To our relief, the court case never materialized, and it was never spoken of again, as decreed by one of the traditionalist chiefs:

Lam maťaxs ḡ*alla Gigağamęy,
 ḡ*alla xuux ḡ*idi id ḡ*ag*ixs*allas sa,
 He?aml
It is completed Chiefs,
Let no one speak of it again,
That is it!

The K*ak*akawak* laws state that, when a decree has been spoken, you will not regurgitate the event; otherwise, the incident will never truly be resolved, and you will have created hatred and animosity for years to come. This decree was considered very serious. The injured party may break a copper against your family for breaking this law. In some cases, and with the permission of the chief that gave the decree, you may mention the event, and the useful knowledge that was gained, for teaching purposes, but names are never mentioned. It is not important who was involved in this court case. Mentioning names would serve no purpose. What is important is that some European laws will not work within the K*ak*akawak* social structure.

We gained much useful knowledge when we were looking into this matter. We found that the majority of Indigenous peoples around the world were faced with the European copyright problem. The “intellectual property law” was explained to us by those who were struggling with the same problem: an individual’s intellect and knowledge cannot be claimed by another individual for gain or profit because that intellect and knowledge do not belong to the claimant.

Communal property belongs to a clan or community that shares the same ancestor. Symbols and figures that are carved on totem poles, talking sticks, feast dishes, and house designs come from the ancestral history, as do clan dances that dramatize the history of the clan. Personal property belongs to the immediate family. The husband acquires certain property through marriage. The dowry from the wife may consist of coppers, names, positions, and dances. These dances have been acquired through vision quest, not from ancestral dances. Vision quest dances are the only dances that could be given as dowries. The
dowry is for the children, and the husband will initiate the children into these
dancing as well as the ancestral dances. If a person has no blood ties
to these ancestral dances, he is forbidden to touch them. If he breaks this law, he
is called “galalqtcana” or “long armed.” Dowry dances belong to the children
alone, and they cannot be shared with any relatives.

The K'ak'akwak' Nation recorded their history in many symbolic ways. I
have already mentioned five of them, but I would like to give an example of these
symbolic representations and how they were used to record the history of
the clans and families.

**TOTEM POLE**

When traditionalists observe a totem pole, they are not watching for brush
strokes, colours, or how the pole was carved. They look at it to see what story it
will reveal. If they know the totem owner personally, they will probably know
how to interpret the figures, thereby revealing the owner’s past.

Totem poles are carved from large cedar logs. In the past, only the nobility
had houses and totem poles. These totem poles are read from the bottom to the
up. The bottom figure is the foundation and is referred to as the first figure, for
it is read first. The chiefs in the past considered this to be the most important
position. They would often laugh when they heard the adage “he is the lowest
man on the totem pole” when someone was referring to a person he considered
inferior.

In our traditions, the bottom position is usually reserved for a few select fig-
ures: the Grizzly Bear holding a copper to denote that the totem owner has
strength, power, and wealth; the D’unulq’q’a (Black Giantess of the woods) to
show the chief’s gigantic achievements and, therefore, his greatness; or a figure
of a man representing the paternal patriarch that survived the flood.

The figures of Grizzly Bear and D’unulq’q’a may appear on your totem pole
as part of your historical recitation. Many ancestors claim they have encountered
Grizzly Bear and D’unulq’q’a. These figures would wear or hold something to
clearly show whom they are representing.

In my lineage, we have a story that tells how one of my ancestors went out
looking for D’unulq’q’a to acquire certain supernatural items. When he reached
his destination, he did not find the Giantess, but he did find a cradle with an in-
fant D’unulq’q’a lying in it. He knew the mother was hiding, so he kept pinching
the infant’s toe to make the baby cry. The Giantess finally called out and asked
my ancestor what she could give him to stop tormenting the baby. My ancestor
told the mother D’unulq’q’a what supernatural gifts he wanted. The pinching of
the toe continued until he received the supernatural objects he was seeking. The figure that would be carved to represent this story on a totem pole for my lineage would be a female D'unuq't'q'a with large breasts holding a D'unuq't'q'a baby.

Ceqquama'y of the Q'iq'asullinux' was another ancestor of mine. He was told by a spiritual being to prepare for a great flood that was coming. He was told to hollow out a giant cedar tree and seal himself in the tree with his family. While he was sealed inside the cedar tree, he was taught the cedar bark ceremony by this spiritual being. He was also taught to weave the cedar bark and was told to make himself cedar bark neck, arm, and leg rings. He was also told to weave a very large cedar bark head ring, with men’s faces on the front, back, and sides of the head ring. This is how he was dressed when he emerged from the giant cedar tree after the flood waters receded, singing his sacred song. The figure that would be carved at the first position of our pole to represent this story would be a figure of Ceqquama'y wearing a very large cedar bark headdress.

The ancestor of the Nunamasaqolis clan of the Lawicis of Turner Island sought refuge during the flood on a ledge on top of a large mountain. The flood waters reached his chin, but he held his head up, looking up to the sky. He saw a large butterfly approach him, and the butterfly rested on his head. The figure that would be carved to represent this story would be a man with a butterfly sitting on his head. This man is Numas, the ancestor of the Nunamasaqolis or Butterfly clan.

Another ancestor of mine is Sanla'y. This is my mother’s clan. Sanla'y claimed that he came from the sun. When you see a figure of a sun on a totem pole, you know this figure represents Sanla'y, the ancestor of the Sanlaem or Sun clan. Many tribes will have this figure on their totem poles because the Sanlaem clan of Fort Rupert scattered when the Ma'smamgilla clan chief was killed by another clan chief at Cañis (Fort Rupert) around 1851, causing a large riot. This incident forced the Sanlaem clan members to join their mothers’ clans in other tribes. All Sanlaem clan members are related, regardless of their tribal affiliations. This is what we call Nammima or Kinsman. Nammima comes from the word Nummaxas, which means “similar or alike, they are related by blood.”

The K'ak'ak'awak' did not have a writing system to record their history, but they did have their totem poles. The first Europeans said that the poles were idols and that we worshipped them. Many totem poles were destroyed because of this false notion. Totem poles were symbolic books that unveiled the past. If it was not for a totem pole, we would not know about a creature called the Homma?a. The knowledgeable ones said it was a very large lizard. They said it looked like the present-day crocodile. Some Big House poles were moved to
Gilford Island from Wakeman Sound some years ago. A figure of a Həmmaʔa is carved on one of the poles. This tells me that an ancestor of the pole owner encountered such a creature, probably during the Mesozoic period or dinosaur age. This would be a period preceding our great deluge, or Yeʔαxsə. This creature was feared by everyone, and it was appropriately called Həmmaʔa, which means “devourer” or “to eat up greedily.”

Other figures will appear on a pole revealing the history of the pole owner. One of the figures will be the maternal patriarch who survived the flood or some other figure that represents the owner’s mother’s history. On many poles, you will see bird figures: Thunderbird, Qulus, D’uencia, Hux’hux”, or Eagle. These figures represent the bird men that the paternal ancestors encountered immediately after the great deluge. The figure of the bird men is placed at the top of the totem pole. These bird men became our ancestors, because they married the daughters of the patriarchs. Not all maternal ancestors encountered bird men. Some encountered a Wolf, Killer Whale, or Supernatural Men.

Talking Staff

The talking staff of a chief is a miniature totem pole. It will reveal the same types of figures and the same story as his large totem pole. He had this staff with him at his potlatches, for in earlier times the chief had to recite the history of his lineage to the gathering in order to validate who he was. Each figure brings back the power of remembrance so that he could accurately tell his history to the people. The staff inspires the speaker, and the speaker reveals the history, and that is why we call it Yaʔantpiq or talking staff.

Feast Dishes

Some of the feast dishes or house dishes were carved with the same figures that a chief would have on his totem pole and talking staff, and they would relate the same story. Other feast dishes carried designs that were obtained by supernatural encounters. Some feast dishes were given away as marriage dowries.

House Designs

In earlier times, only the clan chief would have designs on the front boards of his house. This design also represented his clan’s history, depicting, for example, the first ancestor after the flood or the bird man that married his daughter. The design
might be a Thunderbird, Qulus, D'una, Wolf, Killer Whale, or Sun, and such designs became known as the clan crests. Many houses had no designs on the front boards, but they might have carved figures around the edge of the roof, or in some cases they would just have a totem pole placed on each side of the door. Again, such representations were obtained through supernatural encounters.

DANCES

It is during our ceremonial dances that these ancient carved figures on the totem poles come to life. The dancers dramatize the stories of these figures in songs and carefully choreographed traditional dances. The ancient stories will come to life, revealing the chief’s lineage, back to the distant past, for all those who have come to witness the event.

One of the stories I loved to hear as a child was the Madam story of the Niulkinux clan of the Náam. The Náam now live at Alert Bay, but they once lived along the Nimpkish River. The Niulkinux clan lived at the head of the river at a place called Níalgal.

Apparently, a young man from this clan was mistreated by his father. He was unhappy and depressed, so he decided to Tuyaga. Tuyaga, to our people, was to go into the forest and let the elements determine your fate. This was the practice in ancient times. Often the individuals who did this would have a supernatural experience or vision during such a time, and they would return to their village with a new song and dance from their experiences. This is what happened to the young man in the Niulkinux story. In his despair, apparently, the young man wandered around the Náam Valley until he came to a mountain referred to as X'illamigxley or “a mountain that has a crystal summit.” At one time, this mountain had a great landslide, and crystal rocks were everywhere at the back side of the mountain.

When the young man returned to his village at Níalgal after his experience, he related this story to his clan. He told how he had been so despondent that he just wandered around, not caring where he was going. Suddenly, he found himself at X'illamigxley, at the landslide, where he encountered what he called a screaming covered flying vehicle. This screaming covered flying vehicle flew him away. He was flown to the house of the child of the flyer of the world. Then he was conveyed to the lower world and then to the northern end of the world. Eventually, he was returned to X'illamigxley at the landslide area. This is when he composed a chant telling of his experience. When he returned home to Níalgal, he sang his chant for the Ninoqad or wise ones. (This is what the ancients
called their singers and composers.) He told them how the dance was to be performed and how the dancer was to dress. The dancer would wear a cedar bark skirt, a cedar bark neck ring, and a cedar bark head ring that had a wooden antenna with a spinning crystal on the tip of the antenna. The dance was to be performed with the hands on each side of the hips, with the palms open. Then the hands would be moved back and forth to the beat of the drums. This was to signify the readiness to fly. When the beat of the drums changed, the dancer would lift his hands just in front of the shoulders, palms open. He would then move in an anti-clockwise direction, forming a large circle. This was to signify that the flight was now beginning. The dancer would move in a very fast spring step. He would keep his hands in front of the shoulders, palms open. This signified flight. He told his clan chief that this dance was called the Madam, which means “a device used for flying.” The Madam dancer was to sing his chant before he appeared, and the Ninoğad would start singing his song.

Many centuries have passed since this young man’s encounter with the Galissalasgâm, the screaming covered flying vehicle, and since he composed his historic chant. This song is still sung to this day by the Namgis singers.

The song tells the experience of the young man from Niñalgas. This song was recorded by Franz Boas as dictated by Namug’is in 1900. I would like to include this version of the song in this chapter, because it was dictated by a member of the Niñallinuk* clan. Whenever I use the Franz Boas texts, I always use the K*ak*a version, and then I translate it, and this is what I have done with this song. I have given the text and page number for those who wish to check the accuracy of my translation. The writing system I use is the International Phonetic Alphabet, similar to that used by Franz Boas.

Madam Song

Haane, haane, ane,
Laʁ dan laʁsid’alissä q*əmxaxaXal X*illamigisâley;
Haane, haane, ane,
I went and stood at the foot of the landslide at Crystal Top Mountain;
Haane, hane, hana, hayi
Paʁsid’omx dan, qan lex dan làyuw laʁ hanis guk*, laʁ guk*’a ni X*ənuk*’a
Mamatagisg alla.
Haane, hane, hana, hayi
I was flown away, until I reached a house sitting on land, the house of the child of the flyer of the world.
Haane, hane, hana, hayi
Qaney yux* dan, qon lex dan qanelaqlid'am lax g*abali'cis nalla.
Hane, hane, hana, hayi

They soared with me, they soared with me to the north end of the world.
Hane, hane, hana, hayi

He xuw li g*ixs si, xans ?ix?axsuv waX xans, hayigey suw waX gan ?olek cheqqa, ya,
yiwo, yiwo, gan ?olek paXalla, nikil lan namux* ?am natalak*.
Hane, hane, hana, hayi

So that is what it is, the dance we enjoy so much, whom I imitate when I have a winter
dance, ya, yiwo, yiwo, for I am a true shaman, for this is the reason why I feel that
I am the only supernatural one.

Gan la yul lik bibnaqolid'amma, gan ?olek paXalla.
Because I was flown to the lower world, for I am a true shaman.

Nikil lan namux* ?am natalak*, xan nikil lan namux* ?am natalak* d'iy ya, gan la
?ul lik palaqisalid'am, hamadak*salid'am, san galissalas?am, xan teXdamkan na,
lagolid'am? gan ?olek cheqqa, ya, yiwo, yiwo.

This is the reason why I feel I am the only supernatural one, this is the reason why I feel
I am the only great supernatural one, because I was flown away, flown away dumb-
founded, by my screaming covered flying vehicle, who is now my winter garment,
making my winter dances impressive, ya, yiwo, yiwo.

[Franz Boas and George Hunt, Kwakiutl Tales, Columbia University Contributions to

I chose this particular story because it clearly shows how the story, chant,
song, and dance are interconnected and how all these are connected to the ceremo-
nial regalia worn by the dancer. And there are other versions of this story,
which Franz Boas also recorded (Boas and Hunt 1910, 96-106).

We encourage the new talented K"ak"ak"awak* artists to create their mar-
keted art based on our ancient crests, emblems, etc. But we want them always to
remember that these symbolic representations belong to all of us, as well as to
the ancient ones, and to all the generations yet to come. What concerns the
traditionalists - those of us who still live by the laws of our ancestors - is that
this new wave of ideas and concepts is trickling into our Big House ceremonies.
Our customs and traditions are slowly eroding. Even the potlatch prohibition
did not cause this degree of damage. The ancient ones had no problem adhering
to their customs and traditions because they followed certain protocols. These
protocols have been followed for thousands of years. Our knowledgeable ones
saw to it that every law and protocol relating to our customs and traditions was
adhered to. Custom is the habitual practice of a community or a people. In other
words, an activity or action is practised so frequently that it becomes almost
automatic. Tradition is the knowledge, doctrines, customs, practices, and proto-
cols that have been transmitted from generation to generation over long periods
of time. So if we are no longer following the ancient ways, should we continue
or refer to our symbolic representations as customs and traditions, or is it now
more correct to call it K\"ak\"ak\"awak\" art?

\[\text{Wow.}\]

BRUCE GRANVILLE MILLER is professor of anthropology at the University of British Columbia. His research deals with Indigenous-state relations, particularly contemporary justice initiatives and the concept of Indigeneity. Current research includes the issue of oral histories in court, the circumstances of non-recognized bands and tribes, and phenotype and identity at the international border. His publications include *The Problem of Justice: Tradition and Law in the Coast Salish World* (2001); *Invisible Indigenes: The Politics of Nonrecognition* (2003); *Be of Good Mind: Essays on the Coast Salish* (2007); and *Oral History on Trial: Recognizing Aboriginal Narratives in the Court* (2011).

MARIANNE NICOLSON is a visual artist of Dzawada’enuxw (Kwakwaka’wakw) and Scottish descent. Her artworks have been exhibited in venues such as the National Gallery of Canada, Vancouver Art Gallery, and National Indian Art Centre, among others, both national and international. In addition to a full-time art career, in recognition of the need to address issues of the Kwakwaka’wakw language and culture revitalization, she is currently pursuing a PhD in linguistics and anthropology at the University of Victoria.

JUDITH OSTROWITZ is the author of *Intervention: Native American Art for Far-Flung Territories* (2008) and *Privileging the Past: Reconstructing History in Northwest Coast Art* (1999), as well as numerous articles about Native North American art. With the support of an Art Writers Grant from the Creative Capital/Warhol Foundation (2012-13), she is at work on a new book with the working title *Contemporary Native American Art: Cosmopolitanism and Creative Practice*. Ostrowitz is an adjunct associate professor who has taught at Columbia University, Yale, New York University, and the City College of New York. She is a contractual lecturer for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and is a former assistant curator at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. She was the recipient of a J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship in the History of Art and Humanities for 1997-98.

DAISY SEWID-SMITH was born in 1938 in Alert Bay, BC. Her parents were Chief James Sewid of the Wiumasgum Clan of the Qwiqwasutinux and Flora Alfred, the daughter of Chief Moses Kaudie Alfred of the Sisunglay of the Namgis of Alert Bay and
Agnes Alfred of the Mamalilqalla of Village Island. Chief James Sewid and his wife Flora had ten children (four boys and six girls) and Daisy was the sixth. The family lived in Village Island and moved to Alert Bay in 1944. Daisy moved to Campbell River in 1973. In 1980 the School District of Campbell River offered her a position as department head of the First Nations Department and to teach First Nations languages. She retired in 2000. She was married to the late Chief Lorne Smith of Turner Island. They had two children — Gloria and Todd — and five grandchildren — Shonna, Jamie, Alice, Erik, and Madison. She received an honorary doctor of law from the University of Victoria for her work as a First Nations educator. She has worked with many professors and students in Canada as well as the United States. She has also authored and co-authored many books and articles, such as *Prosecution or Persecution* (1979) and *Paddling to Where I Stand* (2004). She continues to share her knowledge with many people, especially Dr. Nancy Turner of the University of Victoria.

PAUL CHAAT SMITH (Comanche) is associate curator at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. His projects include the permanent history exhibition at NMAI’s museum on the National Mall and the exhibitions *Fritz Scholder: Indian/Not Indian* and *Brian Jungen: Strange Comfort*. With Robert Warrior, he authored *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (1996). Smith’s second book, *Everything You Know about Indians Is Wrong* was published in 2009.

CHARLOTTE TOWNSEND-GAULT is a professor in the Department of Art History and a faculty associate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, and a visiting research associate in the Department of Anthropology at University College London. She has published widely on the history and politics of response to Indigenous arts and culture in North America since the early 1980s, most recently "Not a Museum but a Cultural Journey: Skwxwú7mesh Political Affect" (2011); "Sea-Lion Whiskers and Spray-Crete: The Affect of Indigenous Status in Contemporary British Columbia" (2011); "Still a Forest, Still Symbols" (2011); and "Outside Things Inside: Relative Status on the Northwest Coast" (2012). Exhibitions curated include: *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations* (1993, with Diana Nemiroff and Robert Houle) at the National Gallery of Canada; and, at the Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery at UBC, *Yuulweluump: Born to Live and Die on your Colonialist Reservations* (1995); *Rebecca Belmore: The Named and the Un-named* (2003); *Backstory:  Nuu-chah-nulth Ceremonial Curtains and the Work of Ki-ke-in* (2010); and, as a member of the curatorial team, *Witnesses: Art and Indian Residential Schools in Canada* (2013).

SCOTT WATSON is director/curator of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery and professor and head of the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at the University of British Columbia. He is director and graduate advisor for the Critical Curatorial Studies program, which he helped initiate in September 2002. He also sits on