

the copper linework and pins, the soft warmth of the woolen blanket, that key trade item that holds such significant and often conflicting import across Indigenous communities in this continent. Through these works, Claus brings us closer to Haudenosaunee visual cultural principles, to understanding how and why the fur trade was replaced by trade in blankets as daily Indigenous materiality, and to cues to responsible actions upon these lands as these trade goods demonstrate the shift from

ceremonial-political uses to primarily economic ones. We can continue to consider and realize presences, histories, symbols and structures that significantly predate European arrival in these relational territories through a holistic openness to deeper time, to learning the recurring motifs in the Haudenosaunee and other First Nations' aesthetic and ceremonial-political repertoires to be better arrivants, better neighbours, better human kin to all other living beings.

DR LÉULI ESHRĀGHI (he/ia) is an Australian artist and curator of S moan, Persian and other ancestries, and a Horizon/Indigenous Futures Postdoctoral Fellow, Concordia University. Léuli creates performances, installations, writing and curatorial projects centred on embodied knowledges, ceremonial-political practices, language renewal and hopeful futures throughout the Great Ocean.

HANNAH CLAUS is a multidisciplinary artist of English and Kanien'kehá:ka [Mohawk] heritage who has been living and working in Tiohtià:ke [Montreal] since 2001. She completed her undergraduate studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design (1998) and her Master of Fine Art at Concordia University (2004). Her work belongs to various public and private collections, including the National Gallery of Canada, the City of Montreal and the Department of Global Affairs. In 2018 Claus created a public art installation for Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She is a recipient of the 2019 Eiteljorg fellowship. Claus is a member of the Tyendinaga Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Ontario.

SPATIAL
HANNAH

CODIFICATIONS:
CLAUS

BY DR LÉULI ESHRĀGHI

Hannah Claus and I first met in a group Skype call in Spring 2016, when I was joining Claus and others on the board of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective/Collectif des commissaires autochtones (ACC-CCA) as a Great Ocean representative. By the time I met Claus in person at the ACC-CCA's affecting *Kwàn Mày Dàyè Dàátth'i/Sit by the fire with us/Ensemble autour du feu* National Gathering in Fall 2016 that she co-convoked with Peter Morin in Whitehorse in Kwanlin Dün territory, I knew her to be a powerhouse of generative energy and care for memory. A multilingual Kanien'kehá:ka artist, educator and curator living and working in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal, Claus taught me early on how important multidirectional relationships within Indigenous genealogical time and territory were and are. Claus complements her impressive pluridisciplinary artistic practice with extensive Indigenous arts teaching at Collège Kiuna in Odanak, and advocacy role at the Conseil des arts de Montréal to increase Indigenous arts visibility and sustainability. Her practice is imbued with Indigenous circular temporality, expansive kinship with all living beings, and intergenerational memory that resurfaces despite colonial suppression.

Sitting in a guest lecture on contemporary art history that Claus gave earlier this year at Concordia University, I again learnt of the immense care she takes to render the multilingual topographical memory of the storied landscapes that constitute the urban environments we know by totalizing Western place names such as Montreal or Halifax. We learnt about the process of consulting with knowledge keepers from the multiple nations that gathered on the island also called Montreal, naming particular seasonal village and ceremonial sites in Kanien'kéha, Dene, and Anishinaabemowin languages. Tiohtià:ke for where Montreal downtown sits, Osherà:ke for where Hochelaga sits, and so on. Complexifying the generalized narratives of French-Canadian pioneering exploit along the St Lawrence inland delta of islands, long supporting thriving ceremonial-political practices and vibrant trade exchanges between Kanien'kehá:ka, Anishinaabe, Wendat, Abenaki and Nehiya Nations.

Many of Claus' recent works in form and in title bring into focus these multilingual lenses through which we can view and come into the circle of knowing Indigenous storied places. Equally, the works presented in this exhibition remedy the settler colonial omissions or absences dealt to complex Indigenous relational territories, centred as these are on kinship, responsibility and ceremony. It bears reminding, especially for a recent arrivant like myself, to take up the Stó:lo writer and scholar Dylan Robinson's term, that Haudenosaunee Confederacy territory stretches across invented Canadian borders, across the British-French-American trifecta statecraft concepts of Ontario, Quebec, New York, Vermont, and Maine. The series of ten laser engravings on handmade tea-stained paper with chine-collé, screen print, copper leaf and Japanese hole punch, is titled *the route that ocicak preferred* (2017). Through the layers impressed and dripped onto the cloud-like softly coloured paper, Claus processes the curved lines of what appears akin to early colonial and fur trader maps of the Great Lakes region into etching marks that in turn echo symbols placed within wampum belts. The imagery is in fact based on a birchbark map created by a Nehiya guide to entice his employer to travel an alternative route between Lake Winnipeg and a fur trading post in the area of today's Ontario/Quebec. We can see many shapes that appear like small animals, lakes, preferred routes of portage of vessels and trade items, links in a tapestry of waterways between First Nations across the largest lakes on this continent.

Wampum belts can be understood as recurring governance-making and responsibility-keeping tools of Indigenous relational territory. In her video, thread and film installation *everlasting* (2016), Claus layers imagery of the Everlasting Tree wampum belt with video footage of a culturally and ecologically significant and rare tree living today. The Peacemaker designated the great white pine as the Tree of Peace, under whose base the five founding nations in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy laid their weapons to rest. The mountain at the centre of the island and city imaginary called Montreal is the site to where we travel in viewing this footage of a great white pine. In the installation, we hear

the rustle of leaves in the wind, the bird and insect calls, the human conversations, all of which assert the balance that is inherent in the Indigenous governance principles that Claus is drawing on here, and the living nature of Indigenous sovereignty, unextinguished by the European settler colonial project in its various nefarious forms.

In Claus' mesmerizing work *all this once was covered in water* (2017) the shimmering effect of light refracting on a large deep-blue body of water, that special visual manifestation of actions that realize Indigenous temporality and states of embodied transformation in multiple Great Ocean cultures, and I suspect in others too, holds echoes of the light. The light of the sun, the moon, the stars, kin animal ancestors as with human ancestors, all present in this work demonstrate Claus' commitment to Indigenous mapping practices that poetically and politically attest to ongoing binding agreements and the incredible multiplicity of connections and exchanges in these relational territories, these storied places, that we move through rather too quickly in the hustle-bustle of urban life in late Capitalism. The points where light reach the water in this work could also be understood as an echo of the cartography of the Great Lakes and major portage trails, of the aesthetics of beading points in a wampum belt such as the solar symbolism in the 50 Chiefs Belt, or the recurring circles and spherical forms in ceremonial regalia and in the full circle, which itself represents the governance system prophesied by the Peacemaker once all parties have joined the Great Peace.

The quintessential importance of water cannot be understated in Claus' practice as in the many ways of knowing and living of Indigenous peoples centred on the fluidity and health of water. In my Sāmoan and other Indigenous languages of the Great Ocean, we are related to each other through the same and adjacent concepts of water expansiveness. Numerous Great Ocean ceremonies render healing and assemble ancestors through selective use of waters with medicines. In my short time living and working in Haudenosaunee territories, I have been struck by the similarities in our reverences for water, for the vitality of large

and small bodies of water, knowing as these beings do, who and what we human kin are and how we move in and around them within Indigenous kinship and relational space. Echoes of times far beyond Western records of history, echoes of Indigenous genealogical time actualized through those who remember the multiplicity of accumulated presences in storied places and in the many agreements that order our roles in this world.

In the *trade is ceremony* (2019) copper pins and blanket installation, Claus illustrates a reverence for Indigenous temporality in deftly crafting recurring motifs from Haudenosaunee repertoires not easily deciphered by uninitiated viewers. The copper lines radiate outwards from a central fire-like form, depicting both the deep Earth-centred memory of the great white pine that symbolizes peace, the bowl that stands for sharing resources together and caring for the Earth, while the circle is a specter for the sun and the forthcoming Great Peace once all parties have accepted it. The radial markings of a tree's wisdom in years and seasons echo the cumulative knowledge of agreements, trade exchange and ceremonial-political practices between Nations bound by successive wampum belts in the relational territories we find ourselves. Carrier of news, diseases, faiths, promises, change, new bloodlines, new foods, new drinks and new ways of knowing and being in the world, trade blankets are equally symbols of wealth, honour and service to one's community.

I think of the canned mackerel, tuna and corned beef tins that are routinely exchanged in births, deaths, marriages and title ceremonies in the Sāmoan archipelago and elsewhere in the Great Ocean, at once the marker of pride and recognition from within one's community or clan group, and a potent conundrum of late Capitalist flows of goods and states of wellness or lack thereof. The impressive dark woolen blanket with inviting copper linework, radial symmetry as poetic incantations to responsible kinship with all our relations, is similarly a powerful contemporary work that situates the viewer in this place and time with fuller knowledge of where we have traveled to arrive here. It is visually stunning, the sharpness of