Museum Review

"The Future Looks Rad from Where I Stand": A Review of *Claiming Space: Voices of Urban Aboriginal Youth* at the UBC Museum of Anthropology

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In memory of Zaccheus Jackson

On 1 June 2014 over seven hundred people crowded into the Great Hall of the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology (MOA) to celebrate the opening of *Claiming Space: Voices of Urban Aboriginal Youth*. The Great Hall, typically a quiet and contemplative space, which houses monumental totem poles, was animated by young Aboriginal poets, dancers, performers and musicians who energized the crowd in celebration of this exhibition. Spoken-word artist Zaccheus Jackson delivered a powerful series of pieces that spoke of his difficult experiences growing up, while remarking on the inspiration that he draws from the Aboriginal youth he mentored through his involvement with the Overly Creative Minds studio of the Urban Native Youth Association in Vancouver, British Columbia. Pop singer Inez performed several songs with messages of empowerment, particularly for young women, bringing the audience out of their chairs and onto the dance floor. A highlight of the opening events included a special performance by the Aboriginal audiovisual collective Skookum Sound System in the rotunda housing Bill Reid's permanently installed sculpture, *Raven and the First Men*;[1] this was the first media art performance given permission by MOA staff to take place in this rotunda. Projecting vibrant visuals onto *Raven and the First Men* and performing electronic and hip hop DJ sets, Skookum Sound System brought a distinctly urban Aboriginal sensibility to the space, reimagining the iconic *Raven and the First Men* through their own articulation of what indigeneity means to them as members of a younger generation of Aboriginal artists and cultural performers (See Figure 1).

As a visual anthropologist, I have conducted research with Vancouver's urban Aboriginal media community for over 12 years, analyzing how Aboriginal filmmakers use media technology to articulate visual sovereignty on- and off-screen (Dowell 2013). I scheduled a research trip to Vancouver to attend the *Claiming Space* opening, and

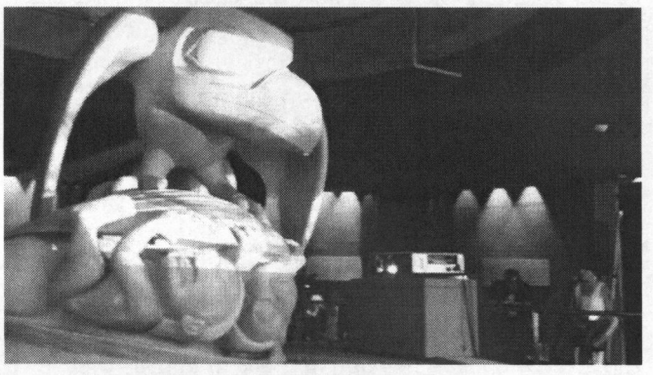

Figure 1: Skookum Sound System performing at the *Claiming Space* opening, 1 June 2014. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

I am certainly thankful that I did, as the atmosphere was electric and palpable. In her blog review, Secwepmec artist and curator Tania Willard described this energy, noting that "this exhibition and project, *Claiming Space*, feels epic and full and alive!" (Willard 2014). I left the opening immensely moved and impressed by these artists and excited that the halls of MOA were brought to life through the work of urban Aboriginal youth, a group who do not often have access to public venues such as museums to articulate their diverse experiences and perspectives. In this article I review the *Claiming Space* exhibit as an example of visual sovereignty, emphasizing the significant impacts of this exhibit, particularly with regard to media art, the strong presence of Aboriginal young women artists and the deep links to cultural traditions found within the artists' innovative aesthetic forms.

Introduction

Curated by Pam Brown and curatorial assistant Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers, *Claiming Space* is the first urban Aboriginal youth art exhibit at the MOA; it featured over 50 contemporary art works by 28 artists, ages 15

to 25, from Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Norway. Four years in the making, this exhibit drew on the MOA's long history of work with Aboriginal youth through their Native Youth Program (NYP), which has been in existence for 35 years. The NYP is a work-study summer program for high school students offering an opportunity to learn about museum exhibition and collection practices, while gaining public presentation skills as tour guides at the museum. Several artworks featured in *Claiming Space* were made by NYP alumni. The *Claiming Space* curatorial team also honoured the Musqueam First Nation—on whose ancestral and unceded territory the MOA and the University of British Columbia campus sit—through the inclusion of artworks made by Musqueam youth and through collaboration on a concurrent sister exhibit held at the Musqueam Cultural Centre, entitled *Musqueam Youth Claiming Space.*

Exploring connections to urban life and ancestral territories, *Claiming Space* offered viewers unfiltered and uncensored access to the voices and experiences of urban Aboriginal youth artists. In my interviews with Pam Brown and Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers, it was clear that their foremost priority was to allow the voices of the artists to come through and not to impose their own ideas or to change the artist's voices. Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers emphasized that "for Pam and me, it was really important to privilege the voices of Aboriginal youth and to make sure it was their voices guiding the project" (interview, 9 October 2014). This emphasis on constructing the exhibit through the artists' own voices was evident in the curatorial themes of the show, all of which were taken from the titles of specific artworks or from phrases in artists' statements. The five overarching themes—"The Indigenous Sprawl," "We Are Culture," "Adapting Our Traditions," "The Gaze" and "We Are the Keepers"—were printed on banners hanging in the gallery space to demarcate the specific sections of the exhibit.

The curators hoped that the exhibit would provide a space for dialogue around issues facing urban Aboriginal youth and that the diverse range of Aboriginal youth voices would be showcased. Their curatorial statement asserts that "these works resist any singular statement about what it means to be an urban Aboriginal youth today. Their art tells us that identity is plural, fluid and escapes externally imposed definitions. Yet within this diversity, we find a unified spirit connected by a deep love for cultural origins" (Claiming Space 2014). In my interview with Vuntut Gwitchin artist Jeneen Frei Njootli, she emphasized the representation of diverse urban Aboriginal youth voices within *Claiming Space,* observing that "the exhibition shows that there are a multiplicity of complex experiences of what it means to be an Indigenous youth, and the work that is coming out of those experiences is hugely important" (interview, 18 October 2014). The diversity of artists' perspectives was also reflected in the vast array of mediums represented in the show, ranging from new media and text-based art to hand drums, weaving, painting, photography and multimedia installations.

Aboriginal Art and Media in the Urban Landscape

One of the striking things about the exhibit is that over half of the artworks are media-based. In fact, this exhibit is the most media-heavy exhibit ever staged at the MOA, and it required every single piece of media technology available at the MOA to install the exhibit. The exhibit designer, Skooker Broome, did an impeccable job working in the long and narrow gallery space to install media displays and podiums housing iPads on which to view the short films as well as two multimedia installation works and two video projections. Pam Brown and Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers were not surprised by the large amount of media art in the show, noting that this is "reflective of the reality of Indigenous youth today" (interview, 9 October 2014) and that "media is a good way for youth to communicate because it is a medium they are comfortable with" (interview, 23 September 2014).

One of the most powerful artworks on display in *Claiming Space* is a multimedia video installation entitled *Musqueam Youth Reclaiming Spaces* (2014), created by an artist collective including Kelsey Sparrow, Brittany Point, Christopher Fossella and Dylan Wijdenes-Charles, who were mentored by Musqueam artist Christie Charles and assisted by Terry Point (See Figure 2).

The installation includes video footage of the artists dressed in Musqueam regalia visiting sites in Vancouver that are culturally and ceremonially significant to the Musqueam people. The artists are seen engaging with these sites through activities that are reflective of Musqueam cultural identity; for example, one scene shows a young woman using a black metal fence as a loom, turning the city fence into a Musqueam weaving. The centrality of weaving to Musqueam identity is also evident in the choice to display this video onto four long rectangular panels that hang from a pole, making the entire video installation reminiscent of the way in which Musqueam weaving is often hung on the wall. The audio track fills the gallery space with the Musqueam language, drumming and singing, so that this piece both visually and aurally claims the gallery space as Musqueam space.

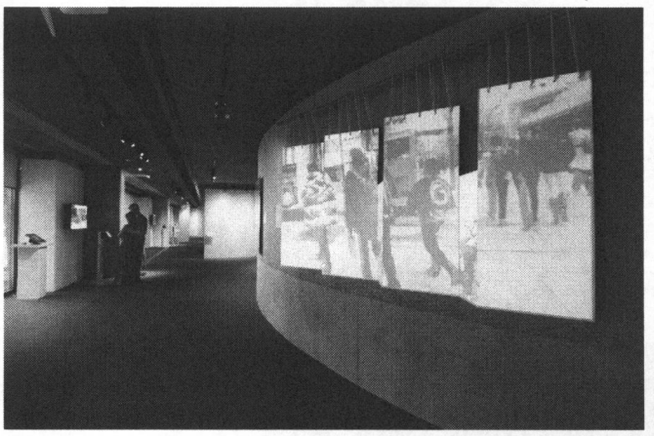

Figure 2: Image of *Musqueam Youth Reclaiming Spaces* (2014) multimedia installation artwork. Featuring artists Kelsey Sparrow, Brittany Point, Dylan Wijdenes-Charles, and Christopher Fossella. Artist/mentor: Christie Charles. Curator: Terry Point. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

On the opposite wall from *Musqueam Youth Reclaiming Spaces* is the stunning and impressive 20-foot black-and-white painted mural from the Urban Native Youth Association's Overly Creative Minds studio, made under the guidance of artist Marie Wustner. Entitled *Reflections of the Indigenous Sprawl*, this mural took two years to complete, with over 30 Aboriginal youth participating in the painting process (See Figure 3).

The stark black-and-white images stretching across the canvas represent an Aboriginal canoe in the waters in front of the mountain backdrop and city skyline of Vancouver. Aesthetically, this mural reflects the diversity of the intertribal urban Aboriginal community of Vancouver and powerfully proclaims Vancouver as an Indigenous city. In an interview Marie Wustner explained:

> We decided to sit down and design a mural that we all thought reflected the Aboriginal youth experience here in Canada, specifically in Vancouver. Our youth come from all over the place either by themselves or with their family. Slowly they integrate into city life. Eventually they become urbanized and gain a unique perspective on this place. [Interview, October 15, 2014]

Reflections of the Indigenous Sprawl and *Musqueam Youth Reclaiming Spaces* illustrate the significance of the urban experience to Aboriginal youth, recognizing that 56 per cent of the Aboriginal population in Canada now lives in urban areas (Statistics Canada 2011). In an essay, Cree-Métis filmmaker and urban geographer Kamala Todd asks, "How do we increase the presence of Aboriginal perspectives and aesthetics on the land? How do we build a more inclusive city in which Aboriginal people have a significant role in shaping how we live?" (Todd 2011: 2). I contend that media artworks, such as *Reflections of the Indigenous Sprawl* and *Musqueam Youth Reclaiming Spaces*, help to build a space for visibility of urban Aboriginal youth experiences, voices that are not often heard or seen in other venues.

An artwork that explores the experiences of indigeneity among global Indigenous youth is the video installation piece *Giesan Giesan* by Sámi artist Márjá Bål Nango. In this installation, a digital film showing Nango putting on a pair of boots and wrapping fabric around her ankles is projected onto a pair of Sámi boots from the MOA collection housed in a glass vitrine. Nango was drawn to this particular pair of boots because they are from her region of Sámi land. Writing about the inspiration for this piece in her artist statement, Nango explains that the artwork urges "museum visitors to understand that these boots, *čázehat*, are not just relics in a museum. They are still a valid part of Sámi identity, worn by Sámi people, young and old, either with tradi-

Figure 3: *Reflections of the Indigenous Sprawl* (2014), made by artists with the Urban Native Youth Association's Overly Creative Minds studio, under the guidance of artist Marie Wustner. Major contributing youth artists: Johnny Yooya, Jessica Bennett, Elvis Chevrefils, Larissa Eliot, Dustin McGladry, Rae-Anne LeBrun, Paul Alexander, Louie Alexander. Special thanks to Beau Dick for contribution of the original moon design. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

tional dress or paired with contemporary clothing." The way in which indigeneity is negotiated through cultural objects and Indigenous art was also echoed in my conversation with artist Jeneen Frei Njootli, whose artworks *Wolf Cloak* and *Untitled* video projection are included in *Claiming Space*. When I asked Njootli about the link between her art and identity, she expressed hesitation about the way in which Indigenous artists' work is often labelled and defined through identity. She remarked:

> My work has been very interested in identity politics but maybe that is just what I have been told. I have been realizing that the word *identity* is used a lot in relation to indigenous artwork, even if it doesn't claim to be about that or the artist does not frame their work/practice like that. Identity ... it's like a blanket that can be placed on work made by 'the other.' (interview, October 18, 2014)

Just as the media artists in the exhibit resist the labels that dominant society places on them and their art, the artists featured in the section "The Gaze" forcefully and fearlessly critique the objectification of Aboriginal women within dominant Canadian society, reclaiming an empowered space for Aboriginal women today.

Critiquing the Objectification of Aboriginal Women

Aboriginal young women make up 80 per cent of the artists within *Claiming Space*, a statistic that speaks to the rising role of women as leaders within Aboriginal arts and cultural production. The artists featured in the section "The Gaze" confront the objectification and sexualization of Aboriginal women's bodies within dominant society, while also exploring the strong role of women in Aboriginal society today. The large number of murdered and missing Aboriginal women in Canada and the disproportionately high rates of violence and sexual assault against Native women in the United States and Canada are issues at the forefront of Aboriginal activism, particularly among Aboriginal youth. The text panel for "The Gaze" proclaims:

> Over the last three decades, more than 800 Aboriginal women in Canada have gone missing or been murdered. These women were more than just statistics: they were mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, cousins and friends. They were women, young and old, whose deaths and disappearances deeply affect Aboriginal communities. Over half of these cases have not been solved.

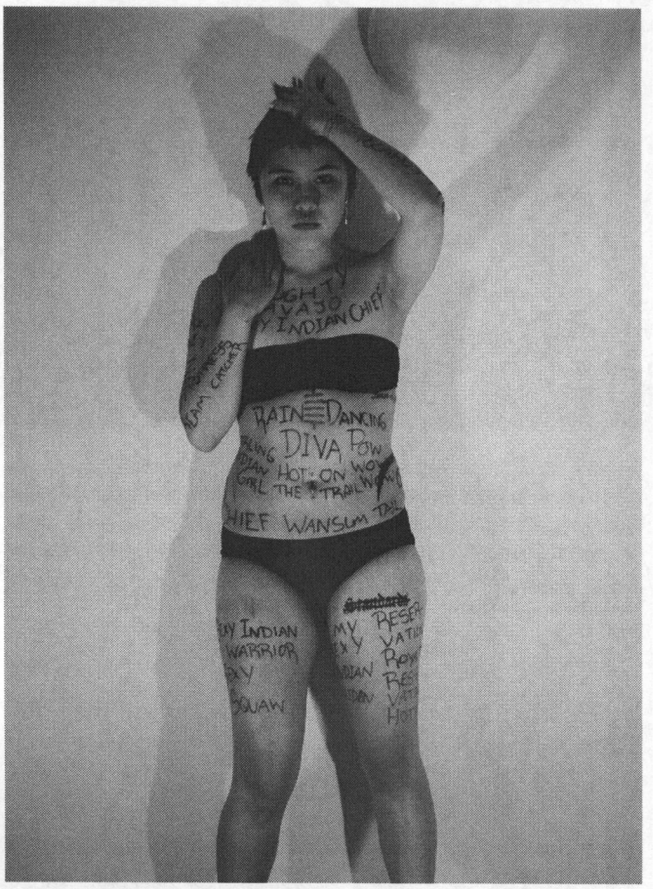

Figure 4: *Untitled* (2013) digital photograph by Ellena Neel. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

Kwakwaka'wakw/Nuu-chah-nulth artist Ellena Neel's *Untitled* art work critiques the objectification of Aboriginal women by writing the names of Halloween costumes from online stores, such as "Sexy Squaw" and "My Sexy Indian Maiden," in permanent black ink across her body and then photographing herself in a self-portrait (See Figure 4). Neel gazes defiantly into the camera and out from the frame to issue a searing challenge to those who would reduce Aboriginal women to these harmful stereotypes.

In an interview Neel explained, "These seemingly harmless everyday words are not words that exist in the physical realm but wrap around the body of Native women, making them exotic sexual objects on their own land. This has led to the unjust physical and sexual abuse of Native women, statistically higher than any other racial group." (interview, October 10, 2014)

Tsimshian artist Kelli Clifton also forcefully critiques the objectification of Aboriginal women through her work *The Male Gaze*, which features 48 Northwest Coast formline eyes painted in teal against a red background. This

visually striking painting (gracing this issue's cover) represents a fusion of Op Art and Northwest Coast formline tradition, and the juxtaposition of the two colours results in an optical illusion and disorienting shimmering effect. Clifton studied colour theory to discover the perfect combination of colours to create this effect; in an interview she explained:

> I wanted the viewer to stand in front of it and, as they were looking top to bottom of it, they are actually mimicking the exact motion that men often make towards women when checking them out. So at the same time there is this optical effect where the painting is flashing at you and making the viewer feel that feeling of discomfort that women often feel when being gazed upon. (interview, September 29, 2014)

Clifton's interest in evoking a visceral response among viewers extends her painting into a performative realm. Her desire to create an emotional reaction of discomfort in viewers to generate greater empathy illustrates her hope that "viewers are able to see these subject matters in a different light and that art can speak directly to people differently than if they were to read an article or see something on the news, it makes you feel something in a different way and that's what I hope to achieve with *The Male Gaze*" (interview, September 29, 2014).

Jeneen Frei Njootli's *Untitled* video also explores the objectification of Aboriginal women's bodies, as well as the role of Aboriginal women's textile arts. In her two-minute black- and-white video Njootli is seen placing a fabric with a traditional pattern over her head while wrapping a strand of black rickrack around her neck. The cloth covers her face and hangs down over her body. Using scissors she cuts out small circles over her left and right breasts so that her breasts are the only part of her body visible through the fabric. This work is both performance art and a video projection. Performance art is a particularly apt medium for Aboriginal artists seeking to critique and explore the ways in which Aboriginal bodies have been objectified and disciplined throughout the history of Canadian settler colonialism. Artists and scholars Dana Claxton and Tania Willard (2012) have described Aboriginal performance art "as a creative intervention of the oppression of Aboriginal people(s)." In Njootli's *Untitled* video, the performance intervention involves a gesture that brings to the surface the various ways in which Aboriginal women's bodies have been sexualized and objectified. In her artist's statement, Njootli proclaims, "This video work speaks to the fetishization of Indigenous women, while questioning our relationships to textiles, trade and the history embodied in materials." The works discussed here illustrate Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers' observation that "it's really women who are at the front lines of community work of the arts right now and I think it speaks to the courage of young Indigenous women today" (interview, October 9, 2014).

"We Are the Keepers"

A prominent theme within *Claiming Space* is the numerous ways in which Aboriginal young artists are profoundly connected to their cultural traditions, while also innovating within those same traditions. The artists in the exhibition express a sense of responsibility to maintain cultural ways of life, while emphatically asserting that culture is dynamic and constantly in flux. This deep connection to place and to community is significantly linked to family ties and ceremonial responsibilities that come from their lineages and clan and house obligations. Several artists in the exhibit come from families of artists whose art is included in the permanent collection of the MOA. For example, in an interview Ellena Neel, who was named after her ancestor Ellen Neel, one of the first Kwakwaka'wakw women carvers, proudly proclaimed: "I am a 6th generation artist from the Neel family, stemming from Charlie James. My dad has done art most of his life and he has always reinforced this idea that I come from a long line of artists" (interview, October 10, 2014).

Several artists in the show adapt cultural traditions or integrate innovative materials into their art. Stól:ō/ Squamish artist Danielle Morsette's *Coast Salish Potlatch Dress* (2013) includes unique design patterns incorporating cedar bark weaving with wool weaving practices (See Figure 5).

She demonstrates impeccable weaving skills while showing that this dress circulates as an art object that can also be worn for ceremonial purposes. In her artist's statement, which was on display at the exhibit, Morsette explains, "This dress is very contemporary, although traditionally inspired by wool and cedar-bark weaving. I wanted to create this dress to show that Coast Salish weaving still has room to advance while done tastefully and true to the art form." This sense of expanding or adapting while still honouring cultural traditions is evident throughout many of the artists' statements. In a museum text panel Kelsey Sparrow asserts, "As First Nations people, we have always adapted our traditions, from before contact to the present day." The curatorial text panel for this exhibit reminds viewers that "through their work, these artists are helping to ensure that traditional practices are no less powerful and meaningful to contemporary youth than they were for their ancestors."

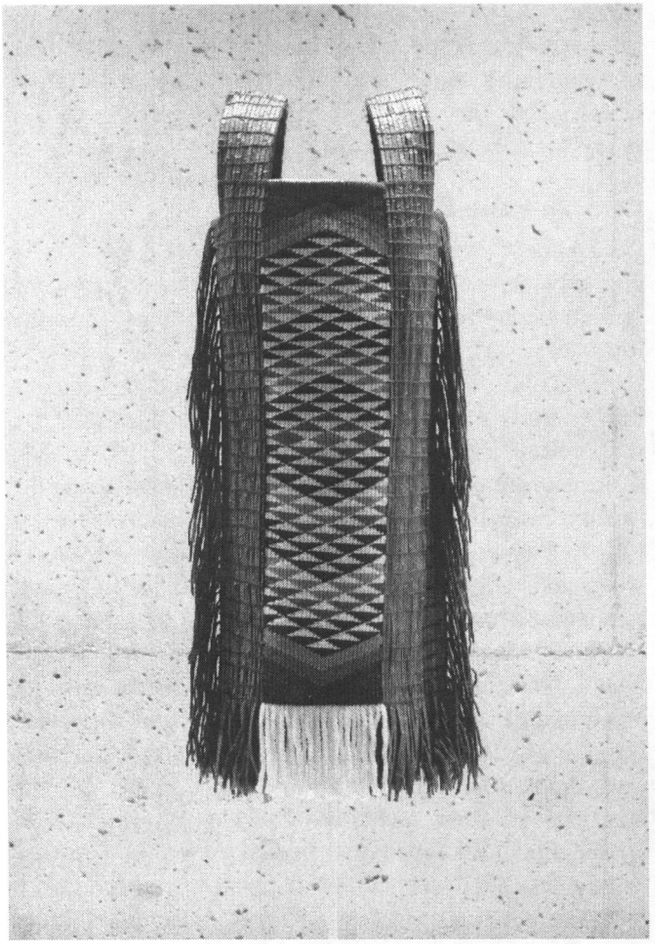

Figure 5: *Coast Salish Potlatch Dress* (2013) by Danielle Morsette. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

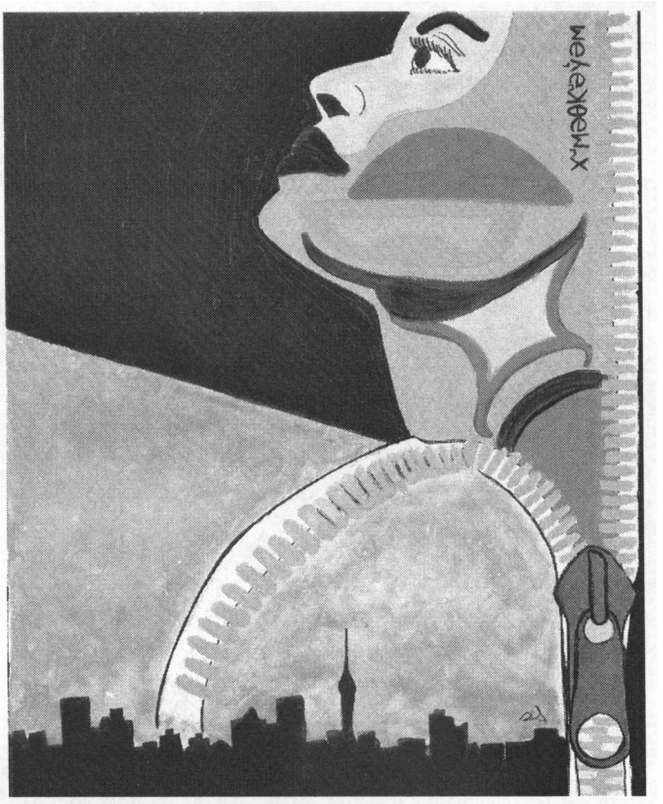

Figure 6: *Emerging Strength* (2011) by Diamond Point. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology.

This sense of innovation within cultural continuity is also evident in Mi'kmaq artist Raymond Caplin's *Traditional Healing* (2012) and Musqueam artist Diamond Point's *Emerging Strength* (2011) featured at the close of the exhibit. *Traditional Healing* is a short two-minute animated video that shows a young Aboriginal woman arriving in the woods near a bleak, black-and-white urban landscape. The young woman looks around the space as a factory spews smoke into the air against the city skyline and polluted water flows out of a drain into the woods. The audio track is filled with the sounds of a bustling city with car horns and sirens. She frowns and then begins dancing a fancy shawl dance; as she dances, the woods around her spring to life in vivid colours. I see this film as a powerful statement about the importance of Aboriginal cultural traditions to environmental issues, as well as the role of the younger generation in helping to keep those traditions and values alive. In his artist statement Caplin explained, "I wanted to develop a story about my Aboriginal origins and my cultures, as well as the concerns we all have about the state of the environment. My culture is part of me, my identity and Mother Earth is what keeps us alive and part of us all."

Diamond Point's painting *Emerging Strength* (2011) is the last artwork that visitors see before exiting the exhibit. Drawing inspiration from the Inuit print *Shaman Revealed* by Ningeokuluk Teevee in the MOA permanent collection, Point created a painting with a Coast Salish woman emerging from the skyline of Vancouver (See Figure 6). This striking visual image claims the space of Vancouver as a Musqueam space, envisioning the backbone of the city as a Coast Salish woman.

In her artist statement Point explains, "I used the zipper theme from *Shaman Revealed* to show how this woman is unzipping the exterior façade of the city to show her true self as a strong Aboriginal person. This piece shows that, no matter where I go or who I become in my life, I will always be aware that I am Musqueam." The curators aimed to leave visitors with a positive and powerful message with *Emerging Strength*; as Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers remarked, "We just thought this piece was so fitting to send people off, because we know

there are so many difficult topics tackled in the show and the youth so eloquently bring these issues to light but we wanted people to leave on a positive note and recognize the strength of Aboriginal youth and where they are today" (interview, October 9, 2014). The *Claiming Space* exhibit has had a tremendous impact on the curatorial team, the artists involved in the exhibit and certainly the visitors coming through the exhibit, providing a significant and landmark venue to highlight the voices and art of Aboriginal youth.

The Impact of *Claiming Space*

The curators behind *Claiming Space* wanted the exhibit to be accessible to a wide audience and to be as engaging and interactive as possible. In contrast to some museums that restrict photography, the *Claiming Space* team encouraged visitors not only to photograph artworks but also to share their photos via social media. These, along with comments in the guest books and on the *Claiming Space* blog and website, suggest that the impact of *Claiming Space* has been deep and wide, reaching international tourists, non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Canadian visitors alike.[2] Senja, a visitor from Finland, commented that the exhibit "opened my eyes to a totally different point of view. Thank you," while an anonymous visitor remarked, "Very powerful exhibit. Really accessible and meaningful not just for adults but children as well. Thank you." A visitor from Italy remarked, "Very interesting! Poetic and political." Pam Brown, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers and other members of the MOA's education department led dozens of guided tours through the exhibit for high school, university and adult education courses.

Many Aboriginal visitors commented on the pride they felt in viewing the exhibit. Brandon Gabriel Kwelexwecten from the Kwantlen First Nation of Fort Langley, British Columbia, remarked, "I loved the exhibition. I'm proud of our Indigenous Youth creating timely, evocative and important critical pieces of work. Hats off to all!" In talking about the impact of the exhibit, curator Pam Brown declared, "I think it makes them proud to be an Aboriginal youth because they are telling their own stories. I've gotten a lot of comments from people that they like the show because they can relate to it" (interview, September 23, 2014). This fierce sense of pride is apparent throughout visitor comments, particularly from Aboriginal visitors. One visitor wrote, "Incredibly moving. I feel choked up thinking of my ancestors. Thank you," while another visitor from Toronto commented, "Native young people show me a ray of hope for us and our environment," a sentiment echoed by Neil from Aotearoa (New Zealand), who wrote, "Claiming Space is a window to hope and inspiring."

The *Claiming Space* exhibit impacted not only visitors but also the artists and curators. The exhibit offered an opportunity for the artists to meet one another and to network among their peers. For example, in an interview Jeneen Frei Njootli discussed the importance of *Claiming Space* in helping her to feel connected to the Aboriginal art world in Vancouver, noting, "I think *Claiming Space* has had a really positive impact, it has for me. It has helped me to feel more connected here and like there is a space for me at this huge institution, a place to feel welcomed and less alienated" (interview, October 18, 2014). Both Pam Brown and Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers talked about the importance of the exhibit as a celebration of the voices of Aboriginal youth. Tailfeathers described the impact of her role in the curatorial process, proclaiming, "I am so incredibly honoured to have worked on this project and there were so many times where I was just so deeply moved by how powerful these pieces of art are" (interview, October 9, 2014). Brown hopes that the exhibit has provided "a better understanding of urban Aboriginal youth and the issues they face every day. I think visitors are made more aware of what is going on and why things are happening because the artists are very honest and straightforward about that they think" (interview, September 23, 2014). Sámi artist Márjá Bål Nango contends *Claiming Space* shows that "Indigenous youth are engaged and dare to criticize and be political and that the Indigenous youth experience is quite similar across nations" (interview, November 8, 2014). Ellena Neel feels that the exhibit is empowering for Aboriginal youth to see "other youth participating and reconnecting to their culture and actively living it," (interview, October 10, 2014) while Kelli Clifton appreciated this exhibition "because it is speaking to issues that are current in today's world and they really do give Aboriginal youth a voice and a chance to share their own stories" (interview, September 29, 2014).

Conclusion: Looking Forward

Providing a platform for Aboriginal youth voices to articulate their perspectives on cultural traditions and indigeneity in the 21st century, particularly from urban perspectives, is a landmark achievement of *Claiming Space* at the MOA. Danielle Morsette proclaimed, "It's not every day where there is an exhibition dedicated to young artists who most likely are not very known to the public or the art world. I was overjoyed completely to be part of it, I still am. It is a unique exhibition that only comes around every once in a while" (Watson 2014). In

reviewing *Claiming Space*, Tania Willard emphatically proclaimed, "I see rebels here—claiming space. I see our future. THE FUTURE IS INDIGENOUS" (Willard 2014). That this exhibit highlighted Aboriginal youth voices and emphasized the future of Aboriginal artistic expression is a radical exhibition practice, particularly when museums often position Aboriginal people as part of the past. One visitor remarked on this, noting, "People think of Aboriginal as something historical, in the past ... this exhibition brings it a voice in the present looking to the future." The horizon of Aboriginal futures shines brightly within *Claiming Space*, an exhibit that left me with a deep appreciation for the cutting-edge, fresh and innovative voices and visions of this younger generation of Aboriginal artists. When I asked Jeneen Frei Njootli about the impact of *Claiming Space* she declared, "This exhibit is the future and the future looks rad from where I stand, when I stand in that exhibit" (interview, 18 October 2014). I could not agree more.

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Notes

1 *Raven and the First Men* was carved out of a block of yellow cedar by renowned Haida artist Bill Reid, along with other assistant carvers, and was completed in 1980. It depicts a portion of the Haida creation story and is one of the most visited artworks in the MOA, prominently featured in its own rotunda. This sculpture is an iconic representation of Northwest Coast art and was also featured on the back of the Canadian $20 banknote from 2004 to 2012.

2 I highly encourage readers to visit the *Claiming Space* website at http://moa.ubc.ca/claimingspace/

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