



Jaune Quick-to-See Smith
A Journey Through Tribal Lands

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7 September – 27 October 2001
Anton Gallery

17 November 2001 – 5 January 2002
Longwood Center for the Visual Arts

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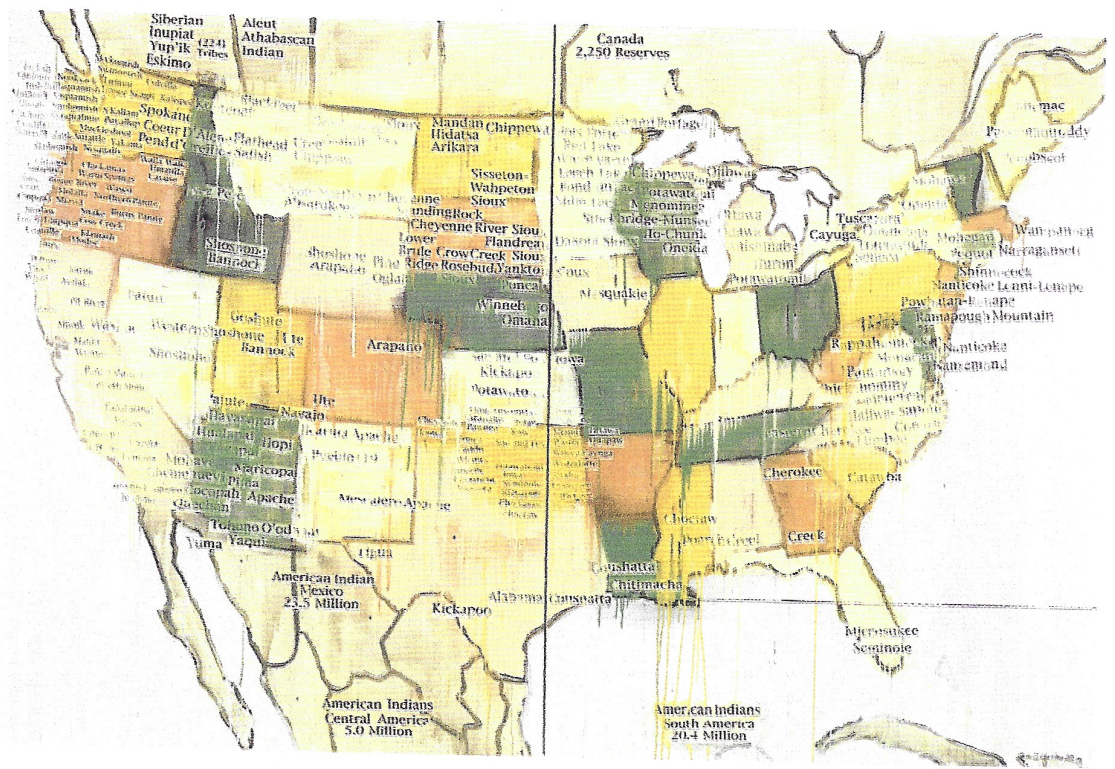
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

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Tribal Map 2001, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
80 X 120 inches



Stop. Look. Listen.

K. Johnson Bowles

Director, Longwood Center for the Visual Arts

I stand quietly in front of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's *Tribal Map 2001* (2000). Its enormity envelopes me like a child standing before a classroom map. The colors are the same as remembered from a map in Mrs. Sills' fifth grade class in Durham, North Carolina – burnt oranges, pinks, mauves, lime greens, light blues.

But instead of words like North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina, I read the names of Indigenous tribes of North America densely collaged onto the map. And instead of the crisp printed outlines the colors and

borders drip and smear into one another. This visceral technique appears on the canvas like tears and blood simultaneously revealing, obscuring and dissolving images and names. I try to see how many names I recognize. They are relatively few and that is when I am struck with a sense of loss and bewilderment.

On a daily basis we encounter the ghosts and lost heritage of a land once entirely comprised of Indigenous Peoples. Without knowing any information

but the name of the place itself, I have sailed in Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island, strolled down Pequot Road in Fairfield, Connecticut, visited the Potawatomi Zoo in South Bend, Indiana, driven on the Powhite Parkway in Richmond, Virginia, and looked at the burial mounds in Moundbuilder's Park in Newark, Ohio. I wonder what life would be if our entire society understood the impact of laws and policies on Native peoples and the rich vitality and validity of Native American traditions in contemporary life. I wonder, not in a way that makes me want to possess curios representing a romanticized primitivism seen through the eyes of a post-colonial white collector, but in a way that makes me want to know an individual, her thoughts, beliefs, and passions.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's work makes me want to know and she provides clues for understanding. In *Ghost Dance Dress* (2000) there are dark, thick contour lines describing a nearly life-size traditional dress emblazoned with an eagle that floats like a spirit in the illusionary space of the canvas. Closer observation reveals layers of collaged words and images partially veiled and revealed by milky translucent paint in cream, gold and brown tones. One large passage begins with "Wovoka's message was apocalyptic." And ends with "To prepare themselves for the great day, Indians must live correctly and above all must gather regularly to practice the Ghost Dance." There are also squares of random numbers like bingo cards, a checkered pattern, and a children's rhyme "The Queen of Hearts,/She

made some tarts,/All on a summers day;/ The Knave of Hearts,/He stole the tarts,/And took them clean away." It is a puzzle and a challenge. Only by putting together these parts and deciphering Smith's references does one begin to contemplate the content of her work.

Ghost Dance (Dress) (2000) is iconic. It is a spiritual meditation on hope and persistence. It reveals a lesson to be learned. To know this you must ask questions and know American history. The viewer must also recognize that all elements employed are purposeful. Every image, symbol, and technique provides insight into the whole of her message. Ask: What is a Ghost Dance? Who is Wovoka? Why a dress with an eagle? Why the children's rhyme?



The Ghost Dance, a sacred ceremony, became popular in the late 1870s after John Wilson Wovoka (also known as the Paiute Prophet) had a vision about the white people vanishing and the Native American peoples returning to their lands. It was a way to provide hope as well as bring people together. The dress refers to the ceremonial clothing that symbolizes protection while waiting for the prophecy to occur. The eagle represents the message being delivered to the tribe. A Sioux chant used in the dance states "Wa/nbali oya/te wan hoshi/hi-ye lo (The Eagle has brought the message to the tribe)."¹ Perhaps the children's rhyme "The Queen of Hearts" points to government suppression of the dance through the Dawes Act of 1887 and the massacre at Wounded Knee on the

Pine Ridge Reservation. As for the bingo cards called "Big Bell" perhaps this is a rallying cry to come together for empowerment, revealing the duplicitous nature of criticism of reservation casinos. Smith notes, "I find it interesting that the Catholic priests brought bingo to our reservations and the government and the states thought that was OK but when Indians control the same gambling then it is not OK."²

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith enables the viewer of her work to at once know the irony, pain, and loss of the past but to see the potential and importance of an enlightened existence for the future. As an internationally renowned artist and powerful spokesperson for contemporary American Indian Art,

she is a woman whose artistic works cannot be separated from the person she is, the passion she feels and the thoughtful activism she inspires. Through an honest, intense, clearheaded and often sardonic artistic voice, she asks viewers to look for meaning and relationships between the things we see in contemporary life and events of the past. She tells us to listen to the layer upon layer voices of the past and present in order to see and shape the future.

These elements are apparent in Smith's richly layered and cryptic work, *Not Out of the Woods* (1996). The viewer's immediate attention focuses on a single and simple contour line emphasizing a triangular form much like a Christmas tree (others may see a projectile

point but in the context on other images and title a tree seems more likely). The red on the top of the form may indicate fire or blood. Within the tree form is a circle with eyes that perhaps represents Tsagaglallal "She-Who-Watches," symbolic of protection³ and a traditional Native American style drawing of a bear. Collaged throughout the canvas are mass media texts "Sale blazing," "Pay Now, Save Later," "It just gets more and more commercial." The canvas also includes Xerox reproductions and drawings of animals including fish, birds, bear, and squirrels. Two children's elementary school workbook pages instruct children to count squirrels and to identify letters on a Christmas tree. At first these children's pages seem ridiculous and simple comic relief. However, she may be saying,

Untitled (Memory Map), 2000
 mixed media on paper
 46 X 34 inches



"those who do not see the devastation of the environment as a profound crime against life itself are like ignorant children" or "how will children be able to count animals once their habitat is destroyed?"

Smith was born in 1940 at the St. Ignatius Mission, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Reservation in Montana. Growing up she always drew and loved art. When she was 16 she even sent away for a correspondence course in commercial art and then moved away from home at age 18 to attend a junior college called Olympic College in Bremerton, Washington. There she was an art major for two years before going to the University of Washington. She continued to draw and paint until she entered

Framingham State College in Massachusetts where she received her BA. Then she received her MA from the University of New Mexico in 1980. Throughout the 22 years spanning her education, Smith worked full-time and raised her sons while developing a style that combined American Indian artistic traditions with the theories and methodology of the Modern and Post Modern art movements. At the heart of her work is the desire to bridge the past with the present and provide a context for her message.

In this sense she shares a commitment with other contemporary American Indian artists who seek to convey political and social messages through their work. She shares this passion with artists such as

Fritz Scholder, T.C. Cannon, Wayne Eagleboy, Carl Beam, Edgar Heap of Birds, Kay Walkingstick, Jolene Rickard and Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie and many others who seek to combat stereotypes and myths about Indigenous Peoples. Like all these artists she speaks from her own point of view living in 20th century America. She is perplexed and angered by pervasive attitudes and ignorance represented in mass media and popular culture. Smith is also a product of her education that included the European canon of art making traditions. Simultaneously one can see her expressionistic action painting tendencies perhaps inspired by Jackson Pollock, the visual yet potent chaos and disarray of Robert Rauschenberg's collages, the irony of commercialism in Andy Warhol's silk

screens, the political activism of Judy Chicago and the acerbic tongues of Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger.

These relationships are apparent in *Flathead Vest* (1996). The inclusion of mass media text is an important contemporary strategy in her instruction and discourse as it seeks to identify and dissect who speaks and to whom. Headlines from published articles such as "... highway where Main Street used to be," "Making sure they never pave your paradise," "home, home on the (driving) range" are clearly written for a middle-class white audience. In the context of Smith's drawing of a Flathead vest the words smack of insensitivity to the plight of Native Americans who lost their land in the colonization of North America.

The words seem to prey upon a co-opted, popularized and romanticized understanding of land issues by referencing 19th century views of westward expansion. Its condescending and paternalistic tone belittles those with a real belief and stake. Smith takes a jab back at the ludicrous statements when she also includes a drawing of Mickey Mouse in her collage. The use of the Disney character's image is a device that references the slang term "Mickey Mouse" meaning something is silly, sophomoric, and inept.

The beauty of Smith's work is her ability to move from the serious and sublime to the humorous and ridiculous and to the frightening and horrific. A further reading of *Flathead Vest* (1996) also reveals the latter. To the right

of the words "Drums Sweat and Tears," Smith places a photocopy of a genetic diagram illustrating the mix of "purebred red" and "purebred white" gametes. This same diagram also appears in *Not out of the woods* (1996). It clearly references the shocking and atrocious issue of blood quantum. Blood quantum is the "degree of blood" used in the certification process (Certificate of Degree of Indian or Alaska Native Blood) by the U.S. Federal government to determine benefits and to be recognized as a citizen of a "native nation." Blood quantum is a racist concept rooted in laws dating back to 1705 that denied civil rights to any non-white and deemed people with certain quantities of "white" blood more competent.⁴ The shocking nature of this information decries the necessity of the words "Drums

Sweat and Tears” as Smith uses them. Drums let people know. Sweat comes from the burden of constant educating. Tears from the profound tragedy and lack of humanism in such policies. She expresses that there is so much to learn, to see, and to do.

Through Jaune Quick-to-See Smith’s brilliantly crafted work, she guides us on a profound instructional journey. She is a teacher and leader who instills a sense of sacred craving for knowledge through a sophisticated set of methods that appeals to a complex range of emotions. Without malice she asks you, the viewer, to open your eyes, mind, and heart – stop, look, and listen as you journey through tribal land.

Notes

¹ James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, 14th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Part 2 (1896), p. 1072.

² Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, correspondence to K. Johnson Bowles, August 3, 2001. She also notes that the bingo cards were collected from the Grand Portage Reservation Casino in Northern Minnesota where she went to a pow wow last August.

³ W. Jackson Rushing, III, ed., *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century*, Routledge, New York, New York (1999). In their essay, *The Story as Primary Source: Educating the Gaze* Joe Feddersen and Elizabeth Woody write, “Tsagaglallal was the last of the women chiefs, and taught her people how to build houses and gather food. Coyote informed her that ‘the world was going to change and women were no longer going to be chiefs.’ In response, she asked to be allowed to watch over her people in perpetuity and her wish was granted.”

⁴ J.D. Forbes, “Blood Quantum: A Relic of Racism and Termination,” *The People’s Voice*, November 27, 2000. This article succinctly traces the history of blood quantum from 1705 Virginia to current debates.



Like a Tree (Dress), 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
80 X 50 inches

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

11

Born

January 15, 1940 (Enrolled Flathead Salish No.07137)
St. Ignatius Indian Mission, Flathead Reservation, MT

Education

M.A. Art, University of New Mexico, NM, 1980
B.A. Art Education, Framingham State College, MA, 1976

Selected Awards

1999

The Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Fine Art, Indianapolis, IN

1998

Honorary Doctorate, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA

1997

WCA (Women’s Caucus for Art) Award for Outstanding Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts

1996

Joan Mitchell Foundation Award for Painting

1995

Wallace Stegner Award, Center of the American West,

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO

SITE Santa Fe Award, Santa Fe, NM

Painting Award, Fourth International Bienal, Cuenca, Ecuador,
South America**1992**

Honorary Doctorate, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, MN

Selected Solo Exhibitions**2001***Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Poet in Paint,*Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York,
Purchase, NY*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,*

North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND, (touring exhibition)

2000*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: New Work,*

Jan Cicero Gallery, Chicago, IL

A Gift to Montana: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's Prints,

Art Museum of Missoula, MT

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Works on Paper,

Spencer Museum, Lawrence, KS

1999*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Multiple Choices,*

Schingoethe Center, Aurora University, Aurora, IL

1998*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Coyote Made Me Do It,*

Steinbaum Krauss Gallery, NYC

*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Sacred Circle*Gallery of American Indian Art, Daybreak Star Cultural Arts Center,
Seattle, WA**1997***Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Modern Times,*

New Mexico State University Art Gallery, Las Cruces, NM (catalogue)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Monoprints,

The Evergreen State College Galleries, Olympia, WA

1996*Subversions/Affirmations: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, A Survey,*

Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, NJ, (touring exhibition)

Lehigh University Art Galleries, Bethlehem, PA;

Austin Museum of Art at Laguna Gloria, Austin, TX;

Art Museum of Missoula, Missoula, MT, (catalogue)

1995*Talking Pictures,*

Steinbaum Krauss Gallery, New York, NY

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,

University of Wyoming Art Museum, Laramie, WY

1994

Jan Cicero Gallery, Chicago, IL

LewAllen Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

SITE Santa Fe, NM

1993*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,*

Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, VA, Parameters Series, (touring exhibition)

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA, (brochure)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,

Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, VA

1992*The Quincentenary Non-Celebration,*

Steinbaum Krauss Gallery, New York, NY

LewAllen Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

1991*Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Works on Paper,*

LewAllen Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

Anne Reed Gallery, Sun Valley, ID

1990*New Paintings by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: A View of Western Lands,*

Bernice Steinbaum Gallery, New York, NY
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,
 Lawrence Arts Center, Lawrence, KS
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, New Works: Chief Seattle Series,
 LewAllen/Butler Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

Selected Group Exhibitions

2001

The View from Here,
 State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia

2000

5th Triennale Mondiale d'Estampes Petit Format 2000,
 Chamalieres, France
Two persons (Andy Warhol and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith),
 Palmer Art Museum, Pennsylvania State University,
 University Park, PA
 Sharjah Arts Museum, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
Paperworks: Fifty Years of Contemporary Art on Paper,

The Contemporary Arts Society of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
 1999

"Ceremonial" Eight Native Americans,
 Venice Biennale, Schola Dei Tiraoro E. Battioro, Venezia, Italy
Masters of Western Art, 1900-2000,
 Western Museum, Wickenburg, AZ
Contemporary Masters: The Eiteljorg Fellowship
 for Native American Fine Art, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians
 and Western Art, Indianapolis, IN
Indian Reality Today,
 Westphalian State Museum of Natural History, Munster, Germany
 1997

Partners in Art: George Longfish and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith,
 CN Gorman Museum, University of California, Davis, CA
 1996

American Kaleidoscope: Themes and Perspectives in Recent Art,
 National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution,
 Washington, D.C., catalogue

1995

Art at the Edge: Social Turf,
 High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA, (brochure)

1994

Cultural Signs in Contemporary Native American Art,
 Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY,
 (catalogue)

Selected Public Collections

AT&T Corporate Art Collection
 Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD
 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.
 Minneapolis Art Institute, Minneapolis, MN
 Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
 National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.
 Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, KS
 Philip Morris Companies Inc., New York, NY
 The Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO

The National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.
 Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN
 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Selected Publications

2000

Heller, Nancy G. *Women Artists: Works from the National Museum of Women in the Arts*, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., New York, NY.
 Hirschfelder, Arlene. *Native Americans: A History in Pictures*, Dorling Kindersley Publishing, Inc., New York, NY,

1997

Gaze, Delia, ed. *Dictionary of Women Artists, Volume 2, Artists J-Z*, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, London, Chicago.
 Hagerty, Donald. *Leading the West One Hundred Contemporary Artists and Sculptors*, Northland Press, Flagstaff, AZ.
 Remer, Abby. *Pioneering Spirits: The Lives and Times of Remarkable Women Artists in Western History*, Davis Publications, Worcester, MA.

Sayer, Henry M., *A World of Art, 2nd Edition*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Simon & Schuster, New York, NY.

1995

Lippard, Lucy, *The Pink Glass Swan: Selected Feminist Essays on Art*, New Press, New York, NY.

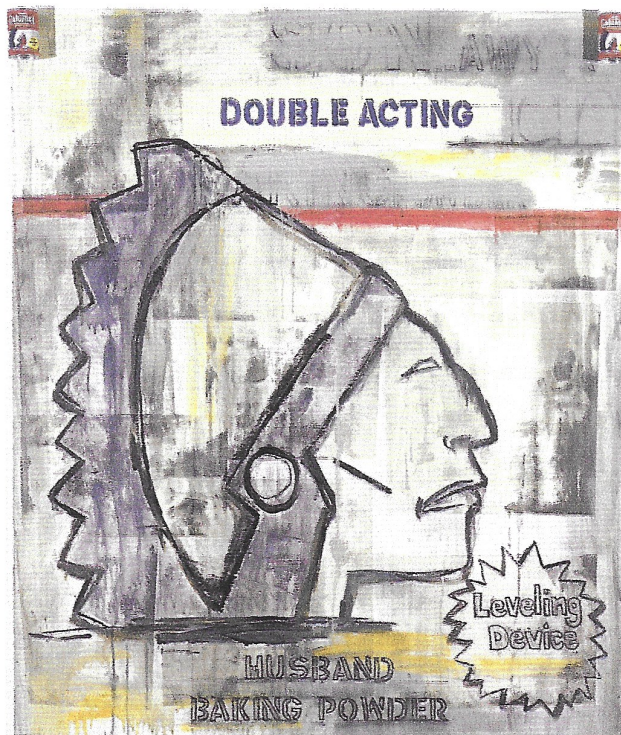
1990

Lippard, Lucy, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multi-Cultural America*, Pantheon Books, New York, NY.

Please Note: This is an extremely abbreviated listing.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's work has been exhibited in over seventy-five solo and 360 group exhibitions around the world. She has delivered more than 175 public lectures and workshops. As a curator she has organized over thirty American Indian exhibitions.

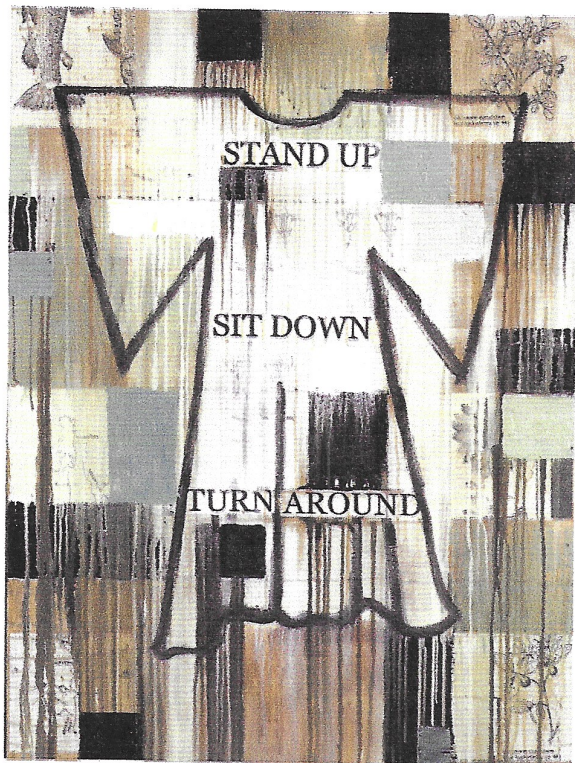
Double Acting, 1996
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
60 X 50 inches



Exhibition Checklist

1. *The Browning of America* (Map), 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
36 X 48 inches
2. *The Changing Shape of America*, 2000
mixed media on paper
45.75 X 33.75 inches
3. *Double Acting*, 1996
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
60 X 50 inches
4. *Echo I*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
60 X 100 inches
5. *Echo II*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
36 X 48 inches
6. *Flathead Vest*, 1996
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
60 X 50 inches
7. *Ghost Dance* (Dress), 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
72 X 48 inches
8. *Like a Tree* (Dress), 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
80 X 50 inches

9. *Memory (Map)*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
36 X 48 inches
10. *Not Out of the Woods*, 1996
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
60 X 50 inches
11. *Stand Up, Sit Down, Turn Around*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
48 X 36 inches
12. *State Names*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
48 X 72 inches
13. *Tribal Map 2001*, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
80 X 120 inches
14. *Untitled (Memory Map)*, 2000
mixed media on paper
46 X 34 inches
15. *Untitled (Strength in Numbers)*, 2000
mixed media on paper
46 X 34 inches
16. *Where Do We Come From?*, 2000
mixed media on paper
45.75 X 33.75 inches



Stand Up, Sit Down, Turn Around, 2000
oil, collage and mixed media on canvas
48 X 36 inches