



KC Adams *Seven Generations* Exhibition Study Guide

The following is a list of resources to provide context for KC Adams' exhibition *Seven Generations* which is on view at Gallery 1C03 from November 21, 2024 until February 14, 2025.

This guide has been prepared by University of Winnipeg Indigenous Summer Scholar Program student Alysa Baraniuk with supplementary sources from University of Winnipeg Curatorial Practices student Margaret Firlotte.

KC Adams

Artist website

<https://www.kcadams.net/>

Relational Making

Published: February 19, 2024

Website: <https://blackflash.ca/40.3/relational-maker-an-artist-project/>

In this essay by KC Adams, she explains the concept of relational making. Adams is a relational maker with roots from Fisher River Cree Nation and Peguis Ojibway First Nation, who lives in Winnipeg, Treaty One territory. She employs a wide range of mediums—such as adornment, AR, ceramics, and performance—reflecting the diverse skills of her female ancestors who ensured their families' survival. Her work honors their traditional practices and expertise. The Indian Act and colonial labels like “craft” diminish the value of Indigenous creations, relegating them to a lower status within Western art hierarchies and neglecting their rich cultural significance. Adams challenges colonial terminology, advocating for “Relational Making,” a concept that integrates Indigenous spiritual, communal, and environmental knowledge into the creative process. This perspective respects traditional practices and urges Indigenous makers to rethink artistic classifications and uphold their cultural perspectives.

Collections and Exhibitions

Manitoba Museum HBC Collection

In 1994, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), one of the world's oldest corporations, donated its artifact collection to the Manitoba Museum. The HBC began acquiring historical objects for a new Winnipeg museum in 1920, growing the collection from a few hundred pieces to over 27,000 items. The collection, which continues to expand through donations from fur trading descendants and former employees, includes roughly two-thirds artifacts of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit origin, reflecting both traditional lifestyles and adaptations to the fur trade. It also features European/Canadian items such as furnishings, medals, trade goods, and objects related to exploration and navigation. Research for these artifacts involves consulting libraries, heritage institutions, archives, Indigenous Elders, fur trade historians, and descendants of fur trade families to uncover and document their stories and fill gaps in the collection.

<https://manitobamuseum.ca/collections-research/manitoba-people/hbc-collection/>

Mámawihitowin / Ganaagishkwadaadiwin / Asenbli / Rencontre / Gathering: Indigenous Beadwork, Embroidery and Quillwork Exhibit

Presented by Manitoba Crafts Museum and Library and Ross House Museum
March 3 - April 29, 2023

Curated by Andrea Reichert and Eric Napier Strong

<https://c2centreforcrafter.ca/2023/02/15/gather-indigenous-beadwork-embroidery-and-quillwork-exhibit/>

This award-winning exhibition gathered together ancestral beadwork, embroidery and quillwork created by Indigenous makers from the collections of 11 museums. It also included new regalia created by Bronwyn Butterfield, Meaghen Fillion, David Heinrichs, Tashina Houle-Schlup, Shauna Ponask. The exhibit webpage includes a video tour of the exhibit. These works bring together grandmother stories from across Manitoba, honouring their creators and the knowledge they share.

Radical Stitch

Presented by the Mackenzie Art Gallery (Regina). Touring to Thunder Bay Art Gallery, National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Beaverbrook Art Gallery (Fredericton), Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art (Indianapolis)
2022-2025

Curated by Sherry Farrell Racette, Michelle Lavallee & Cathy Mattes

<https://mackenzie.art/exhibition/radical-stitch/>

Radical Stitch is one of the most significant exhibitions of contemporary Indigenous beading across North America, featuring work by more than 50 artists. Beading is one of the defining mediums of contemporary Indigenous art on this continent, and this landmark exhibition brings much needed critical attention to the breadth and impact of this practice. *Radical Stitch* explores the evolving art of beading, highlighting its aesthetic innovations and tactile beauty. It examines how beading materials and techniques blend traditional cultural practices with contemporary adaptations, serving as a medium for cultural exchange and resistance. The exhibition features a diverse array of works from both traditional and modern perspectives, showcasing top North American artists. These pieces reflect the ongoing evolution of beadwork, inviting viewers to engage with its political, creative, and aesthetic aspects. The exhibit web page includes a walkthrough video tour with exhibition curators conducting a kitchen table talk.

We Are Still Here - Giiyaabi Omaa Nindayaamin

Presented by the National Portrait Gallery of Canada
2021-2022

Curated by Ann Davis

<https://portraitcanada.ca/exhibitions/we-are-still-here/we-are-still-here/>

In response to the discovery of unmarked graves at the Kamloops Residential School, KC Adams embellished portraits taken of her family and friends, all school-aged children, with images of ancestral beadwork and quillwork regalia from the Manitoba Museum's HBC Collection. These portraits not only showcase the resilience and wisdom of the Indigenous community but also underscore the children's role in bringing joy and hope, as well as our duty to ensure their safety. Adams composed the portraits in seven layers to symbolize seven generations, reflecting Cree teachings that envision looking seven generations back and seven forward.

KC Adams (Ininnew/Anishinaabe/British), a relational maker, educator, activist, and mentor based in Winnipeg, explores the intersection of technology and Indigenous culture in her work. She is an award-winning artist that is recognized both nationally and internationally. Adams

holds a B.F.A. from Concordia University and a Master of Arts in Cultural Studies, Curatorial Stream, from the University of Winnipeg.

Residential School History

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

For over 150 years, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children were forcibly removed from their families and sent to distant Indian Residential Schools, with over 150,000 children attending and many never returning. The first of these schools was established by a church in 1831 and, by the 1880s, the federal government began funding these schools to systematically separate children from their families and cultures. In 1920, the Indian Act made attendance compulsory for Treaty-status children aged 7 to 15. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) found that these schools were part of a deliberate attempt at cultural genocide, aiming to eradicate Indigenous cultures and languages. The schools were often poorly funded, overcrowded, and provided substandard education, with severe punishments for speaking native languages and a lack of accountability for staff mistreatment.

<https://nctr.ca/education/teaching-resources/residential-school-history/>

<https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>

National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada

The National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada is housed in the former Portage la Prairie Indian Residential School. It shares the legacy of the Residential School era through displays, pictures, artifacts and stories. It looks back where we came from, looks at the present and where we are going. It preserves knowledge, wisdom and experiences of the past. It moves ahead in our healing journeys from the traumas we endured. It is also a place to showcase our culture, our unique dance regalia, and even the small arrowhead which speaks volumes of how we survived on the land. It is a place where history and culture meet for all nations.

<https://nirmsmuseum.ca/>

Indigenous Regalia

The Indigenous Arts Collective

The Indigenous Arts Collective is dedicated to reclaiming and preserving endangered Indigenous art forms, ensuring the retention of cultural knowledge. Guided by the Haudenosaunee Seventh Generation Principle, their work aims to build a sustainable knowledge base for future generations. They reconnect and share cultural wisdom with women, youth, and children, fostering strong ties to heritage and the natural world. The collective seeks funding to create safe spaces for healing and restore cultural foundations essential for healthy communities. Donations are welcome to support this important mission. This website highlights Indigenous artists, featuring their work in regalia and beadwork, available for purchase.

<https://indigenousartscollective.org/regalia-and-sewing/>

Quillwork

Porcupine quill embroidery is a traditional art form unique to North America, with the earliest known examples discovered in Alberta, Canada, dating back to the 6th century CE. Primarily practiced by woodland Aboriginal groups, this technique involves folding, twisting, and sewing quills to decorate a variety of items, including clothing, moccasins, knife sheaths, baskets, bags,

rawhide, tanned hide, and even wooden handles. The quills were dyed in various colors, including black, white, red, blue, and yellow, to achieve different shades.

<https://www.aboriginalperspectives.uregina.ca/workshops/workshop2011/background.shtml>

Quillworking thrived among Native Americans until the mid-1800s, when glass beads became widely available through European trade. Subsequently, beadwork traditions evolved, incorporating techniques and designs originally developed in quillworking. Despite being considered a 'lost art' by many, Native American groups such as the Sioux, Cree, Ojibway, and others continue to preserve and practice the tradition of quill embroidery.

<http://www.nativetech.org/quill/quill.html>

Beadwork

A Thread Between Generations: Indigenous Beadwork From Then to Now

This article offers archeological descriptions with references to Indigenous beadwork and how it began and where trends are today.

<https://asiheritage.ca/a-thread-between-generations-indigenous-beadwork-from-then-to-now/>

Regalia Retailers

BESSeeze Leather and Beads Inc.

Indigenous women owned and operated, BESSeeze offers a variety of supplies needed in regalia making. They are located in Winnipeg.

<https://www.besseeze.ca/about-us>

Teekca's Aboriginal Boutique

Teekca's Boutique offers 6 retail locations throughout Manitoba, including two in Winnipeg, and provides quality Aboriginal-themed giftware. They have a long list of artists, crafters, and jewelry makers from across Turtle Island.

<https://teekcasboutique.com/>

Anishinaabe Girl Boutique

Owner Shauna Fontaine is a proud urban citizen of Sagkeeng First Nation residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba Treaty 1 Territory. She creates wearable luxurious Indigenous artistry, having spent more than two decades crafting her art and preserving her Indigenous heritage. Her passion is illustrated through intricate designs and commitment to personal artistic development and transmission of culture. Shauna is deeply committed to empowering emerging and other Indigenous handmade artists, especially women and youth, through mentorship in entrepreneurship and creating spaces for artists to enter the retail market. Her Winnipeg boutique promotes the Indigenous handmade industry, where authenticity is key and features her designs as well as the work of other Indigenous makers. She is also a co-founder of the Pitâw Mīno Muskîkî (Brings Good Medicine) Indigenous Handmade Markets, a collective of Indigenous women artists and community advocates who have come together to host seasonal Indigenous Handmade Markets in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Treaty 1 Territory.

<https://anishinaabegirl.com/>

Powwows

Canadian Powwows

This website serves as a comprehensive and free resource on powwow culture and teachings. It provides a curated list of powwows happening across Canada, complete with maps to assist in finding each event. Additionally, it offers valuable tips and guidance on what attendees can expect and what is expected of them, helping both newcomers and experienced participants navigate the rich traditions and protocols of powwow gatherings

<https://canadianpowwows.ca/>

Recommended Readings Available at The University of Winnipeg Library

***Perception: A Photo Series* by KC Adams**

Call number: Available as an Ebook through UWinnipeg Library.

Publication date: 2024

Artist KC Adams's *Perception* Photo Series first appeared on billboards, in storefronts, in bus shelters, and projected on Winnipeg's downtown buildings. The photographs confronted common stereotypes about First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people to reveal the contemporary truth. Gathered here in the book *Perception: A Photo Series*, Adams's images will inspire viewers to act against prejudice of all kinds.

***Radical Stitch* by Sherry Farrell Racette, Michelle LaVallee, Cathy Mattes.**

Call number: Available In UW Library's collection in print (NK3650.5.N7 R33 2024).

Publication date: 2024

Radical Stitch is a catalogue for an international touring exhibition first mounted by the MacKenzie Art Gallery, highlighting contemporary Indigenous beading across Turtle Island/Canada/USA. Paired with *Bead Talk*, which features personal stories from bead workers, the catalogue presents over 50 artists with detailed images that showcase their vibrant and impactful work. Co-produced with the National Gallery of Canada, it aims to enhance recognition of modern beading practices.

***Bead Talk: Indigenous Knowledge and Aesthetics* by Carmen Robertson, Judy Anderson, Katherine Boyer.**

Call number: Available as an Ebook through UWinnipeg Library.

Publication date: 2024

Bead Talk is a concise collection of interviews and stories from prairie beading communities. Published by the University of Manitoba Press, it is part of the paskwāwi masinahikewina/Prairie Writing series and highlights how prairie Indigenous peoples shape their world.

“Land and Beaded Identity: Shaping Art Histories of Indigenous Women of the Flatland” by Carmen Robertson [article]

Call Number: Available through UW Library, published in *RACAR: revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review* v42 n2 (20170101): 13-29

ISBN: 0315-9906

The territory constitutes a determining force in artistic creation. The austere meadows, in particular, require constant adaptation from current artists as well as from those who preceded them, determined by access to resources and the need for mobility. This article focuses on the impact of the territory on the practice of beading as practiced by indigenous women. It connects examples of traditional beadwork held in Saskatchewan museum collections with the works of three contemporary Plains Indigenous artists: Ruth Cuthand, Judy Anderson and Katherine Boyer. The

comparison aims to better understand the intergenerational process of transmission of ancestral practices and thus reveal how the territory is expressed in the objects and works decorated with pearls, which contribute to shaping the story of the plains.

***North American Indian Jewelry and Adornment: From Prehistoric to Present* by Lois Sherr Dubin.**

Call number: Available in UW Library's collection in print (E 98 J48D83 2003).

Publication date: 2003

This book, the result of ten years of archival research, artifact photography, and interviews, features over 1,200 illustrations (about 820 in color) showcasing Native American adornment, including jewelry, beadwork, and ceremonial regalia. It includes regional maps, diagrams of jewelry techniques, and three gatefolds.

***Plains Indians: Regalia & Customs* by Bad Hand.**

Call number: Available in UW Library's collection in print (E 78 G73H35 2010).

Publication date: 2010

Plains Indians: Regalia & Customs is a compilation of diverse facts, original primary source quotes, and references recorded by 18th-century Plains Indian peoples and their contemporaries, who considered these observations significant enough to document.

***Warriors of the Plains: Native American Regalia & Crafts* by M.S. Tucker and Joe W. Rosenthal; illustrated by David W. Rickman.**

Call number: Available in UW Library's collection in print (E 78 G73M34 1995).

Publication date: 2013

This book features a rich collection of both vintage and modern images, showcasing the magnificent regalia of the legendary Plains warriors. It includes numerous examples of craft techniques, which are valuable for creating contemporary dance and ceremonial regalia, reflecting how today's Native American dancers incorporate vintage elements into their modern attire

***kôhkominawak ocihcîwâwa: Our Grandmother's Hands: Repatriating Métis Material Art* by Gregory Scofield**

Call Number: In processing through the UW library (E99 M47 S26 2023) and available [through the Gabriel Dumont Institute](#)

ISBN: 9781988011226, 9781988011233, 1988011221, 198801123X

Publication date: 2023

This book showcases Gregory Scofield's collection of Métis artefacts, repatriated from around the world. It features 101 pieces including Norway House/Norway House Style silk embroidery, silk embroidery, beadwork, quillwork, and the sash. It includes an introduction by Scofield, and an historical overview by Sherry Farrell Racette.

***wâpikwanig: A Beginner's Guide to Métis Floral Beadwork* by Gregory Scofield and Amy Brily**

Call Number: Available [through the Gabriel Dumont Institute](#)

ISBN: 9781926795058

Publication date:

This is a step-by-step guide book and DVD video which provides information and instruction on Métis floral beadwork. The guide is intended for beginning beaders and includes an historical overview by Sherry Farrell Racette, followed by instructions on basic beading, supply lists and options, techniques and hints, and examples of traditional and contemporary beadwork. Patterns are included in the book.

***sînapân kîskasâkâs: A Guide to Making Contemporary-Style Métis Ribbon Skirts* by Bonny Johnson and Leah Marie Dorion**

Call Number: Available [through the Gabriel Dumont Institute](#)

ISBN:9781926795966

Publication date: 2021

This book will assist you in the creation of your own Métis style ribbon skirt. Authors, Bonny Johnson and Leah Marie Dorion guide you through the process with detailed instructions which are accompanied by photographs of each step. This resource comes with a companion DVD, and introductions from both authors on the historical and contemporary uses of these traditional Métis style ribbon skirts.

***THE POWER OF STYLE: How Fashion And Beauty Are Being Used to Reclaim Cultures* by Christian Allaire**

Call Number: Available through UW Library as an ebook, also available [through Amazon](#)

ISBN: 9781773214924, 9781773214931, 9781773214948, 1773214926, 1773214934, 1773214942

Publication Date: 2021

Style is not just the clothes on our backs--it is self-expression, representation, and transformation. As a fashion-obsessed Ojibwe teen, Christian Allaire rarely saw anyone that looked like him in the magazines or movies he looked to for inspiration. Now the Fashion and Style Writer for *Vogue*, he is working to change that--because clothes are never just clothes. Men's heels are a statement of pride in the face of LGBTQ+ discrimination, while ribbon shirts honor Indigenous ancestors and keep culture alive. Allaire takes the reader through boldly designed chapters to discuss additional topics like cosplay, make up, hijabs, and hair, probing the connections between fashion and history, culture, politics, and social justice.

***Beadwork Techniques of the Native Americans* by Scott Sutton.**

Call number: Available through Amazon.ca.

ISBN: 1929572115, 978-1929572113

Publication date: 2008

Beadwork Techniques of the Native Americans features numerous full-color photos of beadwork from both Native and non-Native sources, showcasing items from museums, private collections, and the current market. It provides detailed, step-by-step instructions with large, color illustrations for four beadwork styles: loom, two-needle applique, lazy stitch, and gourd (peyote) stitch. Both basic and advanced techniques are covered, including comprehensive guidance on making and beading moccasins.

***Powwow: A Celebration through Song and Dance* by Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane.**

Call number: Pre-order through Amazon.ca.

ISBN: 1459843444

Publication date: April 2025

Powwows are vibrant celebrations of Indigenous song and dance. This book explores the evolution of powwow culture in North America, from its origins to its contemporary prominence. Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane, a lifelong competitive dancer, offers insights into the protocols, regalia, songs, dances, and cuisine of powwows across the continent, highlighting their significance in Indigenous culture and reconciliation