

Journal #5462 from sdc 5.17.23

Lagomarsino Petroglyphs

Native American Quotes

Kick-ass Data Set

As a child, afternoons at Smithsonian museums fostered Bill Nye's love of science & learning

Color and Memory - Robert Houle's "Red is Beautiful"

James "JP" Plympton

James "JJ" Thomas



EXPLORE

THE LAGOMARSINO PETROGLYPHS

COME HIKE WITH US

The Lagomarsino Canyon (outside of Virginia City) is one of the largest petroglyph sites in Nevada, containing 2,229 rock art panels. We will hike a few miles round trip to see this beautiful piece of Native American History.

June 17, 2023
9am to 1 pm

RSVP NOW

Steve Hedrick
shedrick@nvui.org
775-788-7611 ext. 107

Transportation available if needed and sack lunch provided by Nevada Urban Indians Inc.
Ages 7 and up

Meet at Nevada Urban Indians
9480 Gateway Drive Suite 100
Reno, NV 89521



Native American Quotes



"When you are in doubt, be still, and wait; when doubt no longer exists for you, then go forward with courage.

So long as mists envelop you, be still; be still until the sunlight pours through and dispels the mists

-- as it surely will. Then act with courage."

- *Chief White Eagle, Ponca*

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."

- *Chief Seattle, Duwamish*

"I do not think the measure of a civilization is how tall its buildings of concrete are, but rather how well its people have learned to relate to their environment and fellow man."

- *Sun Bear, Chippewa*

"If you talk to the animals they will talk with you and you will know each other. If you do not talk to them you will not know them and what you do not know, you will fear. What one fears, one destroys."

- *Chief Dan George, Tseil-Waututh Nation*

"We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can't speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees."

- *Qwatsinas (Hereditary Chief Edward Moody), Nuxalk Nation*

"I have seen that in any great undertaking it is not enough for a man to depend simply upon himself."

- *Lone Man (Isna-la-wica), Teton Sioux*



"I have heard you intend to settle us on a reservation near the mountains. I don't want to settle. I love to roam over the prairies. There I feel free and happy, but when we settle down we grow pale and die." - *Chief Satanta, Kiowa*

"The Great Spirit is in all things. He is in the air we breathe. The Great Spirit is our Father, but the Earth is our Mother. She nourishes us.....That which we put into the ground she returns to us." - *Big Thunder Wabanaki, Algonquin*

"Honor the sacred. Honor the Earth, our Mother. Honor the Elders. Honor all with whom we share the Earth:-Four-leggeds, two-leggeds, winged ones, Swimmers, crawlers, plant and rock people. Walk in balance and beauty." - *Native American Elder*

"Friend do it this way-that is, whatever you do in life, do the very best you can with both your heart and minds. And if you do it that way, the Power of the Universe will come to your assistance, if you heart and mind are in Unity. When one sits in the Hoop Of The People, one must be responsible because All of Creation ins related. And the Hurt of one is the hurt of all. And the honor of one is the honor of all. And whatever we do effects everything in the universe. If you do it that way-that is, if you truly join your heart and mind as One-whatever you ask for, that the Way it's Going to be." - *Lakota Instructions for Living passed down from White Buffalo Calf Woman*

More Native American Quotes:

"If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian, he can live in peace... Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow.All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief.They are all brothers. The Earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it..." - *White Elk*

"Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers,free to think and talk and act for myself, and I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty." - *Heinmot Tooyalaket (Chief Joseph), Nez Perce Leader*

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." - *Chief Seattle, 1854*

"What is Life? "It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset. The

True Peace. The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Taka (the Great Spirit), and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us. This is the real peace, and the others are but reflections of this. The second peace is that which is made between two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations. But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is known that true peace, which, as I have often said, is within the souls of men." - *Black Elk, Oglala Sioux and Spiritual Leader (1863 - 1950)*

"May the stars carry your sadness away, May the flowers fill your heart with beauty, May hope forever wipe away your tears, And, above all, may silence make you strong." - *Chief Dan George, Tsleil-Waututh Nation*



"Hold on to what is good, Even if it's a handful of earth. Hold on to what you believe, Even if it's a tree that stands by itself. Hold on to what you must do, Even if it's a long way from here. Hold on to your life, Even if it's easier to let go. Hold on to my hand, Even if someday I'll be gone away from you." - *Crowfoot, Blackfoot warrior and orator 1830 - 1890*

"And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell, and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being." - *Black Elk, Black Elk Speaks*

"It is better to have less thunder in the mouth and more lightning in the hand." - *Apache Tribe*

"The Holy Land is everywhere." - *Black Elk*

"I have seen that in any great undertaking it is not enough for a man to depend simply upon himself." - *Teton Sioux Tribe*

"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave." - *Dakota Tribe*

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"All who have died are equal." - *Comanche People*

"All dreams spin out from the same web." - *Hopi Tribe*

"Go forward with courage. When you are in doubt, be still, and wait; when doubt no longer exists for you, then go forward with courage. So long as mists envelop you, be still; be still until

the sunlight pours through and dispels the mists – as it surely will. Then act with courage."  
- Chief White Eagle, Ponca Chief

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One of the more interesting set of data I have run across this week (be sure to look up your state):

<https://deadorkicking.com/death-statistics/us/2022/>

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“Plenty Wounds, a Dakota Native American” sources: Käsebier, Gertrude, photographer. Plenty Wounds, American Indian. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <[www.loc.gov/item/2006679598/](http://www.loc.gov/item/2006679598/)>.

<https://nicenews.com/environment/nilpena-ediacara-national-park-australia/>

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Long afternoons at the Smithsonian’s museums as a child helped foster Bill Nye’s love of science and learning.

As a kid, Bill Nye spent whole days wandering the halls of Smithsonian museums. Now the Science Guy is back... to find his own blue lab coat and periodic table bowtie on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

[This time on Sidedoor, we sit down with Bill Nye](#) to get schooled on science education, comedy, and the 1990s hit TV show that turned him into an entire generation’s favorite science teacher.

Links & Extras

- See more iconic objects from pop culture history in the [new Entertainment Nation exhibition](#) from the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History.
- Bill Nye is currently the CEO of [The Planetary Society](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing space science. Check out their educational resources and [at-home kid’s activities](#).
- You can also [share the magic of the original Bill Nye the Science Guy series](#) with the young explorers in your life (or just tune in for the nostalgia factor!) with full episodes on [billnye.com](#).
- Bill Nye returned to science television in 2022 with *The End is Nye*, a series that ventures into the most epic catastrophes imaginable to offer ideas for disaster mitigation, prevention, and survival. You can [watch The End is Nye](#) on NBC’s Peacock streaming service and join Bill Nye with Smithsonian Associates on [May 10 for a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the series](#).
- Hope for the future of scientific discovery and environmental stewardship inspired the creation of the [Smithsonian’s Earth Optimism Initiative](#)! Learn about research and conservation projects from across the globe that are making a positive impact as we work to build a more sustainable future.

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MAGAZINE OF SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

<https://twitter.com/SmithsonianNMAI>    <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianNMAI/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SmithsonianNMAI>

**Color and Memory** From Issue: Spring 2023 / Vol. 24 No. 1 by **Alexandra N. Harris**

For more than 50 years, the work of Saulteaux Anishinaabe artist, curator and writer Robert Houle has united Indigenous cultural heritage and design with Western contemporary art practices to examine spirituality, history, cultural appropriation and the ongoing fight for Indigenous sovereignty. He calls the result “transcultural”—a synthesis of Indigenous and Euro-American ways of making and thinking about art.

The first major retrospective exhibition of his work, “**Robert Houle: Red Is Beautiful**,” opens May 25 at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. Curated by Wanda Nanibush (Anishinaabe, Beausoleil First Nation), curator of Indigenous art at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, “Red Is Beautiful” honors not only the breadth of Houle’s oeuvre but also his singular method of processing trauma and resilience through artistic expression.

Robert Houle in 2015 with his triptych “Colours of Love.”  
Courtesy of Canada Council for the Arts / Derreck Roemer Houle references



This self-portrait is Houle’s newest painting in the “Red Is Beautiful” exhibition. In this work, his spirit name, Blue Thunder. In Anishinaabe cosmology, a thunderbird embodies thunder and lightning and is one of the most powerful spirit beings.

“Transforming Blue Thunder,” 2021; oil on mylar; 87.5” x 42”. Courtesy of the Artist

**Robert Houle: Red Is Beautiful**

Conceived by the Art Gallery of Ontario’s Curator of Indigenous Art Wanda Nanibush, “Robert Houle: Red Is Beautiful” is the first major exploration of the past 50 years of the artist’s creations. Houle’s paintings and mixed-media installations chronicle not only his personal development as an artist but also the influential artistic and political revitalization that emerged in Indigenous communities during the late 20th century. “Red Is Beautiful” is about that renaissance, that resurgence of Indigenous culture,” says Nanibush. But it’s also about color. Houle’s bold palette is a defining aspect of his work, and the large scale of many of his paintings is part of their power.

Nanibush is also the editor of the accompanying catalog of the same name, published by the Art Gallery of Ontario. Featuring 200 images of Houle's life and artwork, the volume showcases the extraordinary breadth of his talent.

Following is a selection and adaptation of the engaging "Red Is Beautiful" exhibition featuring Houle's innovative artworks that will be on display from May 25, 2023, to June 4, 2024, at the NMAI in Washington, D.C.

### **Beyond History Painting**

Robert Houle asserts an Indigenous perspective of historical events. In the 1990s, Houle began to incorporate words, images and visual references into his work to amplify political messages and critique conventional, inaccurate perceptions of history.

"Kanata" is the Mohawk word for "town" and the origin of Canada's name. In Houle's painting by that title, this consequential battle between European empires is represented by the colors of the adjacent panels: blue for France and red for Britain. By highlighting the thoughtful witness with color, Houle emphasizes the enduring presence of Indigenous nations through centuries of colonial nation building to follow.

In his portrayal, Houle fades out Benjamin West's original 1770 painting, reversing the more conventional view that casts Native people as powerless observers and peripheral to history by centering Native knowledge and experience, activism and empowerment.

In "O-ween du muh waun (We Were Told)," Houle recontextualizes the Indigenous figure from West's painting, acknowledging the Anishinaabe prophecies that foretold the arrival of Europeans while also establishing the consistency of Native presence and sovereignty before and after.

### **Sacred Geometry**

Painted early in his career, Houle's geometric paintings fuse two traditions of abstraction—modernist painting and ancestral design—to create powerful expressions of emotion tinged with spiritual resonance. He calls the result "transcultural"—a synthesis of Indigenous and Euro-American ways of making and thinking about art.

Houle was particularly drawn to the modernist idea that color and form could prompt emotion or a feeling. At the same time, he recognized that ancestral Anishinaabe artists also had created a language of abstract form and color for beadwork on regalia, or formal dress, worn in ceremony. Anishinaabe geometric symbols possess deep and often secret, sacred meanings.

Houle developed the composition of "Ojibway Motif, #2, Purple Leaves Series" from ancestral Anishinaabe beadwork designs. On beaded sashes, shoulder bags and items of ceremonial dress, a vast language of geometric symbols describe the richness of the cosmos. Houle studied and used such designs as inspiration for his approach to modernist abstraction.

### **The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones**

Anishinaabe people have crafted items for ceremonial use for countless generations. From rattles to regalia, these items create experiences of the divine. Houle finds his inspiration within these

ancestral creations and uses color, painterly gesture and Indigenous art materials such as porcupine quills to elevate his own art to the same purpose. He strives to create contemporary works just as powerful and evocative as those created by the “Ancient Ones,” as he calls his First Nations ancestors. At the same time, Houle remains committed to the techniques of contemporary art practice.

“Parfleche for Norval Morrisseau” is a tribute to an influential Anishinaabe artist who created a unique style of painting, sometimes called the Woodland style, which echoes a style of some floral and other beadwork designs on traditional Indigenous clothing.

### **Sovereignty**

In this series, Robert Houle examines key historical documents in which colonial and modern Canada imposed a legal framework for its relations with First Nations. The proclamations and acts acknowledge the nation-to-nation relationship between First Nations and Canadian governments. Houle seeks Indigenous alternatives to the written documents, using expressive color to suggest Native understandings and protocols of diplomacy. His versions focus on “premises for self-rule,” the inherent sovereignty that is fundamental to First Nations peoples in both Canada and the United States.

### **Defending Sovereignty**

Like many of his artist contemporaries and forebears, Houle believes that abstract painting can aptly address heroic and humanistic themes. During the last few decades, some of Canada’s First Nations have resisted continued encroachments upon their lands and autonomy. Houle’s monumental paintings elevate these episodes of political resistance to a more universal and epic struggle against injustice.

In the 1980s, First Nations protestors closed roads through their territories near the Canadian town of Temagami to prevent logging of old-growth forests. This dispute is ongoing. Houle admired the tenacity of the protestors and made them warrior lances with feathers made of synthetic materials.

### **Residential School Years**

In the late 1990s, Houle began to explore his childhood experiences at Sandy Bay Residential School through his art. He characterized the resulting works as “painfully beautiful manifestations of survival of government/church efforts to destroy my cultural and spiritual identity. They are based on childhood memories of the trauma experienced during elementary residential school days on my reserve, Sandy Bay First Nation, Manitoba, in the early ’60s.”

In his monumental work “Sandy Bay,” Houle revisits memories of attending the Sandy Bay Residential School. The top photograph on the far left shows the school’s head priest, described by Houle as kindly; below it shows the artist’s sister’s First Communion. To their right is a shadowy image of the school. Although it was located on the Sandy Bay Indian Reserve, students could only return home on weekends. Superimposed are words from a hymn Houle’s mother often sang to comfort him: “ON SAM KI KISEWATIS ANA MANITOWIYAN” (“Oh, you are so kind and so treasured although you are god like”). At right, Houle invokes the power of color and painterly gesture to convey emotions: healing calm (blue) and violent trauma (red).



Houle embarked on this series of works as an act of healing, such as “Sister Clothilde,” which portrays one of the abusive nuns at the school.

### **Perceptions of Memory**

Houle created small, untitled ink paintings as illustrations for a volume of haiku poetry by his Anishinaabe friend, poet, novelist and social critic Gerald Vizenor. Houle does not necessarily illustrate the content of the poems but strives to create a feeling or emotion with his minimal images.

### **Liberating Cultural Heritage**

Born in 1947, Robert Houle grew up within the Sandy Bay First Nation in Manitoba. Though he was raised learning the Anishinaabe language and cultural practices of his extended family, his experiences of physical and emotional abuse at his community’s Catholic mission-run residential school—part of the Canadian government’s attempt to assimilate Indigenous people—left deep wounds.

Decades later, he would process his trauma through works such as “Sandy Bay,” which recounts and records Houle’s memories as a way to heal, as well as the black-and-white depictions of his nightmares, seen in “Sister Clothilde,” and their antidotes, dream shamans. In these works that address the past and healing, Robert identifies with “pahgedenaun,” a Saulteaux term he learned from his father meaning “to let [it] go” from one’s mind. “Beauty is a way of tempering a narrative that could be a victimizing narrative,” reflected curator Nanibush on the power of “Sandy Bay.” She said, “It can fill that narrative with hope, it can fill that narrative with empowerment.”

Houle was introduced to art during high school, after which he achieved concurrent art history and art teaching degrees in the early to mid-1970s. During his art history research, he was drawn to the abstract expressionists, particularly the vibrant color works of Barnett Newman. He was further inspired by contemporary Native artists’ uniquely Indigenous approaches, which were rarely displayed in museums and galleries at the time.

In 1977, the National Museum of Man (now the Canadian Museum of History) hired Houle as its first curator of Contemporary Indian Art. Groundbreaking as his role was, Houle recognized that his colleagues remained driven by the same mindset that has characterized the museum field since the 19th century—the erroneous belief that Indigenous people were dying out and museums existed to salvage their remaining cultures. Native contemporary art remained relegated to ethnographic collections rather than being considered fine art created by living people.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Houle witnessed an Indigenous cultural renaissance concurrent with growing political activism. His position afforded him the opportunity to meet contemporary Indigenous artists such as painter Norval Morrisseau (Anishinaabe), who became both an inspiration and a close friend. This cultural resurgence occurred in stark contrast to how Houle saw some museums treating Indigenous cultural heritage items. It was the museum’s dissection of a medicine bundle left under its protection that finally triggered Houle’s resignation after three years in his position there. He then resolved to “liberate” the heritage items he left behind. “How

do I do that?” he recalled in a conversation in the Autumn 1988 issue of *Muse*. “I am leaving. What can I do to breathe life into them, to show that they still matter?,” he said. “Up until last year I concentrated on making parfleches [pouches] and warrior staffs, trying to rehabilitate those objects I left behind.”

Since that time, Robert Houle has continued to “rehabilitate” museum collections on his own terms: in a blend of what he calls the “spiritual legacy of the ancient ones”—the rich artistic heritage of his ancestors—and Western abstraction. Early works such as his 1972 “Ojibway Motif, #2, Purple Leaves Series” interpreted ancestral beadwork designs into modernist, geometric forms. “Red Is Beautiful,” the first painting Houle sold to a museum, was inspired by patterns on woven bags. “His innovation is that he’s thinking of [traditional Indigenous designs] at the same time he’s thinking of the history of abstraction from a Western point of view,” asserted Nanibush. “He brings that together as something new.”

### **The Power of Color and Form**

As a colorist, his intense palette is representative of his abstract approach yet is infused with meaning derived from his Indigenous identity. “Especially within an Anishinaabe point of view, color has spiritual capacity and it has emotional capacity,” Nanibush observed. Houle uses color to express gender, emotion and memory while resetting imbalances. “Sometimes the color seems to be to me an interaction with the Western tradition. So he’ll throw pink in where ... the field might have been uber masculinist. It’s almost like he’s inserting a kind of feminine energy there or at least a criticism of the over-masculinist traditions within Western abstraction.”

Some of his earliest work while still a student at McGill University evidences his experimentation with color and emotion. Asked in 1972 by a professor to paint love, he drew inspiration from love poems a friend wrote to create a series of pastel, geometric paintings. His 1999 “Palisade I” combines historical significance with cultural symbolism: the vertical green canvases represent the palisades surrounding the British forts captured by Great Lakes First Nations during Pontiac’s War; the color also signifies the green wampum belts used to convey diplomatic messages.

His admiration for the color-field abstractions of Newman and innovation of Morrisseau in part allowed Houle to follow this syncretic path. “Newman was so huge because he could combine spirituality and abstraction,” said Nanibush. “With Morrisseau it’s more about him being Anishinaabe, it’s more about him taking his own people and the art community and doing something on his own, so it’s a different type of permission. It’s permission to talk about our culture in contemporary art and believe that it’s relevant.”

Similarly, Houle’s works based on the parfleche, an envelope often made of rawhide and customarily painted with geometric designs, are dedicated to contemporary Indigenous artists or delve into Houle’s exploration of spirituality. Both his Catholic and Anishinaabe religious upbringing significantly influenced his art and identity. For example, using paint and porcupine quills on paper for his 1983 “Parfleches for the Last Supper,” Houle rendered Jesus and his apostles into parfleche form.

## **Taking a Stand**

During the 1980s, Houle's work increasingly critiqued colonial interpretations of history, the appropriation of Indigenous names for commercial purposes and Indigenous peoples' resistance to continued government encroachment on their land and autonomy. In 1989, First Nations protestors blocked a logging road at the Canadian town of Temagami to challenge logging on tribal lands. In 1995 at Ipperwash, a community on Georgian Bay in Ontario, a First Nations demonstrator was shot to death during a confrontation with provincial police over the government's occupation of tribal lands. In 1990, the Mohawk community of Kanehsatà:ke protested the expansion of a golf course into First Nations lands. Houle's large-scale paintings dedicated to these acts of resistance stand to inform the public about First Nations' experiences of injustice.

The quincentenary of Columbus's landing in North America, 1992, was cause for many Indigenous artists to publicly rethink colonialism. During that year, Houle co-curated the influential exhibition "Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations" at the National Gallery of Canada. This was the first major exhibition of Indigenous contemporary art from Canada and the United States and placed both contemporary Indigenous art and land's spiritual and political legacy at the fore.

That same year Houle completed "Kanata," a monumental work that borrows British-American artist Benjamin West's 1770 painting "The Death of General Wolfe" to reframe Indigenous peoples' role in Canada's founding. He removed the painting's color except for the adornments on the single Native person in the image and inserted symbolic elements missing from the historical record such as a figure of an Indigenous woman and a Native person canoeing away.

Houle has continued to represent Indigenous experiences in his work, not just as a response to the dominant interpretation but also from a particularly Indigenous point of view. Throughout his lifetime of work, whether through elemental geometric works based on his cultural heritage or processing personal and community history, he adheres to traditional concepts of spirituality and beauty in his art that continue to provoke and inspire our emotions. "My art gives me a lot of strength to critique something, and I knew I had to do that," Houle commented. "It's been a way for me to deal with my own personal issues about our country and about our politics and about the way women are treated."

*Alexandra N. Harris is a senior editor at the National Museum of the American Indian.*

To actually see the work: <https://www.americanindianmagazine.org/Robert-Houle-exhibition>

*In Loving Memory*

# James Jay Plympton

"JP"



September 4, 1945

May 13, 2023

**VIEWING:**

Date: May 19, 2023  
Time: 10:00-11:00 am

**SERVICES:**

Date: May 19, 2023  
Time: 11:00 am

**BURIAL:**

Nixon Cemetery,  
Nixon, NV

**LOCATION:** Nixon Gymnasium, Nixon, NV

**Traditional Dinner** to follow burial services at the Nixon Gym.  
Food Donations appreciated.

*In Loving Memory*

*James William "JJ"  
Thomas, Jr.*

**VIEWING:**

Date: May 20, 2023  
Time: 10:00-11:00 am

**SERVICES:**

Date: May 20, 2023  
Time: 11:00

**LOCATION:**

Nixon Gymnasium,  
Nixon, NV

**TRADITIONAL DINNER:**

To follow services  
Food Donations  
appreciated

Flowers accepted on  
Wednesday

**CREMATION BURIAL:**

Date: May 24, 2023  
Time: 11:00 am  
Location:  
Nixon Cemetery,  
Nixon, NV



**Sunrise: 11/25/1971**

**Sunset: 05/13/2023**