10.17953/A3.47355

Dreaming Our Futures: Ojibwe and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Artists and Knowledge Keepers. By Brenda J. Child and Howard Oransky. Minneapolis: Katherine E. Nash Gallery, 2024. 168 pages. $34.95 hardcover.

I believe *Dreaming Our Futures: Ojibwe and Očhéthi Šakówin Artists and Knowledge Keepers* is an important catalog to read, to own, to familiarize yourself with, and to keep as a companion guide and reference. It includes an insightful history of events that have shaped the works of many different Ojibwe and Dakota artists and includes descriptions about how those perspectives are woven into the art these knowledge-keepers have created. Upon my first reading, I imagined it as a thoughtful book to increase understanding on how colonial history shapes contemporary Indigenous identity in the United States. I imagined it being used not only as a catalog but also to promote understanding of Indigenous art, to guide reflection on key Native American lifeways that help us to be better beings, and finally to increase fluency with Indigenous languages. Indeed, this book, for all its beauty, inspiration, and usefulness, is surprisingly priced at less than $35 for a new hardcover copy.

This book is well-structured with commentary on the collection by several thoughtful experts, which prepares readers for the works shared. The reader engages in a study of history that assist with understanding the artistic creations and the intent of the artists. In the prefacing section, experts cover important colonial traumas and how they are expressed by the artists. The experts comment on their direct experiences with the artists to show a greater context— how the life of the artist is uniquely incorporated into the art. It is my belief that art is supposed to evoke conversation about how the past has brought us to the present and to suggest where we might be headed. The directness of this book, like the art it represents, holds the potential to encourage thoughtful and multidimensional discourse between parties who may have discrepant notions on how history has affected and shaped Indigenous and non-Indigenous reality in the United States.

The history shared by the experts helps with appreciating the art, and the commentaries weave in important details to note when observing the works, details that could be overlooked by a novice. As is noted in the book on page 27, the works "are more like weavings than paintings," combining layers of traditional images with the unexpected and the stark. This juxtaposition and the commentary of the experts dismantles the romanticism by helping the viewer to realize how much of the story they do not understand—to stop making assumptions and investigate further. These questions stir the reader organically into wanting to know more of the underlying philosophy and storying that the works do not show but rather suggest.

The Indigenous philosophy alluded to in the paintings leads the reader to understand more about the ideas, the concepts, and the connections between past and

present, between ancestral wisdom and contemporary view. For example, Mona Susan Power examines a painting by Andrea Carlson depicting a peaceful background and a cluttered foreground, with a woman's hands appearing to birth or shove that chaos at the audience. Power's discussion on page 42 not only asks us to consider how we romanticize the past but also confronts us with the problem of the mess we have cultivated and should be sorting out. As Bobby Wilson notes on page 32, "You can't shake people who are romantic about Indians from being romantic about Indians," but observations like Power's help us interrogate the role romanticism might be playing in addressing our reality. Power also notes details on page 41 that promote the reader's consideration of how certain aspects of Carlson's painting show links between the past and the present. The presence of traditional Ojibwe characters from teachings and ceremony, peering into our contemporary mess, guides viewers to think about how our ancestors are watching us, questioning us, and pushing us to find resolution, not merely "checking to see where we are in the story . . . and are we near the end yet?" (41) but also protecting us on the periphery, outside of everyday awareness. Through their art, the artists offer questions to viewers to interrogate personal actions, accountability, and connectedness to problems as well as ask if we will continue to be part of their perpetuation. The artists offer the urgent questions we should be asking, but not the simple reconciliation some may be seeking or expecting.

The commentary helps the reader of the book and the viewer of the art to see the disservice of past galleries in presenting Indigenous art "as a retrograde, [an] always knowable object" (27) and shows the deeper level of how Indigenous artists seek to indigenize contemporary galleries rather than simply be included in them. This is not only revealed in the art, but also in the architecture of the book. The book being presented in English as well as the Native languages of the artists claims space and identity as well as reminds the reader of the challenges, beauty, and responsibility of bicultural citizenship. As a learner of Ojibwemowin, the language in which the thoughts of the Ojibwe artists are expressed, I am motivated to reach a greater level of fluency in order to reread their ideas as they would have communicated them to the ancestors.

I believe this book offers insight into Indigenous art, history, worldview, philosophy, and language to promote healing. As I read it, I found myself pushed to consider many things: the enigma of the horizon and its role in shaping my dreams; the nature of treaties, created to protect land though maintained relationships; and the realities of Indigenous artists being suppressed as they are asked to fulfill performative and predictable niches dictated by historical oppressors rather than express their unique, provocative voices. I was encouraged hearing about the importance of the seven parts of a whole (spirit, shadow, mind, body, heart, breath of life, and power) and our highest responsibility, to be a good relative. Contributor Diane Wilson cites a perceptive thought by artist Dougie Padilla: "Compassion is not always handing a rose to somebody. It is turning the sword sideways and whacking them with the flat edge" (47). In this way, through the thoughtful combination of words, art, and the stories they both tell, the book helps us imagine how healing may happen for us all.

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