



## **Robert Houle - Paris /Ojibwa**

**Education Guide  
Art Gallery of Peterborough 2011**

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## The Artist

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### Robert Houle Biography

Robert Houle was born in St. Boniface, Manitoba, 29 March 1947. He is a member of Sandy Bay First Nation, Manitoba and currently lives and works in Toronto. Houle is a Canadian contemporary Anishnabe artist who has played a significant role in retaining and defining First Nations identity and has drawn on Western art conventions to tackle lingering aspects of colonization and its postcolonial aftermath. Relying on the objectivity of modernity and the subjectivity of postmodernity he brings Aboriginal history into his work through the interrogation of text and photographic documents from the dominant society. He studied art history at the University of Manitoba, art education at McGill University and painting and drawing at the International Summer Academy of Fine Arts in Salzburg, Austria. Houle has been exhibiting since the early 1970's. His most recent exhibition, the multi-media installation *Paris/Ojibwa*, was recently on view at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris and will make its North American debut at the Art Gallery of Peterborough in May 2011. Among his many solo exhibitions are *Lost Tribes*, at Hood College, Maryland; *Sovereignty over Subjectivity*, at the Winnipeg Art Gallery; *Palisade*, at the Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa; and *Anishnabe Walker Court*, an intervention at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. He has also participated in several important international group exhibitions, including *Recent Generations: Native American Art from 1950 to 1987*, at the Heard Museum, Phoenix; *Traveling Theory*, at the Jordan National Gallery, Amman, Jordan; *Notions of Conflict*, at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; *Real Fictions: Four Canadian Artists*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia; *Tout le temps/Every Time*, at the Montreal Biennale 2000 and *We Come in Peace...: Histories of the Americas*, at the Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal.

*Robert Houle Biography continued*

Houle was the first Aboriginal curator of contemporary aboriginal art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization from 1977 to 1981 and has curated or co-curated groundbreaking exhibitions such as *New Work by a New Generation*, in connection with the World Assembly of First Nations at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina in 1982, and *Land Spirit Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* in Ottawa during the Columbus Quincentennial.

As a writer, Houle has written many essays and monographs on major contemporary First Nations and Native American artists. He also taught native studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto for fifteen years mentoring a new generation of artists and curators. Houle's considerable influence as an artist, curator, writer, educator and cultural theorist has led to his being awarded the Janet Braide Memorial Award for Excellence in Canadian Art History in 1993; the 2001 Toronto Arts Award for the Visual Arts; the Eiteljorg Fellowship in 2003; membership in the Royal Canadian Academy; distinguished Alumnus, University of Manitoba and the Canada Council International Residency Program for the Visual Arts in Paris. Additionally, Houle has served on various boards and advisory committees including those of The Art Gallery of Ontario, The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, The Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, A Space, The Power Plant and the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

Currently, he has returned to OCAD to lecture on indigenous abstraction in the faculty of art and is working on a group of portraits based on research done over the last three years in Paris. He has recently contributed an essay to the catalogue, *The Colour of My Dreams: the Surrealist Revolution in Art*, the largest exhibition of this movement ever to be presented in Canada at the Vancouver Art Gallery and plans to publish a book based on his collected writings and thoughts on contemporary Aboriginal art.

## Artist Influences

Robert Houle has played a significant role in retaining and defining First Nations identity and has drawn on Western art conventions to tackle lingering aspects of colonization and its postcolonial aftermath. While creating his work, Robert Houle was influenced by the artists Eugène Delacroix and Benjamin West, and by the French poet Charles Baudelaire. Robert Houle first became aware of this enduring connection between cultures during his residency at La Cité des Arts in Paris where he noted that exotic encounters with Native Americans impressed the 19<sup>th</sup> century Parisian imaginations of poets and painters, notably Charles Baudelaire and Eugène Delacroix. Robert writes that, “seeing the Delacroix sketch, *Cinq études d’Indiens*, [of the Ojibwa dancers] at the Louvre’s Pavillon de Flore (Paris), le department des arts graphiques was like traveling back in time to when Delacroix first drew it”.



“Cinq études d’Indiens”, (Eugene Delacroix, 1845), plume encre brune, sur papier velin, collection of the Louvre.  
Delacroix drew these Ojibwa during a performance at the Salle Valentino.

Artist's Influences, continued

### Benjamin West



"The Death of General Wolfe" (Benjamin West, 1770), oil on canvas, 152.6 x 214.5 cm Transfer from the Canadian War Memorials, 1921 (Gift of the 2nd Duke of Westminster, England, 1918) National Gallery of Canada (no. 8007)

### Karl Girardet



"Louis-Philippe assistant dans un salon des Tuileries a la danse d'Indiens hovas. 21 avril 1845", 1846, (Karl Girardet, 1813-1871), collection of Musée national du Château de Versailles. Photo credit: Agence photographique de la Réunion.des musées nationaux.

## Cultural Influences

As an Anishnabe artist, Robert Houle explains that his 16 foot square by 11 foot 9 inches high set complete with a sound component and futurist video projection is “a cultural hybrid of theatricality and ethnicity”.<sup>1</sup> Houle’s installation, *Paris/Ojibwa* re-imagines a grand 1845 Parisian room in which two different cultures, Ojibwa and Parisian, make contact, evoking the lingering memory of the historical Maungwudaus and his (Ojibwa) dance troupe performing for the Parisian court.

Houle first became aware of this enduring connection between cultures where he noted that exotic encounters with Native Americans impressed the 19<sup>th</sup> century Parisian imaginations of poets and painters, notably Charles Baudelaire and Eugène Delacroix. Robert writes that, “seeing Delacroix sketch, *Cinq études d’Indiens*, [of the Ojibwa dancers] at the Louvre’s Pavillon de Flore, le département des arts graphiques was like traveling back in time to when Delacroix first drew it”.<sup>2</sup>

The artist’s re-imagining of what may have happened in this encounter -- took place in 2006 during his residency at La Cité des Arts in Paris. The resulting multi-media installation is homage to the memory of the indigenous dance troupe, as well as a reflection on the crucial theme of disappearance. The title of the work alludes to contact between Europeans and a group of indigenous people from Canada guided by a remarkable man, Maungwudaus (a Great Hero).

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Houle, *Paris/Ojibwa* artist statement.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

### History of the event- background for teachers<sup>3</sup>

In the year of 1845, Parisians saw authentic Ojibwa on the streets as performers, tourists, and always as a curiosity. These Ojibwa who were also called Mississauga or Chippewa, came from what was then known as Canada West. Ignorance and prejudice were so widespread that pamphlets had to be handed out to advise people that one could not walk to there, that the Rockies were not in India, and that the visiting performers had their own language, Ojibwa, Anishnabe (Anishnabewin).

At the behest of George Catlin<sup>4</sup>, Maungwudaus<sup>5</sup> and his family and companions had left London to replace the Iowa in the *tableaux vivants* that complemented the display of his paintings and educational program. A viral outbreak of smallpox had taken its toll on the Iowa and they were returning home. Maungwudaus, or George Henry as he was baptized and listed in the early nineteenth century records of the Methodist Episcopal Church, (now the United Church of Canada), was the son of Mesquacosy and Tubiniqua and half-brother of the well known missionary, the Reverend Peter Jones. He helped write an Ojibwa hymnbook but left his church after a split between the followers of Reverend Jones, those who wanted to return to traditional ways and those who believed in Europeanization. Peter Jones thought that the European exhibitions of George Henry were harmful and stifling to the true character of their people. To Jones, amelioration meant living as Christians and integrating into the larger society, while Henry challenged the ideology behind that premise of becoming better by forfeiting everything handed down from the ancestors. Maungwudaus was well aware that they were seen as visiting "curiosities" as he writes in his self-published manuscript "An Account of the Chippewa Indians, Who Have Been Travelling Among the Whites in the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland, France and Belgium" (Boston, 1848).

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<sup>3</sup> Information to be used at your discretion depending on the age of your class.

<sup>4</sup> George Catlin (July 26, 1796- December 23, 1872) was an American painter, author and traveler, who specialized in painting portraits of Native Americans.

<sup>5</sup> (Maungwudaus/ George Henry, 1811-after 1855) Born at the 40 Mile Creek in the Credit River area to Mesquacosy and Tubiniqua, Maungwudaus was an Ojibwa who converted to Christianity in 1824 and became one of the most promising Native candidates for the Methodist ministry.

*History of the event, continued*

They entertained Louis-Philippe and his queen, Amélie, as well as the king and queen of Belgium, at Saint Cloud. The French monarch had spent more than three years of his exile during the Napoleonic Wars in the new republic of the United States of America (1796-1800). He had traveled from Louisiana to Maine and had contact with the Anishnabe (Ojibwa) and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) throughout the New England states and the Appalachians.

The Iowa and the Ojibwa peoples were more susceptible to smallpox and their fear was based on the knowledge that many other aboriginal nations had completely disappeared. The distribution of infested blankets, the first germ warfare in North America is revealed in correspondence between Colonel Bouquet and Lord Jeffrey Amherst, the commanding general of the British forces during the final battles of the French/ Indian wars (1757-1763). Chief Pontiac (1720-1769), a French ally, led a rebellion of eighteen indigenous nations in 1763 wherein the Seneca and the Frenchmen circulated wampum/war belts to try to halt the encroachment on territory yet to be settled by treaty. The Seneca, known as the keepers of the western door of the Iroquois territory suffered greatly. Several of their villages were decimated by the Amherst war strategy of giving a gift of a small metal box filled with infected pieces of flannel and then insisting that their emissaries "...do not open until you get home".<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Michael Bell, *Robert Houle's Palisade* (Ottawa, Carlton University Art Gallery: 2001). This exhibition catalogue provides a wealth of endnotes and original sources about smallpox and General Amherst.

## The Exhibition

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### About the Exhibition

This multimedia installation travels backward in time to the Paris of 1845. Two different cultures, urban and woodland, old and new worlds, come into contact. And through a metaphoric room, memory, objectification, decoration, construction and disappearance are revealed, a room defined by the sound of drums and chanting and a video projection animating the dancing Ojibwa. The title alludes to contact between Parisians and a group of exotically garbed, indigenous people from Canada, elaborately head-dressed in plumes configured as never seen before. History is reclaimed through the aboriginal representation of an actual event based on a drawing and a travelogue. The four elegiac paintings in the installation are a pictorial representation of abstracted shapes and forms that leave traces of time, of paint and colour. They interrogate space, and integrate a location where the Ojibwa will return symbolically one last time. The room, made of memories of a Delacroix drawing and Maungwudaus' pamphlet, includes a sound component that permeates throughout the host venue. The viewer is at the intersection of indigenous spirituality and Judeo-Christian modernity. The ancestors and the manitous will hear the entry song. The theatrical, trompe l'oeil, marble floor, never quarried, never danced upon, situates the viewer in front of a European interior, an alternate view.

The *Paris/Ojibwa* multimedia installation is an imposing suite of four simulated classic French wall panels against a floor of simulated marble. Each panel depicts a painted figure: a shaman, a warrior, a dancer and a healer. Facing toward the horizon of home, their Indigenous roots connect to the landscape in each painting. Beneath each panel is an abstracted depiction of the smallpox which took many of their lives, derived from paintings on an 18th century buffalo robe now in the collection of the Branly Museum in Paris. Across the top of the panels, the names of the 1845 Ojibwa are painted in gold. Adjacent to this structure is a video installation by French artist and animator Hervé Dagois, commissioned by Houle as a visual celebration of the healing and optimism of the contemporary Jingle Dance. The room, made of memories of a Delacroix drawing and Maungwudaus' pamphlet, includes a sound component. The soft, rippling sound of water that slowly develops into drumming evokes a heartbeat.

## History of the exhibition

The Art Gallery of Peterborough is proud to present the Canadian debut of *Paris/Ojibwa* an installation by Anishnabe artist, Robert Houle: May 14 through September 4, 2011. *Paris/Ojibwa* was first exhibited at the Centre culturel canadien de Paris in April 2010 with support from the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council. On April 13th 2010 a dozen of Canada's most accomplished Anishnabe artists, curators, art lovers and their friends gathered in Paris to celebrate the opening of *Paris/Ojibwa* at the Canadian Cultural Centre. Visionary artist, writer and curator Robert Houle conceived this event, of major cultural and historical significance.

As a ceremonial lead-in to the formal opening of the exhibit and in homage to the Ojibwa of 1845, Houle invited artist, curator, dancer and Odawa artist, Barry Ace, to perform a series of pow wow dances beginning at the Louvre, winding through the Tuileries Gardens, on to Cleopatra's Needle, and down the Champs-Élysées with his final dance in front of the installation. In his beautiful black velvet and red silk regalia, Ace stepped out of the Louvre, turned on an iPod speaker system, and with blaring pow wow music, danced men's traditional to a surprised crowd. With grace and power, Ace honoured the Ojibwa (Anishinabeg) dancers who had traveled to Paris in 1845. Groups of onlookers followed, grew and changed as he danced in the Tuileries Garden, at Cleopatra's Finger and finally in front of the cultural centre at the Place des Invalides. Like the Ojibwa of 1845 he too endured the pain of dancing on concrete, cobble stone, pebbles and marble in moccasins designed for contact only with the earth.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Chansonneuve, Deb. "Paris/ Ojibwa 1845-2010." May 2010.



"Dancer", "Healer", "Shaman", "Warrior", from the installation Paris/Ojibwa, 2009, framed, oil on canvas, (71.5 x 214 cm)

## The Program

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### About the Program

The School Education program at the Art Gallery of Peterborough offers activities designed to meet the Ontario curriculum guidelines of creativity, self-expression, and imagination. The gallery recognizes the importance of incorporating the Ministry guidelines into the program, and creating a valuable learning experience that can be extended into the classroom. At the Art Gallery of Peterborough students will engage in hands-on activities and create their art to augment their visit to *Robert Houle, Paris/ Ojibwa*.

Bookings are available from May 18 to June 30, 2011.

## **What is First Nations art?**

First Nations refers to the various cultural groups from across Canada and the United States. Each of these groups has a unique and diverse heritage, language, cultural practice, spiritual belief, and art style. First Nations art can take many forms, such as ancient carvings, rock art, designs in sand or on the body, fiber craft and wooden sculptures, or bark paintings. For instance, quillwork was a major art form for the Plains First Nations people. The Woodlands First Nations carved artistic tools such as canes, spoons, pipes, and bowls from burl wood. The Pueblo First Nations have a strong tradition of painting portraits of animals, people, and the environment, while the Southwest First Nations people decorate the walls of caves with images of people, animals, and geometric forms.<sup>8</sup> All of these art forms are unique and different, however most First Nations art focuses on ancient, historical, and modern traditions, colonialism, storytelling, rebirth, or death.

## **What is the difference between First Nations Contemporary and Traditional art?**

In order to understand First Nations art, it is important to define both contemporary and traditional art. Traditional art is part of the historical culture of a group of people, or is skills, and knowledge, which is passed down through generations. Contemporary art may be defined as art produced from the 1970's to the present time.

In context to First Nations art, traditional art forms were often created out of organic materials. For instance, paint was often made up of crushed stones to produce birch bark paintings, whereas contemporary First Nations artists experiment with modern materials such as, oil paints, acrylic paints, watercolours, and terracotta sculptures. Both traditional and contemporary forms of First Nations art do however, focus around images of their own people, the environment, relationships with the earth, colonialism, and the continuum of humanity.

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<sup>8</sup> Anne D'Alleva, *Painting/Rock Art, Native American Arts & Cultures*, Martha Siegel, Worcester, Massachusetts, U.S.A., Davis Publications, 1993, 63-4.

**Pre-visit Lesson For AGP School Education Program** (An option for teachers to cover before the visit)

**Key Learning/Big Picture:** Students will learn about the Anishnabe life in 1845 as well as explore local history from this time period. Students will also be briefly introduced to the artist Robert Houle and the influences that inspired his work.

**Curriculum Expectations:** This information will provide an appropriate context for the class visit to the Art Gallery of Peterborough and the Studio Activities. As outlined in the Ontario curriculum overview for Junior students (grades 4 to 6), students will develop their ability to use the arts to understand, explore and communicate feelings and ideas from, and about, their multicultural, multimedia environment. Students will also learn to identify and explore multiple perspectives, question the messages in works of art and consider the issues raised in them, including issues related to fairness, equity, and social justice.

**Materials/Resources:** Projector for colour images with photocopies of worksheet 1 handout

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Worksheets will be evaluated along with observation of student responses

**Lesson Sequence:** Begin by asking the students about what they know about the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada and any local connections with Aboriginal Peoples. The artist Robert Houle should be introduced (biographical information as well as all handouts and photographs are attached to this document), and a brief explanation of his inspirations and influences should be given.

Discuss life for Aboriginal Peoples before and after the Europeans colonized Canada. What changed and what stayed the same? While the differences and similarities are being explained, images depicting Anishnabe life could be shared with the students.

**Closure:** Students will be given the included worksheet.

**Ongoing Assessment:** Evaluate student progress.

*Pre-visit Lesson for AGP School Education Program (An option for teachers to cover before the visit) continued*

## Robert Houle and Anishnabe (Ojibwa) Culture

### A Brief Overview: Life for the Anishnabe Before Colonization.<sup>9</sup>

Eastern Ojibway men hunted or fished alone or in small groups, while women gathered food such as wild rice, berries and maple sap. Like their Cree neighbours in the northern Great Lakes region, they lived in small family hunting groups, each with its own recognized territory, during the winter months, moving into band villages during the summer. The largest unit was the band, linked by language, kinship and about 15-20 patrilineal clans or families. The power of the chiefs was limited, and tribal council was rare, and limited to making war. Ojibway who moved west differed from their eastern cousins. Some - the Bungee - cultivated corn, squash, beans, and tobacco. Others like the Saulteaux adapted further, and adopted the Buffalo culture. The Ojibway used birch bark for canoes, cooking utensils and decorated storage boxes called makuks that were shaped by steaming, sewn with fibres and sealed with gum to make them watertight. When they moved camp, they rolled up the birch bark covering of the wigwam and carried it along with them. In the summer, the Ojibway men wore buckskin breechcloths, and both sexes wore vests, leggings and moccasins, with fur and decorated hide garments in the winter, and colorful sashes with zigzags and stripes woven on looms. After first contact with French, bands became larger and the power of Ojibway chiefs grew, since they were called upon to negotiate with the fur traders. This also left them open to war - from 1630-1700 they fought the Beaver Wars with the Iroquois. They were also struck by European diseases that overwhelmed the power of the shamans who had relied on herbal medicine. The Midewiwin (Grand Medicine Society), a secret religious society open to both men and women, evolved at that time to perform healing ceremonies. The society kept records on birch bark, the only written records kept by Great Lakes tribes. The Midewiwin also forged tribal cohesion, and made the Anishinabe Nation one of the most powerful and unified tribes on the continent.

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<sup>9</sup> The History of Canada Online. <[www.canadachannel.ca](http://www.canadachannel.ca)> April 2011

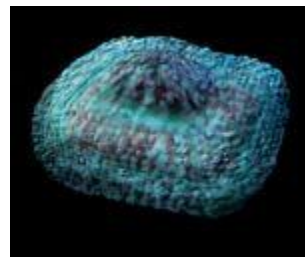
## After Colonization, the effects of Smallpox

Native populations of the Americas lacked immunity to the infectious diseases that had already ravaged Europe. Sparse populations prevented a buildup of communicable diseases. Various European diseases such as measles, chicken pox, typhus, typhoid fever, dysentery, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and mainly the smallpox virus devastated the Indigenous American populations. The resulting number of deaths, realignment of tribal alliances, brought subsequent changes in Canadian and American Indian Cultures.

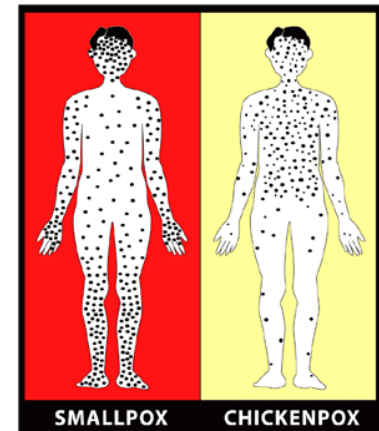
Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the estimated native population in North and South America numbered ninety to one hundred million. Conservative estimates place the deaths from smallpox above sixty-five percent of the population.

### What is smallpox?

Smallpox is a very serious illness caused by a virus called the variola virus. Smallpox gets its name from the pus-filled blisters (or pocks) that form during the illness. Smallpox is very contagious. The virus can spread to others, through tiny drops of an infected person's saliva. Smallpox virus can live for years on infected material.



Smallpox virus



Smallpox is not related to Chickenpox which is a much milder disease caused by a different virus

### In Peterborough, did you know that...?

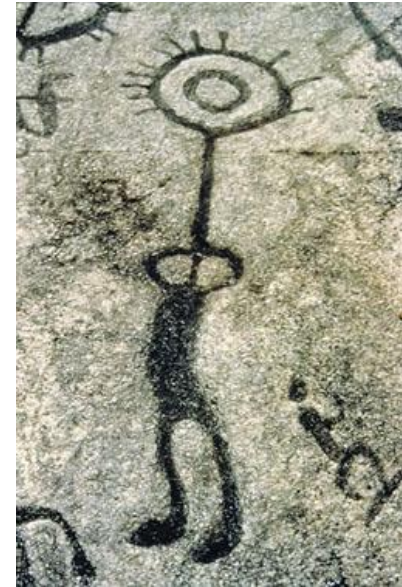
Peterborough has many Aboriginal Peoples historical sights such as the Petroglyphs in *Petroglyphs Park*, the *Serpent Mounds Park* near Keene and a *burial site*

After being partially buried for centuries, the Peterborough Petroglyphs were 'rediscovered' for contemporary audiences in 1924. The limestone at Peterborough is generally thought to have been carved by the Algonkian people between 900 and 1400 CE. Today, the First Nations people of Ontario call the carvings *Kinomagewapkong*, meaning "the rocks that teach.

The Serpent Mounds Park is owned and operated by Hiawatha First Nation. On a high point of land near Rice Lake are nine burial mounds that enclose the graves of the Point Peninsula people. The largest mound has a zigzag or 'serpentine' shape.

The Brock Street Burial Plaque:

"Here on December 6, 1960, the skeletal remains of a man who lived in this area about 2000 years ago were discovered by Douglas Yaxley of Peterborough. Buried with the man were twenty-nine artifacts attributed to the Point Peninsula culture which occupied the Trent River system before the Christian Era."



Pictographs at Peterborough Petroglyphs

**Worksheet 1 Questions** (Junior grades)

1. What are the some of the historical Aboriginal sights in and around Peterborough?
2. Who has influenced Robert Houle's artwork?
3. What material did the Ojibwa use to make canoes?
4. How did contact with European visitors and colonizers affect the Ojibwa people?

**Worksheet 1 Questions** (Intermediate grades)

1. How did contact with the Europeans affect the existing Cultures and People of North America?
2. What makes up a culture? List the components that distinguish one culture from another.
3. Is it important to preserve artifacts and create Historical Heritage Sites? (i.e., the Peterborough Petroglyphs, the Brock Street Burial Plaque.)

Why or why not?

Who decides what is important and how it is presented?

4. Artist Robert Houle said: "seeing the Delacroix sketch, *Cinq études d'Indiens*, [of the Ojibwa dancers] at the Louvre's Pavillon de Flore (Paris), le department des arts graphiques, was like traveling back in time to when Delacroix first drew it". How do you respond to that statement?

**Robert Houle - Paris / Ojibwa**



Artist Robert Houle in his installation Paris /Ojibwa

## Compare and Contrast



"The Death of General Wolfe"  
(Benjamin West, 1770), oil on  
canvas, 152.6 x 214.5 cm  
Transfer from the Canadian  
War Memorials, 1921 (Gift of  
the 2nd Duke of Westminster,  
England, 1918) National  
Gallery of Canada (no. 8007)



"Kanata" (Robert Houle, 1992),  
acrylic and conté crayon on canvas,  
228.7 x 732 cm overall; panels:  
228.7 x 183 cm each. (Purchased  
1994) National Gallery of Canada  
(no. 37479.1-4)

### **Compare and Contrast**

1. How does Robert Houle's "Kanata" vary from Benjamin West's "The Death of General Wolfe"?
2. How are the two paintings similar?
3. How has Robert Houle used West's image?
4. How has the meaning changed?

**Post-visit Lesson for AGP School Education Program (An option for teachers)**

**Key Learning/Big Picture:** Students will discuss and analyze Robert Houle’s exhibition. Topics covered include context, materials used to create the installation, feelings evoked from the installation and the different perspectives of both parties involved in the event. (Paris/Ojibwa) Students will learn about Maungwudaus. Teachers can use the attached documents of images and text to discuss with their students. For junior levels: students are to write a journal entry discussing how the exhibition made them feel. For intermediate levels: write a short story in a first person point of view of one of the Ojibwa persons who is recalling their journey to Paris in 1845.

**Curriculum Expectations:** As outlined in the Ontario curriculum overview for Junior students (grades 4 to 6), students will develop their ability to use the arts to understand, explore and communicate feelings and ideas from, and about, their multicultural, multimedia environment. As outlined in the Ontario curriculum, students will also learn to identify and explore multiple perspectives, question the messages in works of art and consider the issues raised in them, including issues related to fairness, equity, and social justice.

**Materials/Resources:** pens/pencils and erasers, journal/paper and a copy of “Account of the Chippewa Indians Who Have Been Travelling Among the Whites in the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland. France and Belgium” (Boston, 1848)

**Lesson Sequence:** *Maungwudaus*, chief of the Ojibwa group in Paris will be discussed. The handout included should be read as well as an excerpt from his published records "Account of the Chippewa Indians." (1848)

Students will complete a writing exercise of which the grade level will determine the specifications.

**Junior:** Students are to write a journal entry describing the feelings that they had while visiting the exhibition as well as why they expressed those emotions. Students are to explain possible solutions and next steps that they may advise others in regards to the topics at hand. Student's journal entry should include a drawing to help them demonstrate this point.

**Senior:** Students are to create a short story/letter written in the first person point of view. Imagine that they are one of Maungwudaus' Ojibwa troupe touring in Paris in 1845. As is the case in most histories, the predominant point of view is heard while those voices opposing the dominant are lost or altered. What were their opinions about the situation? Perhaps they enjoyed being "curiosities." Were they influenced to partake or were they forced? What were their reactions to Paris? The final copy could be written with ink on a tea soaked and crumpled paper so that it appears to be written in 1845.

**Closure:** Students may present their journal entries and drawing or letter to the class. The teacher may wish to ask questions concerning their attitudes towards the exhibition.

**Ongoing Assessment:**

The students will be asked the next day to write out what they remember from this lesson as a formative assessment. Student work and student participation will be evaluated.

*Post visit lesson for AGP School Education Program (An option for teachers), continued*

## Learning about Maungwudaus



Maungwudaus' troupe. An 1851 daguerreotype of six of the Chippewa (Ojibwa) that visited Europe in 1845. Photo credit: Chicago Historical Society.

## George Henry Biography (Maungwudaus)

Christian Guardian, An account of the North American Indians

Born at the 40 Mile Creek in the Credit River (southern Ontario) area to parents Mesquacosy and Tubiniqua, Henry was an Ojibwa who converted to Christianity in 1824. Along with his half-brother Peter Jones, John Sunday, and Peter Jacobs, he was considered one of the foremost members of the Methodist Church in Canada, devoting fifteen years to the conversion of his people to Christianity, travelling long distances, teaching, interpreting, preaching, and enjoying great respect among his own people and his Methodist superiors. In the late 1830s he helped James Evans write an Ojibwa hymn book and regularly sent letters to the *Christian Guardian*, the Methodist newspaper. In 1840 he suddenly left the ministry. For the next three years he worked as the government interpreter at the St Clair Mission; and in 1843 organized a dance troupe to tour the United States and Europe. Wherever they stopped, they were entertained and honoured as celebrities by royalty and high society alike. Henry's reminiscences and impressions of his experiences overseas appeared in three pamphlets: *Remarks concerning the Ojibway Indians, by one of themselves, called Maungwudaus, who has been travelling in England, France, Belgium, Ireland, and Scotland*, (Leeds, 1847) includes a short account of the tour as well as a few comments regarding Native religion and customs and several testimonials. *An account of the Chippewa Indians, who have been travelling among the whites in the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland, France and Belgium* (Boston, 1848) is his most detailed literary effort, recording his impressions of persons and places in London, Paris, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, as well as shrewd comments on the contemporary scene and amusing anecdotes.

*An account of the North American Indians* (Leicester, 1848) includes a very brief description of his tour written by himself. His perceptive and amusing impressions, however, are the first of few Native testimonials regarding Europeans that survive. Henry's wife and their three children born overseas all died during the tour. An advertisement in the Toronto *Globe*, on 22 April 1851, announced an 'illustrated lecture on their manners and customs' to be given by the celebrated Maungwudaus, as well as the appearance of 'three of his sons and an Ottawa Female ... in their *Original Costume* ornamented with coloured Porcupine Quills, their caps made of Golden Eagle's Feathers, and their necklaces of Grizzly Bear's Claws'. Another advertisement, this time in the

*Harrisburg Morning Herald*, 11 May 1854, announced his appearance in that city. His last-known letter (in the Henry Schoolcraft Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.) is dated 23 Sept. 1855. Henry then disappeared from documentary evidence.<sup>10</sup>

**Ojibwa in Maungwudaus' troupe:**

Maun-gua-daus (a Great Hero) Chief, age 41

Say-say-gon (the Hail Storm), age 31

Ke-che-us-sin (the Strong Rock, age 27

Mush-she-mong (the King of the Loons), age 25

Au-nim-much-kwah-um (the Tempest Bird), age 20

A-wun-ne-wa-be (the Bird of Thunder), age 19

Wau-bud-dick (the Elk), age 18

U-je-jock (the Pelican), age 10

Noo-din-no-kay (the Furious Storm), age 4

Min-nis-sin-noo (a Brave Warrior), age 3

Uh-wus-sig-gee-zigh-gook-kway (Woman of the Upper World) Wife of Chief, age 38



<sup>10</sup> Penny Petrone. "George Henry Biography." < <http://www.jrank.org/literature/pages/8002/George-Henry.html#ixzz1II6DERJG> > April 2011.

## Helpful Resources

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### Words to Consider

**Aboriginal Peoples** – The descendents of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35 (2) of the Constitution Act of 1982 states, “In this Act, Aboriginal peoples of Canada includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.”

**Anishnabe**- Anishinabe - Anishinaabe or Anishinabe—or more properly Anishinaabeg or Anishinabek. The ethnonym (the name a group gives itself) of a group of First Nations peoples in the Great Lakes region, including the Ojibwa, Odawa and Pottawatomi. The word comes from the Algonquian language and is translated as "first people," "original people" or "the people."

**Appropriation** - the taking of something that belongs to or is associated with somebody else, especially without permission.

**Colonization** – The control or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people (i.e. The Federal Government developed Residential Schools, which forced First Nations children to leave their families and homes, and abandon their cultural traditions and languages.

**Context**- The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

**Culture**- The customs, arts, social institutions, achievements, attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular nation, people, or other social group.

**First Nations** – First Nations is a term of ethnicity that refers to the Aboriginal peoples in Canada who are neither Inuit nor Métis. The term “First Nations” has gained wide acceptance in Canada since the 1970s. First Nations is more inclusive to all cultural groups. There are currently over 600 recognized First Nations governments or bands spread all across Canada, roughly half of which are in the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia.

**Indigenous Peoples-** Indigenous peoples are ethnic groups that are defined as indigenous according to one of the various definitions of the term, there is no universally accepted definition but most of which carry connotations of being the "original inhabitants" of a territory. In the late twentieth century the term became a political term used to refer to ethnic groups have historical ties to groups that existed in a territory prior to colonization or formation of a nation state, and which normally preserve a degree of cultural and political separation from the mainstream culture and political system of the nation state within the border of which the indigenous group is located.

**Installation Art** – Art that is created, constructed, or installed on the site where it is exhibited. Installation art works with a particular space, and usually aims for the subject or viewer to partake in the work physically by moving through the installation.

**Small Pox-** An acute contagious viral disease, with fever and pustules usually leaving permanent scars that the Europeans gave to the Indigenous Peoples through contact and infected blankets and supplies.

### Continued Study

- Countries and their Cultures < [www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)>
- Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Ceremonies*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.
- Native Art in Canada: An Ojibwa Elder's Art and Stories < [www.native-art-in-canada.com](http://www.native-art-in-canada.com)>
- *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791*, edited by Rubin G. Thwaites. Cleveland: Burrows Brothers Co., 1896-1901.
- Warren, William Whipple. *History of the Ojibway People*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984 (originally published, 1885).

## Acknowledgements

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