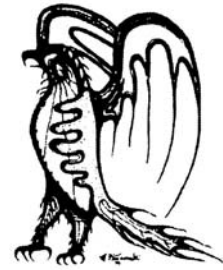


Ojibwe Cultural Foundation



Ojibwe Cultural Foundation

Tasenwang: All Souls Day

By Patsy Panamick

Tasenwang is celebrated on November 1st to honor those who have gone before us. It is also referred to as “All Soul’s Day.” Tasenwang is a type of memorial, celebrated in our own traditional way. Families and community members prepare for this day by gathering and harvesting wild game, edibles, teas and fish. Special wreaths are made to place at the gravesite of a loved one who has passed on.

Cemeteries are cleaned by community members and a ceremony is performed before the evening feast. A dish of food is prepared with a bit of everything and set at the table. This food is burned & offered to the spirits before having the meal. Upon retiring for the night, a clean ta-



Patsy Panamick, Kate Roy, & Sophie Corbiere stand with the wreaths they have made for Tasewang. Photo by A. Corbiere.

ble setting is placed at the table for the spirits to come to anytime throughout the night.□

Jiibay-Miikan: The Path of the Dead

By Alan Corbiere

Tasenwang is a blending of Anishinaabe beliefs and Christian practices. The Church and all of its denominations could not totally eradicate all pagan customs the world over so they did the next best thing, which is, supplant

the pagan practices with their own. These days the Anishinaabe makes a wreath and places it on the grave, as Christians do elsewhere, however, the key difference is that during Tasenwang the Anishinaabe makes an offering *cont'd p.4*

Volume 1, Issue 4
October 2006

Dates to Remember

- October 6, 1862, Manitoulin Treaty was signed
- October 7–8, Mnjikaning Pow wow (Rama)
- October 9—Thanksgiving
- October 28 - OCF Wreath making workshop, call Patsy 377-4902
- October 31—Halloween
- November 1—All Souls Day Tasenwang
- November 3–4 Sissagwad Art Symposium at The OCF

Inside this issue:

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The Unexplained, by Carl Beam

Interpretation by Ray Fox

“The Unexplained” is one of many successful pieces using Postmodernism as an artistic weapon that Carl executed; the emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity; the emphasis on HOW seeing (perception itself) takes place, rather than on WHAT is being perceived.

Many people, Native and non-Native people, look at these images and are deeply moved, shocked by the visual content of the individuals with covered heads over the Pieta scene of Jesus Christ. A sense of guilt is triggered by this collage and the suggestive use of the white cross directly over the heads of these two individuals.

The depictions are actually of Apache Gaan Dancers (“Spirit Mountain Dancers”). They cover their heads in spiritual ritual, in the belief that when a man covers up his physical identity, others cannot identify him as an individual man, but an exposed spiritual entity. The crosses above their heads, assumed to be Christian, but have in fact, been used by Native Americans as a principle teaching symbol, for a long time, predating European contact. Therefore, the cross is “Pre-Christian.”

‘The Pieta’ scene of the Virgin Mary cradling the dead body of Christ, a powerful iconic image in Christian history, is posi-



“The Unexplained” by Carl Beam, Ojibwe Cultural Foundation Collection.

tioned directly underneath the Gaan Dancers. Carl Beam said, “One Act of Faith = One Act of Faith” universally speaking on the comparison between faiths, and the clash between cultures from a societal misunderstanding. □

Sissagwad: Artists Forum Nov. 3– 4, 2006 at the OCF

Congratulations to Dave Migwans, M’Chi-geng, artist who has successfully received a grant to host an artist symposium. Dave has called the gathering “Sissagwad: The whispering sound of the Spirits”.

The symposium will bring together estab-

lished and emerging artists. The established artists will deliver presentations explaining the Anishinaabe creative process, the history of Anishinaabe art, Anishinaabe artistic technique, as well as thoughts on the directions Anishinaabe art may go. Invited speakers include Lee Bell, James Simon, Blake Debassige, Anong Beam and Peter Migwans.

Carl Beam: Artistic Innovator

By Ray Fox

Carl Beam (1943-2005), an internationally recognized Canadian artist of Ojibwe descent, was an innovator in the contemporary art scene and a strong influence to an entire generation of Aboriginal artists. Carl was also influential as a political and environmental activist.

In 2005, Beam was a recipient of the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Victoria, and also did post-graduate work at the University of Alberta. A multi-talented artist who worked in diverse media including: drawing, painting, watercolour, etching, non-silver photography, ceramics, all executed with his mastered photo transferring process. His work has been exhibited throughout North America as well as Germany, Italy, Denmark, and China. His works are housed in major permanent Canadian and international collections such as, the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Abright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York.

Carl Beam has been a supporter of the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation. He designed and provided the monument piece (sandblasted in limestone), depicting the Shaman Family, which greets the visitors to the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation. Carl also designed and donated the engraving of the Thunderbird inlaid in the centre of the floor of the rotunda at the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation. The Thunderbird is a powerful spiritual being to the Anishnaabek and is also the symbol representing the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation. In completing the artwork, Carl then waived the commission (back) to be used in programming, as his personal contribution to the OCF.□



A Commemorative banner hangs in downtown Toronto for Carl Beam. Photo by A. Corbiere taken on September 27, 2006.

An 'Encounter' with Carl By Alan Corbiere

On a fortuitous visit to Toronto, I stopped at the lights on Bloor Street and looked up to see a mural of Albert Einstein holding some contraption. To my surprise, I saw that this was a reproduction of one of Carl Beam's works. Apparently Carl has some fans down in Toronto as well! Seeing a 7 story mural dedicated to Carl reminded me how influential Carl was and remains. Carl used many iconographic images of people in his work to convey political messages; people such as Crowfoot, Sitting Bull, Poundmaker and Einstein. I had to wonder to myself if Carl was getting a kick out of the fact that his work was hanging from a Holiday Inn hotel in downtown Toronto, sponsored by a media group.□

Jiibay-Miikan: The Path of the Dead cont'd from page 1

of food to those that have passed on and burns it in the fire. This element of the Anishinaabe belief was considered a sin by the priests. The priests were outfitted with booklets in Ojibwe to read to the Anishinaabeg, booklets such as Catechisms and the “Examination of Conscience”, which was a series of questions a priest asked before taking somebody’s confession. Questions about lying, stealing, observing the Sabbath, were the usual fare, but the Anishinaabeg were asked: “Noomya na gii-magoshe?” “Have you recently performed a ceremonial feast?” or on the assumption of guilt, “Aaniish pii shkwaach gaa-magosheyen?” “When was the last time you held a ceremonial feast?” This feast (magoshe) is a different word than the word we more commonly use today, either wiikonge or wiik-onding.

The practices are different as is the conceptualization. For Christians, the dead go to heaven above us. For the Anishinaabe, the dead follow Jiibay-miikan or Jiibekana, which is more commonly known as the Milky Way or the Path of the Dead. The spirits of the dead are said to travel through the western doorway for the rest of their journey. The spirit of the departed was provided with food and extra moccasins for the journey to jiibay-kiing (Spirit world). In 1938 Andrew Medlar of Walpole Island explained:

“Ogii-gkendaanaawaa sa waa-zhi-gnoonaawaad nonda sa gaa-nbon’jin. Maaba dash noos gewii giinbod kina gegoo sa gii-wezhhaa iw [gaagmaa] maa dengwying. Gaye go ogii-giikmaan maaba aw ebgidenmaad nonda sa noosan gii-wiindmawaad gaa wiin da-aabnaabsinig gaa-bi-njibaanid, baamaa go niigaan ji-naabnid widi ezhaanid nnaazh dash go ji-dgoshninid widi sa ezhaanid. Miinwaa ogii-nookoonaawaan niizhna sa bkwezhgaansan bebiwaagin gojiing endnidegin. Gaye go ngodwewaan niwi mkiznan aagwiita miinwaa gii-tamwaa go maa mkakong, Giishpin ni-noonde-biigsidood niwi omakzinan jibwaa-dgoshing widi ezhaad e-pngishmog, ji-njibdood neyaab miinwaa ji-biiskang niwi mkiznan. Mii maanda gaa-zhichgewaad zhaazhi go giwi sa bemaadzijig.” [Andrew Medlar 1938]

“They knew by heart that which they would say in addressing the one who had died. When my father died he was adorned in every way and painted on his face. And he who held the burial rites for my father exhorted him, telling him not to look back whence he had come, but to look forward toward the place to which he was going until he should arrive at the place to which he was going. They placed for him two small loaves of bread that had been baked out of doors. Also an extra pair of moccasins was placed in the coffin with him, so that if he wore out his moccasins before he arrived whither he was bound in the west, he might take them out and put on these other moccasins. This is the way the people of old did.”

*St. Peter turned him back.
That Anishinaabe was told,
“This place is not for Indians,
you have to go over there.”*

This idea of a ‘heaven above’ and ‘spirits in the west’ was recorded by German traveler Johann Kohl in 1855. He asked about the ‘happy hunting ground’ and was provided with the diagram (see next page). The rectangle is the earth, the straight line from the top of earth is the Creator’s law. All of the little branches marked (a) are deviations from the Creator’s Law. All who die, travel the ‘Path of Souls’ to the Village of the Dead (path on the left). On their way they meet a giant strawberry and then a river. The other path (on the right) is that of the Christian and the square marked (Z) is heaven.

The early missionaries had a great deal of trouble converting the Anishinaabeg because of the belief that there were two places for the dead to go. Apparently at one time a converted, baptized, Anishinaabe had died. He traveled along the road to Christian heaven and when he arrived at the ‘Pearly Gates’ St. Peter turned him back. He was told, “This place is not for Indians, you have to go over

Jiibay-Miikan continued

there.” So this Anishinaabe went to follow the other trail. Upon arriving there he was told, “You can not come here because you have been baptized and have accepted Christianity.” So this Anishinaabe was stuck. He decided to go back and then came back to life here on earth and told all of the Anishinaabeg his experiences (was this one of the first acts of racism? Just kidding). This experience apparently did not happen to just one Anishinaabe, it happened to several. Many heard these reports and after that time the missionaries had a harder time converting Anishinaabeg because the Anishinaabeg believed that they would be turned away from both places! The Anishinaabeg also believed that if they accepted Christianity and were able to get into Heaven they would not be able to see their deceased relatives. This prospect was troubling, however, the missionaries proved to be persistent and eventually through much effort, derisive and belittling comments about Anishinaabe life, the missionaries gained a foothold ‘counting coup’ on Anishinaabe souls. However, a testament to Anishinaabe resilience is enacted with the celebration of Tasekwang and the burning of food to feed the dead. ☐

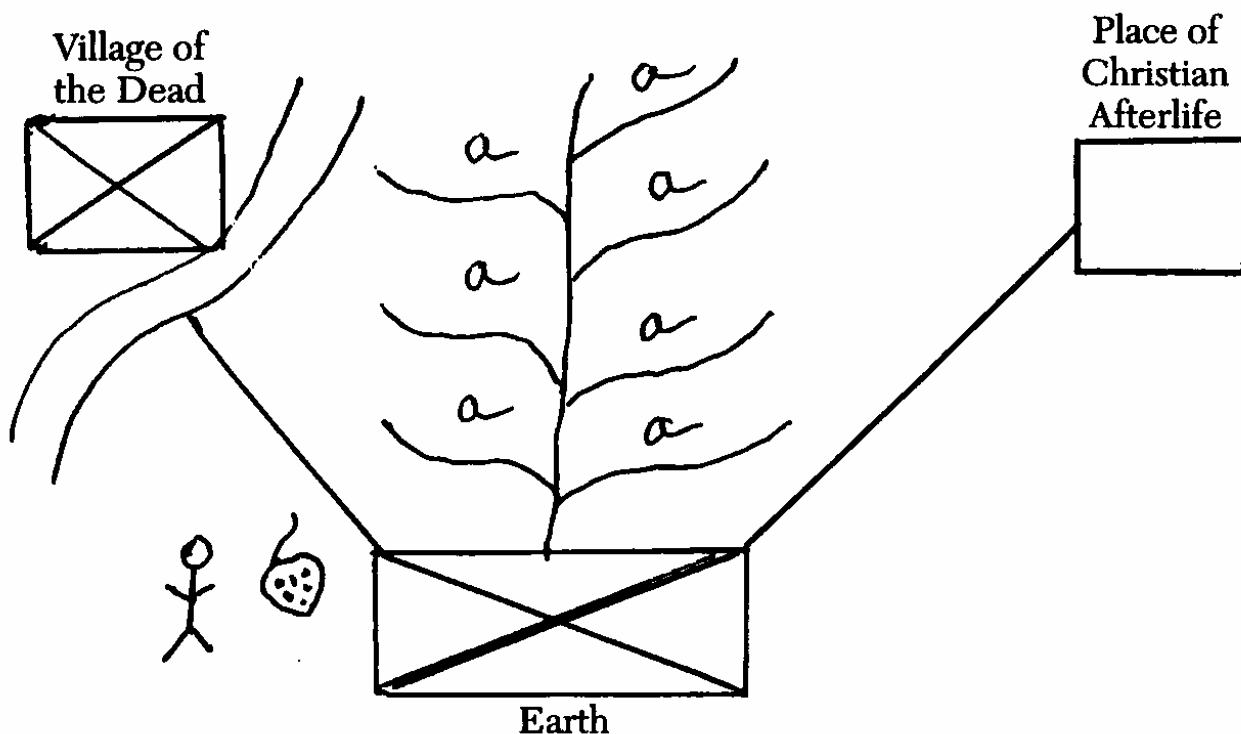


Figure 4.1. The Path of Souls to the Village of the Dead

Image from Johann Georg Kohl, “Kitchi-gami”, 1985 (originally 1885), p. 215

Aanind Nishnaabe-kidwinan (Some Nish words)

Jichaag—Spirit Jiibaam—Soul Jiibay—spirit of the dead

Wiiyaw—Body Wiikonge—Feast Wiikonding—there is a feast

Sham—Feed him! Ndashmaa—I am feeding him Magoshe—Anishinaabe feast

Make a Wreath to Honor a Loved One Who Has Passed

Step 1: Find a growth of evergreen club moss. Pick an ample amount. Gego nen-maake semaa! Don't forget tobacco! Evergreen looks like a little pine or cedar tree. Don't pick the straight ones—they are itchy!



Step 2: Cut out your cardboard circular pattern. Make a hoop to the size you want your wreath to be.



Step 3: Clean the roots and sort the evergreen



Step 4: Cut strips of plastic to wrap around the cardboard.



Step 5: Wrap plastic around the cardboard pattern until completely covered.



Step 6: Gather 7 evergreen and tie with thread and fasten to cardboard.



Step 7: Completely your circle.



Step 8: Cut out crepe paper flower petals. Cut different sizes & colours and save unused 'scraps' for later. These pieces will be spread on grave.



Step 9: Drag your scissors along the crepe petal to make it curve. Once curved then gently pull in middle to fan it out.



Step 10: Keep your cut petals organized by size. Use the large for outer petals and smaller size for inner petals. Use thin pieces for pistol and tie together.



Step 11: Now the crepe should look like a flower. Tie it with long thread so that you can dip it in hot wax.

Pow wow Tips By Falcon Migwans

Aanii Boozhoo! All you beautiful people out there. Although the pow wow season is over we still have the winter gatherings to look forward to. Rama Pow Wow Thanks Giving Weekend this month, all the New Year's gatherings and of course the famous Toronto Skydome competition Pow wow in November.

This month's tip is for all the pow wow spectators out there that promise themselves every year that 'this is the year' they are going to make their regalia throughout the winter months for next year's season. The ones that get excited and even talk about the look of their 'soon to be ready for dance' regalia but always seem to run into obstacles or find excuses such as not enough resources or materials, don't know how, or don't know what is to be adorned on the regalia. This is to help you get started and to remember to keep moving along no matter how much work it seems to be. So keep your eye on the monthly installments of the quick tip as we are going to be addressing a number of regalia questions through out the next few months.

A person's regalia is spiritually significant and should be treated in the same respect, as our elders tell us. Regalia should tell a story, a story of the one who wears it, a story of one's life. By looking at a dancer's regalia you should be able to tell where the dancer is from and their tribe. When designing your outfit your regalia should have a representa-

tion of each of the following:

- your clan
- your colours
- your spirit helper
- your anishnaabe name
- your tribe ex. Floral design for Ojibwe

If you don't know or do not have all that is listed above then you need to approach a local helper or traditional helper to help you attain what is needed. In the meantime, do what you can to get your regalia together. Although there are commonalities and guidelines in each of the dance styles, there are no laws or police. So don't feel less than others if you don't have any bead work done, or you have moccasins that are two sizes too big, or you don't have any feathers, the point is to get out there and dance. Show your thankfulness for life, your cultural pride and dance for the ones that can't, dance for the creator, dance for your family and friends but most of all dance because you want to.

Stay tuned next month for how to make a request from a traditional helper - what to take, what to offer, and what or how to give to a traditional person. ☐

Making a wreath cont'd



Step 12: Allow to cool and start a different flower.



Step 13: Tie and arrange each of your wax flowers and ribbon to the wreath—you're done!



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**We're on the
web
www.theocf.ca**

"Preserving, Revitalizing and strengthening Anishnaabe language and culture"

Enaamjigeyaang—Our Vision

The OCF is a visionary, self-sustaining, strong organization representing and responding to the needs of its member communities with emphasis on language, culture and traditional teachings. It is a vibrant centre full of activity, learning, networking, leadership and sharing; bringing Elders, Youth and communities together to preserve the Anishnaabe language and culture for future generations.

OCF Mandate

To preserve, revitalize and further enhance the language, culture, spirituality and traditions of the Anishnaabe people by representing the needs being expressed by the member First Nation communities of the Robinson Huron Treaty area.

OCF Donors!! Gchi-Miigwech Donors!!

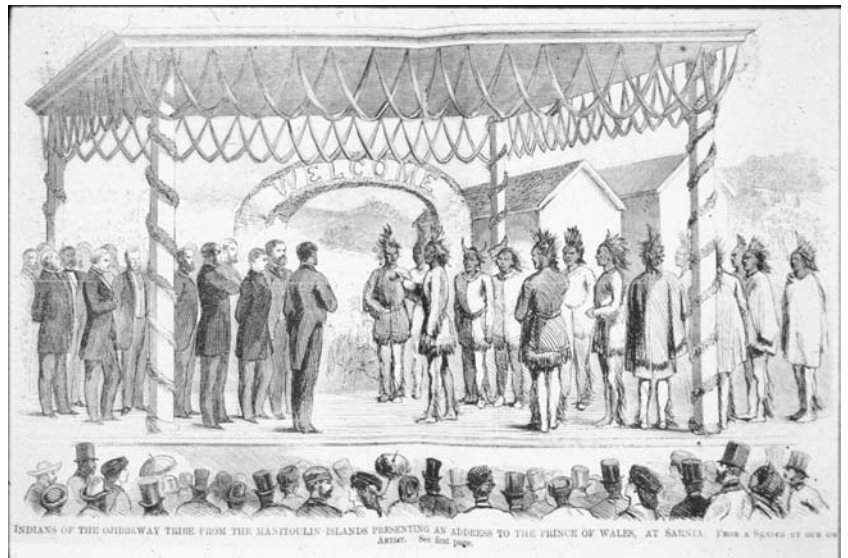
Gchi-Miigwech to our Donors: The [McGregor Bay Association](#), [St. Christopher's Church](#) in McGregor Bay, & [Manitoulin Nordic Ski Club](#).

The Ojibwe Cultural Foundation is a registered charitable non-profit organization. Donations are used to offset costs of program delivery and tax deductible receipts can be issued for contributions greater than \$ 100.00.

Manitoulin Chiefs Protest the 'Making of Chiefs' in 1862

In 1860 the Chiefs of Manitoulin met the Prince of Wales at Sarnia and presented their grievances to him, specifically the practice of 'making chiefs'. They wrote in July 21, 1862

"When the Prince of Wales arrived at Port Sarnia, that's when medals were hung around the necks of those who don't know anything, so those Indians would be chief, And even now, new chiefs are being made, Two men were already asked last winter, So he was told, "You will give up the Island next time they ask you, he said to them. so that is why new chiefs were made so that this would happen... For it is us, who are going to find our chiefs, those of us who are Indian There are those who were and are our chiefs, and those are the ones that we always want to have as our chiefs."



Manitoulin Island Chiefs stating their concerns to the Prince of Wales at Sarnia in 1860. The Prince would eventually become King Edward. Source: New York Illustrated News