
Storytelling, Visual and Cognitive Mapping and Photoatlassing of Indigenous Elder William Commanda's Canoe Journey: Art, Craft, Motion, Experience, Knowledge and Wisdom

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Abstract:

This presentation examines the importance of the motif of the Indigenous canoe in the integration of art, craft, cybernetic and cognitive cartography, ecology, movement, epistemology and relationality in the life and work of North American Indigenous Elder William Commanda, founder of the *Circle of All Nations*. A world-renowned canoe builder and environmentalist, *Law of Nature* preoccupations featured in his life-long exploration of canoe as material object and epistemological methodological tool, to present ephemeral Indigenous relational and bridge building knowledge and wisdom. His formal outreach to the mainstream world of North America is documented in a 1960s video of the Smithsonian Institute; in Denmark, in commemorative photo/teaching books at the Roskilde Museum and, at age 90, in the *Good Enough for Two* canoe-making documentary (2006). Today, there is an explosion of interest in the canoe in school and museum settings in Canada, and the spatial and temporal significance of this iconic emblem utilizes and is complemented by semiotic Photoatlas orientation and analysis (after Wolodtschenko).