AS WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE

Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance

LEANNE BETASAMOSAKE SIMPSON

INDIGENOUS AMERICAS
The publication of this book was assisted by a bequest from Josiah H. Chase to honor his parents, Ellen Rankin Chase and Josiah Hook Chase, Minnesota territorial pioneers.

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This vision for a present has the potential to create Nishnaabeg futures that categorically refuse and reject dispossession and settler colonialism and the violence of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness that maintains them. To me, Indigenous nationhood is a radical and complete overturning of the nation-state’s political formations. It is a vision that centers our lives around our responsibility to work with our Ancestors and those yet unborn to continuously give birth to a spectacular Nishnaabeg present. This is a manifesto to create networks of reciprocal resurgent movements with other humans and nonhumans radically imagining their ways out of domination, who are not afraid to let those imaginings destroy the pillars of settler colonialism.

This is my beginning. This is my radical resurgent present.

ONE
NISHNAABEG BRILLIANCE AS RADICAL RESURRENCE THEORY

GILBERT DROVE THE KIDS from the reserve into town for school every morning, and sometimes when we would come to visit, he would drive another lap around the reserve to pick up all the Elders in his yellow and black bus, driving us to the treatment center or out to the community trapline on the edge of the reserve. I was in my midtwenties. Young. I didn’t yet know which things in life are rare and which things happen all the time if you remain open and happen to be in the right place at the right time. Over two years, spending time with a group of twenty-five Elders who had known each other and their land for their entire lives was an extremely rare situation. One that in the next twenty years of my life wouldn’t be repeated with the same depth.

I’ve gone back to this experience over and over again in my head and in my writing because it changed the way I think in a fundamental way. It changed the way I am in the world. I want to reconsider it here because this experience is foundational to my work on resurgence and to who I have become. I considered
parts of this story in the short story “lost in the world where he was always the only one,” published in Islands of Decolonial Love, although somewhat fictionalized, as a way of linking our current reality to the Nishnaabeg sacred story of a little boy who is taken to the skyworld to learn from seven Elders and then returned to the earth to share his new knowledge with the Nishnaabeg. Meaning, we all have to be, in some way, that little boy. Like that boy, those Elders that I learned from for those two years actually gave me something that has propelled my writing and thinking ever since. It was the greatest gift.

I was working with Professor Paul Driben, an anthropologist from Lakehead University at the time. We had been hired by the Effects on Aboriginals from the Great Lakes Environment (EAGLE) project of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to work with the Anishinaabeg reserve community of Long Lake #58, located in the boreal forest of northern Ontario, about three hundred kilometers northeast of Thunder Bay, to create a land-use atlas. The band council sent us to the Elders. This was not a unique project in the 1980s and 1990s. Traditional Ecological Knowledge was in its heyday in the eyes of white policy makers, academics, and even Aboriginal organizations. The idea was that if we documented on paper the ways that we use the land, policy makers would then use the information to minimize the impacts of development on our lands and ways of life. The idea was that clearly documented land use would bring about less dispossession, as if dispossession occurs by accident or out of not knowing, rather than being the strategic structure it is. The project was to gather the individual cognitive, territorial maps Elders held in their heads into a collective, a visual remapping and translation of some aspects of Indigenous Knowledge into a form that would be recognized by industry and the state.

Of course, I don’t think the Elders involved in these studies were naive. I think what I saw, and perhaps what they saw, was a process that could be used as a tool to generate cohesion, pride, and rebuilding within our own communities when our own people saw visually and so clearly what dispossession, displace-

ment, encroachment, and industrial extractivism look like over our territories across time. Laid out in a visual way, the magnitude of the loss cannot be explained away, the strategic nature of colonialism cannot be ignored. The driving force of capitalism in our dispossession cannot be denied.

I was suspicious of Dr. Driben in the beginning. He wasn’t Native, he was an anthropologist of all things, but he had created these maps before with other Nishnaabeg communities. Sitting in his windowless cement office in the basement of a building at Lakehead University eating subs, I could tell by the details on the maps that Elders trusted him. I could tell by the bunker-like nature of his office far removed from the upper echelons of the university that perhaps the university didn’t. This boded well for our relationship.

Paul did something that has stayed with me and has always informed my approach to working with communities and to research. He was invited into the community to do a specific task, which in the end he delivered, but he actively and continually divested himself of the false power the academy bestowed upon him when he drove onto the reserve. He asked the Elders if they thought the project was a good idea. They said it was. He asked them how best to proceed. They told him. He asked them if they would be the decision makers. They agreed, and then they were, and he got out of their way.

This was an overwhelmingly different way of conducting research than I had experienced in two biology degrees. At the time, I could only frame it within collaborative or participatory or community-based methodologies, but it was really none of those. Those kinds of methodologies to some degree privileged Western theories, epistemologies, or knowledge systems, and the process that emerged in this situation was Nishnaabeg to the core. These methodologies assume there is a role for the academic. Paul did not. He came into their circle on the terms of the experts, the Nishnaabeg Elders, not the other way around.

Which enabled me to come into their circle, as a young Nishnaabeg person with very few useful skills to them other than youth. Western education does not produce in us the kinds of
effects we like to think it does when we say things like education is the new buffalo. We learn how to type and how to write. We learn how to think within the confines of Western thought. We learn how to pass tests and get jobs within the city of capitalism. If we're lucky and we fall into the right programs, we might learn to think critically about colonialism. But postsecondary education provides few useful skill sets to those of us who want to fundamentally change the relationship between the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples, because that requires a sustained, collective, strategic long-term movement, a movement the Canadian state has a vested interest in preventing, destroying, and dividing. Postsecondary education provides very few skill sets to those who want to learn to think in the most complex ways possible within the networked system of Indigenous intelligence. In fact, I needed to leave all of that kind of education behind in order to come into this with hesitation and an open heart. The parts of me that I drew on in this circle of Elders were liabilities at university—gentleness, humility, carefulness, and the ability to proceed slowly.

During the next two years, the Elders, who in my memory are now eagles, took me under their wing. I wrote down on large topographical maps every place-name for every beach, bay, peninsula, and island they could remember—hundreds and hundreds of names. We marked down all of their traplines, and the ones before that and the ones before that. We marked down hunting grounds and fishing sites, berry patches, ricing camps, and medicines spots. We marked down birthplaces and graves. We marked down places where stories happened. We marked down ceremonial sites, places where they lived, places where life happened. We also marked down the homes of their relatives—places where moose and bears lived, nesting spots and breeding grounds. We marked down travel routes, spring water spots, songs and prayers. Places where feet touched the earth for the first time. Places where promises were made. The place where they blocked the tracks during the summer of the so-called Oka Crisis.²

We also recorded pain. The prisoner-of-war camp, the internment camp, and its school that some Nishnaabeg kids attended so they could continue to live with their families and not go to residential school. The 150 years of clear-cuts. The hydroelectric dams, the direction the lake was supposed to flow. The flood, the road, the railway tracks, the mines, the pipeline, the hydrolines. The chemical sprays, the white people parks and campgrounds. Deaths.

The overlays showed decade after decade of loss. They showed the why.

Standing at the foot of a map of loss is clarity.

Colonialism or settler colonialism or dispossession or displacement or capitalism didn't seem complicated anymore. The mess I was wrapped in at birth didn't seem so inevitable. It seemed simple. Colonizers wanted the land. Everything else, whether it is legal or policy or economic or social, whether it was the Indian Act or residential schools or gender violence, was part of the machinery that was designed to create a perfect crime—a crime where the victims are unable to see or name the crime as a crime.²

But this isn't even the most important thing I learned from the Elders of Long Lake #58 in the middle of the 1990s. They gifted me with my first substantial experience with Nishnaabeg thought, theory, and methodology in a research context, and Nishnaabeg intelligence in life context. Paul showed me the kind of researcher I thought I wanted to be, but in reality I wanted to be able to think like those Elders, not him. By taking such a radically different approach to both community and research, Paul divested his power and authority as an academic that had been placed on him by the academy and then by an Aboriginal organization and placed that responsibility where it belonged: with the leaders and the intellectuals of the community. Paul was a holder of space. He created the space for Elders to not just say the prayer and smudge us off at the beginning of the meeting but to be the meeting. He created the space to put Nishnaabeg intelligence at the center and to use its energy to drive the project. Those Elders gave me my first glimpse of Nishnaabeg brilliance—theory, methodology, story, ethics, values all
enmeshed in Nishnaabeg politics and encircled by the profound influence of the world. They pulled me into an alternative Nishnaabeg world existing alongside the colonial reality I knew so well. This has propelled my life.

This experience more than anything else opened my mind and heart to the brilliance and complexity of Nishnaabeg embodied thought. It resonated in a profound way in me and has driven two decades of living, making, writing, and research. Sometimes it is the only thing I am absolutely sure of, and more than that, I am absolutely sure that we as Nishnaabeg cannot survive as a people without creating generations of artists, thinkers, makers, and doers that live in Nishnaabeg worlds, that are in respectful relationship with each other, that create a movement that joins us to other Indigenous nations to protect the land and bodies. We need to live deliberately and with meaning.

I think about the maps those Elders carried in their bodies as two-dimensional representations of the networks they live and their parents and grandparents lived. I think about the maps my generation carries in our heads or maybe in our phones. I think about the networks the next generation will carry in their bodies. I think about how the networks we have in our heads today create the networks our children have in their heads as adults. It is this experience more than any others that has led me to center Nishnaabeg intelligence in my life, in my work, and in my thinking about resurgence.

Years later, when I would begin thinking and writing about Indigenous resurgence as a set of practices through which the regeneration and reestablishment of Indigenous nations could be achieved, the seeds those Elders planted in me would start to grow with a strong feeling, more than thinking, that the intellectual and theoretical home of resurgence had to come from within Indigenous thought systems, intelligence systems that are continually generated in relationship to place. I realized that the Elders of Long Lake #58 had pulled me into an Nishnaabeg world, and that this world was a very fertile place for dreaming, visioning, thinking, and remembering the affirmative Indigenous worlds that continue to exist right alongside the colonial worlds. I got a strong sense from them that our intellectual systems are our responsibilities, that they are an extension of our bodies and an expression of our freedom. There was no room in their Nishnaabeg world for the desire to be recognized and affirmed by the colonizer. There was no room in their Nishnaabeg world to accommodate or center whiteness.

The Nishnaabeg brilliance those Elders pulled me into was profound. Their world—a cognitive, spiritual, emotional, land-based space—didn’t recognize or endlessly accommodate whiteness, it didn’t accept the inevitability of capitalism, and it was a disruption to the hierarchy of heteropatriarchy. Thinking about it now, I see that it was my first flight path out of settler colonialism. In their very quiet, non-demonstrative, and profoundly gentle way, those Elders refused settler colonialism, driving along the TransCanada in a children’s school bus, laughing all the way to their trapline. They refused and generated something different. Everyday. Just like their Ancestors and their Ancestor’s Ancestors.

**Biiskabiyang and Flight**

Biiskabiyang—the process of returning to ourselves, a reengagement with the things we have left behind, a reemergence, an unfolding from the inside out—is a concept, an individual and collective process of decolonization and resurgence. To me, it is the embodied processes as freedom. It is a flight out of the structure of settler colonialism and into the processes and relationships of freedom and self-determination encoded and practiced within Nishnaabewin or grounded normativity. In this way, it is a form of marronage. Scholar Neil Roberts describes the concept of marronage (derived from Awawak and Tainos thought) in his book *Freedom as Marronage* “as a group of persons isolating themselves from a surrounding society in order to create a fully autonomous community,” like the act of retreating to the bush, or resurgence itself. Breaking from contemporary political theory’s vocabulary to describe this flight, Roberts writes, “marronage is a multidimensional, constant act of flight that involves what I ascertain to be four interrelated pillars: distance,
movement, property, and purpose. Distance denotes a spatial quality separating an individual or individuals in a current location or condition from a future location or condition. Movement refers to the ability of agents to have control over motion and the intended directions of their actions. Flight, therefore, is directional movement in the domain of physical environment, embodied cognition, and/or the metaphysical." It necessarily, then, must be rooted in the present. Black feminist theorist and poet Alexis Pauline Gumbs, in an interview about her book *Spill: Scenes of Black Feminist Fugitivity*, says, "I am interested in presence and the present tense. I think fugitivity requires being present and being *with*, which are both challenges."  

Those Elders of Long Lake #58 knew present and being with, they knew flight—distance, movement, land as relationship, purpose. They watched the freedom of eagles, our messengers, moving effortlessly between worlds as expert communicators. Through ceremony, they shifted through physical realities to heightened spiritual ones. They constructed the world according to the structures, the processes, and the relationships Nishnaabewin illuminates. To me, they were maroonage. My flight to escape colonial reality was a flight into Nishnaabewin. It was a returning, in the present, to myself. It was an unfolding of a different present. It was freedom as a way of being as a constellation of relationship, freedom as world making, freedom as a practice. It was biiskabiyang.  

No matter what we were doing together, those Elders always carried their Ancestors with them. They were in constant communication with them as they went about their daily lives engaged in practices that continually communicated to the spiritual world that they were Nishnaabeg. I didn’t understand this. I kept asking them about governance, and they would talk about trapping. I would ask them about treaties, and they would take me fishing. I’d ask them what we should do about the mess of colonialism, and they would tell me stories about how well they used to live on the land. I loved all of it, but I didn’t think they were answering my questions. I could see only *practice*. I couldn’t see their *theory* until decades later. I couldn’t see intel-

ligence until I learned *how* to see it by engaging in Nishnaabeg practices for the next two decades.

It would be fifteen more years after my experiences at Long Lake #58 before I would sit down and begin to write what would become *Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back*. I had completed a PhD at the University of Manitoba and was spending a good deal of time with Robin Greene-ba, a Treaty 3 Elder, and Elder Garry Raven-ba, and the community of Hollow Water First Nation on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. I had moved home to Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg territory to learn from my own Elders and had connected with Curve Lake Elder Doug Williams, as well as Wikwerahtkong Elder Edna Manitowabi. They all confirmed my experiences in Long Lake #58: that centering ourselves in this Nishnaabeg process of living is both the instrument and the song.

I set out initially in *Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back* to find Nishnaabeg knowledge of how to rebuild from within after devastation because I thought this knowledge would be instructive about how to continue to resist and resurge in the face of ongoing colonialism. I did this not so much through discussion, although there was discussion, but through deep engagement with the Nishnaabeg systems inherent in Nishnaabewin—all of the Nishnaabeg practices and ethical processes that make us Nishnaabeg—including story or theory, language learning, ceremony, hunting, fishing, ricing, sugar making, medicine making, politics, and governance. Through this engagement, a different understanding emerged. This is entirely consistent with Nishnaabeg thought, although I did not appreciate it at the time. It became clear to me that *how* we live, *how* we organize, *how* we engage in the world—the process—not only frames the outcome, it is the transformation. *How* molds and then gives birth to the present. The *how* changes us. *How* is the theoretical intervention. Engaging in deep and reciprocal Indigeneity is a transformative act because it fundamentally changes modes of production of our lives. It changes the relationships that house our bodies and our thinking. It changes how we conceptualize nationhood. Indigenous intelligence systems set up, maintain,
and regenerate the neuropathways for Indigenous living both inside our bodies and the web of connections that structure our nationhood outside our bodies.Engagement changes us because it constructs a different world within which we live. We live fused to land in a vital way. If we want to create a different future, we need to live a different present, so that present can fully marinate, influence, and create different futurities. If we want to live in a different present, we have to center Indigeneity and allow it to change us.

I talk about this in Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back as emergence, but emergence isn’t quite the right concept because it isn’t just a recognition of the complexity and multidimensionality that we might not fully understand at work. It is also a strategic, thoughtful process in the present as an agent of change—a presencing of the present that generates a particular kind of emergence that is resurgence. Kinetics, the act of doing, isn’t just praxis; it also generates and animates theory within Indigenous contexts, and it is the crucial intellectual mode for generating knowledge. Theory and praxis, story and practice are interdependent, cogenerators of knowledge. Practices are politics. Processes are governance. Doing produces more knowledge. This idea is repeated over and over again in Nishnaabeg story and for me ultimately comes from the Seven Fires creation story as told to me by spiritual leader Edna Manitowabi and recorded in Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back. Through this story, she taught me that knowledge or existence itself is a function of intellectual thought, emotional knowledge, and kinetics or movement. Gžihwe Manidoo (The Creator, the one who loves us unconditionally) didn’t research about creating the world or think about creating the world. Gžihwe Manidoo created the world by struggling, failing, and by trying again and again in some of our stories. Mistakes produce knowledge. Failure produces knowledge because engagement in the process changes the actors embedded in process and aligns bodies with the implicate order. The only thing that doesn’t produce knowledge is thinking in and of itself, because it is data created in dislocation and isolation and without movement.

The Seven Fires creation story confirmed to me in an epic way that the original knowledge, coded and transmitted through complex networks, says that everything we need to know about everything in the world is contained within Indigenous bodies, and that these same Indigenous bodies exist as networked vessels, or constellations across time and space intimately connected to a universe of nations and beings. All of our origin stories do this, and, really, in the complex reality networked emergence generates, Nishnaabewin itself is a continual generation and iteration of these stories and principles.

The Seven Fires creation story sets the parameters for Nishnaabeg intelligence: the commingling of emotional and intellectual knowledge combined in motion or movement, and the making and remaking of the world in a generative fashion within Indigenous bodies that are engaged in accountable relationships with other beings. This is propelled by the diversity of Indigenous bodies of all ages, genders, races, and abilities in attached correlations with all aspects of creation. This is the exact opposite of the white supremacist, masculine, hetero-patriarchal theory and research process in the academy, which I think likely nearly every Indigenous body that has walked into the academy in some way has felt. We need (to continue) to refuse that system or refuse to let our presence in that system change who we are as Indigenous peoples. We need to continue and expand rooting the practice of our lives in our homelands and within our intelligence systems in the ways that our diverse and unique Indigenous thought systems inspire us to do, as the primary mechanism for our decolonial present, as the primary political intervention of our times. This means struggle. Struggle because we are occupied, erased, displaced, and disconnected. Struggle because our bodies are still targets for settler colonial violence. Struggle because this is the mechanism our Ancestors engaged in to continuously rebirth the world. And our struggle is a beautiful, righteous struggle that is our collective gift to Indigenous worlds, because this way of living necessarily continually gives birth to ancient Indigenous futures in the present.
Nishnaabewin as Grounded Normativity

What I learned from Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back, from the process that created it and through the process of engaging in conversations about it over the past five years, is that although I found lots of stories within Nishnaabeg thought about rebuilding, struggle, and self-determination, these were not all crisis-based narratives, and they certainly were not victim-based narratives, nor were they about mere survival. These stories relied upon a return to self-determination and change from within rather than recognition from the outside. They all pointed to invigorating a particular way of living. A way of living that was full of community. A way of living that was thoughtful and profoundly empathetic. A way of living that considered, in a deep profound way, relationality. When I look back at it now, my experience with the Elders of Long Lake #58 was my first substantive experience of Nishnaabewin, or what Dene political theorist Glen Coulthard, author of Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition, calls “grounded normativity,” ethical frameworks generated by these place-based practices and associated knowledges. In academic circles, particularly theoretical ones, this is an important intervention because grounded normativity is the base of our political systems, economy, and nationhood, and it creates process-centered modes of living that generate profoundly different conceptualizations of nationhood and governmentality—ones that aren’t based on enclosure, authoritarian power, and hierarchy. The term itself is far less important in Indigenous circles; we’ve always known our way of life comes from the place or land through the practice of our modes of intelligence. We know that place includes land and waters, plants and animals, and the spiritual world—a peopled cosmos of influencing powers. We know that our practices code and reveal knowledge, and our knowledge codes and reveals practices. We know the individual values we animate in those lives in turn create intimate relationships with our family and all aspects of creation, which in turn create a fluid and collective ethical framework that we in turn practice. I think in the context of my own nation, the term Nishnaabewin—all of the associated practices, knowledge, and ethics that make us Nishnaabeg and construct the Nishnaabeg world—is the closest thing to Coulthard’s grounded normativity. I use the term interchangeably with Nishnaabeg intelligence, like Coulthard, as a strategic intervention into how the colonial world and the academy position, construct, contain, and shrink Indigenous knowledge systems.

In this sense, in the past, Nishnaabeg woke up each morning and built Nishnaabeg life every day, using our knowledge and practices because this is what we are encouraged to do in our creation stories; these are our original instructions. This procedure or practice of living, theory and praxis intertwined, is generated through relations with Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg land, land that is constructed and defined by our intimate spiritual, emotional, and physical relationship with it. The procedure is our grounded normativity. Living is a creative act, with self-determined making or producing at its core. Colonized life is so intensely about consumption that the idea of making is reserved for artists at best and hobbies at worst. Making is not seen as the material basis for experiencing and influencing the world. Yet, Nishnaabeg life didn’t rely on institutionality to hold the structure of life. We relied upon process that created networked relationship. Our intelligence system is a series of interconnected and overlapping algorithms—stories, ceremonies, and the land itself are procedures for solving the problems of life. Networked because the modes of communication and interaction between beings occur in complex nonlinear forms, across time and space. There is necessarily substantial overlap in networked responsibilities, such that the loss of a component of the network can self-correct and rebalance.

Governance was made every day. Leadership was embodied and acted out every day. Grounded normativity isn’t a thing; it is generated structure born and maintained from deep engagement with Indigenous processes that are inherently physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Processes were created and practiced. Daily life involved making politics, education,
health care, food systems, and economy on micro- and macro-scales. I didn't need to look for catastrophe or crisis-based stories to learn how to rebuild. The Nishnaabeg conceptualizations of life I found were cycles of creative energies, continual processes that bring forth more life and more creation and more thinking. These are the systems we need to re-create. The structural and material basis of Nishnaabeg life was and is process and relationship—again, resurgence is our original instruction.

What does Nishnaabeg grounded normativity look like? What is the ethical framework that is provided to me living my life on the north shore of Lake Ontario? What are these practices and associated forms of knowing? Nishnaabeg political systems begin in individuals and our relationships to the implicate order or the spiritual world. The ethics and values that individuals use to make decisions in their personal lives are the same ethics and values that families, communities, and nations use to make decisions about how to live collectively. Our ethical intelligence is ongoing; it is not a series of teachings or laws or protocols; it is a series of practices that are adaptable to some degree fluid. I don't know it so much as an "ethical framework" but as a series of complex, interconnected cycling processes that make up a nonlinear, overlapping emergent and responsive network of relationships of deep reciprocity, intimate and global interconnection and interdependence, that spirals across time and space. I know it as the algorithm of the Nishnaabeg world. I wrote about many of these in Dancing on Our Turtle's Back—the seven grandmother teachings, ethics of noninterference and the practice of self-determination, the practice of consent, the art of honesty, empathy, caring, sharing, and self-sufficiency, for example. Our economy, fully integrated with spirituality and politics, was intensely local within a network of Indigenous internationalism (discussed in chapter 4) that included plant and animal nations, the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, and nonhuman beings and other Indigenous nations. Its strength is measured by its ability to take care of the needs of the people, all the peoples that make up the Nishnaabeg cosmos. Colonialism has strangulated grounded normativity. It has attacked and tried to eliminate or confine the practice of grounded normativity to the realm of neoliberalism so that it isn't so much a way of being in the world but a quaint cultural difference that makes one interesting. When colonialism could not eliminate grounded normativity, it tried to contain it so that it exists only to the degree that it does not impede land acquisition, settlement, and resource extraction. It is this situation, the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from our grounded normativities through the processes of colonialism and now settler colonialism, that has set up the circumstances that require a radical Indigenous resurgence as a mechanism for our continuance as Indigenous peoples.

I feel grateful, looking back, that I was able to interact with the Elders of Long Lake #58, these Nishnaabewin theorists, on their own terms, as opposed to as a graduate student. Had I gone into their community as a student, I would have inevitably written about this project within the confines of the academic literature and thinking of the academy in the 1990s, and this perhaps would have become my record of these events. Instead, I didn't write about this experience until now, but I held it as a seed that in the right Nishnaabeg context grew and gives credence to the idea that the fuel for our radical resurgence must come from within our own nation-based grounded normativities because these are the intelligence systems that hold the potential, the theory as practice, for making ethical, sustainable Indigenous worlds.

I believe our responsibility as Indigenous peoples is to work alongside our Ancestors and those not yet born to continually give birth to an Indigenous present that generates Indigenous freedom, and this means creating generations that are in love with, attached to, and committed to their land. It also means that the intellectual and theoretical home for our nation-based resurgences must be within grounded normativity and, for me specifically, within Nishnaabewin, our lived expression of Nishnaabeg intelligence.