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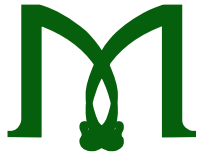
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Odenabe (the river that beats like a heart) Watershed

JESSICA MARION BARR



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Artist's Statement

This piece revises and re-'maps' the watershed around Nogojiwanong ('the place at the end of the rapids' in Michi Saagig Nishnaabemowin¹) or Peterborough, where I currently live, mother, teach, learn, and sometimes swirl in little eddies of research-creation. The river that flows through this territory is the Odenabe (Otonabee), "the river that beats like a heart."² I have such gratitude and love for this beautiful and strong water body, in whom I have enjoyed swimming and playing with my child many times and who is so important to this place -- and who persists despite the ongoing damages of settler-colonial deforestation, damming, the mills that caused so much harm, and the effects of corporate water pollution. I created this piece by respectfully gathering aquatic plants that were floating by the banks of the river near Trent University, simmering them with a small amount of river water to make an ink, and then drawing and painting a depiction of this watershed based on a projection sourced from native-land.ca. Using gold paint from Beam Paints (an Anishinaabe-owned company based in M'Chigeeng First Nation on Manitoulin Island: www.beampaints.com/) I gently marked the spot where I had collected the plants. Nishinaabeg elders and water protectors such as Shirley Williams and Dorothy Taylor have shared the knowledge that water is the blood of Mother Earth. We are all co-constituted with the waters in our places. This piece attempts to offer a sort of heartfelt portrait --rather than a more colonially understood map-- of this territory, rendered with materials that are tangibly and deeply interconnected with the waters being depicted.

Medium: handmade ink made from Otonabee river aquatic plants on watercolour paper (24" x 36"), 2022

Déclaration de l'artiste

Cet œuvre d'art révisé et re-'cartographie' le bassin versant autour de Nogojiwanong (« le lieu au bout des rapides » en Michi Saagig Nishnaabemowin³) ou Peterborough, où je vis, maternelle, enseigne, apprend et, parfois, tourbillonne dans de petits tourbillons de recherche-crédation. La rivière qui traverse ce territoire est l'Odenabe (Otonabee), « la rivière qui bat comme un cœur ». ⁴ J'ai une telle gratitude et un tel amour pour ce plan d'eau magnifique et puissant, dans

1 Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2011), *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence*, Arbeiter Ring Publishing: Winnipeg, MB, p. 26.

2 "The Otonabee runs through Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg territory from the river we call Zaagaatay Igiwan [Trent River] into Pimaadashkodeyong [Rice Lake]. [...] I asked my Elder Gdigaa Migizi what the word Otonabee means in Nishnaabemowin. He began by telling me that the first part means "heart," coming from the word *ode*; and the word *odemgat* means boiling water, because when water boils, it looks like the bubbling or beating of a heart. He then explained that Otonabee is an anglicized version of Odenabe -- the river that beats like a heart -- in reference to the bubbling and boiling waters of the rapids along the river" (Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Dancing on our Turtle's Back*, p. 93-94).

3 Simpson, p. 26.

4 L'Otonabee traverse le territoire nishnaabeg de Michi Saagig, depuis la rivière que nous appelons Zaagaatay Igiwan [rivière Trent] jusqu'au Pimaadashkodeyong [lac Rice]. [...] J'ai demandé à mon aîné Gdigaa Migizi ce

lequel j'ai souvent aimé nager et jouer avec mon enfant et qui est si important pour cet endroit - et qui persiste malgré les dommages continus causés par la déforestation coloniale, les barrages, les moulins qui ont causé tant de dégâts et les effets de la pollution de l'eau par les entreprises. J'ai créé cette œuvre en ramassant respectueusement des plantes aquatiques flottant sur les rives de la rivière près de l'Université Trent, en les faisant mijoter avec un peu d'eau de rivière pour en faire une encre, puis en dessinant et peignant une représentation de ce bassin versant à partir d'une projection provenant de native-land.ca. À l'aide de peinture dorée de Beam Paints (une entreprise anishinaabe basée dans la Première Nation M'Chigeeng sur l'île Manitoulin : www.beampaints.com/), j'ai délicatement marqué l'endroit où j'avais ramassé les plantes. Les aînés nishinaabeg et les protecteurs de l'eau, comme Shirley Williams et Dorothy Taylor, ont partagé le savoir que l'eau est le sang de la Terre Mère. Nous sommes tous co-constitués par les eaux de nos lieux. Cette œuvre tente d'offrir une sorte de portrait sincère – plutôt qu'une carte plus coloniale – de ce territoire, rendu avec des matériaux tangiblement et profondément interconnectés avec les eaux représentées.

Technique : encre artisanale réalisée à partir de plantes aquatiques de la rivière Otonabee sur papier aquarelle (61 x 91 cm), 2022

About the Artist: Jessica Marion Barr (she/her) is an artist, educator, researcher, and queer single mother of Scottish, English, Dutch, and matrilineal Haudenosaunee ancestry. Her interdisciplinary practice incorporates artmaking and arts-science research-creation, investigating creative, collaborative, queer, embodied/somatic, and Indigenous-led approaches to environmental issues and social/ecological justice. Her arts-practice-based Ph.D. in Cultural Studies at Queen's University focused on ecological elegies. Jessica has exhibited artwork across Canada, and has attended trainings and artist residencies nationally and internationally. An Assistant Professor at Trent University, she is cross appointed to the Cultural Studies Department and the Honours Bachelor of Arts and Science Program, and approaches her teaching and supervision with creativity, enthusiasm, and attentiveness to care and wellbeing.

Artist's URL: <https://www.trentu.ca/culturalstudies/faculty-research/undergraduate-faculty/jessica-marion-barr>

que le mot Otonabee signifiait en nishnaabemowin. Il a commencé par me dire que la première partie signifie « cœur », venant du mot ode ; et le mot odemgat signifie eau bouillante, car lorsque l'eau bout, elle ressemble au bouillonnement ou au battement d'un cœur. Il m'a ensuite expliqué qu'Otonabee est une version anglicisée d'Odenabe – la rivière qui bat comme un cœur – en référence aux eaux bouillonnantes et bouillonnantes des rapides qui la longent. (Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Dancing on our Turtle's Back*, p. 93-94, unofficial translation).