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Princess White Deer's Show Blanket: Brokering Popular Indigenous Performance Across International Borders

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Article abstract

This article focuses on Esther Deer, also known as Princess White Deer, and her family of Mohawk performers from Caughnawaga and St. Regis (now Kahnawà:ke and Ahkwesáhsne) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period often considered the nadir of genocidal policies and practices against the Peoples of Turtle Island. Working, as a settler scholar, with the Princess White Deer Collection in the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center and with voluminous non-Indigenous press coverage, Bold reconstructs and reads details of the Deers' acts on the international circuit. In their choreography of spectacle and control of theatrical space, their management of their own labour and their address to their audiences, they seem not only to seize agency in the entertainment marketplace but also to sustain intergenerational family, kinship, and community relations. The most visible marker of their border-crossing mobility and cultural brokerage lies in the layers of their performance attire—the topmost of which is the show blanket, especially as wielded by Princess White Deer.

Princess White Deer's Show Blanket: Brokering Popular Indigenous Performance Across International Borders

CHRISTINE BOLD[1]

This article focuses on Esther Deer, also known as Princess White Deer, and her family of Mohawk performers from Caughnawaga and St. Regis (now Kahnawà:ke and Ahkwesáhsne) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period often considered the nadir of genocidal policies and practices against the Peoples of Turtle Island. Working, as a settler scholar, with the Princess White Deer Collection in the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center and with voluminous non-Indigenous press coverage, Bold reconstructs and reads details of the Deers' acts on the international circuit. In their choreography of spectacle and control of theatrical space, their management of their own labour and their address to their audiences, they seem not only to seize agency in the entertainment marketplace but also to sustain intergenerational family, kinship, and community relations. The most visible marker of their border-crossing mobility and cultural brokerage lies in the layers of their performance attire—the topmost of which is the show blanket, especially as wielded by Princess White Deer.

Dans cet article, Christine Bold s'intéresse à Esther Deer, aussi connue sous le nom de Princess White Deer, et à sa famille d'artistes mohawks originaires de Caughnawaga et Saint-Régis (le Kahnawà:ke et Ahkwesáhsne d'aujourd'hui). Ces derniers se produisaient sur scène à la fin du XIXe et au début du XXe siècle, à une époque considérée par plusieurs comme la moins glorieuse pour ce qui était des politiques et des pratiques génocidaires à l'endroit des peuples de l'Île de la Tortue.

Bold, une chercheure colonisatrice, s'est penchée sur la collection Princess White Deer au centre linguistique et culturel Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa. Appuyant ses recherches au moyen d'un volumineux dossier de presse non indigène, elle a reconstruit dans le détail le parcours des Deer sur le circuit des spectacles à l'échelle mondiale. Leur chorégraphie spectaculaire et leur maîtrise de l'espace théâtral, leur gestion de leur propre travail et leur façon d'adresser le public laissent entendre qu'ils ont réussi à obtenir le pouvoir d'agir d'eux-mêmes sur le marché du spectacle tout en maintenant des relations familiales et communautaires intergénérationnelles. La mobilité transfrontalière et le courtage culturel des Deer transparaissent dans les nombreuses couches de leur tenue de scène, la dernière desquelles était la couverture de spectacle que maniait si bien Princess White Deer.

In the exhibition about the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke in the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center, one panel tells the story of Paul K. Diabo. He was the Mohawk ironworker who, in 1926-1928, fought and won in the US District Court in Philadelphia his right, as a Caughnawaga Mohawk (as the English-language documents of the day put it) to free passage across the Canada-US international border. It was a landmark case, upholding the Jay Treaty of 1794 and reaffirming Iroquois sovereignty.[2] Next to the exhibition panel, standing in the corner, is a figure I found puzzling and incongruous: a male mannequin dressed in a typical wild west show outfit of fringed, beaded buckskin suit and big feathered headdress. Why had the figure been positioned next to the Paul Diabo story? "That's the outfit he wore in court," explained Teiowí:sonte Thomas Deer, Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke, Cultural Liaison, architect of the exhibition and librarian to the centre. I think I looked puzzled. "In that period, in the 1920s, it was the only way to ensure he would be recognized as 'Indian'—and this was a major victory for Indians."[3] The moment became a touchstone for me, in understanding how politics, public recognition, and popular paraphernalia could work together in Indigenous people's hands. Their achievement in enforcing freedom of movement and labour was not lessened but made more visible by being clothed in an outfit often considered only an article for commercial consumption. But this, also: Thomas Deer continued, "But I didn't like how naked his forearms and wrists looked with this costume, so I put my own ribbon shirt on underneath." Looking closely, I could see the deep red cloth sleeves and brightly beribboned cuffs below the buckskin fringes, one garment of Indigenous pride affirming another. The figure embodies a layering by which Mohawk identity is both protected and announced by the outer layer of expected stereotype; the outer garment is revealed by its underlay to have culturally specific power too; and a mobility at once geographical and intergenerational takes material form.[4]

What Teiowí:sonte Deer made visible has become my framework for tracing the performance strategies of Esther Deer, also known as Princess White Deer, and her family of Mohawk entertainers, who were contemporaries of Diabo in Caughnawaga and its neighboring community of St. Regis (now Ahkwesáhsne). This article follows the Deer family's career on the international entertainment circuit as another enactment of sovereign, border-crossing mobility. Working with the archive of their popular performances,[5] it reads their choreography of spectacle and control of theatrical space, their management of their own labour and their address to their audiences not only as seizing agency in the entertainment marketplace but also as sustaining intergenerational family, kinship, and community relations. As with the figure of Diabo as dressed by Teiowí:sonte Deer, these multiple dynamics coalesce in the layering of the performers' attire, in combinations and relations which can be glimpsed along the way, culminating powerfully in Princess White Deer's wielding of her show blanket.

Evoking this framework also acknowledges another border, between the Indigenous performer and the non-Indigenous spectator, then, and between the Indigenous archivist and the settler scholar (in this case, me) now. There is a lineage of Indigenous performers shaping the spectatorial gaze and it, too, carries intergenerational echoes.[6] The Deer family were part of the extensive network of Indigenous popular performers who travelled global circuits of vaudeville and its overseas equivalents, variety and *Varieté*, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These venues were key to training audiences in the rhythms of western modernity, through the new practices of looking required by their live and filmic

programmes.[7] Indigenous vaudevillians, though under-acknowledged in contemporary performance scholarship, played a significant role in that process. My grandfather could well have been in the Deers' audience when they played Glasgow, Scotland, in 1907. I wondered what he might have seen when he looked at these Mohawk performers as, his descendant, I listened to Teiowí:sonte Deer, himself a descendant of Esther Deer's extended family, showing me how to see differently.

There is rich analysis of how hypervisible "Indian" caricatures have attempted to render Indigenous peoples invisible, especially in the arena of popular entertainment and especially at the turn of the twentieth century, often considered the nadir of genocidal policies and practices against the Peoples of Turtle Island (Raheja xii, 208). Rayna Green (Cherokee descent) was one of the first to name the cost to Indigenous performers of being trapped within dominant stereotypes of "playing Indian"; Philip J. Deloria (Dakota descent) has also parsed that concept and its dangers to Indigenous peoples:

> In the early twentieth century, Indian people participated in the making of Indian Others as never before. Yet the fact that native people turned to playing Indian—miming Indianness back at Americans in order to redefine it—indicates how little cultural capital Indian people possessed at the time. Such exercises were fraught not only with ambiguity, but with danger. Mimetic imitations could alter political, cultural, and personal identities in unanticipated ways. (*Playing* 125)

The attempted commodification of Indigenous peoples has been directly linked to dominant ways of seeing—as in, for example, Joanna Hearne's argument that film viewers have long been encouraged to see Indians along the barrel of a gun. These scholars, and others, also recognize that, within those conditions not of their own making, Indigenous performers also exerted agency in shaping how they were seen, managing dominant "expectations" (Deloria, *Indians* 3 and passim), protecting their privacies—that is, sustaining what Michelle H. Raheja (Seneca heritage) calls "visual sovereignty" (xiv and passim).

The Deer Family in Performance

The history that the Deers carried with them from Mohawk Nation Territory has been characterized by Kahnawà:ke Mohawk scholar Gerald Taiaiake Alfred as "brokerage" under pressure (22, 33). Pushed northwards from the seventeenth century by European invaders, some Mohawks established communities along the St. Lawrence River where, among other strategies of "survivance," they positioned themselves as trade and political intermediaries among the British, French, and Iroquois.[8] When European powers carved out Turtle Island in their own interests—establishing the United States in the late eighteenth century and Canada in the mid-nineteenth—Mohawks had to navigate more borders not of their own making: Kahnawà:ke lies north of what became the Canada-US line, across the river from Montreal, while Ahkwesáhsne is crossed by the international border, as well as those of Ontario, Quebec, and New York State. In the face of genocidal Indian Acts, educational regimes, and land grabs, the Mohawk people sustained parallel governance structures, spiritual practices, and cultural

forms, insisting on their identity as neither Canadian nor American, but Mohawk. In the words of anthropologist Audra Simpson, also Mohawk of Kahnawà:ke, they "are nationals of a precontact Indigenous polity that simply refuse to stop being themselves" (2).

Through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, now a growing population on a shrinking land base, the Mohawks of Caughnawaga and St. Regis took on modern marketplace conditions with familiar versatility, developing forms of "mobile employment" (Alfred 3) out of their long-established skills. They seized itinerant opportunities with repeated returns home: moving back-and-forth across the Canada-US border in lumber work, river piloting, military engagements, iron construction, sports, the sale of fine beadwork and basketry, and entertainment (Blanchard 99; Beauvais 138; McNenly 124-25).

The Deer family was part of the first generation to enter the entertainment marketplace. Esther Deer records that her grandfather, Chief Running Deer (Ennias Ta-Si-Tai-Ari Os-Ka-Non-Do) was born in the 1830s in St. Regis, participated in the display for the Prince of Wales during his visit to Montreal in 1860, and was one of the first to travel with P. T. Barnum's show.[9] By the early 1860s, Chief John Running Deer "had an all-Indian troupe that performed in the William Washburn shows" (Galperin 23)—dancing, singing, craft-making, trick-riding—and he and his wife Esther Martin Loft (Ka-Nas-Ta-Ge, Bay of Quinte descendant of Joseph Brant) raised their family of five children as a theatrical troupe.[10] Touring—eventually nationally and internationally—was part of the job, but the Deers sustained ties to their home communities, the two oldest sons, John (Ta-Ka-Lo-Lus) and James (Ar Ha Ken Kia Ka) intermittently figuring as spokesmen for St. Regis land claims and political gatherings. Even when Running Deer returned to St. Regis full time in retirement, he continued to work colonially imposed borders by rafting visitors back-and-forth to his International Hotel which, according to the 1892 census, was "bisected diagonally" by the border which "about equally divides the population of the American and Canadian members of the Saint Regis nation" (Donaldson 32).

An 1894 photograph of one Deer troupe, the St. Regis Indian Show Company, introduces the array of materials, relations, and challenges involved in the persistence of Mohawk agency in the entertainment marketplace (Figure 1). The composition centres Chief Running Deer flanked by members of his family and community, including his daughter Mary, her husband Black Eagle, and another relative, Lily Deer.[11] Visible in their clothing and poses is the choreographed layering of cultural markers at which Esther Deer later became so adept. While the performers' dress carries distinctively Mohawk designs and beadwork, four of the six adopt a stereotypical "Indian" gesture for the camera, hands shading brows as they gaze off into the distance; the row holding this pose on horseback also evokes the growing popular expectation that all Indigenous cultures were horse cultures. Black Eagle, on the far left, powerfully concentrates the conjunction of culturally specific items: he combines the flaring ostrich feather headdress seen on Native peoples of the North East since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an Iroquois warrior's necklace of teeth or claws, the rifle introduced by violent European invasion, and, covering most of his body, the trade blanket which carried its own histories of attempted genocide and Native resistance.[12] The card's border extends the layering into the performers' names, English above Mohawk, and articulates the commercial dynamics at play. This sell card is an advertisement for W. S. Tanner of Lawrence, Kansas, the non-Indigenous broker who brought the artistry of St. Regis Mohawks to market ("Largest Dealer in their Fancy Baskets") and whose ownership of this image frames their

Fig. 1. W. S. Tanner, (Group portrait of St. Regis Mohawk men and women in costume outside log building, some on horseback) ca. 1894. Photo provided by Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

self-representation (Tanner holds copyright and sells the card for 35c).[13] As the Deers developed their travelling acts, they took this power of brokerage to themselves.

They also seem to have embedded family stories within the trappings of popular performance. Take, for example, the woman who became James Deer's wife, Georgette Osborne. Georgette was a British-born actor, a child star in several popular plays in North America, including at different times both Topsy and Eva (that is, both in and out of blackface) in the massively popular stage version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[14] In 1888, she played Susan Boone, wife of Daniel, in *Daniel Boone and the Indians*, where she met James Deer, who, with his brothers, father, and others from St. Regis, was performing Indian in the show (Galperin 43-44). When they married, in 1889, Georgette became a *de jure* member of the Mohawk Nation and ward of the government, according to the laws of both Canada and the United States. On-stage, Georgette performed that re-categorization, switching her costume in *Daniel Boone* from settler to buckskinned Indian maiden, tomahawk in hand.[15] Later, the press would herald her as one of "the Queens of the Mohawk Tribe of Indians" for a virtuoso riding act in which she wore a western settler outfit of buckskin skirt and jacket, checked shirt, neckerchief, and wide-awake hat.[16] This visible embrace of multiple identity positions was not available to all. Then, as now, the effect of inequitable gender laws on the Mohawk people was destructive: Indigenous women who married non-Native men lost their Indian status,

while non-Indigenous women (such as Georgette) who married into the Nation gained it. James and Georgette Deer may have reacted to the pull of entertainment opportunities on the road as well as the push of tensions at home. In any case, they based their residence in New York City while touring as far afield as the Midwest. On 2 November 1891, Ester [sic] Louise Georgette Deer was born to the couple in the Bronx.

One method by which the Deers asserted creative and marketplace control was by wielding the tools of the western legal system. On 17 August 1892, John and James Deer announced themselves the first trick riders in North America to copyright their act. Registering their claim with the US Copyright Office from the family residence in Hogansburg, on the southern side of the international boundary running through St. Regis, they designated themselves both "proprietors" and "authors" of "a Dramatic Composition," titled "Indian Riding," to which they subsequently added a scripted "scenario."[17] Their publicity leaflet detailing their act—each body part, pose, and action precisely choreographed—was at once marketing strategy and legal notice. Under the masthead of "The Famous Deer Brothers Champion Indian Trick Riders of the World," James and John Deer Jr. issued a "Warning! Imitators Beware!," citing the authority of the Librarian of Congress and their attorney. In the Deer brothers' hands, such governmental systems could serve Indigenous ends, recognizing and protecting their distinctive skills—what they termed their "untaught natural horsemanship" (a phrase which both declares the persistence of Indigenous distinction and, like the figures on horseback in the St. Regis Indian Show sell card, could speak to popular pan-Indian expectations). From this position of strength, James Deer, as Manager, offers to broker a deal:

> We are always prepared to negotiate with responsible managers throughout the country, at the principal summer resorts, circuses, agriculture associations, parks, &c. We can always furnish a Historical Wild West at short notice, and guarantee the show first-class in every respect.[18]

The Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, 1901, saw a kind of culmination of the Deers' entertainment and entrepreneurial strategies when they ran their own "Deer's Indian Village." There were bigger, more official Indian exhibitions at the exposition, but they went under the "vanishing Indian" trope.[19] The Indian Village mounted by the Deers was more modest in its physical dimensions, but more ambitious by far in its exhibition of contemporary Indigenous ownership and performance skills. One photograph shows the extended family arrayed at the entrance to their arena (Figure 2): several figures, including Chief Running Deer, centre right, are recognizable from the St. Regis Indian Show; James and Georgette position themselves at the ticket booth; John Deer ropes a man on horseback. At the centre is the nine-year-old Esther Deer on a white horse, her upper body seeming to be wrapped in the kind of striped show blanket which later loomed large in her performance.

The significance of the performance outfits in this historical scene is illuminated by a discussion of the complexities of contemporary Indigenous theatrical costume by Anishinaabe-Ashkenazi scholar and practitioner Jill Carter. With reference to costume designer Erika A. Iserhoff (Omushkego and Eeyou Cree heritage), Carter delineates

Fig. 2. Deer's Indian Village. Photo provided by the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center.

> the specific processes, challenges, and opportunities that are bound up in her work as an author of material texts that live in the commercial sites of spectacle wherein contemporary Native experience is performed. [...] Together, we ruminated upon the Aboriginal theatre worker's struggle to address and resist being packaged as a spectacle for voyeuristic consumption while concurrently trying to attract audiences in to hear our stories. (6)

Reading the Deers' attire as "material texts" created in particular environments redirects attention away from restrictive measures of so-called "authenticity" towards their life as connective tissue, linking performers on the circuit with their home communities, family members with each other, and different Nations of "show Indians."

The photograph of Deer's Indian Village shows floral and diagonal patterns which are recognizably Mohawk or Haudenosaunee and the distinctive Mohawk *gus-to-weh* headdress worn by Chief Running Deer, along with what Johnny Beauvais, a member of another Kahnawà:ke family of entertainers, called "the 'Sioux look'" which audiences expected of "our Indians" in the later nineteenth century.[20] Esther Deer is on record fondly remembering her father making the regalia which she calls "our costumes"; other items of clothing came from the community of Iroquois women in Lower Manhattan—at least one of them from St. Regis—expert in buckskin and beading.[21] "The 'Sioux look'" was made with Mohawk skill, visible in the beaded vests worn for many years by James, John, George and Esther which echoed each other in the Plains Indian-style motifs and in their full-feather Plains-style headdresses. In this photograph, the vest is most visible on John Deer, the full-feather headdress on James Deer. The figure of Paul Diabo again serves as a touchstone; like him, the Deer

troupe is clothed in "material texts" which respond to dominant audience expectations while retaining the power of Indigenous-specific labour, relations, and meanings.

As well as showcasing a gathering of Mohawk performers under Mohawk direction, the Deer's Indian Village also positioned them as hosts. Their entrance banner announced in large letters: "RedMen Welcome." This phrase potentially puts in motion several conflicting gestures of "welcome and unwelcome," to use the language of Stó:lō scholar Dylan Robinson ("Welcoming" 5). If the phrase referred to Native peoples, it can be understood to pointedly indicate one place where they were welcome—compared to the many places, by implication, they were not.[22] Additionally, the phrase could be understood to politely discomfit non-Native spectators—inviting them to experience being less than welcome. But equally, especially in that period, the phrase could be inviting non-Native wannabees, such as members of the Improved Order of Red Men, the white male fraternity known often to patronize Indigenous events.[23] By any interpretation, the Deers are positioned as setting the terms of this entertainment space; their gesture resonates powerfully with Robinson's contemporary exploration of "the degree to which Indigenous sovereignty is constituted through gestures of welcome that take place in spaces of transit and gathering" (5). Discussing borders, airports, and exhibition spaces of today, Robinson limns

> Indigenous protocols of welcome that remind guests that they are guests. [...] To welcome guests [...] is, to varying degrees, to signal sovereign control over the rules of the space and the authority under which such rules are enforced. (16)

Within the terrain of commercialized spectacle at the turn of the twentieth century, the Deers exerted unusual rhetorical and material control. They were literally running the show: making costumes, setting ticket prices, choosing and protecting their acts, reaping the financial rewards, showcasing their culturally specific skills, and positioning non-Indigenous spectators as paying guests on *their* domain. Particularly in the context of wild west shows, this was a notable achievement. Although there is a growing literature recognizing the agency exerted by Indigenous performers within wild west shows, the overall management and ownership were overwhelmingly by white patriarchal figures.

Of course, the Deers also faced countervailing forces when they were invisibilized by the dominant entertainment industry—including their experience with *The Great Train Robbery*, the famous Thomas Edison film, directed by Edwin Porter, in late 1903.[24] They also could be overtaken by community tensions caused by colonization—including the imposition of governmental regimes dictating who qualified as Mohawk and what land they would be allotted. Perhaps partly for these reasons, at the end of 1903, the Deers accepted an invitation from Texas Jack to join his wild west show in South Africa. Thus began the Deer family's overseas career—brokering new cultural expectations and crossing different borders—which would last approximately a decade.

The Deer Family Overseas

The Deer Family literally made their name overseas, launching their billing as "the celebrated Deer Family of Indians." This was not an easy or straightforward achievement, as their negotiations across entertainment venues and countries show. Rayna Green has documented that the beginning of Indians playing Indians happened in Europe ("Tribe" 33); Coll Thrush has demonstrated the long fetch of British voyeuristic viewing of Indians—although also the power of Indigenous visitors who could "look back," "cast an Ojibwe gaze on London," and form their own opinions (10).

The Deer family came to Europe via South Africa, where the press coverage was paradigmatic of how they initially hovered between creative control and more passive display. In mid-December 1903, John, James, George, Georgette, and Esther Deer—along with Phillip Big Tree and Black Eagle from St. Regis—landed in Cape Town, South Africa. On the one hand, the South African press acknowledged them as "Irrequois," listing their Mohawk names.[25] They were applauded as performers with a wide range of skills, including "fancy riding," singing, dancing, and acting in sketches.[26] But in this environment they also became "Red Indians," positioned within the long tradition of exhibition, objectified culture to be explained by the European (in this case Dutch or Boer) authority in the "Redskin Encampment" beyond the arena:

> A visit to the menageries, a large marquee where the animals may be seen and the Indians and cowboys inspected, is well repaid, and an opportunity should be sought of having a word with Captain Dierkes, who is in charge, as the Captain is thoroughly acquainted with Indian manners and customs, and being fluent of tongue gives one a host of facts in a few moments. In the menagerie he will point out many articles of interest.[27]

As the scene is told, human beings become visible only as appendages to exoticized artifacts. These include "the calumet or pipe of peace" puffed on by "old Split Bark, the Medicine Man"—presumably Phillip Big Tree—and "scalps which White Deer [Esther Deer] wears, and were handed to her by her grandfather." James Deer's role as manager also seems to have been subsumed here "Under the sole direction of Texas Jack."[28] In terms of controlling the space of performance, this was the challenge: How to prevent the pride of specific Indigenous naming being turned into exoticised objectification? How to prevent "real Indians" from becoming "Red Indians"? How to exploit competitive showbiz claims as "the only ... " without playing into the genocidal rhetoric of "the last ... "?

Some of the answer lay in the specificities of theatrical space. In October 1904, the Deers sailed from South Africa to Great Britain and began to hire themselves out to venues across Europe. Press coverage over the next six years shows them shuttling back-and-forth among wild west shows, circuses, zoological gardens, music halls, vaudeville venues, variety palaces, and *Varieté* stages. Program by program, headline by headline, and newspaper story by newspaper story (of which there were hundreds), it becomes clear that the Deer Family made their way out from under a number of containing myths—that all Indians belonged

to the Buffalo Bill firmament, that they were under the control of a euro impresario, that they were "Der letzte vom Stamme der 'Mohawks'" [Last of the Mohawks]—by working the structure, rhythm, and audience relations of vaudeville and variety.[29] Seizing the conditions of this performance space, they brokered audience expectations with Mohawk expertise.

When vaudeville and its overseas equivalents are identified as a central mechanism of western modernity, four conditions are often cited. First, from the 1880s, vaudeville forged a more inclusive audience—across class, gender, ethnicity, and, to an extent, race—than previous entertainment forms. Tony Pastor, in New York City, is often cited as the first to create a "family-friendly" environment by banning alcohol and introducing services for women, such as powder rooms. The cheapness, hierarchical seating plans, and cultural variety of acts on stage also attracted a wide range of "new immigrants." Second, vaudeville auditoria were unlike the huge outdoors arena of wild west shows with their emphasis on mass displays of horsemanship, violence, and (mostly male) Indian primitivism. Vaudeville performers—of whom a goodly number were women—were put in direct, sometimes close-up, relationship with the audience; perhaps nostalgically, vaudeville enthusiasts remember their experience as deeply communal. Third, the distinctive pacing of the variety bill—which stretched from ten acts in one offering in North American theatre to thirty in the Russian empire—both reflected the pace of modern life and acclimated audiences to it. And, fourth, vaudeville-variety was the first entertainment to develop a globalized system linking managers and, through international labour unions, performers. Conditions of the vaudeville circuit were demanding, especially for those in small-time houses; nevertheless, Indigenous vaudevillians could seize opportunities for creative and managerial control beyond those in any other entertainment venue available to them in this period.

The more the Deers appeared on music hall, variety and *Varieté* stages the length and breadth of Britain, Ireland, and Germany, the more agency they accrued. Increasingly billed as headliners, they functioned as a self-contained unit within variety line-ups. With their multipart act, they controlled the internal pacing, transitions, and variation which loomed so large in the vaudeville experience. "Indians of the Past" consisted of "1.—The Indian Camp Fire. 2.—Princess White Deer in her Famous Songs and Indian War Dance. 3.—The Settlers' Cabin. 4.—White Rose[sic] and Princess Deer in their Speciality. 5.—The Indians Burning Settlers' Cabin. 6.—Sensational Knife Duel. 7.—Settlers to the Rescue."[30] Public understanding of this act shifted perceptibly during their years on variety circuits. Whereas, early on, the press reported the sequence as a triumphal white-settler narrative in which the Indigenous performers enact their own inevitable vanishment, later it was covered as showcasing Indigenous skill and versatility; the structuring principle for the spectator became less narrative teleology and more vaudevillian episodicness.[31]

In the physical space of these theatres and the conventions of direct address, the Deers also developed a sense of intimacy with their audiences, as was heard during their first appearance at the Greenock Empire:

> An incident with a note of humour in it took place at the Empire on Wednesday night. The Deer family were giving their genuine representation of Indian life. The settler log hut was being surrounded by Indian braves in full war paint, when from an open window a girl's voice exclaimed, as she looked out "O, mammy, I believe

> there's Indians about" then an excited youth in the gallery, carried away by the realism of the scene, squeaked out "Watch yersel', lassie, there' ane beside the door!"[32]

This light-hearted anecdote provides a glimpse of some additional layers of agency at work. The "lassie" would almost certainly have been Esther Deer, because she and Georgette played both "settler" and "Indian" in the Deers' bit, a doubling which held real (though vaudevillized) relationship to their double lineage for anyone in the know. Moreover, the very history of their home territory at St. Regis, a place to which Indigenous people had moved under the pressures of colonization, redefined the notion of settlers and settlements well beyond the wild west binary.

The performance journey travelled by the Deer Family overseas is epitomized in the contrast between their first appearance in Dresden, Germany, around 1905-1906, and their second in January 1910.[33] In joining the German entertainment world, the Deers were entering a particularly powerful force field of fascination, projection, and identification with the Native people of North America which had been building since at least the nation's emergence; Hartmut Lutz's term for the distinctively German national(ist) obsession is "German Indianthusiasm."[34] "By the 1880s, *Völkerschauen*"—the commercial display of Indigenous peoples—"became common in German cities" and continued to live in spectacles conjoining displays of animals and peoples, as in Carl Hagenbeck's human zoo of 1907 (Penny 57). Every year, new groups of Native performers arrived, with Wild West shows and circuses, while German popular print culture, from Karl May's first Winnetou novel in 1893 onwards, was replete with caricatures of Indians.[35]

In their first appearance in Dresden, the Deers were part of "*Grosse Indianer-Schauspiele aus dem Wilden Westen Nordamerikas*" [Big Indian spectacles from the wild west of North America] conducted on the grounds of the Zoological Gardens, a place thick with the histories and associations—and smells—of the *Völkerschauen* and human zoos. Despite their photograph appearing on the cover of the program, the Deers are put firmly in their place under "Direktor und Unternehmer" [director and producer] Paul Schultze.[36] The eleven acts on the bill are organized and interpreted to create a teleological narrative of Indian vanishment and white supremacy. The Mohawk performers' singing, dancing, and riding skills become precursors to the closing sketch, "Trappers Heim" [Trapper's Home], in which "ein indianischer Spion" [an Indian spy] enables an Indian attack on the log cabin, but they are ultimately beaten back by "amerikanischen Cowboys" [American cowboys]—an act which is explicitly linked to history:

> Mit der Befreiung der Farmerfamilie und der vollständigen Niederlage der roten Räuber endet die Wiedergabe eines hochinteressanten Schauspiels, welches sich leider häufig in früheren Zeiten im wilden Westen ereignete.
>
> [With the liberation of the farmer's family and the complete defeat of the red robbers, the rendition of a highly interesting drama ends, in a way that was unfortunately frequent in the wild West of earlier times.]

Similarly, the program emphasizes the Indigenous performers' status as remnants, figures living now only in James Fenimore Cooper and Mayne Reid romances:

> Es gibt nur noch eine geringe Zahl von Ueberlebenden jener Zeit, and die Stunde ist nicht fern, wo die so erschütternde Zeitepoche aus der Geschichte Nord-Amerikas nur noch in schriftlicher Ueberlieferung existieren wird.
>
> [There are only a small number of survivors of that time, and the hour is not far off, when such a shocking epoch of the history of North America will exist only in written tradition.]

In 1910, when the Deers returned to Dresden's zoological gardens, German entertainment spaces were thicker than ever with Native presence.[37] By this time, however, the Deers had climbed the entertainment ladder. No longer consigned to the grounds of the zoo, they now appeared "Im Konzersaal Zoologischer Garten" [in the concert hall of the Zoological Gardens], a place connoting artistry and audience relations. In the *Grosse Indianer-Schauspiele*, the Deers had taken part in approximately four of the eleven acts; in 1910, their multi-part act was very much the main event, accompanied only by the clown Amandus and his troupe from the Circus Angelo who entertained during the intermissions.

The Dresden press in 1910 framed the performance with these values. One English-language newspaper praised the opening act by Esther Deer: "The beautiful voice of Princess White Deer, the young Indian girl, gave evidence of real talent and excellent cultivation."[38] The Deers also worked their sense of the audience, adding scenes to appeal to the German *Indianer* fascination, especially a scalping scene cited by much of the German-language press. But the new ending seems to be calculated for the sensibilities of the Anglo-American population of Dresden, a notable presence in the city before the First World War: in a playful act of cross-racial modernity, the Deers mounted "the exposition of a genuine American cake-walk," a dance closely associated with Black culture, apparently performed in full regalia.[39]

Everything about the 1910 performance suggests that the Deers calculated their multiple audiences' self-consciously modern, cosmopolitan sensibilities and used their own virtuosity to share a joke with them. In this work, they got at the fundamental conditions of vaudeville or *Varieté*: how its novelty spoke to western modernity. The effect was noted by at least one German-language newspaper:

> Echte Indianer auf einer Saalbühne.... Eine Art Varietévorstellung indianischen Lebens in primitiver Urwaldszenerie auf moderner Saalbühne—eine anscheinend paradoxe Darbietung, und doch reizvoll.... Indianerleben und Varietébühne! Und doch ist es so.... Vor allem pakt der Gesang und der Tanz eines jünger schönen Indianermädchens, von deren Vortragskunst viele unsrer Brettlkünstlerinnen lernen könnten.[40]
>
> [Real Indians on a concert hall stage.... A kind of variety performance of Indian life in primitive forest scenery on a modern concert hall stage—an apparently paradoxical performance, yet attractive.... Indian life and vaudeville theater! And yet it is so.... Most enthralling of all are the song and the dance of a young beautiful Indian maiden, from whose elocution many of our cabaret artists could learn.]

The comment constitutes a fundamental, and unusual, recognition that what is on display on this stage is modern artistry—including the artistry of converting an audience's assumptions about cultural contradiction into their appreciation of entertaining paradox.[41]

Characterizing Indigenous people's relationship to the automobile at the turn of the twentieth century, Deloria has written: "Native people blurred together Indian pasts, presents, and futures as they sallied back and forth across the boundary markers of gender, class, and primitivism" (*Indians* 14). The magnitude of the Deers' sallying back and forth across borders and boundaries of space, time, and race can be marked in at least two ways. When the Deers went overseas, they travelled not as autonomous citizens with passports but as wards of the US government dependent on papers of permission being drawn up at US embassies and consulates country-by-country. Through the power and inventiveness of their on-stage presence, especially on variety and *Varieté* stages, they publicly transcended that child-like status. Performance by performance, and tweak by tweak of their act, they also redefined the term "Indian novelty." Osage scholar Robert Warrior has critiqued "the rhetoric of novelty" for its containment and diminishment of Indigenous creativity (qtd. in Weaver, *Red* 108). The term has signalled the enfreakment of Indigenous peoples on commercial display, their very humanity sold as a novelty and their cultural skills downgraded as anomalous oddities.[42] But novelty had a particular purchase in vaudeville, as a core value, a central entertainment experience, for which the audience was paying. When the Deers were advertised as a "Special Novelty Treat" in Dresden, their value lay in producing what Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Italian theorist and enthusiast of the variety theatre, labelled "imaginative astonishment" of a distinctly modern and cosmopolitan type, whereby the audience was led to recognize and laugh at their own expectations of Indians while appreciating unanticipated levels of artistry.[43] These "vaudeville Indians" overseas shifted novelty's association from freakishness to creative control, making visible the modern Indian about whom, in a Canadian context, Daniel Francis has said: "Whites could not imagine such a thing" (59).

Esther Deer Goes Solo

This moment in 1910 seems the apex of the Deer Family's career as a performance troupe. Later the same year they toured *Varieté* theatres in the Russian empire, but soon family members went their separate ways. George and James Deer returned to Germany, signing up with Sarrasani's Circus (the most successful European imitator of Buffalo Bill's Wild West). Esther, whose talented horse-riding, singing, dancing, and acting had been singled out for praise from her first performance in 1903's *Queen of the Highway*, decided to go solo. Her mother Georgette accompanied her on much of her touring around eastern and western Europe during the next four years.[44]

Going solo for Esther did not mean being alone on the stage, as she drew round her the acts and strategies developed with her performance family, which, in turn, carried lines of affiliation to their home territory and the community of "show Indians" more broadly. For the non-Indigenous spectator, the most visible evidence of the kinship lines which she drew together lies in her attire (Figure 3).

Esther took the pieces which she had accrued over the years—the buckskin clothing and footwear made by her people on and beyond Mohawk Nation Territory, the beaded vests with Sioux-type designs which echoed her father's and uncles', the various head pieces (some Mohawk-specific, some more based on wild west designs), the trade silver and jewelry (to which she would add her own medals from European royalty)—and layered them on top of each other in the familiar practice of protection, adaptation, and self-proclamation. Almost twenty years later, a French anthropologist would describe her performance regalia as "la parure sacreé de ses ancêtres" [the sacred adornment of her ancestors] and, in a way, he was not wrong.[45] Esther Deer remembered costumes being lovingly made by her father; they visibly brought together distinctive Mohawk skills and items with signifiers of wild west popular culture as adapted from Sioux or Plains Indian motifs. They embodied a shared culture, reaching from immediate family to the extended community of Indigenous show people.[46]

The topmost layer was Princess White Deer's show blanket. This item—foreshadowed in Black Eagle's outfit in the St. Regis Indian Show sell card and in the glimpse of Esther at the Deer's Indian Village—became newly visible on the family's European tour. By the time Esther Deer went overseas, she was prominently sporting a striped show blanket, sometimes on her horse, sometimes folded over her shoulder, sometimes carried over her arm, and choreographed

Fig. 3. Princess White Deer 1909/10, Postcard. Photo provided by the Karl Markus Kreis Private Collection.

into her on-stage performance. When she presented it to her audience, it can be understood—like Paul Diabo's western regalia—as both protection and proclamation of her identity.

Trade blankets were, and remain, double-edged swords in connection with Indigenous peoples. On the one hand, they functioned as tools of genocide, infected with diseases to which Indigenous people had no immunity when they were brought onto reservations and reserves by government agents and traders. They also tried to supplant Indigenous creativity—the robes made from animal skins and the hand-woven blankets. Eventually, factories appropriated Indigenous iconography into their designs, as ways of validating these products of industrialized production. First, from about 1890 J. Capps and Sons developed categories and motifs that purported to represent Indigeneity, then, most famously, Pendleton blankets developed highly ornate and complex designs based on a wide range of Native creativity (Kapoun 73-129). Yet these physical and cultural assaults were met with Indigenous ingenuity: some wearers would Indigenize trade blankets with feathers, plants, shells, buttons, or other items. Some communities came to value them as forms of recognition and accomplishment to be presented on the occasion of a notable achievement. Some would incorporate them into dance and other performances. And more recently, some Native creators have negotiated with Pendleton's to trade Indigenous artistry for recognition and material recompense. Framed by the politics of colonization, survivance, and resurgence, blankets seem quintessential embodiments of the brokerage which runs strongly through the history of Esther Deer's people. The material object, its aesthetic and spiritual properties, and its connection to settler-Indigenous relations brings together opposed forces, deployed differently by different communities and embodying a power which is both ongoing and unresolved. "Indian blankets" are still glorified by settler wannabees who are equally capable of wielding "Blanket Indians" as a demeaning shorthand for peoples incapable of entering the modern world. At the same time, going "back to the blanket" signalled Indigenous "opposition to assimilation," historically and more recently (Deloria, *Indians* 28, 30).

Esther's show blanket was of a design that would later be categorized by the Capps company as "Mohawk War Striped" (Kapoun 77). Esther used it as a horse blanket in her trick riding displays with her family which, among other things, involved her learning to replicate her mother's act as Georgette went into retirement. Sometimes the blanket reads like a protective layer. In one photograph, in a line-up in which the young woman stands next to the Scottish vaudevillian Harry Lauder, she is protected on one side by Georgette's touch on her shoulder and on the other by her blanket over her shoulder, distancing her from the man standing closely next to her.[47] When this photograph was cropped by the press, Georgette was edited out, so the blanket plays that much stronger a role. And, of course, it is a show blanket, to be flourished as part of her spectacle—signalling danger, barbarism, dancerly control. When Esther went solo, and her blanket became more prominent than ever, it held those complex lineages, dangers, and protections—both the violent onslaught on and resurgent survivance of her people—in its folds.

Princess White Deer had considerable success on *Varieté* venues across the countries of the Russian empire. The company she kept on stage across Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Ekaterinoslav—mainly women performers—seems to have been more genteel than in some earlier venues, although the cities themselves were places of considerable danger in these years of turmoil between the first and second Russian Revolutions and the onset of the

First World War.[48] By 1913, she was making the links to family and trans-Indigenous kinship which can be read in her performance outfit explicit in her publicity. In advertising her appearance at the Fövarosi Orfeum, Budapest, her photograph is framed by her family connection—"Grand daughter of the Famous Mohawk Indian Chief Running Deer"—and her show credentials—"A Feature Act on Every Program Meeting With Great Success." And it is autographed: "Aboriginally yours, Princess White Deer" (Figure 4).[49] It may be telling that the signature seems first to appear in May 1913, when she was performing in Moscow; the month previous, her "dear uncle George," as she would remember him, was killed in a riding accident in Hamburg.[50] In reinforcing her connection to Indigenous community in a period of particular loss and grief, was Esther Deer, again, sending Indigenous messages down the lines of commercial transaction?

Esther was also about to extend the family, as had her father and uncle, across racial and national lines and, again, may have been reinforcing her identity as no less Aboriginal for that. In 1913 in St. Petersburg she met, and would eventually become engaged to, Count Krasicki, who was of Polish or Russian aristocratic lineage.[51] When war broke out in Europe in 1914, Esther and Georgette fled back to St. Regis, returning to Hogansburg (possibly to Running Deer's hotel). In the midst of the war, Esther crossed the Atlantic to marry Count Krasicki, returning to St. Regis to wait it out, while he returned to fight on the Russian front. In mid-1916, she heard that her husband had been killed. This time in Esther Deer's life seems to have been so painful that, as Patricia Galperin has documented, she pulled a veil over it.

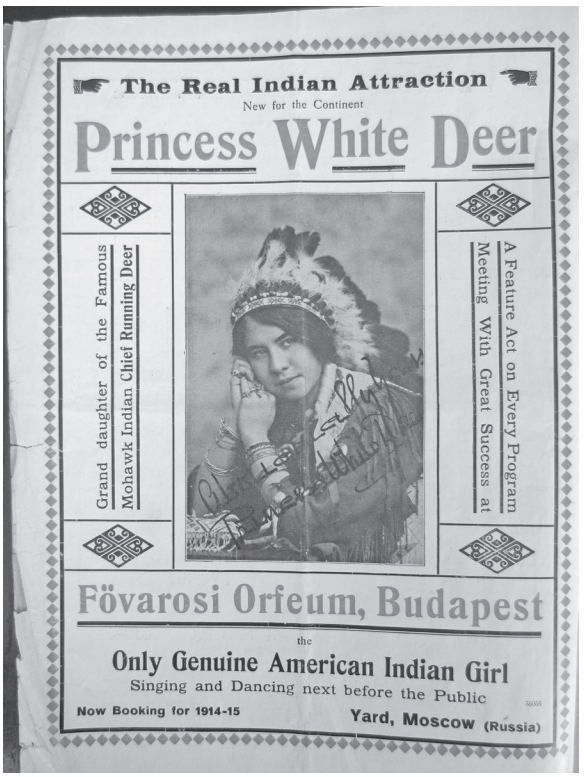

Fig. 4. *Das Programm*, 23 Nov. 1913, Full-page Advertisement, Sammlung Varieté, Zirkus, Kabarett, Stiftung Stadtmuseum, Berlin-Spandau.

By March 1917, Esther Deer had plunged into big-time US vaudeville, opening a chapter which is its own story.[52] Although her name loomed larger—including mile-high in lights at one of B. F. Keith's theatres—and her costumes were skimpier, Princess White Deer's success back in the US seems to have been achieved by her sticking to the terms of engagement which her family had brokered in Europe. She managed her own troupes, engaging two performers—Chief Eagle Horse, Alaska Native, and Chief Os-Ko-Mon, who self-identified as Yakima—to act as her "Indian Braves."[53] She also brought family members from Caughnawaga—including her cousin May Splicer, who performed as Moonlight, and a member of the Beauvais family—to tour as part of her "Indian ballet."[54] She choreographed her own multi-part acts under titles which make the connection with western modernity clear: "From Wigwams to White Lights" and, in a clear updating of her family's act in Europe, "Indians of the Past and Present." She extended the modernist racial play seen in her family's Dresden gig with her own Buck-and-Wing dance. And, although her increasingly skimpy costumes were no longer made by her family, for a long time she retained some of her original, home-made regalia: much of the silver, the headdress and the beaded vest, made by her father and echoing those worn by him and her uncles. She also continued to wield her blanket.

During the years that Esther Deer rose through big-time vaudeville to Florenz Ziegfeld revues and Broadway shows by Charles Dillingham, Raymond Hitchcock, and others, she posed for many publicity photographs by New York studios. In them, she works the blanket like a lifeline. Sometimes she holds it like a backdrop to her own body, framing her pose (Figure 5). Sometimes she holds it to her body, literally and symbolically countering the voyeuristic gaze. In one shot, as the blanket disappears out of the frame, she touches it with her toe,

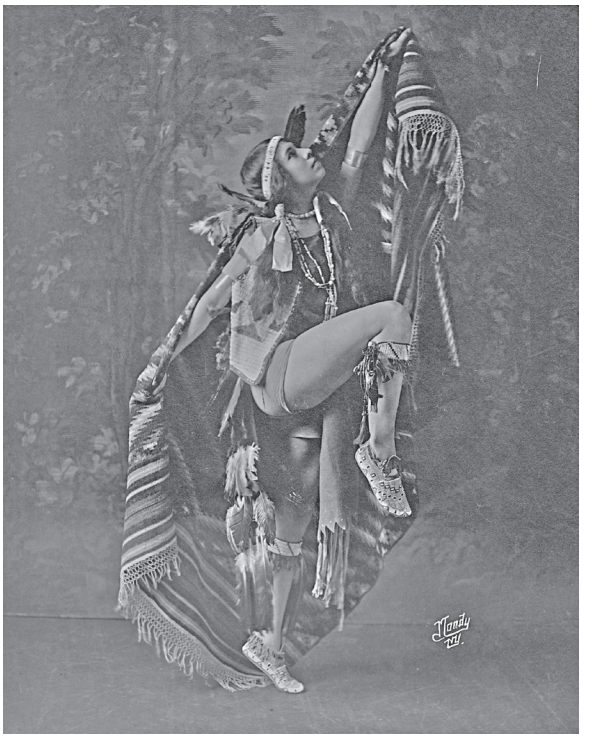

Fig. 5. Princess White Deer. Photograph by Moody Studios, New York, for promotion at B. F. Keith Theatre, ca. 1917. Photo provided by the Patricia O. Galperin private collection.

Fig. 6. Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic, 7 Nov. 1918. Princess White Deer is stage right, eighth from the end; two other famous performers, Fanny Brice and Bert Williams, are stage left, seventh and fifth from the end. Photo provided by the Florenz Ziegfeld Collection, Harry Ransom Center, the University of Texas at Austin.

grounding herself while, in the words of the press, "shaking a wicked shimmy."[55] In this series of photographs, the blanket is not the striped one she used in Europe; it is her father's show blanket. Navigating the onslaught of commercial commodification back in the US, Esther carried closer than ever kinship in material form. The layering is now explicitly intergenerational, a line of relation unbroken by commodity culture, a living "material text," in Carter's term, kept alive as she carried forward and was kept company by her family's performance legacy—including whatever histories, memories, and meanings the blanket held within her family and community. One pose crystallizes the connection between border-crossing and costuming. In it, she drapes another of her show blankets down her back, held by one finger, while her front half is clothed in flapper dress and shoes. The hybrid image suggests a kind of flapper blanket—laughing at notions of "blanket Indians," suggesting the little distance between flapper and Mohawk headbands, indicating, as she would do with increasing explicitness, that the modern depended on the Indigenous.[56]

In 1918, on stage in one of Florenz Ziegfeld's patriotic revues as the First World War was ending and Princess White Deer's US career was taking off, she struck a quintessential pose (Figure 6). I read her as protecting herself with the blanket—again, her father's—folding kin and community around her. But she can also be read as threatened by the stereotype of the

primitive "vanishing Indian" lined up with other icons of the American nation including, to her right, a performer done up as the Statue of Liberty, wrapped in the national flag. With the blanket, Esther Deer controls what the audience can see of her body, but also signals the danger of being smothered by it. And peeping out beneath the blanket is her flapper shoe, a sign of the modernity which she also continued to wield, pointing to a lifetime of modernist performance for those who might not otherwise see it.

Conclusion

The Deer Family crossed borders throughout their lives, brokering conditions not of their own making—to follow Alfred's analysis—and performing sovereign mobility. Princess White Deer left the Broadway stage at the end of the 1920s, negotiating her way through other public and political spheres, on and beyond Mohawk Nation Territory. This article has focused on the theatrical tools of Esther Deer and her family—their performance dress, acts, choreography, management—as border-crossing strategies, tracing what Mohawk agency made of vaudevillian modernity. I end with a scene in another exhibition, "Princess White Deer: A Woman, A Mohawk and A Legend," curated by Patricia O. Galperin in 2017. Among the photographs, playbills, travel documents, and press clippings, two show blankets glowed with astonishing richness. They were Esther Deer's and her father's blankets, between 120 and 150 years old, a little frayed but rich in shades of orange, brown, pink, green and yellow. How powerful they must have been in their newness—holding in their folds lineages of violent onslaught and resurgent survivance; being wielded in invitation to, refusal of, and protection against stereotyped expectations—I cannot imagine. Perhaps, in the world of popular entertainment at the turn of the twentieth century, this is what Indigenous brokerage looked like.

Notes

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2 See Alfred 59; Reid, "Illegal." I follow the language of the period in naming Indigenous communities, except when invoking a contemporary dimension. The Jay Treaty, between "His Britannic Majesty and The United States of America" was signed 19 November 1794.

Among its provisions for "Amity, Commerce, and Navigation," article 3 acknowledged the continued right of Indigenous people on both sides of the border to live and work freely in the US and to carry goods duty-free across the international border.

3 Personal conversation, Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center, Kahnawà:ke, 5 April 2018. (Quoted with permission.)

4 The meanings made by this conjunction are too numerous for me to address here. Among them is the fact that the "headdress and beaded buckskin outfit [...] was made by women in Kahnawake to honor" Diabo (Reid, "Illegal" 74). The ribbon shirt also carries complex combinations of continuity and change, Nation specificity and Indigenous commonality, ceremony and resistance.

5 Along with Princess White Deer's archive, voluminous newspaper coverage, and a small number of published sources, I acknowledge particularly my reliance on Galperin, who worked closely with Esther Deer's niece, Sylvia Karonhiahawi Goodleaf Trudeau, in writing her biography.

6 For an account of how, as a settler scholar, I aim to contribute to the recovery of Indigenous performance history through building relations of research exchange with Indigenous artists and scholars, see Bold, with Monique Mojica, Gloria Miguel, and Muriel Miguel.

7 Among numerous works, see Gunning, Hansen, Jenkins. I use "western modernity" to indicate its location within what Mark Rifkin calls "settler time" (viii and passim) and to acknowledge that Indigenous performance and relations exceeded "non-native frames of reference" (ix).

8 The term coined by White Earth Anishinaabe writer and theorist Gerald Vizenor for Indigenous endurance, continuance, resistance, and resurgence.

9 For the Mohawk names of Chief Running Deer, John Deer, and James Deer, see Esther White Deer, "An Explanation of the Wampum Belt" (PWDC). For Running Deer's birthplace and ancestry, see Galperin 22.

10 See Esther White Deer, "An Explanation of the Wampum Belt" (PWDC).

11 Lily Deer seems to be either his daughter Lydia or the wife of John Deer (see *New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957* for J John Deer [A] and *New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957* for Lilly Deer [A]).

12 For these details of dress, see Gabor 18, 35 (KORLCC collection).

13 The caption of another 1894 sell card copyrighted by Tanner declares that he "Gives Exclusive Sale [...] of his St. Regis Indian Fancy Baskets" (Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress).

14 See Galperin 41-42; "The Theatre Royal," *Montreal Gazette* 6 Dec. 1881: 5 (N).

15 See photograph in Galperin 48.

16 "Heuck's," *Cincinnati Enquirer* 18 Aug. 1895: 19 (N).

17 Library of Congress, *Record* 17 August 1892, 28 November 1892; Library of Congress, *Dramatic* 1069.

18 "The Deer Brothers Famous Champion Indian Trick Riders of the World" (PWDC).

19 On The Midway, white entrepreneur Frederick T. Cummins ran an Indian Congress of "42 Tribes, 700 Indians" which broadcast "the fact that the Indians are fast disappearing and will soon be a memory" (Cummins 1). The Six Nations Village, designed by a white

military man, Captain R. E. Lawton, housed "pagan Indians" who "will live just as they did in the olden days, when the red men ruled the continent" ("Indians to Build Their Village," *Buffalo Courier* 15 Jan. 1901: 8 [N]).

20 Beauvais 136. On the *gus-to-weh*, see Gabor 6.

21 Esther Deer wrote, in her account of arriving in South Africa, "Father had made all our costumes by hand they were beautiful" (PWDC). See also "The Indian Women of New York," *Pittsburgh Daily Post* 18 April 1909: 33 (N). Nicks and Phillips report: "Sylvia Trudeau (personal communication, 9 May 1995) remembered a Western Indian named Sheet Lightning visiting Esther and her mother in New York to measure them for clothing" (158).

22 I owe this reading to Vernon Goodleaf, Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke (personal conversation, 2 December 2018, acknowledged with permission).

23 On IORM's "compensatory political identities par excellence," see Deloria, *Playing* 63.

24 See Bold, "Early."

25 "East London, Dec. 15, 1903" *Era* 23 Jan. 1904 (BNA); "Redskins on the War Path," *Cape Argus*, undated clipping (PWDC).

26 "Texas Jack's Circus," unidentified clipping (PWDC).

27 "East London, Dec. 15, 1903"*;* "Texas Jack's Circus."

28 "Texas Jack's Great Combined Show," clipping from *Diamond Fields Advertiser* 4 July 1904 (PWDC).

29 See, for example, "A Capital Show," *Entr'Acte* 25 March 1905 (BNA); unidentified advertisement in Dortmund press, 1-15 Nov. 1905 (DB); "The Palace," *Irish News and Belfast Morning News* 25 April 1905 (BNA).

30 Alhambra Theatre of Varieties playbill, Edinburgh, 1908 (PWDC); Galperin 63-64.

31 See, for example, "The Standard, Pimlico," *The Stage* 19 Jan. 1905 (BNA).

32 "Variorum," *Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette* 22 April 1905 (BNA).

33 Their first appearance came on the heels of Buffalo Bill's Wild West second tour of Germany, in 1906, which included a stop in Dresden (Weaver, *Other* 84).

34 Lutz 167-84 (in German, *Indianertümelei*); see also Moses, Penny, Sieg, Calloway et al.

35 Kreis documents May seeing the Deer family in Dresden ("Prinzessin" 20-22). There was much *Indianer* activity around Dresden in 1910.

36 "Grosse Indianer-Schauspiele aus dem Wilden Westen Nordamerikas in Szene gesetzt von *Paul Schultze, Direktor und Unternehmer," Undated program (PWDC).

37 For 1910, Penny documents "forty-two Oglala-Sioux" exhibited by Hagenbeck (131); Kreis writes of twenty-two "Vollblut-Indianern" [full-blood Indians],as they were advertised, touring outdoor venues in Onondaga conductor Russell Hill's American Indian Band ("Blasmusik" 147, 151-52).

38 "The first Indian performance … ," unidentified clipping, [Jan.] 13, 1910 (PWDC), perhaps from the *Daily Record*, published in Dresden 1906-1910 as the only English-language daily newspaper in Germany (see Zimmerli 133).

39 "The first Indian performance … "

40 "Echte Indianer auf einer Saalbuhne," unidentified, undated clipping (PWDC)

41 Lutz classifies Indianthusiasm as anti-modernist (169).

42 Kreis notes how "novelty" was wielded in the reception of Russell Hill's Indian Band ("Blasmusik" 148).
43 "Zoological Gardens, Dresden. January 10th and 13th [1910] at 8 p.m., January 15th at 3 and 8pm," unidentified clipping (PWDC); Marinetti 159.
44 *US, Index to Alien Arrivals at Canadian Atlantic and Pacific Seaports, 1904-1944* for Georgetta White-Deer (A), *Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935* for Georgette White-deer (A).
45 Paul Coze, "L'aigle à l'aile brisée," unidentified, undated clipping (PWDC).
46 For example, Esther Deer's Plains-style headdress was credited in a newspaper caption: "the latest headgear invented by Nespa Hampa, 'the Sioux mystery'" ("Mohawk Actress a Hit in Europe," *Los Angeles Sunday Times* 28 Dec. 1913: 43 [N]). Hampa Naspa was a Lakota performer in Buffalo Bill's Wild West (see Moses 66-68).
47 Galperin records that Lauder became Esther Deer's manager (65).
48 See, for example, Programme, "APOLLO" Variety Theatre, Ekaterinoslav, 12 Dec. 1912 (PWDC). In addition to programmes in PWDC, I traced Princess White Deer's solo tour through advertisements and address lists in issues of *Das Programm* 1913-1914 (SS) and Galperin. Thanks to Evgenia Timoshenkova for Cyrillic translation.
49 *Das Programm* November 1913 (SS); "Aboriginally yours" was the cabinet-card autograph of Seneca performer Go-won-go Mohawk from c.1895—so far, the first documented usage; Otis 66 cites others. Esther Deer most likely knew Go-won-go (J. O. Brant-Sero, "Says England Is Tiring of the Stage Indian," *Los Angeles Times* 28 Dec. 1913: 43 [N]).
50 On verso of photograph of George Deer from Dresden, Esther Deer wrote: "June 4th 1884-1913 My dear uncle George Passed April 7th 1913 in Hamburg Germany Ever lovingly[?] Remembered" (PWDC).
51 See Galperin 74-81; Otis 52.
52 After Esther Deer returned to the US, a huge number of newspaper stories covered her career; I have read over 200.
53 Among much coverage, see "Princess White Deer (A Full-Blooded Mohawk Indian) And Her Company of Indian Braves," *Times Dispatch* [Richmond, VA] 9 Dec. 1917: 30 (N).
54 See, for example, "Indian Princess White Deer," *New-York Tribune* 21 July 1919: 9 (N); "Full-Blooded Indian Girl coming to Local Theater," *Dayton Daily News* [OH] 28 Dec. 1919: 17 (N).
55 "Indian Princess White Deer," *Buffalo Times* 4 Dec. 1919: 16 (N).
56 She would later make a case, for example, for the Indigenous roots of jazz.

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