“Woodland Visions”, Ojibwe Art by local artist Robert DesJarlait

Artwork interpretation cards include stories told by the artist of his work. These works were featured at the East Central Regional Arts Council as a solo exhibition from February 17, 2023 through March 17, 2023. DesJarlait was awarded an ECRAC Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF) Individual Artist Grant to create a body of work to be featured at the ECRAC Gallery including watercolor paintings by DesJarlait. The opening reception was Friday, February 17, from 5 to 8 PM, with an Artist Talk at 5:30 PM.

In addition to receiving an ACHF Individual Artist Grant DesJarlait has won awards in ECRAC’s annual IMAGE Art Show; in 2021, he won the artistic merit award. In 2022, he won an artistic excellence award for Ojibwe Mitigwaki Niimid (Ojibwe Woodland Dancers). The judges cited the work for the “techniques used and the expertise exhibited [and] noted how his artwork showed great movement and that it also conveys a true emotional impact.”

In his 2022 exhibition catalog, renowned Ojibwe artist Carl Gawboy included DesJarlait among artists who inspire him. Gawboy said: “Robert DesJarlait for his authenticity. If he paints a woodland traditional dancer, you KNOW everything is right.”

Regarding his work, DesJarlait says: “My paintings are personal visions of a tribal reality. My stylized, figurative images compose a micro/macro-scopic Ojibwe universe. Interwoven in this universe are creation stories, history, customs and traditions, and my central theme – Ojibwe Manidoowiwin, the tribal spirit of the Ojibwe people.”

DesJarlait is from the Red Lake Ojibwe Nation. In addition to fine art, he is a muralist, writer, historian, and educator. He began his career as an artist in 1984. He has authored and illustrated several curriculum units for American Indian Education Programs and American Indian agencies and organizations in Minnesota. He is listed in Who’s Who in American Art and Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian. He currently lives in Onamia, MN.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Giigoonyikekwewag (The Fisherwomen)

Watercolor (Translucent)
18 ½" x 14 ½"
2019

Although there were specific gender roles for Ojibwe women and men, roles overlapped and were shared by both. Setting and collecting asabiig (nets) is often regarded as a male activity. However, women also participated in bagidawaa (net fishing). In the painting, two ogaawag (walleye), ginoozhe (Northern pike), and adikomeg (whitefish) have been caught in the asab (net). The women (as all the women in the series) are wearing strap dresses woven from mazaanaatigoog (nettles).

Abagwe’ashk Ikwe (Cattail Woman)

Watercolor (Gouache)
13” x 14 ½”
2019

Abagwe`ashkoon (Cattails) served a variety of services including medicine and food. Abagwe’ashk fluff was used as insulation in winter wiigiwaman (birch bark lodges). It was also used to line a baby’s loincloth to serve as a type of disposable diaper. When the fluff was soiled, it was disposed of and fresh fluff added. In this piece, a young, pregnant mother-to-be is collecting fluff for her baby.

Gashkibidaagan Ikwe (Bandolier Bag Woman)

Watercolor (Gouache)
14" x 12"
2019

Gashkibidaaganag (Bandolier bags) was a high art form that developed among the Ojibwe in the late 1800s. It was primarily a woman's art. Gashkibidaaganag were part of Maziniminensikaan (beadwork) that featured an array of floral and leaf motifs composed with seed and glass beads. Traditionally, dyed quills and moose hair were used. The introduction of manoomin (beads) via European traders led to newer art forms that expressed Woodland identity. Maziniminensikaan was arranged on leggings, men's aprons, strap dress panels, moccasins, and shirts. Compositionally, designs were usually arranged symmetrically. Gashkibidaaganag were the apex of beading art. The palette of Gashkibidaaganag artists often was reminiscent of fauvism palettes with bold, vibrant colors that weren't always representational of the floral and leaf forms that they depicted.

Dakobijigan (Tied Rice)

Watercolor (Gouache)
12" x 15"
2019

Before the harvest, women would go out and tie the manoomin (wild rice). They used strips of wiigibiish (basswood) that was rolled into a ball. A panel was worn on their back with birch bark ringlets through which the wiigibish was threaded to keep the wiigibish from tangling. They used a hooped pole to pull the manoominaatigoon (wild rice stalks) down to be tied. The wiigibish was dyed and allowed for a family's harvesting area to be marked. (This method is still used by many families today.) The zhiishiib (duck) flying overhead has balls of mud stuck to its webbed feet. The mud balls are embedded with manoomin seeds. The mud balls dropped off the feet of the zhiishiib, sunk to the bottoms of the waters to the sediment below and, thereby, spread and planted the seeds for future growth.

Binawiigo (In the Beginning)

Watercolor (Gouache)
15” x 11”
2019

This painting is essentially a self-portrait that connects me to the traditional art form of mazinibii`iganan (pictographs). Mazinibii`iganan can be found all across Anishinaabeg-Aki (the Land of the Anishinaabe). Mazinibii’iganan were mages that were painted on rocks. Another method was mazinaabikiniganan (petroglyphs) - images that were etched on rocks. Images were more commonly painted than etched. Onaman, a red paint, was used. Binding agents were fish guts or bear fat. Onaman was considered to be sacred. In the origin story, the Thunderbird and Great Beaver engage in a battle. The Thunderbird captures the Great Beaver in its talons and carries it into the skies. The talons of the Thunderbird pierce the Great Beaver and its blood rains down upon the Earth. The blood sinks into the sand. The red sand is onaman and was used to paint mazinibii`iganan images on rocks. The array of images included spirit-beings, mythological animals, and humans composed into narratives about visions, dreams, stories, migrations, hunting and warrior parties. However, interpretations of the compositions are difficult to decipher. In “Binawiigo,” I chose two pictographs found on a lake in Ontario. The exact meaning of these two images – a human form and a wolf – is unknown. But it reminds me of the origin story about Original Man and Ma’iingan (Wolf). However, the human form also reminds me of Nenabozho. Nenabozho was a shape shifter and often transformed himself into a waabooz (rabbit). The long ears on the human figure seems to indicate that it is Nenabozho who has partially transformed into a waabooz.

Misko Magoodaas (Red Dress)

Watercolor (Gouache)
13” x 22”
2019

We usually associate MMIW (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women) with events happening today. But it didn’t begin on dark, desolate highways. MMIW has existed ever since the Invasion and the colonization of our homelands. The fur trade wasn’t just about economic motives for tribes. It was also about the servitude of Native women as “country wives.” And, women forced into prostitution at forts and trading posts. Rape, beatings, and murder became the fate of many of these women. “Misko Magoodaas” is about one of those victims – a woman who has been raped. She has cut off her braids as a sign of her grief. Her mirrored reflection in a red strap dress signifies her journey into the cauldron of historical trauma.

Niibinishi Gabeshi (Summer Camp)

Watercolor (Gouache)
21" x 16"
2019

The Ojibwe were a semi-nomadic people who followed seasonal rounds to areas of subsistence. The two main camps were the niibin (summer) camps and biboon (winter) camps. Daagwaagin (Fall) and ziigwan (spring) camps were more short-term and limited to gathering manoomin (wild rice) in the fall and ziinzibaakwad (maple sugar) in the spring, and late spring and early fall was a time for ceremonies. Niibinishi Gabeshi (Summer Camp) included a variety of activities – gathering birch bark, gathering plants for food and medicine, hunting and trapping, netting fish, growing food, and tanning hides for winter. The summer wiigiwam usually differed from the winter lodge in that reed mats were used for the walls. The wiigiwam provided protection from the elements yet was ventilated and cool on hot summer nights. Basswood twine was used to secure the roof and walls to frames made from ash saplings. Logs on the sides further secured to roof to the frame. Small A-frame structures were built to store various implements. Pits were dug, lined with birch bark with birch covers to keep foodstuffs cool and out of reach of animals. Rock mortars and pestles were used to grind mandaamin (corn). Small garden plots were common and planted with agasimaan (squash), mashkodesiminag (beans), and mandaamin (corn). Historians of colonization portray tribal life as drab and tedious. However, tribal peoples didn't, like the colonizers, dominate nature; rather, they were dominated by nature. They lived a wholesome existence that was in balance with the Original Instructions mandated by Gichi-Manidoo (the Creator).

Maamiikwendamaw Nagawbo (Remembrance – Boy in the Woods / Patrick Robert DesJarlait)

Watercolor (Gouache)
14” x 24”
2019

My father’s Ojibwe name was Nagawbo because he was always in the woods and observing the things around him. He was also given another name – Gwiwizens Odayn Ozhibii ignaak (Boy with a Pencil). He is often attributed as the first Native American modernist in fine arts. But his artistic abilities weren’t limited to fine art. He was also a commercial artist who worked for ad agencies in Minneapolis in the 1950s and early 60s. His most famous creation was the Hamm’s Beer Bear. As a tribute to my father, I’ve painted the bear in his favorite pose – dancing on a log. But rather than a pine log, I have him dancing on a birch log to emphasize his connection to the Ojibwe. And, I’ve given him an update with an otter turban and bandolier bag. The ogaa (walleye) never appeared in the cartoons. So, I’ve added an ogaa to emphasize my father’s connection to Red Lake where our ogaawag are the filet mignon of the Ginoozhe-Aki (the Fish World).

Wiizhaandige Gitigaan (Unfinished Garden)

Watercolor (Gouache)
16" x 17"
2019

"I want us to be doing things, prolonging life's duties as much as we can. I want death to find me planting my cabbages, neither worrying about it nor the unfinished gardening."
~ Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

Quotes, sayings, and phrases provide inspiration for cancer survivors. They become embedded in one's thoughts and perspectives. For me, Montaigne's narrative about unfinished gardening strikes a deep chord. It speaks to me about continuing life's journey and attaining goals within our grasp. My death will find my garden unfinished, but that matters not. What I've accomplished is what is important. "Unfinished Garden" then is about my cancer journey. Several of the floral and leaf motifs have a personal meaning. A manidoog floats near me, a shape with translucent wings and a red bead representing the spirit being. The unfinished garden is symbolized by the large leaf that is near the center. Half of the leaf is finished, half is unfinished. Life's end becomes an unfinished garden.

Giiwosewinini (The Hunter)

Watercolor (Gouache)
21” x 15”
2019

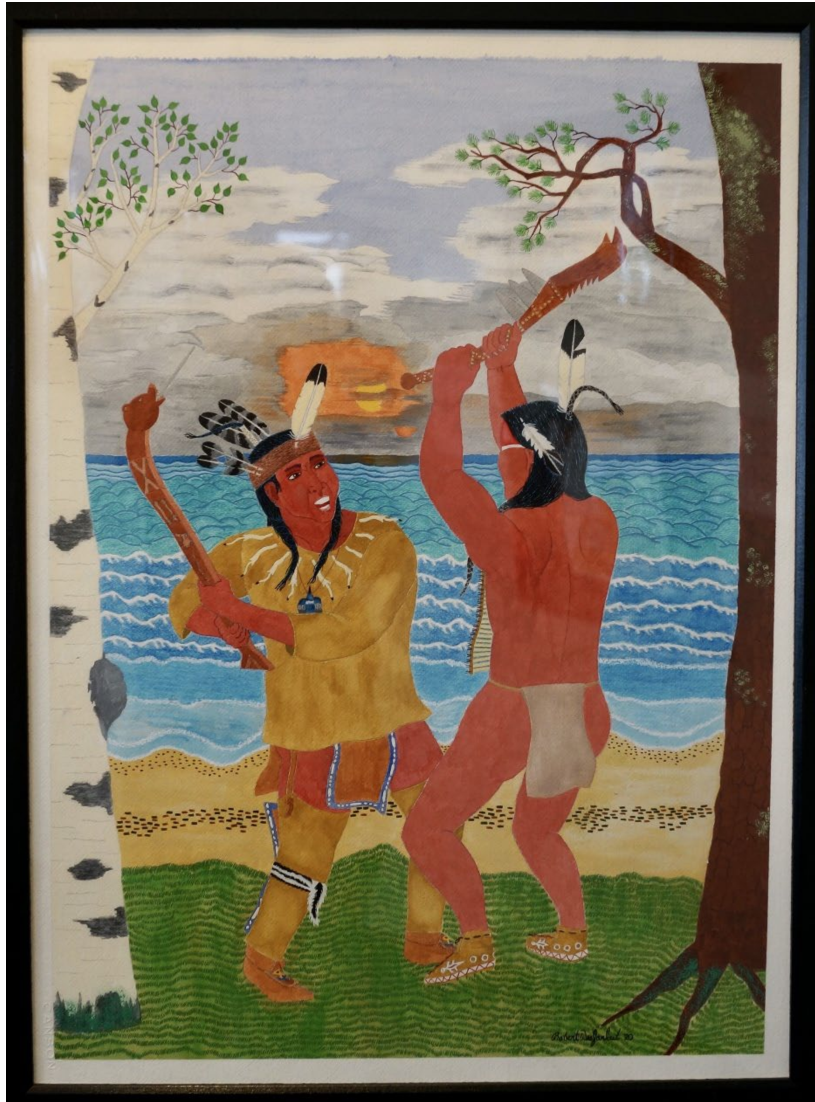
Biboon was a time for hunting waawaashkeshiwag (deer), moozoog (moose), and adikwag (caribou), and for trapping fur bearing animals. For women, indoor activities included making food utensils and birch bark food containers, and making clothing and moccasins that were often intricately decorated with dyed porcupine quills. Biboon was also a time for learning. Origin and Nenabozho stories were told to teach children their history, spiritual beliefs, creation of the natural world, and cosmology of the Anishinaabeg people. Many camps were located near rivers to allow access for ice fishing. The outside walls of the wiigiwanan (lodges) were covered with birch bark sheets that provided protection from the cold winds of winter. Abagwe`ashk (Catttail) fluff or moss was placed between the inner walls of reed mats and outer birch walls to provide insulation. “Giiwosewinini” depicts a hunter returning with a small waawaashkeshi (deer) that will help feed his village. The gijigaaneshiinzhi (black-capped chickadee) is the bird of winter who is able to survive sub-zero temperatures. He represents the spirit of the Anishinaabeg who, like the bird, are able to survive the harsh conditions of Biboon.

Nagamon Bimaadiziwin (Song of Life)

Watercolor (Gouache)
22” x 30”
2020

“Nagamon Bimaadiziwin” is based on a story told to me by Meridel LeSueur. She said that a international conference for women was held in a African county. African women walked across deserts to attend the conference. When they reached their destination, they found the conference was held in a compound surrounded with barbed wire. The main theme/influence for the painting is femicide. Femicide and sexism have no racial or class boundaries. Four "races" of women are represented - Native, Asian, Black, and White. The women are singing and their song breaks the barbed wire of gender oppression. The cowry shells worn by the Anishinaabe, Black, and Asia women connects all three because such shells are traditionally worn in their cultures. Nookomis Giizis (Grandmother Moon) is the nourisher of life. She is the spiritual protector of women. The two stars her within circle are based on stars depicted in pictographs. The moon represents the female aspect of spiritual power.

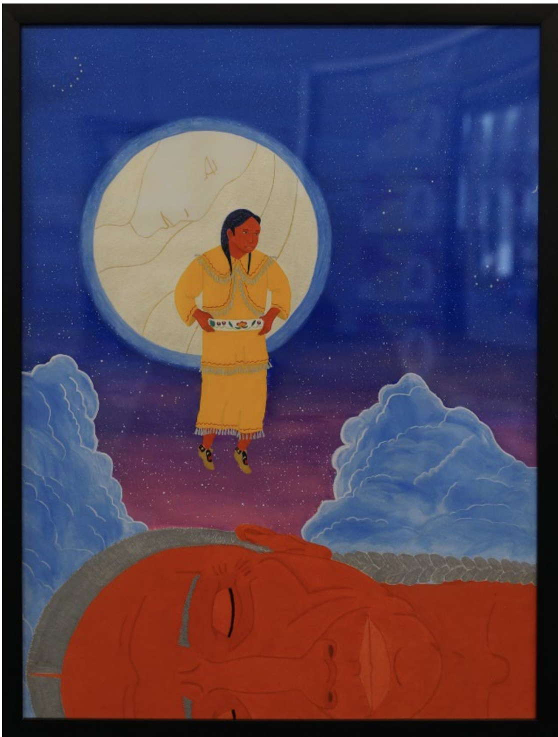
Miigaadiwining Wayekwaadaawangaa-ziibi (Battle at Sandy)



Watercolor (Gouache)
22” x 30”
2020

The battle at Sandy River was a significant event in the history of the Red Lake people. The painting is based on the story that was told to me by nimishoomis (my grandfather) and other elders. I chose to focus on two warriors engaged in hand-to-hand combat. I tried to maintain a historical accuracy to this work. For example, there is no beadwork. At the time of the battle (approximately 1765), quillwork was used on clothing. Beads replaced quills in the late 1800s. The Bwaan (Dakota) warrior wields a Thunderbird club. His forehead is painted red with a white stripe. The cut feather and the split feather have specific meanings. Bear grease was used to make scalp locks stand up. It was the scalp lock that was taken when scalped. The women would make a scalp hoop/pole from which they hung the scalps from and would dance with it at the community war dance. The Red Lake warrior has a bear head war club with a long spike protruding from its mouth. The clubs are based on photos of war clubs in collections. The Red Lake warrior wears war "charm." These were made from a bird skin, i.e., a small bird, usually a kingfisher, that was filled with a medicine only known to the wearer; cloth birds were also made. They were worn around the neck and provided protection to the warrior.

Ziibaaska’iganagooday Bwaajigan
(Dream Vision of the Jingle Dress)



Watercolor (Gouache)
15 x 20
2022

This painting depicts a dream vision from the past in which an akiwenzii had a dream vision of a dress for his sick daughter. From his dream vision, the dress is made, worn by the daughter, and she is healed from her sickness. The daughter’s medicine dress evolved into the ziibaaska'iganagooday (jingle dress) that began to be commonly worn by Ojibwe women in the early 1900s. The ziibaaska'iganagooday, continues to be worn today. And, it will continue to be worn by generations yet to come. Through the ziibaaska'iganagooday, generations from the past connect to present generations, and present generations connect to the Seventh Generation. The ziibaaska'iganagooday, in and of itself, represents the continuity of Ojibwe culture and the role of women in healing. In the painting, the dress is modeled after a 1920s old-style ziibaaska'iganagooday currently displayed at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. I’ve chosen to color the dress yellow to represent the Sun – hence, life and continuity. The moon watches over the daughter to guide and protect her in her dream dance. Two Ojibwe constellations can be seen in the night skies – Madoodiswan (Sweat Lodge) and Gaadidnaway/Mishibizhii (Curly Gaadidnaway/Mishibizhii (Curly Tail/Great Underwater Panther). These two constellations rise in the east and are overhead in the Spring sky. They signify renewal of spirit and water. The ziibaaska'iganagooday has become a contemporary pan-Indian dance category. But, it is the old-style ziibaaska'iganagooday dancers – without hair feathers or plumes, eagle wing fans, and beaded leggings – who dance in the spirit of the dream vision given long ago to the akiwenzii for his daughter

Ojibweg Mitigwaki Niimid (Ojibweg Woodland Dancers)

24 x 33
Watercolor (Gouache)
2020

Today, Woodland dance is found among Northeastern tribes and Southeastern tribes and has been a part of the dance history and culture in those tribes for many years. To avoid confusion, the term "Men's Woodland" as used here refers to Woodland Dance among the Ojibwe in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Among the Ojibwe, the history of Woodland Dance is difficult to determine. Some see it as a “new” dance that began in the early 2000s. Its popularity among Great Lakes tribes has led to a new category at powwows – Men’s Woodland. It is a unique and specific style of dance with its own type of regalia and songs. However, Men's Woodland is anything but new. Its history far predates its modern counterpart. Indeed, its history predates the advent of the origin of the powwow itself.

The regalia worn by the four dancers depicts the common type of clothing worn for Woodland dance. Regalia include otter turbans, porcupine head roaches, and a beaded headband with feathers. The beaded headband is typical of the type of headdresses worn by men long ago. One of the dancers is carrying a baaga’adowaan (lacrosse stick). Historically, there are connections between Woodland dance and baaga’adowewin (lacrosse). Today, it’s common for Woodland dancers to carry a baaga’adowaan as part of their dance.

Ojibwe Mitigwaki Nimiim (Ojibwe Woodland Dancer)

20 x 30
Watercolor (Gouache)
2020

Men's Woodland Dance has a circular history. Although some attribute it as a modern powwow dance, its beginnings stretch far beyond establishment of the modern powwow dance complex. It is a direct descendant of the War Dance complex that existed in pre-Colonial times.

War dancing was widespread among many tribes across Turtle Island, and there were similarities in war dancing. The Scalp/Victory Dance were part of the dance complex generally referred to as the War Dance. The origin and point of diffusion are unknown. Among the Ojibwe-Anishinaabe ogichidaag (warriors), this old form of war dance was called Nandobaniishimowin. The name is derived from the term Nandobaniiwin, meaning warfare.

Today, Woodland regalia reflects ties to the ancestral past – feathered turbans, bandolier bags, floral leggings, vests/yokes, and aprons, and ball-headed war clubs or baaga'adowaan (lacrosse sticks). Dancers may carry eagle wing fans, war bags, or dance without any hand items. Most importantly, each dancer is dancing their own personal war dance – one that relates to their own personal experiences in life.

Gwiiwizens Nanaadawi'iwe Nagamo Misko Magoodaas (Boy Singing the Red Dress Healing Song)

15 x 20
Gouache (Watercolor)
2020

This painting is connected to my painting "Misko Magoodaas" (2019). The traditional strap dress that hangs on the tree signifies that Murdered and Missing Indian Women did not begin in modern times. Rather, it is a reminder that Native women were raped and murdered during the fur trade.

The strap dress is our ancestral dress worn in traditional life. I added copper cones on the hem to connect to our use of copper long before the Invasion of our lands. The ottertail design is quillwork. We did not use beads until the late 1800s. Before the advent of beads, quills were used for design work. The ottertail design is a very old design and was used extensively on clothing, basketry, and mats. The design is related to our migration from the East, when we lived on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean; in our migration story, the otter led the Three Fires (the Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi) into the Great Lakes region.

The markings on the birch tree are related to the origin story of the birch tree. According to the story, the thunderbirds struck the tree with their lightning and left their shapes and forms on the tree.

The image of the boy with his hand drum is finished. The makwa (bear) head and arm on the drum represents protection and healing. Like the boy, the makwa is singing a song of health and protection.

The spirit of missing and murdered women looks down from the clouds. The song briefly brings light to her abode of sorrow and loneliness.

Miskwaasige Gichi-gami Anishinaabe
(Red Sun Over Lake Ojibwe)

15 x 20
Watercolor (Gouache)
2020

Under the Miskwaasige (Red Sun) of Gichigami-Anishinaabe (Great Sea of the Anishinaabe), the Manidoo Gizhigaans (Little Spirit Tree) watches two Migiziwag (eagles) dancing and listens to the nagamon (song) of the Ozaawaabineshii (Yellow Finch) who sings the language of the Anishinaabe.
The Ojibwe named it Lake Ojibwe or Great Sea of the Ojibwe. After colonization, it was renamed Lake Superior. The Manidoo Gizhigaans (Little Spirit Tree) is located at Gichi-onigaming (Grand Portage). The Ozaawaabineshii (Yellow Finch) is the keeper of our language.

Our elders teach us about the Four Orders of Life. Aki (Earth) is the first order, followed by plants, then animals and, lastly, human beings. The importance of the teaching is that the first three orders can exist without human beings; however, human beings can’t exist without the first three orders. Therefore, it is the responsibility of humans to take care of the first three orders. The painting depicts the first three orders of life. Essentially, it is a reminder of our responsibility to the world we live in.

Bwaajigan Wanashkid Ikwe (Vision of Tail Feather Woman)

15 x 20
Watercolor (Gouache)
2020

During the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, a Dakota village was attacked by U.S. troops. A young woman fled to a nearby lily pond, hid under the water, and breathed through a hollow reed tube. She hid for four days. During that time, she received a vision from the Creator. In her vision, she saw a special kind of drum mounted on four legs. She also saw various items that were with the drum. These included a pipe and four eagle feather belts. She was given songs that went to the drum. She was given instructions on how the drum was to be used. She was told that she had to build the drum and make the items that went with it. Once completed, she was to take the drum, items, and ceremony that went with and pass it to the Ojibwe. In this way, peace and goodwill would be established between the Dakota and Ojibwe.

The Ojibwe called her Wanashkid Ikwe – Eagle Belt Woman. The drum – called the Big Drum – became firmly established among the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. As instructed, the Big Drum ceremony was brought to other Ojibwe villages throughout central Minnesota and western Wisconsin.
Although the Drum ceremony diminished among Ojibwe communities, it remained strong at Mille Lacs. Today, there are spring and fall Drum ceremonies. The importance of the Drum ceremony is it brings goodwill and well-being to the community. In recent years, there has been a revival of the Drum ceremony in several Ojibwe communities.

Nibi Gaa-bimaajiwemagak (Water Gives Life)

15 x 20
Watercolor (Gouache)
2020

Standing in nibi (water), a anjiko ikwe (pregnant woman) abaabaso (smudges) herself and her nigishkawaawaswaan gipay (baby in her womb).
Her 12-week-old baby is within a spirit orb. In the painting, the gipay (womb) is depicted as a spirit orb. As such, the baby represents a physical form within a spiritual realm. The Ojibwe do not have a word for the fetus. However, gigishkawaawaswaan means unborn baby, i.e., a baby that has not been born yet. It's significant that in Ojibwe culture, the fetus is considered a baby and not a fetus. This is the knowledge that our Anishinaabe ancestors had regarding the wonders of birth. Life for the baby began before it emerged into the Land of the Living.

The technique used to see within the mother is usually referred to as the x-ray vision technique. X-ray vision is part of Ojibwe traditional art that can be found on pictographs painted or etched on rocks. In the 1980s, it evolved into an art form among Ojibwe and Cree fine artists in Canada.
The emphasis of this painting is nibi (water). Aki (earth) is 71% nibi. Humans are 60% nibi. Within the gipay (womb), babies are surrounded by nibi. Water gives life. Water is life.

Aashkikwe miinawaa Nitamoozhaan
(New Woman and First Born)

15 x 20
Watercolor (Opaque)
2023

The theme of Mother and Child has appeared in several of my works going back to the mid-1980s to present day. One of the main influences has been my wife, Nan. At one time she was a lay midwife and brought many babies into the world. From her, I gained a knowledge of mothers and babies. Additionally, our four children were born at home and provided me with a deeper level of understanding about motherhood and birth.

Originally, the tentative title for this work was Madonna miinawaa Oshkabinoozjinh (Madonna and Child). Religious iconography was obviously an influence. The hood worn by the mother contrasts with the shrouds and veils worn by women in religious iconography. Hoods were a basic part of clothing among the Ojibwe. Before the advent of beads, hoods were often embellished with designs made with dyed porcupine quills or moose hair. When beads became available in the early to mid-1800s, the quantity was limited. Their use was limited to outlining design patterns. By the 1860s-1870s, beads became more widely available and fully beaded floral motifs appeared on clothing including hoods.

Once I began the painting, it began to go through changes in its meaning. It went from a Native Madonna and Child to an Ojibwe origin theme.

In Ojibwe culture, there are several origin stories focusing on relationships with Anang-Aki (the Star World). According to the story of Aashkikwe, Aki (Earth) took the shape of women, beginning first with Aashkikwe. Aashkikwe means first or new woman. Aashkikwe falls in love with the beauty of Waabanoong, the morning star. Waabanoong changes into Aashki'inini, first or new man. They marry and Aashkikwe consents to live at his home in the Sky World. There is one condition. Aashkikwe must never look to gaze upon her home, Aki (Earth).

One day, Aashkikwe, pregnant with child, is out gathering plants. She dug so many plants that she made a hole in the sky. She gazed through the hole and saw her home. As a result, she was sent back to Aki. As she fell from the sky, waabiziig (swans) and nikaag (geese) caught her and lowered her to Aki. This, of course, is not the full story. The story can only be told on certain occasions. But the portions that I've recounted here provide context to the painting.

The night skies in the painting feature the constellation Bagone'giizhig, Hole in the Sky. In the Greek constellation system, the star cluster is called the Pleiades. In Ojibwe star knowledge, Bagone'giizhig is consider to be a spiritual doorway. The Ojibwe believe that human beings came from the stars. Bagone'giizhig is the point of entry and return. The Ojibwe constellation system existed before the coming of White people. Ojibwe constellations recounted origin stories and connections to the star world. Their positions provided information to seasonal changes. When Bagone'giizhig appeared overhead in Dagwaagin (Fall), Ojibwe knew it was time to prepare their winter camps.