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Dyani White Hawk: Speaking to Relatives, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO, 18 February–16 May 2021. Catalogue: Ed. Jennifer Doyle, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, 2021, 78 pages, paperback, ISBN 9780996272889, \$36.00.

Glynnis Stevenson

The Minneapolis-based multimedia artist and curator Dyani White Hawk flaunts the breadth of her multimedia practice in a solo exhibition at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City. Organised by assistant curator Jade Powers, the show interrogates the false binary between art and craft and the privileging of Euro-American art practices, further uplifting the role indigenous women play in disseminating their languages and cultures. White Hawk — who is of Sičáŋǵu Lakota, German and Welsh ancestry — uses painting, beadwork, video and photography to re-embed the artistic practices of her heritage into the art historical canon. Porcupine quills and moccasin toes rendered two-dimensionally in acrylic paint evoke motifs central to many indigenous American cultures. In other works, colourful beads inlaid into canvases rupture the flat surfaces to force a dialogue between easel painting and the beadwork White Hawk learned from friends of her mother.

In a keynote address given at the Native American Art Studies Association, White Hawk reflected upon how her incorporation of indigenous art motifs had been derided in graduate school: one professor had asked, ‘What if all *my* art was about me being Polish?’¹ The work on display in *Speaking to Relatives* reflects a refusal to suppress identity in order to make such individuals comfortable. In many art museums, indigenous American art and Euro-American (usually termed simply ‘American’) art are physically separated; that is, if the former isn’t simply relegated to a natural history museum. White Hawk’s work blends practices, interweaving motifs and media in a summation of her Lakota belief in *mitákuye oyás ‘iy* (‘all my relations’), which posits that all things are connected. As she suggests in the exhibition title, White Hawk’s practice speaks to indigenous and non-indigenous audiences alike.²

Walking into the first of four exhibition galleries dedicated to her work, the viewer is guided to draw a visual comparison between White Hawk’s painted and beaded works, like *Untitled (coral, turquoise, and yellow)* (2016), and the permanent collection’s Sean Scully painting, *The Moroccan* (1982), an oil on canvas with orange, red, black, and white horizontal bands positioned at the entrance. White Hawk often embeds vintage beads in her canvases, pushing the viewer to acknowledge the debt Euro-American

painters owe to indigenous art-making practices. This connection is made most explicit in *Untitled, Blue and White Stripes (The History of Abstraction)* (2013), which, as catalogue author Carmen Hermo notes, intends to centre the patterns of Navajo blankets that colour field painters appropriated without acknowledgement.³ The painting's surface and title both knowingly nod to the predominant features of the American flag, subverting its crisp red and white stripes in favour of hazy segments that mimic the soft blending of blanket fibres.

From direct engagement with easel painting, White Hawk segues into memorialising the tools of hearth and home. Her *Carry* series (2019–20), the standout body of work in this exhibition, makes the side lining of indigenous American art a central focus with its recentring of copper cookware heavily encrusted with intricate beadwork. Here, she is steadfast in her refusal to relegate utilitarian objects to mere usefulness: in fact, White Hawk's pots and ladles are deliberately *unhelpful*. Rather than sitting on a shelf, the pots are either affixed to the wall like sconces or suspended on metal posts made invisible by buckskin fringe cascading to the floor. *Carry II* and *Carry III* are both elevated well above eye-level and their placement in the middle of the third gallery space beseeches the visitor to gaze up and circumambulate them, as though they were objects of veneration. By repositioning these wares outside of the kitchen and exhibiting them as sculptures, White Hawk forces a reappraisal of quotidian objects often found in ethnographic museums, rather than institutions dedicated to fine art.

In the final body of work in the exhibition, the photo-sculpture *I Am Your Relative* (2020) and surrounding video installation *LISTEN*

(2020), White Hawk moves from motifs suggesting the presence of indigenous people to a literal representation of indigenous women in figurative works. The imposing stature of the women photographed by Tom Jones, a Ho-Chunk photographer, each representing a different tribe, is reinforced by video monitors around the room featuring women speaking their individual languages. The voices and figures in this space are exclusively female, centring their stories. However, the photos in *I Am Your Relative* grew out of a performance for an anti-violence gala in Minneapolis for the group Global Rights for Women. They are meant to highlight the disproportionate violence suffered by indigenous women, which was left out of this exhibition, even though it was discussed in the catalogue.⁴ The women's shirts bear slogans like 'More Than Your Fantasy', alluding to sexualised violence, but the work loses its punch without a note about the violence necessitating the creation of such work.

Taken altogether, White Hawk's exhibition is a necessary conversation starter in a state haunted by the lack of federally recognised tribes resulting from the Trail of Tears – the American government's forced westward displacement of tribes from 1830 to 1850. Featured in the city's most prominent contemporary art space, White Hawk centres contemporary indigenous voices in the city's art scene. The addition of White Hawk to the Kemper's exhibition spaces is a welcome refutation of the historical silencing of indigenous voices.

1 Dyani White Hawk, 'The Long Game', *Arts (Basel)* 9, no. 2 (June 11, 2020): 67.

2 White Hawk described her practice to show curator Jade Powers as reflective of her beliefs as a Lakota woman, 'acknowledging that we are all related'. Jade

- Powers, 'Introduction: On Relatives, Relations, and Relationships', in *Dyani White Hawk: Speaking to Relatives*, ed. Jennifer Doyle, exh. cat. (Kansas City, MO: Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, 2021), 8.
- 3 Carmen Hermo, 'Dyani White Hawk: Accumulating Collective Power', in Doyle, *Dyani White Hawk*, 19.
- 4 Hermo, 'Dyani White Hawk', 21.

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Andy Warhol, Tate Modern, London, 12 March–15 November 2020. Catalogue: Eds. Gregor Muir and Yilmaz Dziewior (London: Tate Publishing, 2020), 244 pages, hardback, ISBN 1849766711, £40.00; paperback, ISBN 1849766703, £25.00.

Louis Shankar

Curators Gregor Muir and Yilmaz Dziewior explain the thrust of their recent Andy Warhol exhibition at Tate Modern thus: 'This humanistic re-visioning explores his background as a child of an immigrant family, his ideas about death and religion, and his queer perspective, revealing an artist who both succeeded and failed in equal measure, and whose work marked a period of cultural transformation that still resonates today'.¹ It is a sympathetic approach, although one that perhaps aspired for too much within a medium-sized survey show. Just one of the three frames of analysis would have provided better focus. Curatorial concerns of inclusion

and exclusion always seem to come to the fore in a Warhol exhibition: there is so much to choose from, where does one draw the line?

There seemed to me a great irony in staging an exhibition dedicated to Andy Warhol, a notorious hypochondriac, in the midst of a global pandemic. 'Warhol was a hypochondriac for whom health and aesthetics were inextricably linked,' writes Brian Dillon, 'an artist who confronted the truth of the body as fearlessly as he did its fantasies'.² And this was a show thoroughly dedicated to the artist himself – Andrew Warhola, the man beneath the wig – an attempt at revelation through the examination of overlooked and sidelined works.

The earliest works on display, from the collection of Paul Warhola, Andy's brother, are intriguing tempera and oil paintings. Surreal and eerie, they are not unlike mythic early works by Rothko and Pollock. Warhol's pared-back line drawings from the 1950s, produced while he was working as a commercial illustrator, are wonderfully simple, elegant, and utterly camp. Male nudes or sensitive portraits of unidentified epebes, the viewer's gaze is drawn to a crotch. *Andy Warhol: Love, Sex, and Desire: Drawings 1950–1962*, a coffee table book dedicated to these works, was also published in 2020. The beautifully sensual works are reproduced with intimate materiality and fidelity, and yet there is something very un-Warhol about them.

It was precisely this campness that Warhol soon purged from his later work. In order to become commercially successful, he had to refashion himself as an 'asexual dandy'.³ Much of this exhibition was part of a wider project — begun in academic circles in 1996 and now filtering into the mainstream