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## ***Doctoring Divinity: Trickster, Jim Logan and the Classical Canon***

**Yvonne Owens**

This paper sets out to establish a Trickster pattern of paradoxical symbol inversions, visible in the iconography of visual artist, Jim Logan. Set against literary selections from various contemporary Native writers, Logan's pictorial lexicon serves to illustrate this dynamic iconographic pattern in First Nations rhetorical imaging. I propose to track Trickster down some uniquely liberating, deconstructive pathways, supported by artistic reproductions from the study of Trickster dynamics in contemporary Native art undertaken by Dr. Allan Ryan in his comprehensive work, "The Trickster Shift." Targeting the cultural barrage mediated by Colonialism against indigenous religiosity and collective values, my selections from Native art and literature demonstrate a cunning reverse assimilation of cultural meaning. Juggling cultural signifiers into paradoxical relationships, such canny inversions reverse the considerable pay-load of meaning constructed in historical European artistic conventions. In the hands of master artificers, reverse appropriation, radical revisionism and subversive iconographies (among other tools), furnish the bag-of-tricks for these inversions of meaning. Like all creators (Jesters, and Fools), the artist's job is to make these feats look easy. The Trickster task is to make his or her "tricks" manifest as eternal "truths" -- natural, inalienable, and self-evident. We -- the contemporary audience for Native arts and literature -- are renewed, transformed and transfigured from our cultural "entertainment." If humor is sacred and reforming, then we -- as consumers of contemporary art and literature --- perfectly fulfill Trickster's mandate for us, as the "sacred victims" of his or her practical jokes, played through the work of artists like Jim Logan.

With his series of paintings, *The Classical Aboriginal Series*, Logan performs a deceptively simple sequence of reverse cultural assimilations. Appropriating images from the "classical" iconographic canon of Western academic art, Logan neatly revises the racial (and gendered) messages of famous and influential "masterworks," inverting and subverting their intrinsic hierarchies of meaning. As Logan reapplies classical imagery to his own purposes, balancing and retyping cognitive values within his reconstructed frameworks, a new relationship between the ubiquitous and familiar "sacred" imagery of "Western Art" and his own, renovated meanings is established. Through *The Classical Aboriginal Series*, Logan accomplishes a subtle but profound dislocation among powerful religious icons, underscoring the personal and social tensions between Western iconography and Native, Christian participation in the orthodox sacred pageant. Under-representation, racialised or gendered elite roles, and culturally privileged perspectives are significantly shifted by means as subtle as a change in the skin colour or gender of the traditional Judeo-Christian protagonists in the Occidental sacred drama. Spiritually prestigious "divine" tableaux are recast with Native characters and re-presented from Native perspectives. By such deft pictorial

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sleight-of-hand, the artist assimilates Christian iconography to his own ideologically subversive, highly moral purposes of inclusivity. In so doing, he colludes with Native writers, past and present, who have sought to overturn the terms of their participation in the dominant culture, religious sensibility and/or ideology.

With *The Classical Aboriginal Series*, Logan represents and portrays a Native (or "Aboriginal") perception of a "classical," sensible invasion. Colonisation, Eurocentrism, ethnocentrism, ideological supremacy, cultural imperialism, Christianisation and the exclusivity and elitism of "Western" academic models are re-viewed from his own inherently, culturally ambivalent standpoint as a Christian-indoctrinated person of Metis heritage. A former lay minister, Logan seems to be artistically furthering his earlier religious mission in iconographically ministering to the artistic souls and sacred self-conceptions of Native Christians. Deconstructing the iconographic program of cultural (Judeo-Christian) assimilation and setting it within a radically revised paradigm of meanings and significance detoxifies the exclusivity of the Christian canon, entitling indigenous North Americans to full imaginative and spiritual access to the icons and sacred narratives to which their ancestors have been converted. Three paintings from *The Classical Aboriginal Series* address some major themes and figures from the Christian ethos: *The Annunciation*, *Jesus Was Not a Whiteman*, and *A Rethinking on the Western Front* (in which Logan's God is not a man at all).

In Logan's sacred dramas, Natives are represented not as late-comers to an ethical pageant well under way, its cast, crew and settings frozen and repetitive -- an *idee-fixe* anchored in Eurocentricity -- but simply as one of the (figurative) lost tribes, issuing from the same "Creation" but dispersed upon a different path, or "identity diaspora."<sup>1</sup> The tactic of ideological subversion, assuming spiritual prestige or centrality in the mythic construct thereby acquires sacred status and entitlement from renovations or revisions of sacred narrative. This is also what Logan's father accomplished when accounting to his son for inequities of Darwinist representations, the text of which Logan incorporated into his painting *A Rethinking on the Western Front*. (Appendix, fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> An appropriation of the typical illustration of human evolutionary stages, familiar from primary-school science texts (and many *National Geographic* magazine), occupies the top left corner of the frame, its racist implications contradicted by annotations couched in the first-person point-of-view.<sup>3</sup> It appears that Logan's mandate of dexterous artistic repair of imagistic under-representation (or even of racial defamation) in appropriated or revised sacred narratives may have been inspired by this paternal example.

According to Logan's father, the "Red Man" is not necessarily the Cro-Magnon "Other" of Darwin's construction of human development and evolution, but a product of the same original prototypical "dough" or "batch." In Logan Sr.'s esteem-saving creation account, people with his son's skin-colour are merely "baked," to a different degree of doneness and colour ("cooked ... just right," in this instance), but are essentially "from the same batter," putting their origins within the same, prestigious circle of primacy. North American Natives are no "specimens" of the "Alien Other" or "Primitive Other" at all.<sup>4</sup> They are, instead, the also-Chosen People, present at the outset of Judeo-Christianity's ethos in the Creation and Annunciation

through Logan's artistic collapsing of time<sup>5</sup>. Logan maintains an iconographic program through *The Classical Aboriginal Series* in which sacred events or mythic realities exist in their symbols and archetypes. These mythic realities are meaningfully greater than, or "outside" of, linear time and single-point, perspectival space, and are therefore available to all people (and peoples). Revisionist texts, like that of his father's creation narrative, are foregrounded in some instances, eclipsing the majestic hierarchies, foregrounding and foreshortening devices of the Academy, as where the Angel of the Annunciation speaks in a pictographic text which superimposes the European-style representation of the approach of Columbus's Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria in *The Annunciation* (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

Ojibway writer, Wayne Keon similarly foregrounds his Native perspective and personal iconographic program in his poem, *smoke and thyme*, where he inserts the images of his "old medicine shirt" into the businesslike office scene, even though his narrating voice tells us he has been told not to wear it there. He further subverts the ethnocentric initiatives of the office" by smuggling the images of his own, personal "medicine" iconography and talismans into our reception of the office setting: "...i agreed this time/ but i never told them/ about the medicine bag i made late in the nite/ about the cedar flame/ the smoke and the thyme."<sup>7</sup> Like the senior Logan's textual infiltration of the closed circle of the Creation Myth imagery of Michelangelo in *A Rethinking on the Western Front*, and his informing of the official version of Darwinian evolution with personalised meaning and authentic imagery, Keon invades the "office" construct in our minds with a vital and unruly spirituality. Just as Logan's paternal revisionist text resists and subverts both Darwin and Genesis, Keon's spiritual resistance counters both Church and State in flouting "official" sociopolitical protocols, within the median zone of business." His poem, *if i ever heard*, seems to express the "Passion" of the self-sacrificing, heroic Redeemer for the Beloved, in both a spiritualised and erotic language, in an ambivalent zone of meaning apparent in ecstatic Sufi poetry, the writings of early Christian mystics, and of the love-lyrics of troubadours.

The ideas and iconographies of the Passion, or Christ's ecstatic or mystical self-surrender through love as sacrificial Saviour, make an ironic comparison to the natural religiosity, elemental mysticism and earthy, sacred logic of Keon's love poem, as well as to Logan's *Jesus Was Not a Whiteman* (fig. 3).<sup>8</sup> Whereas the Christ of The Passion is willing to go the distance for our "sins," Keon's lover's passion is also willing to go the distance, bearing whatever it takes (the elemental powers of water, earth, fiery light, or "stars"), "out of this wilderness," for the beloved. His devotion is fundamental and extreme. His scenario is also posed as a spiritual crisis afflicting the beloved, which the lover will redeem with, in this instance, "ojibway majik," presented as a sacred "medicine" or "majik" of loving surrender: "if i ever heard/ your love had gone pale/ i would come out of this wilderness/ with ojobway majik/ for you/ ...if i ever heard/ your love had gone in the nite/ i would come out of this wilderness/ with my ojobway stars/ for you."<sup>9</sup>

Logan's Indianised image of the Saviour, who is (of course) Christianity's icon of ultimate loving sacrifice (indeed, IS the sacrifice), naturalises (and nationalises) this spiritual *noblesse oblige* as a Native cultural and spiritual property, surrounded by the Bingo chips of Church and Native design.

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Author, Lee Maracle, also calls Jesus into her narrative in *Sojourner's Truth*, casting him as African, co-opting his voice to debunk the notion of "lords" in heaven (among other vestiges of incipient Western post-feudal elitism within the conventions of the Christian Church)<sup>10</sup> For Maracle, Jesus is not only not White, he is a rational and humane voice for compassionate, non judgmental reason. He touts no rules, espouses no cruelty. Logan's image, on the other hand, seems to imply that "Our Lord" may well be an imported Redeemer, to deal with an imported set of problems, but He's here now, so He'd better be accessible for the work of redemption, capable to imaginistically "go the distance" with whatever it takes (including Bingo chips).

Pictorially and textually, with the direct, artistic power of both the Image and the Word, Logan breaks in upon the closed circle of White self-congratulation and the Eurocentric monopoly of sacred entitlement, access and privilege. He comments that these entitlements were appropriated from Semitic symbol-sets and value-systems in the first place (which he characterises as non-White).<sup>11</sup> With *Jesus Was Not a Whiteman*, he makes the point that his revised Redeemer construct is no less entitled to employ the now-familiar Judeo-Christian icons than are European, academic constructs. Making the point that the White racial elitism (if not outright supremacy) of casting Spanish or German types "...in these glorious positions of divinity" comes second, third, or fourth-hand through a complicated series of conscious and unconscious cultural appropriations, Logan insists upon his rights and license with the Christ icon, to "make him Indian."<sup>12</sup> Logan's revised sacred schema suggests that neither the socio-political-economic designs of empire, nor the phenomenological and representational accidents of history (which must here be seen to include Salvador Dali), are justified in dictating the exclusive Europeanisation of Christ within classical iconographic programs, as these are constructed so as to inevitably result in the marginalisation of the indigenous (or "Aboriginal") peoples of ideologically conquered lands (and even the Semites of Christ's natal origins and legendary lineage in the House of David).

In his rethinking of the "Western Front," the creator Logan, like the pictured Creator God (A breasted and gowned Mother deity, in this case), re-conceives Adam as a North American Aboriginal man. His account, authenticated and documented in paint, ranks his own versions of Adam and Eve with those of Darwin's theory of evolution, the Genesis of the Levites or priestly schools, and with the "Original Woman" or "Mitochondrial Eve" of current DNA research. It follows that Logan's Native "Original People" are in the running to inherit (or at least share) the Earth. They have as much entitlement as the White paradigm of Enlightened Rationalist's Manifest Destiny (or as Nietzsche's Teutonic "Superman"). With roots in sacred histories, Indigenous peoples can look forward to some futurity. Suddenly, they have been written into the script and painted into the storyboard. As Logan points out, he's entitled to paint it (and cast it) any way he wants to -- for, in an ironic and inevitable twist, assimilation under a standard eventually makes that same standard a common cultural property. If cultural properties are awarded by bloodlines, Logan is entitled to have his way with this one in any case as his genetic heritage is partly European.<sup>13</sup> Turning that into a license for powerful cultural manipulations, he claims a sort of diplomatic immunity, not merely by virtue of being Metis, but also by virtue of being a practising Christian.

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Harvesting the iconographic heritage which comes to him via two mainline infusions, he takes it to a new level of ironic perception and authenticated expression -- what Native American writer Gerald Vizenor calls "mythic verism." For a mythic vehicle to represent a "true" or veristic experience for participants in the myth, it must address authentic, personal, spiritual and collective needs. What is the true purpose of a myth or symbolic legacy? Some would say, (including myself) that it is to aid in answering the age-old questions, "What is going on here and

where do I fit in?"<sup>14</sup> Obviously, much revision must take place, in the traditional icons of Christian mythic structure if not their essentialised meanings, for these questions to be answered veristically for any non-White, non-male participants. "*White May Not Be Right*" in any case, as Drew Hayden Taylor points out in his humorous piece of that name, equating "white" with a multitude of evils, including white flour, white sugar, processed foods of pale hues, and other "evil edibles.... It makes you wonder what all those White supremacists are so damn proud of."<sup>15</sup>

Taylor discusses the debilitating effects of Native children's participation in Christian educational models in the residential schools of the past in another of his short personal essays, *The United Church Apology*. For Natives (or Native children) to participate as equals in the ongoing, communal sacred drama and pageantry of Christianity, or in other than miscreant, villain or victim roles, identity-reparation and image-rehabilitation needs to take place. And it needs to happen on levels other than verbal, apologetic or even financial, according to Taylor: "An apology is a good beginning, but only a beginning, And I hope they see it that way."<sup>16</sup> He goes further and proposes a solution "based in traditional Native beliefs," whereby Christian institutions would provide real and enduring restitution to the victims of clerical and institutional misdeeds. "Let's see them throw some money or resources to these people along with their apology."<sup>17</sup> Taylor recounts his participation as technical support in a healing-and-wellness conference for former students at the Pelican Lake residential institution, backed by the former supervisors of the school, the Anglican Church. I was reminded of Pauline Johnson's characterisation and model for ethical Bishopric behaviour in her short story, *We-Hro's Sacrifice*.<sup>18</sup> "This church had seen the errors of its ways and was attempting to right its wrongs."<sup>19</sup>

Where a Native Gabriel brings his/her revelations to a Native Madonna on the white-sand beach of the New World (the southern U.S. or the islands of the Caribbean), the Native audience for such a work is given to know that the Divine Child is also Native. In Logan's Annunciation parable, the Indigenous Madonna sits at her work, that of gathering fish in her basket, much as Madonnas from Western tradition sit spinning, sewing, or reading the Bible. Not only the Messiah is recast, his futurity radically altered and the meanings and implications of all the intervening history substantially changed, but the Native viewers' rights to their own perspectives are guaranteed. The right to draw personal and collective conclusions about the "coming of the Christ Child" or its mythology, and the legacy the Christianised future will bear, is delivered into the hands of Native participants in the unfolding saga of Christianity in the New World. Certain sacred rights and privileges, such as the right to determine one's own role and destiny, come back into the hands of

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those who occupy and inhabit the myth, or who see their own representations within it.

The right and entitlement to prayer and invocation of divine forces, for providence or worship, is again naturalised to Native practitioners, as seen in the Traditional Oratory of historic Elders and in Pauline Johnson's evocation of "We-Hro's Sacrifice."<sup>20</sup> Native sacred events, devotional offerings and sacrifices are here seen to be not only on a par with Christ's sacrifice according to the Christian canon, but in fact as versions of it -- like Logan's human products obtained from the "same batch." Mary Tappage's open and dignified account of her and her classmates' participation in the Christmas pageant in her residential school in British Columbia presages Logan's approach to the sacred drama. Her excitement at the magical lure of Christmas celebration and song is palpable in her words, her enjoyment of concert pageantry (and the entirely unsuspected, non-Christian icon of the Christmas Tree) affirms her profoundly spiritual urge to engage divinity through art and communal ritual. She assumes a centrality of voice, occupying the experience, claiming it and inhabiting it: "I can't tell you how beautiful that first Christmas tree! / Everything was changed! / ... And then we all went to chapel through the snow / That first Christmas for midnight mass."<sup>21</sup>

How different is it for Native viewers (especially Native women viewers) to witness Mary as also Native? Obviously it constitutes a very different experience to view a feminine Native representation as the Mother of God than as the many "mundane" stereotypical representations of Native women. Comparing the complex of messages in Logan's work with those embedded in 17th century Eurocentric paintings, rationalising Colonialism by portraying tribeswomen as primitive and amoral cannibals, makes a shocking iconographic contrast.<sup>22</sup> In these self-serving dioramas, the brown-skinned woman callously harvests dismembered human limbs in her basket. Yet for all the grace and spiritual esteem conferred upon Native women by Mary's recasting as Native in *The Annunciation*, her character is in possession of no greater control over what is about to happen to her than was the Nazarene Mary. It is in his subversive commentary (such as this discourse upon gender representations in monotheistic orthodoxy) that Logan's critical, discursive analysis shows. With a terrible foreknowledge (ironically forged of hindsight) we, as the audience for this work, watch helplessly as the catastrophe of colonisation descends upon this blithe woman, who must be "pure of stain," as she is sporting a gold-leaf halo just like her classical sisters. Late adjustments to Catholic dogma instituted the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception," so that Mary's evasion of the "original sin" afflicting all other mortal souls was scripted to have derived from her own mother's sexless conception of her. Does this mean that Classical Aboriginal Mary's mother, too, was surprised by spontaneous pregnancy?

Ideological questions abound; despite Logan's disclaimer, there is nothing at all "simple" about any of this.<sup>23</sup> Though bearing the "Good News" of the Gospels, Christ's Coming, and Salvation, we know the ship also conveys disease and calumny, both physical and spiritual. Native Mary, like Semitic Mary or Europeanised Mary is helpless to decline the colonisation of her body and mind. Back turned to the horizon, she can't even see it coming. Moreover, the only character traits available to her as Mary are those of a

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servant or slave. She must display submission and obedience to her divine overlord's will (and promptly does so in all Gospel texts). She must be "as a handmaiden unto the lord," and no significantly divine status will ever be awarded her. She will reign in the hearts of her public, but never assume a positioning within the Trinity as a part of (or a participant in) the Nature of God. She is a passive receptacle, a "pure vessel." Therein lies her virtue, according to Church doctrine. Except in popular Church tradition, where the Church succumbed to public pressure and crowned her the "Queen of Heaven," the only insignia of sacred ranking she may claim is a saint's halo, the traditional regalia of sacred victims and martyrs. It is Native Mary's helplessness, very like classical Mary's, that we feel. Powerless to "just say no," Aboriginal Mary must make new meanings from the limited repertoire available to her in her predicament as a female, Christian icon. Though racially empowering, the role of Christ's mother is sexually disempowering (which was ever its true purpose within the orthodox canon).—

These perspectives are represented, simultaneous to the European-styled representations of Conquistador-laden ships, in the pictographs which tell the tale from the Indigenous point-of-view. The Annunciation itself here refers, not only to the introduction of the mythic character of the Christ Child as divine saviour figure, sacrificial hero, and imported icon to Native peoples of the "New World," but to the advent of Columbus' mercantile and ideological imperialism upon their shores. This is similar to Lee Maracle's portrayal of how the Captains Cook and Vancouver (and others like them) arrived upon the western shores of the continent in *Ravensong*. Her visionary child character, Celia, "sees" the square-riggers standing offshore, as well as the lengthy plague of ill events which followed in their wake. The nature of the imminent arrival is not a "blessed event," seen from this standpoint, but an invasion of alien and alienating ideology, and a corrupting spiritual pollution of epidemic proportion.<sup>24</sup>

In Logan's vision, the pictographic text superimposed upon the Western pictorial representation of the same event shows the landing party led by an armed man with a raised weapon.<sup>25</sup> The Angel seems to be prognosticating more than the immediate "arrival," for the pictographs depict more ships than the three shown poised on the horizon in the Western-styled depiction. While the three ships in the distance seem innocently aspected (though sporting the sinister red cross of the Crusaders, the Templars, The Knights of Rhodes, and the Holy Inquisition), the five ships of the pictographs descend into the upper left corner of the frame like a plague of locusts. The pictographic text actually narrates an event more along the lines of Jeannette C. Armstrong's vision in her poem *History Lesson*: "Out of the belly of Christopher's ship/a mob bursts/Running in all directions/Pulling furs off animals/Shooting buffalo/Shooting each other/Left and right..."<sup>26</sup>

When Logan's tableau is viewed through the lens of Armstrong's images which come later in her poem, describing a paradise "forever lost," the Angel of the Annunciation, Gabriel, becomes the Angel of the Expulsion, Michael. From this perspective, Mary is also Eve, soon to be evicted from the Garden (along with her unholy ideological progeny). "Somewhere among the remains/of skinless animals/is the termination/to a long journey/and unholy

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search/for the power/glimpsed in a garden/forever closed/forever lost?<sup>27</sup> The classical tradition of Mary's representation as the *hortus closus*, or "enclosed garden" resonates with both Logan's and Armstrong's evocations of threatened innocence, where the toxic internalisation (or Biblical "knowledge") of an alienating dualism and doctrine of "Good" and "Evil" brings Death into the Garden and augers a cruel and lengthy exile of Native populations disinherited from their integrated unity, of 'paradisical' heritage.

To conclude, I'd like to return to the Christian narrative event just prior to this pivotal moment in collapsed time, before Eve/Mary's conceptions lost paradise for posterity and the invaders' ships disgorged their ideological cargoes mid-2nd-millennium A.D., when the world was still new and Logan's Mother God, surrounded by her children, friends and family (along with Raven/Thunderbird), created Aboriginal Adam upon the back of Turtle Island. *A Rethinking on the Western Front* shows the Creatress suspended with Her sacred clan amid a field of stars, the quickening touch of her right forefinger meeting Aboriginal Adam's left, Her active gesture meeting his passive reception, Her enlivening spark animating the quiescent male. The Creator deity is clothed, the only figure in the composition to be draped in any way. Perhaps this is for the same reasons the females are clothed in Logan's other gendered reversal of the "traditional" Western power relationship between the sexes, his appropriation of Manet's *Le Dejeuner sur l'herbe*, called *The Diners Club (No Reservation Required)* (fig. 4):<sup>28</sup>

"Some of our societies, Native societies, were matriarchal and the women carried a lot of power within the political system, so I wanted to put that sort of idea in the painting -- that the women here have the power ... If there's anybody to be to be subservient to the other, or lower than the other, or with less power than the other it would be the naked men rather than the clothed women. Clothing seems to suggest power..."<sup>29</sup>

To my perception, the import of the heavy-breasted, matronly figure being the only clothed or draped one is immediately and obviously apparent as a symbol of respect for female divinity. And this is where Logan's revisionism is shown to be truly radical, even heretical.<sup>30</sup> Yet his is the same attitude toward female spiritual power as that expressed in Jeannette C. Armstrong's *Indian Woman*, where she reverses the gender-stereotypical traits awarded 'squaws,' and states, "Where I walk beauty surrounds me, grasses bend and blossom, over valleys and hills, vast and multicoloured, in starquilt glory." "I am the keeper of generations," she proclaims, and "I am the strength of nations ... I am a sacred trust, I am Indian Woman."<sup>31</sup> Armstrong's poetic proclamations echo the voice of artist and teacher, Valerie Morgan, who told me during my interview with her for *Artichoke* magazine that "...it's the women who carry on the culture -- through the House Groups, and through teaching."<sup>32</sup> There is a secret to unlocking the power of divine symbolism co-opted to Western hierarchical models and White, male-dominant ranking systems -- even to that power claimed by ranking-systems disguised as religions -- and Logan has discovered it. The key consists in addressing the spiritual logic and inherent divinity of women, their creative role in culture building, as well as their great deconstructive power as spiritually marginalised (or, in terms of the Catholic clergy, spiritually exempted) voices.

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Lenore Keeshig-Tobias underscores this deconstructive power of women in her prose poem, *How to Catch a White Man (oops) I Mean Trickster*, "...set free the voices of his women... Now that white man (I mean Trickster) will scramble. And he'll fight, digging himself deeper into the hole, but he won't ever get out this time. His women will see to that."<sup>33</sup> She tells us that the way to re-appropriate the White, male power-structure's assumption of all divine, sacred or spiritual value unto itself is to unlock its stolen hoard of meanings. She suggests that, in playing "hide-and-seek" with -- and hoarding -- the voices of "his women," "that white man" actually performs the destructive/galvanising role of Trickster, aggravating the "cleansing" or reforming response of insurrection, renewal and revitalised expression. The way to regain a handle on Trickster in this guise is to "catch" him, or reappropriate him -- reclaimed in this case as women's own, liberated and liberating voices. There is nothing so subversive to the power-structures and ideology currently dominant, and its "classical" academic canon, as the elevation of the status of women and women's voices (with the possible exception of the elevation of feminine divinity). Logan accomplishes these most ideologically heretical subversions, and more, through *The Classical Aboriginal Series* -- but never so profoundly as in his renovated pictorial creation text, *A Rethinking on the Western Front*. In Jim Logan's revised iconographic lexicon for his appropriated Genesis, "In the beginning, there was the Word," and the Word was with Goddess.

### Endnotes

1. This is a traditional counter-assimilation tactic, also deployed by Muslim iconographers in their appropriation of Byzantine Genesis iconography based on the Old Testament.
2. Alan Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art*, (Vancouver/Toronto 1999), 127.
3. Ryan, 126, 127.
4. at least, not as the "other" was accounted for in both Old and New Testaments, and its traditional narratives and iconographic cycles (like The "Apocalypse"), as demon, monster or infidel given to "abominations."
5. Ryan, 120.
6. Ryan, 121.
8. Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie, *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature* (Oxford 1998), 222.
9. Ryan, 122.
10. Moses & Goldie, 223.
11. Moses & Goldie, 297.
12. which fact perhaps accounts for the real reason behind the historic systematic demotion of Jews' spiritual status; it's not that Jews killed Christ, it's that Christians killed Jews, after stealing their culture. It is this basic truth so heavily disguised in the revisionist histories of anti-Semitism and "science." This is

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perhaps the true or underlying reason why suspiciously Semitic-looking types are made to occupy the Neanderthal rung of “official” science-texts’ representations of Darwin’s evolutionary ladder

13. Ryan, 120,123.

14. Ryan, 297.

15. Ryan 4-5.

16. for the answer to this question to have “mythic verism” within a Native American sensibility or world-view it usually requires elements of ironical or humorous perspectives, according to Vizenor.

17. Drew Hayden Taylor, Further Adventures of a Blue-Eyed Ojibway: Funny, You Don’t Look Like One Two. (Penticton1999), 80-82.

18. Having said that, Mr. Taylor goes on, in his next essay ( *Who’s to Blame and Who Has the Right to Blame* ), to debunk the wholesale blaming by Natives of “all ashen-complexioned people in general ” for past wrongs against Native societies and individuals.

19. Taylor, 111.

20. Taylor, 112.

21. Moses and Goldie, 32.

22. This quote by Taylor on page 112 suggested to me that a Catholic Church-sponsored, touring exhibit of Logan’s *The Classical Aboriginal Series* could constitute an important gesture in this direction. This exhibit and others like it could perform the vital function of iconographic/self-image repair after centuries of exclusion or defamatory racial typecasting. The Anglican Church, the Unitarians, and the Catholic Church could perhaps share costs to produce and tour a culturally lavish series of touring exhibitions, featuring the works of Contemporary Native artists who fulfil the mandate of expressing “mythic verism,” as a partial antidote and reparation for the unauthentic, mandatory and victimising ideological participation forced on Natives (and Native children) in the past.

23. Moses & Goldie, 11, 32.

24. Moses & Goldie, 41.

25. Mariet Westerman, The Art of the Dutch Republic-1585-1718 , Orion Group, London , 1996, 114-115.

26. Ryan, 120.

27. Moreover, as in all patriarchal constructs, the mother’s status derives second-hand from the status or “Alpha” ranking of her son, making other mothers and other mother’s sons rivals for a ranking mechanism in short supply, that being top, solitary rank or “rule”.

28. Lee Maracle, Ravensong (Vancouver 1993),10.

29. Ryan, 120.

30. Moses & Goldie, 226.

31. Moses & Goldie, 227.

32. Ryan, 128.

33. Ryan, 126.

34. It’s probably a good thing Logan was a Christian lay minister and not an orthodox or Catholicpriest -- or he, like the outspoken former priest, Matthew Fox, might also have been censured, silenced, de-frocked and excommunicated, for portraying the Supreme Creator in female guise.

35. Moses & Goldie, 229-230.

36. Yvonne Owens, “Vision Keepers,” Review in Artichoke: Writings About the Visual Arts, Fall/Winter 1999, Vol. 11, No. 3, pg. 18.

Moses & Goldie, 264.

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