

'Shell is Proud to Present... *The Spirit Sings*': Museum Sponsorship and Public Relations in Oil Country

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Abstract

This article re-examines the renowned Canadian exhibition, *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples* (1988) through a lens of corporate, national, and institutional interests. The author positions *The Spirit Sings* as a productive historical case study for contemporary questions of decolonization and divestment in museums. Using archival and interview findings from her doctoral research, the author highlights the sponsorship and public relations elements of the exhibition, which she argues have been missing from past analyses. Ultimately, the author uses this case study to question the relevance of current debates over oil sponsorship for museums that operate within extractive economies. The article concludes by calling for further critical research around the organizational processes of museums and their participation in corporate legitimization.

Key words: *The Spirit Sings*; oil; sponsorship; Glenbow Museum; protest; divestment; decolonization; public relations; Canadian museums

Introduction

On Friday, 15 January 1988, 150 protestors stood outside of the Glenbow Museum in downtown Calgary, Canada. Holding signs that read 'Share the shame' and 'In whose interest does "The Spirit Sing"?' (*Montreal Gazette* 1988 in Robertson 2019: 59), the crowd was protesting the opening of the Glenbow Museum's (hereafter 'the Glenbow') long-awaited flagship exhibition of the 1988 Winter Olympics Arts Festival: *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*. With 3,500 visitors inside on opening day, staff at the Glenbow had expected both crowds. Indeed, the exhibition received much publicity throughout its multi-year development. First, *The Spirit Sings* was part of the 1988 Calgary Olympics and had been heavily marketed as such. It was also a significant endeavour in the museum world: described by the Glenbow's director as 'the most ambitious and complex museum exhibition project undertaken in Canada in recent decades',¹ *The Spirit Sings* featured hundreds of artworks and artifacts from Indigenous groups in Canada – many of which had been loaned by museums across Canada, the US, and Europe – to be displayed together for the first time in a Canadian institution. Second, the outdoor crowd, comprising Indigenous people and allies, came in support of a longstanding boycott of both the exhibition and the Calgary Olympics, organized by the Muskotew Sakahikan Enowuk, or Lubicon Lake Nation (hereafter 'the Lubicon').² Several years before the 1988 Calgary Olympics, the Lubicon planned to boycott the games to draw international attention to their land claim with the federal government. And in 1986, the Glenbow announced that Shell Canada would be the exclusive sponsor of *The Spirit Sings*, providing a record-breaking \$1.1 million³ toward the exhibition. Because Shell Canada, a faction of one of the world's largest oil companies,⁴ had been drilling for oil in the Lubicon's territory in northern Alberta, the Lubicon and their political advisors embarked on a global solidarity campaign against the exhibition and received the support of many institutions, scholars, professional associations, churches, and individual museum professionals.

Well-established as a controversial event in Canadian cultural history, *The Spirit Sings* has been characterized as a 'watershed moment' (Cooper 2008) for Canadian museology. The Lubicon's boycott – spurred by the announcement of Shell's sponsorship but eventually entangled with broader concerns over Canadian museums and the display of Indigenous art and artifacts – had international ramifications and led to the 1992 *Task Force on Museums and First Peoples*, a ground-breaking collaboration by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations. While significant scholarly attention has been given to *The Spirit Sings* from its aftermath until today, it remains worthy of continued examination. First, though many scholars have extensively written about the exhibition and continue to cite it as a defining moment for museums, few have focused on Shell's sponsorship, despite its core role in prompting the boycott and the fact that it was the largest corporate sponsorship of an art exhibition at the time. Second, as 'the sole major action against a museum accepting funding from a fossil fuel company' (Robertson 2019: 192), *The Spirit Sings* is a productive case study to return to in light of current controversies around oil-sponsored exhibitions and growing pressures to divest museums from fossil fuels. Using archival documents and interviews with museum professionals historically or currently involved with the Glenbow,⁵ this article brings *The Spirit Sings* back into focus as a valuable case study for current discussions of decolonization and oil divestment in museums. In what follows, I begin by contextualizing my inquiry and situating the exhibition among its broader institutional, political, and cultural history. I then provide an overview of *The Spirit Sings* as both an exhibition and a critical event⁶ and examine its legacies for Canadian museum practice, expanding on Ruth Phillips' argument that scholars have 'lost sight' of particular aspects of the exhibition (Phillips 2011: 52). Next, I interpret archival findings to suggest ways that *The Spirit Sings* intersects with broader political, corporate, and institutional dynamics, namely: state-sanctioned 'multiculturalism' and cultural appropriation; the branding of Shell as a 'good' corporate citizen;⁷ and the corporatization of public relations (PR) and funding practices in museums. Finally, I bring together contemporary perspectives from interviews to highlight the complexity of museum sponsorship in cities like Calgary, founded upon oil wealth, and argue that the museum field should approach divestment critically and with institutional specificity.

Framework

Locating extraction in Canadian culture

As sites occupying 'the uncomfortable space between the state, the private sector, the arts, and the economy' (Robertson 2019: 5), museums are a contradictory player in Canada's cultural landscape: on the one hand, many large museums receive funding from the oil sector and elect industry moguls to their boards; on the other, museums and their various communities of practice are increasingly highlighting Indigenous resistance and fostering discussions about climate change. While recent confrontations over the development of pipeline infrastructures (such as in Wet'suwet'en territory) are a sober reminder that resource extraction often fuels contemporary conflicts between the Canadian state and Indigenous communities, Canada has long asserted its sovereignty over natural resources through the construction of a national oil culture (Barney 2017). The relatively uncontested support of Canadian art, culture, and education by extractive industries – usually practiced as part of companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) mandates – is a significant aspect of this culture and of the legitimation of Canada's oil-dependent economic system.⁸ In the near future, these relationships between extractive industry and public institutions will become harder to ignore. First, with increased environmental awareness and calls to transition away from fossil fuels,⁹ the oil industry may double-down on its strategies of cultural and ideological legitimation. In other words, given the long history of oil's involvement in Canadian political and public life, it is likely that promotional efforts such as lobbying, advertising, and cultural sponsorship will only increase in the face of divestment pressures. Second, scholars have recently pointed to the ways that the global transition to renewable energy remains rooted in destructive extractivism (e.g., the extraction of lithium to produce electric cars).¹⁰ With this in mind, it is fair to assume that the Global North's extractivist economic system will continue

its promotional strategies, including the sponsorship of cultural institutions, long after global divestment from fossil fuels. This suggests an urgent need for museum scholars to examine the ways that corporations achieve cultural legitimacy.

Situating museum funding within decolonial frameworks

In recent decades, museum scholarship and practice have also become increasingly informed by frameworks of decolonization and 'capital R' Reconciliation.¹¹ Many Canadian museums have begun laying the groundwork to respond to the recommendations of the *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples* (Assembly of First Nations and Canadian Museum Association 1994) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)'s *Calls to Action* (2015). Even beyond the federal and global confines of the TRC or the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, researchers, museum professionals, and Indigenous communities continue to collaborate on a variety of museum reforms grounded in the goals of decolonization. These include the repatriation of Indigenous artifacts and human remains to their home communities, mandatory consultation processes with communities around the care and display of their objects, re-cataloguing practices informed by Indigenous knowledge rather than Euro-centric classification systems, and increased hires of Indigenous professionals in museums (Phillips 2011; Lonetree 2012; Krmpotich and Peers 2013; McCarthy, 2019).

However, much of these reforms and discussions have focused on museum objects and education, such as cataloguing, exhibitions, or programming. I respond to the calls of Nuala Morse, Bethany Rex, and Sarah Harvey Richardson to study museums as organizations, which includes the administrative or 'mundane' processes (Morse *et al.* 2018: 112) that make up museum practice, such as funding and sponsorship. It is from this line of inquiry that I began my exploration of oil-sponsored exhibitions in Canada with *The Spirit Sings*. Drawing on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's (2012) essay 'Decolonization is not a metaphor', which posits the return of Indigenous peoples' lands as foundational to decolonization, I trouble the simultaneity of decolonial frameworks in museums and their ongoing partnerships with the energy sector, the operations of which are defined by the continuous expansion of 'territories of extraction' (Arboleda 2020) and the dispossession of Indigenous lands. Building on Henrietta Lidchi's (1997) analytical tools of exhibition 'poetics and politics', I also consider *The Spirit Sings'* primary sponsor, Shell, to be an active participant in 'the politics of exhibiting' (Lidchi 1997: 184); in other words, Shell was a co-creator of the specific historical, political, economic, and institutional moment within which the exhibition was produced.

Context

The Glenbow Museum

Located on 9th avenue in downtown Calgary, just south of the Makhahn¹² or Bow River, the Glenbow Museum is an art and regional history museum which houses an 'exceptional collection of art and historical objects'.¹³ Described on its website as a 'place of confluence' and a 'meeting point for people and communities to join a flow of ideas, knowledge, opinions and experiences',¹⁴ the Glenbow hosts a variety of programs and exhibitions.¹⁵ Aside from its several oil sponsors and its location in the heart of Canada's oil capital, the Glenbow's ties to resource extraction can also be traced back to its very beginnings. The museum was founded in 1954 by lawyer-turned-oil millionaire Eric L. Harvie, who had greatly profited from his leases in the Leduc oil field¹⁶ (Diehl 1989). Harvie spent some of his wealth amassing a large collection of Indigenous and Canadian artworks, eventually donating it to the province of Alberta.¹⁷ In 1976, the Alberta government funded the construction of an eight-storey structure with over 8,361 square meters of exhibition space to house the Glenbow in downtown Calgary. Today, while the Glenbow's largest grants are provided by Calgary Arts Development, the Calgary Foundation, the City of Calgary, the Government of Alberta, and the Government of Canada, its biggest corporate sponsor for the last two fiscal years has been Chevron, a multinational oil and energy corporation.

Olympics, Sponsorship, and Politics in 1980s Calgary

The Spirit Sings occurred during important political, economic, and cultural developments in Canadian history. The international oil crises of the 1970s and 1980s had significant repercussions in Canada, causing a general recession and leading to a high number of oil companies filing for bankruptcy.¹⁸ However, Calgary was still a rapidly growing city in the 1980s, sustained by the extractive wealth of surviving companies and large multinationals which were increasingly focusing on 'unconventional' supplies of oil, such as the tar sands in Fort McMurray and offshore reserves.¹⁹ At the same time, global shifts toward a neoliberal economic model,²⁰ exemplified in Canada by the Brian Mulroney government (1984-1993), led to several changes for cultural organizations, including decreased government funding, increased corporate support, and structural reforms that reflected the rising importance of marketing and development in the not-for-profit sector. Like many museums in North America and, to a lesser extent, Europe, the Glenbow was not immune to these economic shifts and, by the late 1980s, was receiving funding from over a dozen oil and gas companies in a single fiscal year. As a 1985 invitation to a Glenbow luncheon bringing together 'Calgary's corporate leaders' – most of whom were from the extractive sector – stated: 'Glenbow has, until recently, operated largely with provincial and federal government support... Current economic restraints dictate that the museum must turn more and more to the private sector for support in order to maintain its present activities'.²¹ By the time of *The Spirit Sings*, the Glenbow was thus already dependent on private industry funding to support its operations.

At the same time as planning for the exhibition began, the 1988 Calgary Olympics (OCO'88) were also being developed – on the heels of the 1984 Los Angeles games. Writing about the rise of corporate power in her book *No Logo*, Naomi Klein notes that it was against this neoliberal backdrop that 'sponsorship went from being a rare occurrence (in the 1970s) to an exploding growth industry (by the mid-eighties), picking up momentum in 1984 at the Los Angeles Olympics' (Klein 2000: 30-1). Indeed, the 1984 games have been widely regarded as a 'transitional moment' in Olympic history, marking a shift between the previously government-supported organization toward 'a new model of private-public partnerships, built heavily on corporate sponsorship' (Gruneau and Neubauer 2012: 134). With its status as OCO'88's flagship art exhibition and its record-breaking sponsorship by Shell, *The Spirit Sings* is therefore reflective of larger economic changes across cultural organizations in the 1980s, from Olympic games to museums. In Calgary especially, the rise of corporate involvement in the public sphere was dominated by the oil industry, with 40 petroleum companies – known as Team Petroleum '88 – collectively sponsoring OCO'88 for \$4.8 million (Fresco 2015). Within this economic context, we can understand how Shell emerged as a logical partner for the Glenbow's Olympic exhibition.

Introducing *The Spirit Sings*: Exhibition, Critical Event, and Other Legacies

Exhibition

Developed over five years, planning for *The Spirit Sings* began in 1983. Stretching across 20,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space on the museum's second floor, it was, at the time, the largest exhibition ever mounted at the Glenbow. It showcased over 650 artifacts belonging to various Indigenous communities across Canada, which the exhibition curator Julia Harrison and Glenbow director Duncan F. Cameron spent extensive time and resources identifying in the collections of hundreds of museums in North America and Europe. One of the primary goals of *The Spirit Sings* was to locate and temporarily return objects that had been extracted to foreign collections from early years of contact and colonization. The breadth of *The Spirit Sings*' thematic scope was not the only reason the exhibition was a momentous endeavour. Like the Olympics, the Glenbow was reaching new heights of corporate sponsorship, and Shell's record-breaking contribution of \$1.1 million was a regular focus in media coverage. The remainder of the exhibition's budget – which totalled over \$2.6 million²² – was covered by the Glenbow itself, OCO'88, and Canada's National Museum of Man.

Critical Event

While concerns over the Glenbow's display of Indigenous artifacts would eventually come into focus, it was the announcement of Shell's sponsorship that ignited the ensuing controversy, boycott, and legacy of *The Spirit Sings*. Before the sponsorship was announced in 1986, OCO'88 was already being boycotted by the Lubicon. In 1986, the Lubicon shifted the target of their boycott toward *The Spirit Sings*, emphasizing the \$130-million tar sand plant Shell was operating on their traditional territory at the time (Nelson and Nelson 2017). While oil and gas development in northern Alberta has had significant impacts on Lubicon people beginning in the 1970s, the Lubicon's struggles with the Canadian state can be traced back to the turn of the century. Missed by government officials during the signing of Treaty 8 in 1899, the Lubicon were involved in a federal land claim from 1933 to 2018. In the 1950s, the discovery of oil in northern Alberta began decades of exploratory invasions on Indigenous territories by extractive companies seeking to secure oil and gas reserves. This included the Lubicon's territory, who were still without federal treaty. Following Alberta's oil boom, the Lubicon experienced numerous socio-economic and health issues from the adverse effects of oil extraction. As Lubicon Cree climate advocate Melina Laboucan-Massimo writes:

Where there once was self-sufficiency, we are seeing increased dependency on social services, as families are no longer able to sustain themselves in what was once a healthy environment with clear air, clean water, medicines, berries, and plants from the boreal forest (Laboucan-Massimo 2014: 114).

Poor air quality and lack of clean running water has also led to severe health concerns among the community, such as elevated rates of cancers and respiratory illnesses (Laboucan-Massimo 2014). These significant declines in quality of life are intimately connected to the environmental impact of oil and gas development. For much of the twentieth century, the Lubicon were thus faced with corporate exploitation of their territory and an ongoing land rights claim.²³

During their boycott of *The Spirit Sings*, the Lubicon employed a focused media and letter-writing campaign to garner the support of museum professionals, scholars, churches, and even some of the institutions from which the Glenbow had requested artifacts. The Canadian Ethnology Society, the European Parliament, and well-known Canadian museum workers supported the boycott,²⁴ while twelve museums refused to lend requested artifacts²⁵ (Wrightson 2017). Though the museum community remained deeply divided over *The Spirit Sings*, the exhibition team nevertheless pushed forward.

Legacies

As Cherokee museologist Karen Coody Cooper writes, *The Spirit Sings* 'was a watershed for North American Indian/museum relationships' (Cooper 2008: 27). Indeed, the Lubicon's boycott directed international attention to the Glenbow and highlighted concerns over museums' representations of Indigenous cultures, which Indigenous people had been protesting for decades.²⁶ Despite the core of the exhibition's controversy having been the Shell sponsorship, several other issues began to emerge in media and scholarship, such as the lack of Indigenous people on the scientific committee,²⁷ the contested display of sacred artifacts, and the overall absence of Indigenous consultation both at the Glenbow and in museums more broadly. Within the museum world, the first significant consequence of the controversy occurred before *The Spirit Sings* even opened. At the 1986 International Council of Museums (ICOM) Conference in Buenos Aires, as some museums had already declined loaning artifacts to the Glenbow, *The Spirit Sings* inevitably became a point of discussion and led to the passing of the ICOM's 'Resolution No. 11: Participation of Ethnic Groups in Museum Activities'.²⁸ Two years later, the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations held a colloquium in Ottawa titled 'Preserving Our Heritage: A Working Conference Between Museums and First People' (Wrightson 2017). The colloquium eventually led to the *Task Force on Museums and First Peoples* report, published in 1994. Meant to provide a 'moral and ethical guideline for change' (Wrightson 2017: 40), the report listed several recommendations for Canadian museums, specifically calling for the increased involvement of Indigenous peoples in the interpretation of their cultures, the repatriation of artifacts and human remains, and improved

access to museum collections (Wrightson 2017). Despite the report being 'primarily normative rather than legislative or judicial',²⁹ it has been held to a high standard and remains regularly cited as a marker of change in museology (Wrightson 2017: 41).

As Mohawk curator and scholar Deborah Doxtator notes, however, 'the shift to the inclusion of Indigenous voices in museum displays did not significantly change the power relations within museums where museological standards of preservation and ownership were sustained' (Wrightson 2017: 45). Kelsey Wrightson extends Doxtator's point to argue that while the Task Force addressed problems of inclusion and access to heritage, 'the political claims of sovereignty and access to land remain unacknowledged' (Wrightson 2017: 45). In other words, while the Lubicon's grievance with the Shell- and government-backed exploitation of their territory ignited their boycott of *The Spirit Sings*, these issues were kept absent from the Task Force report, with Canadian museums prioritizing Indigenous inclusion and recognition over discussions that might disrupt the status quo. Quoting Dene scholar Glen Coulthard's (2014) *Red Skin, White Masks*, Wrightson further demonstrates that the Task Force, by mirroring the Canadian state's 'politics of recognition',³⁰ exemplifies the ways that Canadian museums uphold settler colonialism in Canada: through affirming and conciliatory forms of domination such as inclusion and access, Indigenous peoples become viewed as 'subjects of recognition' in post-1992 museum frameworks while asymmetric power relations maintained by the state and extractive industry stay intact (Wrightson 2017: 37).

Despite such critiques, the 1994 Task Force report remains an official turning point in Canadian museum history. In fact, *The Spirit Sings*' legacy through the Task Force has been emphasized to such a degree that museum scholar Ruth Phillips³¹ argues scholars have 'lost sight' of *The Spirit Sings* as an exhibition because 'the polemical nature of the published literature has had the effect of defining the exhibition *only* as a critical event, understood in terms of its after-effects and their contribution to museological reform' (Phillips 2011: 51). By focusing on *The Spirit Sings* as an exhibition, Phillips reveals it to have been an innovative, intentionally hybrid project, condemning the 'demonized and flattened cardboard representation' promoted by its constrained framing as a 'critical event' (Phillips 2011: 52). Behind-the-scenes correspondence and memos between members of the scientific committee do suggest that while the project was complex and sometimes fraught, several members of the committee were ultimately well-meaning and critical in their work. For example, the exhibition team attempted efforts to challenge traditional exhibition models, such as coordinating a parallel Indigenous arts festival in hopes of countering static representations of cultural groups in the exhibition. Additionally, the curator supported a request by a member of the scientific committee to change the exhibition's title from its original 'Forget Not My World', who in 1986 noted that,

We want to make a strong statement about the enduring achievements both intellectual and artistic of the traditional aboriginal cultures of Canada. The title implies that there is danger that these cultures and their achievements either have been or will be forgotten without our own efforts.³²

Motivated by Phillips' call that museum research ought to emphasize 'the dynamics of interaction through which major public representations are produced' (Phillips 2011: 52), this article aims to extend both ways that museum scholars have studied *The Spirit Sings* thus far: whether it has been interpreted as an exhibition or as a critical event, *The Spirit Sings* has yet to be examined through a lens of funding and sponsorship, despite increased attention to current oil-museum partnerships by activists and researchers. Even prior to scholarly writings about the exhibition, media coverage from 1986 to 1988 also obscured the boycott's core critiques of land dispossession and resource extraction. Instead, local press often focused on whether museums like the Glenbow had the right to display Indigenous culture. In a 1987 interview, Lubicon chief Bernard Ominayak maintained: 'Our objection is that the sponsors of the show, oil companies and the Alberta government, are the same people who are out in our area and destroying our people'.³³ Inspired by this reminder of the issues at stake in contemporary discussions of museum sponsors, the following analysis uses Shell's sponsorship of *The Spirit Sings* to highlight the ways that the exhibition promoted particular forms of legitimacy at national, corporate, and institutional levels.

Overlapping Legitimacies: Locating Corporate Interests in *The Spirit Sings*

Imagined Representations and Cultural Appropriation

As the flagship art exhibition for the Calgary Olympics, *The Spirit Sings*' focus on Indigenous cultures was no coincidence. Occurring at the height of multicultural politics in Canada, the OCO'88 spectacle sought to showcase a modern, equitable, and diverse nation. Like the 1976 and 2010 Olympics,³⁴ this showcase employed Indigenous representation for cultural and political value.³⁵ Three cultural figures were prominently featured in OCO'88: 'the Mountie, the cowboy, and the Indian' (Adese 2012: 489); and the opening and closing ceremonies included 're-enactments' as well as Indigenous imagery and performances. Considered the backbone of Calgary's identity, the figures of the Mountie, the cowboy, and 'the Indian' were used by Olympic organizers to display the city's 'unique western heritage' and romanticized westward colonial expansion (Adese 2012: 489-91). Perhaps in sponsoring *The Spirit Sings*, an expansive and 'expertly' curated exhibition about Indigenous art, the Olympic organizing committee hoped to redress the stereotypical and performative nature of its ceremonies. Nevertheless, despite their aim to 'present the richness, diversity, and complexity of Canada's native cultures' (Harrison 1988: 7), planners of *The Spirit Sings* also occasionally produced flattened cultural representations. For example, an early exhibition sketch proposes two structures to be set up in the Glenbow lobby: a 'ticket tipi' and an 'information igloo' (Figure 1). While it is unclear if these structures were in fact deployed for *The Spirit Sings*, the amusement park-like undertones of the sketch mirror OCO'88's use of Indigenous peoples as a tourist attraction (Adese 2012). The 'tipi' and 'igloo' concepts also contrast the main thesis of *The Spirit Sings*, further pointing to the contradictions of exhibition-making, or what Ruth Phillips describes as 'a lack of alignment of the messages transmitted by the curatorial content, graphic branding, and marketing strategies' (Phillips 2011: 62). As curator Julia Harrison stated in a 1988 CBC radio interview:

There tends to be a certain concept in many people's minds of sort of (sic) a pan indian (sic) image, that (...) all indians (sic) have a totem pole, a tepee (sic), and a birch bark canoe. What I really wanted to focus on was the richness and the diversity of native cultures in this country...³⁶



Figure 1. Exhibition sketch for *The Spirit Sings*. Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 1987. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – F. General Files', folder 1: 'Olympic exhibition. Design - General'.

The co-option and distortion of Indigenous heritage into Canada's national imaginary was also reflected in local and national media coverage of the exhibition and its surrounding boycott. Much of the framing around the exhibition hints at the right of Canadians to view the cultural objects presented in the show – a right that was often used by the press to critique the Lubicon protest and land claim. Between 1986 and 1987, the *Toronto Star* and the *Calgary Herald* published such headlines as 'Native art represents *our* heritage' (emphasis my own); '[Lubicon] Band goes too far'; and 'Lubicon nuisance'. As Nelson and Nelson (2017: 68) show, the boycott of *The Spirit Sings* was often presented by journalists as unpatriotic, 'unCanadian... and an embarrassment to Canada and "all Canadians"'. For Nelson and Nelson (2017), this negative media framing established an 'us versus them' binary while excluding the Lubicon and their allies from a newly fashioned understanding of Canadian citizenry. As the news of the boycott spread, Shell, on the other hand, would quickly reframe their sponsorship of *The Spirit Sings* as a project helping to shed light on 'contemporary Native issues'.³⁷ Additionally, when responding to the press about the Lubicon's boycott, the exhibition curator called it 'a very dangerous thing' for freedom of speech, arguing that 'we have to respect the right to do research'.³⁸ By communicating a narrative about shared Canadian history and the right to access, research, and display certain cultures, the exhibition team for *The Spirit Sings* appropriated Indigenous cultures for institutional aims. In doing so, the Glenbow also assumed authority over what constituted best interest for the care and display of objects. For example, the museum denied requests by the Kahnawake Mohawk nation to remove an Iroquois False Face mask from the exhibition. Following a two-week injunction which saw the mask removed from display, a judge eventually ruled it should return to the Glenbow (Bell 2009: 46). The court proceedings over the display of the mask reveal the colonial logic of Canada's legal institutions, which intersected with museological practice and issues of sovereignty in this particular cultural moment. By fighting the Kahnawake Mohawk's request for the mask and developing an antagonistic discursive relationship around the Lubicon's boycott, the Glenbow showed that there was no space in *The Spirit Sings* for Indigenous responses or challenges to the exhibition.

'Good Citizenship and Generosity': Branding Shell Through *The Spirit Sings*

It is within this Olympic context of nation-building and legitimation that Shell and the Glenbow became partners in the production of one of the most significant exhibitions in Canadian history. Through this partnership, Shell not only branded itself to a national public via advertisements; it also sought to promote a particular image of itself for private shareholder meetings. However, it is important to note that the direction in which interest in the partnership was expressed between Shell and the Glenbow complicates the popular idea that museums might be passive instruments of corporate legitimation. In 1985, it was the Glenbow who reached out to Shell to ask if they would support the '1986 major exhibition "State of the Art: Alberta in the Mid-1980s"'. Aware of the possibility of an Olympic-level project, Shell declined, replying: "We have decided not to sponsor this exhibit in favour of exploring the possibilities of a major Glenbow exhibition timed for the 1988 Olympics."³⁹

Thus, while Shell had previously sponsored several Glenbow initiatives over the years, in the mid-1980s the company was seeking a branding campaign of national scale.

A second important contextual detail is that by 1986, corporate sponsorship was common in most Canadian museums and the Glenbow had policies and practices in place to ensure Shell would get a significant return on its sponsorship, such as tiered benefits for corporate donors. Benefits for all levels of donations included name credits on donor boards, private previews of exhibitions and behind-the-scenes tours with senior staff, and use of the Glenbow spaces for corporate functions. At the higher levels of corporate donations, benefits included a gift from the Glenbow (such as a plaque or statuette) and a private dinner with the Glenbow chairman and director. At the highest level, which would have applied to Shell's sponsorship of *The Spirit Sings*, benefits included '...exclusive recognition to be tailored to meet donor (corporate) needs in public relations and marketing' and 'sponsorship of an exhibition or program will carry additional benefits'.⁴⁰

With its status as exclusive sponsor, Shell therefore secured the right to be the only advertiser in the Glenbow magazine's special issue for *The Spirit Sings* (Glenbow Museum 1988). A two-page spread in the issue, seen in Figure 2, demonstrates the entanglement of sport, art, and culture at the core of Shell's branding strategy:

Because Of Shell, A Young Engineer Is Drilling In Swan Hills. And A Young Dancer Is Performing In Swan Lake.

Shell Canada is in the business of developing natural resources. So you would expect to find us investing in places like Caroline, Peace River and Swan Hills. But Swan Lake?

We support the performing arts because the cultural talent of Canadians is as much a natural resource as oil and gas and is of vital importance to the future of this country.

Shell's community investment program, which places a special emphasis on young

Canadians, provides assistance to a variety of cultural endeavors across Canada.

Official Sponsor OF THE XV Olympic Winter Games.

including annual bursaries for two gifted students attending the National Ballet School. As well, we fund educational concerts, theatre productions and fine arts programs.

Soon, Shell Canada will be sponsoring

a very special event - *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*. This extraordinary exhibit of rare Indian and Inuit art objects will be the flagship event of the 1988 Olympic Arts Festival during the

to 1911 when we formed not just a new resource company but a new partnership - with the people of Canada.

SHELL CANADA

Figure 2. Glenbow magazine's special issue for *The Spirit Sings* (Glenbow Museum 1988).

The second paragraph of this advertisement states: 'We support the performing arts because the cultural talent of Canadians is as much a natural resource as oil and gas and is of vital importance to the future of this country'. By emphasizing the company's support of cultural initiatives over its primary business of oil extraction, Shell's Olympic advertising campaign sought to showcase the company as a 'good corporate citizen'.⁴¹ As External Affairs minister Joe Clark stated in his opening speech for *The Spirit Sings* in January 1988, Shell 'acted with a degree of good citizenship and generosity seldom matched anywhere'.⁴²

While Shell's primary focus in its Olympic branding campaign was communicating a public image, the company also instrumentalized its partnership with the Glenbow to promote itself behind closed doors during its 1987 annual general meeting. A memo from January 1987 outlined a request by Shell that the Glenbow facilitate a mobile display with content from *The Spirit Sings* to be set up at the Pallister Hotel, where Shell leadership, and likely employees and shareholders, would attend the meeting. Rather than the traditional advertising benefits listed in the Glenbow's Corporate Donor Benefits policy, the museum's collaboration on the display might be considered an instance of the 'tailored recognition' or 'additional benefits' guaranteed to highest-level donors by the Donor Benefits policy. In the memo about the mobile display, it is suggested that, after its first installation at the Shell annual meeting, the 40 ft. long display 'consisting of approximately 10 panels' could be used at other sites, such as the Calgary Stampede, the Calgary Convention Centre, the Glenbow, or shopping malls. The memo further outlines guidelines for the display, such as: that the text 'be similar to the kind of copy [the Glenbow] would produce for our brochure'; that a map of Canada with the six cultural regions and examples of artifacts exhibited in *The Spirit Sings* be included; and that 'Shell would very much like to use *The Spirit Sings* logo'. Of note is another guideline, which, though crossed out in pen in the archival copy of the memo, asked:

As a 3-D centrepiece to this otherwise flat exhibit, Shell would like to display an artifact which is large enough and colourful enough to draw attention to the exhibit, and to also add museum “realness” (...) This loan would be one day only – for their A.G.M.⁴³

While the Glenbow appears to have refused Shell’s request to borrow an artifact, through this mobile display the company nevertheless sought to leverage its access to *Spirit Sings* content – from text, to design, and even objects – to communicate an image of itself to its internal people: that of a company with the knowledge, involvement, and prestige provided by the ‘realness’ of the museum.

Museum PR: Shifts in Practice at the Neoliberal Turn

Yet a focus on institutional memos and policies with ambiguous authorship can easily promote readings of complicity and corporate legitimization on the part of the Glenbow. Questions remain: in what ways did individual professionals at the museum actually become entangled in the legitimization of Shell? And what can Shell’s record-breaking sponsorship of *The Spirit Sings* tell us about broader shifts in the history of museum practice in Canada? What emerges from the archival record is not only a story of funding and sponsorship in the 1980s, but one about a similarly understudied aspect of museum work: public relations (PR). Two opposing but simultaneous realities unfolded in the public relations effort for *The Spirit Sings*. First, much of curator Julia Harrison’s work in the later stages of the exhibition’s planning was dedicated to media appearances about the exhibition. In other words, in the midst of the Lubicon boycott, Harrison became the public face of *The Spirit Sings*. However, despite Harrison’s dual role as curator and unofficial PR liaison, the general public relations strategy surrounding the exhibition was also significantly outsourced. For example, at least five external consulting companies were brought in to lead the exhibition’s public image, with their expertise varying from advertising to public speaking training for Glenbow spokespeople. Though Harrison was likely placed in the media spotlight to share her expertise about the contents of *The Spirit Sings* and shift focus away from the boycott, the Glenbow’s collaboration with external PR consultants reflects Canadian museums’ institutional transition toward corporatization. While these two efforts may appear contradictory – a museum employee and external consultants emerging as important players in the public image of the exhibition – they both suggest that, in 1987-88, the success of this Olympic art exhibition was prioritized over meaningful discussions about Indigenous sovereignty, community consultation, and the ethics of sponsorship.

As *The Spirit Sings* found itself entangled within the massive federal, political, and economic project that was the 1988 Calgary Olympics and the legitimating strategies of Shell, the survival of the exhibition became imperative. As such, much of the work of Harrison and Cameron in later stages of exhibition planning concerned the defence and promotion of the exhibition. While Cameron wrote many letters to other museums and organizations to endorse the project⁴⁴ and re-assure institutions of the exhibition’s relevance and safety in an attempt to secure artifact loans, Harrison participated in numerous press appearances, including print and radio interviews. As part of this effort, Harrison and Cameron were asked by Shell to take a media relations workshop, which involved at least two hours of mock reporter questions and feedback from PR consultants. A 1987 memo raised ‘a concern about the media speaking to the scientific committee on sensitive issues’ and noted that, ‘It was agreed that only [Harrison] and [Cameron] would do interviews’.⁴⁵ While Cameron and Harrison were the official spokespeople for the exhibition, given Cameron’s occasionally inflammatory comments to the media and colleagues, Harrison likely carried an unprecedented responsibility toward public relations for a museum curator at the time.

Though Harrison’s important involvement in the public image of *The Spirit Sings* sheds new light on the behind-the-scenes processes of the exhibition’s development and suggests novel avenues for museum research, her media relations efforts did not occur in isolation. The Glenbow enlisted the Hilda Wilson Group to manage *The Spirit Sings*’ public relations strategy, while Shell hired Arts & Communications Counsellors (A&CC) in 1987 to manage the Glenbow’s response to the boycott. In the introduction to their Public Relations Plan, A&CC wrote:

The current controversy over the loan agreements, stirred up by the Lubicon band, is an unfortunate and disturbing tactic, employed by these Indians to draw attention to their failure to reach a satisfactory settlement of their land and mineral rights claims... From what we have been able to determine, the Lubicon issue will not die down, and it may very well shift and escalate.⁴⁶

The strategic plan and recommendations written by A&CC frequently echoed the antagonistic framing and vocabulary of conservative media outlets like *The Calgary Herald* (Nelson and Nelson 2017), assigning responsibility for the ongoing land claim to the Lubicon themselves. The language of the PR plan suggests that the increasing professionalization and outsourcing of museum practices like fundraising, marketing, and public relations since the 1980s have led to a differentiation between collections and community work and the expanding public relations strategies of museums. With the rise of decolonial and social justice-informed frameworks in museum studies, as well as the growing phenomenon of museum activism, this disconnect is likely to exacerbate current public critiques of corporate-museum partnerships.

With Shell's record-breaking contribution of \$1.1 million – at the time the highest ever sponsorship of a Canadian exhibition, which the Glenbow Museum 'would be lucky to get now'⁴⁷ – we can understand how in-depth engagement with the Lubicon's critique of Shell and consideration of funding alternatives were likely unthinkable in the 1980s. Seeing little opportunity to meaningfully respond to the anti-Shell discourse and boycott, the priority of *The Spirit Sings* leadership became to complete the project and redress its media narrative. Such institutional objectives continue to mark museum practice today. Practically, these responsibilities do not always align with contemporary academic and social justice-informed frameworks for museums, forming a divide that has only grown with museums' increased outsourcing to external marketing and fundraising firms.

Conclusion: Contemporary Perspectives and A Continued Divide

While sponsorship and divestment debates may seem hopeful for European institutions, serious activist pressure to divest museums from oil sponsors has yet to reach the Glenbow or most Canadian museums. Despite the near-immediate aftermath of *The Spirit Sings* controversy on collections-based museum practice, as was evident in the *Task Force Report* (1992), I learned in an interview that, in 2019, the Glenbow had not yet developed a policy related to funding ethics.⁴⁸ I was informed that the museum was beginning to explore the creation of the 'gift acceptance policy'; however, I was also assured that, when completed, the policy would not exclude specific industries.⁴⁹

Continued partnerships with the oil sector remain evident at the Glenbow. During my visit, I spent much time walking around the museum's largest permanent exhibition, *Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta*, a 2,500 square meter celebration of settler Albertan history and culture which, naturally, gives significant didactic space to the story of resource development. In an interesting juxtaposition, located directly across *Mavericks* is the museum's permanent exhibition on Blackfoot culture. Because it remains deeply entrenched in Calgary's ongoing circulation of extractive wealth and 'maverick' culture,⁵⁰ the Glenbow has the potential to add nuance to discussions of museum divestment from the oil and gas sector. The divestment discourses promoted by UK-based activist groups like Culture Unstained or Art Not Oil can be troubled by the reality that some institutions have always been embedded in histories and economies of extraction, as the Glenbow's founding by oil-millionaire Eric L. Harvie clearly illustrates. But the Glenbow is not only historically and financially indebted to oil. From my recent interviews with museum professionals, it is apparent that discussions of divestment from the oil sector have a different tone in Calgary. While several interview participants recognized that the oil industry 'causes destruction'⁵¹ and considered oil funding to be 'dirtier money' in a cultural sector already dependent on dirty money,⁵² very little change can be enacted so long as the majority of Calgary's wealth continues to stem from oil and gas. As one participant stated about the Glenbow, 'most members of our board are businesspeople' and industry connections are invaluable for museum fundraising.⁵³ As with most cultural institutions, fundraising in Canadian museums requires intensive networking efforts within business circles to secure funding for projects and operations. It is 'a brutal

job', as one interview participant admitted, trying to get 'money out of whoever you can'.⁵⁴ With increased anti-oil protests around the globe, Glenbow staff can only be hyper-aware of the tensions inherent to their work: developing innovative cultural programs and encouraging critical thinking all-the-while having various levels of personal relationships with people who work in the oil industry.

There is also an evident respect and gratitude for long-term corporate sponsors among the staff. For example, the oil company Chevron has sponsored the Glenbow Museum School, a program and resource for teachers and children, for 25 years: 'We wouldn't be able to do that program without them', one participant noted.⁵⁵ Naturally, within Calgary's current political economic system, led by a Conservative government that champions extractive projects, the museum could not survive if it boycotted funding from the oil and gas sector. This does not mean that the museum is disengaged from critiques of the industry: in 2018, the museum hosted an exhibition of works by Dene artist Alex Janvier, which included his 1988 work titled *Lubicon*, painted in support of the Lubicon's boycott. The Glenbow therefore clearly operates as a museum in Kirsty Robertson's terms, in the uncomfortable space between the arts, the state, the private sector, and the economy (Robertson 2019). Given the current challenges to fundraising in museums and the economic makeup of Calgary, it is understandable that while *The Spirit Sings* had lasting impacts on object-based museology in Canada, issues of land sovereignty and resource exploitation so central to the boycott remain largely absent from policies at the Glenbow.

Initially, my interest in *The Spirit Sings* and its Shell sponsorship stemmed from a general absence of critical discussions of sponsorship in museum studies. Writings on the matter have tended to either dismiss concerns about sponsorship from the assumption that all corporate money is 'dirty' or make generalizations about sponsors' involvement in exhibition production while promoting an industry-specific divestment agenda. Unfortunately, such positions have minimally advanced answers to a question central to contemporary museum practice: how might the museum field reconcile decolonial and social justice frameworks with the embeddedness of museums in exploitative capitalist structures, which are likely to remain long after divestment from fossil fuels? As this case study of *The Spirit Sings* has shown, the sponsorship and divestment debates currently activating museums around the globe could benefit from further empirical research on the practical implications of cultural sponsorship, both present and past. Perhaps more importantly, such research must be grounded in a robust interdisciplinary framework that recognizes both the nuance of museum work and the reality that 'green' extractivism, which is currently fueling the global transition to renewable energy, is proving to be just as destructive as fossil fuel production.⁵⁶ Such analyses are bound to become crucial to discussions of museum sponsorship in the near future, as new exploitative systems of extraction will likely amplify their strategies of cultural legitimation.

Received: 20 January 2021
Finally accepted: 4 May 2022

Notes

- 1 Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 'Twenty Nations Participate in Glenbow Olympic Exhibition', 18 March 1987. Box 1 of 9, '1987 Administrative Files', folder B.8.6.9.
- 2 In literature and media sources, the Muskotew Sakahikan Enowuk are frequently referred to by various names: Lubicon Lake Nation, Lubicon Cree First Nation, or Lubicon Lake Cree. For simplicity and consistency, I will henceforth refer to the nation as 'the Lubicon'.
- 3 With inflation, this sponsorship would amount to \$2,189,275.77 today. Bank of Canada, 'Inflation calculator'. <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>, accessed 20 August 2021.

- ⁴ Shell, a Dutch company, was also embroiled in controversy abroad, with a nation-wide boycott of the company occurring in South Africa in 1986, as civil rights groups argued it supported South Africa's apartheid system of government to maximize profits. See Don Rosen, 'Nationwide Boycott of Shell Oil Over South Africa Ties Hits L.A.', *Los Angeles Times*, 12 April 1986. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1986-04-12-me-3593-story.html>, accessed 10 October 2021.
- ⁵ I conducted interviews with five museum professionals during the fall of 2019. These professionals were invited to participate in interviews because of their present or historical involvement with the Glenbow Museum. These interviews were confidential, and every effort has been made to prevent the identification of participants in this article. Identifying the positions previously or currently held by these professionals risks their identification. As such, vague descriptors are used intentionally.
- ⁶ As described by Veena Das (as a critical event that 'establishes new modalities of social action' [Das 1995: 5]) and cited in Ruth Phillips' 'Moment of Truth: *The Spirit Sings* as Critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It' (in Phillips 2011).
- ⁷ Corporations which practice Corporate Social Responsibility are frequently described as 'corporate citizens'. As Josh Nelson and Adie Nelson note (2017: 78), many journalistic accounts of *The Spirit Sings* praised Shell for its sponsorship and 'portrayed its action as the sine qua non of "good (corporate) citizenship"'.
- ⁸ According to Statistics Canada, from 2000 onward, the oil industry has held a 5 per cent share of the Canadian GDP and 21 per cent of the Albertan GDP (Wang 2020).
- ⁹ Which are becoming especially prominent in the cultural sector, such as through the activist work of Liberate Tate and Art Not Oil. See Platform, Liberate Tate, and Art Not Oil, 'Not If But When: Culture Beyond Oil', 2011. <http://platformlondon.org/2011/11/27/read-online-now-not-if-but-when-culture-beyond-oil/>, accessed 17 January 2022.
- ¹⁰ Thea Riofrancos, 'Extractivism and Extractivismo', *Global South Studies: A Collective Publication with The Global South*, 11 November 2020. <https://www.globalsouthstudies.as.virginia.edu/key-concepts/extractivism-and-extractivismo>, accessed 20 December 2020.
- ¹¹ 'capital R' Reconciliation refers to the Canadian state's instrumentalization of the term as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Métis artist David Garneau argues that the commission represents "the government's frantic race to a post-historical space of reconciliation, rather than submission to a permanent state of negotiation [and] treaty." (Garneau 2016: 37)
- ¹² The Blackfoot word for Bow River, Makhahn means 'river where the bow reeds grow', referring to the reeds growing on the riverbanks which are used to make bows. See Town of Banff, 'Indigenous Peoples', n.d. <https://www.Banff.ca/IndigenousPeoples>, accessed 20 August 2021.
- ¹³ Glenbow Museum, 'About', 2021. <https://www.glenbow.org/about/>, accessed 15 November 2021.
- ¹⁴ Glenbow Museum, 'About'.
- ¹⁵ As of late 2020, the Glenbow Museum is closed for a significant renovation campaign. According to the museum's website, the new building (the result of an interior and exterior revitalization of the original building) will be complete and open to the public in mid-2024. Glenbow Museum, 'Renovation Plan', n.d. <https://www.glenbow.org/renovation-plan/>, accessed 2 September 2021.

- ¹⁶ Operated at the time by Imperial Oil.
- ¹⁷ Clare Cotton, 'Glenbow Museum', The Canadian Encyclopedia, 8 April 2015. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/glenbow-museum>, accessed 10 July 2019.
- ¹⁸ Alberta, 'Energy Crises, Political Debates and Environmental Concerns: 1970s-1980s', n.d. <http://www.history.alberta.ca/energyheritage/oil/energy-crises-political-debates-and-environmental-concerns-1970s-1980s/default.aspx>, accessed 21 September 2021.
- ¹⁹ Alberta, 'Energy Crises'.
- ²⁰ As per David Harvey, neoliberalism is 'a theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade' (Harvey 2007: 22).
- ²¹ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 'Invitation to luncheon for CEOs', 19 March 1985. Box 'A.1-A.9 Administration files', folder 16 'Public relations and marketing'.
- ²² With inflation, the exhibition's exact budget would amount to \$5,202,515.32 today. Bank of Canada, 'Inflation calculator'. <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>, accessed 20 August 2021.
- ²³ The Lubicon were finally able to settle their land claim in 2018, obtaining 256 square km of lands and \$113 million in government funds (Clancy 2018).
- ²⁴ Such as Bruce Trigger, the then-curator of ethnology at the McCord Museum of Canadian History, from which he resigned to protest the museum's collaboration with *The Spirit Sings*.
- ²⁵ These museums often cited concern over the security of the artifacts amidst the boycott and the high profile of the exhibition, with only a few directly siding with the Lubicon.
- ²⁶ Kirsty Robertson provides a helpful summary of Indigenous resistance to museum practice in her book *Tear Gas Epiphanies: Protest, Culture, Museums*, noting a 1976 sit-in at the Royal Ontario Museum by members of the American Indian Movement, who were demanding the return and re-burial of human remains (Robertson 2019: 53).
- ²⁷ Except for Haida artist Bill Reid, who participated on the committee occasionally.
- ²⁸ ICOM, 'Resolutions Adopted by ICOM's 15th General Assembly', 1986. https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOMs-Resolutions_1986_Eng.pdf, accessed 19 January 2018.
- ²⁹ Like the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (Wrightson 2017).
- ³⁰ Using the decolonial politics of Frantz Fanon in a Canadian context, Coulthard (2014) argues that the Canadian state's 'politics of recognition' – as exemplified by the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples – in fact re-inscribe colonial subjectivity by shifting from violent domination toward 'affirmative and conciliatory forms of domination' (in Wrightson 2017: 37).
- ³¹ Ruth Phillips was also a member of *The Spirit Sings*' scientific committee.
- ³² Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Phillips, R., correspondence, 1986. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – F. General Files', folder 4: 'Olympic Exhibition – Scientific Committee Correspondence.'

- ³³ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Ominayak, B., 1987, [cited in 'Appropriation: A Case in Point', *Last Issue*, 32, Autumn 1987. Box '1987 Administration Files', folder B.8.6.8.
- ³⁴ In Montreal and Vancouver respectively.
- ³⁵ Though these had varying degrees of accuracy, stereotyping, and consultation (Adese 2012).
- ³⁶ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Harrison, J., radio transcript, 17 January 1988. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – F. General Files', folder 1: 'Olympic exhibition – Advertising'.
- ³⁷ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Czaja, E., 'Glenbow Museum Spirit Sings Official Opening', 14 January 1988. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – I. General Files', folder 27: 'Olympic Exhibition Opening'.
- ³⁸ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Harrison, radio transcript, 17 January 1988.
- ³⁹ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Proulx, E., correspondence, 20 June 1985. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – H. General Files', folder 20: 'Olympic Exhibit. Funding – Corporate Sponsor'.
- ⁴⁰ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 'Donor Benefits', 1986, 3. Box 1 '1987 Administration Files', folder B1: 'Board of Governors – General'.
- ⁴¹ Meaning a company that effectively practices corporate social responsibility.
- ⁴² Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Clark, J., 'Notes for an address by the Right Honourable Joe Clark Secretary of State for External Affairs', 14 January 1988, 2. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – I. General Files', folder 27: 'Olympic Exhibition Opening'.
- ⁴³ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 'Memorandum', 20 January 1987. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files, H – General Files', folder 20: 'Olympic exhibition. Funding – Corporate Sponsor'.
- ⁴⁴ For example, Cameron also wrote to the president of the Canadian Museum Association (CMA), condemning the publication of an article in the CMA's bulletin *Museogram*, which discussed *The Spirit Sings* and the Lubicon boycott.
- ⁴⁵ Glenbow Museum Library Archives, Calgary. Glenbow Museum, 'Minutes of The Spirit Sings Opening Events Meeting', 24 August 1987. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – I. General Files', folder 27: 'Olympic Exhibition Opening'.
- ⁴⁶ Glenbow Museum Library and Archives, Calgary. Arts & Communication Counselors, 'Public Relations and Publicity Plan for The Spirit Sings', January 1987. Box 'Spirit Sings Ethno. Business Files – H. General Files', folder 20. 'Olympic Exhibition Funding – Corporate Sponsor'.
- ⁴⁷ Interview 1 (confidential), interview by author, digital recording, 28 November 2019, Glenbow Museum, Calgary.
- ⁴⁸ Interview 1, 28 November 2019.
- ⁴⁹ Interview 1, 28 November 2019. As part of its renovation plan, the Glenbow's website now states that 'Glenbow is progressively executing an impact portfolio lens across its

investments, going beyond environmental, social and governance criteria to directly support resources for artists, Indigenous communities, mental health and climate change, right here at home'. See Glenbow Museum, 'Reimagined', 2022. <https://www.glenbow.org/reimagined/>, accessed 31 July 2022.

- ⁵⁰ In the 2001 book which inspired the Glenbow's *Mavericks* exhibition, author Aritha van Herk defines a maverick as 'a unique character, an inspired or determined risk-taker, forward-looking, creative, eager for change, someone who propels Alberta in a new direction or who alters the social, cultural, or political landscape'. See Glenbow Museum, 'Mavericks: An Incurable History of Alberta', 2021. <https://www.glenbow.org/mavericks/>, accessed 15 April 2020.
- ⁵¹ Interview 1, 28 November 2019.
- ⁵² Interview 4 (confidential), interview by author, digital recording, 10 December 2019, Peterborough, Canada.
- ⁵³ Interview 1, 28 November 2019.
- ⁵⁴ Interview 3 (confidential), interview by author, digital recording, 2 December 2019, Banff, Alberta.
- ⁵⁵ Interview 3, 2 December 2019.
- ⁵⁶ Riofrancos, 'Extractivism and Extractivismo'; Thea Riofrancos, 'What Green Costs', *Logic Magazine*, Issue 9, 7 December 2019. <http://logicmag.io/nature/what-green-costs/>, accessed 31 July 2022.

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