

**A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS PRESENTATION ON
INDIGENOUS ELDER WILLIAM COMMANDA
PERSPECTIVES ON
CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Canadian Association for the Club of Rome

February 19, 2020

Romola V. Thumbadoo, PhD

Coordinator, Circle of All Nations,

SSHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Research Associate Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre

Carleton University Romolavt@gmail.com

WILLIAM COMMANDA, INDIGENOUS ELDER, WAMPUM CARRIER, HON PHD, OFFICER OF THE ORDER OF CANADA



THE LEGACY OF ALGONQUIN ELDER
L'HÉRITAGE DE L'AÎNÉ ALGONQUIN

Dr. William Commanda, OC

11.11.1913 - 03.08.2011

*"We must come together
with one heart, one mind, one love,
and one determination to create
A Circle of All Nations
A Culture of Peace."*

*"Nous devons nous unir avec un seul
cœur, une seule âme et une volonté
pour créer un cercle de toutes les
nations et une culture de paix."*



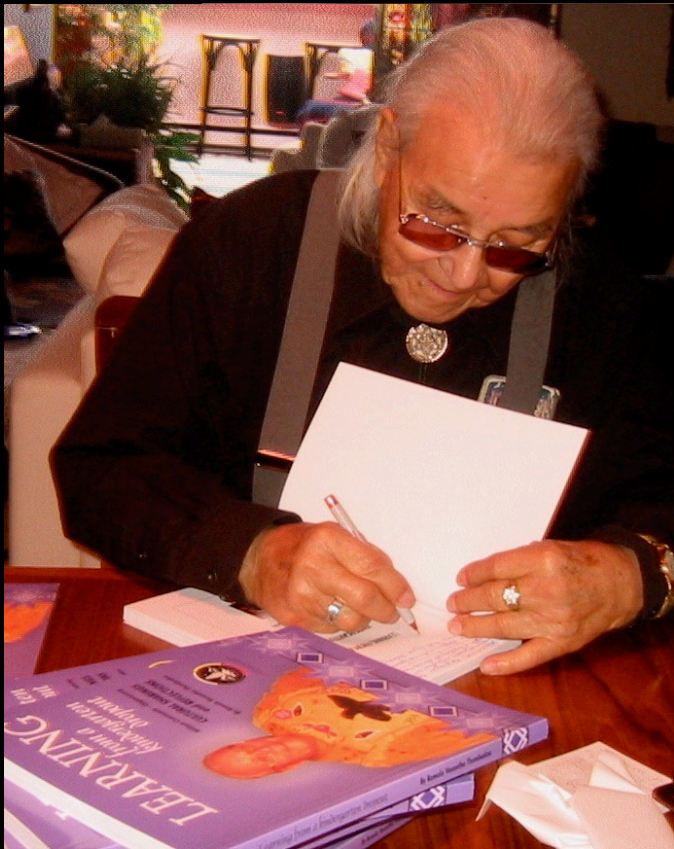
A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS
A CULTURE OF PEACE

www.circleofallnations.ca

www.asinabka.com



KINDERGARTEN DROPOUT, LAND MINES TREATY, V I PRAYER, HON PHD



WILLIAM COMMANDA, CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS

- THEMES

- **IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

- Canoe/Kayak Journeys
- Sustainable Relations
- Laws of Nature and Human Animals
- Nature/Tectonic Abrasion/Evolution/Peace
- Circle of All Nations Bridge Building
- Kindergarten Dropout PhD and OC
- Spiritual Trajectory to Knowledge
- 2020 Digital Mapping Retrospective and Reflection
- GINAWAYDAGANUC UBUNTU – All is Related

- **ANIMATIVE ACTIONS**

- 1945 Activism and Politics – as in Civil Rights!
- 1967 Canada 100; Eganville Gathering
- 1969 Gathering: Kitigan Zibi/Bitobi Lake
- National to Global – 1987, 1991, 1993 – ME and CC
- Agenda 21: Sustainable Development
- Sunbow Five Walk 1995 /96
- 1996 RCAP Report – Who will Drink the Water?
- 1996 CAN Gatherings and Non-stop Outreach
- 2000 GlobalEcoPeace Poster and Gathering
- 2006 Waterlife Workshop; Sustainable Relations
- Asinabka Legacy Vision for Sacred Chaudiere Site

INDIGENOUS SPIRIT AND KNOWLEDGE



1967 CAN GATHERING

- On ancient limestone rocks of the Ordovician period (5m)
- First international multicultural gathering in Eganville, Ontario
- Canada's 100 birthday Message



SUNBOW FIVE WALK

- Spiritual Elder For Walk for Mother Earth and Indigenous based healing and outreach
- From First Encounter Bay Mass to Santa Barbara California
- E-Journal Storytelling

William Commanda
Keeper Of The Seven Fires Prophecy Wampum Belt

These Difficult Times We Live In Were Foreseen By Spiritual Visionaries Across The World. My Ancestors Warned Us About This Time And The Choices We Would Have To Make, In The Seven Fires Prophecy, Which Was Inscribed In Sacred Wampum Shell In The Late 1400s

The Prophecy Holds A Vision For A Future Where We:

- Honour Our Relationship And Responsibility To Mother Earth And All Creation
- Celebrate Our Individual Gifts And Diversity, And Still
- Recognize And Respect Our Place Within A *Circle Of All Nations*

The Steps To This Future Are Few:

- First We Look Within, So We Know Ourselves First And Best. We Recognize, Acknowledge And Forgive Ourselves Our Shortcomings And Any Failure To Achieve Our Best Potential
- We Forgive Others For Any Hardship And Pain They May Have Caused Us And Our Communities. We Trust That This Energy Will Transform Them Spiritually
- We Recognize That Our Thoughts, Words And Actions Affect Ourselves, Mother Earth And All Creation, And We Embrace Peace Mindfully
- We Listen To Our Minds But We Trust Our Hearts Above All

It Is Of Crucial Importance That The People Of The World:

- Respond Immediately To The Plight Of The Many Oppressed By Exploitation, Social Injustice, Racism And
- Animate The Human Capacity For Forgiveness, Compassion, Love And Reconciliation; And
- Create A Global Synergy To Ensure The Improvement Of The Lives Of All

This Path Will Lead Us To Love, Sharing, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion

PEACE TURTLE POSTER

- Created for CAN International Millennium Peace Gathering
- UN Decade for Culture of Peace
- Integration of Earth and Peace
- Reaffirmed for UN ECOSAC project

WHO IS WILLIAM COMMANDA?

- Carrier of sacred **Wampum** heritage
- Renowned birch bark **canoe maker** and craftsman
- **Political Algonquin leader**, elder, chief, chief the North American Indigenous Nations Government
- Founder of the **Circle of All Nations**, a **global eco-peace-community** dedicated to advancing environmental stewardship and racial harmony
- **Officer of the Order of Canada** and recipient of two **honorary doctorate degrees**
- University of Ottawa Chancellor Michaelle Jean (GG) created **Commanda Hall** in recognition of his relevance to **academic knowledge in 2014**
- **Canadian History Hall : Commanda panel and message**

William Commanda, Ojigkwanong
(Étoile du matin – Morning Star)



«Ginawaydaganuc – Nous sommes tous liés»
L'ancien chef de la bande d'Algonquins de Kikapou, 286, a été nommé officier de l'Ordre du Canada en 2006. Il est un homme d'origine autochtone qui a travaillé pour le gouvernement fédéral pendant plus de 20 ans.

"Ginawaydaganuc – We Are All Connected"
William Commanda was a Menominee Algonquin elder, second language speaker and renowned canoe builder. He served as chief of his home community of Kikapou 286 from 1982 to 1992 and as Chairman of the South American Indian Nations Government from 1982 to 1992, leading the first world summit in 1992.

Respect for Mother Earth
"The Mother Earth, Water and Fire – our elements and our life" is the theme of the 2014 World Summit on Mother Earth. It is a call to action for all nations to respect and protect our planet and its resources. It is a call to action for all nations to respect and protect our planet and its resources. It is a call to action for all nations to respect and protect our planet and its resources.

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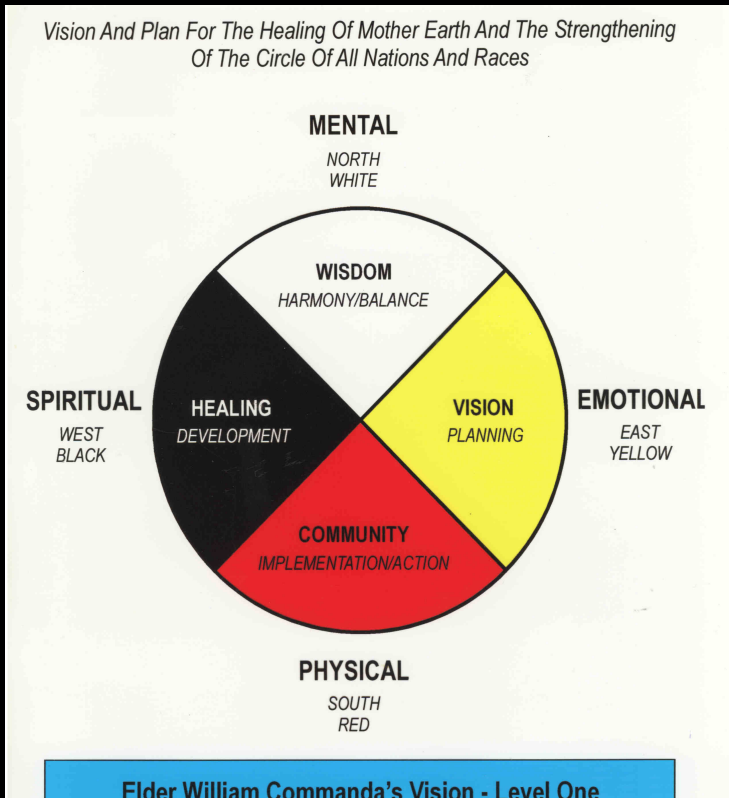
In 1992 he initiated the Circle of All Nations, an informal global peace community dedicated to Indigenous wisdom, social justice and peace. He received two honorary awards, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2006.



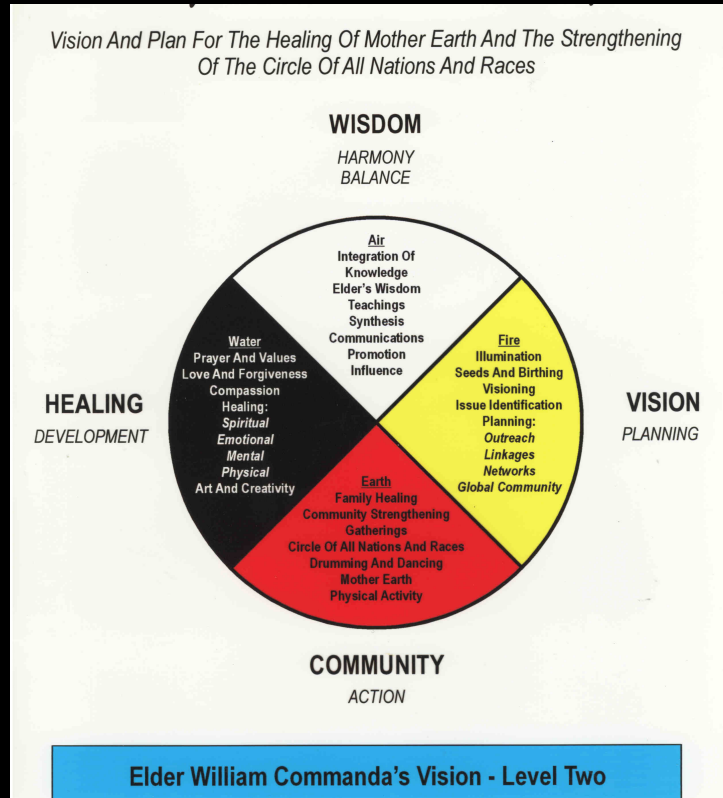
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CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS DISCOURSE



IDEALOGICAL



ANIMATION/ACTION



MANIFESTATION

WHY STUDY WILLIAM COMMANDA

- William Commanda has been influential on environmental issues at a **global** level in some microcosmic fashion since the 1990 UN Pre-Rio Earth Summit deliberations
- He also positioned his approach in many **contemporary debates** – e.g. uranium, water contamination and megadumps, eels, damming, habitat protection, species at risk, in the process influencing diverse players
- William Commanda is well known for his voice of peace building and reconciliation, grounded in his **Indigenous rootedness on the land**, yet **connected with diverse others**
- These *others* animate his **environmental stewardship and peace** building legacy via the CAN Discourse

- With respect to environment, my research has led me to conclude that there are **limitations to popular contemporary approaches** to the environment – e.g. environmental ethics , deep ecology, feminist geography
- **Acceleration in climate change**, and environmental crises of global impact attest to the urgent need for new, innovative approaches
- 3 decades after Rio Earth Summit, three things predominate in environmental issues
 - the voice and place of the **Indigenous** and
 - **western domination** of thinking in a “world on fire”
 - **global connections**, and interrelatedness of problems and solutions

OUR THESIS RESEARCH

The central research query focuses on

- William Commanada's thoughts on Mother Earth, **environmental and relational issues**,
- how they have informed **contemporary debates** on Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations and thinking and action, and
- whether they can contribute to a greater contemporary **integration** of his Anicinabe (Indigenous) approach to **knowledge generation** in academic discourse



Cyber-
cartographical



WELCOME



Animated by the passion of Grandfather William Comandis, the Circle of All Nations is a global eco-community unified by its fundamental and unbreakable conviction that as children of Mother Earth, we all belong together, with Nations, irrespective of our individual nation, creed or culture.

Phenomeno-
logical

Logics of
Inquiry

Performance
Mapping



Historical
Dialectical





Cyber-
cartographical
mapping



Critical
Reflexivity

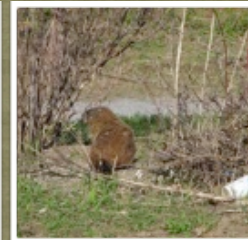
Primary
Methods

GeoNarrative



Narrative





NATURE THE TEACHER

Cosmic, Rocks, Water, Plants, Animals - and Reflexivity

We have thousands of images of the multiple faces of Nature. I say that I take these photographs to acknowledge the lessons the emerge from engaging relationally with the Laws of Nature; it is my equivalent of the tobacco or copper William Commanda would offer nature in exchange for spruce roots or birch bark. It engenders reciprocity.

See Romola's NATURE CAN TEACH PAGE ON FACEBOOK!

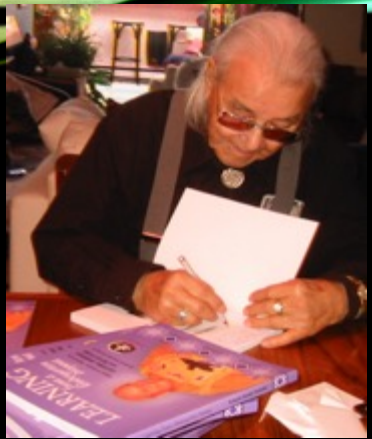
**A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS
A CULTURE OF PEACE**
 FOUNDED BY
WILLIAM COMMANDA
 a global eco community
 unified by values of

- RESPECT
- RESPONSIBILITY
- FORGIVENESS
- COMPASSION

FOCUSED ON ADVANCING

- INDIGENOUS WISDOM
- RESPECT FOR MOTHER EARTH
- RACIAL HARMONY
- SOCIAL JUSTICE

Recipient of 15 Gold PROTON CORONA AERIALS
 Can you do the work in action!



**ASINABKA
SACRED CHAUDIERE
SITE**
 To Commemorate the Spirit of the
 "SACRED CHAUDIERE" SITE

- Indigenous Centre
- Peace Building
- Eco City Park
- Historic Park

Reconciliation

SPiRiT of the NORTH
 WISDOM OF THE OLDER SIBLING
 WILLIAM COMMANDA
 Recipient of 15 Gold PROTON CORONA AERIALS

**FROM the HEART of POLAR BEARS
A MESSAGE**

SNOW SHOES
 IN THE OLD DAYS
 WILLIAM WALKED 50
 MILES A DAY ON HIS
 SNOW SHOES. AND
 ALL THE COMPASSION MY
 DAD HEARDY + DID
 TODAY WE HAVE THE CLIMBERS +
 POLAR BEARS + OTHER BEARS
 EVERYWHERE

**TROPHY they
WON'T TAKE!**

An Iteration of
 the CAN/
 Commanda
 Discourse

CANOE
 Spirit of MANITOQU
 Where was Manitoqu before
 he created the Earth?
 'In his Canoe, which was
 floating in the skies'
 The Indigenous Canoe
 -the penultimate symbolic
 wonder of Canada

- Integrating the physical + metaphysical
- Integrating Spirit, Art, Craft + Invention with the practical + sustainable

The Metaphor for Navigating the Journey of one's Life

**WATER FALLS
at the
SPiRiT OF WATER**

- ONE OF THE FOUR SACRED ELEMENTS
- CONTAMINATED, POLLUTED + DEPLETED EVERYWHERE

WILLIAM COMMANDA SAYS
 "I believe Mother Earth is a living creature. She has body + spirit + veins. The rivers are her veins. If they are blocked everywhere, cancers, poisons build up; eventually they kill. Dams, motor vehicles, foreign animals, fertilizers, pesticides, raw sewage are attacking the life blood of Mother Earth. She has to fight back in NATURE'S LAW"

PARKS + the BOREAL FOREST

- 70% of NATIONAL PARKS WERE CREATED AT THE INSISTENCE OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES
- THE BOREAL RENDEZVOUS IS EMBEDDED IN THE PRAYERS OF OUR ELDER

WE ARE LIVING IN TIMES of PROPHECY

ONLY AFTER THE LAST TREE IS CUT THEN IS NO MORE RIVER IS POISONED
 LAST FISH IS CAUGHT THEN YOU WILL KNOW MONEY CAN'T BUY AND GLOBAL CRISIS

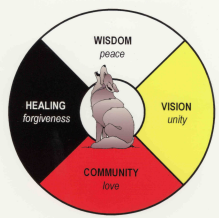
WILLIAM COMMANDA IS THE TIGER'S VOICE FOR THE EARTH. HE SAYS "IF WE DON'T STOP THE BLOOD OF THE EARTH FROM BEING SPILLED WE WILL BE DESTROYED"

HISTORY - ANCIENT HISTORY

Well beyond 4000 years

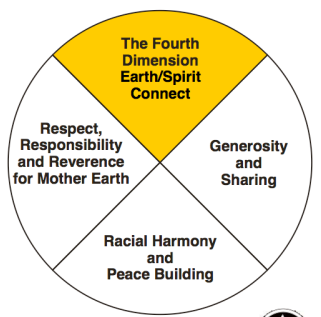
- Billions of YEARS AGO, the MOST ANCIENT ROCKS EMERGED HERE
- + 5000 YEARS AGO → MEETING PLACE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF NA
- 400 years AGO, WILLIAM'S ANCESTORS PRAYED HERE AS CHAMPLAIN WATCHED
- IN THE 1500s, there were plus 100,000,000 peoples in America
- DECIMATED BY ORIGINAL GERMAN WARFARE + RACE GENOCIDE
- IN THE 1800s, the LAND TRANSFORMATION BEGAN →
- FUR TRADE, LOGGING + DAMS
- HYDRO + NUCLEAR ENERGY
- ie. RESOURCES OF WILLIAM'S ANCESTORS GAVE BIRTH TO CANADA

*A Circle of All Nations
A Culture of Peace*



The Wolf Project
dignifying each other as one race:
"A Human Race"

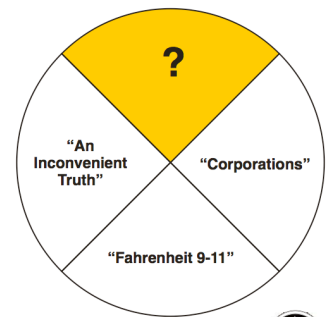
The Light of The Eighth Fire



William Comanda
circleofallnations@sympatico.ca



Dominant Ideologies



William Comanda
circleofallnations@sympatico.ca



The Crucial Paradigm Shift



William Comanda
circleofallnations@sympatico.ca



CHRONOLOGY OF KEY ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF MOTHER EARTH

Chronology of Key Activities in support of Mother Earth

1945 - Precursor - Hopi Petition on Environment to the UN
1967 - First Indigenous Gathering - at Eganville, Ont
1967 - Gathering of Nations in Maniwaki
1987 - Presentation of Wampum Belts at Constitutional Talks
1991 - Pipe Ceremony at Pre Rio Preparations in France
1992 - Message to Earth Summit in Rio - Agenda 21
1993 - Cry of the Earth Conference at UN
1995 - Spiritual Guide of the Sunbow Five Walk for Mother Earth
1996 - Release of the RCAP Report - at Victoria Island - Would you drink the water?
2004 - Honorary Elder - Boreal Rendezvous
2004 - Heritage Rivers Bill Mason Conservation Award
2006 - Honorary Chair - Ottawa Heritage River Designation
2006 - WaterLife Workshop
2007 - The Awakening Gathering
Annual Circle of All Nations Gatherings Promote Environmental Stewardship
2004 - Focus on Water
Annual Gathering of Nations Pipe Ceremonies at Victoria Island
Interventions on the Proposed Megadump at Danford Lake, Sacred Chaudiere Site, American Eel as a Species at Risk, Test Drilling for Uranium

CHRONOLOGY OF KEY ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF MOTHER EARTH

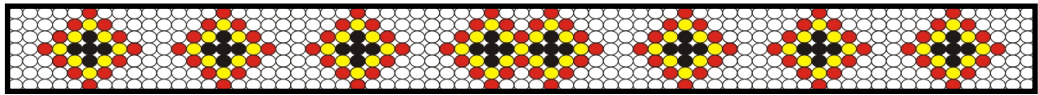
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- 1987 - Presentation of Wampum Belts at Constitutional Conference
- 1991 - Pipe Ceremony at Pre Rio Preparations in France
- 1992 - Message to Earth Summit in Rio – Agenda 21
- 1993 - Cry of the Earth Conference at UN

CHRONOLOGY CONTINUED

- 1995 - Spiritual Guide of the Sunbow Five Walk for Mother Earth
- 1996 – Release of the RCAP Report – at Victoria Island and Water Crisis
- 2004 - Heritage Rivers Bill Mason Conservation Award
- 2006 – Honorary Chair – Ottawa Heritage River Designation
- 2006 – WaterLife Workshop
- 2007 – The Awakening Gathering

CHRONOLOGY CONTINUED

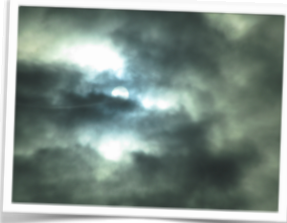
- Annual Circle of All Nations Gatherings Promote Environmental Stewardship
- 2004 – Focus on Water
- Annual Gathering of Nations Pipe Ceremonies at Victoria Island
- Advocacy for the American Eel as a Species at Risk
- Interventions Consistent with the Four Key Elements:
 - Fire: Test Drilling for Uranium
 - Earth: Proposed Megadump at Danford Lake
 - Water: Road construction on Migratory path of the Loon
 - Air: Sacred Chaudiere Site



OCTOBER 2019 Field Trip to Montagne Diable and Des Chutes Windigo: Ancient Sacred Vision Quest Site in Quebec



A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS
COLLAGE VIGNETTE



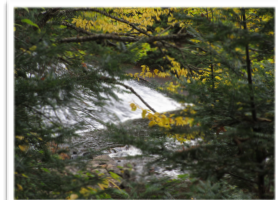
1. In William Commanda's memory an important Vision Quest site of his ancestors, we visited it three times together; once we drove and met Fire Keeper Peter Decontie and Lawyer Michael Swinwood there; next we drove German psychiatrist and Systemic Constellations lead, Dr. Karl Heinz Rauscher there (it later featured in a book he dedicated to WC); and finally we went there with Charlie Commanda and Joanne Stacey.



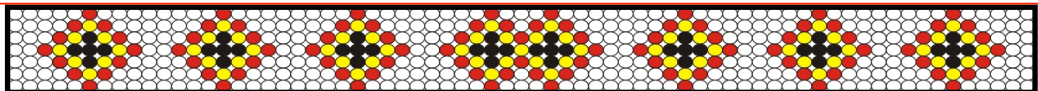
2. On Sept 14 2013, I guided WC's sister Judy's daughter and her two sons, (Daisy Mary Commanda Jacko, Billy and John Gallenger) to Montagne Diable - originally known as **Spirit Mountain**. Her paternal ancestors came from this Baskatong/Mishomis area. By now, a commercial enterprise prevented us from driving up to the top of the mountain, which was very disappointing for all of us.

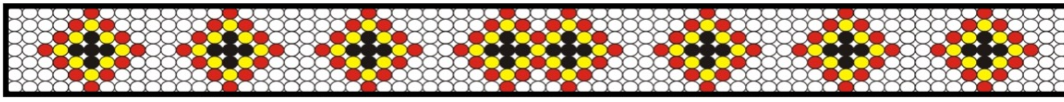


3. In October 2019, WC's other niece, Julia's daughter Lillian Dowling and her second husband Ray Leblanc, were wanting to explore the ancestral lands - Lillian had grown up away from the reserve and her Indigenous heritage and was now interested in understanding this part of her history better. We did a 6 day trip to Maniwaki and Val d'Or and vicinity. This time, the creation of a provincial park precluded a visit to the peak. We were stopped at Chutes de Windigo, and noted the two things WC had bemoaned for years - tree cutting and moose hunting - in view of the decimation of moose population and habitat, he believed this moose hunting would have to stop. Ironically, in other parts of Parc LeVerendrye, Algonquin communities were in fact protesting the hunting valiantly.



Follow the thread to the HUDSON Post: October 26, 2019 to note the impact of tree cutting at Baskatong in 2013 on Flooding of 2019





A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS
A CULTURE OF PEACE

OCTOBER 2019 Field Trip along the Ottawa River to Hudson/Oka, at the Lake of Two Mountains, where the Ottawa Meets the St. Lawrence



A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS
COLLAGE VIGNETTE



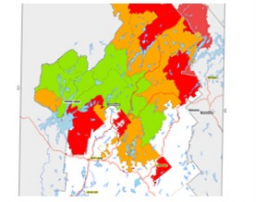
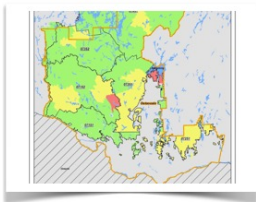
1. THE LAND SPEAKS AND WHAT IS IT SAYING? The Algonquin language emerged from the land: as the people entered the emerging postglacial landscape, they had to develop a new language to understand it and communicate with it and with each other - the understanding that they were part of the land at a fundamental level is iterated repeatedly in the core relational words Indigenous Peoples use to describe land - Mother Earth. William



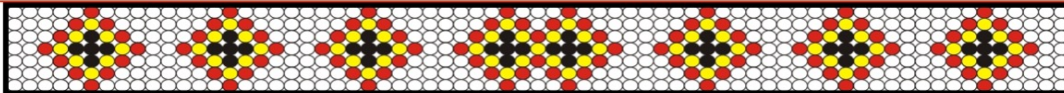
2. In the earlier infographic, I noted I had driven to the top of Montagne Diable (formerly Spirit Mountain) with WC three times. These were ceremonial moments. On Sept 14 **2013**, I guided WC's sister Judy's daughter and her two sons, (Daisy Mary Commanda Jacko, Billy and John Callanger) there: her paternal ancestors came from this Baskatong/Mishomis area. Now, a commercial enterprise prevented us from driving to the top of the mountain. On October 2 **2019**, I took WC's other niece, Julia's daughter Lillian Dowling to explore the ancestral lands This time, the creation of a provincial park precluded a visit to the peak. We were stopped at Chutes de Windigo, and noted the two things WC had bemoaned for years - tree cutting and moose hunting.



3. On October 26, **2019**, I went on a road trip to Hudson/Oka area with my friend Carolyn Martelock, and we visited Circle of All Nations colleagues, the Mayor, Jamie St Maurice Nichols, his wife Amanda MacDonald and family. It was ironic that he had just met with representatives of government Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, Tactical Integrated Forest Development Plan 2018-2023, Outaouais Region Gatineau, who presented him with their November 8, 2017 report. the maps below from their report identify in red zones of tree-cutting - in the first, note that identifies tree cutting in Baskatong area in **2013**. It was not till the meeting with the Mayor that they realized the implications of the Baskatong tree cutting for the 2019 flooding at Hudson, evidence of which you can see in my photos and video clip. I realized my pdf road trips were affirming WC's approach to knowledge.



Follow the iterative Infographics 1 and 2 to track the impact of tree cutting at Baskatong in 2013 on flooding at Hudson/Oka in 2019



CYBERCARTOGRAPHY, CYBERNETICS AND ENCORE VIVANT WILLIAM COMMANDA!

CYBERCARTOGRAPHY
Ancient Knowledge Base and Contemporary Application

More than a decade ago, D. R. Fraser Taylor, Director of the Geomatics Cartographic Research Centre (GCRC) at the Carleton University, the academic pioneer in the field of cybercartography, wrote that this technology would see cartography applied to a much wider range of topics than had traditionally been the case: "It will also utilize an increasing range of emerging media, forms and telecommunication networks such as the Internet and the World Wide Web. It will be a multidimensional cartography using multimedia formats and is more likely to be an integral part of an information package than a stand-alone product. Cybercartography will also be highly interactive and engage the user in new ways. In organizational terms, it will see new partnerships being created between national mapping organizations, the private sector and educational institutions and the products of cybercartography are likely to be compiled by teams of individuals from very different disciplines and professional perspectives working together" (Taylor and Pynes 2009).



William Commanda
August 3 at 5:40 AM · 🌐

Special Day - It was 8 years ago around this moment that Grandfather William Commanda began his next journey - remembering him and his special life and outreach and the family and friends and Circle of All Nations who animated his work - ever grateful for his example and inspiration and his energy which still embraces all of us. I wondered what photo would present this morning - well, here it is! More later!

7,712 People Reached 1,760 Engagements Boost Post

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CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS CONTACT DETAILS

© Romola V. Thumbadoo PhD Geography
SSHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Coordinator, Circle of All Nations, 613-599-8385
Legacy Work of Elder William Commanda, OC, PhD
www.circleofallnations.ca; www.asinabka.com
circleofallnations@sympatico.ca

Personal Assistant to The Director D. R. Fraser Taylor
Research and Administration, 613-520-3979
Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre (GCRC)
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Carleton University
www.gcrc.carleton.ca
rvthumbadoo@gcrc.carleton.ca

Find us on Facebook: Romola Vasantha Thumbadoo,
Circle of All Nations, William Commanda, William
Commanda Legacy Asinabka, Romola's Nature CAN TEACH

Thumbadoo, R.V. (2018). *Ginawaydaganuc and the Circle of All Nations: The Remarkable Environmental Legacy of Elder William Commanda* PhD Thesis. Ottawa. Carleton University. <https://curve.carleton.ca/aa4e3cbb-5b83-464d-8286-a901fcd77b06>