

Catriona Jeffries

Duane Linklater

*Whitney Biennial 2022:  
Quiet as It's Kept*

The Whitney Museum of  
American Art  
New York, USA

April 6–September 5, 2022

Vancouver

Duane Linklater

Installation view, *Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept*, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA, 2022





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*mistranslate\_wolftreeriver\_ininimowinîhk* (detail), 2022, canvas, linen, cochineal, orange pekoe tea, charcoal, sumac, cotton thread, blueberry dye, felt tip marker, tarpaulin, 3 parts, each approx. 222 x 102 in. (564 x 259 cm)



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*wintercount\_215\_kisep'sim* (detail), 2022, canvas, linen, cochineal, orange pekoe tea, charcoal, sumac, cotton thread, blueberry dye, felt tip marker, tarpaulin, 3 parts, each approx. 222 x 102 in. (564 x 259 cm)



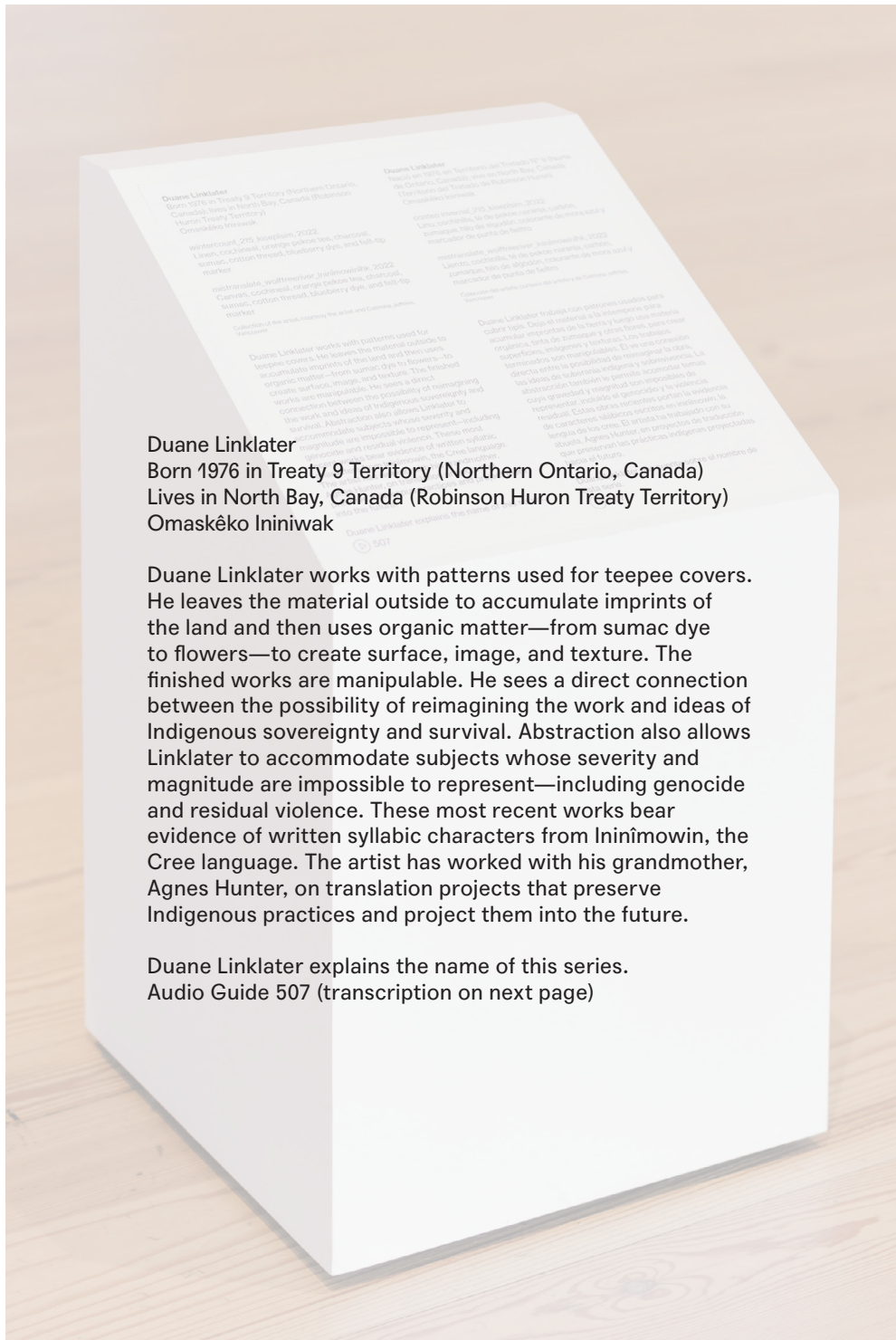


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*wintercount\_215\_kisep̓sim* (detail), 2022, canvas, linen, cochineal, orange pekoe tea, charcoal, sumac, cotton thread, blueberry dye, felt tip marker, tarpaulin, 3 parts, each approx. 222 x 102 in. (564 x 259 cm)







**Duane Linklater**  
Born 1976 in Treaty 9 Territory (Northern Ontario, Canada)  
Lives in North Bay, Canada (Robinson Huron Treaty Territory)  
Omaskêko Ininiwak

Duane Linklater works with patterns used for teepee covers. He leaves the material outside to accumulate imprints of the land and then uses organic matter—from sumac dye to flowers—to create surface, image, and texture. The finished works are manipulable. He sees a direct connection between the possibility of reimagining the work and ideas of Indigenous sovereignty and survival. Abstraction also allows Linklater to accommodate subjects whose severity and magnitude are impossible to represent—including genocide and residual violence. These most recent works bear evidence of written syllabic characters from Ininîmowin, the Cree language. The artist has worked with his grandmother, Agnes Hunter, on translation projects that preserve Indigenous practices and project them into the future.

Duane Linklater explains the name of this series.  
Audio Guide 507 (transcription on next page)

Duane Linklater: My name is Duane Linklater, and I'm originally from Moose Creek First Nations, which is located in Treaty 9 Territory in Northeastern Ontario situated along the southern coast of James Bay.

Narrator: Linklater uses pigments that have been important to Indigenous artists, including sumac, charcoal, and cochineal. He's painted them onto linen canvas that will be shifted and rearranged over the course of the Biennial.

Duane Linklater: These are teepee covers. They're not functional teepee covers, but I think that the idea is there. There's something important about these works and their ability to articulate a change, or their ability to articulate a fluctuation of time and space. And that's sort of originating from their original uses, as teepee covers, as this sort of very, very flexible mode of architecture, this flexible mode of being able to move from one place to another, according to the situation of the environment.

The series is called *Wintercount*. And so in my own culture, my Omaskeko Cree culture that when we ask each other this question of how old are you? And when we ask each other that question in Cree, if we were to translate, that would literally be saying, how many winters are you? If we are looking at a lifetime of a person, that person is half winter, the sort of way I look at it, right? And so this really beautiful way to think about the presence of winter. In this case, there were certain things that I've been thinking about over the past three or four years, five years, and that have made their way into the work. For example, I think one of the important ones this past summer in Kamloops, they uncovered a number of unmarked graves of children who went to residential school.

Narrator: The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission has described the residential schools as a central element in Canadian policy on Indigenous people for over a century. Children were taken away from their families in an effort to force assimilation and erase Indigenous cultures. Thousands of unmarked graves have been uncovered around Canada, and the search for more continues. In November of 2021, the Department of the Interior announced plans to begin identifying the unmarked graves that exist at similar schools in the United States.

Duane Linklater: Myself, I didn't attend residential school, but many of my family members were forced to attend residential schools. And it had a profound impact on my family, and part of what it is that's happening in here, and part of making this work, being able to articulate myself, and being able to speak and make work, make choices, free, open choices with the work seems important in light of this historical context.



Alvarado  
Ancart  
Arreola

Edwards  
Ellison  
Everett

Her  
Hill  
Hopkins

Martinez  
McKenzie  
McMillian  
Mira  
Morales  
Moved by the  
Motion

Raven  
Ray  
Rhoades  
Roberts  
Rosales  
Ryan

WangShui  
Wesley  
White

Barker  
Barrada  
Belmore  
Berger  
Blake  
Breslin

Farid  
Fusco

Jaar  
Jackson  
Johnson

Nance

Salane  
M. E. Smith  
S. E. Smith  
Sterling-Duprey

White Hawk  
Williams

## Whitney Biennial 2022 Quiet as It's Kept

Cassandra  
Press  
Cha  
Chacon  
Chambers-  
Letson  
Churchman  
Cokes  
Connolly  
Connors

Kwan Arce  
and Tolentino

Othello

Tabet  
Thomasos  
Trinh

Yoon

Da Corte  
A. Dean  
D. Dean  
Dickson

Gallagher  
A Gathering of  
the Tribes /  
Steve Cannon  
Gavin  
Gordon  
Green

Lemon  
Lerner  
Linklater  
Little  
Lowe

Pendleton  
Pritchard

Venegas

Born 1976 in Treaty 9 Territory (Northern Ontario, Canada);  
lives in North Bay, Canada (Robinson Huron Treaty Territory)  
Omaskêko Ininiwak

*pêyakwâw êpipohk kîhitohtet pêyak ililiw ênâtamôsîit ênâtauwâpamât kîhohcimâtisîit*  
one time in the winter, one Ininiw (Cree) person went hunting for moose, and this is how he survived by searching/hunting for moose

*eko kâwâpamât môso anime nâtamôsîit kînipahew mâka*  
then he saw that moose that he was hunting and he killed it

*asay mâka owâliw kîtauw kâhisitât otasîhkewinihk*  
and already he was far away from his home—he was out in the bush in his hunting grounds / trapline

*asay maka mitoni tipiskâniw*  
and already it was getting very dark / into the night

*mona mâka îspaliw cikîyet*  
he didn't have time to go home

*eko kâhitelihtâhk ispi kâpakwanât anihi omôsoma kihci-tôtahk isi êkâsîhkacit etipiskak ênipât êpipohk êtahkayak ohci*  
then he thinks that when he skinned that moose, he's going to do this in a way so that when he sleeps he will not be cold, in the winter it is cold

*eko kâhitelihtâhk kihci-wîskwekonîit anihi môsowayâna*  
he thought/decided to wrap very tightly those moose hides around himself

*eko kâkawîsimot êwîskwekonîit anihi wâposwayâna anihi môsowayâna*  
then he went to sleep, with those rabbit skins and those moose hides wrapped around him

*eko maka ispi êkisepâyanik ispi wîwâniskât mona kîhohscikaskitâw cikoskot êhâhkconci môsowayâna*  
and then, when in the morning, when he wants to wake up, he couldn't get up because the moose hide froze, he was stuck inside

*eko kâhitât ant(a) ekâ kîwalawîit anihi môsowayânihk*  
then he was there, he cannot come out from inside that moose hide

*mâskoc mâka wayes nisto kîsikâw nîtauw ânta pâtima kâtâkosihk kotakî wenikânak enâtauwimâkaniwit ewanihit ekâ kîkîwet eko kâpecikotwâniwahk êhapwesâkonit ana môsowayân kihci-awelihten eli w antochi môsowayânihk*  
and perhaps approximately three days he was there, afterwards they arrived, the ones who searched for him as he was lost and unable to go home. someone came to make a fire to get him out, they had to thaw it out so he could get out

Story by the late Joel Linklater, the artist's paternal great-uncle

This story was originally recorded by C. Douglas Ellis in 1956–57 in Fort Albany, Treaty 9 Territory (Ontario), and subsequently translated and published in the book *Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay: âtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina*, ed. C. Douglas Ellis (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1995).

It should be noted that the artist's grandmother, Agnes Hunter, helped Douglas Ellis with the translations for the original publication.

This new, provisional translation, which was done in the summer of 2021, represents a collaborative and ongoing engagement between the artist Duane Linklater and Hunter regarding Ininiw (the Cree language). This translation was made using the same recording Ellis made in 1956–57.

The artist translated this story into roman orthography and spoke to his grandmother, who resides in Piwânak, on the telephone for further insight. After conversation and listening to the recording of the story over the phone, Agnes made subsequent suggestions, changes, corrections and additions. After hearing the story, she said: "I hope he learned his lesson out there."

## Selected Exhibition History

- 2019 *Soft Power*. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, October 26, 2019–February 17, 2020.
- 2019 *Danica Barboza, Jason Hirata, Yuki Kimura, Duane Linklater*. Artists Space, New York, December 6, 2019–February 9, 2020.
- 2018 *Agora*. The High Line, New York, April 2018–March 2019.
- 2018 *Beautiful World, Where Are You?* Liverpool Biennial, Tate Liverpool, July 14–October 28, 2018.
- 2018 *Post-Nature—A Museum as an Ecosystem*. Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, November 17, 2018–March 10, 2019.

## Selected Bibliography

- 2021 Donnan, Amanda. *Duane Linklater: my motherside*. Seattle: Frye Art Museum, 2021.
- 2021 Obrist, Hans Ulrich, and Kostas Stasinopoulos, eds. *140 Artists' Ideas for Planet Earth*. London: Penguin Press, 2021.
- 2020 Joo, Eungie. "Duane Linklater: Other Workers Will Follow." *Aperture* 240, Fall 2020, 44.
- 2020 Joo, Eungie, ed. *Soft Power: A Conversation for the Future*. San Francisco and New York: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Rizzoli Electa, 2020.
- 2017 Scott, Kitty. "What Then Remainz?: Duane Linklater in Conversation with Kitty Scott." *Mousse Magazine* 59, Summer 2017, 256–63.

Sassa playing *tapahon* with two works in process in the artist's studio, North Bay, Canada, 2021  
Works in the artist's studio, North Bay, Canada, 2021. Left: *she pulls it down\_wound*, 2021.  
Right: *earthhhhhh*, 2021



## Duane Linklater

