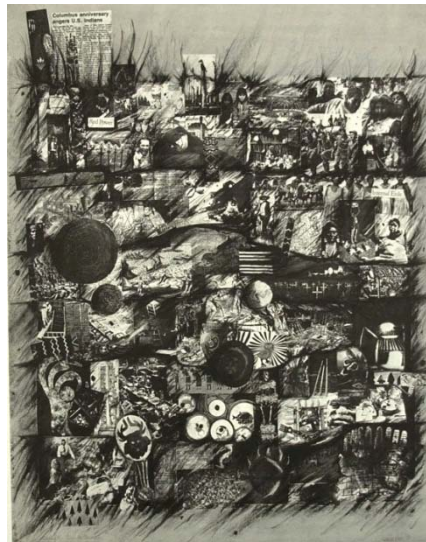


Laura Youngbird

Waabi-Giziibiigiingwe

March 22nd – May 14th

Gallery 126 Dawson Community College



Dawson Community College *Gallery 126* is pleased to announce *Waabi-Giziibiigiingwe* an exhibit of mixed media artworks by artist Laura Youngbird. Laura's artwork will be on exhibit from March 22nd – May 13th in *Gallery 126* which is open Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM, and evenings Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 6:30 – 9:00 PM. Located in room 126 computer lab next to the Jane Carey Memorial Library. For more info and to see the 2009 – 2010 gallery schedule go to <http://www.dawson.edu/>

Laura Youngbird is an artist & art educator at Circle of Nations, a Native American boarding school in Wahpeton, ND. She is an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa, Grand Portage Band. "Ironic, I work in the type of institution that emotionally & spiritually crippled generations of Native people. Now we encourage our students to embrace their heritage. Art is healing. We didn't have a word for art long ago. Art & life were one. I cannot live without art or making art. 'My Work' is how I communicate what can't be put into words & documents my outrage at crimes that continue their brutal legacy. The dress & scratched out faces are symbolic of the "assimilation" forced on Native children taken away to white boarding schools & indoctrinated into Eurocentric culture. Their identity both removed & dictated. *Waabi-Giziibiigiingwe* in Anishinabe means *white-washed* & refers to policy of the early 1900's to assimilate Native people."

Laura, has a distinctive American Indian perspective in her work. The themes in Laura's work

originated from experiences her family and particularly her grandmother had while at boarding schools and issues that surrounded their assimilation into non-Indian culture. Laura also explores the influences of Christianity on American Indian spirituality and life views in her artwork.

“Early investigations began when I started responding to images of my grandmother. I inherited several photographs when my great aunt Lucy passed on. My grandmother violently scratched her face out of every photograph that existed of her. There were pictures of Lucy that were scratched out as well... I remember doing the same thing to my own pictures in a high school year book.

Those pictures of my grandmother haunted me. Both my grandmother, my mother and countless others grew up in Indian boarding schools. I heard horrible stories. It was important to my mother that my sisters and brothers and I went to ‘regular’ schools. My parents did not move back to the reservation until my youngest brother graduated from high school. I wanted to know more about my grandmother and our heritage. My mother told me to go look in a book because she didn’t know anything...

I decided to go back to school, I was hungry for answers. Before I knew it, I was done with my classes but I didn’t feel done. I still had and have questions. I discovered that my mother knew more than she thought she did. I have discovered that there is so much more to learn. Making art creates more questions for me. I am grateful for the little insights I gain from time to time. I tell the kids I work with I wish I could go to school forever...they are amazing teachers.”

Laura received her MA in Drawing and Printmaking from Moorhead State University - Moorhead, MN and her BFA Drawing and Painting, Minor in Native American Studies, also, from MSUM - Moorhead, MN.

If you are interested in learning more about Laura Youngbird, you may wish to check out these and other websites: <http://laurayoungbird.com/> http://hpr1.com/arts/article/art_native_american_style