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"Made To Be Given": Generosity as Methodology in Arthur Amiotte's Collaborations

Julia Hamer-Light

In a photographic slide from around 1972, bright light from a window overexposes the left side of a woman's body as she sits and sews (fig. 1). Her careful hands push red and blue fabric under the presser foot of a blocky, khaki-colored sewing machine. The woman is Oglala Lakȟóta seamstress and artist Rose Gibbons (1915–1986), the aunt of artist-educator Arthur Amiotte (Oglala Lakȟóta; b. 1942). In this snapshot, she sits at a work table in Amiotte's living room in Manderson in Wazí Aháŋhaŋ Oyáŋke, or the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. It is the spring of 1972, and the family is preparing for a giveaway as part of a *huŋká* ceremony for Amiotte's young son.[1]

Fig. 1. Scan from a photographic slide of Rose Gibbons (Oglala Lakȟóta) sitting at her sewing machine in Arthur Amiotte's house in Manderson, SD, c. 1972. Personal papers and archives of Arthur Amiotte, Custer, SD

In a giveaway, a family distributes gifts to their community in the name of the person they want to honor. Three different parties—the person honored, the giver, and the recipients—are all brought into closer relationship.[2] For this ceremony, Gibbons pieced quilt tops, while Amiotte and other relatives bought woolen Pendleton blankets and beaded moccasin vamps. Dresses like the one Gibbons sewed on her machine, decorated with elk teeth or accompanied by dentalium-shell capes, were made to honor select guests. To Amiotte, the giveaway, where a family spends months if not years making and gathering beautiful and useful things, remains the root of Lakȟóta aesthetic practices. Speaking in an

interview in *Parabola* in 1990, Amiotte says: "The idea was that you ennobled the object itself, and others within the group, by giving them these fine things. . . . The admonition is that if you think you own these goods even though they belong to someone else, you must cut yourself off from them and think in another way."[3] People made beautiful things in order to give them away.

Amiotte's preparations for the giveaway melded with his work as an artist. Around the same time, the director of the South Dakota Memorial Art Center in Brookings, South Dakota, reached out to Amiotte about developing an exhibition. Amiotte knew that he and his family were too busy to take on an additional project, but he figured that they could show wall hangings he had already completed alongside some of the work they had made for the giveaway. Another old photographic slide, its edges speckled with age, shows an installation view of the resulting exhibition (fig. 2). A star quilt top is spread across an exhibition plinth, as if over a bed. One of Amiotte's wall hangings, *Late Spring II* (1972), hangs to the far left, while an early version of *Door to the World* (1971), which he would later rework, appears at the center. The next year, in 1973, Amiotte organized a second exhibition at the Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City with his grandmother Christina Standing Bear Mesteth (Oglala Lakȟóta; 1897–1984) and his two aunts, Gibbons and Lula Two Bonnets (Oglala Lakȟóta; 1918–2008). Aptly titled *Experiments in Collaboration*, the show reframed their shared practices through wall hangings they jointly created.

Fig. 2. Scan from a photographic slide of an installed exhibition at the South Dakota Memorial Art Museum, Brookings, SD, 1972. Personal papers and archives of Arthur Amiotte, Custer, SD

I first saw the photograph of Gibbons and scenes from this installation in miniature, lined up as 35-millimeter slides on a homemade light table Amiotte had set up in his library in Custer, South Dakota. I had written to Amiotte, who prefers to correspond by mail, in September 2021, asking him about the wall hangings in general and *Experiments in Collaboration* in particular. After a few phone calls and another follow-up letter from me, a thick envelope slid through my mail flap in Philadelphia in October 2022. In his characteristic slanted writing, across thirty-eight sheets of gridded paper, Amiotte had written his own account of how the wall hangings came into being. At the end, he wrote, "To be continued . . . " I took that note as an invitation. The next spring, I asked whether I

might visit. I would have felt lucky to spend an afternoon with him. That visit, I spent five days with him, and I have since returned twice. When I called him to plan that first visit, all he told me was that many of his fiber works and exhibitions were documented on slides. I felt unsure of what to expect, so I brought my own scanner for the slides in a carry-on suitcase. Between our conversations and considerations of his archival material, I did not have time to digitize the entire collection. So, when I left at the end of the week, he let me take some of the slides home with me. At my own desk, I found it almost impossible to clean the slides (most printed over fifty years ago) of all residue of age. Many of the image files I produced bear the mark of my inexpert process.

"Visiting"—more so than "oral history" or "interview"—feels like the right way to describe the conversations Amiotte and I have had. Scholars Sherry Farrell Racette (Métis), Carmen Robertson (Scots-Lakȟóta), and Katherine Boyer (Métis) have described the importance of visiting as a research methodology.[4] In Brenda MacDougall's (Métis) foreword to *Bead Talk*, she calls visiting "the act of spending time with active presence of, and engagement with, the gifts of speaking, hearing, and participating."[5] In order to visit, you must first introduce yourself. This applies both to the relationship I have formed with Amiotte and to the relationship I will continue to form with you, the reader, throughout this narrative.

So, I will introduce myself to you. I am a white settler scholar of German and British descent. My mother's side of the family is primarily based in the Great Lakes and Great Plains regions, while my father's people largely live in the northeastern United States. My maternal grandmother and grandfather grew up in northwestern Nebraska, just south of where Amiotte was raised in South Dakota. After I arrived for my first visit with Amiotte, we sat in his sitting room with his wife and drank tea. I told them about how I got to their house by following the roads I had followed years ago with my family, on trips to the Hésâpa, or what I called the Black Hills. We discovered that Amiotte's son now lives in the same town where my grandfather grew up. These moments of connection felt like part of the research, drawing a relational map of each other's experiences so that we could identify common ground.[6] Sometimes, I joke that I received some of my most valuable training for my present project in my grandparents' living room, where I learned how to make small talk. That kind of conversation is not, in the end, very small at all. It shows people where you stand.

I am now writing a dissertation about Amiotte's work as an artist and art educator during the 1960s and 1970s. I have been fortunate to be able to frame this project in dialogue with Amiotte. I first encountered his work in an oral history interview with him in the Archives of American Art while searching for evidence of Native American artists who had interacted with what has become known as the Studio Craft movement.[7] Native artists spent most of the twentieth century distancing their creative practice from pejorative and ethnographic designations of their art as craft.[8] Meanwhile, in university art departments and craft schools across the United States, like Black Mountain College and the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, other (primarily white) artists began embracing craft media to challenge artistic hierarchies.[9] I knew that Native artists must have continued to make experimental work in fiber, ceramic, and wood and must have exhibited that work, but their stories were missing. I had initially planned to write a chapter on Amiotte's fiber wall hangings as one of four case studies in a dissertation about how Native artists both contributed to and rejected the concept of studio craft. The time I spent with Amiotte,

however, entirely transformed my project. I have always wanted to center relationality in my academic practice. The tight timeline of a dissertation, I had worried, would preclude my ability to do so. Relationships happen at the rate of correspondence—sometimes over years. Amiotte's generosity with his time, knowledge, and archives opened the possibility of moving more slowly if I narrowed my focus. If my project became a monograph, I realized, those constraints would allow me to dedicate time to this relationship.

Within the context of our present collaborative research, I have continually returned to *Experiments in Collaboration* as a model for my own methodology. Amiotte was early in his career when he curated the exhibition, but even by then, he had established a blueprint for a methodological ethic guided by generosity and collaboration. His methodology resembles that of Indigenous studies scholars like Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree) and Kim TallBear (Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate), among many others, who have long explored how research requires the formation of relationship. Wilson argues that all research paradigms essentially answer a set of basic questions: "What is real?," "How do I know what is real?," and "How do I find out more about reality?"[10] Within Indigenous knowledge systems, these realities exist in relationship rather than on their own, somewhere "out there."[11] I do not and cannot move through relationship in the same way that Wilson, as a Cree man living within a Cree cosmology, can, but it still seems possible to learn from the idea of relationship as reality. While reading for my qualifying exams, I encountered art historian Kirsten Pai Buick's book *Child of the Fire: Mary Edmonia Lewis and the Problem of Art History's Black and Indian Subject* (2010) and TallBear's essay "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry" (2014) in quick succession. Toward the end of her study, Buick writes that an ethical art history should not "thematize another" but rather obsess the writer enough to put herself "in question." Buick continues on to say that answering the question, however, is not important. The significance, rather, is that the art historian feels responsibility because of that question.[12] When I read TallBear's essay, which argues that a scholar must go beyond just "giving back" to a community and rather build relationships of accountability, I saw a resonance.[13] Both authors call into question the relationship between "the researcher" and "the researched." In other words, they each show how authority shifts when research is reframed by responsibility and relationship.

At this point, I should further introduce Amiotte, too. He was born in 1942 in Manderson. On both his father's and mother's sides, he descended from generations of Lakȟóta leaders and artists who sometimes intermarried with European settlers and immigrants.[14] After the age of six, he spent his school years in the settler town of Custer, South Dakota, where his mother had moved to find work during World War II, and his summers in Manderson, where he followed his grandmother, Christina Standing Bear Mesteth, as she gathered plants and sat near her as she beaded. In our conversations, he has described how sorting beads and rearranging scraps of fabric while she quilted served as some of his earliest lessons in color theory.[15] After earning a bachelor's degree in art education and nearly finishing a master's degree, at the age of twenty-seven, he began teaching art in the primarily Lakȟóta Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Porcupine Day School. As the crow flies, Porcupine was seven miles from Manderson, where his grandmother still lived. Driving, the route was seventeen miles, if he took the BIA Highway 27 to 28, passing through the town of Wounded Knee. Between 1969 and 1972, while he was living in Porcupine,

Amiotte would drive the route in the evenings, on the weekends, and throughout school breaks to continue learning from his grandmother and aunts.

In 1972 Amiotte stopped teaching and moved to Manderson to start a curriculum development lab for the BIA. The position came with a government-provided house that allowed the family space to continue preparations for the giveaway in honor of Amiotte's son. Brief glimpses of the giveaway persist in a silent reel of Super 8 film recorded by a guest. One woman helps another slip a dress over her head. Its yoke decorated with elk teeth, it covers the short orange dress and tall white boots she had put on that morning. Men recite a prayer in front of the gathered guests. A young Amiotte, hair braided and wearing a red shirt, leads his small son by the hand, followed by a procession of others. A panning shot briefly shows blanket after blanket decorated with ribbons and carefully hung on clotheslines that stretch between *thípi*. It would be easy to miss this display as the film rapidly cuts between different moments from the day. But in scenes from this giveaway and later ones Amiotte hosted, I keep coming back to the invitation this backdrop poses to the other events of the day. The hosts of a giveaway choose a few specific gifts to honor particular people, but the most important stage is the *wíȟpeyapi*, or "throwing away."[16] This is the moment where goods are spread out over the ground, and anyone can come to the front and take them. The hosts, at this point, do not give directions as to who should receive what, and they relinquish all control over the fate of the gifts.

Fig. 3. Louis R. Bostwick, *Sioux Indians—the gifts made ready for presentation*, 1919. Personal papers and archives of Arthur Amiotte, Custer, SD

The blankets on the line announce this promised generosity. Historically, women would have hung their *ózaŋ*, or *thípi* liners, outside of their home to tell passersby that they would be hosting a giveaway. During one of my visits, Amiotte showed me a historic photograph from 1919 (fig. 3) of a giveaway on Pine Ridge. In it, women in dresses covered with beadwork and elk teeth stand behind trunks topped with beaded bags and shawls. Even more gifts are spread on the ground. Two *ózaŋpi* decorated with porcupine quill-wrapped tassels hang behind the display. Before the federal government forced Lakȟóta

onto reservations, these liners would have been made of hand-tanned deer or buffalo hide. The ones in the photograph, however, appear to be muslin or canvas, which would have been provided as a trade-annuity good by the federal government in fulfillment of treaty obligations.[17] Assimilationist policies would have forced these women and their families to move from a *thípi* to a cabin or small house. Many families, however, kept *thípi* or canvas tents next to their homes.[18] The display of the *ózaŋ* continued to send an important message. Amiotte describes how the *ózaŋ* extended generosity and hospitality to everyone gathered: "It's like an extension of the interior of your *thípi*. . . . This is our environment, welcome to our home, and this is what we're doing."[19] The display itself was an integral part of bringing people into the circle of generosity and gratitude engendered by the giveaway.

The lessons of holding the exhibition and giveaway congruently stayed with Amiotte. He wanted viewers in museums to appreciate work, like the moccasins and robes that he and his relatives made for the giveaway, as concrete aesthetic statements rather than as objects defined by their use. But he also wanted to bring the value of generosity and the importance of sharing beautiful things that were key to his and his relatives' practice into the exhibition space. The next year, in 1973, in the exhibition *Experiments in Collaboration* at the federally operated Sioux Indian Museum (SIM) in Rapid City, South Dakota, Amiotte had the opportunity to continue developing both commitments (fig. 4). He described his shared process with his grandmother and aunts as "a personal and perhaps idiosyncratic redefinition of Indian art."[20] The wall hangings at SIM combined Lakȟóta principles of abstraction found in historic forms through pieced fabric and beadwork that, in turn, responded to broader contemporary explorations in the fiber art movement. But their joint redefinition did not only occur through the visual language of the work. It also lay in the artistic and curatorial process.

Fig. 4. Installation view of *Experiments in Collaboration*, Sioux Indian Museum, Rapid City, SD, 1973. Personal papers and archives of Arthur Amiotte, Custer, SD

When Amiotte wrote the catalogue essay for *Experiments in Collaboration* a year later, his description of how his family approached the exhibition resembles that of their preparations for the giveaway:

> The creative process thus becomes a shared activity in day to day living as well as a unifying and concentrating of talents directed toward a composite whole. Such a process is not new to our people as this way has almost always been the pattern of much creative activity ranging in variety from acquiring the animals, birds, and vegetal materials from which hides, sinew, bone, horn and feathers are obtained to the actual designing and manufacturing of the finished items.[21]

Amiotte remembers sitting across the table from his aunt Rose Gibbons, deep in concentration as they both worked on *Beaded Elk Hide Robe* (fig. 5). They each beaded from one edge of the hide toward the other, occasionally rotating the work so that the subtle differences between their lanes of beads would blend. The front of the exhibition pamphlet lists all four family members as equal participants, but Amiotte was the spokesperson for the project. Sitting and sewing together, piecing fabric together, and beading together, they all contributed to bringing the exhibition into being. Amiotte collaborated with his grandmother and both aunts on larger compositions like *Transition Robe* (1972; fig. 6). In the wall hanging, an uneven red ellipse rises like a sun in a dark blue sky framed by bands of black, red, and yellow, reminiscent of a historic robe. Amiotte sketched the design while his grandmother or aunts—usually Gibbons—would piece and sew the fabric in the wall hanging. Lula Two Bonnets beaded the medallions on this wall hanging, while Amiotte wove the beaded strips. Christina Standing Bear Mesteth, an accomplished moccasin artist who had, in turn, taught each of them how to bead, likely sat nearby beading her own work.

Figs. 5, 6. Left: Arthur Amiotte and Rose Gibbons, *Beaded Elk Hide Robe*, 1973. Cloth with beaded and fringed Indian tanned buckskin, tin cones, and dyed horsehair, 59 x 50 in. Aktá Lakota Museum and Cultural Center, Chamberlain, SD, Elenita R. Brown Revocable Trust, 2018.07.3702; right: Arthur Amiotte and Rose Gibbons, *Transition Robe*, 1973. Wool cloth with beaded strip on buckskin, headed half rosettes, and ribbons, 55 x 74 in. Aktá Lakota Museum and Cultural Center, Chamberlain, SD, Elenita R. Brown Revocable Trust, 2018.07.3704

Within the context of the SIM, *Experiments in Collaboration* intervened in a long history of racialized, ethnographic collection and display. The museum began as the Pioneer Museum of the West River Historical Society in Rapid City, which opened with an exhibition of Lakȟóta and Dakȟóta art collected by Swedish settler John A. Anderson (1869–1948) in 1935. For nearly four decades, Anderson had run C. P. Jordan Mercantile, a trading post on the Rosebud Reservation. Newspaper articles about the opening of the museum describe Anderson's collection as full of "Indian curios" and "artifacts," positioning the objects, their makers, and their communities of origin in a disappearing, primitive past. Many of the works Anderson amassed in his collection were likely sold to him under duress—hours of labor and years of experience materialized in the beautiful beaded dresses, vests, and moccasins that the makers or receivers of these works traded for food, wool, and other supplies necessary for living. Others were given to him as expressions of friendship.[22] Either way, the cycle of generosity and exchange that imbued these belongings with life and vibrancy within their communities of origin ended with Anderson, who kept them for his own collection. Within the matrices of the collection, these belongings become objectified by what Carmen Robertson describes as "a Western art lens" that values "stasis and possession," which has become a nearly universal way of knowing art.[23] When treated as objects that can be kept in storage, hung on walls, or sold as investments, these belongings become ensnared in the colonial systems of collection that, historically, have kept them from returning home.

The exhibition cleared space for Lakȟóta aesthetics within this space by extending the principles of generosity and collaboration manifest in the giveaway into museum galleries. In the artist file on Amiotte at SIM, I came across the checklist for *Experiments in Collaboration*. Fifty-two objects, including moccasins, bags, shawls, and wall hangings, rounded out the exhibition.[24] Soft graphite pencil next to each entry lists either a price or "NFS" (not for sale). When the Indian Arts and Crafts Board took control of the SIM in 1954, the federal agency established the Tipi Shop to sell work by contemporary Native artists in the museum. As the SIM began exhibiting more and more work by contemporary artists during the 1960s and 1970s, the galleries became a commercial space as well. Historic belongings stayed in the collection. Contemporary work, however, could be sold. In *Experiments in Collaboration*, a pair of moccasins might go for $50, while a pipe bag would go for $125. None of the wall hangings have titles, but one whose dimensions match those of *Transition Robe* is listed at $400.

I asked Amiotte about the relationship between the giveaway and the exhibition, about the wall hangings in the exhibition that the museum bought and kept, and about the other works from the exhibition acquired by private collectors. He replied that the format of an exhibition is "a very white thing," very different from the giveaway. Whereas the giveaway facilitates the lives that art takes on through circulation as gifts, guests bought and paid for the work on display in the exhibition. Many of those works ended up in permanent collections in museums that exist to keep and preserve them. But although many of the artworks entered collections, those marked "NFS" returned home with the family to be used in ceremonies or given as gifts. The money the four of them made from the sale of the work allowed the household to continue to practice generosity and support their community. Despite all her contributions to the exhibition, Gibbons refused to take her portion of the money. Amiotte decided to buy her a new pickup truck to replace hers,

which was falling apart, instead.[25] The proceeds from the exhibition, then, flowed outward through the same ethic of generosity that had shaped it.

Working through Amiotte's slides at my desk in Philadelphia, the slow whir of my scanner gave me time for contemplation and curiosity. Throughout the process, I have held a lingering question: why would Amiotte and his relatives have wanted to extend an ethic of generosity and collaboration to include the SIM in the first place? Museums, at their core, are colonial institutions. When the Department of the Interior purchased Anderson's collection in 1938 with plans to move it to Washington, DC, newspapers reported that local white citizens lobbied for it to remain as a point of civic pride and tourist attraction.[26] But when the government tried to move the collection again in 1956, it was a Sičhą́ǧu Lakȟóta caretaker for the collection, Nellie Star Boy Menard (1910–2001), who ensured that it stayed in Lakȟóta homelands.[27] Throughout the history of the collection, there are instances of Lakȟóta stewardship that reflect Menard's own investment in keeping the works in the area. Even if they were removed from their communities of origin, these belongings could still be visited as long as they remained in Rapid City. As a child, Amiotte was one of those visitors. As an adult, he saw an opportunity when the museum began showing the work of contemporary Očhéthi Šakówiŋ artists in the 1960s and '70s. By using historic forms and materials in the wall hangings and other works Amiotte and his relatives displayed in *Experiments in Collaboration,* they rejected the idea that Native artists had to make paintings or fine sculpture to be considered modern.

Ultimately, I have started to think of *Experiments in Collaboration* as itself a form of visiting. Robertson describes how other contemporary beadwork artists have engaged with museum collections as a way of being present with "beadwork caught within the organizational structures that restrain relational ways of knowing."[28] When the wall hangings and new beadwork made for *Experiments in Collaboration* entered the museum space, they had the opportunity to visit with the cultural belongings already constrained within the institutional walls. Those works marked "NFS" were able to leave again, bringing stories about the relatives they saw inside out into the world beyond the galleries' confines. Many were likely given away, while Amiotte himself continued to wear one of the robes made for the exhibition at ceremonies for decades afterward. The SIM acquired a number of wall hangings made solely by Amiotte, but only one of the collaborative works he made with his relatives. After the exhibition, he took many of the wall hangings home with him, where they remained in storage until Amiotte's friend and mentor, religious studies scholar John Epes Brown (1920–2000), purchased them. After Brown passed away, his family donated many of the wall hangings to the Aktá Lakota Museum and Cultural Center in Chamberlain, South Dakota.

My work with Amiotte has been categorically different from the sustained work he completed with his relatives, but Amiotte's experiments in collaboration continue into the present through his generosity. A dissertation—understood as the foundation of art-historical scholarship—usually happens at the urgent pace of fellowship cycles, funding opportunities, and graduate contracts. Learning from Amiotte, I have also thought about what we need in order to think differently within that structure. *Experiments in Collaboration* shows how working through relationships requires space, time, and a responsibility to others. I worked in reciprocity when I digitized slides both for my research and to help Amiotte with his own archive. I have made myself accountable to

him by sharing my work with him before I published it. My relationship with Amiotte will not end with my dissertation defense or the publication of a book. Red River Métis/Michif scholar Max Liboiron describes methodology as an "ethic" or "a way of being in the world."[29] These relational acts usually live outside the defined structure of academic research, but I wonder if thinking critically about methodology as ethic could become an expected part of art-historical research.

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Notes

The phrase "made to be given," used in the title of this essay, comes from Ella Deloria's (Iháŋkt̆huŋwaŋ Dakt̆hóta) *Speaking of Indians* (1944) and was quoted by Arthur Amiotte in D. M. Dooling and Arthur Amiotte, "Giveaway for the Gods: An Interview with Arthur Amiotte," *Parabola* 15, no. 4 (1990): 40.

[1] The *huŋká* ceremony was performed to recognize "children-beloved" in Očhéthi Šakówiŋ communities, who would be expected to uphold principles of generosity throughout their lives. See Ella Cara Deloria, *Speaking of Indians* (University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 45–48.

[2] Deloria, *Speaking of Indians*, 50.

[3] Dooling and Amiotte, "Giveaway for the Gods," 41.

[4] Carmen Robertson, Judy Anderson, and Katherine Boyer, eds., *Bead Talk: Indigenous Knowledge and Aesthetics from the Flatlands* (University of Manitoba Press, 2024); and Sherry Farrell Racette, "Kitchen Tables and Beads: Space and Gesture in Contemplative and Creative Research," in *The Routledge Companion to Indigenous Art Histories in the United States and Canada*, ed. Heather Igloliorte and Carla Taunton (Routledge, 2022).

[5] Robertson, Anderson, and Boyer, *Bead Talk*, x.

[6] Kathleen Absolon (Anishinaabekwe from Flying Post First Nation) differentiates between conversations as relational and interviews as extractive forms of knowledge production, in *Kaandossiwin: How We Come to Know; Indigenous Re-Search Methodologies*, 2nd ed. (Fernwood, 2022), 132.

[7] Arthur Amiotte, oral history interview with Mija Riedel, August 18–19, 2010, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

[8] Native artists and educators have always cleared their own paths through colonial institutions in order to both teach and learn fine art. See Elizabeth Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze: Primitivism, Modernism, and Transculturation in American Art, 1890–1915* (Duke University Press, 2009); Bill Anthes, *Native Moderns American Indian Painting, 1940–1960* (Duke University Press, 2008); and Jennifer McLerran, *A New Deal for Native Art: Indian Arts and Federal Policy, 1933–1943* (University of Arizona Press, 2009).

[9] Jenni Sorkin, *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community* (University of Chicago Press, 2016); Elissa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010); T'ai Smith, "The Problem with Craft," *Art Journal* 75, no. 1 (2016): 80–84; and Edward S. Cooke Jr., "Modern Craft and the American Experience," *American Art* 21, no. 1 (2007): 2–9.

[10] Shawn Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Fernwood, 2008), 33–34.

[11] Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*, 73.

[12] Kirsten Pai Buick, *Child of the Fire: Mary Edmonia Lewis and the Problem of Art History's Black and Indian Subject* (Duke University Press, 2013), 213.

[13] Kim TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," *Journal of Research Practice* 10, no. 2 (2014): 2.

[14] Amiotte's great-grandfather Matȟó Nážiŋ fought in the Battle of the Greasy Grass (Battle of the Little Big Horn), traveled throughout Europe with Buffalo Bill, and drew historical narrative scenes on muslin that are now in many museum collections. While touring Europe, he married an Austrian woman named Louise Rieneck (1865–1933). Their daughter, Amiotte's grandmother, was Christina Standing Bear Mesteth, widely known as a beadwork artist, culture bearer, and bundle keeper.

[15] Arthur Amiotte, conversation with the author, May 23, 2023.

[16] Dooling and Amiotte, "Giveaway for the Gods," 43.

[17] Ramey Mize notes that many Lakȟóta artists began using muslin received as payment through annuities when making painted *ózaŋ* after the Medicine Lodge Treaty (1867) and Fort Laramie Treaty (1868), in "Hearing Witness: The Wičhówoyake of Matȟó Nážiŋ's Little Bighorn Muslins," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 57 (December 2022): 85–105. See also Nancy B. Rosoff and Susan Kennedy Zeller, eds., *Tipi: Heritage of the Great Plains* (University of Washington Press, in association with the Brooklyn Museum, 2015).

[18] Mize, "Hearing Witness," 96.

[19] Arthur Amiotte, oral history interview with Julia Hamer-Light, June 16, 2024, Custer, South Dakota.

[20] Arthur Amiotte, ed., *Experiments in Collaboration: An Exhibition* (US Department of the Interior, Sioux Indian Museum and Crafts Center, 1973, n.p.

[21] Amiotte, *Experiments in Collaboration*, n.p.

[22] "John Anderson's Hobby Develops into Full-Time Job as Museum Custodian," *Rapid City Journal,* April 8, 1938, clipping in Early West River Historical Society Papers, Black Hills Historical Society, Rapid City, SD [hereafter Black Hills Historical Society].

[23] Carmen Robertson, "Beading Back and Forth: Upending Temporality through Knowledge Transmission," *21: Inquiries into Art, History, and the Visual* 5, no. 1 (2024): 51.

[24] Checklist for *Experiments in Collaboration*, 1973, artist file for Arthur Amiotte, Sioux Indian Museum, Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Department of the Interior, Rapid City, SD.

[25] Amiotte, conversation with the author, May 23, 2023.

[26] "S.D. Will Retain Sioux Collection," November 7, 1938, clipping, Black Hills Historical Society.

[27] "Pioneer Relics To Be Housed At Halley Park Museum—Open May 13," *Rapid City Journal*, May 6, 1956, clipping, Black Hills Historical Society.

[28] Robertson, "Beading Back and Forth," 54.

[29] Max Liboiron, *Pollution Is Colonialism* (Duke University Press, 2021), 36.