



CULTURES ON THE EDGE

PHOTOGRAPHERS CHRIS RAINIER, PHIL BORGES,
WADE DAVIS, CAROL BECKWITH AND ANGELA FISHER

PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY
AND THE RALLS COLLECTION

The mission of the National Geographic initiative “Caravan: An Exploration & Celebration of Cultures” is to ensure the continuation and vitality of the “Ethnosphere” — the sum total of the earth's cultural, spiritual, and lingual heritage.

The five ethnographic photographers represented in the exhibition at the United Nations are all joined by their commitment to documenting cultures for the National Geographic Society.

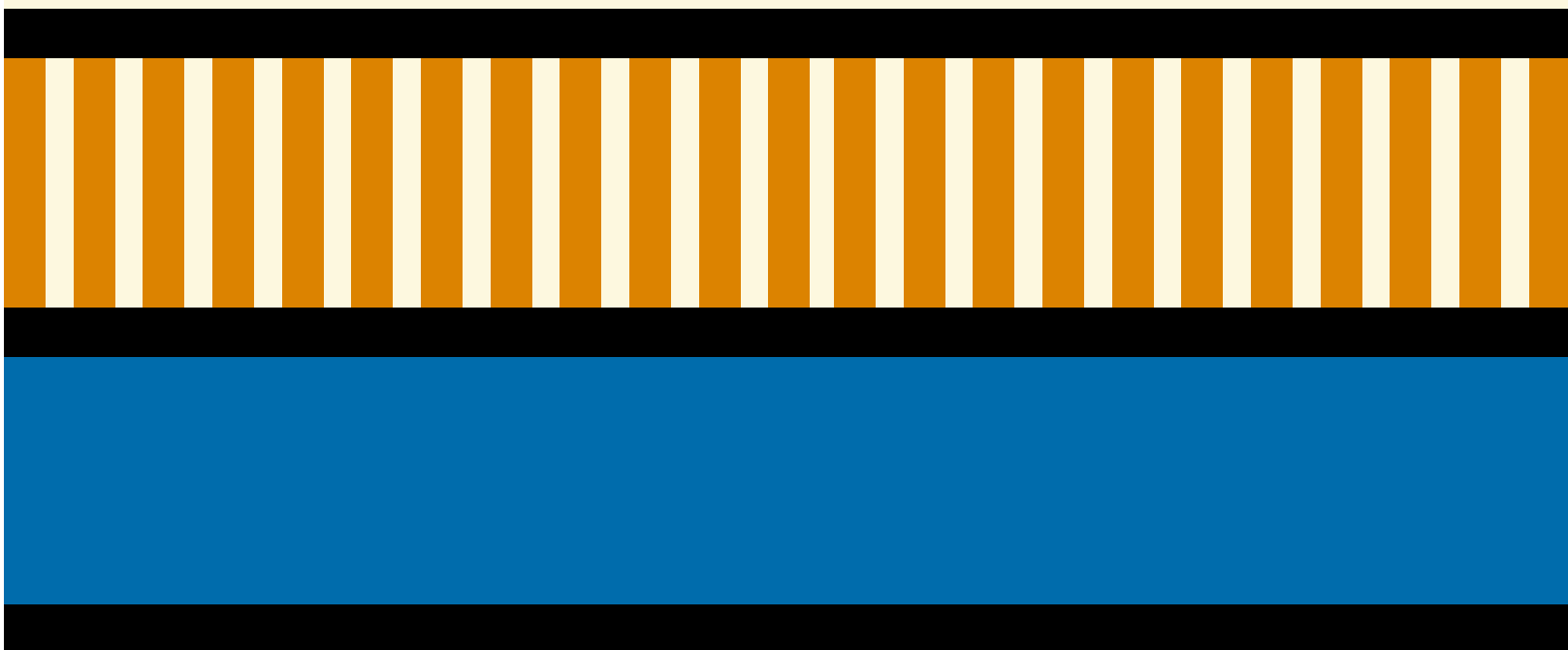
Their photography represents cultures from North America, the Artic Circle, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, Namibia and the Sahara.

Each of the participants has published numerous books, including: “African Ceremonies” by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher; “Enduring Spirit” by Phil Borges; “Where Masks Still Dance” by Chris Rainier; and “The Serpent and the Rainbow” by Wade Davis.

For more information contact:

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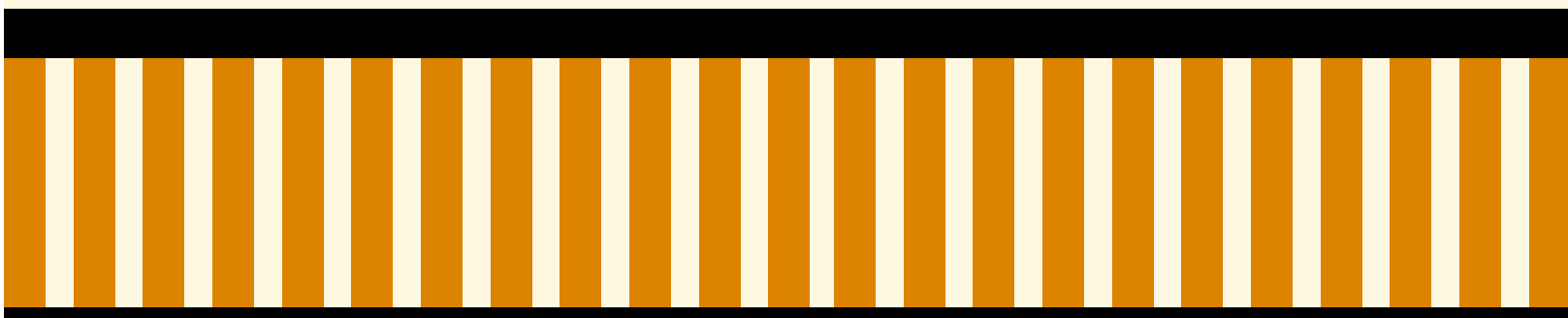


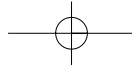
THE AMAZON BASIN IN BRAZIL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANO FAGUNDES

The portraits on this wall were taken in January 2003 of the Kayapo-Mekragnoti (Mentuktire) Tribe, also known as Txukarramae. The tribe and its 335 inhabitants are located in the northern region of the Xingu National Park in the lower Amazon basin in Brazil. The Txukarramae were first contacted by Orlando and Claudio Villas-Boas in 1953 — the tenth year of the Roncador-Xingu expedition to the center of Brazil. The two explorers journeyed from the western and eastern ends of the Amazon and met in the middle of the continent, just south of the Von Martius Waterfalls in the Xingu River.

The Xingu National Park was created in 1961 with help from the Villas-Boas brothers, with the intention to save the tribes from the inevitable expansion of other societies into the Amazon region. With an area of 2.8 million hectares, the Amazon is still the biggest indigenous reservation in the world today, and it is home to over a dozen different tribes. These images are a part of a seven-year study by Brazilian photographer Adriano Fagundes who is documenting the people of the Amazon — from the source of the river on the western slopes of Mount Mismi in Peru, over 5000 kilometers eastward to the Atlantic Ocean.





LEAGUE OF THE FIVE NATIONS WAMPUM

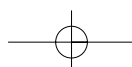
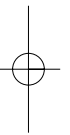
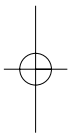


This is a replica of a record of the foundation of the Iroquois Confederacy when the Peacemaker formed it. Each of the 50 strings represents one of the chiefs of the original Five Nations: the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and the Mohawks. When the Confederacy was formed, it was stated that all should be of equal rank and carry individual titles. So they should never forget their titles and positions in council this wampum record was made.

“The Five Nations Confederacy shall in the future have One Body, One Mind, and One Heart. If any evil should befall them in the future, they shall stand or fall united as one man?”

The Confederacy chiefs are symbolized as trees of the Five Confederate Nations. They are united together standing with joined hands forming a circle so strong that if a Tree should fall it will rest upon the shoulders of the entire union. It can neither separate nor weaken the circle. So the strength of the union is preserved.

Thus, our people, and the faces yet to come shall remain under the protection of the circle in security, peace, and happiness.





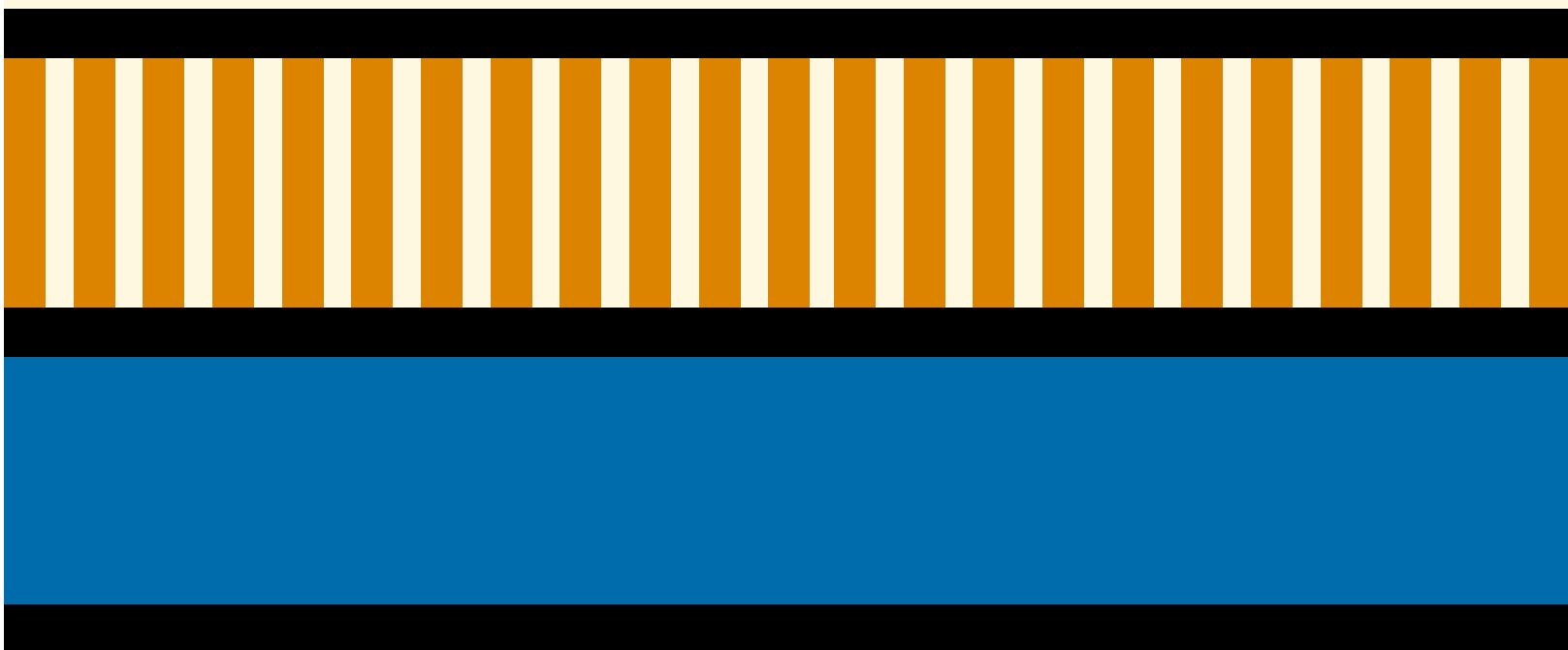
IROQUOIS NATION CANADA

LORNA THOMAS-HILL AND SAMUEL THOMAS

Lorna Thomas-Hill and Samuel Thomas are a mother and son collaboration team. They are enrolled members of the Lower Cayuga Band of the Iroquois Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve, Canada. Over the past 26 years, they have presented lectures, demonstrations, and taught workshops in museums and universities across the United States and Canada. They have been active in the ongoing research, revitalization, and continuance of Iroquois embossed (three-dimensional) beadwork.

Of the more than 850 Indigenous Nations in North America, this technique is exclusive to the Iroquois Peoples. Lorna and Sam approach their work incorporating both traditional Iroquois design and symbolism and traditional Iroquoian teachings. Their works are in museums and galleries around the world and they have produced pieces for both stage and film.

For more information, please contact Samuel Thomas at:
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RAPANUI EASTER ISLAND

SANTI HITORANGI, SCULPTOR

Santi Hitorangi is a native of Rapanui (Easter Island), located in the South Pacific roughly 3000 miles west of the South American mainland. He is a descendent of Haumoana and Tupahotu families, the ancient Rapanui sculptors, who carved and moved the monolith, Moai.

Santi's art — sculptures, paintings, music and body painting — are extensions of his culture. He incorporates symbols and traditions of Rapanui, and combines them with his own inspiration and imagination shaped by the times in which we live.


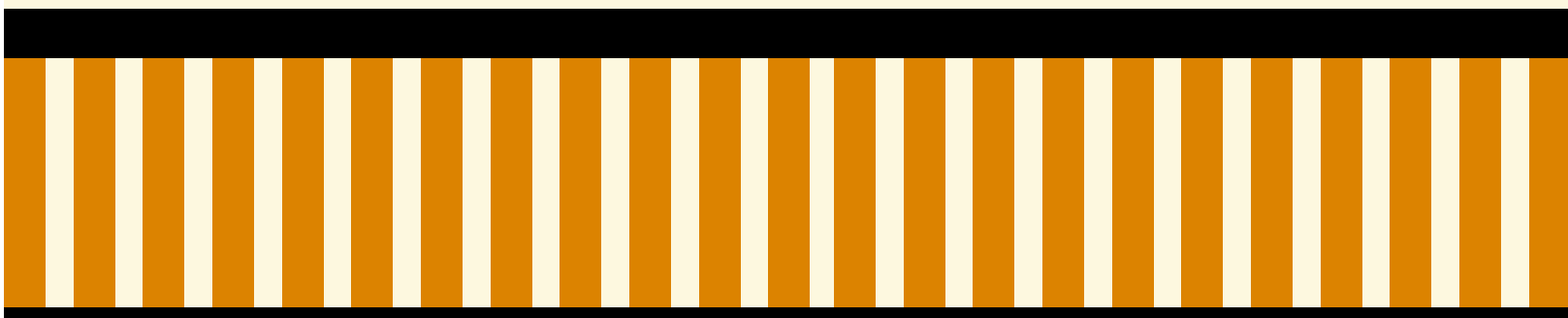
In April 2004 Santi wrote an article which examines how the mistranslation of important documents has led to misunderstanding between the government of Chile and the Rapanui Parliament regarding the inherent rights of the indigenous people of Rapanui to their land.

The article was published by Taylor & Francis for the International Journal for Intercultural Studies, Vol. 25 No.1, London.

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WHARE WHAKAARO HOUSE OF THOUGHT

GEORGE NUKU, MAORI ARTIST, NEW ZEALAND

In Maori terms, the House is metaphor for the cosmos. It contains the entire philosophical narrative of a Maori view of existence. The arms of the house speak of the beginning of the world from the dark to the light. The Tahuhu (ridge pole) explains the union between the primal parents. The Poutoko (pillars) symbolize the gods and ancestors and are used to separate heaven and earth. The Whakapakoko (human image) represents the final stage of the life and death aspect of us, Te ira tangata (human aspect).

George Nuku is a Maori artist working in stone, bone, wood, shell and polystyrene. His works range from delicate jade and pearl amulets, stone sculptures of Polynesian demi-gods and Maori cultural heroes from life-size scale and up to two stories tall. George carries the tradition of his people handed down for thousands of years in an artform that promises to expand life and enhance survival.

For more information please contact the artist:

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