



**Bandolier for Tenagàdinozìbi (The River that Stops One's Journey)
Gatineau River**

mixed media, 2022

45 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 5 1/2 in, 115.6 x 29.2 x 14 cm

Three rivers meet at the provincial border of Québec and Ontario, also the area surrounding the municipalities of Ottawa, on the Ontario side, and Gatineau on the Québec. The largest is the *Kichi-Sibi* (Ottawa River) which, in the Algonquin dialect of Anishinaabemowin, means the great or big river. The *Pasapedjinawong* (Rideau River) enters into the *Kichi-Sibi* at the north east end of Ottawa. Here the rivers converge with the roar of two sets of falls. Within walking distance is the French Embassy and 24 Sussex, the official residence of Canadian Prime Ministers. Both structures sit atop the rocky cliffs that are characteristic of where the land meets the water on the Ottawa side.

On the south east end of Gatineau, the edge conditions are softer. Here the *Tenàgàdinozibi* (Gatineau River) slips into the *Kichi-Sibi* with less spectacle - hushed lapping on sandy shorelines covered in low brush. Smaller tributaries branch out with forests buffering the roadway infrastructure from the shore even concealing from some perspectives the colonial architecture of Pointe-à-Gatineau, the settlement on the east side of the bridge that spans the mouth of the *Tenàgàdinozibi*. The contrasts provide ways to read the landscape, one marked by a turbulent Colonial history, allegorically.

The bandolier bag is one of three by Barry Ace that honours the rivers of this confluence and include, along with *Bandolier for Tenagàdinozibi (The River that Stops One's Journey) (Gatineau River)*, *Bandolier for Gichi-zibi (Big River)* (Private Collection), and *Pasapkedjinawong (The river that passes between the rocks) (Rideau River)*. Each contains an embedded digital tablet that is activated by a motion detector upon approach. The digital device conveys the concept of animism as in Anishinaabemowin a bandolier bag - *gashkibidaagan* - is understood as an animate object, one in relationship with those who encounter it. When each is activated a video recording of the river being honoured is displayed. For the *Tenagàdinozibi*, Ace has recorded a location upstream, rapids where the water rushes over rock, gaining momentum in the final moments of its journey to reach the greater flow of the *Kichi-Sibi*.

The *ziibaaska'iganan* (jingles) that dangle from the bottom reference Jingle Dress Dance regalia worn by women at traditional gatherings. When the dancer moves, the jingles replicate the auditory experience of hearing water, a sound that is understood as healing, restoring equilibrium to the one's spirit. Telecommunication wires stream out from behind them. Other materials used in regalia - black velvet, bias edging and calico - are integrated into the design. The embellishment - capacitors, resistors and light-emitting diodes - references the medicinal flowers used in the curvilinear beadwork of the Anishinaabeg, motifs also used on regalia.

The titles on all the works foreground the Algonquin dialect of Anishinaabemowin and the names they gave each river - *zibi* (also *sibi* or *sipi*). With European settlement, Ace states, "The colonial names that supersede and disregard the original names do not come close to the descriptive quality of the rivers." In the soft sand of the *Tenàgàdinozibi* shoreline, a resting place is found.

Excerpt - Encoding Culture 2 Catalogue.