

LEE CLAREMONT

Daughters of the Moon

Lee Claremont's paintings reflect her love of colour and its emotional power and healing abilities. There is a sense of lightness and happiness in these paintings, which hold deep meaning and complexities.

Acquired by the Woodstock Art Gallery in 2021 through the assistance of the Art Acquisition Fund, City of Woodstock, these two paintings are part of Claremont's recent body of work, *Daughters of the Moon*, which features female figures in the artist's recognized vibrant colours, adorned in beautifully painted textiles. These women represent the strength and spirituality of Indigenous peoples, and each woman is telling a story of their ancestors.

The Ancestors and *The Grandmothers* both reference the Elders in the Indigenous community who are held in high esteem; the women who are committed to sharing their wisdom and consulted on important issues that affect the community. These paintings are a tribute to these women, their knowledge, and their commitments to their communities.

Vibrant and celebratory, these paintings also hold significant symbolism. The green turtle representing Mother Earth (Turtle Island)—an integral part of the Mohawk creation story—as well as the red hand can be found in the painting *The Ancestors*. The hand is a symbol for healing, but it is also presented as a symbol of solidarity with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and honours the tragedy of the children whose remains have been found at residential schools. While Claremont's paintings reflect the beauty and traditions of Indigenous culture, they also reference the past and current struggles and political issues that Indigenous communities are faced with.

Lee Claremont was born of Mohawk and Irish ancestry in Woodstock, Ontario, and is a member of the Six Nations, Oshweken, Ontario. She now resides in the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia.

Lee Claremont, Mohawk/Irish, b. 1945

(right) *The Grandmothers*; (left) *The Ancestors*

2021

acrylic on canvas

Purchased with the assistance of the Art Acquisition Fund, City of Woodstock

Woodstock Art Gallery Permanent Collection