

Celebration of Pauline Johnson

Tekahionwake: A Legacy of Poetry and Activism

Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake was a Canadian poet, performer, and activist who lived from 1861 to 1913. She was a prominent figure in the literary and cultural landscape of Canada, and her work continues to be celebrated today. This article will explore her life, work, and enduring impact on Canadian literature and Indigenous rights.

Early Life and Influences

Pauline Johnson was born in Chiefswood, Six Nations of the Grand River, on the Mohawk territory in Ontario, Canada. Her father was a Mohawk hereditary chief, and her mother was an English immigrant. Johnson was raised in a bicultural environment, and her upbringing had a profound influence on her work and identity.



Buckskin and Broadcloth: A Celebration of E. Pauline Johnson — Tekahionwake, 1861-1913

by Sheila M.F. Johnston

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Johnson's early influences included the Mohawk oral tradition, as well as the works of English Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. She began writing poetry at a young age, and her first published poem appeared in a local newspaper when she was just 15 years old.

Literary Career

Johnson's literary career began in earnest in the early 1880s. She published her first collection of poetry, "The White Wampum," in 1895, which was a critical and commercial success. Johnson's poetry was praised for its lyrical beauty, its vivid descriptions of nature, and its exploration of Indigenous culture and identity.

In addition to her poetry, Johnson also wrote short stories, essays, and plays. She was a versatile writer who explored a wide range of themes in her work, including love, loss, nature, and social justice. Johnson's writing helped to raise awareness of Indigenous issues and to challenge prevailing stereotypes about Indigenous peoples.

Performance Career

In addition to her writing career, Johnson was also a successful performer. She began performing her poetry in public in the 1890s, and she quickly gained a reputation as a charismatic and engaging speaker. Johnson's performances were often accompanied by traditional Mohawk music and dance, and they helped to introduce Indigenous culture to a wider audience.

Johnson's performance career took her across North America and Europe. She performed at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York

City and the Lyceum Theatre in London. Johnson's performances were met with great acclaim, and she helped to break down barriers between Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences.

Activism and Advocacy

Johnson was a passionate advocate for Indigenous rights. She used her platform as a writer and performer to speak out against the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. Johnson's activism was rooted in her deep love and respect for her Mohawk heritage. She believed that Indigenous peoples had the right to self-determination and that their unique cultures and traditions should be respected.

Johnson's activism took many forms. She gave speeches, wrote articles, and lobbied politicians. She also worked with Indigenous organizations to promote Indigenous rights and to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples.

Legacy and Impact

Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake's legacy is vast and enduring. She was a pioneering Indigenous writer and performer who helped to change the face of Canadian literature and culture. Johnson's work helped to raise awareness of Indigenous issues and to challenge prevailing stereotypes about Indigenous peoples.

Johnson's legacy continues to inspire Indigenous writers and activists today. Her work has been translated into many languages, and her plays, poems, and stories are still widely read and performed. Johnson's life and work remind us of the importance of voice, representation, and activism.

Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake was a remarkable woman who left a lasting mark on Canadian literature and culture. Her work as a poet, performer, and activist helped to bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Johnson's legacy is one of courage, creativity, and compassion, and her work continues to inspire and challenge us today.

Image Descriptions



**EMILY PAULINE
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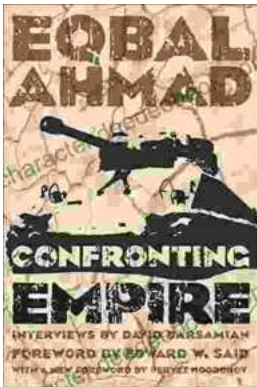
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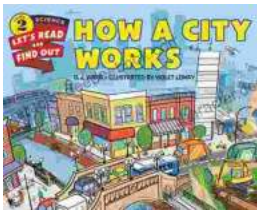
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