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*Archives of American Art*

## **The Woman's Building Records, "Artists Who are Mothers," 1988-1989**

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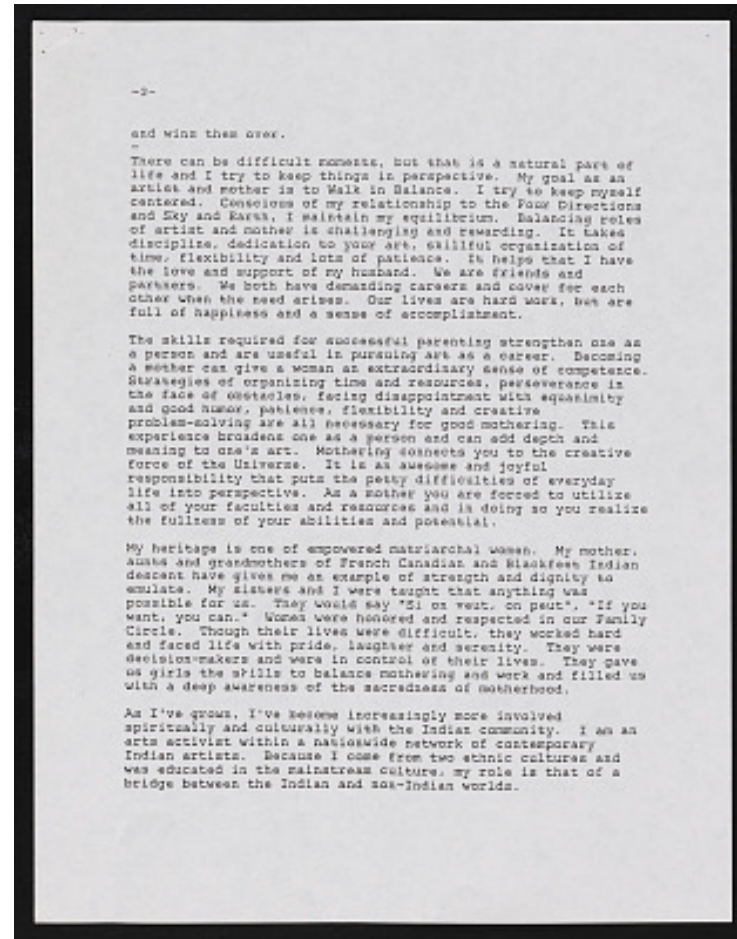
and wins them over.

There can be difficult moments, but that is a natural part of life and I try to keep things in perspective. My goal as an artist and mother is to Walk in Balance. I try to keep myself centered. Conscious of my relationship to the Four Directions and Sky and Earth, I maintain my equilibrium. Balancing roles of artist and mother is challenging and rewarding. It takes discipline, dedication to your art, skillful organization of time, flexibility and lots of patience. It helps that I have the love and support of my husband. We are friends and partners. We both have demanding careers and cover for each other when the need arises. Our lives are hard work, but are full of happiness and a sense of accomplishment.

The skills required for successful parenting strengthen one as a person and are useful in pursuing art as a career. Becoming a mother can give a woman an extraordinary sense of competence. Strategies of organizing time and resources, perseverance in the face of obstacles, facing disappointment with equanimity and good humor, patience, flexibility and creative problem-solving are all necessary for good mothering. This experience broadens one as a person and can add depth and meaning to one's art. Mothering connects you to the creative force of the Universe. It is an awesome and joyful responsibility that puts the petty difficulties of everyday life into perspective. As a mother you are forced to utilize all of your faculties and resources and in doing so you realize the fullness of your abilities and potential.

My heritage is one of empowered matriarchal women. My mother, aunts and grandmothers of French Canadian and Blackfeet Indian descent have given me an example of strength and dignity to emulate. My sisters and I were taught that anything was possible for us. They would say "Si on veut, on peut", "If you want, you can." Women were honored and respected in our Family Circle. Though their lives were difficult, they worked hard and faced life with pride, laughter and serenity. They were decision-makers and were in control of their lives. They gave us girls the skills to balance mothering and work and filled us with a deep awareness of the sacredness of motherhood.

As I've grown, I've become increasingly more involved spiritually and culturally with the Indian community. I am an arts activist within a nationwide network of contemporary Indian artists. Because I come from two ethnic cultures and was educated in the mainstream culture, my role is that of a bridge between the Indian and non-Indian worlds.



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