

Shelley Niro
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Tree pays homage to the “Keep America Beautiful” campaign showing on television across the continent in the early 1970s. Iron Eyes Cody appeared as the stereotypical Indian as he looks around the environment and sees that the landscape is no longer being cared for and that there is little respect for it. He cries one big tear. Even though Iron Eyes isn’t Native and the campaign played on the “stoic representation,” I feel this is a representation we can look at as a role model. Caring for Mother Earth should be our biggest concern at the moment.

Shelley Niro was born in Niagara Falls, New York, and is a member of the Turtle Clan of the Mohawk. She grew up on the Six Nations Reserve and is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art, where she received an Honors Fine Arts degree in painting and sculpture. Niro began working in video several years ago and her first film, It Starts With a Whisper, co-directed with Anna Gronau, has screened around the world. Storytelling through film and installation art, Shelley creates roles for Native women that give them a voice of strength and community. She has exhibited widely and her work often addresses questions of identity and how it is constructed by the self and others. She has recently completed an MFA at the University of Western Ontario and currently lives in Brantford, Ontario.



PHOTO: HULLEAH TSINHNAHIJINNIE