Images of the painting that Emily Carr (Klee Wyck) talks about:

Big Raven

1. Head of the Raven is slightly upward which indicates pride, optimism, hope, pride
2. Dark sky but light coming through
3. It is held on the ground by grass
4. Light Vs. Dark: Light represents hope, affirmation, knowledge,
5. Big Raven – Celebrating Raven (At a time when everything is in transition regarding the Native economic, cultural aspects during colonialization). This is Carr’s celebration of the central symbol of the natives. In Western culture, it may be a cross. Carr altered how she perceives the world. She is trying to do her best to see as a native – towering figure of a Raven.
6. The grass, the ground is in motion. Nature is moving. Nature in the western world, for the most part, is seen as an object we can relate to – like a thing. i.e. Clear-cutting is totally normal and we can do whatever we want b/c it was given to us by god. Nature is alive, has spirit, is in process, and therefore we have a relationship to nature which is not as a thing but as a another subjectivity. We have a subject relationship. As opposed to a subject-object relationship. The colonial attitude toward was at opposite ends on the theological scale. We think that we can do whatever we want to nature and not have any consequences. i.e. Global warming. Nature is another subjectivity that we have to respond to, in the same manner we respond to other people – with respect. Natives did not blaze trail or mark trails. Instead, they made it so that the tree grew at an angle by tying the spruce. The natives are not damaging the tree. More importantly, they are not damaging another being, another spirit.
7. Carr is doing her best to see the world differently. She is doing this by seeing nature differently and treating it with respect.

Above The Gravel Pit

1. Influenced by Van Gogh
2. The motion across the sky is blurred, and flowing
3. Forests in Canada have been clear-cutted beyond measure. Fly over BC, and you’ll see a lack of trees
4. Clear-cutting is way more profitable than any other method

The Crying Totem

1. Why is she so involved in finding and discovering totem poles?
2. Totem poles are a critical, religious, tribal, relationship, and historical symbol for the Natives. They were seen as living beings. In this picture, she sees the totem pole crying. The totem pole is crying because it knows of the attempts people are making to erase it

Cumshewa

1. Raven towering above everything – sense of hope, optimum, future being threatened
2. Carr’s saying look at what you have attempted to destroy

Forest: British Columba

1. Lack of light
2. Everything is flying into each other which shows collaboration
3. It is inviting – “you gotta come in, and be ready to go down that path to question our relationship to the natural world”
4. Very unusual painting
5. Carr is opposed to cutting trees down. Carr is against the colonial project

Guyasdoms D’Sonoqua

1. Importance of femininity, maternal power
2. Difference between matriarchal, and patriarchal power
3. As seen in her autobiography

Indian Church

1. Western view of religion, and travel religion
2. The simple church is infront of the natural world. The church takes precedence over nature.
3. Church is associated with death
4. Linearity: Everything is defined and clear as opposed to flowing and moving.
5. Above the church you can see a face hiding in the trees

Old Time Coast Village

1. Tension between two beings: Nature and village at the bottom
2. Linearity: Bottom part (fields) are linear
3. Profile of a man’s face on the left side of the image.
4. Bow of a canoe is almost out of the frame. Symbolizes how it’s under attack but we don’t pay much attention to it.
5. Trees sway at an angle and look down at the fields as if they don’t want them here

Totem Mother

1. Mother and child paintings are very common works of art in the western world
2. Carr puts emphasis on maternity, love, caring, etc. outside of the western convention
3. Promotes thought provoking questions about our own culture and customs

Totem Walk Sitka

1. Path is marked by totem poles

Tree Trunk

1. Sense of motion, nature is alive
2. Small thing but changes a whole perspective

Wood Interior

1. Light shining into the forest
2. Trees sway at an angle

Skidan: The text puts lots of emphasis on growing, being alive, things replicating themselves. Once you can see nature this way, you can see the world more clearly.

Ucluelet: The word “Toxis” is awfully close to “Toxic”. Once you have lost your language, you have lost your contact with history and culture. The mission house has replaced and erased the original language that defines peoples history and language. Carr is concerned about the loss of language. If you erase the language, you erase what the language brought to bear on peoples lives. When kids were brought to residential schools, they were forced to speak English and told to not speak any native language. Once the language, the culture is erased along with it. Carr wants us to think about what happens when the colonial project sets its sight upon language.

In the second paragraph, Emily Carr is painting with words – “stuffed with black” – she is using language symbolically. In Carr’s paintings, light is associated with optimism, relief, and pleasure. Light is used to illuminate objects. Emily Carr is making a political comment. When reading the text, keep an eye out of political points

p.34: She is observing a process that is part of colonial project which was essential. The A, B,C on the blackboard is a fundamental aspect of a colonial project. Carr understood what it meant when you erased one literacy for another literacy. People were forced to speak English. These people lost their ability to speak their native language and lost their culture in the process. Carr gives us a drama; children starting squirming out – as if they resist.

Residential Training School picture: The children look unhappy/sad. They are wearing a uniform, seem uncomfortable, and they all have a western hairstyle. As soon as kids were enrolled in residential schools, there hair was immediately cut off and styled to a western look.

Majestic Post Card

1. The RCMP and Indian are shaking hands which is a western tradition.
2. Canada did not have a glorious past as the post card claims. This post card has no actuality of the relationship between Canada and the natives. This post card is a marketing scheme.
3. Northwest police were formed to control and oppress the Indians

Father’s of Confederation

1. Indian (he or she) would like a place on the confederate table too. None of the FoC are native. They’re all white dudes.
2. Indian portrait is not in binary (both genders, androgynous, etc.)

Another picture of an androgynous person

Gitxsan Carrier Declaration

“We have governed ourselves” – The governing being talked about is the land and themselves. They are governing themselves by restricting themselves from hurting the land. This governs the land as well. There is a distinction between governing yourself from the inside and governing the outside. The Native people can govern themselves and they do not need anyone else to tell them how to act. They don’t need the Indian Act, or Ottawa to tell them what to do. The Native can govern themselves and have done it successfully. This has lead to conservation and preservation of the land, water, and animals. The totems were banned because of the deep history of the people it symbolizes and holds. The culture was trying to be erased by the law makers. These law makers even banned potlatch. This was done to strip the Indians of their identity. In particular, potlatch was banned, because it is a troubling of profit and capitalism. This is another step in erasing the identity of the Natives.

Camp Miakonda

1. The words are hyphenated so you know how to pronounce it. i.e. MI-A-KON-DA. The word is fabricated to imitate the sound of the indigenous
2. “When you are at camp... you are yourself”
3. Five white girls peeking out from a tent
4. Why was it so important to send little white kids to Indian camps?
5. How do you emulate a native world? It is out of sync, since girl guide value is pushed towards. This is a marketing strategy. The ad says it is paying respect but it isn’t paying anything. This is another money-making scheme used to show a positive relationship between indigenous people and colonials. This ad is trying to get kids to act as “Indians” who haven’t got a clue about indigenous cultures. It is a reconstructed history of the indigenous culture.
6. The relationship between indigenous and colonials is fabricated as positive. Similar to the RCMP shaking hands with the colorful Indian chief.
7. Ad was posted in July 2015

p.32: I felt so young and empty standing there before the Indians and the two grave Missionaries.

1. The message is that right is dextrous and left is sinister

32 – “After breakfast came a long pres…” – Carr refers to the tree as “it”. This is the subject-object relationship. Carr is the subject and the tree is the object. But after a couple pages, the tree is no longer an “it” and becomes a “he”. The tree begins to have life

Subject-object relationship (Carr and a tree when referred to as it)

38 – “The room was deathly still…” – The tree is defined as a pine tree and is referred to as “he”.

Subject-subject relationship (Carr and the pine tree when referred to as he)

Inch Canoe: Diminished the native culture and reduced it to bits. A canoe is over 20 feet long and is now less than 2 inches. White people had no idea how to navigate the lakes of Canada, until the Indians taught them. And then the white people took over the Indians after learning how to use a canoe.

“They have such silly notions”, said the Missionary.

These were not in the original version. It is a heavily politically charged comment. We interrogate our history and present reality of Canadian existence. It is a position – discounting almost anything that comes out of indigenous mouth. Drawing a picture of an old woman – negative to their identity and culture (believe that someone’s spirit can be trapped in the picture). In some parts of the world it is prohibited to take pictures in public because people get offended and feel judged. Somebody who believes in a non-rational way of belief system calling indigenous’ non-rational notions. By personifying the tree, she begins to see nature fro natives’ eyes (transition from it to he). In brackets the missionary says these barbaric views need to be civilized. The natives cannot join the white society or be a part of their own society. None of their beliefs are sacred anymore. Carr is making a comment that echoed for three generations. Spirituality is a part of the Indian’s beliefs. Carr is humanising the Indians. “Down deep we all hug something”. There is no distinction made between them and us. Everyone is the same because we all have an identity and something that we love. The missionaries’ way of looking at the world, hurts, degrades, and humiliates the Indians, and Carr will not have that. Carr is interrogating the missionaries’ views on the Indians. The Indians celebrated daily. The church and the school are seen as one building. It is a school, everyday, but Sundays. This is bad because it hurts the Indians and colonizes them. It takes away their identity. Tanook is a disruption and upsets not only the missionary but the woman as well. The pink print shoulder is one of the native’s woman who has been disrupted. The greater missionary pats the pink print shoulder for saying “disgusting old man”. The native woman dressed in western clothes who goes to church, she is critical to ensure that the colonial project is a success. The author’s edited some parts of the book out because western burial practices and native burial practices are different. The indigenous see a connection between the human being and the world outside. This connection goes beyond life. Carr wrote this text a rebellious text to ask people what political system are they operating in. The people who edited this, didn’t want us to think about the political implications of the colonial project.

Chapter Sophie

p.55: Baskets. I got baskets!

The basket symbols a womb; it holds a baby. This story is all about babies. Since babies represent the future, it’s about the future. Sophie is capable of producing children. The basket is a womb who produces children that end up dying. All 21 children die. Infant mortality rates of native were 20x higher than for non-indigenous. Sophie speaks broken English. This gives us the idea that Sophie is less educated than the Europeans. Sophie doesn’t even speak her native language and struggles to speak English which makes life very hard for her. It makes her seem intellectually limited. The colonials use language as a way of suppressing the Indians. Language is a bridge to all intellectual topics. Franks sees himself superior to Sophie because he speaks English better.

p.56: Danger of being “nice” is a part of being colonized (nice = not fighting back, and accept colonial project). There’s a big rumour of Indians being addicted to alcohol. However, Carr says let’s take a look at the power structure that made that behaviour more likely than it would have been.

p.64: “The little Indian ward had four beds”

The Indians had their own ward. This is apartheid. This is segregation based off of race. And the ward is very little. A hospital is huge but the Indians only get 2% of the entire hospital. Service is prolly shit too

p.65: “Thriving white babies”

One of Carr’s friends and her friend had no children because they all died. Did they die because of inadequate nutrition? Bad health care? Why did they die? Carr brought the native woman to the thriving white children. Those kids were able to live while the Indian kids died. This is white privilege and Carr is bragging about it. When you are the victim of power, you cannot be unjust. Niceness is deconstructive. It is not something Carr sees as a necessary response but as an unfortunate response.

“Greenville”

p.82: Emily Carr finds comfort in the Western organisation of time and nature (we lead our lives on date and time). Emily Carr is trying to adjust her perspective, but she falls back into her old ways. She understands what the colonial project is (about imposing the way of living to others). She identifies herself as a Victorian woman (needs to have a sense of place and time by the symbols of linearity – clock, and calendar.

p.85: The tree acts as a connectedness. It links things together. There is no judgement created, Carr just retells the story as she sees it. Emily enters her house by getting a fire started, clock working and puts up her calendar again. Emily Carr is learning. She finds her bearings, lets the clock run down, and acknowledges that her bearing no longer depends on the western background.

“Sailing To Yan”: It is about matriarchy and how women are competent

p.109: All the aspects of indigeounity are gone because the objects have been replaced by western articles. The items are pianos, organs, flute, harmonica (these are all western instruments). This is a life that has been cut off from the past. This family has been colonized. Their totem pole would not concur with their current lifestyle. Carr does not criticize but tells it how she sees it. However she gets a little objective when telling Mr. Green’s actions. “I will help you in being colonized. I will help you in buying and selling commercialised ways. Carr recognises what the problem is and understands it. She knows she is part of the problem.” ‘

p.112: There is a picture with three babies. Two of them never lived and one died. This is compared to the first story when drawing a picture of someone was a concern because of their soul being captured. “If the had lived and had inherited her strength and determination, they could have rocked the Queen Charlotte Islands”. This means that if the kids had lived and were strong as their mother, they would be able to rebel against the colonial project. However, these kids will never be rocked (by their mother), and will never be able to challenge the colonial project.

“Kitwancool”: Does not know where she is going. She is in the land of darkness. She is a white woman and does not get treated with respect. She finds totem poles to paint. At page 142 remember that Sophie does not speak her native language. One would think that given how Mrs. Douse is configured – maybe there is a hope and future to, by being connected to the culture and language. “Why did you come” – Why did you come here and interfere with our way of life. Emily responds back with she wants to paint the totem poles. It is interesting because the native asks, “What do you want our totem poles for”, instead of why do you wanna paint our poles for? It shows that Emily is an intruder in the way of life of the natives. The natives think Emily has malicious intents and wants to colonise the natives. Emily wants to paint the totem poles to preserve a little bit of the culture so future natives can admire and respect the. The young people will have access to them. Emily Carr is a fascinating person. She is helping in erasing the culture but wants to preserve it. Pg.147-148: “I told Aleck to ask if his mother would like to have me give her pictures of her poles. “If so, would send them through the Hudson’s Bay” – This is ironic because she asks Aleck if his mother would like to have Emily give her pictures of the poles. Emily can just give the picture. Instead she chooses to send the pictures through Hudson Bay. She is going to send back copies of the original, and not the original, and she is going to send them back as if she has power over them. She is going to send them back through the Hudson Bay Company, a company that was actively part of the colonial project. Emily Carr is asserting her power over the Indians. It’s as if she is saying that you can rebel against the colonial project, but you cannot avoid it. The colonial project cannot be fought forever and eventually you will give in to it.