



# THE "TWO SPIRIT" PROJECT

The Two Spirit people in pre-contact Native America were highly revered and families that included them were considered lucky.

Indians believed that a person who was able to see the world through the eyes of both genders at the same time was a gift from The Creator.

Ioannis Solomozis X Natalia Syrimis  
for La Maison Pierre Frey

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Vasilis Lagios



# THE CONCEPT

Following the Pierre Frey's "GRAND CANYON" collection: "The discovery of a New World, where Native Americans live in harmony with their environment and carry on a never-ending dialog with the spirit world. The Grand Canyon collection evokes this culture with enthusiasm and freshness of a tireless curiosity seeker."

"The New World." This romanticized term inspired legions of Europeans to race to the place where Native Americans live in search of freedom from oppressive regimes or treasures that would be claimed in the name of some European nation.

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## THE "TWO SPIRIT" PROJECT

The tale of a tribe; A gift from the Creator, born with the spirits of both genders in one body.

Traditionally, Two Spirit people were considered lucky and fearless. They held positions within their tribes that gave them great respect, such as Medicine Men-Women, shamans, visionaries, mystics, conjurers, keepers of the tribe's oral traditions, nurses during war expeditions, cooks, matchmakers and marriage counselors, jewelry-feather regalia makers, potters, weavers, singers and artists as well as adopting orphaned children and tending the elderly.

Europeans who arrived in the Native American Garden of Eden in the mid of 15th century witnessed for the first time a land so uncorrupted. In keeping with European prejudices held against Natives, the Spanish Catholic monks destroyed most of the Aztec codices to eradicate traditional Native beliefs and history. The first tradition they targeted to eliminate was the one of the Two Spirit people, since their kind of gender variance was not tolerated. Europeans and eventually Euro-Americans demanded all people to conform to their prescribed two gender roles.

In this project setting, our first priority was to emphasize the importance of being able to see the world through the eyes of both genders at the same time and considering the necessity of respecting diversity -as a prior value- and honoring the ethics and traditions of native Americans, we decided to revive various objects of their everyday life related to their way of living, norms and beliefs.

3 THE CONCEPT





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PIERRE FREY

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5 THE CONCEPT





# THE PATTERN

The native people of America were the masters of camouflage, as they were its true inventors. This skill gave them the tremendous advantage, regardless of the inferiority of their weapons.

When Europeans came to the New World, their idea of camouflage was one of single color, usually green or dark brown. Many early settlers were taken hostage or killed because they never saw their captors until they were in front of them. They were also impressed with how close native people could get to their prey in order to kill or manipulate them.

They would even change the colours of their camouflage in order to match the colours of nature. For example, during spring time they would use black, brown, red





# THE SOFA

The spirit of togetherness. A circular structure intended to unify a community just like Native Americans' everyday life was playing out around the fire.



PIERRE FREY

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"The New World." This romanticized term inspired legions of Europeans to race to the place where Native Americans live in search of freedom from oppressive regimes or treasures that would be claimed in the name of some European nation.

PIERRE FREY X SYLLOGES X IOANNIS SOLOMOZIS  
- NATALIA SYRIMIS

## THE "2 SPIRIT" PROJECT The tale of a tribe; A gift from the Creator, born with the spirits of both genders in one body.

Those who arrived in the Native American Garden of Eden had never seen a land so uncorrupted. Of all of the foreign life ways Indians held, one of the first the Europeans targeted for elimination was the Two Spirit tradition among Native American cultures. George Catlin said that the Two Spirit tradition among Native Americans, "Must be extinguished before it can be more fully recorded."

Tent \_ Home. The most iconic image of Native American culture, showcasing a modern take of the teepee.

Sofa \_ The spirit of togetherness. A circular structure intended to unify a community just like Native Americans' everyday life was playing out around the fire.

"One" does not hold any important meaning.

Benches \_ Aligned in parity creating a balanced harmony.

Curtain \_ The spirit of unity, symbolizing the opposition; good and evil, day and night, male and female.

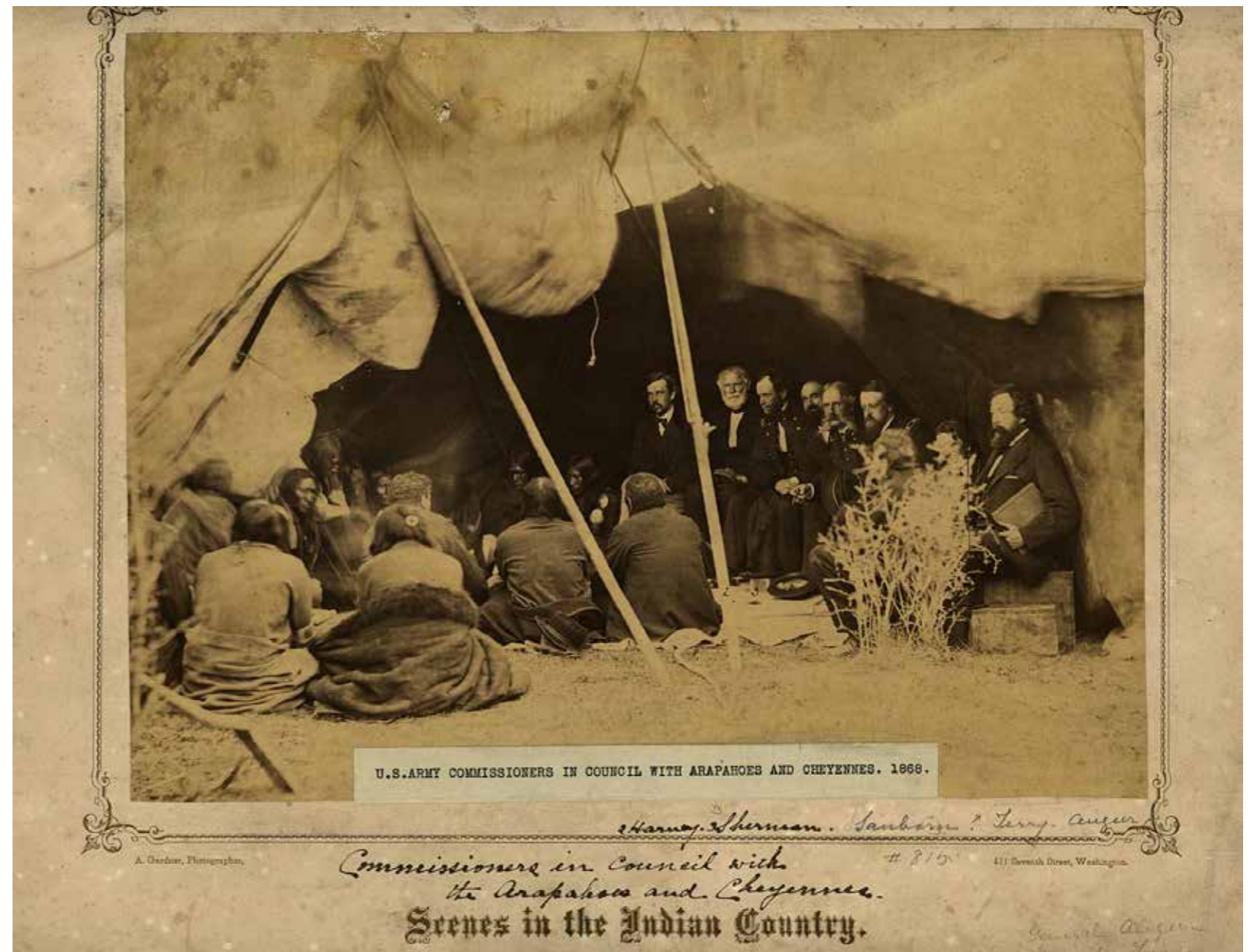


# SOFA, THE INSPIRATION.

It was 1868, and what he had been asked was to photograph the peace talks at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, between a federal-appointed commission and a conglomerate of chiefs from Plains Indian tribes. Never before, and never again, would so many tribal leaders gather in one place, nor would anyone else have the chance to document a way of life that was so rapidly disappearing.

IMAGE: U. S. Army Commissioners in Council with Arapahoes and Cheyennes. Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Gen. William S. Harney and William T. Sherman. By Alexander Gardner.

Group of American Indians and United States Army Commissioners in tent structure with wide, staked-up opening; Indians sit on ground at left, and Commissioners at right on boxes.





# SOFA, THE DESIGN.

The design was inspired by the boxes used by the U.S. Army Commissioners in Council and the cloths used by Arapahoes and Cheyennes to sit. Boxes and cushions were used together, becoming one when zipped.

Composed by 7 rectangular elements. Where Seven represents the world order to the fullest: Mythology provides us with an integrated spatial picture of the world uniting numbers 3 & 4 which together form the symbolism of the number 7, especially deeply rooted in culture. The human body synthesizes the vertical and horizontal structures of the world, also modeling the sacredness of the number seven. For the Cherokee, seven is "the actual number of the tribal clans, the formulistic number of upper worlds or heavens, and the ceremonial number of paragraphs or repetitions in the principal formulas". They even held a seven-day green corn ceremony. Seven is even the number of stars in the Pleiades.





# CURTAIN



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# THE DESIGN.

The spirit of unity, symbolizing the opposition;

One does not hold any important meaning, so the first significant number for American Indians is two. It symbolizes the opposition, but at the same time duality and unity which maintain the balance and harmony: god and evil, day and night, male and female. Therefore the curtain contains a zip in the middle, to be able to divide the single piece into two individual, smaller ones.





# TENT





# THE TENT.

Tent \_ Home. The most iconic image of Native American culture, showcasing a modern take of the teepee.

Native American symbols are geometric portrayals, celestial bodies, natural phenomena and animal designs. The basis of many symbols, patterns and designs. The simple shape of the square sign was easy to depict on any raw materials such as rock, stone, wood, shell and animal hides. Its square base symbolizes an enclosed, safe space; permanence and security. The triangular shape represents the home of the family. Easy to build, portable, suitable for their nomadic way of living.









# CLUTCH





# THE CLUTCH.

Clutch \_ Medicine Bag. Carried by the Native American men to maintain personal harmony - with the physical, spiritual and supernatural. It usually contains herbs and articles as well as vision quest, stones, bones, hair or fur. Each of the items has a special significance in the life of the owner of the bag. Traditionally, medicine bags are worn under the clothing, to protect their valuables. The Clutches, in a group of three, representing the vertical picture of the world.





# BENCHES & PANELS

The four corners of the world.





# THE BENCHES & PANELS

Benches & Panels\_ Aligned in parity creating a balanced harmony.

In two pairs, forming the most important number: four. The symbol of the horizontal picture of the world, which is most clearly represented among North American Indians. Therefore, the horizontal picture of the world looks exactly like a crossroads of four corners of the world. Four also numbers the worlds – three previous ones and the present one, where we live. Four plays an important role in traditional American Indian architecture.





# THE "TWO SPIRIT" PROJECT

Project Name : The "TWO SPIRIT" Project

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Original graphic design : GRAND CANYON – La Maison Pierre Frey

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Concept : Ioannis Solomozis – Natalia Syrimis

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