

# Native American Studies Center

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA LANCASTER

## *Renaissance of The Catawba Indians*

Exhibit dates: March 10, 2015 through March 1, 2016

Exhibit Opening: March 25, 2015 at 4:00 -6:00 pm

Curator Talk: March 25, 2015 at 5:00 -5:20 pm

Project and Exhibit background:

This exhibit is based on a photo documentary essay on the Catawba Indians that began in 1997 after Photojournalist Catherine Bauknight met Monty Hawk Branham and Anna Branham, Catawba Indian Potters, at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center. During this meeting, the Branhams spoke of a pottery show in Washington, DC, in which they recently participated. At this show, they were told by a person-- who claimed to be an authority on the subject-- that the Catawba Indians no longer existed. The Branhams explained how stunned they were and that they replied to this comment, "We are here". Bauknight recalls being told by Monty Hawk Branham, "One of the reasons we survived was because the colonist liked and bought our pottery for the flavor it yielded when used for cooking." The Catawba's resilience to wars, diseases, and loss of land strengthens their bond and cultural connections to each other and perpetuates their cultural knowledge of making their unique pottery from the clay of the Catawba River banks. Bauknight asked if they would like to participate in a photo essay on their culture and their pottery to declare their existence as the Catawba Indian Nation. Monty and Anna agreed and the three-year photo documentary essay began.

"The first year of the documentation was spent mostly getting to know the people and them getting to know and trust me. It was an honor to be allowed to enter this portal into their culture based on respect for each other, the land and wildlife, and the importance of silence in communication.", Bauknight says.

Through this photo documentary essay, much about the culture is shared in the exhibit "Renaissance of The Catawba Indians" to be the Catawba's own voice of the awakening of their identity and existence. The documentary was exhibited at UNC-C Art Gallery and in the Rotunda of The Capitol Building in Washington, DC, sponsored by UNC-C and the office of S.C. Congressman John Spratt.

### **About the Curator:**

The culture of the Catawba Indians has been an interest of Bauknight since she was a child growing up in Lancaster, SC. Her parents, Harold and Nancy Clements, and other family also live in Lancaster. Bauknight attended USCL for one year before moving to Colorado Springs and living in many locations throughout the U.S. and Germany. She later returned to Charlotte, NC. She was a free-lance contract photographer for the Charlotte Observer, the New York Times, Time Magazine, Newsweek Magazine, USA Today, and international publications. She has taught photography at Central Piedmont Community College, Queens University of Charlotte, Cal State Fullerton, and Cal Poly Pomona for 17 years. She now lives in Pasadena, CA. She photographs and writes for the Huffington Post Blog while completing a documentary on the culture of fashion in Los Angeles and screening her award winning documentary film throughout the world to help raise awareness of *Hawaii A Voice For Sovereignty*.

Bauknight says that she continues to document and teach indigenous people a philosophy and style to document their culture through their own voice to perpetuate their culture and to help build a bridge from the past to the future for global wisdom and social unification.



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## *Document Your Culture*

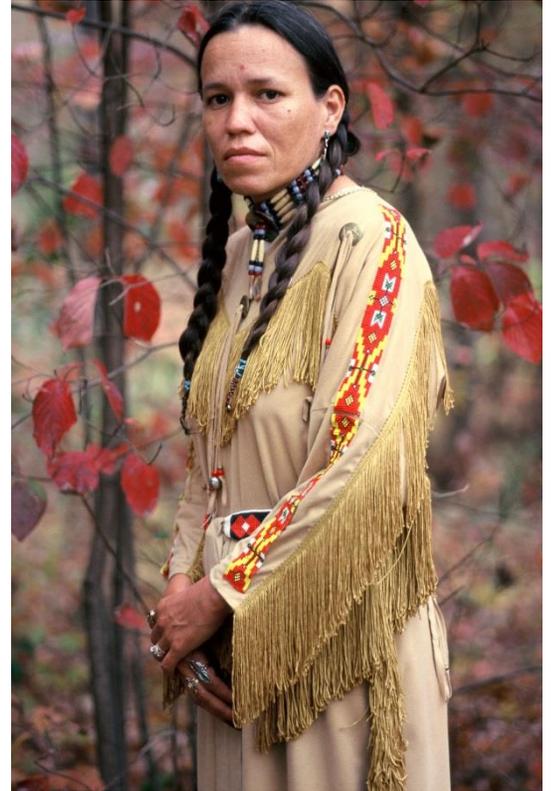
Lecture by Catherine Bauknight

March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Join us for a lecture program on how to *Document Your Culture* by photojournalist and documentary filmmaker Catherine Bauknight. "The need to strengthen cultural education and creative leadership through the voice of the Native American and indigenous people is now", Bauknight says. *The Renaissance of The Catawba Indians* is an important photo essay that she created with the Catawba Indians in 1997-1999.

The awareness of the Catawba Nation was raised in Washington, D.C. during the exhibition of the images at the Capitol Building in 1999.

Bauknight will speak on her philosophy and techniques of the use of photographic tools to share cultural information and wisdom. She will discuss how her experiences as a photojournalist and filmmaker have assisted in revealing the identity of indigenous people through their voices, and how this has empowered them, and created change for ancient cultures in the modern world.



### **About the Lecturer:**

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*Hawaii: A Voice For Sovereignty* is Bauknight's first documentary. It helped create significant awareness of the issues faced by indigenous Hawaiian people seeking sovereign rights, communicated in their own voice. It has received eight major awards including "Best Global Documentary Creating Change". The documentary has been screened three times at United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues events in New York City and Geneva, Switzerland. It will be shown on the PBS Station, "First Nation Experience" (FNX) in the greater Los Angeles area on February 22nd, 6:30pm PST and 9:30pm EST, and March 22nd, 6:30pm PST and 9:30pm EST. The trailer can be viewed, and the DVD can be ordered at the [www.hawaiiavoiceforsovereignty.com](http://www.hawaiiavoiceforsovereignty.com).

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