

# SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM





# ARTIST BIO, STATEMENT, BACKGROUND & PROPOSAL

## American Indian Painter Born 1983

My name is Spencer Keeton Cunningham. I am an Colville artist. The Colville Tribe and Reservation is located in Northeastern WA. There are about 10,000 members since I was born and grew up on and off of my reservation as a child. There are approx 8.5 thousand tribal members. I am one of them. My reservation is home to me but so is SF. I know the hardships some of these people in the surrounding areas of the Minna Natoma project face on a day today basis and I have done multiple public art projects in the TL and SF.

My goal with this project is to bring Indigenous voices to light and bring contemporary Indigenous art to the forefront in the SF Bay area. San Francisco is Ohlone, Miwok, & Coast Miwok territory. It is only right that we mark the grounds with an indigenous design & have a Indigenous event as an opening ceremony for the art placed on the ground. I am connected to the Indigenous community that still resides in SF and the bay. Most of us have been pushed out historically and in recent years. If I am selected I would like to urge the city to make an effort to include more Indigenous voices in the city planning of art projects.

I have lived in the SF area since 2004. I co-founded the Indigenous Arts Coalition in SF in 2008. I graduated from SFAI in 2010. John Roloff has a sculpture right down the street from where this project is happening. He was a mentor of mine at SFAI. I have been exhibiting in museums and galleries for the past 18 years. I have exhibited at the Wenying Highland Art Museum in China, The Crocker Museum, The Autry Museum in Los Angeles, which the current exhibit (WHEN I REMEMBER I SEE RED is still up until January 2022).

I have also created public artworks in Hong Kong, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Mexico, ] New York, Oakland, Hawaii, Tasmania, Amsterdam, Miami, Alaska, Seattle, Toronto, & British Columbia. My painting work can be found in the permanent collection of the Berkeley Art Museum have been inducted into the World Congress of Art History in Beijing China by Art Historian Elaine O'Brien.

This project proposal is simple. I want to bring patternwork from my people to this ground. This is a symbolic gesture. This is a very significant gesture to have an Indigenous artist mark the ground. San Francisco needs to invest in Indigenous voices. Now is the time.

I want this project to be the beginning of something new in SF. I want to create a marking on the street that is simple and works with the application process of the long lasting paint or plastic inlay on the street (industrial paint is fine) The inlay could be used as an accent on the crosswalks. The following imagery is all done by hand and pencil and ink on paper. I was informed that these were supposed to be initial designs. If selected I would be digitally creating designs to work with the people applying the industrial paint to the surface. I am very hands on artist but I would like this piece to be very permanent so I am ready to just design and let the proper team apply the paint.



Each pattern you see in this proposal has a specific meaning. These patterns are sacred. I have also created contemporary versions of the patterns as potential designs. I have included much more than one potential design here. There are quite a few concepts and designs to choose from.

I have worked on public art projects for the past 18 years. I am ready to mark the ground of SF with a pattern and start to raise up Indigenous People in the community that need their voices to be heard. This mural will not be political or edgy or whatever it is that people label Indigenous art for a cause. In other words there will be no use of commercial symbols (as pictured below) in the Minna Natoma project. This work will be strictly patternwork with a strong meaning and message. But a very positive one and the application of the Indigenous marking to the ground is what makes it contemporary. I know that the art needs to be family friendly, PG, Safe for young people and people of all ages cultures etc. This mural will be positive, bright and incorporate Indigenous culture into its creation, application, and if selected the opening ceremony of the piece (where I mentioned I would like to have Indigenous community that I would like to hire using SFAC funds to come sing, drum, tell stories etc) I have done multiple projects with Indigenous youth in SF and I would like to have some youth be a part of this project somehow as well potentially.

The main part of the project is that I want to create a piece for the Indigenous people of SF. I will keep it simple. I will add small notes here and throughout the rest of the proposal but if I am selected I will be creating something special. The following is an artist CV. Thanks for your time.

Spencer Keeton Cunningham



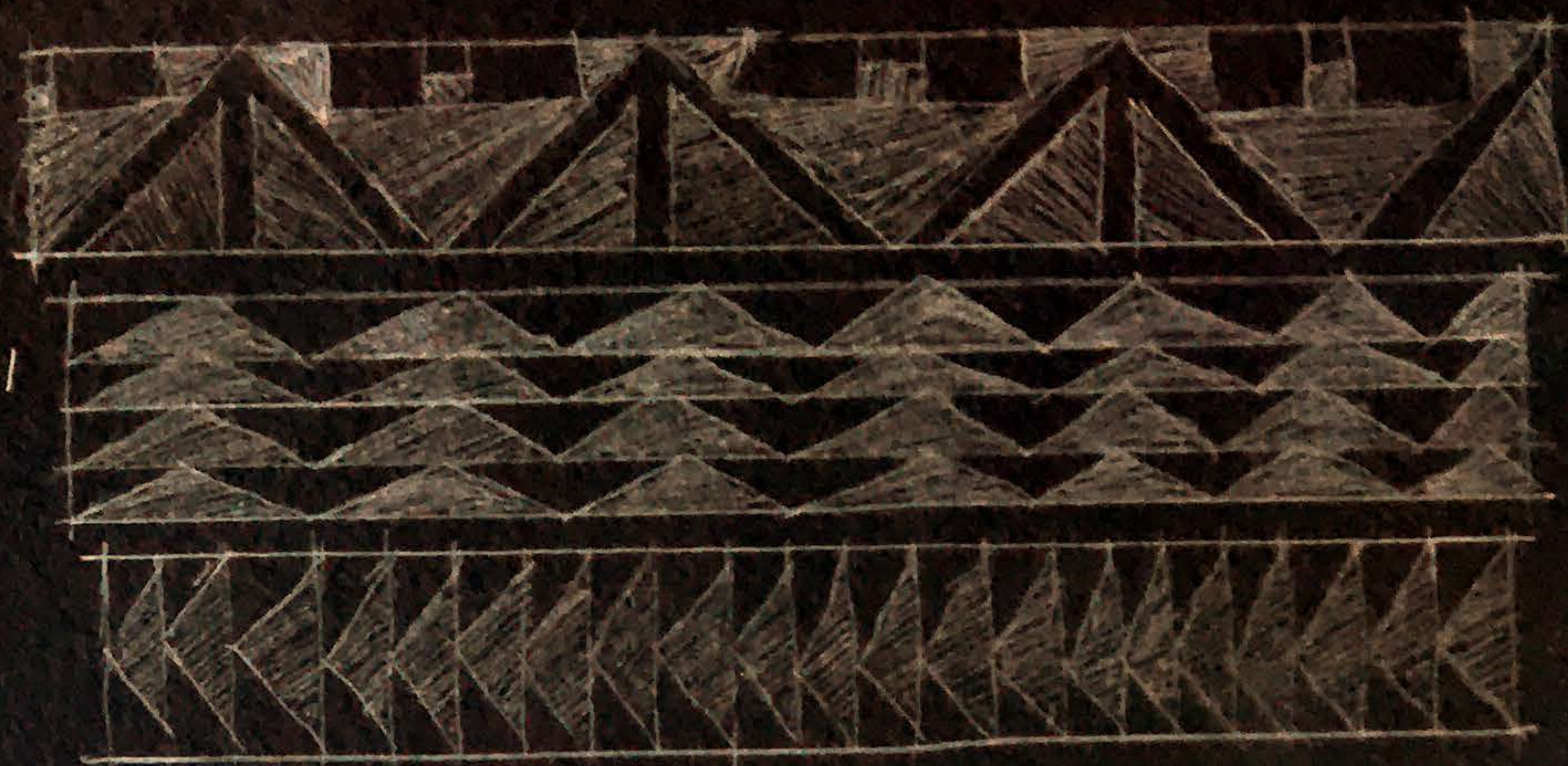
SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM & JAQUE FRAGUA  
"STOLEN INDIGENOUS PATTERNWORK" PORTLAND OREGON



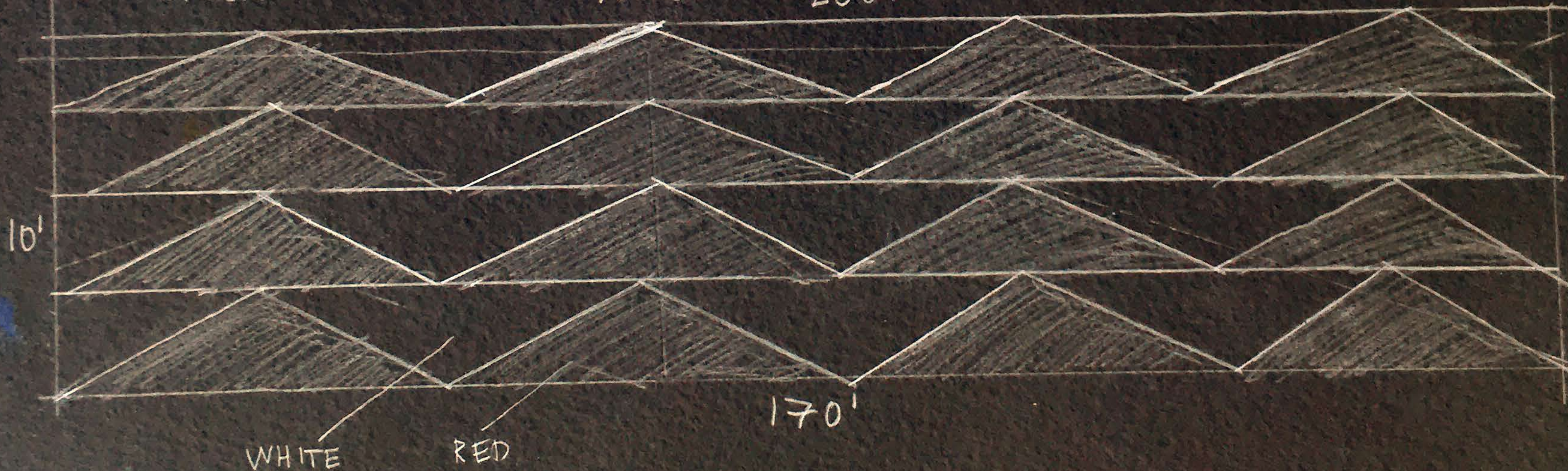
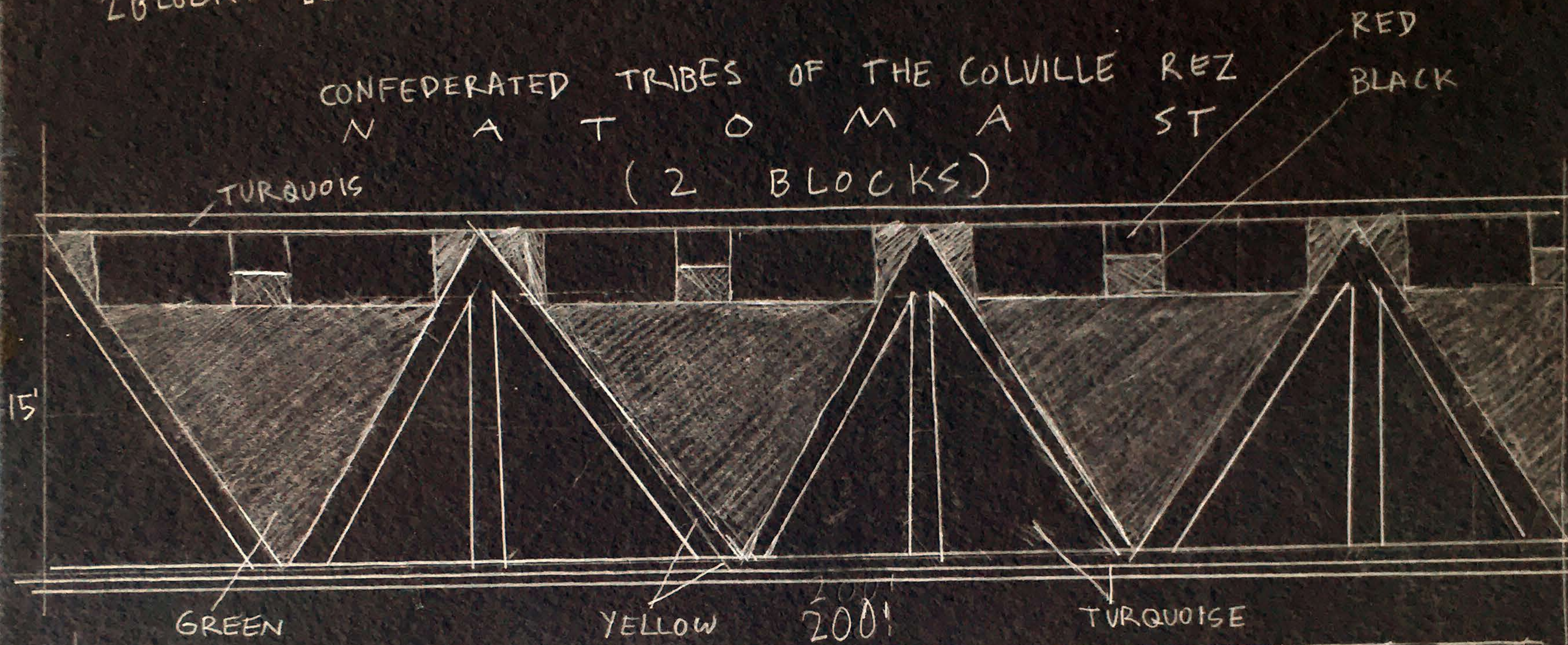
1. NATOMA STREET - 2 BLOCKS  
 1ST BLOCK MEASURES 10' x 170'  
 2ND BLOCK MEASURES 15' x 200'

2. MINNA STREET  
 1ST BLOCK MEASURES 15' x 480'

3. MINNA ST.  
 2 BLOCKS BOTH MEASURING 15' x 160'



CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE REZ  
 N A T O M A S T  
 (2 BLOCKS)



M I N N A S T ST  
 (1 BLOCK)



RED  
 BLACK



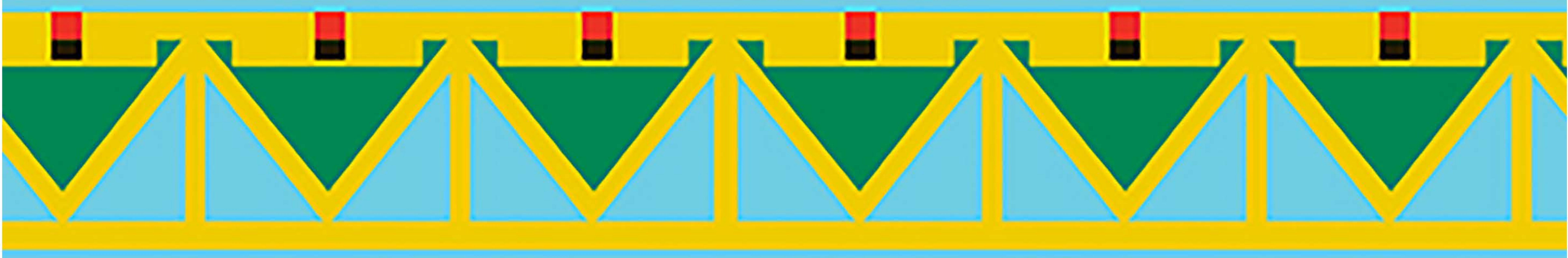


THIS IS A CALIFORNIA MAP OF THE INDIGENOUS TERRITORIES. I WANT THIS TO BE REPRESENTED SOMEWHERE ALONG THE STREET WHERE THE ART IS PLACED ON THE GROUND. POTENTIALLY IN SCULPTURAL FORM.  
-SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM



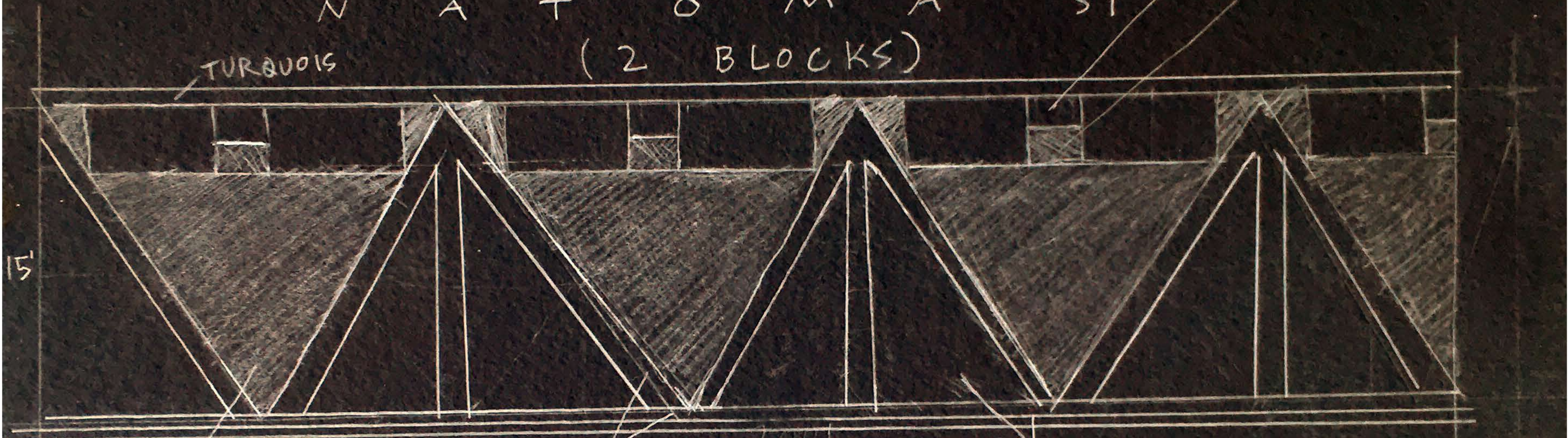
THE PATTERN BELOW IS FROM TRIBE, THE COLVILLE TRIBE, IN WASHINGTON STATE. THE IDEA IS SIMPLE. RECLAIM THE GROUND AND DECOLONIZE THE STREET.

1. NATOMA STREET - 2 BLOCKS - ?  
1ST BLOCK MEASURES 10' x 170'  
2ND BLOCK MEASURES 15' x 200'



THIS IS ONE PATTERN OF MANY I HAVE TO POTENTIALLY APPLY TO THE MINNA NATOMA STREETS

CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE REZ  
N A T O M A S T  
(2 BLOCKS)  
TURQUOIS  
BLACK



# COLVILLE CONFEDERATED TRIBES







THIS IS A DESIGN FOR THE CROSSWALK. THESE COULD BE AT EACH INTERSECTION

THIS IS A DESIGN FOR THE GREENING OF THE STREET AND POTENTIAL SCULPTURES. I UNDERSTAND I AM AN ARTIST SELECTED FOR THE GROUND MARKINGS BUT IF THERE ARE FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE MORE SCULPTURES IN THE MINNA NATOMA AREA I AM INTERESTED





THE SCULPTURES ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF COYOTES AND WOLVES. THE BENCHES ARE IN THE SHAPE OF CALIFORNIA WITH THE INDIGENOUS MAP ON THEM



THIS IS ANOTHER ANGLE OF THE STREET IN THE PREVIOUS PAGE. NOT PICTURED IS THE CROSSWALK DESIGN



S P E N C E R

K E E T O N

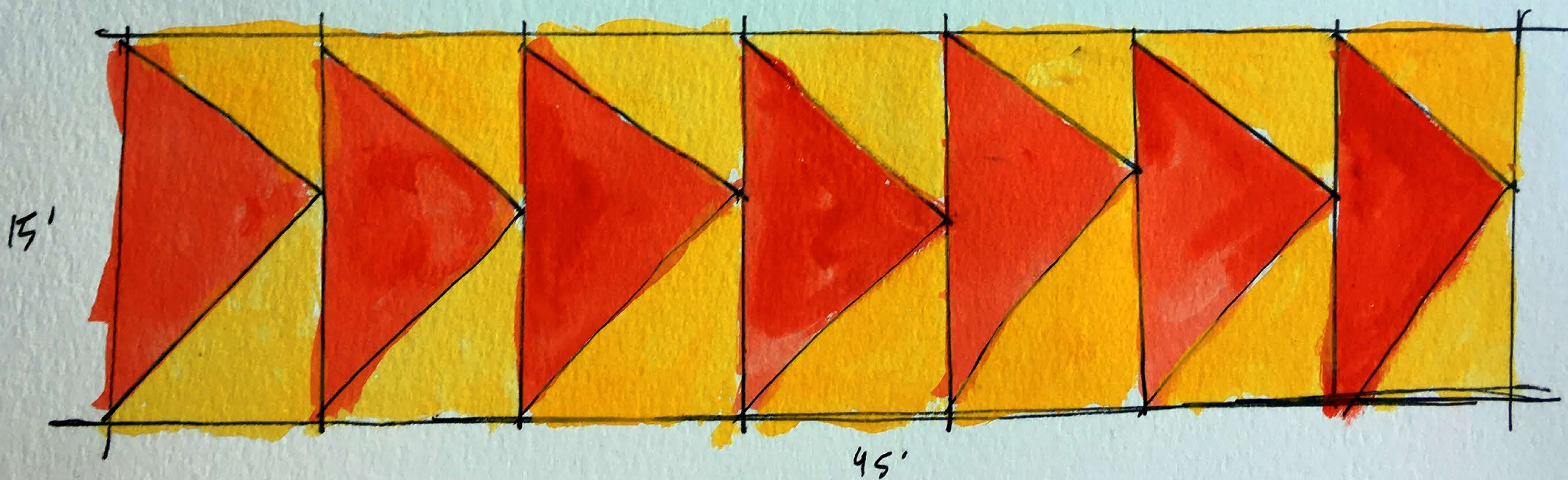
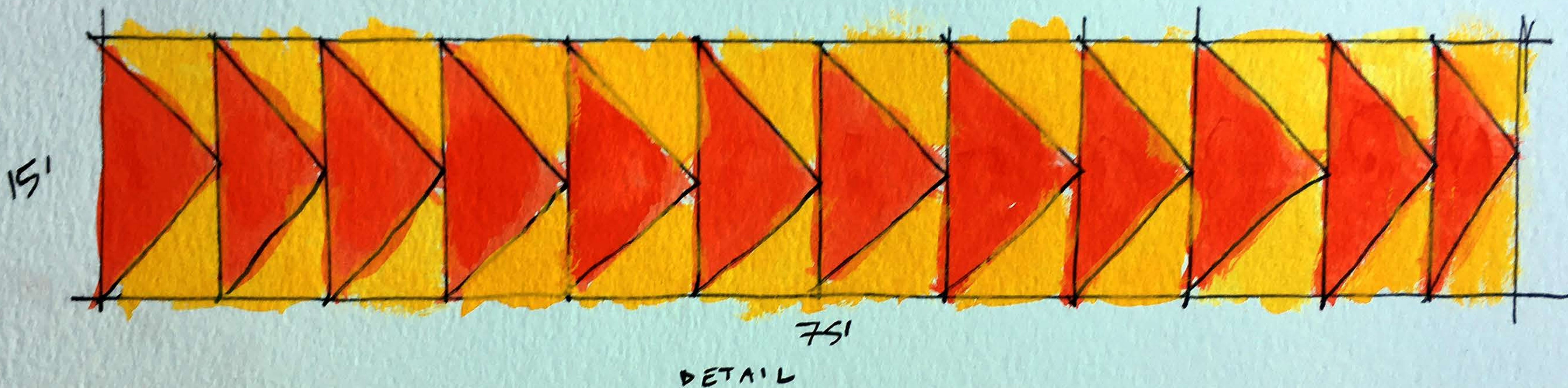
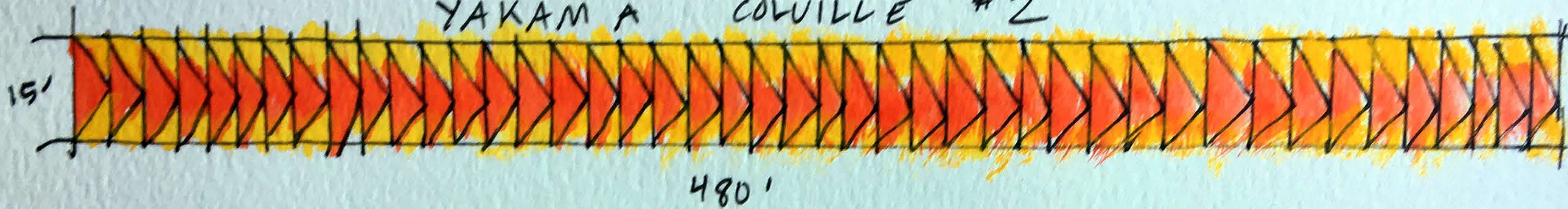
C U N N I N G H A M

M I N N A

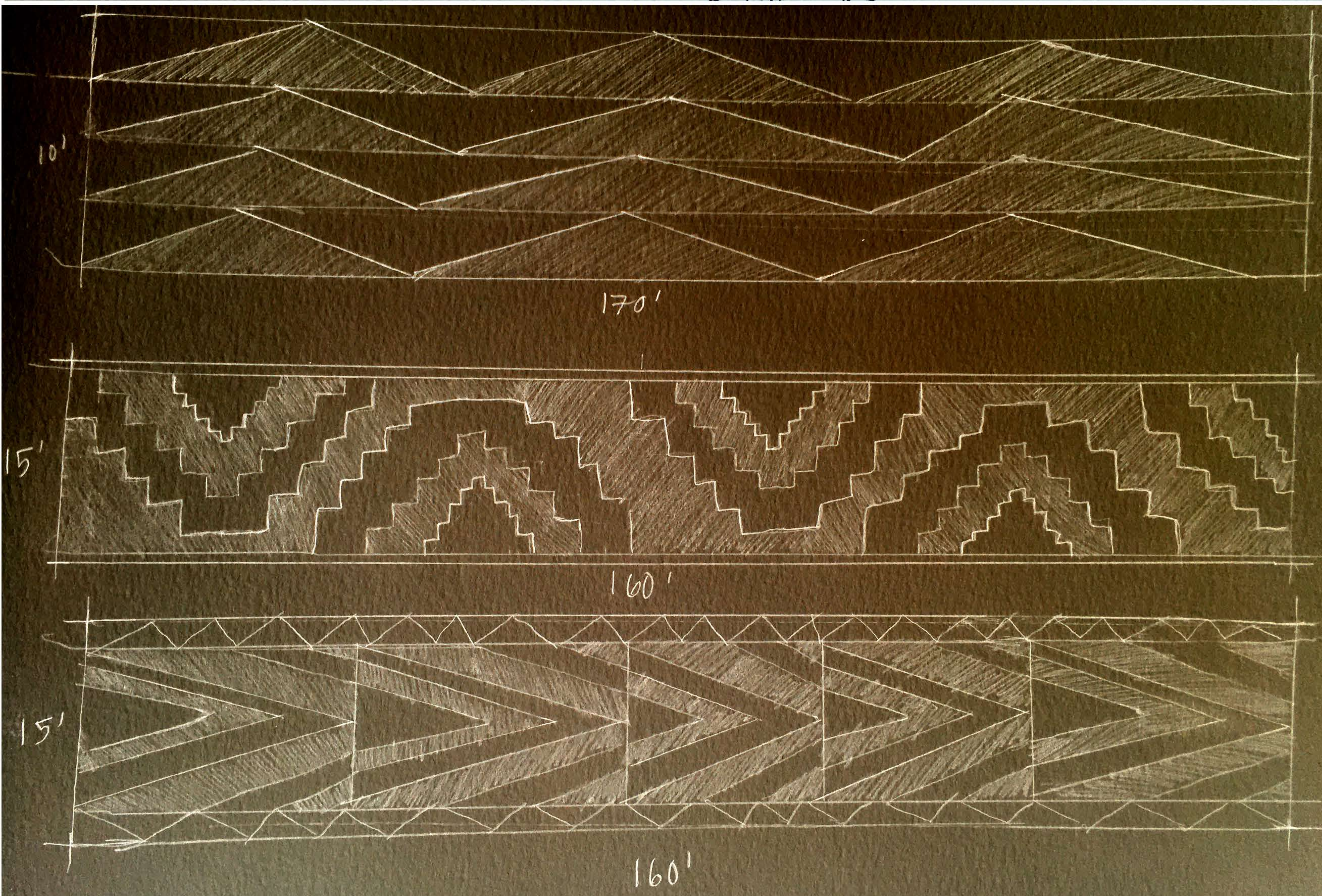
S T

Y A K A M A

C O L V I L L E # 2



THESE ARE ALL POTENTIAL DESIGNS FOR THE MINNA NATOMA ST PROJECT. THESE PATTERNS ARE DERIVED FROM BASKETS AND GARMETS, & CEREMONIAL OBJECTS WORN BY PEOPLE OF THE COVLILLE TRIBE. MY GRANDMA WAS COLVILLE WITH YAKAMA & ARROW LAKES. MY RELATIVES ARE IN THESE PATTERNS

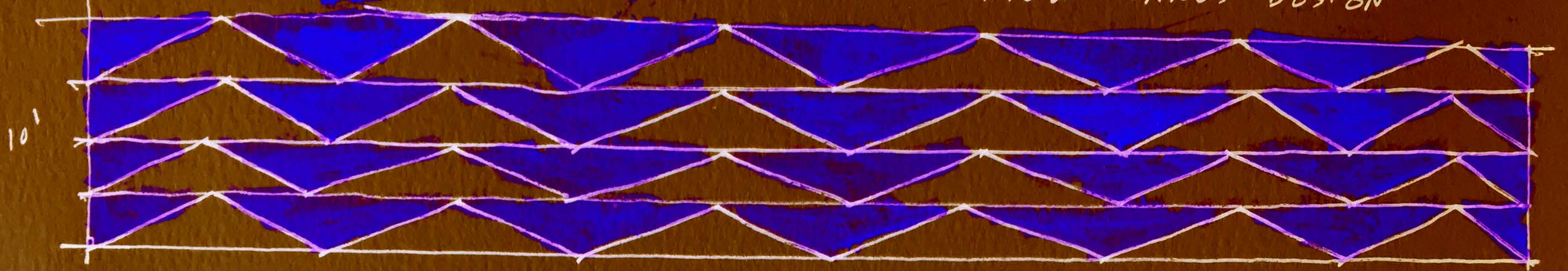




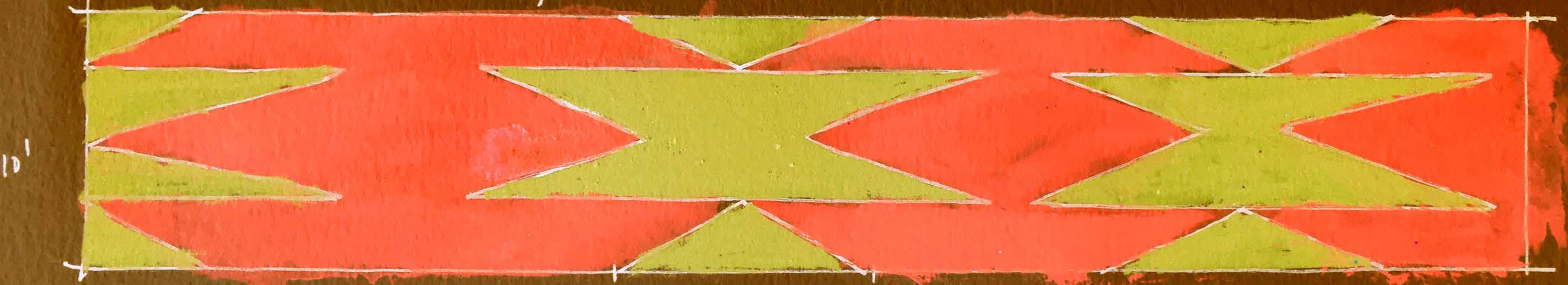
SPENCER

KEETON

CUNNINGHAM - ARROW LAKES DESIGN



COLVILLE / YAKAMA DESIGN

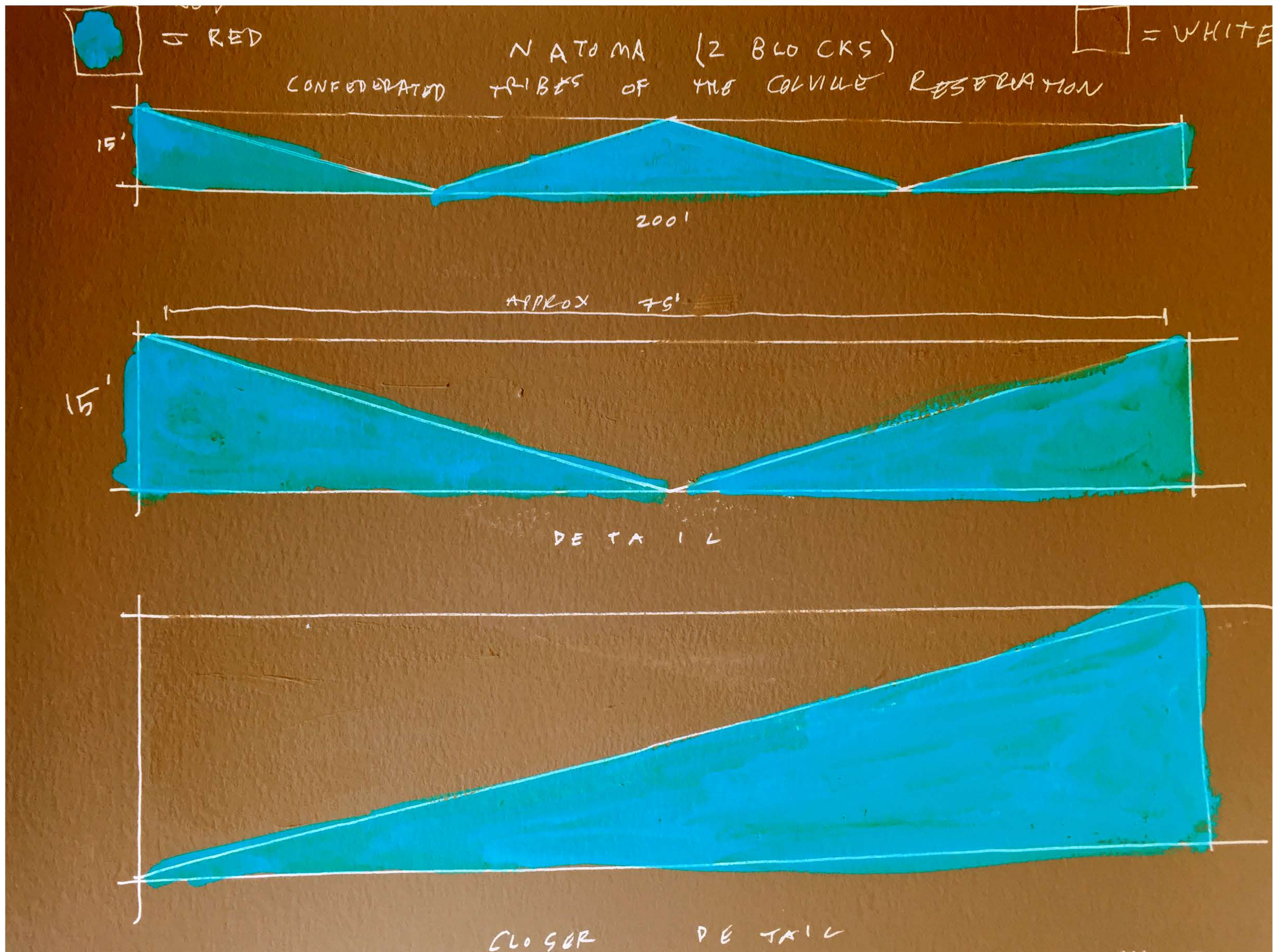


COLVILLE / ARROW LAKES DESIGN



THE IMAGES ABOVE ARE FROM THE ARROW LAKES AND COLVILLE TRIBE. ALSO THE YAKAMA. THESE PATTERNS HAVE SYMBOLIC MEANING IN CEROMY. SOME HAVE BEEN MADE INTO A MORE CONTEMPORARY PATTERN AS SEEN IN THE IMAGE ABOVE. (3RD DOWN) "COLVILLE / ARROW LAKES DESIGN" THE BLOB SHAPES ARE SYMBOLIC OF WATER. THE TRIANGLE PATTERN IS TAKEN FROM THE GARMET. THE UPWARD TRIANGLE IS SPECIFIC TO THE COLVILLE TRIBE AS WELL.

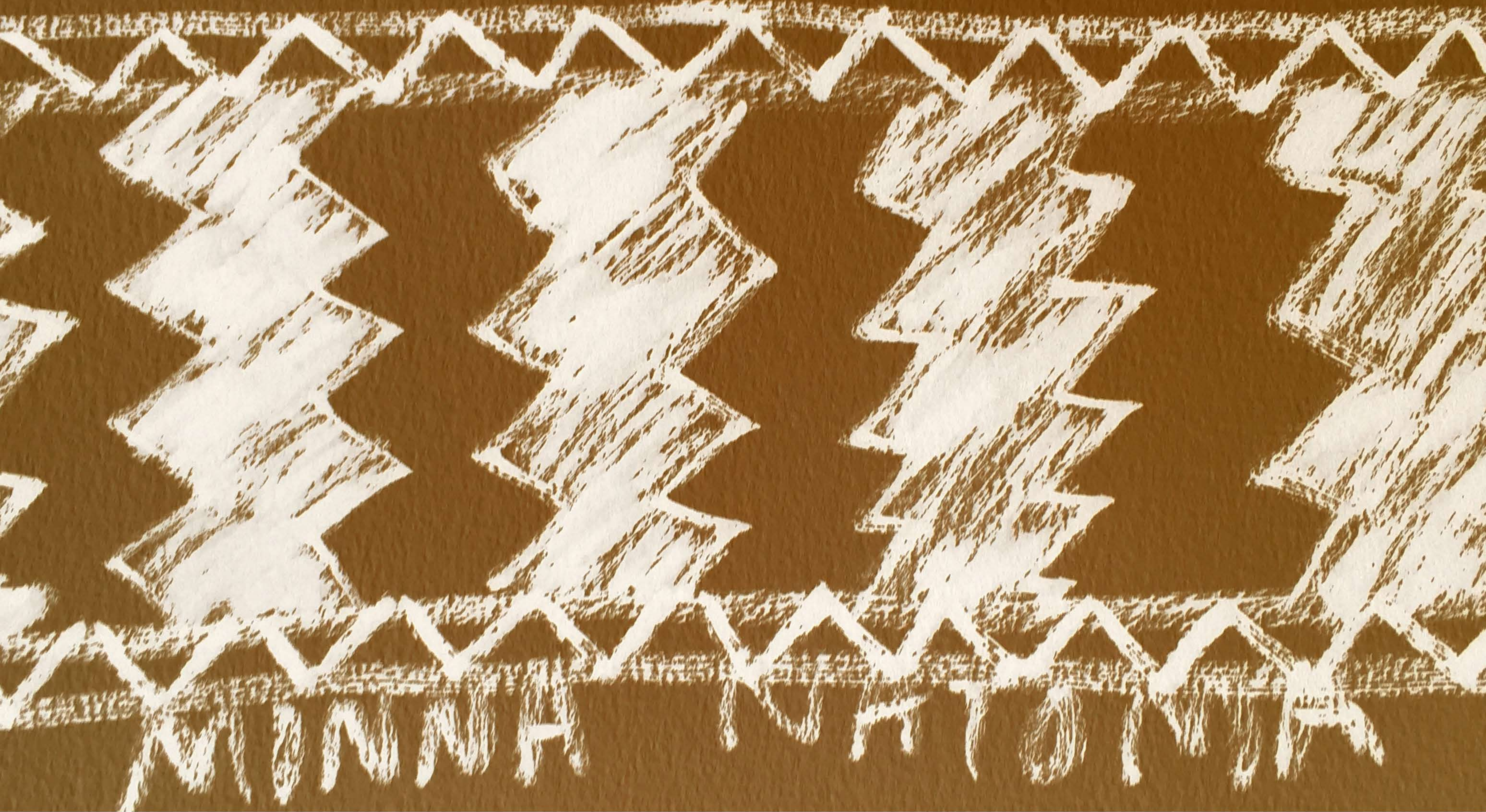
THE IMAGE TO THE RIGHT IS FOR THE NATOMA OR MINNA ST. IT IS LARGE AND REPRESENTATIVE OF WATER.



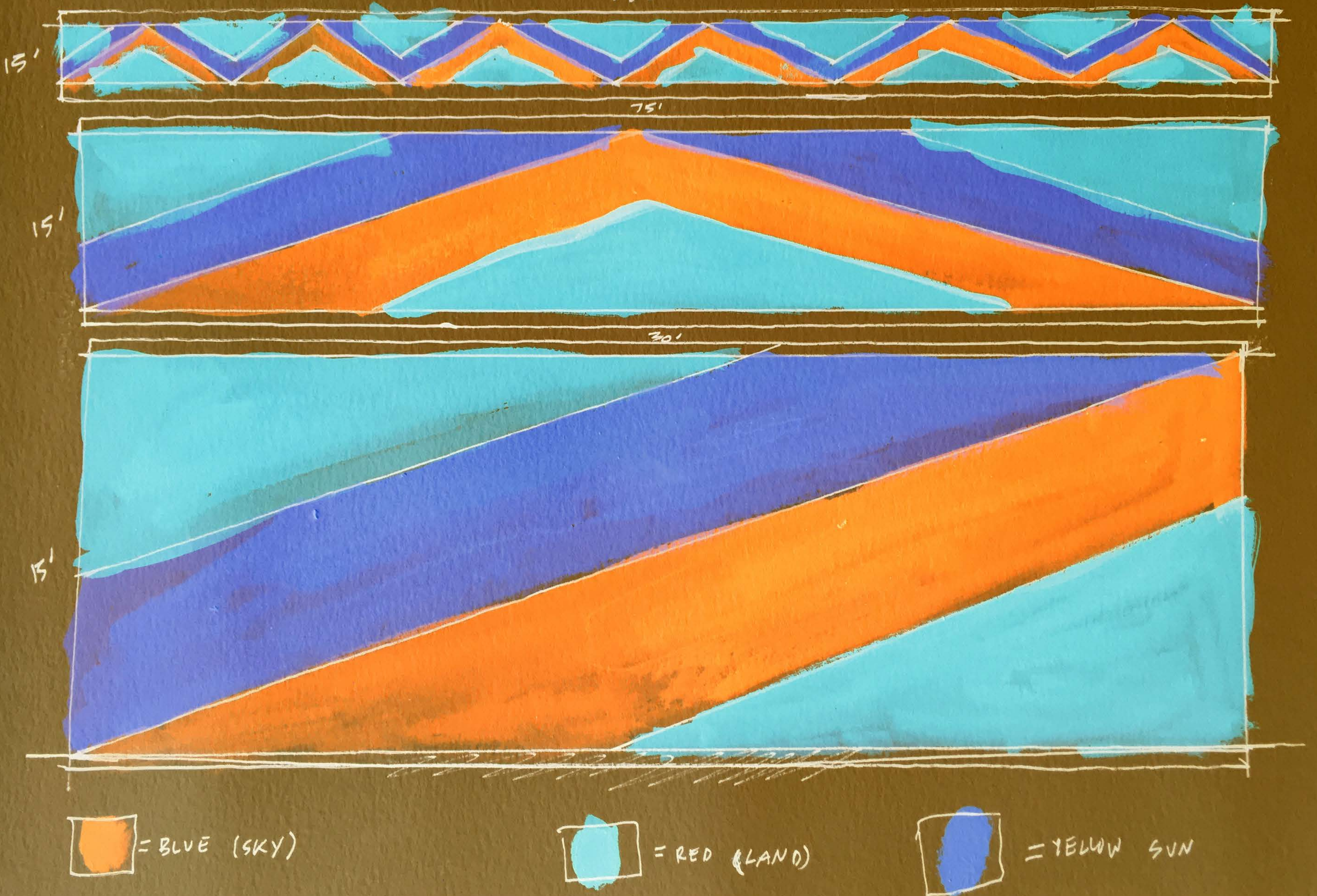
PICTURED ABOVE IS WHEN I WAS PAINTING A SIGN FOR THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES POWER CAMP DURING THE STANDING ROCK PROTESTS.



BELOW AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE IS A POTENTIAL DESIGN FOR THE MINNA CORRIDOR



COLVILLE PATTERNS FOR STREET SURFACE - SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM  
CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION  
M I N N A S T.  
480'





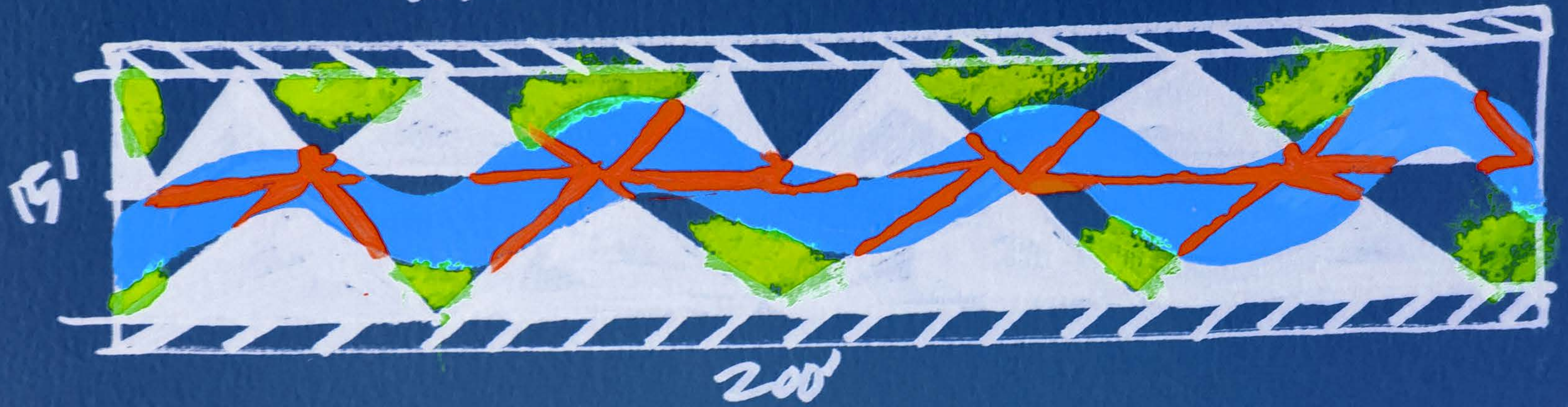
THE SCULPTURES ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF COYOTES AND WOLVES. THE BENCHES ARE IN THE SHAPE OF CALIFORNIA WITH THE INDIGENOUS MAP ON THEM



THIS IS ANOTHER ANGLE OF THE STREET IN THE PREVIOUS PAGE. NOT PICTURED IS THE CROSSWALK DESIGN



SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM  
COLVILLE PATTERN #16



COLVILLE NATIVE FUTURISM PATTERN



DETAIL

160'

160'

ABOVE ARE TWO VARIATIONS OF PATTERNS. A CONCEPT I'VE BEEN WORKING ON LATELY IS NATIVE FUTURISM. I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT TO CREATE A COMBINATION OF A FUTURISM PATTERN MIXED WITH A MORE TRADITIONAL, YET CONTEMPORARY PATTERN.



# "WAY" WELCOME

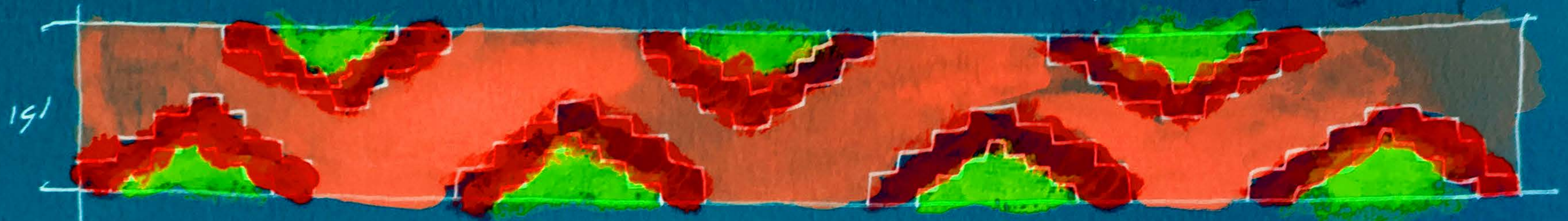
MOSES-COLUMBIA  
OKANOAGAN  
NESPELEM  
SANPOIL  
COLVILLE  
LAKES



NEZ PERCE  
WENATCHI  
METHOW  
CHELAN  
ENTIAT  
PALUS

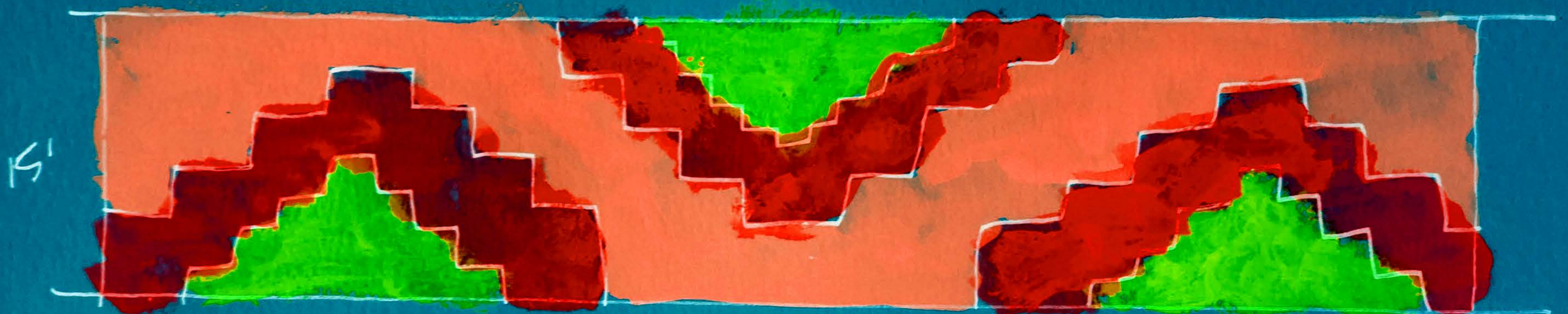
HOME OF THE 12 CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE INDIAN RESERVATION

SPENCER KEESON CUNNINGHAM - MINNA-NATMA

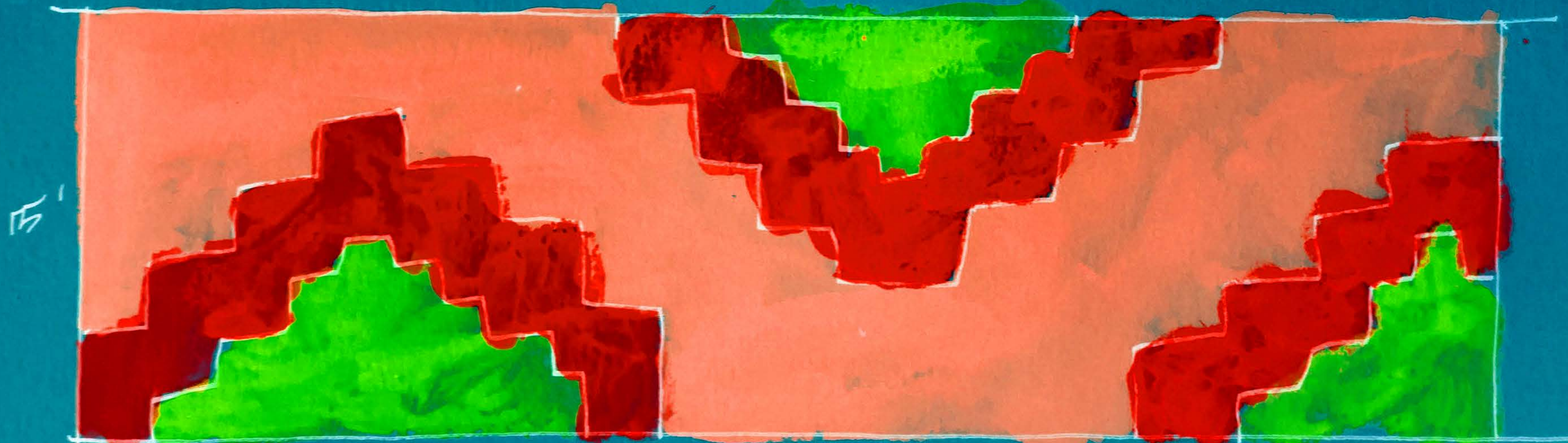


COLVILLE TRIBE BASKET PATTERN DESIGN

2001



60'



40'



THESE ARE VERY ROUGH  
 DESIGNS. IF SELECTED,  
 I WILL CREATED DIGITAL  
 VERSIONS THAT ARE  
 VECTORIZED AND  
 READY FOR APPLICATIONS  
 ONTO THE STREET FOR  
 THE MINNA NATOMA  
 PROJECT. I WANTED  
 TO GIVE A DECENT  
 AMOUNT OF PATTERN  
 EXAMPLES TO CHOOSE  
 FROM. ALSO COLOR  
 IS NEGOTIABLE AND  
 EDITABLE FOR ALL  
 PATTERNS AND DESIGNS  
 THESE IMAGES WERE ALL  
 PAINTED BY HAND.  
 THE FINAL DESIGN  
 WILL BE MORE PROFESSIONAL

SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM

MINNA NATOMA ST.  
 "COLVILLE WATER DESIGN"



200'



DETAIL

45'

■ = BLACK

□ = WHITE

■ = BRIGHT RED

SPENCER KEETON CUNNINGHAM - EAGLE PATTERN DESIGN YAKAMA  
 MINNA NATOMA ST. COLVILLE KROON LAKES



10'

480'



10'

100'



10'

60'