Photo essay by Gerald Auginash

With his faithful Canon camera, Gerald Auginash travels the county, state, and even around the world documenting Native American life. Gerald grew up on the Red Lake Indian Reservation but moved to Minneapolis in his teens. After studying electrical engineering at Dunwoody College of Technology he started a lifelong career with Bell Telephone.

When his daughter started dancing in Pow Wows, Gerry got a camcorder. Then he got a digital still camera. He’s on his fifth Canon camera now—a EOS 5D Mark IV. Through his many lenses he’s shot the dedication of Tribal Nations Plaza at University of Minnesota’s TCF Bank Stadium; Indigenous Peoples Day Festivals; protests in Minneapolis’s City Council Chambers and at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation; the Alcatraz Sunrise Ceremony; Foire de Tours festival in Tours, France; numerous events at the Minneapolis American Indian Center; Clyde Bellecourt; the rise and fall of the Hiawatha homeless encampment; and too many Pow Wows to count. His photos document the lives, ceremonies, joys, and tribulations of contemporary Native life. His photographs give us lasting portraits for future generations. Follow Gerald Auginash on Facebook.

Grand Entry at the Labor Day Traditional Pow Wow, Veterans Memorial Pow Wow Grounds, Cass Lake.

Drummers at the Thanksgiving Celebration Pow Wow, Minneapolis American Indian Center.

Traditional beaded dress (left) and traditional men’s outfit (above), Hunting Moon Pow Wow, Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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White Earth civil rights activist Clyde Bellecourt (above) joined the crowd at Standing Rock pipeline protests in 2016. Tobacco pouches (right) were tied to fences during ceremonies.

In 2017, Tours, France, invited its sister city Minneapolis to be the featured destination at their regional festival Foire de Tours. A north woods scene was recreated including a log cabin on a lake complete with canoes (below). The American Indian Movement Interpretive Center sold wild rice and crafts, Native American dancers provided entertainment, and Sean Sherman, the Sioux Chef (above), served bison, walleye, and wild rice. More then 75,000 people came to the Minneapolis pavilion over the course of the ten-day festival.