NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURE:

RESILIENCE, RECLAMATION, AND RELEVANCE

NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURES FOUNDATION

in partnership with

National Endowment for the Arts & National Endowment for the Humanities

A report on the first national Native arts and cultures collaborative convening held on **FEBRUARY 14, 2020 in Washington, D.C.**

NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURES FOUNDATION, FEBRUARY 2021

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OPENING CEREMONY & PERFORMANCES

Master of Ceremonies – Ruben Little Head *(Northern Cheyenne)*
Flag Song – Uptown Boyz (intertribal)
Posting of Colors Prayer – Native American Women Warriors Color Guard (intertribal)
Land Acknowledgement – Lillian Sparks Robinson *(Rosebud Sioux)*
Dance Performance – Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)*
Music Performance – Frank Waln *(Sicangu Lakota)*

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The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation advances equity and cultural knowledge, focusing on the power of arts and collaboration to strengthen Native communities and promote positive social change with American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native peoples in the United States.

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a message from the NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURES FOUNDATION

In February 2020, a first-of-its-kind gathering took place in Washington, D.C., co-hosted by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF). *Native Arts and Culture: Resilience, Reclamation, and Relevance* brought together over 225 attendees including members from more than 40 tribal nations, representatives from over a dozen federal/state/regional entities, many Native artists and students, and non-profit professionals and funders who support Native peoples. The programming of the gathering was designed collaboratively by a Native Advisory Council formed by NACF and a Federal Planning Committee formed by the NEA and facilitated by Lillian Sparks Robinson *(Rosebud Sioux)*, CEO of Wopila Consulting and former Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans.

The vision for the convening began five years earlier, in 2015, when NACF initiated a dialogue with the NEA about the need for more collaboration among federal agencies and Native organizations, leaders, artists, and culture bearers. Discussions and gatherings had occurred with federal agencies and Native communities in many other sectors for decades, but there never had been a large convening focused solely on arts, cultures, and humanities. The time seemed ripe for bringing the field together. There was agreement that there should be more coordination and learning between federal cultural agencies and Native communities, which could lead to greater mutual understanding and a more robust Native arts and cultures ecology. At the prompting of NACF, First Peoples Fund, the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums, and other national Native-led organizations, NEA began a multi-year process of visiting Native-led programs and tribal governments and communities to listen and learn. Then after adjustments following the 2017 change of administration, in 2019, the planning could finally begin and the spark was fully ignited.

The convening could be described as a gathering of nations—with many Native participants bringing the distinct cultures and ideologies of their respective peoples into juxtaposition with each other and with the cultures and ideologies of the U.S. government. Though each is unique, one might safely say that Native worldviews rest upon the fundamental belief in the interdependence of all creation, as commonly suggested by the phrase "all my relations." It was in this spirit that the gathering took place, bound by an ethic of cross-cultural respect in shaping constructive relationships and narratives, and providing groundwork for a better understanding of the multiplicity of Native peoples. In the U.S. alone, there are 574 federally recognized tribes, speaking over 150 languages and dialects, with distinct cultural practices, independent

governance and citizenship, and sovereign rights to unceded homelands. In addition to these tribes, there are currently 560,000 state-recognized Native Hawaiians living in Hawai'i and the continental U.S. There are also state-recognized tribes, unrecognized tribes, a myriad of uncounted and undocumented Native people, people of complex mixed-heritage identities, and a wide range of Indigenous peoples living in the U.S. from throughout the Americas. There is no Native American monolith.

The purpose of the convening was to be immersed in all this complexity together with our governmental partners who provide resources to Native America—for arts and archives, archeology and linguistics, and education and wellness—in order to listen, learn, and interact together. It was understood that this was to be the first convening of its kind, but not the last, and that there would be subsequent convenings with broader participation, informed by learnings and recommendations from this one. The gathering highlighted promising practices as well as common challenges in creating, sharing, curating, researching, and resourcing Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian arts, humanities, and cultural heritage.

We see this report as a way to memorialize the convening—so those who attended can remember it and those who were unable to attend can share in its richness—and to synthesize the learning so all may find a role in advancing Native arts and cultures. The report offers a set of field recommendations for future action. These were formulated from what was addressed at the convening, advice from the Advisory Council, and existing field knowledge. The recommendations point toward critical areas of work and they are an invitation for all to keep planning and working together.

We would be remiss not to acknowledge the extraordinary times we have been living in since the February convening. The ravages of COVID-19 and calls for a racial justice reckoning have not so much changed the situation we addressed at the convening as starkly illuminated it—revealing long-standing truths about inequities and injustices. We see this as a moment of reckoning for America. What we choose to address in our organizations and communities now has the ability to create a truly equitable future that can help shape the 21st century. Truth-telling about our histories and what has brought us to where we are now is required—such as the damage rooted in the Doctrine of Discovery, slavery, and settler colonialism. The crisis of the pandemic, desires for racial justice, and climate change are forcing tough questions and demanding brave answers about who we are as a country and who we can be.

Native sacred places, lifeways, and traditions have shaped this land since time immemorial—and Indigenous people continue to create, share, and inspire despite centuries of colonization. An essential component of justice for Native peoples is the value attributed to our arts and humanities. Lifting up our contemporary artistic expressions after generations of attempted erasure and reclaiming our languages, cultures, and histories are necessary acts of Indigenous resilience and liberation.

The gathering in 2020 was a step forward on the path of Native resilience, reclamation, and relevance, and we invite all who are dedicated to creating a better future to walk with us.

—The staff of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

FIELD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

It is with commitment and hope that the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) puts forth these recommendations to the field. They were distilled from issues and ideas raised at the convening (see Addendum C: Conference Takeaways), advice from the Advisory Council, and knowledge built by many over time. The recommendations point toward critical areas of work and are an invitation to all who seek to strengthen the well-being of Native communities in America. It will take the collaboration of Native and non-Native peoples; the public, private, and non-profit sectors; and the goodwill and efforts of many individuals and communities to accomplish these goals.

Native American Women Warriors Color Guard

ADVANCE TRUTH-TELLING ABOUT NATIVE PEOPLES, HISTORY, AND OUR ARTS AND CULTURES

The ability of Native peoples to tell our own stories—about ourselves, our history, and the history of the U.S.—and to have those stories heard and amplified are vital to our survival and well-being. Steps needed to strengthen self-determined narratives include:

- Advance Native arts and cultures through Native-stewarded regular regional/national convenings for relationship building, knowledge sharing, and strategizing
- Develop, support, and conduct Native-driven and -defined research—e.g., regarding existing resources and infrastructure, and equitable cultural resource allocation for Native artists/culture bearers/cultural organizations
- Develop and disseminate educational materials from a Native perspective—e.g., regarding the dismantling of the Doctrine of Discovery, documentation of the knowledge of Native elders, language revitalization, and contemporary Native arts practices

INCREASE NATIVE POWER IN POLICYMAKING AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE

Native leadership and voice are needed in positions of influence and decision-making to shift institutional power, perspectives, and practices. Steps needed to increase Native power include:

- Advocate for Native power throughout the cultural field and its systems of support, including hiring/selecting Native people for positions in organizational leadership and staffs, and seats on boards, commissions, and advisory councils
- Build partnerships with public/semi-public cultural agencies and cultural institutions and associations to engage Native leadership in crafting policies on the curation, contextualization, access to, and use of Native material and ephemeral culture
- Create and develop more Native leadership and organizational development programs to better prepare Native cultural workers to rise in and lead museums and other arts and cultural organizations, philanthropic institutions, and public agencies

ADVOCATE FOR EQUITABLE RESOURCING OF NATIVE ARTISTS, CULTURE BEARERS, AND THE ARTS AND CULTURES FIELD

Equitable and decolonized resourcing of Native artists, culture bearers, and organizations for self-determined cultural production and infrastructure building is necessary for the advancement of Native justice. Steps needed to achieve equitable resourcing include:

- Advocate for non-Native arts and cultures funders to create/increase dedicated funding streams for Native artists, culture bearers, and arts & cultural organizations; engage knowledgeable intermediaries, when needed; and build long-term relationships with Native constituents
- Advocate for Native-led support systems and arts & cultural organizations
- Build partnerships with public/semi-public cultural funding entities (e.g., federal cultural agencies, state arts and humanities councils, regional arts organizations, etc.), private funders, and philanthropic associations to engage Native leadership in crafting policies to remove barriers and increase resources for Native artists, culture bearers, cultural organizations, and arts communities
- Increase opportunities for Native artists, culture bearers, and communities to exercise the power of creative practice to address positive social change, cultural revitalization, and community resilience

BACKGROUND

On the cold, clear morning of February 14, 2020 at Constitution Center in Washington, D.C.—home to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)—the excitement was palpable as people gathered to see old friends, make new ones, and, most of all, share, listen, and absorb the offerings of *Native Arts and Culture: Resilience, Reclamation, and Relevance*. It was a unique gathering of nations, culture bearers and cultural workers, officials and administrators, researchers and students—all committed to lifting up and nourishing Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian arts, humanities, and cultural heritage. The convening included an opening ceremony, welcome remarks, a keynote address, three sets of concurrent panel sessions interspersed with performances, and a closing session to gather conference takeaways and give thanks to all those who deeply gave of their hearts and hands to make the convening a reality.

THE OPENING

The proceedings began with an opening ceremony of song by the Uptown Boyz (intertribal, DC), a posting of the colors prayer with the Native American Women Warriors Color Guard (intertribal, DC), an acknowledgement of the Piscataway and Nacotchtank Anacostan peoples on whose lands the gathering took place, and welcoming remarks by the co-hosts of the event.

In her introduction, Lulani Arquette *(Native Hawaiian)*, President and CEO of NACF, spoke of the multiplicity of the Indigenous people of the U.S., their vast contributions and influences in shaping what is now America, and the reason to come together in support of that breadth of arts and cultures:

> *We're here because we know the incredible power of arts to both transform and preserve, to uplift and energize, to teach and reveal, to entertain and inspire. Most importantly, we know the power of arts to build empathy, create belonging, and connect us across tribe, race, gender, age, ethnicity, town, state, and country.*

Lulani then introduced U.S. Poet Laureate and incoming NACF Board Chair Joy Harjo *(Mvskoke)*, the keynote speaker for the convening. In her deep and wide-reaching address, Joy wove together the notions of the arts and our humanness, Native arts and the soul of this country, and Native people, their rootedness to the land, and their embodiment of systems of knowledge that are critical to our quality of life and to life itself.

Lillian Sparks Robinson,
Clifford Murphy,
Lulani Arquette,
Joy Harjo &
Jon Parrish Peede

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Joy Harjo *(Mvskoke)* belongs to *Oce Vpofv* (Hickory Ground) and is an internationally renowned writer and performer. Author of nine books of poetry, several plays, children's books, and a memoir, she was named the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States in 2019.

The following is an excerpt of the full keynote address:

While we are here together for a moment, let's acknowledge the culmination of all the meetings, gatherings, and organizational and ancestral help that have assisted us to convene, ponder, plan, and celebrate the resilience, reclamation, and relevance of Native arts, cultures, and humanities. Every organization has ancestors, just as we have familial ancestors. I wouldn't be standing here as an artist, nor would most other Native artists be where we are without each and every one of the organizations that are represented here, today, in this place. We are here to acknowledge the gift of the work we do, and all those whose lives are inspired, supported, and even changed by our efforts.

Let us also acknowledge the challenges, especially during these times of national chaotic cultural and climactic breakdown, because the American and world communities need what the arts provide more than ever. It's the arts that carry the spirit of a people. We need what the arts offer: dynamic, energetic life forms that give immediate and timeless shape and voice to the journey of the individual and collective soul. If we are to survive, even thrive, it will be because we take care of the arts, nourish our cultures, and build the foundation of Indigenous humanities. If this country is to integrate spiritually, creatively, and profoundly, we must nourish the roots. There is no America without Native nations, arts, cultures, languages, and humanities. Without the acknowledgement and inclusion of Indigenous roots, a land—a country—is unmoored, without stability.

For we are here because of ancestral dreaming and longing unfurling within every one of us. Our endeavors began long before we took our first breath—rather, each of us emerges from a field of familial ancestry, which includes the lands and all who are part of what we name as "land." We are here to continue a focused imagining, to assist in the visioning and support of the arts, cultures, and humanities of over 574 federally recognized Native nations, and those legitimate state-recognized tribal groups, which means essentially, we are here in support of American arts, cultures, and humanities.

This story begins with the land: how it is regarded, our relationship to it, and how we move about on it, how we honor the keepers of the land, and how we give back. Our materials, from baskets, painting, sculptural implements, instruments, inspirations, designs, architectural concepts, song concepts, and stories are directly tied to some aspect of land, landscape, and place. Many of our origin stories involve emergence from the land, or they detail how we arrived here in this place. Our relationship to the land defines how we understand our place in the world. Our cultural stories live within our DNA and unwind throughout our lifetimes, as singular entities and as Native nations and countries.

The Mvskoke Nation *(Muscogee Creek Nation)* is a confederacy of many smaller tribal towns and cultures, bound together by geography and belief. One Mvskoke story says that we emerged from darkness into this place where we were given everything we needed. We share Turtle Island and must take care of all plants, animals, and natural forces. When we veer from connection then we dim the light. When we build walls at borders, we destroy light within all of us. When our need for oil destroys the homes of caribou and polar bears, then we are destroyed.

Behind and within us each of us, individually and as cultural entities, stands a long line of dreamers, artists, thinkers. Within and through each is a network of plants, animals, natural forces that nourish and give mind, heart, and spirit sustenance. Let's acknowledge them and thank them as we begin.

We are in a crisis. False narratives have fostered a destruction of the natural environment in which we live, in which we grow children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren and make a world in which to continue. What joins the original cultures of these lands is a shared belief system in which we are not separate from the land, or from the consequences of the stewardship, or lack of stewardship, of these lands. These lands aren't my lands. These lands aren't your lands. We are the land. Together we move and are moved about with the knowledge that we are not at the top of a hierarchy as human beings; rather, we are part of an immense field of knowledge and beingness, and human contribution, though crucial, is not the most important. All have a place. What use do humans have in this bio system? Are we necessary to earth ecology?

To regard the Earth, or *Ekvnvjakv*, as a person, as a mother, is not a romantic notion. Understanding this will be essential to our survival, and as an effective

response to cultural genocide. To understand this relationship means that we have respect for life, for the mother principal, for women who stand alongside men, not beneath them. We are in crisis. We are experiencing the outcome of disconnection, of our breaking of universal laws that appear in the original teachings of nearly every culture in the world, which state: Do not take more than you can use. Respect life. Respect the giving of life. And give back.

Despite the history, the cultural repression and disappearance attempts, the damage, even carnage, we have persisted. We are resilient. Within our arts, cultures, and expressions of humanity, we have tended and envisioned ourselves as full members of resilient and living cultures. We are in the present. It is within our cultural and artistic creations that we have freshly planted images, sounds, and stories that can restore the American story, that can assist in care and respect of the environment, in the quality of life of human beings, of the earth herself.

The United Nations' Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948, defines genocide as "an attempt to destroy a people, in whole or part." It is a crime under international law. In a speech delivered in Vancouver, British Columbia, Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin acknowledged, when referring to Canada's treatment of its Aboriginal people, that "cultural genocide" began in the colonial period. Cultural genocide occurs directly, when a people's languages and cultural ways of moving about and knowing the world are systematically destroyed, when the roots—our children—are taken away to be raised in a system that lacks nourishment.

Within a few generations of the first immigrant settlements in this country, the population of Native peoples diminished from nearly 100% of the population of this country to less than ½ of 1%. We are not present as human beings. We exist predominately in the form of stereotypes, as sports mascots. "Redskins" is a deeply rooted image that is proving nearly impossible to dislodge. The word refers to the bodies of Natives brought in for bounty by those who wanted us removed to transplant us. This travesty of representation would not be allowed for any other cultural group in this country, yet for Natives, it remains, despite the fact that there would be no America without us, without our contributions to the American form of democracy, to American arts, cultures, and humanities. We are not apparent in the cultural streams that establish and define American thought, art, and culture. We are not present at the table, though we appear perpetually at the Thanksgiving table every Thanksgiving in the stories told to our children in educational institutions across the country. Natives were not there at that table. There was no table. Their heads were on stakes giving warning around the newly constructed towns by the settlers, built on Native lands. These false narratives of Native nations, peoples continue a story of cultural genocide.

Cultural genocide means the destruction of the essential cultural legacy of what is American. There is no America without all of our tribal nations and what we contribute, without acknowledgement of our arts, cultures, and humanities.

Each of us carries primal and developed concepts and shapes within us. They are tied directly to geographical places and generational understandings. This is true for all of us. Indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere are directly tied to these lands because we have been here for generations—our bodies are this land. To disappear us is to delete libraries of languages and knowledge systems.

The arts, cultures, and humanities of this land, this place that we call the United States, are ingrained in the ageless depths of this land and its original people and have continued to be sown in profound layers of influence that have been introduced by immigrants of every continent and nearly every world culture.

A healthy cultural system is marked by diversity and movement. Diversity ensures that life creates and continues creatively, which is the primary mode of human development. Artists and purveyors of cultural knowledge, keepers of earth, know this—we move toward that which has been unimagined to make fresh avenues of meaning, avenues by which we can move understanding.

Now, anyone in the world with a computer and Internet access can be influenced by a diversity of sounds, concepts, and cultures. Our resource network is extended. We humans are story

gatherers, that's what we do, and we've continually developed new technologies to support this.

Our future will grow within this immense field of creativity that defines movement toward understanding, away from false narratives, from processed stories and thinking.

We must be ready to reopen the wound, and even open to revising the story—and that is done by the artists, the thinkers, and the dreamers—those who can envision from within this immense field, and Indigenous artists must be part of the leadership in the revision of the American story.

This convening is the beginning step to open a larger dialogue, to continue to develop strategies and support in the field of becoming. This convening offers us a chance to design a path for how we move forward toward a Native arts, cultures, and humanities that is an inherent part of the American cultural flowering.

We are here together to carry the creative and thoughtful spirit of the people forward, to assist in feeding the imagination, the heart and soul of the people. It is only through arts that humans acquire a knowledge that connects us as in that immense field of meaning, that connects us to each other, to the plant people and the animal people, to spirit and to the earth, *Ekvnvcakv*.

ONCE THE WORLD WAS PERFECT

Once the world was perfect, and we were happy in that world.
Then we took it for granted.
Discontent began a small rumble in the earthly mind.
Then Doubt pushed through
With its spiked head.
And once Doubt ruptured the web,
All manner of demon thoughts
Jumped through—
We destroyed the world we had been given
For inspiration, for life—
Each stone of jealousy, each stone
Of fear, greed, envy, and hatred, put out the light.
No one was without a stone in his or her hand.
There we were,
Right back where we had started.
We were bumping into each other
In the dark.
And now we had no place to live
Because we didn't know how to live with each other.
Then one of the stumbling ones took pity on another,
And shared a blanket.
A spark of kindness made a light.
The light made an opening in the darkness.
Everyone worked together to make a ladder.
A Wind Clan person climbed out first into the next world.
And then the other clans, children of those clans, their children,
And their children, all the way through time, into this morning light,
To you.

Poem by Joy Harjo

PANEL SESSIONS

Six panels took place throughout the day, exploring a range of topics designed to deepen understanding of and strengthen supports for Native arts and cultures. Panel speakers and moderators were Native leaders, artists, activists, curators, culture bearers, and educators, and they engaged with a diverse audience of Native artists, Native leaders, and colleagues from government agencies, foundations, and the non-profit arts and culture sector. Each session uniquely revealed the resilience of Native peoples through their contemporary artistic and cultural expressions and the work to revitalize, reclaim, and sustain Indigenous knowledge.

PANEL 1:

INFORMING NATIVE TRUTH THROUGH RESEARCH AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

PANELISTS

Crystal Echo Hawk *(Pawnee)*,
IllumiNative

Shelly C. Lowe *(Navajo)*,
Harvard University Native American Program

Francene Blythe *(Diné/Eastern Band of Cherokee/Dakota)*,
Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

MODERATOR

Betsy Theobald Richards *(Cherokee)*,
The Opportunity Agenda

Moderator **Betsy Richards** *(Cherokee)* is Director of Cultural Strategies for The Opportunity Agenda, a social justice communication lab that works to advance the impact of the social justice community. Betsy framed the panel session around the importance of the stories we tell about ourselves and how to advance a national dialogue to shift dominant narratives and positively effect change in attitudes, behaviors, practices, and policies for Native peoples.

She defined the term "narrative" as: a broadly accepted story that reinforces ideas, norms, issues, and expectations in society. "This story is created most often by the dominant culture and is carried through societal channels such as education, museums, public art, news media, and entertainment." She explained that work in narrative change is about transforming people's understanding in ways that facts and advocacy alone cannot.

Crystal Echo Hawk *(Pawnee–Kitkehahki band)* is Executive Director of IllumiNative, a non-profit initiative designed to increase the visibility of, and challenge the negative narrative about, Native nations and peoples in American society. She spoke about the power of narrative—both in terms of the good it can cause as well as the harm. In particular, she addressed the issue of the systematic erasure of Native peoples and how it is difficult to make policy changes if decision-makers don't know that you exist.

Crystal described her intention to cover the audience with a "data blanket" that would reveal American attitudes, knowledge, and understandings of Native Americans. Her talk centered on the findings of the Reclaiming Native Truth (RNT) project. Started in 2016, RNT—the largest public opinion research project ($3.3M) of its kind ever done about Native peoples—was conducted with top national pollsters and researchers from across the country. Literature reviews, focus groups, in-depth interviews, message testing, national polls, and extensive social media analyses were all part of the research.

RNT continues as a national effort to foster cultural, social, and policy change by empowering Native Americans to counter discrimination, invisibility, and the dominant narratives that limit Native opportunity, access to justice, health, and self-determination. RNT's goal is to move hearts and minds toward greater respect, inclusion, and social justice for Native Americans.

> ***If we can change the story, we can change the future.***
> Crystal Echo Hawk

Crystal illustrated just how much invisibility is baked into the systems and national consciousness of the U.S. In a 2015 study conducted by Professor Sarah B. Shear and others, it was found that 87% of state-level history standards fail to cover the history of Native peoples after 1900, and that 27 states make no mention of a single Native person in K–12 curricula. "Generation after generation of Americans are coming out of that system and they're literally conditioned to think that we no longer exist." Native American characters are only present in <.04% of primetime television and film, and in that miniscule amount, what you mostly find are tropes of "the savage Indian," "the mystical, magical Indian," and other harmful stereotypes being created by non-Native people.

The RNT research included interviews with policy influencers such as federal court judges and law clerks, the majority of whom, it turns out, never took a law class in federal Indian law and struggled to define tribal sovereignty. Crystal related the words of one federal judge: "Indigenous? To me that equals primitive." Members of Congress were interviewed who admitted that not knowing about and understanding the issues of Native people does affect their decisions.

The RNT project also uncovered that 78% of Americans know nothing about Native peoples. Crystal continued, "A significant percentage aren't sure that we exist. And 72% of Americans never encounter information about us anywhere." Given all of this, it is unsurprising that two-thirds of Americans don't think that Native people face discrimination. This erasure fuels bias and makes advocating for Native rights difficult because non-Native people can't understand or empathize with the lives of Indigenous people.

The takeaway that Crystal underlined was that systems change is what is needed to combat this profound ignorance of the lives and history of Native Americans. Researcher Dr. Stephanie Fryberg *(Tulalip)* names the issue plainly: "Invisibility is the modern form of racism against Native Americans."

The other problem with invisibility is that what little does penetrate the national consciousness is most often stereotypes—racist sports mascots, caricatures in film/TV/newspapers, and over-sexualized images of "Native" women. Crystal noted that more than 500 Native women and girls went missing in January 2020 and no one is talking about it. She raised the questions: What is the link between those images and the high number of murders and missing Indigenous women and girls? What are the results of this ongoing dehumanization?

> ***Our most revolutionary acts as Native peoples to fight racism is being visible—through our art, through our words, through our images, through our standing up and fighting for policies today.***
>
> Crystal Echo Hawk

The roadmap forward is disrupting the invisibility. The RNT project did another round of polling in 2018 and reframed the Native issues they spoke to people about—informing people that Native Americans are still here and of the history, such as, 500+ broken treaties with Native nations. It was found that when offered accurate narratives, 78% of those polled wanted to learn more about Native Americans and the same percentage believed it was important to feature more stories about Native Americans in media and entertainment. Seventy-two percent supported accurate Native history being part of K–12 curricula. Crystal closed by saying "The time is now—Americans want contemporary representation […] That's how we are going to change the future."

Shelly Lowe *(Navajo)* is from Ganado, Arizona and is Executive Director of the Harvard University Native American Program and a councilmember for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). She principally addressed the functions of the NEH and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as regards Native peoples—the distribution of their resources and examples of projects that seek to strengthen Native controls over their own cultural heritage. She also raised the challenge of institutionalizing practices and ways of thinking that lift up Native perspectives.

Shelly explained the work of the national humanities and arts endowments by first emphasizing that they have a lot of financial resources to offer Native peoples, but that not enough applications are coming in from Native communities, organizations, and tribal colleges. Though funding has gone out to innovative projects that are leading and changing the narrative of Native peoples, there is much more that could be accessed. She stated that more work needs to be done to raise awareness of these opportunities.

The NEH and the NEA have analyzed where their funding is going—what types of organizations and geographies—and have found that rural areas and some states in particular are very under-represented as grant recipients. Shelly was excited by this first-ever national Native convening with the NEH and NEA, and the efforts to improve this situation, but was sad that it took so long for the gathering to happen.

Shelly underlined the importance of addressing the invisibility that Crystal spoke of and outlined steps that she thought should be taken. First, read the RNT report. Then, share it widely and make use of the resources that go with it designed for use by Native people and non-Native allies. She pointed to Mary Downs, Senior Program Officer at NEH, who tracks Native American-related programs/ opportunities/ applications, as a valuable ally. Shelly also cited a couple of NEH-supported projects that she hoped would be useful for people to know about and serve as inspiration.

The projects that Shelly highlighted were Mukurtu, an open source content management platform built with Indigenous communities to manage and share digitally cultural heritage held by museums and research institutions. Indigenous groups set the rules and standards for how the collections are accessed, used, and cared for. The second project focused on empowering Native people to provide local context and traditional knowledge labels for objects that are not in their care. Collections

at museums and academic institutions are often seen as resources for researchers rather than being of value to the communities they came from. "It's a way for tribes and communities to say, 'This is ours,'" Shelly explained. Native people, for example, get to set terms of access by specifying who can see specific content, at what time of year, and the content's purpose. These are two examples of different approaches to managing and caring for Native cultural resources in concert with Native communities. She also pointed out that having the support of the NEH or NEA can give an imprimatur to projects and help them attract attention and additional resources.

Shelly identified relevant, ongoing questions important for Native communities:

- How do we find out where collections of our cultural heritage are?
- How do we collaborate with institutions to craft policies for access and use?
- How do we decide what we have ownership of?
- How do we continue to adopt practices that give power to Native perspectives?

> ***We have to figure out how to break down these structures, dismantle them, and reassemble them in ways that really do help us continue to live the arts and humanities lives that we live in . . .***
>
> Shelly Lowe

She ended with a story of when she came to the NEH. She was asked by the then-chairman when she first became interested in the humanities. She didn't understand the question because she thought of the arts and humanities as always having been a part of who she was, not something separate. Shelly stated that we have to get funding agencies, organizations, and universities to understand that the arts and humanities have always been a part of who we are—they've always been a part of how we think and how we address things in the world.

"We have to figure out how to break down these structures, dismantle them, and reassemble them in ways that really do help us continue to live the arts and humanities lives that we live in, that we've always lived, and that we know that we're going to continue to live."

Francene Blythe *(Diné/Eastern Band of Cherokee/Dakota)* is Director of Programs at the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF). She outlined the history and trajectory of NACF and its new endeavors in the realms of support for Native artists and culture bearers, advancement of positive Native narratives, and catalyzing efforts for social and environmental justice.

NACF, one of the organizers of the convening, was created in 2009 as the result of a Native arts community consultative process and feasibility study conducted by the Ford Foundation and led by Betsy Theobald Richards when she was a program officer there.

Francene explained that when the Foundation reached its ten-year mark, it paused to do an evaluation of its decade of programming and revisit its organizational structure, focus, and mission. The original NACF mission was to support the demonstration, appreciation, recognition, and revitalization of Native arts and cultures of the American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian peoples. She explained that the mission going forward is to advance equity and cultural knowledge—focusing on the power of the arts and collaboration to strengthen Native communities and promote positive social change with American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native peoples in the United States. The Foundation will do this in four focus areas: supporting and presenting Native artists/culture bearers, developing partnerships, expanding awareness of and access to Native knowledge, and being a catalyst for positive social and environmental change.

Previously, NACF gave individual fellowships and made small grants to arts organizations. But in the future, Francene explained, it will be making larger grants to social change projects that will address the environment, cultural practices, education, and narrative shift. These projects will be regional,

interstate, national, or international. The focus areas of the new grants were determined by a broad field survey that found 75% of respondents prioritized issues regarding the environment (e.g., land stewardship, natural resources, sacred sites, climate change); 72% prioritized cultural preservation, revitalization, and/or protection (e.g., food ways, language, traditional practices); and 58% prioritized perceptions and awareness of Native peoples.

Three projects were highlighted that had been supported by the Foundation in the past. Those were:

- *Wisdom of the Elders' (WOTE) Native American Film Academy and Climate Change Festival:* a regional project in the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana) that trains Native youth to create short documentary films on environmental issues by interviewing elders in their community. WOTE provides venues for screening works created through the program, and youth films have also been broadcast on PBS through Vision Maker Media and entered into film festivals.
- *Northeast Indigenous Arts Alliance's Youth Art Mentorship:* a two-phase mentorship program where youth learn about Narragansett traditional arts (such as basketweaving) and become familiar with food sovereignty issues, the history and origins of traditional foods, and how to plant, harvest, and prepare traditional foods.
- *The Story of Everything:* a multidisciplinary performance piece by spoken word artist and physicist Kealoha Wong that seeks to answer the question "Where do we come from?" by juxtaposing Indigenous knowledge (in this case, Hawaiian creation stories) and Western knowledge (astrophysics and evolution).

Francene made the point that we are seeing more instances of Western science catching up to Indigenous knowledge. She noted old Navajo protocols for pregnant women that entailed the understanding that unborn children experience the world before birth. Yet, it is only in more recent times that Western science has promoted playing music to babies in the womb.

> ***We're seeing more and more in science [that] our Indigenous knowledge really existed first and it's Western science that is catching up to us.***
>
> Francene Blythe

The presentation concluded with Francene drawing together the various pieces laid out by the other speakers and relating them back to the work of NACF—Betsy's having laid the foundation for the creation of NACF, the Foundation's new plans to advance and amplify the visibility efforts of Crystal Echo Hawk and IllumiNative, and connecting Native artists and communities to museums and collections to deepen relationships and understanding for both Native and non-Native peoples.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

After the presentations, Betsy asked if anyone wanted to share a success story. Crystal said that data really do have the power to move people to change and spoke about how land acknowledgements were being done at Sundance and the Oscars to honor Native people, past and present, and that Paramount provided funding to tell the story of the Keystone pipeline, which aired last fall. It was also noted that the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies would be sharing the RNT research with its constituency.

Someone from the audience mentioned the success of Princess Johnson's *(Neets'aii Gwich'in)* "Molly

Crystal Echo Hawk, Betsy Richards, Shelly Lowe, & Francene Blythe

of Denali" in fighting stereotypes. Another person mentioned the initiative of the San Francisco Arts Commission to project contemporary images of Native Americans in public places, for example, at a site where the controversial statue, *Pioneer Monument*, was taken down.

Shelly noted that after ten years of advocacy, Harvard University had hired its first tenured Native faculty member. Both she and Francene mentioned the power of building partnerships, for example, with tribal colleges and universities and pooling resources with other funders.

Betsy also asked about challenges that people are facing in lifting up Native voices. For artists, the tension between making work accessible to communities and being sufficiently compensated for their work was mentioned as an issue. In universities, there is the ongoing dynamic of too few Indigenous people on faculty and being asked to speak for all Native peoples. For public funders, there can be bureaucratic and legal challenges to implementing changes in their practices based on the feedback they get from Native communities.

PANEL 2:
RECLAIMING AND REVITALIZING NATIVE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

PANELISTS

Donald Soctomah *(Passamaquoddy)*, Passamaquoddy Tribe

jessie little doe baird *(Wôpanâak)*, Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project

Delores Churchill *(Haida)*, Weaver, Visual Artist, National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow

MODERATOR

Lori Pourier *(Oglala Lakota)*, First Peoples Fund

Moderator **Lori Pourier** *(Oglala Lakota)* is President/CEO of First Peoples Fund. In this panel, Lori underlined the importance of hearing from those who hold their Native languages and recognizing the role they play in revitalizing and sustaining community life.

Lori was born and raised on the Pine Ridge Reservation. She began her career in DC with the First Nations Development Institute. Later, she returned to her homelands in South Dakota and took the helm at First Peoples Fund over 20 years ago. She is studying her language along with her daughter and granddaughter through the Red Cloud Indian School. She admitted how hard it was to move forward in her studies, so she felt particularly honored to be able to introduce her panelists as knowledge carriers for their communities and as an inspiration to her for how and why she does her work.

Lori sequenced the panel by starting with Donald Soctomah, being a part of "the people of the dawn" *(Wabanaki)*, moving on to Wôpanâak territory with jessie little doe baird, and ending in the Northwest with Delores Churchill.

Donald Soctomah *(Passamaquoddy)* is Passamaquoddy Historic Preservation Officer for his tribe, and he explained they have two communities in Maine and one in Canada. "In Canada, we're known as *Peskotomuhkati*, which means 'the people who spear pollock.' Pollock is a big fish and if you're in a birch bark canoe on the open ocean, you gotta have good balance."

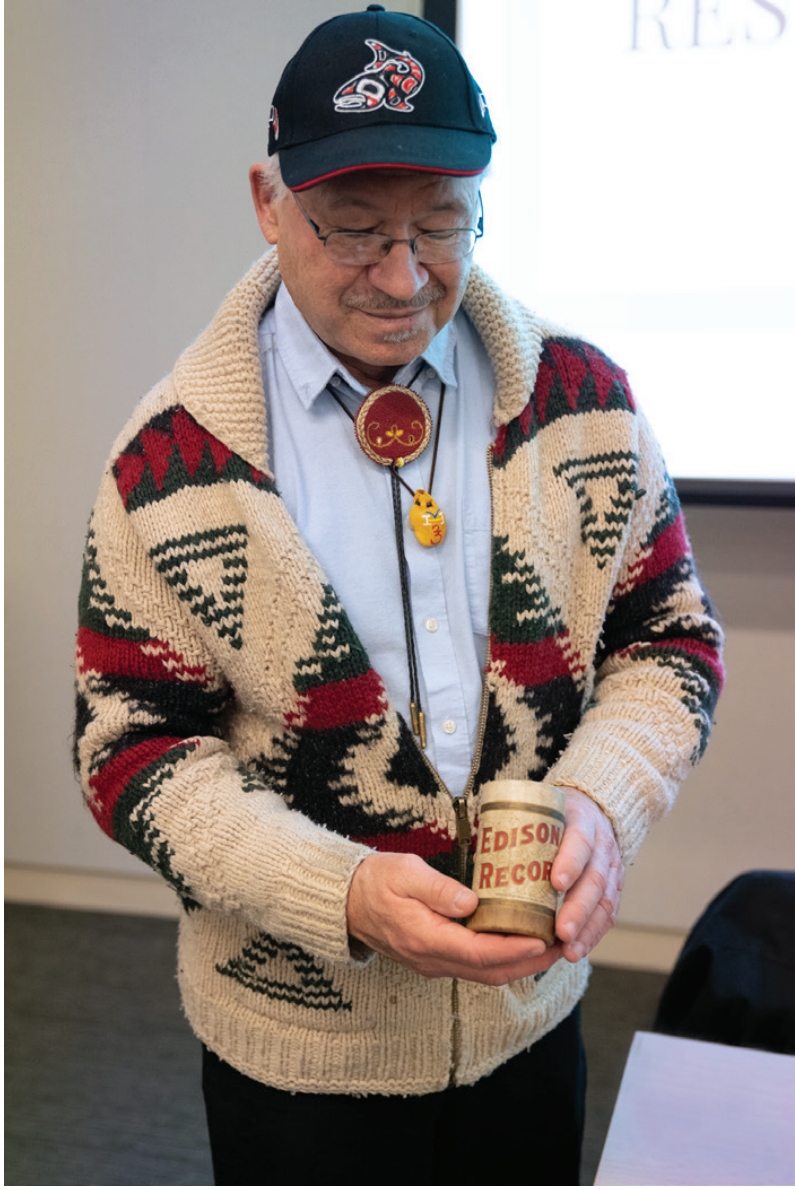
Donald began his presentation by saying in Passamaquoddy "I'm always talking from my heart—the beating drum. I call my heart 'the drum.' So as I play my drum, I'm speaking truth to you and all the spirits that gather around us—the spirits of the great wood chopper, the spirits of the whirlwind. They're always with me and I feel protected that way."

Thanking the Library of Congress and the American Folklife Center staff for their support, Donald focused his presentation was on some of the first field recordings made on wax cylinders that are housed at the Library. In the late 1800s, Mary Hemenway, a Boston philanthropist, convinced a friend in Maine to have her husband, Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes, a natural scientist-turned-ethnologist, record the Passamaquoddy on the Maine-Canada border. In 1890, Fewkes approached a group of Passamaquoddy about the recording, and three men who were culture bearers stepped forward and shared what they could—given the limits of the technology. Donald described the improbable situation: "If you were sitting there and someone says, 'Can you speak to my talking box? And you're going to hear your voice come back.' Kind of crazy right? […] They did a number of songs. Each one of these cylinders can hold, maybe, two and a half to three minutes. There're not many Native songs or stories that are two minutes

long! So, we have bits and pieces." Fewkes made 31 recordings—many of which were experiments testing recording distances, weather conditions, etc., given that field recordings had not been done before. Donald brought an example of a wax cylinder from the Office of Thomas Edison that he found at a yard sale to show the audience. "If you have your eyes open, all of a sudden you see these [cylinders] everywhere."

Donald described the deep contradictions of the time these activities to record Native lifeways were going on. He reminded people that 1890 was the same year as the massacre at Wounded Knee. "As I think about the history that was going on across the country, this is part of the story, too. In the Western part, they're trying to exterminate; in the Eastern part, they're trying to hold on to some of the culture that's going to disappear. If you read a newspaper in 1890, it would say, 'Native people are disappearing. You better get their artifacts, get their voices, get everything.' So, this was the start of that. And when you put it with Wounded Knee, it's like night and day to me."

Fewkes also travelled to the Southwest and gathered voices of the Hopi, Zuni, and other Native communities. These voices were stockpiled; many were stored at Harvard's Peabody Museum. But the technology was disappearing and breaking down, so the Library of Congress started The Federal Cylinder Project (1979) to preserve the information and find out what was on thousands of wax cylinders—many of which were not labeled. One of the best linguists of Passamaquoddy, David Francis, who was in his 90s, listened to the first round of recordings. They were also shared with some of the fluent speakers, but to no avail—it was too difficult to hear through the scratches. With digital technology, it finally became possible to reduce the sound distortion and people could hear the words and the songs more clearly for the first time. Through sharing the material, again with fluent speakers—first with the youngest speaker so he could relay the words and songs to elders (many with hearing problems)—this 1890s "old Passamaquoddy" is finally being reconciled with today's Passamaquoddy. It is still being vetted by an elders' review committee to make sure it's right before it is shared with the younger generations, who are hungry for it, Donald noted.



Donald Soctomah showing an example of a wax cylinder from the Office of Thomas Edison

Donald Soctomah, jessie baird, Delores Churchill & Lori Pourier

He was able to share one of the fruits of these labors: a video of Dwayne Tomah singing and explaining the purpose of a snake song. By way of introduction, Donald mentioned that when he was growing up, he had been led to believe that a snake was evil. "Well, it's not evil, it's part of our stories and it's part of the battle between traditional knowledge and Christian knowledge […] the battle that took place for us since 1604. I'm not anti-religious or anything. I'm just saying the battle took place—the battle for people's minds and souls."

In the video, Dwayne Tomah illustrates the way the snake song brings people together in a slow, deferential, and methodical way, and with a patience that

> ***When we have this chance for something coming back to us, we've got to make every effort that we can to preserve it and make it part of us again because it's part of your and everybody's DNA.***
> Donald Soctomah

ensured the inclusion of everyone. He explained, "This was a ceremony, a gathering song. This is how they described it when Jesse Walter Fewkes came to Calais, Maine […] This is part of the ceremonies and rituals that were done to be able to make connection with one another because that was so important for our villages, to make connection with each other, to get to understand our culture and language […] [In] the songs and dances and ceremonies were always a lesson to be learned, always a lesson to be learned."

Donald explained that the long journey of these songs and dances returning to the community was a beginning. "The voices of our grandfathers that came back […] they're energizing another generation, so that the songs and the stories will never leave our community no matter what forces are trying to take it away […] When we have this chance for something coming back to us, we've got to make every effort that we can to preserve it and make it part of us again because it's part of your and everybody's DNA."

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jessie little doe baird *(Wôpanâak)* is a co-founder of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project, Vice Chairwoman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Tribal Council, and a MacArthur fellow. She focused her presentation on the origin story of the language project and what it has meant to her community.

jessie greeted all with a Wôpanâak morning salutation meaning "You're in the light" and continued in her language to give thanks to the local Indigenous people and ancestors. She then began describing her unusual journey to what has become her life's work.

In 1993, jessie had been supporting battered women and homeless families—work that she loved. But she became so beset by thoughts about the lost Wôpanâak language that she contacted a respected elder of the Aquinnah Wampanoag, Helen Manning, and asked if she knew anything about the language. It turned out that she did and believed it was time to call people together to talk about reviving it. That was how the language project started.

jessie explained that there had been no Wôpanâak speakers for about 170 years. But surprisingly, she found they had the largest collection of Native written documents on the continent, due in great part to an Englishman John Eliot, who came to Massachusetts in the 1630s. His and other English immigrants' interest in teaching the Wampanoag about Christianity led to some Wampanoag learning English and the eventual translation of the Bible into their language—documenting some 60,000 words. This Bible in Wampanoag became the first printing of the Bible in any language in North America.

> ***"In the '90s, there had been no Wôpanâak speakers for about 170 years, but the language had the largest collection of Native written documents on the continent.***
>
> jessie little doe baird

There were hundreds of other documents in Wôpanâak that were also used to reclaim the language. Using the English alphabet and understanding the power of written documentation, the Wôpanâak recorded land and resource agreements from both before and after first contact. Longstanding histories of female and male leaders (the Wôpanâak are a matrilineal society) were also recorded.

The Bible translation gives insights into some Wôpanâak points of view that were different from the English. There isn't a one-to-one Wôpanâak-to-English correspondence for some words. For example, there are two words for the verb "create"

in Wôpanâak: one refers to something people can make, like a chair; while the other is used in reference to things that spring from nature.

Much progress has been made in re-establishing communities of speakers: an orthographic system has been standardized; a master-apprentice program was created and supported by the Administration for Native Americans; a curriculum has been developed; and community classes, immersion camps, after-school programs, and a library have been created. The local school board has approved the curriculum and young people can take Wôpanâak to fulfill their second language requirement credit.

Acknowledging these successes, jessie also noted that they did not come easily. "We have to make everything for the school from scratch. So, it's a lot of work, and we always need more hands […] This year is the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Mayflower in our territory. There were 69 tribes in our nation when the Mayflower landed. There are three left on our traditional homelands […] My people are suffering this year, trying to stop the federal government from removing the trust status from our lands. We're fighting to retain one half of 1% of our land. But language has been an important part of that journey."

Delores Churchill *(Haida)* is a weaver and visual artist, a First Peoples Fund Community Spirit Award honoree, and a 2006 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) National Heritage Fellow. She spoke about how many different efforts in the Northwest to reclaim Native languages and cultural practices are revitalizing communities.

Delores began by sharing the three rules of public speaking told to her by her uncle, Chief Wiah (William Mathews). First, begin by saying Xaada 'láa isis (Good people), so they will listen to you. Second, don't speak about yourself or your family. Third, speak for only five minutes. Luckily, she did not adhere to the last piece of advice. He also told her "the only connection we have to our ancestors is through our language" and so she focused her remarks principally on the importance of language.

Delores first acknowledged the successes of language reclamation efforts in Hawaii and how people from the Pacific Northwest visited there and learned from those experiences, particularly the use of "language nests" (early childhood immersion programs). She reflected that some years later, "I went to language nests in my village where my great-grandchildren were learning Haida. And I was so amazed how they could speak […] and they were singing Haida songs." She explained that one of the songs the children were singing was one she recognized. "It made my tears run because when I was a child when we went to the beach everybody would sing that song. Because the raven taught people how to dig clams and cockles […] They're not only learning the language, but they're learning the culture."

The Haida in Canada also have programs to strengthen language skills. Delores described a program at a senior center in Skidegate (British Columbia) where elders go every day to speak Haida with each other and with youth who want to learn. She emphasized the importance of positive reinforcement. "One of the things I saw was there's nothing negative ever said to the learners […] You should never [laugh at students] because it discourages them. It makes them not want to learn the language." She witnessed 20 to 30 fluent speakers coming each day and noted that Haida was being taught in school as well.

Younger people are also taking the initiative to preserve their language and become teachers. Delores told the story of Ben Young *(Haida)*, who has degrees in education and Haida from Butler University and Simon Fraser University, respectively. But Ben's formative learning was with his grandfather, Claude Morrison *(Haida)*, whom Ben went to live with in the final five years of his grandfather's life. Ben is now the director of the Haida language nest in Hydaburg, Alaska. Delores also mentioned Lance Twitchell *(Tlingit)*, Associate Professor in Alaska Native languages

> ***"We want our language. We want our dance. We want our story. We want our culture taught in the schools.***
> Delores Churchill

Delores Churchill & Lori Pourier

at the University of Alaska Southeast, and another younger generation educator dedicated to keeping his language alive. With a Ph.D. in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization from the University of Hawaii, Lance not only teaches Tlingit at the university and in the community, he also advises on Tlingit-related poetry, music, theater, and film.

Delores pointed to grassroots advocacy as a driving force of revitalization efforts that serve whole communities. "There was a parent-teacher group that went to the school board and the school borough assembly […] and said, 'We want our language. We want our dance. We want our story. We want our culture taught in the schools.' And you know, they're doing that out in a town that is 12,000 people, and only 25% are Native." And where her granddaughter directs a program at Fawn Mountain Elementary School in Ketchikan, AK, all the children, not just Native children, were immersed in Tlingit culture and were being taught Raven stories, how to pronounce Tlingit words correctly, and how to dance, drum, and sing.

Another example of how to creatively integrate traditional practices with other curricula is Sharing Our Box of Treasures, Sealaska Heritage Institute's partnership with the University of Alaska and the Institute of American Indian Arts to link Northwest Coast arts such as basket weaving and canoe building with mathematics. Delores team-taught with a mathematics professor. "Basketry and Raven's tail, every bit of it is mathematical. You cannot do a basket with a design unless you know math. This program […] is so exciting because I think other communities can learn to do that."

Delores closed her remarks by referring to the following passage and her deep belief in the importance of maintaining language:

> *There is trauma connected to language loss and healing associated with language revitalization. The historical trauma was passed from one generation to the next. The first generations of language speakers were punished for speaking their first language. Self-determination in this context is the language community being in full control of the future of their language. It has to be a basic principle that language programs don't wait for things to happen. They make them happen.*

There was no formal question and answer session for this panel.

PANEL 3:
THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND PRACTICES IN SOCIAL CHANGE

PANELISTS

Maya Austin *(Pascua Yaqui/Blackfeet)*, California Arts Council

Joyce Begay-Foss *(Navajo)*, Museum professional, Weaver

Patrick Makuakāne *(Native Hawaiian)*, Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu Dance Company

MODERATOR

Lulani Arquette *(Native Hawaiian)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

Panel moderator **Lulani Arquette** *(Native Hawaiian)* has been President/CEO of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation since its founding in 2009. She opened the panel by sharing three important values that her parents communicated to her when she was growing up:

> *Kūlia i ka nu'u – Strive to do your best*
> *Malama 'aina – Care for and respect the land*
> *Aloha kekahi i kekahi – Take care of and love one another*

She explained how she saw these values embodied in the work of the panelists—their beautiful and important efforts in support of their communities regarding the lifting of Native voices and visibility, preservation of and access to material culture, and maintenance of cultural practices and sacred sites—as well as the challenges of doing this work.

The speakers began with an initial introduction of their background and work, and then were able to delve deeper into details—the context, particular activities and experiences, and insights from their years of training, teaching, advocating, and learning.

Maya Austin *(Pascua Yaqui/Blackfeet)* is Arts Program Specialist at the California Arts Council. She spoke about the evolving nature of Native American storytelling through film and media. She outlined how she sees the phases of development in this sector, the generations of Native filmmakers who are influencing and being influenced by each other's work, and the possibilities that are opening up for the next generations.

Maya was Senior Program Manager for the Native American and Indigenous Program at Sundance Institute for the last ten years and managed the Institute's global investment in Indigenous storytellers. In particular, she helped to identify a new generation of Native media-based storytellers and cultivate them starting with initial story development through to production with a goal of having the work shown at Sundance and in Native lands.

Maya is now back in her hometown of Sacramento working at the California Arts Council (CAC) managing a portfolio of programs looking at the

statewide investment in the creative ecosystem, with a focus on how the CAC is working with Indigenous communities. She is also Vice Chair of Vision Maker Media, which is supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and exists to serve Native producers and Indian country in partnership with public television and radio.

Lulani posed the question to Maya: Can you speak to what progress you've seen in the Native stories being produced in the last ten years, and what challenges did you face?

Maya explained that in order to support Native storytellers well, the Sundance Institute needed to look at the history or filmic genealogy of Native filmmaking and how that has influenced Native filmmakers over time. What they identified was essentially four generations of filmmakers exemplified by:

- 1st generation: Alanis Obomsawin *(Abenaki – Kanehsatake, Trick or Treaty?)* and Merata Mita *(Māori – Mauri, Patu!)*
- 2nd generation: Chris Eyre *(Cheyenne/Arapaho – Smoke Signals, Skins)* and Heather Rae *(Cherokee – Frozen River, Trudell)*
- 3rd generation: Sterlin Harjo *(Seminole/Muscogee – Four Sheets to the Wind, Barking Water)*, Billy Luther *(Navajo/Hopi/Laguna Pueblo – Miss Navajo, Grab)*, and Taika Waititi *(Māori – Boy, Jojo Rabbit)*
- 4th generation: Lyle Mitchell Corbine, Jr. *(Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians – Shinaab, Shinaab: Part II)*, Razelle Benally *(Oglala Lakota/Diné - Raven, War Cries)*, and Shane McSauby *(Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians – Mino Bimaadiziwin)*

Maya explained she sees a fifth generation emerging with artists who are funding and cultivating not only their own work but each other's work and creating tables where new work can be developed and produced. Despite this heartening progress, she reminded the audience that *Smoke Signals* (1998) is still the only Native American film that received national/international distribution by an entity such as Miramax.

> ***We can tell Indigenous or non-Indigenous stories, but it's all Indigenous storytelling.***
>
> Maya Austin

With this outline of generations of filmmakers, Maya also sketched the trajectory of how concerns in the field have been evolving from *What are our stories? to How do we engage the field and the industry to let them know our stories matter and that we matter? to Rather than for mainstream audiences, why don't we create films for each other? and We can tell Indigenous or non-Indigenous stories, but it's all Indigenous storytelling.*

She went on to explain that the field shifted significantly when the digital platforms arose (e.g., Netflix and Amazon) and that they are not only interested in showing the work, but also in cultivating artists through their development programs. Sydney Freeland *(Navajo)* directed two films for Netflix and also started working under Shondaland at ABC.

Maya articulated her view of where Native media-based storytelling is now. "*Thor: Ragnarok* is an international Indigenous film. I think everything Taika does is Indigenous. Even if we're not telling a distinctly Native story, you can't separate the two [the story and the storytelling]. Whenever I watch *What We Do in the Shadows*, I see it as an allegorical story about feeling outside or on the fringe of society in your own homeland on your own land […] So I think what we're seeing right now is a shift, and I don't know necessarily where

it's going to take us, but I think it's really exciting. But the road that got us there was really being able to articulate who we were […] and trying to figure out our own story and where we came from. And once we were able to do that, we were able to tell our story […] and then we were able to start engaging the field and engaging the industry."

Sundance's Indigenous program has evolved from developing work at the Institute to bringing films to Native lands in order to engage youth by seeing themselves on the screen, then bringing them to workshops so they are in the room for script reads, revisions, and watching the dailies. The goal is to keep involving them with the content and the steps in the development process, so they can become the next generation of Native filmmakers.

Joyce Begay-Foss *(Navajo)* is an award-winning weaver and long-standing museum professional. She focused her remarks on passing on knowledge of Native cultural practices and histories to new generations, the importance of place in grounding that knowledge, and the necessity for Native peoples to be able to control access to their material culture and how it is interpreted.

Joyce recently retired as Director of Education from the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico, after 23 years of service there. She is also a weaver and was taught traditionally by the generation before her mother. She explained that Navajo society is matriarchal, "so the women are in charge, guys. I say that in a good way because it's our responsibility to carry on our culture and our tradition. I came from a very strong weaving family, so that set me up on a pathway."

Joyce noted that even though Santa Fe is known as a Native arts town, people usually only know a few of the pueblos and that many Native peoples still suffer from invisibility. "It's like we're still not here. But we are here. This is our homeland […] Even with curriculum, even in the State of New Mexico, teachers are not teaching about Native American history. They'd rather teach about Billy the Kid, who was an outlaw."

As a counter-narrative, Joyce showed a slide of Spider Rock in Canyon de Chelly, AZ. She explained that part of its significance historically is that it is the place from which Kit Carson marched Native people in the 1860s hundreds of miles to Bosque Redondo, Fort Sumner, NM, and yet it also holds the memory of Native peoples' resistance and resilience. "We are survivors of genocide […] We have to be resilient and proud, and we have to teach our young people why we are here. Even our young people don't know who Barboncito and Manuelito are—early leaders that signed a treaty with the U.S. government."

She also noted that Spider Rock is a powerful place for Navajo weavers as the home of Spider Woman/ Na'ashjé'íí Asdzáá. Showing a slide of a Navajo chief's blanket and a basket, Joyce pointed to their Spider Woman design references. "Why is weaving important? […] I want to go back and touch base on art. We don't have a word for art in Navajo. This is not just art. It's cultural knowledge." Thinking of Native material culture as 'art'—a basket, a blanket—displaying it in museums, and divorcing it from the place and context in which it was made can strip the meaning and significance of it. "As an education director, but being Navajo, I have that traditional perspective. We need to show that [perspective] more in publications, institutions, museums, and art shows to educate people."

Joyce spoke about how she was lucky to come from a traditional weaving family, but she acknowledged that not everyone who wants and needs to learn weaving has that advantage. She pointed out the importance of making Native peoples aware of the collections that museums are holding, about making those collections accessible, and making sure they are displayed and contextualized accurately. For these practices and policies to be realized requires having Native people inside these institutions who have deep traditional knowledge and lived experience of practices and protocols—not just non-Native staffers with advanced degrees from the academy. Stepping into this work as a Native person sometimes means standing your ground about how things are displayed (or not) and what information is shared (or not).

Many distinct, yet interconnected, ideas flowed through Joyce's presentation like different strands

Maya Austin, Joyce Begay-Foss, Patrick Makuakāne & Lulani Arquette

binding the warp of a complex weaving. Issues she raised included: cultural misappropriation of traditional and family designs, cultural and intellectual property rights and what is considered "in the public domain," environmental rights and protections, and the requirement of Certificates of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIBs) for tribal enrollment. Joyce exhorted Native young people in particular to become lawyers who could fight for Native rights and values. She also called on tribal leadership to do their part on these policy issues, but that ultimately, everyone was needed to do this work. Though she may have just retired from her museum work, Joyce had a significant "bucket list" and the energy to go with it. Her passion for the next generation's access to cultural knowledge and the fight for Native rights didn't look to be waning, despite her retirement.

"I'm a protector. In my clan family, I'm a warrior, so I have to live up to my name. There are those of us out there that are very traditional. We know our culture […] We need to protect it. I say this as a mother and grandmother. I worry about

> ***We need to worry about our environment. We need to be protectors, not just water protectors. We've got to protect everything—family, water rights, education […] It's a spectrum. It's your whole life.***
> Joyce Begay-Foss

the future generations. What are we leaving for our kids? We need to rebuild our foundation of cultural knowledge and make sure that they're learning their language, the traditional culture, the meaning of traditional design […] It takes a major feat to accomplish some of these things that we need. Like my elders would say, you can't say no, no is not the word, you have to do it. There's no turning back. No excuses. Because time is short and we need to do it for our kids."

Patrick Makuakāne *(Native Hawaiian)* is a kumu hula and founder of the halau, Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu. He invoked the power of embodying traditional culture and its power to heal, inform, and inspire. He talked about how the deeper value of dance was not necessarily in its performative aspect, but in participating in it in order to experience vulnerability, humility, strength, and connection.

Patrick, originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, founded his halau 35 years ago in San Francisco. He is also co-artistic director for the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and the spiritual advisor for the Native Hawaiian religious/spiritual group at San Quentin State Prison. He has also been participating in the actions to block the building of the Thirty Meter Telescope atop Maunakea on the island of Hawaii.

As his introduction, Patrick invited everyone's participation in sending out an intention to their ancestors. He pointed out that no matter what belief system each person may hold, that all indisputably have ancestors. Encouraging everyone to be active and not passive, Patrick asked all to stand and prompted their participation in a part of the chant that referred to ohana (family) and at that point asked the audience to shout clearly and intentionally their family name. He then led the group in breathing deeply together and began the chant.

NA 'AUMAKUA

Nā 'aumākua mai ka lā hiki a ka lā kau
Mai ka ho'oku'i a ka hālāwai
Nā 'aumākua iā ka hina a kua
Iā ka hina a alo
Iā ka'a'akau i ka lani
'O kīhā i ka lani
'Ōwē i ka lani
Nunulu i ka lani
Kāholo i ka lani
Eia nā pulapula a 'oukou 'o ka ohana
E mālama 'oukou iā mākou
E ulu i ka lani
E ulu i ka honua
E ulu i ka pae 'āina o Hawai'i
E hō mai ka 'ike
E hō mai ka ikaika
E hō mai ke akamai
E hō mai ka maopopo pono
E hō mai ka 'ike pāpālua
E hō mai ka mana

A PRAYER TO THE ANCESTORS

To our ancestors, from the rising
to the setting of the sun
From the zenith to the horizon
Ancestors who are behind us,
in front of us, to the right of us
A reverberant sound can be heard
in the heaven by our voices
We are here, your descendants
Watch over us
Let us flourish in the heavens
Let us flourish here on earth
Let us flourish here in our native land
Grant us wisdom
Give us strength
Give us intelligence
Afford us true clear understanding
Let us see beyond what our eyes can see
Give us the power, strength, and resilience
that we can make a difference in our community.

Patrick began his talk by describing his work at San Quentin. Though he teaches hula there, he does so under the auspices of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act as a spiritual advisor to the prisoners. So he teaches hula, not as dance, but as a rite, a service. As circumstance would have it, he currently has no Native Hawaiians in his Native Hawaiian spiritual group. The population he works with is very transient. However, there are a substantial number of Pacific Islander men in the prison as well as other island men from Asia. Patrick was concerned about whether or not they would understand him, given he is a Native Hawaiian, and they are not. But he found they do understand the cultural values he introduces—the respect, the behaviors. He teaches by example and that's how they learn—and he finds their sense of confidence builds as does their abilities to express themselves.

Patrick's work is to go beyond the surfaces and into the deeper history, values, and meaning of the movements and rituals he teaches and explore the range of emotions that are a part of them with the prisoners. The men have responded with commitment and dedication, so much so that Patrick is developing a program to continue working with them once they are released from prison.

The beauty and power of working in the prison was lifted up in Patrick's presentation, and he encouraged others to take the opportunity to experience it. "To be valued, to be acknowledged, to be loved, and to take all of that and mix it together and create art. I really watch these guys soar. It's been a privilege and a pleasure to be dealing with these men [...] If you have a chance to work in the prison system, please do it. You will come out of there feeling the most rewarded you ever have."

Patrick segued to the protests against the building of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Maunakea, the world's tallest mountain, on the island of Hawaii. He explained that the mountain is designated as conservation land, and yet there are already 13 observation facilities on the mountain. Environmental concerns abound, but issues of protecting the land go beyond endangered species. "Forty to fifty years ago, people never said the o-word—'occupation.' But now we clearly understand under international law Hawaii is occupied by the United States. There is a new set of vocabulary and mindset which people are working with now, and it's culminating on that mountain. It's bigger than the issue of a telescope."

> ***"It's not performative. It's ritual. And we as Native people, we can use ceremony and ritual to elevate our consciousness together.***
>
> Patrick Makuakāne

Patrick spoke about the agency that people were gaining from these actions and how traditional cultural practices were functioning to both inform and inspire. There is a protocol that has been taking place every day to block the road on the mountain leading to the building site—a collection of dances and chants—and whoever is there is allowed to participate. What used to be protected activities are now being shared and taught to the people who are coming to defend the mountain. "It's not performative. It's ritual. And we as Native people, we can use ceremony and ritual to elevate our consciousness together."

There are still many issues to work out about what is at stake in fights for protections, rights, and sovereignty, but Patrick sensed a new kind of power to be rising in people. "We're not all the same. We don't all believe the same thing. But this time, we might not be on the same page, but we're reading the same book, and that's a big improvement. There's hope out there for us."

Joyce Begay-Foss & Maya Austin

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Some issues raised during the session by the panelists, moderator, or audience members that seemed particularly alive for further discussion, examination, and action included:

- How do we get more young Native filmmakers into film school and into the pipeline? How do we cultivate more scholarship and film criticism from a Native point of view?
- Whose voice matters—particularly in museums—someone with traditional, first-hand knowledge of the meaning and significance of material culture or someone with a Ph.D.? How do Native people assert their right to their culture?
- How do we show that having a program like Patrick's in San Quentin can help with recidivism and be able to find more ways to get support for such programs and across different sectors?
- In Indigenous philosophy, we don't view the humanities and the arts as being separate. So, applying to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and other funders who make that distinction is problematic, if not impossible. How do we break down those barriers of cultural bias?

PANEL 4:

NATIVE & NON-NATIVE COLLABORATION: Institutional and Community Partnerships that Matter

PANELISTS

Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)*, Dance Place (DC)

Anna Needham *(Red Lake Ojibwe)*, Arizona Commission on the Arts

Daryl Baldwin *(Miami Tribe of Oklahoma)*, Myaamia Center, Miami University (OH)

MODERATOR

Joseph Kunkel *(Northern Cheyenne)*, Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative

Moderator **Joseph Kunkel** *(Northern Cheyenne)* is a community designer, planner, educator, and Executive Director of Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative (NM), which was founded in 2009 to advance the development of culturally and environmentally responsive housing design within American Indian communities. The panel focused on the experiences of a diverse group of Native leaders in the arts and humanities in relation to collaborations between Native and non-Native peoples, organizations, agencies, and institutions and how these kinds of collaborations can be transformed and strengthened.

Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)* is a DC-based choreographer/performer/educator, and Executive Artistic Director of both Christopher K. Morgan & Artists dance company and Dance Place, a center for dance performance, creation, and education. His Native Hawaiian lineage and training in ballet, modern, jazz, and hula have informed his work as an artist and administrator. His story mainly focused on two examples: how crossing cultural borders can provoke resistance and how a historically White-led cultural institution can collaborate with a Native curator to good effect.

Christopher began by making a point about his ancestry—Native Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, German, and Irish—and the federal policy that makes him "not Hawaiian enough" (that is, less than 50%). "I am 47% Native Hawaiian and sitting in a federal institution right now. Actually, I do not have enough Hawaiian blood to qualify for anything that the federal government provides in terms of reparations."

Within a conversation about Native/non-Native collaboration, Christopher wore at least two different hats: one as a Native Hawaiian artist performing in non-Native institutions and the other as a relatively new head of an old organization that is broadening its curatorial vision. "We [at Dance Place] intend to reflect the broad diversity, cross-section, breadth of this incredible city that we live in. So, within that, there needs to be a strong strain that represents the Native and Indigenous folks both from this region and from across the country."

Christopher's story of his journey as an artist revealed more layers of complexity. The arc of his work has been in exploring the intersectionality of his identities, but he has encountered many points of resistance to his crossing seemingly invisible, but very real borderlines in making his work. He explained that funders who knew him as a modern dancer were skeptical of his investigations of hula, venues that had expectations of what his work should look like wanted it to stay that way (no leis, please), and his being a mainlander raised some questions among his fellow Native Hawaiians about his intentions. It was feeling like working in this way was not meant to be.

But things eased up. His new work, Pōhaku, got

some traction, and Christopher was then contacted by Rosy Simas *(Seneca)*, a dance artist working with the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts (St. Paul, MN) to produce a Native festival. He described this partnership between a historically White-led institution (accustomed to producing musicals and orchestral concerts) and Rosy, a Native artist, as noteworthy. What stood out for him was 1) the Ordway centered Rosy's voice in the curatorial process, 2) she was paid, 3) she had final review of marketing materials, and 4) she had a strong authoritative voice over composing an elders council and deferring to their judgment. Christopher noted that developing processes with this kind of integrity took time, but that it could be useful for organizations to think about their already-existing ways of negotiating international partnerships, because "these are international partnerships […] There're these ways that within institutions we can lean into practices that we already have and shift the lens of who we're providing those opportunities to."

> ***There're these ways that within institutions we can lean into practices that we already have and shift the lens of who we're providing those opportunities to.***
>
> Christopher K. Morgan

The experience with the Ordway and Rosy continued to be a good one as Christopher arrived in St. Paul to perform and do community engagement work. The St. Paul team had established a partnership with Little Earth, a housing complex for Native people. "They chartered a bus. I had 25 Native folks between the ages of 7 and about 80 get on this bus with me, and we went to Mdewakanton Sioux land that was under construction to become a cultural art center. As part of the performance of Pōhaku (which is the Hawaiian word for "stone"), in every venue and community we perform it, we gather about 100 stones from that community and they become part of the set of the piece. Once the piece is done, it's restored to that land where it was borrowed from. So these 20 some people […] helped us gather the stones there. The Ordway staff were there. They sent a photographer. They provided lunch. They really thought through every layer of the process. They had spent a lot of time building the relationship with the program person at Little Earth to make sure that they felt welcome to go in on this process […] It's a really shining example for me of a way that a partnership in a historically White-led institution engaged with a Native curator and deeply supported the practice of a Native artist."

Anna Needham *(Red Lake Ojibwe)* is a theater artist, arts administrator, and Indigenous rights advocate. In 2019, she became Artists Programs Coordinator at the Arizona Commission on the Arts, creating grant opportunities and programming for individual artists. Having recently become an arts funder, Anna aimed her comments toward the ways she sees her sector needing to change in order to serve Native artists and communities better.

"As somebody who works for the state arts agency of Arizona, I really think about, and my agency thinks about, 'Who are we actually serving?'" As a funder in the public sector, Anna uses Census data as a touchstone for her advocacy for Native artists. She noted that the 2018 data show "about 5% of Arizona is Native. That means for a state with about seven million people, there're 380,000 Natives. We have an individual grant that's $5,000 that lets artists research and develop, explore, and deepen their practice and not have to worry about having a final product […] From 2013 to 2019 […] we've funded over 100 artists and have only had one Native artist." The Commission conducted focus groups

Joseph Kunkel, Christopher Morgan Anna Needham & Daryl Baldwin

with successful and unsuccessful applicants to understand what the barriers were—particularly for Native artists. Though applications numbers have more than doubled, getting the information into the hands of Native people is still an issue, as is people's understanding of their eligibility to apply.

Anna sees a number of funder practices that have raised issues for Native communities. An overarching problem is the existence of structures that Native people must fit into to be seen as qualified or legitimate, whether or not those structures are appropriate to their circumstances or needs. Digital tools continue to be double-edged—good for convening people remotely in large, rural areas, but challenging when the lack of good internet connections makes having only online grant applications problematic.

> ***I'm always bringing a colleague with me when I go up to Hopi, so it's not just me that's building relationships with them, it's our entire institution.***
>
> Anna Needham

Anna underlined that taking the time to build consistent relationships between agencies and communities is vital to being able to work in a more intentional way—not just "throwing seeds around and seeing what blossoms." Sometimes that work can be a stretch because of staffing limitations, but it's important to make sure agency commitments extend beyond one person. She explained, "I'm always bringing a colleague with me when I go up to Hopi, so it's not just me that's building relationships with them, it's our entire institution."

Anna's final point was about funders needing to do more to share their knowledge, resources, and partnerships with the community in order to build "networks of understanding." Funders can be conduits for connection and information hubs in addition to resource providers. "My vision of [supporting] self-determination as a funder is the community's having the option to know everything to make an informed decision."

Daryl Baldwin *(Miami Tribe of Oklahoma)* is the founding director of the Myaamia Center at Miami University in Oxford, OH. The Center is dedicated to the promotion and revitalization of Myaamia language, culture, knowledge, and values and is an initiative of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma in partnership with Miami University. He was recognized as a MacArthur Foundation Fellow in 2016. Daryl shared the story of how the Myaamia Center was founded and the characteristics of the relationship that made it possible.

Daryl introduced himself in Myaamia and explained why Washington, DC, is referred to as meetaathsoopionki or "the place of ten sitters" in his language. "It's a term that's used not only in our language, but a couple of related languages. It apparently refers to our ancestors and other tribes coming to Washington, DC, walking into a room and having ten people sit around a table to negotiate with […] It's an interesting thing that by using my language, I'm drawing on that history, that deep history we have in the development of the United States."

The relationship between Daryl's tribe and the Miami University is nearly 50 years old. He pointed this out to underscore that relationships take time and that there can be bumps in the road in building them. In 1972, Chief Forest Olds stopped on the campus that bore the name of his tribe on his way to a meeting in Cincinnati, and this visit marked the beginning of this contemporary relationship. Later in the 1990s, the tribe struggled with the university around their use of the Redskins mascot. By the mid-1990s, the university made the name change. Also around that time, the university created the Miami Indian Heritage Award to attract young tribal members to attend with a fee waiver. The numbers of students the award attracted remained pretty low for about a decade. But a turning point occurred in the late '90s, when the tribe received its first Administration for Native Americans (ANA, an office of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services) language preservation grant. Daryl, along with colleagues Julie Olds and David Costa, had been doing this work. "We very quickly realized that we just didn't have the resources. A small tribe in northeast Oklahoma, obviously living in diaspora—we needed help."

The tribe reached out to the university, and though neither was sure what resources were needed to support the work, they negotiated a two-page outline for a position on campus to explore the possibilities. That position was created in 2001 and the university agreed to fund it for three years and then re-evaluate it. Daryl then became the director of what was then known as the Myaamia Project. A wise decision was made from the start to have the position report to Student Affairs in order to prevent getting caught up in departmental politics. "It gave me really quiet space within Student Affairs for me to explore what might be possible—with the guidance of the tribe, for the benefit of the tribal community. This was a position that was created

to directly respond to the language and cultural educational needs of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, first and foremost."

> ***What Miami University did was they created tribal space on campus for us to step into and to direct the activities of that space. I think that was critical.***
>
> Daryl Baldwin

For the next ten years, there was a tremendous amount of exploration that was critical to the development of the project—and the university was hands-off. "I had complete freedom and flexibility to travel to Oklahoma, to develop youth programs, to engage with our linguist in California, and to do a whole host of things. I was pretty much on my own working closely with the Miami Tribe's Cultural Resource Office." Over time, both sides saw how well the project was doing and agreed to keep going. And here was the remarkable thing: "During this entire period, there was no MOU, MOA, no agreements. It was very fluid, very open. It was explorational [...] What Miami University did was they created tribal space on campus for us to step into and to direct the activities of that space. I think that was critical."

In 2013, the Myaamia Project became the Myaamia Center, an interdisciplinary research center, tribally directed to respond to the tribe's educational needs in language and culture. Today, there are 16 full- and part-time staff, Native and non-Native. Daryl emphasized the importance of the Center's creating and sustaining its culture. "There's a saying in our field: 'you got to grow your own.' And we literally have trained a whole generation of young folks to come out and take this effort on."

The Center produces critical content for the development of curricula for educational programs for all age groups and, serving a community in diaspora, makes use of technology to develop learning-in-the-home initiatives—all tribally driven. Because of that, Daryl pointed to an important addition to the work made recently around assessment. "We had to be able to explain to tribal leaders why this was important [...] The people that hold the purse strings are tribal leaders who spend their days with attorneys and business people. You do have to learn how to be able to say 'This is important to the well-being of the community. And here's why.'" Data on youth identity formation, graduation rates, community engagement, and more are tracked over time. The Center also pursues long-term collaborations and partnerships. "We still can't do this alone. But what is important is that we're in the driver's seat."

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

In the question and answer period after the presentations, a number of questions were raised that deepened the discussion of how to reconcile and build strong relationships.

Joseph posed the question regarding relationships with funders: "How can we create the space to allow for these relationships to develop over the time knowing that this is a healing process, knowing that we're working within a space that's going to take time to develop?"

Daryl found the question a resonant one. "In many ways, we are trying to recover from a lot of the damage that's been done in the last hundred plus years. And in order to really respond to that, there needs to be a certain amount of capacity building within tribal communities. And that takes time and that takes exploration, that takes making mistakes […] I think what's important for agencies that are providing funding is you've got to allow time and space for communities to develop their capacity. As time goes on, the skill level goes up, the participation goes up, everything improves over time as long as you can stay consistent with it."

Anna added that funders need to learn from and respect the expertise of the people in the communities they serve. It's not about "coming in and saying 'Oh, look at what we have. Do you want it or not?' […] It's actually giving [the community] the power in the situation all the way through and continuing to build off it."

To illuminate a different facet of the question about funders taking time, Christopher addressed the urgency of the needs of the times we are in and the minimum percent payout of most foundations. "The time is now. Make change. Shorten the timeline […] Increase the percent that you're getting out. What is this 5%? [...] Why not seven? Why not ten? We're in a world of crisis. Why not get it out there?"

Joseph then asked about the reconciliation of the parts of oneself as a creative Native person inside of Western structures and institutions, and pointed to his own Beaux Arts training as a designer and needing to reflect back on his community's cultural practices.

Christopher noted, "so much innovation happens when you bring different minds together. And so if I'm trying to reconcile, integrate, connect, innovate with different aspects of my own identity and my own training, often that innovation births something new and exciting." But he also acknowledged that the notion of blending could raise the issue of appropriation. "I think as long as there's depth of research, meaningful relationship, and deep dialogue that happens, appropriation doesn't happen. It becomes this new thing as long as all of those other elements are there—right relationship is a big part of that."

Anna added that walking in two worlds, having had the benefit of an education at NYU and being a Native arts funder, she feels the obligation to share as much of that knowledge as she can with Native communities and to say, "here're the rules that they're using. Now go and play with it and mess around with it and change what arts administration really means" from a Native perspective.

Many other questions and suggestions arose around the issue of funding in Native communities.

- When many culture bearers and practitioners don't think of themselves as artists and consider process as important as product, arts funders need to rethink their funding structures and requirements if they want to serve Indigenous people.
- Who can help bridge the gaps in cultural understanding between Native communities and funders and facilitate outreach to connect resources to those who need them? Who are the buffers, the filters, the translators, the intermediaries?
- What does signing a contract mean for communities who have seen so many treaties broken?
- What would it take to sit down and have a conversation with a program officer instead of having relationships mediated by pieces of paper, not be required to apply and report annually, or have a relationship that spans years, not just one grant cycle?
- If there were a good framework for funding Native communities or artists, what would it look like?
- When you have over 500 tribal communities, there are no models. Useful ideas and approaches can be shared, but there is no shortcut to meeting communities where they are and being open to exploring.

One of the final questions that Joseph asked was about the notion that Daryl brought up about "growing your own" in terms of staff and organizational culture. What did it entail? For Daryl, this meant a long-term endeavor that must be community driven. He explained that the younger generation needed assistance "to help them reconnect with their cultural heritage—and that language and cultural education, community building are all part of that and the reintroduction of our value system as a tribe. And when that all comes together in a learning environment, our youth bond with each other, they learn with each other, and it starts to strengthen that generation."

Daryl emphasized the initiative must be grounded

Christopher Morgan & Aaron Salā

in the community, but "if the younger generation doesn't pick up their heritage in such a way where they're willing to promote and engage with their language and culture, then it's pretty hard to move forward […] So we spent a lot of time structuring things around that. Youth can come into our programs at a very young age from the time they're born […] Today, we have 32 tribal students on campus; half of those kids are coming out of our youth programs. So what we've done is we've created an educational pipeline. And one of the outcomes of that is not only their learning experience, but it's a chance for us to help them learn how to take whatever field they may go in and contribute back to the tribe in some way, whether it's through studies in law, business, arts, environment, whatever that may be. There's a way to integrate Myaami into that, so that they feel not only engaged with their heritage, but a way to help build the nation."

PANEL 5:

FOR US, BY US, WITH US: HOW TRADITIONS AND VALUES INFORM INDIGENOUS ARTS TODAY

PANELISTS

Andre Perez *(Native Hawaiian)*,
Koi'honua

Winoka Yepa *(Navajo)*,
IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts

Aaron Salā *(Native Hawaiian/ Samoan)*,
Hawai'i Arts Alliance

MODERATOR

Carolyn Melenani Kuali'i *(Native Hawaiian/ Mescalero Apache)*,
Kua'aina Associates, Inc.

Carolyn Melenani Kuali'i *(Native Hawaiian/ Mescalero Apache)* is President and Executive Director of Kua'aina Associates, whose vision is to support the continuity of Indigenous knowledge and expression through arts and cultural practices as a means to evoke a new vision during a new time. Carolyn began by acknowledging the Nacotchtank people of the place commonly known as Washington, DC, and stated that as Native artists "we support the voices of their descendants [...] [to] continue to thrive and live and to reclaim and retell their stories—and that's what our panel is about today."

Before the presentations began, Carolyn posed couple of questions for the audience to reflect on as they listened to the presentations:

- How do traditions and values inform Indigenous art today?
- How do innovation, evolution, tradition, and authenticity blur the lines between Western concepts of tradition and contemporary Native art?

Kicking off the session was **Andre Perez** *(Native Hawaiian)*, a culture practitioner, community activist/ organizer, and co-founder of Ko'ihonua, a non-profit organization dedicated to reclaiming and providing cultural space for Hawaiians to learn, practice, and engage in their traditions and practices. Originally from Koloa, Kauai, Andre currently resides on O'ahu where he is completing his master's degree in Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. His remarks centered on his journey in the revitalization of Hawaiian wood carving, specifically to the carving of Ki'i (god images) that has led to a resurrection of Hawaiian ceremonial practices.

"I am a late student. I spent a lot of time as a community activist and organizer and cultural practitioner learning from our elders. Then I decided to go to school to enhance the work that I was doing. My MA research started out around Hawaiian carving traditions and narrowed down to the carving of Hawaiian Ki'i, which are the images of our gods." Andre then polled the audience to see how many had heard of tiki or tiki bars. Andre noted that the show of hands demonstrated "how appropriated and exploited these images, carved images of our gods, are" and explained that "tiki" was an older Southern Polynesian word for "Ki'i."

Andre became aware of the need to fill a knowledge gap in Hawaiian Ki'i carving when the restoration of a heiau, or large temple, was happening on the Big Island in Kona, and there were no Hawaiian carvers to recreate the images that once stood on the sacred site. "They had to contract a Marquesan carver, who resides in Hawaii, and really nice man, but I saw that there was a problem when we [didn't] have carvers to restore the images of our gods." So, Andre decided to do his MA research on the methodology of kinship.

"I created a simple methodology for the sake of satisfying my professors that I called a 'methodology of kinship'." It was based on connections and similarities in such things as

Andre Perez, Winoka Yepa, Aaron Salā & Carolyn Kuali'i

geology, language, and religion. And that led Andre to "our Māori cousins." He explained that though the M-āori think of Hawaiians as their elder cousins, they have "some of the strongest carving traditions in all of Polynesia"—some that are unbroken. Through his research, Andre met one of the most famous and accomplished Māori master carvers—Lyonel Grant.

Andre had countless detailed questions for Lyonel—about tools, aesthetics, and carving techniques from beginning to end. Finally, Lyonel made Andre an offer he couldn't refuse: "Hey bro, you really want to understand carving, you gotta carve. Why don't you get some guys together and let's train them?" Andre disclosed, "I was speechless. I always use this analogy: if you're into martial arts, this was like Bruce Lee offering to be your personal teacher."

It took a couple of years, but Andre pulled together a group of what they themselves jokingly call "the nobodys"—guys without artistic recognition, but with a passion for carving. He wanted to spread the knowledge beyond the usual suspects. They trained and then formalized a group, Hui Kālai Ki'i o Kūpā'ike'e; brought in Hawaiian living treasure master carver Sam Ka'ai; and created a carving apprenticeship program. They focused particularly on

> ***Hey bro, you really want to understand carving, you gotta carve.***
> Andre Perez quoting Lyonel Grant

the traditional use of the ko'i /adze, which Andre argues is "probably the most important tool in all of Polynesia. No adze, no canoe; no canoe, no Polynesians, no Hawaiians, no Maoris, no Samoans, no Tongans, no Fijians. It's the ko'i that shapes the canoe. And this process, that of carving [...] we call kālai."

The carving apprenticeship not only served to revitalize the practice of Hawaiian Ki'i carving, it also restored knowledge of the protocol, prayers, chants, and understandings of the carving process in a ceremonial context. Though Andre admits this can cause discomfort to some, he sees this restoration as a critical piece of a decolonization process. "We're trying to break that yoke of Christian domination by reconnecting, replacing value, and believing in the mana—the spiritual power of our gods—and shedding that yoke of hegemony that comes with so-called religions of salvation. 'Behave this way, so that you can go to this special place. If you don't behave a certain way, you don't get to go, you go to this very bad place.' We don't believe in that. That's somebody else's story. That's not our story. Part of our goal is to reconnect or reestablish our relationships [...] between our kānaka, the people; akua, the gods; 'āina, the land; and the holistic relationship of interdependence between our understandings of that relationship."

Another distinction that Andre took pains to convey was that one of their objectives was to create practitioners, not just artists. "Art is good. I like art, but [...] it's individualistic oftentimes. Whereas a practitioner, a carver, you're carving for the community needs, you're carving for your society, you're carving for the religious needs of your people. And I use the term religion very intentionally […] Religion is protected by the Constitution, so we're very intentional about the use of that term."

Linking to the idea of serving one's community, Andre spoke of his work on Maunakea. He had helped to organize the camp on the mountain, and since half of the carvers were already there, they did a carving workshop. They had been given lama (a sacred wood of the ebony family) by the Big Island community, and they decided to carve something to "establish our memory, so that we never forget what happened at this time in space." Then, they gifted the images to the Mauna community—the elders and the practitioners.

Showing some pictures of the carvers on Maunakea with the Ki'i they made, Andre invoked the meaning of their actions on the mountain: "We call upon our ancestral gods to be with us, not to fight the battle for us, but to stand with us as we fight our own battle to protect our land and our way of life."

Winoka Yepa *(Navajo)* was born and raised on the Navajo reservation in Shiprock, NM. She is a photographer and Senior Manager of the Museum Education at the Institute of American Indian Arts' Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MOCNA). Winoka is a fifth-year doctoral candidate in education and museum studies at the University of New Mexico with research focused on identifying alternative and new representations of Indigenous identity from a decolonization perspective. She spoke about her investigations into how art-based practice can impact the development of identity with Indigenous youth.

Winoka began by telling the story of how she came to pursue her studies. Though raised on the reservation, Winoka knew very little about her Diné culture, the language and history. Her father grew up in a traditional home. "He attended ceremonies, spoke the language on a daily basis, knew the traditional stories and philosophies of our people. But unfortunately, much of that was taken away from him when he went to boarding school." Her mother grew up away from the reservation and, like

Winoka, didn't know much about Diné culture—until she met the man who was to become her husband and began to learn the language in order to communicate with her mother-in-law.

> ***I didn't really know myself as a Navajo woman because it was something that I didn't learn about when I was young, even though I grew up on the reservation.***
>
> Winoka Yepa

Winoka didn't begin to explore her identity as a Diné woman until she went to college. She met other Indigenous students who shared their histories, cultures, and philosophies with her, but found she had little to share with them. So, she decided to get a Native American Studies degree and took on a project of examining her identity. "I spent many weeks with my amá sání/grandmother completely immersed in the Navajo language, listening to her stories that ranged from cultural stories to family stories about my father, my grandfather, and family I never met. Throughout much of this time, I kept a journal of my thoughts, my prayers, lessons, moments of frustration when learning the language, and also just the joy of hanging out with my grandmother. I also captured much of my time with her through photographs and through drawings."

Photography became an important part of Winoka's life—first as a hobby, and then eventually as a way to explore her identity and pursue her research. She found that using photography and other art forms was a productive method to help other young Indigenous people explore and represent themselves. Mostly working with teens, Winoka tried many different kinds of projects—"everything from teaching them how to do digital/analog photography, digital storytelling [...] a lot of spoken word and writing poetry, songwriting, things like that." Through this, a range of stories emerged from the youth "from just personal stories—things that happened with their family and just memories"—to some confrontations with racism and discrimination, but also a lot of their own cultural stories and tribal narratives.

The sharing of tribal stories was a good indicator for Winoka that she had created a safe space for the youth to open up about their backgrounds, since "you don't really do that with just anyone." She also understood that they had few outlets for exploring their identities in school and expressing themselves in creative ways. So her research led her to look at what factors were influencing the identity formation of Native youth—from posting on Instagram to place-based considerations to tribal values. In this process, Winoka found herself interrogating her own cultural heritage and how it has informed her identity. And this led her to hózhǫ́.

Hózhǫ́ is a concept that is part of Navajo philosophy that, by a standard definition, is "the condition in which health and well-being are in balance, in harmony with each other." According to Winoka's grandmother, hózhǫ́ is being happy and healthy, listening to your heart, making sure your mind is right, doing well. But when she asked Winoka what it meant to her, Winoka realized she needed to stop looking to everyone else and to define it for herself. "I was thinking, if I don't know what it means then I am not living in hózhǫ́, I'm not living that life, and I need to explore more."

That exploration has been to incorporate hózhǫ́ and other concepts of Diné philosophy (sa'ah naaghai bik'eh hozhóón) into her work as a scholar and educator. Winoka has been building programming for youth around these concepts. "I developed

a project where I guide students through those four life principles, but in the very broadest form possible because I'm working with students from all different Indigenous backgrounds and they have their own philosophy, their own history, their own stories."

In doing this work, Winoka has seen parallels in decolonizing theory. She sees the Diné idea of conceptualization as being akin to understanding of self and noted that they say "to decolonize yourself, you need to understand who you are as a person." She lifted up the sequence of the four life principles as a pathway to being an advocate for others—"for your community, for your Indigenous brothers and sisters, for the environment, for Mother Earth, for Father Sky."

Winoka's goal is to work these ideas from her research into the educational programming at MOCNA. She wants to create a template using these Diné principles, but have it be open enough for students to transform it into something they can call their own. "I really wanted them to also be able to include their own principles, their own philosophy […] It's something that I'm working towards." With these efforts, Winoka is creating a cultural framework that conjoins indigeneity with liberation.

Aaron Salā *(Native Hawaiian/Samoan)* was born on O'ahu and raised in Hawaii and Samoa. He has trained in voice and piano in the Western European classical tradition and in traditional Hawaiian chant. He is an award-winning vocalist, pianist, composer, arranger, and conductor. He is also a doctoral candidate at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Aaron addressed the productive tensions between Hawaiianness and non-Hawaiianness in himself and in society.

Aaron somewhat mischievously introduced himself in an Alcoholics Anonymous-style with: "My name is Aaron Salā and I am colonized." He followed up by admitting that "it is wonderful to say that to a group of brownies who might understand both individually and collectively what colonization might feel like, to know what it is to be entangled in the complicated cloak of colonization." Aaron went on to describe how his colonization "manifests itself in the music that uses me as its vessel."

Aaron spoke about his trajectory as an artist. On the brink of starting a career on the East Coast as an opera singer, he made the radical shift to stay home in Hawaii and reinvent himself to occupy what he thinks of as a liminal space between his Hawaiianness and his European training. "The work that I have the privilege of performing really exists in the limin, that period or area of threshold that is neither here nor there, or perhaps better, both here and there and everywhere in between."

> ***"The work that I have the privilege of performing really exists in the limin […] that area of threshold that is neither here nor there, or perhaps better, both here and there and everywhere in between.***
>
> Aaron Salā

Aaron has gotten recognition for the form of liminal or blurred artistic work he has been creating. So when he became involved with the movement of protectors of Maunakea, he was approached by a Japanese hula teacher—Seiko Okamoto—to collaborate on a piece to raise awareness in Japan of its complicity in the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project. Aaron explained, "a Tokyo-based company is responsible for building the mirrors that would become part of the TMT." Eventually, he and his wife wrote a multimedia musical production that incorporated video of hula being danced on the mountain as well as footage of Hāwane Rios, a singer and activist of the movement, climbing Maunakea.

"I wanted a way for us to tell of the tension in a really beautiful way between what was happening—Hawaiians finding ourselves again or showing the world that we have found ourselves—the tension between Japan as manufacturer of these mirrors, and what was happening in the Hawaiian community. I went back to a mele that was written for Queen Emma. Queen Emma was vying for the throne […] at the same time as Kalākaua […] What is fascinating about these two is that Kalākaua went

outside to validate his capacity to rule, and he built treaties with the Emperor Meiji of Japan and the Queen of England. And Queen Emma, she went inward. She climbed the mountain, she toured the islands [...] that tour of the archipelago is forever memorialized in song, in mele […] and I set it to new music."

Aaron spoke of the complex layers of context that ended up in the finished piece—the tensions of "blurring" the non-Hawaiian with the Hawaiian, the tempered and untempered singing and instrumentation, resurrecting an old song that references both the dynamics of looking outward and looking inward, and placing that old song in a new context. Musically, Aaron juxtaposed his singing the mele using a tempered scale and singer Snowbird Bento chanting the mele "according to her soul." His piano playing was blended with a fue, an untempered Japanese bamboo flute. And then there was a Japanese hula dancer who, though deeply immersed in the tradition, was not of it.

Aaron showed a video clip of the piece and let it demonstrate what he had taken pains to describe—his artistic reckoning of the complications of living in a globalized world. "I wanted to really get in the blur of the line, get into that liminal space, and make that space safe."

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

At the end of the presentations, an audience member congratulated Winoka on the work she was doing and encouraged her to keep at it. "What you did was take the Navajo learning principles of sa'ah naaghai bik'eh hózhǫ́ and implement them as a museum educator and I commend you for that." She thought it was very creative to take these principles and use them in a museum context, not just in a university setting.

Before the session ended, Andre wanted to point to issues surrounding the use of the words "traditional," "classical," and "authentic" in the arts field, in particular, with regard to Native cultural practices. He uses the word "tradition" loosely because he believes it is tied to a misconception of how practices are actually realized, and he referred people to the work of Albert Wendt, a Samoan scholar. "[Wendt] argues that nothing is traditional. Everything starts out as an innovation; somebody creates it. Tradition' is a colonial term that locks us into the past." Andre thinks of the notion of something being "classical" as referring to things that came from a practice or aesthetic of a former time and not bound by any ethnic culture. "When we move forward in revitalizing practices, 'tradition' becomes kind of a limiting term. I've had people tell me, 'That's not traditional.' Well, what is tradition? Who gets to determine that and what qualifies them to do so?" He also questioned the concept of authenticity and pointed out that it comes out of the tourist curio collecting dynamic of the early 1900s. Collectors were looking for 'the real deal.' "But what is 'the real deal'?" he asks.

Andre sees all of this as connected to the notion of cultural integrity, as written about by Māori scholar Hirini Moko Mead. Mead defines something with cultural integrity as "rooted and informed by the classical knowledge of our ancestors, by the past" and that the evolution of Native cultural practices "must come from an Indigenous person from that culture, if there's going to be change."

Winoka Yepa & Aaron Salā

PANEL 6:
REIMAGINING NATIVE VISIBILITY AND IDENTITY IN URBAN AREAS

PANELISTS

Murielle Borst Tarrant *(Kuna/Rappahannock)*, Actor, Theater Producer

Lyz Jaakola *(Anishinaabe)*, Fond du Lac Tribal College

Dylan A.T. Miner *(Métis)*, Michigan State University

MODERATOR

Reuben Roqueñi *(Yaqui/Mayo/Chicanx)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

Moderator **Reuben Roqueñi** *(Yaqui/Mayo/Chicanx)* is Director of National Artist Fellowships at the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation. The fellowship program is about ten years old and has made awards to over 130 artists.

Reuben framed the panel by saying that the reality of Native lives in urban settings is complicated and read a passage from Tommy Orange's novel There, There to give a visceral and particular sense to what he meant. He pointed to the broad range of experiences of different tribes and that the meaning of "urban" could be just as varied, but that "the issues that affect our communities are global issues, and they affect all of us, so as we're thinking about our lives in the city, I think that they will resonate with everybody in the room—Native or non-Native."

Murielle Borst Tarrant *(Kuna/Rappahannock)* is a theater artist, author, playwright, director, producer, educator, and human rights activist. She described some of the history of how Native people migrated to New York City, challenges of being a Native theater artist there, and the role of theater in maintaining culture and having a voice.

Murielle started by sharing some of her family background. She grew up in New York City, though her family is of the Rappahannock nation and came from Virginia in 1800 during the Indian removals. She explained that New York was thought of as a place to get work. Her husband's family moved to New York City in 1925 due to a different set of removals and had been with *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* shows. The families met in New York.

Murielle was pleased to be able to speak on a topic that she believes doesn't get discussed much—what it means to grow up as a New York City Indian. "It ain't easy and ain't for the faint-hearted, I'll tell you that […] It is complicated. It's complicated like being a Native person on the rez is complicated." She explained that in Manhattan, there are no [tribal] satellite offices. "We have community centers and we have theaters" to help sustain culture. But it is a fight to find resources and funding. "Land acknowledgements are great. I like them. [The one] on the Academy Awards was something to see […] 'But what else can you give us?' is my question […] We need sustainability to be seen."

Murielle works with Native theater artists and companies as well as non-Native companies on Broadway and off. Some of the questions she thinks need to be explored are as follows: What

Getting us to cities was supposed to be the final, necessary step in our assimilation, absorption, erasure, completion of a 500 year old genocidal campaign. But the city made us new, and we made it ours.[…] We bought and rented homes, slept on the streets, under freeways, we went to school, joined the army forces, populated Indian bars in the Fruitvale in Oakland and in the Mission in San Francisco. We lived in boxcar villages in Richmond. We made art and we made babies and we made way for our people to go back and forth between the reservation and the city. We did not move to the cities to die. […]

We ride buses, trains and cars across, over, and under concrete plains. Being Indian was never about returning to the land. The land is everywhere, or nowhere.

—*Tommy Orange, excerpt from* There, There

does it mean to be a Native person? What is our point of view? How important is that point of view? She believes more Native programming needs to be regularly included in the main seasons of non-Native theaters, not ghettoized. "If we're going to talk equal equity and diversity and inclusion […] where do the Native people fit with equal equity on our land base? […] Equal equity for us is something very different, and that needs to be part of the discussion." Murielle acerbically quipped, "if you're not at the table, then you're on the menu."

Without being at the table, the stereotypes can abound. "I am not a chief. I am not a clan mother. I'm not a tribal councilwoman. I'm not an appointee from any governing group. I am just a Native woman trying to produce work and get us [Native people] seen on New York City stages." On the other hand, there can also be assumptions that Native people in New York have no grounding in those tribal systems and practices. But, Murielle explained, "we do know our culture, and we do know our language, and we do know our songs, and we do know our dances." However, a story her mother told her added a layer of nuance to that knowledge.

When her mother was a child, there had been so much cultural devastation because of the boarding school system, elders she knew in New York City started to teach Native youth their songs and dances, even if they weren't from their tribe, because there was no one else to teach. So, people from Murielle's mother's generation in New York ended up learning songs and dances from different parts of Indian country, since many different peoples had migrated to the city to find jobs.

Murielle spoke of the trauma that people brought with them to New York from their dislocation and forced assimilation. "My grandfather was taken from his land base and put into a missionary school, and he never went back […] My husband's grandmother was one to survive out of 12 children from Nebraska who went to Carlisle Indian School. And I'm sure I'm not the only story that has this. We are all products of survival of the Native boarding school system, of the genocide, and we're just three generations away, maybe."

Reuben Roqueñi, Murielle Tarrant, Lyz Jaakola (hidden), Dylan Miner

Murielle sees theater not only as a way of maintaining culture, but also of having a voice. "What does that mean to sustain family, nation, and community in a place like New York City where you can be overwhelmed? I say that we did that—my family, particularly—not only through powwow culture, but we did it through theater. I grew up in theater because my family wanted to make a different point of view." She explained that she is a legacy artist of Spiderwoman Theater, founded by her mother, Muriel Miguel, in the 1970s. "I say that we have to honor the shoulders that we stand on. And I knew I have great shoulders to stand on, and I think of the next generation that's going to come after me."

She then emphasized that there was a lot of work to be done, but that there was also such a thing as cultural exhaustion—being constantly asked to explain, educate, and bear the burden of others' ignorance. She told a story of a post-

> ***What does that mean to sustain family, nation, and community in a place like New York City where you can be overwhelmed? I say that we did that [...] not only through powwow culture, but we did it through theater.***
>
> Murielle Tarrant

performance Q&A that went on at length. The many questions were politely answered, until finally she had to say to an audience member, "Hey lady, I'm making 75 bucks here, this is a $40,000 question. Take a class."

Murielle is a true believer in allyship. She would like people to take responsibility for educating themselves, not indulge in stereotypes, and think about how to be supportive and make space for Native people to speak. "I think it's very important, especially in New York City, to say that we have a voice. We're here. We're not going anywhere. This is our land base and this is the way we do things."

Lyz Jaakola *(Fond du Lac band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, Eagle Clan)* is an award-winning singer and founder of the Oshkii Giizhik Singers. She is an instructor and Director of Ojibwemowining Resource Center of Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Minnesota, and she promotes singing as a way to keep culture, strengthen community, and lift up Native points of view.

Lyz lives on the Fond du Lac reservation and has seen it change from a place with one main road and dirt paths to a bustling area with many paved roads, lots of buildings, and more and more people. She mentioned that the city that borders the reservation has annexed a part of the reservation where she lives. "They took over our territory, literally, which I think is still illegal, but they did it anyway."

Lyz, whose Ojibwe name Nitaa-Nagamokwe means "the lady who knows how to sing," spoke about how she started down the road that led her to her life in song. She described how the Oshkii Giizhik Singers was born out of a dream she had. "[I saw] myself and some women singing in these waves of blue energy, washing over to people that were listening. And when I talked to my elder and said, 'What do you think that means?' Of course, like any good elder [would say], 'Well, what do you think it means? Put your tobacco out and figure it out, my girl.'" So Lyz ended up creating the group in 2005 and since then, they have produced three CDs and were awarded a Nammy in 2009. Soon after the group was founded, they invited anyone to join their gatherings to sing in order to stay connected and give back to the community.

> ***My elders taught me that I am only as successful as my community is successful.***
>
> Lyz Jaakola

The themes of giving back to community and acknowledging those who came before ran consistently through Lyz's presentation. She mentioned Sharon Day *(Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe)* in Minneapolis as being an influence to many, including her, and laughed when she said, "I consider myself blessed that she tells me what to do."

A significant project of Lyz's that had a long gestation was based on wax cylinder recordings that Frances Densmore, an ethnologist at the Smithsonian Institution, made at the turn of the 20th century. "When I first started teaching at our BIA school, I found out about these [recordings] and I said, 'Hey, we should have those recordings for the kids.'" It turned out to be more complicated to access the audio than Lyz originally thought. But after some years, and thanks in part to Judith Gray at the Library of Congress, she finally was able to acquire digital copies of the recordings—which are now available in the digital archives at the tribal college. In 2019, the Oshkii Giizhik Singers released their CD, *Anishinaabekwe Inendamowin* (Women's Thinking), that rematriated ten songs from those hundred-year-old Densmore recordings, along with six newly composed songs. Thanking the First Peoples Fund and others for supporting the project, Lyz expressed hopes to do more in that vein in the future.

Lyz is a prolific performer and organizer as evidenced by the other groups she has spearheaded. Given that she is an educator and musician, Lyz has long used music as a means of teaching the Ojibwe language to children. Through this work, the Anishinaabe Youth Chorus was formed. They perform at festivals and other events and have made a CD, as well. She also has her own band, #theindianheadband, which she characterized as "intentionally enigmatic." They covered Led Zeppelin's "The Immigrant Song"

(about Viking invasions), but did a remix in Ojibwe.

Lyz explained that what she likes to do in her group is work with "songs that were made by Natives or about Natives, and we reclaim them and tell new stories with them." A focus for her at the moment is the oil pipeline being run through her reservation. Though the tribal government ended up having to sign the agreement with the Canadian oil company running the project, she spoke of the tensions arising from the circumstances. "It's affecting us daily. Both quite physically having no access to our medicines and the condition of our water is changing already, but also in our relationships and seeing the trucks go by every day is not doing very well for people's mental health."

Lyz believes that practicing her art is a powerful way to raise her voice for her community, and sees music as "a way that we can reach in and change people's hearts and minds and have them recognize how very important our relationships are to everything and to each other."

Dylan A.T. Miner *(Métis)*, a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario, is an artist and Director of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies and Associate Professor in the Residential College of Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University (MSU) in East Lancing. His presentation demonstrated how his work as an academic and an artist is grounded in Native history and practices, as well as a commitment to making Native history and practices visible through his visual art and his work with youth.

Dylan introduced himself in Nishnaabemwin (he usually does introductions in Michif as well, but didn't due to time constraints) and shared some of his family history. "I descend from the historic Georgian Bay Métis community, one of seven Section 35 rights-bearing Métis communities in Ontario, with older ancestral relationship to Slave Lake, Alberta."

Dylan focused his presentation mostly on his work as an artist, though his practice is clearly linked to his life as an academic researcher. "One of the things I do with my work is I investigate local histories […] I'll interrogate archives and then create [visual] poems from the texts." He described a project that involved Kalamazoo College (a small liberal arts institution sitting on Treaty of Chicago territory) and oral testimony that he found of a Potawatomi chief, a gimaa/ogema, who was against signing the treaty. The slide he showed was of banner-like textiles he had created that included the words of the chief along with images of medicine plants.

> ***One of the things we did when we wrote our [land acknowledgement] is we actually implicated the university in the longer history of settler colonialism within the country.***
>
> Dylan A.T. Miner

Suddenly making the connection between colleges and accountability, Dylan mentioned MSU's land acknowledgment developed by the American Indian and Indigenous Studies program as a potential resource. "I'm of two minds with land acknowledgments. On the one hand, I think they're beautiful, and they create rhetorical space. Having seen Native youth hear themselves when they come onto university campuses and spaces is amazing. Yet at the same time, unless institutions are accountable to them, I think that they don't do what we want them to do. So one of the things we did when we wrote ours is we actually implicated the university in the longer history of settler colonialism within the country." He unpacked what he meant by implicating the university and mentioned the Morrill Act of 1862, which created the land grant

universities, of which MSU is one. He noted that it was not a coincidence that this was the same year the Homestead Act was passed and the mass execution of the Dakota 38 took place.
Dylan showed a slide with pictures of his family—along with an octopus bag, a common Métis cultural object, belonging to his family—and began to describe the complicated relationships to land that were created in the interface of Natives and settlers. "My community was on Drummond Island, what we call Bootaagani-minis, the place where wild rice is milled." In the late 1820s, the Métis—referred to as "French Half-Breeds"—were forced off Drummond Island, across Lake Huron to the Georgian Bay or Penetanguishene, Ontario. The Métis petitioned the Canadian government in 1840, but there was no response. More petitions ensued, as well as inter-tribal conflicts between peoples in Canada and the U.S.

Dylan pointed to how these cross-border dynamics, to this day, have fed into the character of urban indigeneity in a place like Michigan. "In Lansing, the community I live in and teach in, there's a significant number of fluent Nishnaabeg speakers, most of them coming from Wiikwemkoong First Nation on Manitoulin Island [Canada] […] They came down beginning in the '50s with chain migration to work in the auto industry […] The majority of the language teachers actually, because of the auto industry, live in Lansing. So we think a lot about, in Lansing and in Detroit, the role that the border plays in the various communities."

Dylan shared some of his museum-based works, which again connected historical research with his visual art. *Water is Sacred//Trees are Relatives* is an installation piece of cyanotypes on fabric of images of landscapes in and around the state of Michigan. He connects the fact that the last major treaty session in Michigan, the Treaty of La Pointe, was in 1842—the same year that the photographic process of cyanotypes was created. "What I wanted to do is actually engage in making photographs using cyanotype alluding to the image-capture technology and its relationship to the history of land expropriation in the state of Michigan." Another part of the piece is a platform that Dylan made of old-growth wood that had been harvested in the 19th century when his community had been moved to Michigan. The wood had to be recovered from the bottom of Lake Huron to be used by Dylan. He calls these his "time traveler portals" and has placed different wooden platforms in various urban and industrial sites, juxtaposing these elegantly simple platforms of planed old growth wood with "ecological spaces of violence."

Moving on through his slides, Dylan showed some of the work that he creates with youth—examples of birch bark baskets, birch bark bitings, Basswood rope, a push pole for ricing. "One of the programming things we do as part of the Indigenous Studies Program at the university, once I began directing the program, is we created an urban sugar bush, so we collaborate with this natural space in the city of Lansing, and basically make maple syrup. So then [...] all of the other things that are linked to spending time together at that moment in time—when the snow is melting, when the sap is running—we spend telling stories [and] engage in the making of the birch bark bitings.

Through an artist leadership fellowship he got from the National Museum of the American Indian, Dylan created a project called *Anishnaabensag Biimskowebshkigewag/Native Kids Ride Bikes* in Lansing. Noting that a lot of Nishnaabe kids were growing up in racially mixed neighborhoods, often with Latinx or hip hop influences, Dylan held weekly language workshops with fluent-speaking elders and youth, along with young urban Native artists, to build lowrider bikes together, detailed with designs inspired from the elders' teachings and referencing Native cultural practices and aesthetics. The bike building served not only as a draw to get the youth to come to language classes, but also linked contemporary Native issues, such as sustainable transportation, with traditional

practices. He has created other bikes with youth in a variety of other places, in addition to other youth projects, such as co-building mobile screen-printing presses on Mexican work tricycles to host printing workshops with young people throughout a city and making books of new Métis- and Nishnaabeg-inspired beadwork templates that he gives away. These simple, yet culturally rich, efforts can make a difference to young people immersed in city life. "These become exceedingly important for youth in urban spaces who don't have access in many ways to the same sorts of things that their relatives do in other spaces."

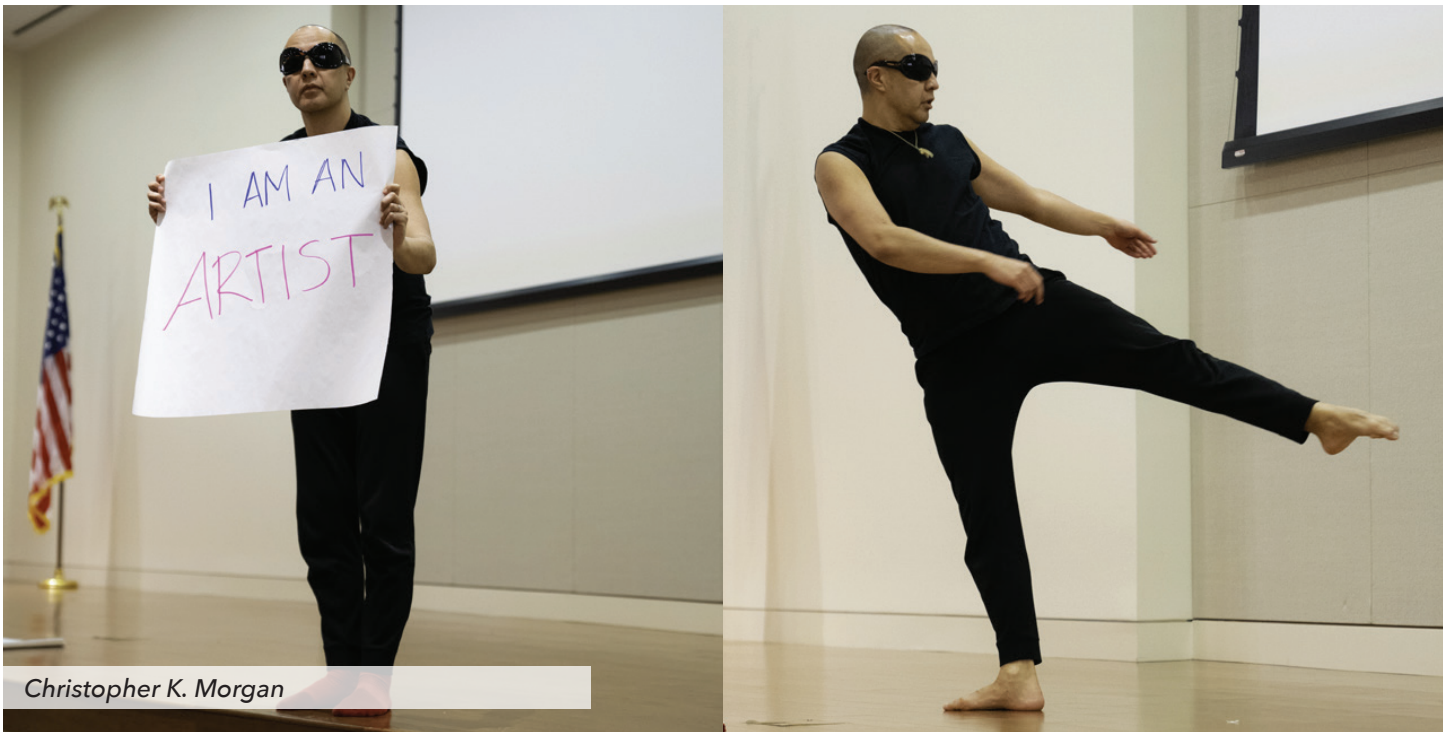
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

After the presentations, a question came from the audience about the benefits that are produced for youth when they are participating in these cultural and language-learning projects, such as intergenerational relations or building self-esteem.

Dylan gave an example from a language-learning project. He noted that the elders he worked with, principally retired autoworkers, would regularly observe that the culture of visiting—just having tea and talking informally—seemed to have disappeared. "With urbanization, with diaspora, with just the reality of raising kids and having families, particularly in urban spaces, we just don't visit in this way. You have to text. You have to call. You have to plan all of those things." So, he started setting up reasons to get together—building bikes, screen printing shirts—and inviting folks of all ages to get involved. He collaborates with an Indigenous youth empowerment program to organize these.

Lyz pointed to an example of building self-esteem, not just for youth, but for adults, as well. She told the story of a woman who started singing with her group. She was a smoker and not living a very healthy life. After a while, she wanted to sing better, so quit smoking and also started eating better, so she lost weight. Then her daughter joined the group, and then her granddaughter. Now there are the three generations singing together.

Murielle spoke of the importance of mentoring young and emerging Native theater artists, particularly directors. She emphasized that safe spaces needed to be created—safe mentally and spiritually—for teaching directing to Native people, who come with different philosophies. She believes that this void in the theater field needs to be supported and pointed out to foundations.



Christopher K. Morgan

PERFORMANCES

The panel sessions were punctuated with performances by dancer and choreographer Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)* and hip-hop artist Frank Waln *(Sicangu Lakota)*.

Christopher performed solo on the lecture stage in a playful interactive and improvisational piece that integrated his diverse range of movement vocabularies—ballet, modern, post-modern, and hula—and explored the question of what it means to be an artist and his own identity within that. "One thing that I would love the broader population and then federal agencies [...] to know about Native artists is that it is a really vibrant and thriving and contemporary group of artists that are making the work happen. A lot of times we hear words like "folk" and "tradition," and those are a part of who we are, but in fact, a lot of the work that's happening has a really broad array of contemporary influences both from our Indigenous cultures and from the world at large."

Frank, a musician, spoken-word artist, and one of youngest participants at the convening, expressed his gratitude to the attendees whose many years of work and commitment he was indebted to and from which he was able to form his path of arts and activism. His performance was an offering of flute playing from his own Lakota roots, as well as some spoken word from hip-hop culture, which he sees as "an Indigenous art form created by Indigenous people who are cut off from their roots in Africa."

Frank Waln

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAY TOPICS

Throughout the convening, many critical issues and insightful ideas were raised by participants—some during the keynote address, panel sessions, performances, and the final "big ideas" plenary and breakouts that closed the gathering. Most of the issues and ideas that were captured fell within the following general topic areas summarized here. (See Addendum C for a more detailed listing of content.)

NATIVE LEADERSHIP & ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- Pathways to leadership
- Removing barriers to resources
- Advocating for equity

RESEARCH, TAXONOMIES, TERMINOLOGY

- Research taxonomies and field terminology reflective of Native perspectives
- Native/non-Native research partnerships

NATIVE VOICE & PRESENCE IN MUSEUMS

- Native voice in curation, contextualization, and conservation
- Access to collection information
- Questions of ownership

NATIVE CULTURE, PERSPECTIVE, AND LANGUAGE

- Reestablishing relationships between beliefs, peoples, and the land
- Preservation of language and cultural knowledge
- Decolonization and restorative justice
- Complexities of identity
- Building relationships across borders

NATIONAL NATIVE ARTS/CULTURES/HUMANITIES CONVENINGS

- Continuing conversations and making them more accessible
- Knowledge-building for different audiences
- Building cross-sector relationships

CLOSING COMMENTS:
What was most valuable to you?

"The most valuable takeaway for me was the inspiration I gained from everyone's work and the connections I made with people doing incredible work."

"My most valuable experience was being in the same room with those who hold similar roles in their respective communities."

"The session on Native Languages stands out as being especially valuable, as it offered an opportunity to understand something I think about regularly—documenting endangered languages—in a new way, through the experiences of people for whom this is a vital issue."

"It's really great to see how the NEA and NEH are working together and creating space for these conversations on a national stage."

"Hearing Joy Harjo speak was a true gift."

"This convening was critical to the field of Native arts, and I sincerely hope it happens again and continues the dialogue."

"There was a thread of messaging around resilience and commitment to long-term community building around arts and culture that really resonated with me. Often time I wonder if I am having impact and often evaluate the short term. The discussion around big-picture ideas helps me stay grounded and reaffirms the work we are doing in the arts and culture field."

"Most valuable to me was hearing from colleagues working in the policy arena, through research and activism."

"Learning about the work of Crystal Echo Hawk and IllumiNative was the most valuable takeaway of the day for me. I have shared the website with all of my networks, and it has sparked so much needed conversation, learning, and soon, I hope, action."

Flag Song – Uptown Boyz & Native American Women Warriors Color Guard

ADDENDUM A

ADDENDUM A - CONFERENCE AGENDA

The National Endowment for the Arts & The National Endowment for the Humanities, in partnership with Native Arts & Cultures Foundation, presents:

NATIVE ARTS & CULTURE: RESILIENCE, RECLAMATION, AND RELEVANCE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2020

AGENDA

7:45 AM
REGISTRATION & CHECK-IN OPENS

8:30 AM
OPENING PLENARY SESSION – AUDITORIUM

- Flag Song, Uptown Boyz, Posting of Colors Prayer, Native American Women Warriors Color Guard, Land Acknowledgement, Lillian Sparks Robinson *(Rosebud Sioux)*

8:50 AM
WELCOME REMARKS AND OVERVIEW OF THE DAY

- Ruben Little Head *(Northern Cheyenne)*, Emcee

9:00 AM
SPECIAL REMARKS

- Jon Parrish Peede, Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities
- Clifford R. Murphy, Director of Folk & Traditional Arts and Interim Director of Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works, National Endowment for the Arts

9:15 AM
INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY

- Lulani Arquette *(Native Hawaiian)*, President and CEO Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

9:45 AM
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

- Joy Harjo *(Mvskoke)*, U.S. Poet Laureate

10:20 AM **- BREAK –**

10:30 AM
INFORMING NATIVE TRUTH THROUGH RESEARCH AND CULTURAL RESOURCES – AUDITORIUM

This panel examines the role artists, research, cultural resources, and heritage collections play in shifting harmful dominant narratives to change hearts and minds, and advance the agency of Native communities. Unprecedented public opinion research has examined perceptions that non-Native people have of Indian Country; key leaders discuss ways their work is addressing misinformation and systemic bias. Engage with how valuable tribal and cultural resources are being preserved, protected and how Native artists, educators and cultural communities are advancing national dialogues.

- Francene Blythe *(Diné, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Dakota)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation
- Crystal Echo Hawk *(Pawnee)*, IllumiNative
- Shelly C. Lowe *(Navajo)*, Harvard University Native American Program
- Moderator: Betsy Richards *(Cherokee Nation)*, The Opportunity Agenda

10:30 AM
RECLAIMING AND REVITALIZING NATIVE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES – CONFERENCE ROOM A

Culture bearers are using language, arts, and historic preservation to revitalize communities. Panel leaders discuss how they have reclaimed lifeways that were nearly lost (using a variety of sources, including field recordings, museum collections, education, and language), and how they have reanimated the health and vitality of community life.

- Delores Churchill *(Haida)*, Weaver, Visual Artist, & NEA National Heritage Fellow
- jessie little doe baird *(Wôpanâak)*, Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project
- Donald Soctomah *(Passamaquoddy)*, Passamaquoddy Tribe
- Moderator: Lori Pourier *(Oglala Lakota)*, First Peoples Fund

11:45 AM - LUNCH -

1:00 PM
THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND PRACTICES IN SOCIAL CHANGE - AUDITORIUM

Native artists, curators, and educators discuss how they are revealing their resilience and multifaceted identity through their culturally relevant work and community experiences. This is a lively presentation about both the challenges and successes in perpetuating Native cultural knowledge and arts, and what can be done to help address indigenous invisibility and safeguard cultural property rights. Learn the stories about how these community leaders are creating social change through cultivating emerging voices in filmmaking, teaching dance at San Quentin prison to co-directing the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, and conducting tribal advocacy and education as a museum director, curator and weaver.

- Maya Austin *(Pascua Yaqui, Blackfeet)*, California Arts Council
- Joyce Begay-Foss *(Navajo)*, Recently retired from the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Weaver
- Patrick Makuakāne *(Native Hawaiian)*, Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu' Dance Company
- Moderator: Lulani Arquette *(Native Hawaiian)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

1:00 PM
NATIVE & NON-NATIVE COLLABORATION: INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS THAT MATTER – CONFERENCE ROOM A

This panel focuses on the experiences of Native thought leaders in the arts and humanities in building strong and effective partnerships with non-native agencies, organizations, and infrastructures, and transforming organizations from within.

- Daryl Baldwin *(Miami Tribe of Oklahoma)*, Miami University (OH)
- Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)*, Dance Place
- Anna Needham *(Red Lake Ojibwe)*, Arizona Commission on the Arts
- Moderator: Joseph Kunkel *(Northern Cheyenne)*, Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative

2:20 PM
PERFORMANCE – AUDITORIUM

- Christopher K. Morgan *(Native Hawaiian)*, Dance Place

2:45 PM
FOR US, BY US, WITH US: HOW TRADITIONS AND VALUES LNFORM INDIGENOUS ARTS TODAY – AUDITORIUM

Indigenous Artists, administrators, educators, students and community organizers are blazing trails and blurring the lines between western conceptions of traditional and contemporary work as they bridge the past to inform the present and navigate the future. This brings up questions around innovation, evolution, tradition and authenticity. Join the panelists in a discussion in how the traditions and values of their cultures helps them to inform and define their work as artists and cultural keepers.

- Andre Perez *(Native Hawaiian)*, Koi'honua
- Aaron Salā *(Native Hawaiian)*, Hawaii Arts Alliance
- Winoka Yepa *(Navajo)*, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts
- Moderator: Carolyn Melenani Kuali`i *(Native Hawaiian, Mescalero Apache)*, Kua`aina Associates, Inc.

2:45 PM
REIMAGINING NATIVE VISIBILITY AND IDENTITY IN URBAN AREAS – CONFERENCE ROOM A

Many Native peoples reside in urban communities on account of decades of government resettlement policies, changing borders, and shifting economies, leading to migration and displacement. Panelists will speak to how they are reinvigorating the cities of New York, New York and Detroit, Michigan; and transforming public education across Minnesota through their arts and humanities practice and organizing work.

- Murielle Borst Tarrant *(Kuna, Rappahannock)*, Actor, Theater Producer
- Lyz Jaakola *(Anishinaabe)*, Fond du Lac Tribal College
- Dylan A.T. Miner *(Métis)*, Michigan State University
- Moderator: Reuben Roqueñi *(Yaqui, Mayo, Chicanx)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

4:00 PM **- BREAK -**

4:10 PM
PERFORMANCE – AUDITORIUM

Frank Waln *(Sicangu Lakota)*, Hip Hop Artist

4:30 PM
BIG IDEAS SESSION – AUDITORIUM

- Lulani Arquette *(Native Hawaiian)*, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation
- Lori Pourier *(Oglala Lakota)*, First Peoples Fund
- Nadia Sethi *(Alutiiq)*, CIRI Foundation
- Quita Sullivan *(Montaukett, Shinnecock)*, New England Foundation for the Arts

5:30 PM **- ADJOURN -**

ADDENDUM B

ADDENDUM B - PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

(by first name)

AARON SALĀ

Aaron J. Salā is an award-winning musician and recording artist, and an ethnomusicologist from the University of Hawai'i. His debut album, Ka 'upu aloha: Alone With My Thoughts (2005) garnered him the Nā Hōkū Hanohano award (Hawaiian grammy) for Most Promising Artist (2006). In 2014, through formal 'ūniki 'ailolo (traditional rite-of-passage ceremony), he graduated to the rank of ho'opa'a (Hawaiian chanter). In 2016, he was named Native Arts and Cultures National Artist Fellow in Music after composing and producing a stage production, E ō Mauna Kea, Kū i ka La'i, which premiered in Kanazawa, Japan before touring to Hamilton, Aotearoa, New Zealand. He has worked as a vocal arranger for such artists as Bette Midler and Kristin Chenoweth. Since 2011, he has been contracted consistently as a composer, and creative and music director, for the Walt Disney Company in the U.S. and in Japan. In 2018, he served as one of two dialogue directors and as music director for the Hawaiian language reproduction of Disney's Moana. At the academy, his research interests lie in gender and sexuality and how these are manifest in Hawaiian music and music-performance, and in music performers and performance in the HawaiianTerritorial Era. He has presented on his research in local, national, and international conferences. He serves on the boards of PBS Hawai'i and Awaiāulu, and is a former chairperson of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. He holds a BA in Music with an emphasis in vocals and an MA in ethnomusicology from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He is preparing to defend a dissertation on the renown Edwin Mahi'ai "Mahi" Copp Beamer in Spring 2021. Aaron is Director of Cultural Affairs at Royal Hawaiian Center in Waikīkī, O'ahu and Project Director of Building and Bridging Native Hawaiian Futures at the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu.

ANDRE PEREZ

Andre Perez is a Hawaiian activist and community organizer from Koloa, Kaua'i. He currently resides on O'ahu and organizes around Hawaiian rights and self-determination. Andre is a co-founder of Hanakēhau Learning Farm with his partner Camille Kalama and a founder of the Hawai'i Unity and Liberation Institute (HULI). Andre is currently working to complete a Master's degree in Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. His research focuses on Hawaiian carving traditions and Hawaiian religion. Andre founded and is director of a Hawaiian wood carving program that is currently training fourteen apprentice carvers with the objective of revitalizing Hawaiian carving practices.

ANNA NEEDHAM

Anna Needham *(Red Lake Ojibwe)* is a theatre artist, Indigenous rights advocate, and arts administrator. She works as the Artist Programs Coordinator for the Arizona Commission on the Arts. As an arts administrator, she acts as a resource for artists and culturally-specific communities to engage with government structures. She has served on panels for other grantmakers, including the National Endowment for the Arts and Western Arts Federation. As a theatre practitioner, she creates work focused on Indigenous people in the ever-present now and centers the audience in relation to the Land. Anna recently received an award from the Yale Indigenous Performing Arts Program for her monologue written for their Native Youth initiative. Anna graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, with a BFA in Theatre with a minor in Producing. She is also a graduate of the Native American Political Leadership Program at George Washington University.

BETSY RICHARDS

Betsy Theobald Richards *(Cherokee)* is Director of Cultural Strategies at The Opportunity Agenda and leads the organization's Creative Change efforts with artists, influencers, and advocates to shift narrative, culture, and policy towards greater and more equal opportunity for all. Betsy brings over two decades of experience in philanthropy, performing arts, Indigenous cultures, museums, arts education, media, and community advocacy to her role. Before joining The Opportunity Agenda, Betsy spent over seven years as a Program Officer in Media, Arts, and Culture at the Ford Foundation, overseeing a national portfolio of Native American and place-based cultural communities. While at Ford, she initiated the creation of the unprecedented Native Arts and Cultures Foundation and served as the global chair of its Committee on Indigenous Peoples. Previously, she was the inaugural Director of Public Programs for the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, the country's largest tribal museum and research center. In addition, she has run two theater companies, served as a Fellow at the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater and has directed on stages in New York, Los Angeles, and Canada. Betsy served on the team for the groundbreaking narrative change research project Reclaiming Native Truth. She holds degrees from NYU and Yale University.

CAROLYN MELENANI KUALI'I

Carolyn Melenani Kuali`i is a descendent of Native Hawaiian and Apache ancestry and the co-founder and director of Kua`aina Associates, Inc., an Indigenous art/culture organization. For the past thirty-years, Carolyn has worked as a capacity building specialist with Native Hawaiian, American Indian, Alaska Native and Pacific Island communities providing consultation in culture preservation programs, facilitation of culture exchange, special projects and fellowship programs for Indigenous artists. Carolyn served as a consultant for the de Young Fine Arts Museum's exhibit, the Royal Hawaiian Featherworks: Na Hulu Ali`i, and the museum's Global Artist Fellows program. She was a contributor for The Pacific Worlds exhibit at the Oakland Museum of California, which won numerous awards such as the American Alliance of Museums award for Excellence in Exhibitions Award, with Special Achievement for Contextualizing Collections with the Community and the 2016 Autry Public History Prize from the Western History Association. In 2019 she was the curator of Continuous Thread: Celebrating Our Interwoven Histories, Identities and Contributions, a photographic exhibit at the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery as part of the Commissions' Native American Initiative, celebrating the contributions of the San Francisco Bay Area's Native community. That same year Carolyn co-produced the Ancestral Ink Symposium, which was a convening of Indigenous tattoo and cultural practitioners at the Santa Fe Art Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Carolyn's current work has been the development of "Transformative Grant Writing: Seeding Reciprocity", which is a train-the-trainer program designed to create a cohort of trainers that will provide San Francisco's historically underserved community-based artists professional development support and coaching in the area of grant seeking and proposal writing.

CHRISTOPHER K. MORGAN

Christopher K. Morgan (he/him) is a choreographer, performer, educator, facilitator, and arts administrator. Born in Orange County, CA, his Native Hawaiian ancestry and wide-ranging international performance career influence all aspects of his work. Christopher founded his contemporary dance company, Christopher K. Morgan & Artists, in 2011; the same year Dance Magazine profiled him as one of six breakout choreographers in the United States. Grants and awards include a 2013 Native Arts & Cultures Foundation Dance Fellowship, 2014 and 2019 NPN Creation Funds, 2014 and 2019 NEFA National Dance Project Production Grant, 2018 Native Launchpad Award from the Western Arts Alliance, and a 2019 Dance USA Fellowship for Artists. Teaching credits include American University (2011-14), the BA and MFA programs at the University of Maryland (2014-17), and residencies at over 20 conservatories and institutions in the US and abroad. In addition to his work as a choreographer and performer, Christopher is the Executive Artistic Director of Dance Place in Washington, DC, where he curates over 35 weekends of performances annually, oversees a school for youth and adults, and continues Dance Place's role as a neighborhood community arts center and nationally prominent performing arts presenter. Since 2006 Christopher has directed Art Omi: Dance, an annual collaborative residency for international choreographers in New York, where he created an utterly unique international cultural exchange program. Frequently sought as a speaker and grants reviewer, he has been at the forefront of national discussions on equity in the arts. He lives in Takoma Park, MD with his husband, opera director Kyle Lang.

CRYSTAL ECHO HAWK

Crystal Echo Hawk *(Pawnee)* is the founder and Executive Director of IllumiNative, the first and national, Native-led nonprofit committed to amplifying contemporary Native voices, stories and issues to advance justice, equity and social impact. Crystal founded IllumiNative to activate a cohesive set of research-informed strategies to disrupt the invisibility and toxic stereotypes Native peoples face. Prior to founding IllumiNative, Crystal served as President and CEO of Echo Hawk Consulting (EHC). Through EHC's robust and respected roster of Native American thought leaders and extensive networks across Indian Country, the company helps amplify Indigenous voices, knowledge, and innovation and develop strategic partnerships to create opportunities for impact. Crystal was recognized by the National Center for American Indian Economic Development as its 2018 "Native American Woman Business Owner of the Year." During her tenure at EHC, Crystal co-led the 2016-2018 Reclaiming Native Truth (RNT) project, an unprecedented research and strategy setting initiative to address misconceptions, stereotypes and the invisibility of Native peoples within American society. Crystal founded IllumiNative in 2018 to put the RNT research into action to drive narrative change that can support equity, social justice and self-determination for Native peoples.

DARYL BALDWIN

Daryl Baldwin is a citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and has been involved in the development of the Myaamia language revitalization movement since 1991. In 2001, he came to Miami University to serve as the founding director of the Myaamia Center. The Myaamia Center was born from a partnership between the Miami Tribe and Miami University to address critical language and cultural educational needs at the community level. Daryl also co-directs the National Breath of Life (BoL) Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages. These collective lifelong efforts to promote and preserve Indigenous languages were recognized by the MacArthur Foundation in 2016.

DELORES CHURCHILL

Delores Churchill is a master basketweaver and living treasure from Ketchikan, AK. Taught by her mother at a young age, she was one of very few youths learning the traditional way of weaving. Today, she has continued her mother's legacy as a teacher, teaching Haida, Tlingit, and Tsimshian forms of weaving. Using such materials as spruce root, cedar bark, wool, and natural dyes, she creates baskets, hats, robes, and other regalia. It is Delores' dream that others will find the peace, connection, and sheer joy that filled her life because of the many gifts the weaving arts have to offer. Currently, Delores' work can be seen in Tracing Roots, a heartfelt documentary that follows Delores on her journey to uncover the origins of a spruce root hat found with Kwäday Dän Ts'ìnchi, also known as the Long-Ago-Person-Found, in a retreating glacier in the Northern Canada. Her search to understand the roots of the woven hat crosses cultures and borders, and involves artists, scholars, and scientists. The documentary raises questions about understanding and interpreting ownership, knowledge, and connection.

DONALD SOCTOMAH

Donald Soctomah is the father to 11 children and grandfather to 20. He serves as the Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for 20 years for his community in Maine, where he works on the protection of culturally significant sites, artifacts and knowledge. He also studies the designs and the meanings of the petroglyphs along the Maine coast. Donald has written several books about Passamaquoddy history, as well as a children's book, Remember Me: Tomah Joseph's Gift to Franklin Roosevelt and also The Canoe Maker. Donald has also appeared in several films about the tribal history of his tribe.

DYLAN A.T. MINER

Dylan A.T. Miner is an artist, activist, and scholar. He is Director of American Indian and Indigenous Studies, as well as Associate Professor, at Michigan State University. He sits on the board of the Michigan Indian Education Council and is a founding member of the Justseeds artist collective. He holds a PhD from The University of New Mexico and has published and exhibited extensively. In 2010, he was awarded an Artist Leadership Fellowship from the National Museum of the American Indian. His book, Creating Aztlán: Chicano Art, Indigenous Sovereignty, and Lowriding Across Turtle Island, was published by the University of Arizona Press. He has also published a number of small artist books,

including the book Aanikoobijigan // Waawaashkeshi; a booklet on Métis and Anishinaabe beadwork; a notebook for learners of Anishinaabemowin *(Ojibwe)* and Nishnaabemwin *(Odawa)*; and several others. In 2017, he commenced the Bootaagaani-minis ∞ Drummond Island Land Reclamation Project and is preparing for a solo exhibition at the University of Michigan, expanding his earlier project, A Library of Indigenous Radicalism. He is presently included in the exhibition Àbadakone | Continuous Fire at the National Gallery of Canada and will be included in this year's Contemporary Native Art Biennial in Montreal. Miner descends from the Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community, one of seven Section 35 rights-bearing Métis communities in Ontario. He is an enrolled citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

FRANCENE BLYTHE

Francene Blythe is the Executive Director of Vision Maker Media, and recently led programmatic strategic planning and grant-making opportunities as the Director of Programs at the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) from 2015-2020. There, she fostered and implemented successful grant programs for individual artists, community artist mentorships and community projects that centered around social issues and partnerships in and around Native communities. Prior to joining NACF she served eight years as the Director of the All Roads Film Project at the National Geographic Society located in Washington, D.C. She steered this international program into an award-winning portfolio of grants that funded meaningful stories in film and photo-journalism. Francene also served as the Program Manager at the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, and as a Cultural Arts Specialist at the National Museum of the American Indian during her time in Washington, D.C. In these two roles, she curated exceptional public programming whereby, she contributed, produced or managed cultural content for the inauguration of the World War II Memorial, the annual Folklife Festival, and the First Americans Festival – part of the opening celebration of the National Museum of the American Indian, as well as programmed Native theater and dance performances, in partnerships with local and regional theaters, universities and museums, for the inaugural NMAI stage. Additionally, Francene serves on the Advisory Committee for Advance Gender Equity in the Arts (AGE), a Portland, Oregon social justice non-profit created to advance intersectional gender equity in the arts; and, remains on the Native American Arts Advisory Board for the Native Curator at the Portland Art Museum. She is Eastern Band Cherokee and Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota from her father and Navajo from her mother.

FRANK WALN

Frank Waln is an award-winning Lakota music artist from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. After teaching himself how to produce and record music as a teenager, Frank Waln later earned a full-ride scholarship and received a BA in Audio Arts and Acoustics from Columbia College Chicago. Frank utilizes music, performance and writing to share his story with the world in order to inspire others to deepen our understanding of how settler colonialism has impacted us all around the world.

JESSIE LITTLE DOE BAIRD

jessie little doe baird is a citizen and Vice Chairwoman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and Linguistic Director for the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project. She was born in Mashpee and lives in Mashpee and Aquinnah. jessie is married and has five children and 9 grandchildren. She is the Co-founder of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project that began in 1993. This is a Cooperative endeavor between Mashpee, Aquinnah, Herring Pond and Assonet communities. The aim of the project is to reclaim Wôpanâak as a spoken language. There were no speakers of the language for six generations. She received her Master of Science in Linguistics from MIT in 2000. She has completed a layperson's introduction to Wampanoag grammar as well as curriculum for teaching, is currently working toward the completion of a dictionary and expansion of the curriculum for Master Apprentice teaching and is working on the Mohegan Pequot language with two apprentices. Her many books in the language include grammar text books, coloring books, stories, game curriculum, a prayer book and a phrasebook for everyday use are being used as one tool in reclaiming fluency. She writes articles on Wampanoag culture and history and is a former research fellow of the National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages as well as a member of the American Antiquarian Society, a Paul Harris Fellow, a Mac Arthur (Genius) Fellow and is named one of One Hundred Women of the Century by USA Today. In addition, she holds Degrees Honoris Causa from Cape Cod Community College and Yale University.

She has served on numerous advisory boards in the areas of Indigenous culture and history. She has consulted with museums and institutions in the US and the UK on exhibits regarding Wampanoag culture, history and language. She has participated in Mashpee town government on the Mashpee Housing Authority as a commissioner, as well as the Mashpee Historic District and in an advisory capacity for past Wampanoag cultural projects and films for various organizations. She also gives talks for colleges and universities in the US and abroad. Her other interests include traditional dance, cooking for family and friends, shell fishing, creation of regalia, a passion for Wampanoag written histories and documents, as well as writing.

JOSEPH KUNKEL

Joseph, a citizen of the Northern Cheyenne Nation, is a Principal at MASS Design Group, where he directs the Sustainable Native Communities Design Lab based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is a community designer and educator, focused on sustainable development practices throughout Indian Country. His work includes exemplary Indian housing projects and processes nationwide. This research work has developed into emerging best practices, leading to an online Healthy Homes Road Map for tribal housing development, funded by HUD's PD&R Office. His professional career has centered on community-based design, material research, fabrication, and construction. In 2019 Joseph was awarded an Obama Fellowship for his work with Indigenous communities. Joseph is a Fellow of the inaugural class of the Civil Society Fellowship and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.

JOYCE BEGAY-FOSS

Joyce Begay-Foss, Diné, is an accomplished museum professional, lecturer, writer and Diné textile weaver. In 2019, in her previous role as Director of Education at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico, she received the 2019 Award of Excellence in National History Leadership. The American Association for State and Local History honored the museum with this award for her Lifeways exhibition, which explored the lives of regional Apache tribes bound by the Athabaskan language. She also curated the museum's highly regarded Spider Woman's (Na ashje'ii 'Asdzáá) Gift: Navajo Weaving Traditions exhibition of weavings from the 1850's through the 1890's and contributed to the exhibition catalogue. She recently retired from the museum, operated by the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, which preserves and interprets historic and contemporary collections and information about New Mexico's Native peoples. As a Diné weaver for over 40 years, she has won numerous awards at the Santa Fe Indian Market, the Eight Northern Pueblos Arts and Crafts Show, and the San Felipe Arts and Crafts Show. She draws on this expertise as a writer, instructor, curator and lecturer on traditional Native textiles and dyeing techniques.

LORI POURIER

Lori Lea Pourier is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, has served as the President/CEO of First Peoples Fund since 1999. FPF honors and supports the Collective Spirit™ of Native artists and culture bearers through fellowships, grants and community-based partnerships, deeply rooted FPF's Indigenous Arts Ecology model and movement building strategies. FPF's Jennifer Easton Community Spirit Awards honors Native culture bearers who selflessly give of themselves and bring spirit back to their communities. Pourier has been involved in the arts, social justice and community development fields for 28 years. She has dedicated much of her efforts on reconnecting Native communities to their cultural assets and bringing new philanthropic resources to Native artists, culture bearers and tribal communities. Pourier is a recipient of the Ford Foundation's Art of Change Fellowship, the 2013 Women's World Summit Foundation Prize for Creativity in Rural Life and the Native Americans In Philanthropy Louis T. Delgado Distinguished Grantmaker Award. She has served as an advisory to numerous philanthropies, Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA) and currently serves on the board of directors of the Jerome Foundation.

LULANI ARQUETTE

T. Lulani Arquette is Native Hawaiian and the President and CEO of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF). NACF is a national organization headquartered in the Pacific Northwest that has been operating since 2009. Dedicated to advancing equity and Native knowledge, NACF focuses on strengthening the arts and cultural expression of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian artists and communities. Current NACF programming evolves past support for artist fellowships and community-based artist work with the SHIFT and LIFT programs. SHIFT supports

artist and community-driven projects responding to social, environmental, and economic justice through a Native lens, while LIFT is an early career support program for emerging Native artists to develop new projects. Lulani, a theatre performing artist herself with degrees in Drama & Theatre and Political Science, brings over 28 years of professional experience steering organizations to their highest creativity and potential. She is currently leading efforts to create the Center for Native Arts and Cultures with the historic transition of ownership of a building in Portland, Oregon, to NACF. Lulani currently serves on the Association of Performing Arts Professionals board and has served on many boards, grant review panels, and advisory councils, including Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA).

LYZ JAAKOLA

Lyz Jaakola is an Anishinaabe musician and educator enrolled with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe. Lyz balances singing in many styles and educating about Native American music internationally amidst her teaching schedule at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. Her bilateral arts career has been recognized with awards and recognitions including the 2009 Native American Music Award, 2012 First Peoples Fund Community Spirit Award, 2013 Sally Ordway Irvine Award, Arrowhead Regional Arts 2014 George Morrison Artist Award, Classical MPR's 2013-2014 Class Notes Artist and numerous collaborations with Arrowhead Chorale, Echoes of Peace Choir, KBEM jazz radio and others across Minnesota. Lyz has recorded 7 CDs, had her music in local film, video and television, including the Emmy-awarded PBS documentary, "Waasa Inaabidaa", mentored Native youth in music composition and published children's literature. This is all because she has a supportive, loving husband and family with three beautiful children, all from her little home on the Rez. Miigwech Manidoo!

MAYA AUSTIN

Maya Austin is currently a Director/Program Weaver for First Peoples Fund. Before joining First Peoples Fund Maya worked as the Arts Program Specialist at the California Arts Council and as the Senior Manager for the Indigenous Program at Sundance Institute. She identified and supported emerging Indigenous filmmakers and content creators across the United States and globally. Additionally, Maya worked for three years as an Archivist and Grants Manager at the U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, DC, for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act program. A board member of Vision Maker Media and the Cousin Collective, Maya has experience as a film curator, instructor and trainer. She has a bachelor's degree in History with a minor in Film and a master's degree in Moving Image Archive Studies, both from UCLA. Maya is Pascua Yaqui, Blackfeet and Mexican-American.

MURIELLE BORST TARRANT

Playwright, director, actress, and Artistic Director of Safe Harbors Indigenous Collective in New York City, Murielle is a second-generation legacy artist of Spiderwoman Theatre. She is the only Native American woman to have her work selected by the Olympic Games in Sydney Australia at the Sydney Opera House. Murielle served as the Global Indigenous Woman's Caucus Chairwoman (North America), keynote speaker at the International Conference at the Muthesius Academy of Art in Kiel Germany and the Norwegian Theater Academy, and is a faculty member of National Institute for Directing & Ensemble Creation in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

PATRICK MAKUAKĀNE

Patrick Makuakāne *(Native Hawaiian)* is a Kumu Hula, choreographer, dancer, director and raconteur that crisscrosses between tradition and innovation. Born and raised in Honolulu, Hawai'i, Makuakāne studied with two of Hawai'i's most revered kumu hula, Robert Uluwehi Cazimero and Mae Kamāmalu Klein. He is the Founder and Director of the Hawaiian dance company and school, Nā Lei Hulu i ka Wēkiu of San Francisco, and is known for his creativity and ground-breaking theatrical performances. While a passionate preserver of tradition, his artistry also crafts a provocative treatment of tradition that leaps forward in surprising ways. Most recently, he was a recipient of the Hewlett 50 Arts Commission, supporting the creation and premier of 50 exceptional works by world-class artists. In 2019, he received a Dance/USA Fellowship with an emphasis on dance for social change, and in 2018, the San Francisco Arts Commission's Legacy award. Makuakāne is the former co-artistic director for the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and currently serves as the spiritual and cultural advisor for the Native Hawaiian Religious Spiritual Group at San Quentin State Prison.

REUBEN ROQUEÑI

Reuben is Director of Transformative Change Programs at Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, serving Native artists, organizations, and programs across the US. Previously, Reuben was Program Officer in the Performing Arts Program at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation in the San Francisco Bay Area, one the nation's largest arts and culture funders. Formerly, Reuben served as Grants Program Director at the Arts Foundation for Tucson and Southern Arizona. Reuben is Board President at MAP Fund in NYC. He is currently a member of the advisory committees for Individual Artists Support at Grantmakers in the Arts, Global First Nations Performance Network, Advancing Indigenous Performance at Western Arts Alliance, and he is a former a board member at Portland Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA). Reuben is of mixed Yaqui and Mexican ancestry and lives in Portland, Oregon.

SHELLY C. LOWE

Shelly C. Lowe is a citizen of the Navajo Nation and grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Ganado, Arizona. She is currently the Executive Director of the Harvard University Native American Program, was previously the Assistant Dean for Native American Affairs in the Yale College Deans Office and Director of the Native American Cultural Center at Yale University. Prior to her position at Yale, she spent six years as the Graduate Education Program Facilitator for the American Indian Studies Programs at The University of Arizona. Shelly is currently a member of the National Endowment for the Humanities Council, an appointment she received from President Obama. She has served on the board of the National Indian Education Association and as a Board of Trustee for the National Museum of the American Indian.

WINOKA YEPA

Winoka Yepa is the Senior Manager of Museum Education at the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA). She is also a fifth-year doctoral candidate in the Education and Museum Studies department at the University of New Mexico and a research associate for the Indigenous Language Immersion and Native American Student Achievement Study funded by the Spencer Foundation and hosted by the University of California Los Angeles. Her foci are Indigenous education, identity studies, decolonial and critical race theory, and museum education. Of Diné *(Navajo)* heritage, Winoka was born and raised on the Navajo reservation in Shiprock, New Mexico. She is an advocate for the sustainability and revitalization of Indigenous cultures and languages, and a strong supporter for the arts and arts education. She currently holds two degrees; a Bachelor of Arts in Pre-Law and Native American Studies and a Masters of Arts in Indigenous Studies with a concentration in Indigenous education and linguistics. Winoka is currently in the process of working on her dissertation research, which aims to identify alternative and new representations of Indigenous identity from a decolonial perspective through storytelling and discussion, while also identifying how art-based practices impact the development of identity for Indigenous youth.

ADDENDUM C

ADDENDUM C - CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS (DETAIL)

Throughout the convening, many critical issues and insightful ideas were raised by participants—some during the keynote address, panel sessions, performances, and the final "big ideas" plenary and breakouts that closed the gathering. The following points capture many of the practical steps and lessons mentioned so that they may inform and inspire the field recommendations for future action.

NATIVE LEADERSHIP & ACCESS TO RESOURCES

ISSUES:

- Leadership: More and diverse Native voices are needed at leadership levels to help shape arts and humanities funding, policy, and institutional practices. A pathway to leadership, including training and mentoring, is needed for incoming Native professionals to move into positions of management and leadership in arts non-profits, public arts agencies, museums, philanthropy, and the general arts and creative field. A critical question for capacity building is: Do Native artists/leaders need professional development, or do existing practices need to change—or both?

- Access to Resources: There is an understanding gap between how Native artists/culture bearers think of their roles in their communities and in society and how funders think about supporting artistic/cultural production, generally, and in Native communities, specifically. Knowledgeable "translators" and intermediaries are needed to help bridge this gap in cultural understanding/policies/infrastructure in order to make resources more accessible and useful to Native artists and communities.

- Access to Infrastructure: Lack of infrastructure, connectivity, and current technology platforms are issues for Native cultural organizations and artists in both urban and rural contexts. How do Native and tribal communities gain access to better technology and tools for accessing information, resources, and creating and presenting their work?

IDEAS:

» Seats at the Table: Active and intentional efforts to seat diverse Native leadership at policy and decision-making tables need to be taken through the following actions:

  - acquisition of appointments on governance bodies (e.g., advisory boards, commissions, boards of directors, boards of trustees, etc.);
  - participation on peer review panels of funders and academics; and
  - development and mentorship of emerging Native leadership.

» Influencing Funding Practices: Typical funding practices can be at odds with how best to support Native artists/culture bearers and communities. Ideas for rethinking those practices include:

Delores Churchill speaking during a Big Ideas session

- encouraging funders to make commitments to long-term and institution-based relationship building with Native communities—not just ephemeral relationships with a single program officer;
- advocating for mechanisms for Native artists/culture bearers/organizations/communities to give feedback on funding policies and better access to information about resource opportunities; and
- advocating for the importance of Native arts and cultures in other sectors, such environment/land management, health/wellness, etc.

» Advocating for Equity: Some ways to build equity for Native peoples include:

- advocating for funders to adopt racial equity policies and helping to define what equity looks like for Native communities (e.g., identifying barriers, suggesting dedicated funding streams or targeted funding allocations, advocating for increasing funders' payout threshold to address historic inequities) and
- advocating for integrated/cross-sectoral ways to assess the value of Native arts and cultures activities and efforts that use a holistic lens.

RESEARCH, TAXONOMIES, TERMINOLOGY

ISSUES:

- Taxonomies for Data Collection: Arts and cultures taxonomies for data gathering and funding need to be revised to capture accurate information about Native artists/creatives/culture bearers and current infrastructure in the field of Native arts and cultures. Current categories are too homogenizing and don't reflect the diversity and variety of Native practices. Revising categories to include master practitioners as well as artists, intergenerational learning as well as formal training, and changing ways of thinking about labor and livelihood are just some examples of how taxonomies of data collection need to be rethought.

- Rethinking Terminology: How terms like "art," "craft," "traditional," "contemporary," "culture," and "humanities" are typically defined in the arts field doesn't necessarily conform to how expression or cultural practices are viewed in Native communities.

IDEAS:

» Research Partnerships: More reliable research and information specifically about Native arts and cultures is needed. Native cultural organizations and tribal communities should consider partnering with research universities on data gathering that is driven and defined by Native peoples to address these needs. Too often the Native voice, and the most appropriate input, is excluded from the research design and its implementation.

NATIVE VOICE & PRESENCE IN MUSEUMS

ISSUES:

Museums need to make collections of Native material culture more accessible and present them accurately. Some key questions related to this issue include:

- Native voice matters in the curation and contextualization of Native material culture. So how should Native people assert their right to their culture? How best to collaborate with institutions to craft policies for access and use?
- How can funders at all levels and sectors be engaged to support the efforts necessary to address collection issues, conservation, and curation?
- How can Native people find where collections of their cultural heritage are stored/exhibited/held?
- How can decisions of ownership be settled?
- How should a conduit be created for the development of Native museum professionals?

IDEAS:

» Contextualization: Native people need to have more of a say in determining how their material culture is displayed/portrayed/written about. Mukurtu is an example of an open-source content management platform built with Indigenous communities to manage and share digital cultural heritage held by museums and research institutions.

» Staffing: National networks are needed to support the development of Native museum professionals. Qualifications of museum staff need to be revisited.

NATIVE CULTURE, PERSPECTIVE, AND LANGUAGE

ISSUES:

- We need to "reconnect or reestablish our relationships…between our kānaka (the people), akua (the gods), and 'āina (the land), and the holistic relationship of interdependence between our understandings of that relationship." (Andre Perez, Native Hawaiian)
- Language preservation and revitalization is extremely important to the survival and viability of Native peoples and cultural practices. The passing of elders and culture bearers in many tribes and Native communities is a serious challenge. How do we capture that cultural knowledge and language before it is lost forever? And how do we support archival research that enables the reclamation of languages that are no longer actively spoken?
- Funders, organizations, and communities need to understand the detrimental impacts of the Doctrine of Discovery on every aspect of society and civilization.
- "We should admit that we're all colonized. Decolonization is a process by which Native peoples and tribes need to heal and liberate ourselves." There is a need for Native healing and restorative justice to combat not only the trauma of history and being invisible in a place that is your homeland, but the idea of cultural exhaustion and being constantly asked to bear the burden of others' ignorance.
- There are both strengths and tensions with multiple identities many Native artists embody relative to mixed race or multi-ethnic heritage, gender identity, professional affiliation, and creative practices.
- It is important to understand and support cross-border issues with U.S. Indigenous artists and communities who are members of tribes located within current U.S. borders and whose traditional homelands once included parts of Canada and Mexico.

IDEAS:

» It's critical to pass on knowledge to next generations. Part of addressing that issue is making sure education in public and private schools includes accurate Native history, language, and culture for Native and non-Native children.

» Misappropriation of culture and identity can be an issue, but as long as there's depth of research, meaningful relationship, and deep dialogue, appropriation doesn't happen. It becomes this new thing as long as all of those other elements are there.

» It is not necessarily helpful to think in terms of model programs. When you have over 500 tribal communities, there are no models. Useful ideas and approaches can be shared, but there is no shortcut to meeting communities where they are and being open to exploring.

» Allyship is about taking responsibility for educating yourself, not indulging in stereotypes, and thinking about how to be supportive and make space for Native people to speak.

» Foster broader discussions on difficult topics such as identity (Who is Native?), decolonizing practices, arts and social justice, and what is Native art (Who decides?)

» Support Native creative arts and restorative justice to address historical and current traumas, and invisibility in one's own homeland

Native Arts & Culture: Resilience, Reclamation & Relevance

NATIONAL NATIVE ARTS/CULTURES/HUMANITIES CONVENINGS

ISSUES:

- How best might we continue the conversations and work of this conference through future meetings and activities, and make them more accessible to more people?

IDEAS:

» **Intended Audience:** Be clear on who the intended audiences are for the gathering. That will help to determine its design. Having more Native people participating, particularly artists, would be desirable.

» **Wish List:** Features to possibly add or change for a next convening include having more performances and more agencies from outside the creative sector, meeting before or after another meeting (e.g., the National Congress of American Indians) in order to build on that gathering, creating opportunities for Native-only spaces within broader convenings, providing more visioning time and opportunities for different ways of participating and learning, making it possible for everyone to hear all the different sessions, providing contemporaneous blogging opportunities, providing a conference app, and having regional meetings that build up to the national convening.

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The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation advances equity and cultural knowledge, focusing on the power of arts and collaboration to strengthen Native communities and promote positive social change with American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native peoples in the United States.

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