

# ***Return to the Land***



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# **BLESS THIS LAND**

Joy Harjo

Bless this land from the top of its head to the bottom of its feet

*From the arctic old white head to the brown feet of tropical rain*

Bless the eyes of this land, for they witness cruelty and kindness in this land

*From sunrise light upright to falling down on your knees night*

Bless the ears of this land, for they hear cries of heartbreak and shouts of celebration in this land

*Once we heard no gunshot on these lands; the trees and stones can be heard singing*

Bless the mouth, lips and speech of this land, for the land is a speaker, a singer, a keeper of all that happens here, on this land

*Luminous forests, oceans, and rock cliff sold for the trash glut of gold, uranium, or oil bust rush yet there are new stories to be made, little ones coming up over the horizon*

Bless the arms and hands of this land, for they remake and restore beauty in this land

*We were held in the circle around these lands by song, and reminded by the knowers that not one is over the other, no human above the bird, no bird above the insect, no wind above the grass*

Bless the heart of this land on its knees planting food beneath the eternal circle of breathing, swimming and walking this land

*The heart is a poetry maker. There is one heart, said the poetry maker, one body and all poems make one poem and we do not use words to make war on this land*

Bless the gut labyrinth of this land, for it is the center of unknowing in this land

Bless the femaleness and maleness of this land, for each holds the fluent power of becoming in this land

*When it was decided to be in this manner here in this place, this land, all the birds made a birdly racket from indigo sky holds*

Bless the two legs and two feet of this land, for the sacred always walks beside the profane in this land

*These words walk the backbone of this land, massaging the tissue around the cord of life, which is the tree of life, upon which this land stands*

Bless the destruction of this land, for new shoots will rise up from fire, floods, earthquakes and fierce winds to make new this land

*We are land on turtle's back—when the weight of greed overturns us, who will recall the upright song of this land*

Bless the creation of new land, for out of chaos we will be compelled to remember to bless this land

*The smallest one remembered, the most humble one, the one whose voice you'd have to lean in a thousand years to hear—we will begin there*

Bless us, these lands, said the rememberer. These lands aren't our lands. These lands aren't your lands. We are this land.

*And the blessing began a graceful moving through the grasses of time, from the beginning, to the circling around place of time, always moving, always*

"Bless This Land", from  
AN AMERICAN  
SUNRISE: POEMS by  
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# ***The Center for Native Arts and Cultures:*** *Convenings on Land Rematriation*

Eric Golo Stone

Organized by the Center for Native Arts and Cultures in collaboration with the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, this project convenes a two-day open working group to reflect on a process of land rematriation that led to the creation of the Center for Native Arts and Cultures, and to envision how from this process the Center will advance a commitment to mobilizing networks of Indigenous artists, culture bearers, and Native-led arts organizations. These in-person group discussions are supported by an accompanying reader, a video work entitled *Never Settle: The Program* by New Red Order, live performance works by Tiokasin Ghosthorse and Allison Akootchook Warden, a document collection and archive presentation, as well as supplemental programs organized by Künstlerhaus Stuttgart Educators.

The Center for Native Arts and Cultures was founded in 2021 as the headquarters of the non-profit Native Arts and Cultures Foundation after taking up the transfer of ownership of the historically registered Yale Union Laundry Building, a two-story commercial structure and surrounding land parcel, in the city of Portland, Oregon, USA, which was previously owned by an artist-run space called Yale Union. This working group serves as a contribution to a larger series of internal focus groups currently being convened by the Center for Native Arts and Cultures to gather input on its organizational capacity and structural conditions as it situates operations, exhibitions, and educational programs in the newly acquired building. While acknowledging the land that this particular building sits on, working responsibly in various local level contexts to reflect the history of previous Native tribes and Indigenous peoples who inhabited the land for the purposes of use rather than ownership has always been crucial to the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation. Additionally, efforts around the transfer of Yale Union to the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation reflect a broader movement to address ongoing historical inequities stemming from land ownership and property relations in the US and beyond.

Germany is yet another site from which these discussions must necessarily take place. There is little question that current German land law has been shaped through German colonial empire and its patrician city-state colonial encounters in the global context. Germany has a long complex history of implementing laws to seize property and assert land ownership. This confiscatory history of legal-economic structures ratified by

Germany and the broader European colonial venture has fundamentally altered the management of land and related resources globally. And it must be recognized how these fundamental changes extend to the lived social relations, economic conditions, and cultural practices imbricated with Indigenous and existing forms of land use. This project focuses on a specific set of lived questions and material challenges that the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation and its Center for Native Arts and Cultures is confronting, but which are also part of the research, education, and outreach efforts today that emphasize rebuilding, restitution, and reparations efforts of Indigenous peoples worldwide as they seek to strengthen internal governance capacities and realize political, economic, and community development objectives.

Contributors include: Maile Andrade, Natalie Diaz, Healoha Johnston, Tiokasin Ghosthorse, Joy Harjo, Flint Jamison, Brandy Nālani McDougall, New Red Order, and Allison Akootchook Warden. With representatives from the Center for Native Arts and Cultures: Lulani Arquette, Reuben Tomás Roqueñi, and Gabriella Tagliacozzo.

The working group and accompanying reader are organized and edited by Healoha Johnston, Director of Cultural Resources, and Curator for Hawai'i and Pacific Arts and Culture at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum.

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This project is supported by an Innovationsfond grant from the culture ministry of the regional government of Baden-Württemberg with additional support from Bishop Museum provided by the Mellon Foundation.

## ***PROGRAM***

WORKING GROUP READER LAUNCH AND PERFORMANCE BY  
Tiokasin Ghosthorse: Friday, 03/31/23 (7pm)

WORKING GROUP: 04/01/23 (1pm—4pm)

WORKING GROUP: 04/02/23 (1pm—4pm)

PERFORMANCE BY

Allison Akootchook Warden: 04/02/23 (5pm)

PUBLIC PROGRAMS WITH

Künstlerhaus Stuttgart Educators:

THORA GERSTNER

02/26/23 (3pm—5pm), 03/02 (2pm—4pm)

YARA RICHTER

03/04/23 (3pm—6pm)

LEJLA DENDIC

03/05/23 (3pm—4.30pm), 03/11 (2pm—3.30pm)

LUDGI PORTO

03/17/23 (2pm—6pm), 03/18 (2pm—6pm), 03/19 (2pm—6pm)

## ***Q+A: Lulani Arquette, Flint Jamison, and Healoha Johnston***

In 2020, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) accepted the historic transfer of land and a building in Portland, Oregon that will become its new headquarters and the Center for Native Arts and Cultures. The Center, founded in 2021, will provide artist studio and maker spaces, exhibition galleries, and performance venues. As land stewards and owners, NACF now has a physical space to extend how they fulfill their focus goal to *catalyze Native peoples, artists and cultures bearers to influence positive social, cultural, and environmental change.*

***HJ:*** Yale Union was gifted the land and building at 800 SE 10th Avenue from an anonymous donor in 2008. In 2020, Yale Union (YU) and Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) announced the transfer of the land and building from Yale Union to NACF. How did the process of land transfer come about, and how is this transition of ownership from Yale Union to NACF different from the 2008 gift made by an anonymous donor to the founders of Yale Union?

***LA:*** In August 2018, Yoko Ott, Executive Director for Yale Union (YU) located in Portland, Oregon invited me to meet her at YU. We met several years after I had relocated to Portland, Oregon from Hawai'i to become the founding CEO of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) in 2009. We shared an admiration and respect for each other's work and common roots in Hawai'i. The day I met with Yoko, I imagined we were going to catch up and swap stories about our families and work, especially our shared interests in arts and cultures, and of course, Hawai'i. And we did. But then something quite unexpected happened. Yoko offered the building and said the YU board and staff wanted to transfer ownership of the property to NACF, and their only stipulation was that the building be used primarily for arts and cultures. After conducting necessary due diligence over a period of almost two years, our respective boards agreed to the transfer and executed the paperwork in early 2020. I especially acknowledge the work of NACF staff and particularly Rupert Ayton, former VP of Finance & Operations, who was integral to the early work and success of the transfer. The NACF Board of Directors were intrigued, but also rightfully cautious about the opportunity at first, and I thank them for their belief and support in the potential of the Center.

That same year, the COVID pandemic hit, followed by the George Floyd tragedy. NACF decided to hold on any press announcement about the transfer until summer 2020. Once the announcement about the transition of the Yale Union building to NACF was released in July, it spread very quickly throughout the Native community and beyond. People were hungry for positive news amidst all of the turmoil, and there was tremendous anticipation about its promise for local and national Native artists and

culture bearers, for the Native community, and for our non-Native allies. Many said, “this is unprecedented.” While incredible in its narrative, it is not solely a symbolic act—it is one that holds great potential for us all to gather, to create, to celebrate, and to flourish. In our exuberance, we must not forget the efforts and impact of YU board and staff who developed a contemporary arts institution that brought forth imaginative approaches and innovative ways to support often unknown artists during its ten-year stretch. The final YU exhibition in the building occurred in 2021 after the transfer to NACF, curated by the talented and amazing Hope Svenson, YU Director of Exhibitions. We lift YU staff up for their courage and also recognize that this opportunity for NACF meant the end of a decade of their work and a subsequent loss that always accompanies any great change.

**FJ:** Yoko initiated the proposition in 2018 but I think that this—and to address your second question, Healoha—is structurally a different inquiry than the “gift” the decade prior by the institution’s anonymous angel patron. Regarding material, the private donor who “gifted” the land and building to the 501 c/3 Yale Union—as a philanthropist—received a substantial tax deduction and this ultimately benefited them and their wealth accumulation through the systems and structures of state and federal governing tax law. In the case of the transfer in 2020 from YU to NACF, however, the institution dispossessed its property and received no incentivized benefits. This was a transfer of power where Yale Union as an institution divested and dissolved which is oppositional to a philanthropist benefiting from charity. Yale Union was not interested in charity. As a PWI (predominantly white institution), we benefited from that entitled privilege of the possession of property that was bequeathed to us by tax-incentivized philanthropy for more than a decade. State and Federal tax laws are built to benefit those who possess property, even when that property is “written off” as charity. Our collaboration with NACF is fundamentally different.

**HJ:** Over the past three years, the terms repatriation, reclamation, and rematriation have been used to describe the transfer of land and building from Yale Union to Native Arts and Cultures Foundation as an example of land back. How do you folks attribute meaning to these terms and their potential to produce change?

**LA:** When NACF developed our programming, we used the word reclamation or reclaim to point to this idea of reclaiming Native knowledge, our arts and cultures, languages and spiritual practices. “Re” which comes from Latin means to do again and repeat, and therefore reclaiming something means we need to awaken it in ourselves and collective communities and make it our own (again). There has been a lot of pillaging and physical and mental genocide that generations of Native peoples are continuing to work through. Yet we all come from a long line of ancestors, many who were wise people who carried the knowledge forward

1. The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest, issue # 11, 2020 Newsletter, Library Rematriation Project, What is Rematriation, Ontario, Canada

through generations. Joy Harjo, NACF board chair, explains, “Our cultural stories live within our DNA and unwind throughout our lifetimes, in our experiences as singular entities and as Native nations and countries.”

We do not use repatriation anymore as it is too narrowly understood as the return of artifacts, cultural treasures, and human remains from museums to their place of origin or lineal descendants. For NACF, we are not a tribal nation or a museum, so repatriation isn’t appropriate to describe our experience or vision for the Center, although it was sometimes used in earlier messaging.

We don’t think of this process of transition as something transactional, nor do we consider it to mean that YU is returning something or giving back the building and land to the original Native inhabitants. That is inappropriate as we are not a tribal nation and we do not represent the original tribes of this area, although we have wonderful relationships with members of many tribes of Oregon. We are Native led, have a majority Native staff and board, and serve Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and Alaska Natives locally and from across the US. The Center for Native Arts and Cultures is in a densely populated urban area, and we are all learning in this work together with local tribes, Native communities, and with non-Native colleagues, about what language terminology to use to describe our collective vision for the building.

At this point in our journey, when we speak of rematriation from a broad Native point of view, we speak of uplifting our contemporary cultures and lifeways by returning to the source; the place of deep knowledge where wisdom resides. In my Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) culture, there is importance in respecting Nā Aumakua, our ancestors who have lived on this planet for millennia, and while they have passed on into the great beyond, their human spirit is often believed to be embodied in other plant and animal life forms, and the natural environment. In many families, there are cultural traditions in place to honor them and allow their guidance to come through.

Rematriation simply means back to Mother Earth, and a return to a more interconnected relational worldview, to life and co-creation, and stewardship and care, rather than patriarchal destruction and colonization. It is about embracing a reverence for Nature and our innate spirituality, cultures, and knowledge, and standing in the truth of ancient wisdoms that should inform contemporary thinking, self-awareness, and overall community wellbeing. More specifically, rematriation is also rooted in a greater understanding of our collective kuleana (responsibility) that calls for a Return to the Land with the exploration of varied definitions around what that means in arts and cultures institutions, and for the artists and peoples associated within this ecosystem. Similar to efforts germinating from many places including calls to action from our Indigenous Canadian neighbors North of the US, “...rematriation is the restoration of right relationships and a true action of decolonization, aimed not just at righting a past wrong but transforming our collective future.”<sup>1</sup>

**FJ:** I cannot answer this question more thoughtfully than Lulani has. Over the years of connecting with NACF, we have learned to step back and listen. At a NACF Board Meeting we were invited to in 2019, NACF's Director of Transformative Change Programs Reuben Roqueñi conveyed that the land was no one's to own in the first place, so it certainly could not be gifted to anyone else. It is also from Reuben that the term "proposition" was proposed as it related to the action. Both of these sensitive uses of language have been vital to my understanding of the action.

**HJ:** How is Native Arts and Cultures Foundation working with thought-partners and advisors including tribal council members, artists and cultural producers in visioning the role of the new Center? Do you, Lulani and Flint, collaborate in this process or other processes?

**LA:** NACF began with a project management team that included a local architectural firm, a historic preservation specialist, and a construction firm when NACF staff conducted our due diligence prior to the transition of ownership. During this early process and through the transition, Jennifer Martin, Director of Operations for YU, worked with NACF for one year and was very helpful in sharing their published materials, plans and previous work which has helped inform our vision today. In the past two years, we have convened meetings of local Native artists and conducted more than 50 tours of the building with funders, legislators, other local nonprofits, and BIPOC groups that have helped raise our visibility locally. A consultant is working with us to survey and convene six diverse focus groups in spring/summer 2023 to seek final input from stakeholders on uses of the Center. Finally, we are expanding the project management team to include a consultant to develop a business sustainability plan, a Native architect to advise on the process, and a project manager who will act on NACF's behalf and coordinate all the efforts between the various project team partners.

This opportunity has plunged us into a radical experience filled with learning and life lessons. It has been rewarding, but not always easy, and nothing this significant is free from challenge. It brings us full circle to one of our organizational values which our board helped develop and many elders talk about which is "commitment" and speaks to the long journey and seeing beyond what we need right now. The process is associated with nurturing both patience and perseverance, and an understanding that all things worth waiting for will come forward in the time they are meant to. This value of temperament and time-investment is at odds with western colonial mindsets and the harried technology driven world we live in, which is centered in power structures to move money and drive profits.

Flint has been an invaluable thought-partner from the very seeding of this effort with NACF. In the early years, we met quite frequently to discuss strategy and progress relative to our boards and their considerations of the effort underway. When the press release

was announced, Flint and I received many interview and podcast requests from various media. We presented well together in several podcasts and interviews that spoke to the transition of ownership, vision, and the potential this presents to inspire other acts of reclamation between non-Native entities and Indigenous organizations. We have taken the time to develop a relationship of trust, listen to one another, and seek each other's viewpoints over the years. This collaboration with Kunstlerhaus, Stuttgart was seeded through Flint, and we continue to dream of ways to tell this story.

**FJ:** Thanks, Lulani. I continue to learn so much from you. Truly, I agree that this has been a rewarding but nevertheless challenging process. In 2018, the same year that she initiated the conversation with NACF, YU Executive Director Yoko Ott passed away. Because she connected us, one of the unexpected aspects that we have shared between institutions, has been the process of grieving. As we at Yale Union have experienced loss in a multitude of ways over the last years, it has been meaningful to process this through an action that has the potential for structural change. Although Yale Union was not a singular individual, but a Board, staff, and community comprised of individuals organized by a shared mission, we have tried to honor Yoko throughout this process. In recent years NACF has invited us to the property as they have hosted convenings to pay respects to Yoko and her ambition for this radical activity of questioning institutional land possession. Personally, I am still learning what has been gained from such losses and I am committed to doing this with NACF long into the future.

**HJ:** As you both look back and ahead, what excites you the most about the Center in particular, and then speaking more broadly, its potential to serve as a model for shared liberation and Return to the Land?

**LA:** What most inspires me is how we are intentionally creating green spaces, as part of the design of a "very urban building" to respect the land and nature it resides within, to enable reflection, contemplation, and creative inspiration, and to be in joyous relationship with others. As a Native organization that is speaking about rematriation, we believe we must renovate the building in ways that contribute to better energy efficiency, water usage, and air quality. Using building materials that include renewable and sustainable resources and creating landscape/garden spaces that include plants indigenous to the region are critical to a less extractive footprint on our natural environment. These commitments are all part of our architecture and design plans for the Center and will help us to achieve Silver LEED certification. One most cherished space in the building has a stream, a tributary of the Willamette River, which trickles and empties into the basement. Instead of blocking the flow or covering it over with concrete, we see this water representative of life-giving energy that carries messages from the past into the future. Allowing it to flow gently through the basement with some

architectural and environmental ingenuity will help create opportunities for artists, the community, and the public to find solace and inspiration, within a broader bustling, concrete covered metropolis.

I envision the Center as part of a movement present in this decade, the 2020's, to work with other committed groups of people and organizations in identifying approaches to self-determination and Return to the Land. What methods can those of us who work in the arts and cultures ecosystem deploy to support artistic creativity, and bring forth Native cultural knowledge and intellectual rigor in new and improved ways that minimize negative colonial settler influences? How do we take a position in arts discourse while also remaining open for civil conversation that requires listening to one another within and outside our respective communities where the "lines may already be drawn?" How can our organizations adapt and remain mission focused on sharing our stories and strengths amidst such rapid change and polarization? All of this and more deserves thought and discourse, and is critically important to our collective movement forward.

When those of us working in arts, education, and communities are intentional about reclaiming our knowledge and cultural practices, when we can define what it means to be self-determined and committed to the pursuit of truth, and when we can sharpen our intellectual rigor by discussing diverse viewpoints that are antagonistic to our thinking without being silenced or enraged, then we just may become better meaning-makers, culture-keepers, storytellers and successful producers of positive change. This vast work on decolonizing coupled with rematriation, while complicated, will help arts and cultural institutions to become stronger and increasingly robust. We must also ensure it leads to new and better models of support for Native artists and culture bearers within their practices and on their creative journeys. It must also generate healthier communities who can work together in shared freedom and prosperity.

**FJ:** I would like to echo Lulani with my excitement about the running water of the Willamette River that is visible in the basement of the Center. It is truly an important site. To prioritize and make this area of the building accessible creates a space for connecting a public with a conversation about the stratification of water, land, crumbling and structural foundations, light, building infrastructure, etc.— is an extremely significant location to visualize the past generations of use of the land. As gentrification continues to build layers on top of these lands, opening this window to the water is important. This excites me very much.

More broadly, this radical action has been important for me as I consider certain questions of institutional ambitions and entitlements. I hope that it can act as a case study for others and contribute to a future with more equitable and diverse distribution of property.

**HJ:** Thank you both for so generously participating in this conversation. As we look to the convenings at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart,

I am truly struck by the significance of the proposition, to invoke Reuben's term as Flint has, and the possibilities in the process of rematriation so profoundly described by Lulani. This structural shift marks a moment that extends beyond YU and NACF and into the broader contemporary art system, which has been less engaged in rematriation despite the call to move from performative gestures towards taking action. I look forward to thinking on this with you folks in Germany. Aloha nui and mahalo.

# **NA PU'U ONE O WAIHE'E**

*for Haumea and all the kupa'āina, aloha 'āina, and kia'i of Waihe'e*

Brandy Nālani McDougall

## **1.**

You are still here—  
the birthplace of salt  
and wind, of rounded black  
and red basalt pebbles, glittering  
olivine, smoothed coral and bone.  
The waves roll rock and reef,  
tangled nets, tarp, plastic  
bits cut and culled from  
convenience, dulled  
glass shards of  
broken bottles.  
Everything comes  
to you freed from what  
it once was, newly emerged—  
to become the sand  
in these dunes,  
to live again.

## **2.**

They say  
before the drains  
and grates that steal  
the water of the valley,  
lo'i kalo lehua lined the  
stream banks, their leaves  
and stalks trembling, young 'i'o  
pounded for the throat-moistening  
lehua poi. Your springs still gurgle up  
through the wide archaeology  
of your iwikuamo'o to nurse  
'ūlei, hau, loulu, kauila  
kili'o'opu, naupaka,  
'uki'uki, pōhuehue,  
'uhaloa, hō'awa, kāwa'u,  
manono, kaluhā—all unfurl, weave  
their roots, cling to the sands of Mauna  
'Ihi, even as the salt-wind bruises  
their leaves, encrusts them, even  
as the sun and salt desiccate  
and sting, even as we all  
may drift toward such  
flight—then your water  
upwells from below  
bringing such  
sweetness to  
the loko  
wai, the  
muliwai.

3.

Aloha Waihe'e  
i ka makani pa'akai,  
aloha nā makani e noho mau,  
aloha e 'Aha'aha, aloha e 'Akipohe,  
aloha e Kili'o'opu, aloha nō e 'O'opu.  
Nip and waft, carrying rain  
mist along the kahawai,  
above hīhīwai, 'ōpae, nāpili  
and nākea, blowing billows of sea  
spray along the lei of dunes,  
the hidden smoke of 'o'opu  
long past but also  
waiting.

Aloha Waihe'e i ka ua  
ōnueue, ke ao, ke ao akua,  
ke aokū, ke ao loa, ke ao 'ōnohi,  
aloha nō e 'Akipohe, aloha  
nō e Kili'o'opu. Circle  
and fall gently, then  
thunder, upwell  
the kahawai  
until full,  
flowing  
freely  
again.

4.

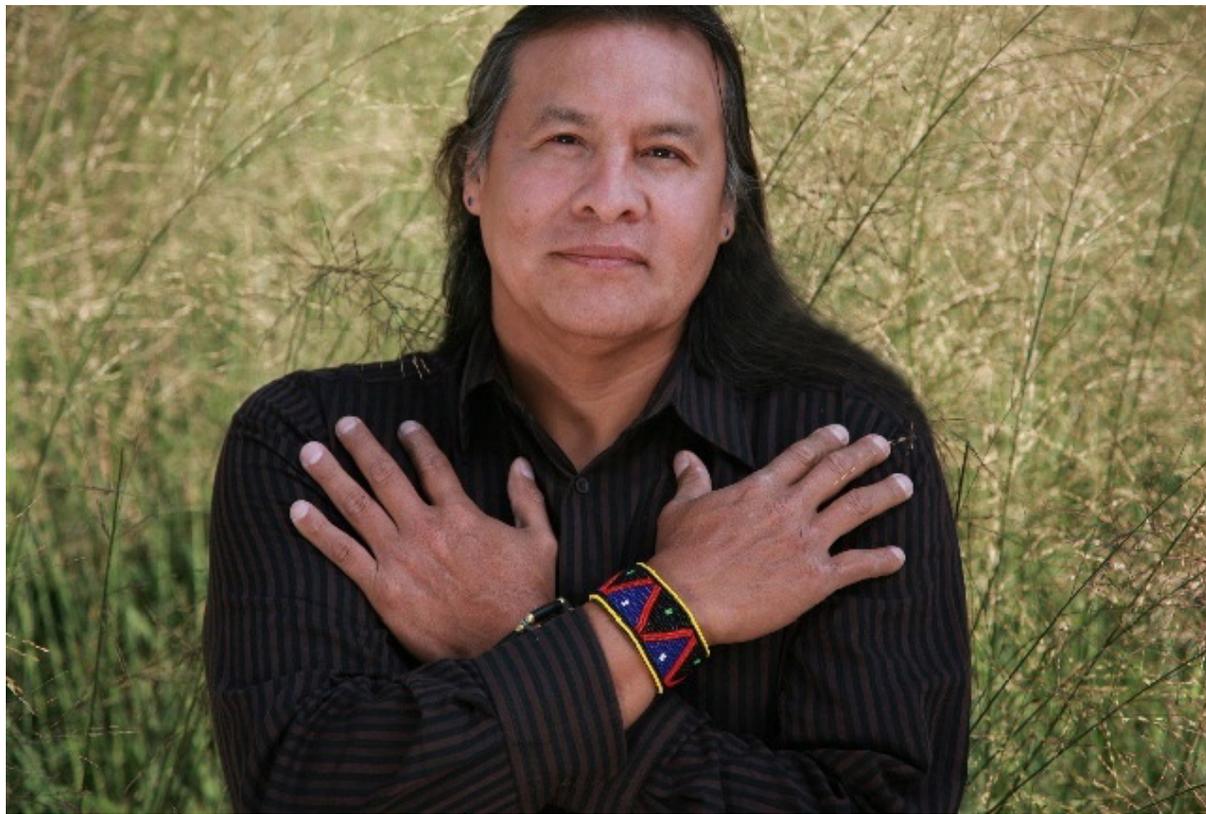
Aloha nō  
e Haumea ē,  
nui ka mahalo  
for all you birthed,  
shaped, and heaped from  
reef, from mauna, from pali  
from the ocean floor, all you eroded  
carved from ice, wind, and rain,  
from shell, coral, basalt and  
bone to bring us  
Mauna 'Ihi.

What is sand

but a return to life,  
the brittle bones of before  
breathing (birthing) again?  
From you we know birth  
to be just one of many  
passages, that we  
are born a flicker

of sun, emerge  
a faint spark  
or drop,  
only the frailest  
slivers from the branches  
of Kalaukekahuli after it was  
flung into the waves so  
carelessly, that there  
is pain and labor,  
the stinging  
salt of our sweat  
and tears, our blood,  
and it is how we learn  
life is precious, remember  
our histories, short and porous  
as they are. Your pu'u one have a much  
longer memory, have become a pewa binding  
ocean to land, buffering storm surge,  
offering moena makaloa of sand  
and salt, cool springs from  
underground tunnels that  
hānai pools of loko wai,  
ho'oipoipo with ocean  
in the muliwai, where  
underwater gardens  
of limu, lacy black,  
crunchy purple and red  
fringed, and fat, juicy green  
cling to the reef. Life begins again  
as they hāpai warm nests, nurse new  
hatchlings of ae'o, 'ua'u, and koloa, part  
the grasses and sedge to reveal tender  
caverns for piko and iwi. Your pu'u  
are every beginning and every  
return, waiwai of Waihe'e,  
pu'u one hānau aloha.  
Ho'i ke ola.  
E ola nō.

"Nā Pu'u One o  
Waihe'e," 'Āina  
Hānau, Birth Land.  
Tucson: Univ of  
Arizona Press, 2023.



© Tiokasin Ghosthorse

## ***Tiokasin Ghosthorse***

### ARTIST STATEMENT

I am an educator, musician and international speaker on peace and the global issues facing Native people and Mother Earth. As the founder, Host, and Executive Producer of “First Voices Radio (FVR),” a one-hour live weekly radio program; and as a guest faculty member at Yale University’s School of Divinity, Ecology and Forestry and at Columbia University, my work across platforms centers on the cosmology, diversity, and perspectives on the relational/egalitarian vs. rational/hierarchical thinking processes of western society. FVR brings focus to Indigenous peoples and struggles by inviting “the people” to share their own stories often in their own languages.

As a musician, I play the Lakota cedar wood flute and offer workshops about this form of art and music. In recent years, my work has underscored the issue of Native youth suicide, and I have specifically chosen to host workshops in locales where suicide attempts are devastatingly high. Working with Lakota children through music and educational workshops sets the conditions for an exchange based on mutual dignity and respect. Creation stories and cultural knowledge are conveyed through music, and my cedar wood flute performances share with audiences the significance and ongoing relevance of Lakota lifeways. There is tremendous urgency in repairing relationships held between people and Mother Earth. We must stop with the idea of creating peace on earth and begin with creating peace with Mother Earth. When I present the values of music or *olowan* (song), it is done with the premise of *Mitakuye Oyasin* (all my relations). *Mitakuye Oyasin*, a phrase from the Lakota culture, honors a worldview of interconnectedness.

# The New Red Times Magazine



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## New Red Order ARTIST STATEMENT

### GIVE IT BACK

We tell you again, now: Freedom is a Red Flag.

Derived. Extracted. Ingested. Found with legacies of displacement.

An acknowledgment of our ongoing settler-colonial occupation is only the first step in a massive reconfiguration of reality which must occur during an awakening if “we” all are to survive. But who are “we”?<sup>1</sup>

Acknowledgements<sup>2</sup> are difficult to read. To mimic, to take on. Perhaps we know we shouldn't, it might be inappropriate. You, the guest, welcome to become the appropriate host. To forget. Welcome becomes warning.

We would have preferred not to have to take it back, wanting instead to move with freedom and inspiration toward what interests us, to be influenced, to influence, to move without encumbrance, in fascination, to freely vacillate — at will, or floating with contingency — between terror and delight, toward the unknown, with all of the excitement in futurity.

But, again, and now, with interest, Give it Back.

Efforts to “decolonize” institutions are embodied in ritual acts of acknowledging Indigenous presence and claims to territory.

Within what is currently called “the United States”, these acknowledgements are increasingly — if only recently — understood as prerequisite for demonstrating engagement with Indigenous peoples.

While a few institutions in the so-called United States have adopted this custom, the vast majority have not.

If this practice was widely adopted millions would be exposed — many for the first time — to the reality of their own ongoing settler-colonial occupation of Indigenous land.

But, Land Acknowledgements as currently practiced by institutions are a small gesture, acting to relieve feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land, power, or privilege. Without having to change. Or commit to much at all. This sounds convenient. But for an institution to announce that it is unjustifiably occupying stolen land, and then continue to do nothing about it, is this worse than silence?<sup>3</sup>

Without continuous commitment to serve as accomplices<sup>4</sup> to indigenous people, gestures of acknowledgement risk reconciling “settler<sup>5</sup> guilt and complicity” and rescuing “settler futurity”<sup>6</sup>.

1. “Henceforward, the interests of one will be the interests of all, for in concrete fact everyone will be discovered by the troops, everyone will be massacred — or everyone will be saved.” — Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 1961

2. Guide to Indigenous Land and Territorial Acknowledgements for Cultural Institutions

4. *Accomplices Not Allies: Abolishing the Ally Industrial Complex*

5. *Settler-Colonialism - A Disclaimer: So as to avoid the continual lateral violence of colonial oppression, we want to clarify that by settlers — we mean those not forcibly displaced from their ancestral homelands, and though we don't blame people for inheriting or being born into a settler-colonial reality, we also need to acknowledge that reality. Currently underway are NRO research projects dedicated to resolving this intersectional rhetorical dissonance so that our struggles may inform each other, and we can achieve collective liberation, with the land and, together.*

6. Decolonization is not a metaphor, E Tuck, KW Yang - *Decolonization: Indigeneity, education & society*, 2012

Some may say the repatriation of all indigenous land and life is “unrealistic.” “Impossible.” Conditions of impossibility acknowledged, announced, then used as cover, can excuse inaction. Like manifest destiny itself, this belief is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Signs take part in things, discourse deploys forces, and representation makes reality.<sup>7</sup> Our words, crimes against reality, create their own conditions for possibility. The “impossibility”, we can get past. Get with the past over time for our future. And now, risk getting committed. Enact a crime against reality.

7. Magical Criticism:  
The Recourse of  
Savage Philosophy,  
Christopher Bracken,  
2007

Give it Back.

This is an actionable item. Requiring currency.

Institutions must not only recognize the continual displacement of Indigenous peoples, but also commit to working alongside Indigenous peoples as accomplices to dismantle the structures that support the settler-colonial occupation of Indigenous land, beginning with the individual’s and institution’s own land, power, and privilege.<sup>8</sup>

8. NACF To Gain  
Ownership of the  
Yale Union Building  
In Portland, Oregon

Give it Back.



Come morning + + + Come graylight + + +  
We ache and scatter +++  
shards + of a horsehead + water jar  
+ + sore-tender + for the shape + its water once took

+ + + A + M + E + R + I + C + A + + +  
haunted shore + + shiprock  
+ + little giant cemetery + of braids  
++ ++ ++ ++  
X X X X  
+++ +++ +++ +++  
X X X X  
++ ++ ++ ++  
+ + +

My brothers are the Cold Killers + + shovelers + of silver anthracite  
+ + fuelgods + of the midnight train  
+ + + Vaporing + + nightsalt + to cloud +++

+ + + My NDN name + is made of steam+++  
Chuk+Shon + Chuk+Shon + Chuk+Shon  
My secret + graffiti + NDN name +  
is Eohippus + + + boxcar + + + jumptrack + + + jolt-light  
+ + + I am The Dawnhorse of Everything + + +

We drive fast + + + We have pedal bones  
+ + also known as coffin bones + + +  
That's why I'm always dying + + +  
halfghost + + + half back  
+ + + half-dressed +  
as the war party + who will return + with a full tank of gas  
+ and a stick of scalps + + +

I war whoop out + into the empty + displaced hip +  
of the Ghost-sea + + and the Ghost-sea +  
war-weeps back +  
into the etched shells of my ears + + +

The Hohokam canals + crack awake + + gush  
+ through the settlement streets + + +  
blister + and boneflower + + +

This Nation + is a white bright + magnesium  
+ NDN burn + + +  
I fume and illumine + in its quantum-arson +++

+ + + Indian Iron Alchemy Horse + + +  
The bitter sweat + webbing my neck + pearls +  
and rusts + night's fossilized clock + + +

The midnight train + monsoons + around the bend  
+ + recognizes me + as a relation + and cries—  
Chuk+Shon Chuk+Shon Chuk+Shon

++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++  
++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++  
++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++

+ + + We are each + the other's + passenger + + +

The city + + is a tectonic bone radio + + +  
in the camouflage dust cloud + my warriors volcano + + +  
American + NDN + horse pyre + + +  
+ + + I shatter cinders + from my hair  
+ + watch them eat the day-aliens with flame

+ + + I will say it—America  
+ + + Beloved Occupiers  
+ + + There is no more vacancy + + +  
When this world has ended + I will carry my people + home  
+ + +



Maile Andrade, *KAHULI: To overturn, overthrow, upset, to change, alter*, 2011. Pandanus, glass, aluminum strips, 16 x 20 ft. (installed), Maui Arts & Cultural Center.

## Maile Andrade

### ARTIST STATEMENT

My work reflects and is rooted in a Native Hawaiian worldview. It is about Indigenous people and their relationship to land, their environment and to values that support the ongoing creation of Indigenous knowledge and wisdom. Indigenous art stems from the land, from heritage and culture, and from shared experiences. It acts as emotional intelligence and has the capacity to enrich the wider world by bringing balance and a more fundamental sense of perspective. Historically, Native Hawaiian people did not separate our creations into art, artifacts, or culture. For us, creativity superseded such classifications. Native treasures, now admired as art, were originally created for practical purposes but were also associated with mana (power), kapu (highly valued and restricted), and mo'okū'auhau (genealogy). Images, symbols, designs and motifs offer insights into the Native Hawaiian essences of life. Today, Native Hawaiian artists are still creating *customary* art as well as *contemporary* art, developing innovative new techniques, materials and themes within the styles handed down by our ancestors through the generations. The artist is a custodian of culture, with obligations as well as privileges.

### *The Kumulipo: A Hawaiian Creation Chant*

'O ke au i kahuli wela ka honua  
Time was altered when the earth became hot  
'O ke au i kahuli lole ka lani  
Time was altered when the sky turned inside out  
'O ke au i kuka 'iaka ka lā  
A time when the days were dark

E ho'omālamalama i ka malama  
Brightened only by the moon  
'O ke au o Makali'i ka pō  
A time of Makali'i (the rise of the Pleiades)

Kuleana kope © 2003, 2009 na ka Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation



Allison Akootchook Warden, *taigruaq*, 2022. Performance in collaboration with Aqqalu Berthelesen, performed at the 2022 Time Based Art Festival, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. Photo by Tojo Andrianarivo.

## Allison Akootchook Warden

### ARTIST STATEMENT

My *ilummiq* was an *anatuq*, a traditional healer. I was raised near my *aanas* and *attatas*, who lived on and from the land, and were children when our remote village of Kaktovik was first invaded by the military in the early 1920's. We had bullets, butter and flour through trading, but had not experienced direct contact until then. In my work, I refer to the experience as 'rapid colonization.' The military bulldozed our entire village in the 1940's to build a runway, with little warning. My mother was sent to boarding school and had to relearn her language. These traumas I carry and seek to transmute through my transdisciplinary art practice.

My work in all mediums has a healing intention. I start by identifying a 'sore spot' in the collective psyche, and then I ground myself in unbridled research. I create from the 'feeling at the end' that I want the audience to have after engaging with my practice. Some 'sore spots' need music, some need the reflection of poem, others need to be shocked through performance art, others need the quiet of visual art or possibly the full embrace of installation. Some need the joy and transcendence of dance.

In my rap, I utilize performance art techniques while rapping as a polar bear. In my installations, I embrace the audience through social practice methods. I often read poems to people in my village before completing a piece, and I discuss all my work with my cousin, who is the tribal leader. I incorporate the *Iñupiaq* language in everything I do as our unique *Iñupiaq* worldview is contained within the language. My practice is one of 'embodied healing'. I remember my Elders' joyful, boisterous, and powerful resistance to rapid colonization; how they did not cede their spirit, their language, their land, or their ancestral knowledge. I soaked up their presence as a young child, and I seek to bring their presence and their perspectives forth through my own embodiment of form using the tools that I have sharpened, my artistic abilities.

In my 2017 performance piece, *siku/siku*, I am on a gallery plinth, a cube, for the first half. I perform as a person on methamphetamines. For the second half, I speak only in *Iñupiaq*, writing in *Iñupiaq* on the cube until it is covered. *Siku* is our word for ice, and it is also what they call meth today. The piece considers the effects of rapid colonization and brings into stark relief the thin line between being subsumed by systems of oppression versus surviving and transcending the waves upon waves of colonial intrusion that have relentlessly hit our shores. I understand that our *Iñupiaq* worldview and values can be a powerful salve for humanity, and I am driven to bring our perspectives and love for life to the widest possible audience. I create to hopefully inspire the younger generation, through my direct actions, that they also can achieve the dreams of their hearts.

*ilummiq* : great-grandmother

*aana* : great-aunt

*attata* : great-uncle

# The Ancestors are Present

Healoha Johnston

In March of 2022, I was hired at Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum located in Honolulu, Hawai'i as part of an initiative called the Pacific Pipeline, and was brought on to help design what will be a sustained, multi-phase fellowship program for Pacific curators and cultural stewards based on Indigenous practices. I came to the position wanting to deepen my own engagement with repatriation after serving as the Smithsonian Institution's Curator of Asian Pacific American Women's Cultural History, a role that was created through the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative. Bishop Museum is a dynamic space within which to consider the relationship between feminist, art history, and Native Hawaiian and Indigenous theories and their applicable relevance in the museum context for reasons that are inextricably tied to Bishop Museum's site specificity. For a Kanaka 'Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) woman, curator, and art historian such as myself, there is no place else like Bishop Museum to listen, ideate, act, and iterate with colleagues across the campus and community members who share similar prerogatives. This essay takes inspiration from the transfer of land and building from Yale Union to the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, and considers the implications of this radical act as it relates to a collection-holding institution.

Bishop Museum's founding narrative is a tribute to an ali'i wahine (royal Native Hawaiian woman) named Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Her husband, Charles Reed Bishop, established the Museum in 1889 in Pauahi's honor with a founding collection consisting of items that Pauahi herself acquired and curated, as well as significant national and cultural items she inherited through the Hawaiian ali'i and then monarchy system. Known also as Princess Pauahi, Bernice Pauahi Bishop was a descendant of King Kamehameha I. Her extensive legacy includes the establishment and endowment of Kamehameha Schools, which is a separate organization from the museum Charles Reed Bishop established in her name. Other ali'i wahine left their collections to Pauahi during her lifetime, or to Bishop Museum after her passing. Princess Ruth Ke'elikōlani (1826-1883), who held positions within the Native-led Monarchical government as a member of privy council and as a Governor of Hawai'i Island, left her collection to Pauahi knowing that there existed an intention to establish a museum. Queen Lili'uokalani (1838-1917), the queen regnant who so deeply threatened the white businessman of Hawai'i with her proposed constitutional reforms—which would have empowered women and immigrants—that they sought aid of the US military to overthrow her, also left her collection in Bishop Museum's care. Many other Kānaka 'Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian people) left their collections to Bishop Museum as well, making this early assemblage of collections a fertile space for understanding 19<sup>th</sup> century Native and Indigenous curatorial practices and social contexts.

Anishinaabe author, Gerald Vizenor, explains that "Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion: survivance is the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction, however pertinent. Survivance is greater than the right of a survivable name."<sup>1</sup> Knowing this, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum is undertaking its own institutional

1. Vizenor, Gerald Robert. *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*. University of Nebraska Press 2008, p. 1.

2. Bishara, Hakim. "Toppled and Defaced Racist Monuments in 15 Cities, From Richmond to Bristol." June 10, 2020. Hyperallergic. <https://hyperallergic.com/569756/confederate-monuments-removed/>

3. Getachew, Adom. "Engaged History." *American Historical Review*, Volume 127, No. 2, June 2022, p. 794.

4. Eve Tuck (2011) *Rematriating Curriculum Studies*, *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 8:1, p.35, DOI: 10.1080/15505170.2011.572521

reckoning as phase one of the Pacific Pipeline. It is not enough for Native and Indigenous people to be invoked in name while operating in structures and policies that are antithetical to the ethics and frameworks practiced by Bernice Pauahi Bishop or the other ali'i wahine whose early collections form the foundation of the Museum's holdings.

## Reckoning and Repatriation

The Museum's Pacific Pipeline initiative emerged out of a world-wide reckoning in the museum field to address systemic racism following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. At this time, social justice protests were organized around the world in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, and in resistance to imperialist systems of oppression that perpetuate power structures rooted in white supremacy. In June 2020, Hakim Bishara writing for Hyperallergic published an account of defaced monuments in 15 cities around the world "from Richmond to Bristol" that were removed either by acts of protest or by government order in response to protest in the span of one week.<sup>2</sup> The international protests in 2020 vocalized and made visible sentiments that were not new. These mass actions brought attention to what was the culmination of decades and in some cases centuries long activism maintained by members of the Global Majority calling on institutions to decolonize systems, engage in meaningful work towards restorative justice, and reckon with hegemonic power beyond performative gestures and expressions of awareness. Political scientist, Adom Getachew, recalls what W.E.B. Du Bois termed the "present-past" as she articulates the way history is ever-present through the inequitable power structures that govern daily life and the collective memory shaped through national and civic establishments that reinforce the legitimacy of those structures. She explains that "the ways we narrate and commemorate the past are intimately tied to our collective ability to reckon with the incomplete and unfinished revolutions for freedom and equality."<sup>3</sup> Getachew reminds us of the ongoing anti-racism struggles, and the way history is engaged, reproduced, and activated on various scales on an everyday basis.

Many other scholars including Patrick Wolfe and Eve Tuck have explained how settler colonialism is not an "event" marking when a settler landed. It is a pervasive process that continues so long as the systems for the production of colonialist approaches and narratives remain in place. For this reason, the reckoning work at Bishop Museum as part of the Pacific Pipeline prioritized an assessment of internal ethics, aimed to reconcile and align with Indigenous stewardship methods. For us this meant first understanding our relationship with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), and working toward the development of an ethical returns policy and a shared stewardship policy. Eve Tuck explains that "the word repatriate comes from the Latin word, *repatriare*, which means restoring homeland, or going home again. In Indigenous contexts, repatriation often refers to the returning of the human remains of our relations, but it also regularly refers to the reclaiming of sovereignty, land, subsistence rights, cultural knowledge and artifacts, theories, epistemologies and axiologies."<sup>4</sup>

A driving question I continue to ask myself is, "What does repatriation look like in a time of repatriation?"

## Reckoning and Rematriation

When one's ancestors are revered, and include the elements of the sky and earth, it is easy to understand how the past is always present. In Hawaiian cosmogony, the Hawaiian Islands and the Hawaiian people share a common genealogy that connects us to "Papa who gives birth to islands and Wākea, the sky father."<sup>5</sup> Ancestors and deities are around us all the time and take many forms in animate belief systems held by Indigenous people in many parts of the world. It is often in protection of these relatives and deity that conflicting world views play out in the media, the courts, and the economy. Water and land protectors at Maunakea, Standing Rock, and Red Hill to name a few recent examples, bring focus to these acute disparities between Native and Indigenous philosophies and spiritualities, and capitalism. It reveals deeply enmeshed systems of power and profit that exist between the military, nationally-funded systems, and mega corporations around environmental extraction and exploitation. The need to recalibrate this relationship between people and the environment (often generalized as "the land"), and a suggested path toward doing so has been referred to as a process of rematriation.

The term rematriation, used by feminist writers, artists, and activists such as Lee Maracle, ReMatriate Collective, and Amanda Fayant to name a few, has various definitions, often modified depending on the locality, context, or discipline. One definition of rematriation is "To restore a people to their rightful place in sacred relationship with their ancestral land."<sup>6</sup> Another explanation of the process offered by scholars says "Rematriation is an emerging decolonial and social justice practice that connects private and public landholders with their Indigenous stewards in recognition that Indigenous Peoples were violently dispossessed and removed from their homelands and lifeways as a result of settler colonialism."<sup>7</sup> The through line between and across these definitions is the foregrounding of ancestral relationships to the earth, and the necessary rejection of patriarchal dominance over land and bodies.

The reckoning work at Bishop Museum is undertaken to address extractive practices that were/are considered museum best practice compliant, but are inconsistent with Indigenous Practice. The reality is that Bishop Museum's Cultural Resources collection bears the imprint of a dual legacy. One is indicative of Native survivance through the ali'i collections and the contributions of people across social stratas who left their collections in the care of Bishop Museum. The other legacy exposes colonial impulses tied to late 19th-early 20th century expeditions and political maneuvers where extractive practices enabled the increase of an uparalleled collection. Like many Native people, Kānaka 'Ōiwi experienced mass population decimation in relatively recent history caused by Hawai'i's continual contact with foreigners beginning in 1778. Population estimates suggest 70-90% of the Hawaiian population passed away during the 1800s.

Hawai'i's 19<sup>th</sup> century material culture shifted as the social and natural ecology of the islands changed. The thriving Kānaka 'Ōiwi population dwindled as foreign diseases, for which the people of Hawai'i had no immunity, swept across the islands with catastrophic effect. The introduction of invasive species brought aboard ships that frequented Hawaiian ports compounded the situation causing dramatic changes to the

5. Silva, Noenoe K. *Aloha Betrayed*. Duke University Press, 2004, p. 11.

6. Sogorea Te' Land Trust. <https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/purpose-and-vision/>

7. Ambo, T., & Rocha Beardall, T. (2023). Performance or Progress? The Physical and Rhetorical Removal of Indigenous Peoples in Settler Land Acknowledgments at Land-Grab Universities. *American Educational Research Journal*, 60(1), 103–140. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312221141981>

8. The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest, issue # 11, 2020 Newsletter, Library Rematriation Project, What is Rematriation, Ontario, Canada

environment. The natural materials once commonly used to create fine feather work were no longer accessible as the birds became rare and extinct, and the capacity of the surviving artists and master practitioners to create laboriously detailed textile and fiber work also diminished. Despite these obstacles, visual culture continued to flourish. New materials and symbols entered the rich existing visual lexicon, and influences across cultures and artistic media came to define the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Non-Native researchers, explorers, and amateur collectors responded to the combination of Native population decimation and an adapted Pacific material culture with a veracity for "authentic" and "unadulterated" examples of what they considered soon-to-be extinct cultures. The quest to discover and acquire Hawai'i and Pacific collections in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century before rapid and imperial-induced development further altered cultural production, involved mining the Pacific for cultural resources causing burial disinterment, and the desecration of Native land and bodies, in some cases with the aid of the U.S. military. Pieces with this type of provenance are part of the Bishop Museum Cultural Resources collection, entering the collection in the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some such pieces are memory markers, pinnacles on the land, that would have indicated where on the land a human ancestor lived, or fished nearby, or worshipped. Had those pieces been left undisturbed, they would be physical connections between people living today, their genealogical predecessors, and their ancestral connection to deities, land, and water.

In the conversation between Flint Jamison, Lulani Arquette, and me in another section of this reader, Lulani cites a well circulated newsletter announcing a collaboration between The Thunder Bay Public Library (TBPL) and The Re-Imagining Value Action Lab (RiVAL) where they elaborate on the command, "Give it Back" referring to Land Back and decolonial efforts through the lens of rematriation. TBPL and RiVAL explain, "...rematriation is the restoration of right relationships and a true action of decolonization, aimed not just at righting a past wrong but transforming our collective future."<sup>8</sup> An approach to rematriation that holds an orientation toward a transformed collective future also implicitly insists on a redistribution of power. There is no other way for a transformed future for all to happen unless power and authority are defined and allocated differently.

Rematriation involves varied forms of restoration and relationship building. Cultural institutions have to acknowledge the pervasive reach of coloniality to identify where authority exists, and how authority redistribution can activate communities towards liberation, especially if we are to truly serve as spaces that support and stimulate cultural production. What that means for a collection-holding museum like Bishop Museum is acknowledging that a collections framework premised on the expiration of Native people and Native cultures is flawed, racist, and irrelevant in 2023. A new framework is required for the redistribution of power. One that aims to restore relationships between and across communities, and sets community engagement in tandem with collections stewardship. TBPL and RiVAL's call for rematriation prioritizes purposefulness and collective action in the present so communities can do the Indigenous work that restores social and environmental ecosystems. This slow collective work can produce a very different world for people today and for future generations.

Yorta Yorta curator at Museums Victoria, Kimberly Moulton, has observed a shift in cultural institutions where “more Indigenous curators and artists are having agency within these spaces to drive an Indigenous curatorial methodology that isn’t embedded in ethnographic systems of classification or commercial driven conceptions of what Aboriginal art should look like.”<sup>9</sup> Her words resonate beyond the Aboriginal Australian context, and extend into the broader cultural sphere. Rematriation, as a varied process, goes beyond the limits of recuperation and representation, toward liberation, because the intention is not to include marginalized people within a structure of oppression.<sup>10</sup> Rather, it offers an alternative structure within which to operate. As a global discourse, it does not sacrifice the local context for its applicability. Quite the opposite. Rematriation underscores the requisite knowledge to contextualize the relationship between the people and land as a central focus for the processes and methodologies to have meaning and relevance. When this relationship is understood and restored, imagining dynamic and creative ways of being are possible. I will close this essay with the words of Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli, whose motto was “*The health of the land is the health of the people is the health of the nation.*”<sup>11</sup>

9. Clark, Maddee. “How to Decolonize the Art World: Three Scenarios.” *Art Writing in Crisis*, Sternberg Press, 2021, p. 163.

10. See writings by Teresia Teaiwa including Teresia K. “Globalizing and Gendered Forces: The Contemporary Militarization of Pacific/Oceania.” *Gender and Globalization in Asian and the Pacific: Method, Practice, Theory*, edited by Kathy E. Ferguson and Monique Mironesco, University of Hawai’i Press, 2008, pp. 318–32. And, Caswell, Michelle. *Urgent Archives: Enacting Liberatory Memory Work*. Routledge, 2023.

11. <https://www.noaemmettaluli.org/>

# TALKING WITH THE SUN

Joy Harjo

I believe in the sun.  
In the tangle of human failures of fear, greed, and  
forgetfulness, the sun gives me clarity.  
When explorers first encountered my people, they called us  
heathens, sun worshippers.  
They didn't understand that the sun is a relative, and  
illuminates our path on this earth.

After dancing all night in a circle we realize that we are a  
part of a larger sense of stars and planets dancing with us  
overhead.  
When the sun rises at the apex of the ceremony, we are  
renewed.  
There is no mistaking this connection, though Walmart  
might be just down the road.  
Humans are vulnerable and rely on the kindnesses of the  
earth and the sun; we exist together in a sacred field of  
meaning.

Our earth is shifting. We can all see it.  
I hear from my Inuit and Yupik relatives up north that  
everything has changed. It's so hot; there is not enough  
winter.  
Animals are confused. Ice is melting.

The quantum physicists have it right; they are beginning to  
think like Indians: everything is connected dynamically  
at an intimate level.  
When you remember this, then the current wobble of the  
earth makes sense. How much more oil can be drained,  
Without replacement, without reciprocity?

I walked out of a hotel room just off Times Square at dawn  
to find the sun.  
It was the fourth morning since the birth of my fourth  
granddaughter.  
This was the morning I was to present her to the sun, as a  
relative, as one of us. It was still dark, overcast as I walked  
through Times Square.  
I stood beneath a twenty-first century totem pole of symbols  
of multinational corporations, made of flash and neon.  
The sun rose up over the city but I couldn't see it amidst the  
rain.  
Though I was not at home, bundling up the baby to carry  
her outside,  
I carried this newborn girl within the cradleboard of my  
heart.  
I held her up and presented her to the sun, so she would be  
recognized as a relative,  
So that she won't forget this connection, this promise,  
So that we all remember, the sacredness of life.

"Talking with the  
Sun", from CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION FOR  
HOLY BEINGS: POEMS  
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**Maile Andrade** is a multimedia artist with an MFA from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She presently is a Professor at Kamakākūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa teaching in a Native Hawaiian Creative Expression Program. She has received a variety of academic awards and was selected by the Folk Arts Apprentice Program to serve as an apprentice with Master Weaver Elizabeth Lee and received the 1998 Visual Arts Fellowship from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. She has participated in several Indigenous Symposiums/Gatherings in New Zealand, Tahiti, and the Longhouse in Evergreen State College, Washington. Andrade was an artist-in-resident in Aotearoa/New Zealand, at the Alaska Heritage Center, Anchorage and SAR School for Advanced Research, Santa Fe, NM. She serves as an Affiliate Researcher at Bishop Museum and has presented her research all over the world. She has exhibited her works locally, nationally and internationally.

**Lulani Arquette** is the President and CEO of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF), a national nonprofit located in Portland, Oregon. NACF is dedicated to advancing equity and Native knowledge with a focus on arts and cultural expression that helps support American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native artists, organizations, and communities. Arquette, a theatre performing artist herself with a BA in Theatre Arts and MA in Political Science, has performed in stage productions and executive produced film projects. Her past work includes leading the largest multi-service organization for Native Hawaiians in Hawai'i and developing its first for-profit subsidiary. She created the Hawai'i Leadership Center, a distinctive multi-sector leadership program for executives and managers that based its curriculum on Native Hawaiian, Asian, and contemporary western approaches. Arquette has served on many boards including Grantmakers in the Arts and is currently a board member of the Association of Performing Arts Professionals. She received the 2021 Berresford Prize from United States Artists, an award that honors leaders and cultural practitioners who have contributed significantly to the advancement, wellbeing, and care of artists in society.

**Natalie Diaz** was born and raised in the Fort Mojave Indian Village in Needles, California, on the banks of the Colorado River. She is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Tribe. She earned a BA from Old Dominion University, where she received a full athletic scholarship. Diaz played professional basketball in Europe and Asia before returning to Old Dominion to earn an MFA. Diaz is the author of *Postcolonial Love Poem* and *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, winner of an American Book Award. She has received many honors, including a MacArthur Fellowship, a USA fellowship, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, and a Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Artist Fellowship. Diaz is the Maxine and Jonathan Marshall Chair in Modern and Contemporary Poetry at Arizona State University.

**Tiokasin Ghosthorse** is a member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation of South Dakota and has a long history with Indigenous activism and advocacy. A master musician and a teacher of magical, ancient, and modern sounds, Tiokasin is the Founder, Host and Executive Producer of "First Voices Radio" (formerly "First Voices Indigenous Radio") for the last 27 years in New York City and Seattle/Olympia, Washington. In 2016, he received a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize from the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy. Other recent recognitions include: Native Arts and Cultures Foundation National Fellowship in Music (2016), National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowship Nominee (2017), Indigenous Music Award Nominee for Best Instrumental Album (2019), National Native American Hall of Fame Nominee (2018, 2019), and New York City's Peacemaker of the Year (2013). Tiokasin is "a perfectly flawed human being" and a Sundancer in the cosmology of the Lakota Nation.

**Joy Harjo** is an internationally renowned performer and writer of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. She served three terms as the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States from 2019-2022. The author of ten books of poetry, including the highly acclaimed *An American Sunrise*, several plays and children's books, and two memoirs, *Crazy Brave* and *Poet Warrior*, her many honors include the 2023 Bollingen Prize for American Poetry, National Book Critics Circle Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award, the Ruth Lily Prize for Lifetime Achievement from the Poetry Foundation, the Academy of American Poets Wallace Stevens Award, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. As a musician and performer, Harjo has produced seven award-winning music albums. She served as Executive Editor of the anthology *When the Light of the World was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through—A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry* and the editor of *Living Nations, Living Words: An Anthology of First Peoples Poetry*, the companion anthology to her signature Poet Laureate project. She is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, Board of Directors Chair of the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation, and is the first Artist-in-Residence for Tulsa's Bob Dylan Center. She lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

**Flint Jamison** is an artist living in Seattle, WA. He was the Co-founder and President of the Board of Directors of Yale Union, a contemporary art center in Portland, OR (2008—2021) and was the co-founder of the artist-run center Department of Safety (2002—2010) in Anacortes, WA. He is the founding editor of *Veneer Magazine* and Associate Professor of Art at the School of Art, Art History, and Design at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA. Jamison is represented by Air de Paris, Paris, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, and Galerie Max Mayer, Düsseldorf. In 2017, he exhibited at the Whitney Biennial and received a Ford Family Fellowship. In 2019, he opened his exhibition *Opportunity Zones* at Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen, Switzerland. In 2020, the Board of Directors of Yale Union announced its dissolution and that it would transfer the ownership of the property to the Indigenous-led Native Arts & Cultures Foundation. In 2021, he opened two solo exhibitions at Air de Paris and Galerie Max Mayer, and a solo exhibition at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart in 2022.

**Healoha Johnston** is an art historian living in Kaiwīki, Hawai'i. She is Director of Cultural Resources and Curator for Hawai'i and Pacific Arts and Culture at Bishop Museum. Johnston's exhibitions and research projects explore connections between historic visual culture and contemporary art with a particular focus on the socio-political underpinnings that inform those relationships. She served as Chief Curator and Curator of the Arts of Hawai'i, Oceania, Africa, and the Americas at the Honolulu Museum of Art, worked in contemporary art galleries and NOAA's Pacific National Monument program, and the Smithsonian Institution as part of the American Women's History Initiative and Asian Pacific American Center before joining Bishop Museum.

**New Red Order** is a public secret society facilitated by core contributors Adam Khalil, Zack Khalil, and Jackson Polys. In our current period of existential and environmental catastrophe, desires for Indigenous epistemologies increase and enterprising settlers labor to extract this understanding as if it were a natural resource. New Red Order—emerging out of contradistinction from the Improved Order of Red Men, a secret society that ,plays Indian'—calls attraction toward indigeneity into question, yet promotes this desire, and enjoins potential non-Indigenous accomplices to participate in the co-examination and expansion of Indigenous agency. Working with an interdisciplinary network of informants the NRO co-produces video, performance, and installation works that confront settler colonial tendencies and obstacles to Indigenous growth. They have presented their work at Artists Space, Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Lincoln Center, Museum of Modern Art, Walker Arts Center, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Sundance Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Toronto Biennial 2019, and Whitney Biennial 2019, among others, expanding the public secret society network across numerous institutional platforms.

**Brandy Nālani McDougall** is an Associate Professor specializing in Indigenous Studies in the American Studies Department at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Born and raised on Maui in the ahupua'a of A'apueo in Kula, McDougall is the author of the poetry collection, *The Salt-Wind, Ka Makani Pa'akai* (Kuleana 'Ōiwi Press 2008). She is the co-editor of *Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific*, an anthology focused on Pacific aesthetics and rhetorics (University of Hawai'i Press 2014). Her second poetry collection, *'Āina Hānau, Birth Land*, is inspired by her two daughters and is forthcoming from the University of Arizona Press in Summer 2023. A former Mellon and Ford postdoctoral fellow, her monograph *Finding Meaning: Kaona and Contemporary Hawaiian Literature* (University of Arizona Press 2016) was awarded the 2017 Beatrice Medicine Award for Scholarship in American Indian Studies and a Ka Palapala Po'okela Honorable Mention. Aside from her scholarship and poetry, McDougall is the co-founder of Ala Press, an independent press dedicated to publishing creative works by Indigenous Pacific Islanders. She is the Hawai'i Poet Laureate for 2023—2025 and lives with her 'ohana in Kalaepōhaku, O'ahu.

**Eric Golo Stone** is currently artistic director at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart where he has organized exhibitions by Eva Barto, Andrea Fraser, Flint Jamison, Anike Joyce Sadiq, Bea Schlingelhoff, and Ramaya Tegegne. His research, writing, curating, and lecturing consistently examines the political economy of art. Drawing from reflexive methods of institutional critique and psychosocial analysis his work with artists emphasizes the governance arrangements, socioeconomic structures, and authority dynamics by which art institutions operate. His writing has been published in *Afterall*, *October*, *Flash Art*, and *Texte zur Kunst*, among other publications, and he is editor of the newly published book, *The Services Working Group*, which revisits the seminal working group exhibition entitled *Services* that was organized by Helmut Draxler and Andrea Fraser in 1994.

**Allison Akootchook Warden** is an Iñupiaq poet, installation artist, performance artist and a tribal member of the Native Village of Kaktovik. In 2022, her poem *we acknowledge ourselves* was featured in the Land Acknowledgements issue of Poetry Magazine. Alaska Quarterly Review published her poem, *portal traveler*, and her poetry was part of *Insidious Rising*, a hyphen-labs project for Google Arts and Cultures. At the 2022 Time Based Arts Festival at the Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, she debuted *taigruaq*, a performance piece with collaborator Aqqalu Berthelesen. She is the recipient of a 2022 Art Matters Artist2Artist Fellowship in interdisciplinary arts, a 2022 Rasmuson Individual Artist Fellowship in music composition, 2019 United States Artist Fellowship in traditional arts, a 2018 Rasmuson Individual Artist Fellowship in new genre and a 2018 Native Arts and Cultures Foundation National Artist Fellowship in music. She is currently working on an album, writing poetry and is scheduled to open her social practice installation *The Inuit Futurism Center* at the Anchorage Museum this summer. She lives in a cabin in Fairbanks, Alaska. [www.allisonwarden.com](http://www.allisonwarden.com)

## *With Gratitude*

It is with sincere gratitude that I express thanks to Juliane Gebhardt and Eric Golo Stone of Künstlerhaus Stuttgart; Lulani Arquette, Reuben Tomás Roqueñi, and Gabriella Tagliacozzo of Native Arts and Cultures Foundation; contributors Maile Andrade, Natalie Diaz, Tiokasin Ghosthorse, Joy Harjo, Flint Jamison, Brandy Nālani McDougall, New Red Order, and Allison Akootchook Warden; and colleagues at Bishop Museum for what has become a generative partnership committed to thinking through repatriation in the arts. Many thanks to designer, Antonia Terhedebrügge of Studio Terhedebrügge, for designing the reader, the poster, and digital presence of *Return to the Land* and *The Center for Native Arts and Cultures: Convenings on Land Repatriation*. Our work together, culminating in this convening and accompanying reader, is inspired by the actions and ideas of ancestors, authors, artists, activists, feminists, organizations, practitioners, and scholars devoted to maintaining connections between people and the land, many of whom insisted upon the role of art and culture in political struggles and repatriation.

Healoha Johnston  
Director of Cultural Resources, and Curator for Hawai'i and Pacific Arts  
and Culture  
Bishop Museum



