

Minneapolis Institute of Art

# In Our Hands: Cultural Fluency and Logistics



Cara Romero, Chemehuevi, born 1977, *TV Indians*, 2017,  
archival inkjet print, Courtesy of the artist © Cara Romero

# Mia

# Agenda

- Cultural fluency discussion, questions and concerns
- Logistics
- Tour themes brainstorm (if time)
- Questions

Cara Romero, Chemehuevi, born 1977, *Hermosa*, 2021, 2021.81 © Cara Romero



## Mia's Native Relations Statement for all *In Our Hands* events:

The museum resides on Dakhóta Makoce, the homelands of the Dakhóta people and their Anishinaabe and Ho-Chunk neighbors. Mia recognizes the painful legacy of colonization and genocide and its impact on Native people. The museum is committed to continuous learning and embraces a living relationship with Native communities to build a more inclusive, empathetic, and equitable space for all. We pledge to make visible the creativity and ingenuity of Native artists, both those who walk among us, as well as those who came before.

# Introductory statements

General statement, condensed:

The museum resides on the homelands of the Dakhóta people and their Anishinaabe and Ho-Chunk neighbors. Through In Our Hands and future exhibitions, Mia pledges to make visible the creativity and ingenuity of Native artists from the past, the present, and the future.

## Introductory statements:

From Marne Zafar:

It is important and respectful to remember that

- Mia is situated on the traditional homeland of the Dakhóta.
- Mia acknowledges that “the people are still here.”
- Mia is aware that the art that was - and is - created is respectful of the past, mindful of the present and aware of the future.

Marne provided her outline of the virtual tour to use as a resource, so check it out on the exhibition resource page.

## Points to remember:

- Start with an acknowledgement of your own identity, and openness to learning from visitors.
- In touring this show, from feedback from Native people, it is best to say “I don’t know” if asked about an aspect of Native culture of which you have no knowledge. Do not try to make an educated guess based on what you may know of other cultures.

## Points to remember:

- Native cultures are not monolithic.
- Be specific on Native nations and cultural affiliations listed for artists. Use information on the labels.
- Native nations pronunciation guide is available, and is posted on the exhibition resource page.



Shan Goshorn

Eastern Band Cherokee, 1957-2018

*Why We Dance*, 2016, Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Flint Ink Endowment Fund, 2021.286.1

© Shan Goshorn

## Points to remember:

- Native hosts are Justice Jensvold, Ardie Medina, Roya Taylor, and Marne Zafar.
- Hosts are here to welcome Native visitors and groups to the exhibition on Thursday evenings (5:30 to 7:30 PM) and Sunday afternoons (1 to 2 PM). Tours and visits for Native groups are scheduled separately for the hosts.
- Native school groups will tour with Mia school guides.
- All Native visitors have free entry to the exhibition.



Marne will be giving the virtual tour for In Our Hands:  
November 9, 7 PM  
December 17, 2 PM  
January 11, 7 PM

Frank Big Bear, White Earth Nation, born 1953  
*We Are Still Here*, 2014, Collage on found paper  
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland  
Park, Kansas, 2014.37  
Photo: EG Schempf, © 2022 Frank Big Bear



In this photography exhibition, we are not focusing on giving information on process. Instead, we are focusing on the primacy of the artists' visions and stories told through the photographic medium. As a guide, you are supporting the visual sovereignty of the artists.

Suggestions for ways to redirect away from process questions--and the need to know process--to the stories being told:

- At the start of the tour, be frank that your focus will be on sharing the content and context, and you will not be discussing the technical aspects of the photographic processes. (This is the direction given by the curatorial team and council.)

- If you use VTS with students, provide a framework about the artist and artwork before using those questions. For example, Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie wanted her digital portrait of We'wha to reflect her cultural knowledge and perspectives. Let the students know that before using VTS to explore what they see.



- Be ready to step in to reorient away from stereotypes with paraphrasing--if stereotypes arise in conversation. ([VTS article](#))

Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie  
Diné (Navajo) / Seminole /  
Muscogee (Creek), born 1954  
*We'wha, The Beloved*, 2012.  
Courtesy of the artist, © 2023  
Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie

- Remember that our identities inform what we see.

For adults, frame the discussion by sharing what you know of what the artist intended--not asking the visitors to interpret based on what they see, especially if they do not come from that culture. Then questions can be asked to dive in deeper: “What visual elements of this reinforce the message of what the artist intended?”

Wendy Red Star, Amnía (Echo),  
2021, © Wendy Red Star



Use a lot of descriptive questions at the start:

Take a moment to look. What first stands out to you in this image?

What do you notice about the colors? Etc.

Then tie what they notice to the artist's message or intent. Avoid letting folks go on with their own interpretations--or rephrase their interpretations as questions and move back to primacy of artists' voices.

Sometimes knowledge is not for us (white people); it belongs to the Native nation. Respect that and explain that.

New terms:

See the catalog essay: “Rematriating Photography” by Veronica Passalacqua:

Passalacqua:

“Rematriation is the practice of restoring people to their rightful place, ‘to heal and transform the legacies of colonization, genocide and patriarchy and to do the work our ancestors and future generations are calling us to do.’” p. 46

Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie  
Diné (Navajo) / Seminole / Muscogee (Creek), born 1954  
*We'wha, The Beloved*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist, © 2023  
Hulleah J. Tsinhnahjinnie



New terms:

Visual sovereignty: The right of Indigenous people to determine how they will be represented. (IOH panel)

Ryan RedCorn  
Osage, born 1979  
*Celena White, ᄎᄎᄎᄎ ᄎᄎᄎᄎ (Osage Cook), 2018*  
Sublimated fabric print  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Ryan RedCorn



Other thoughts or questions?

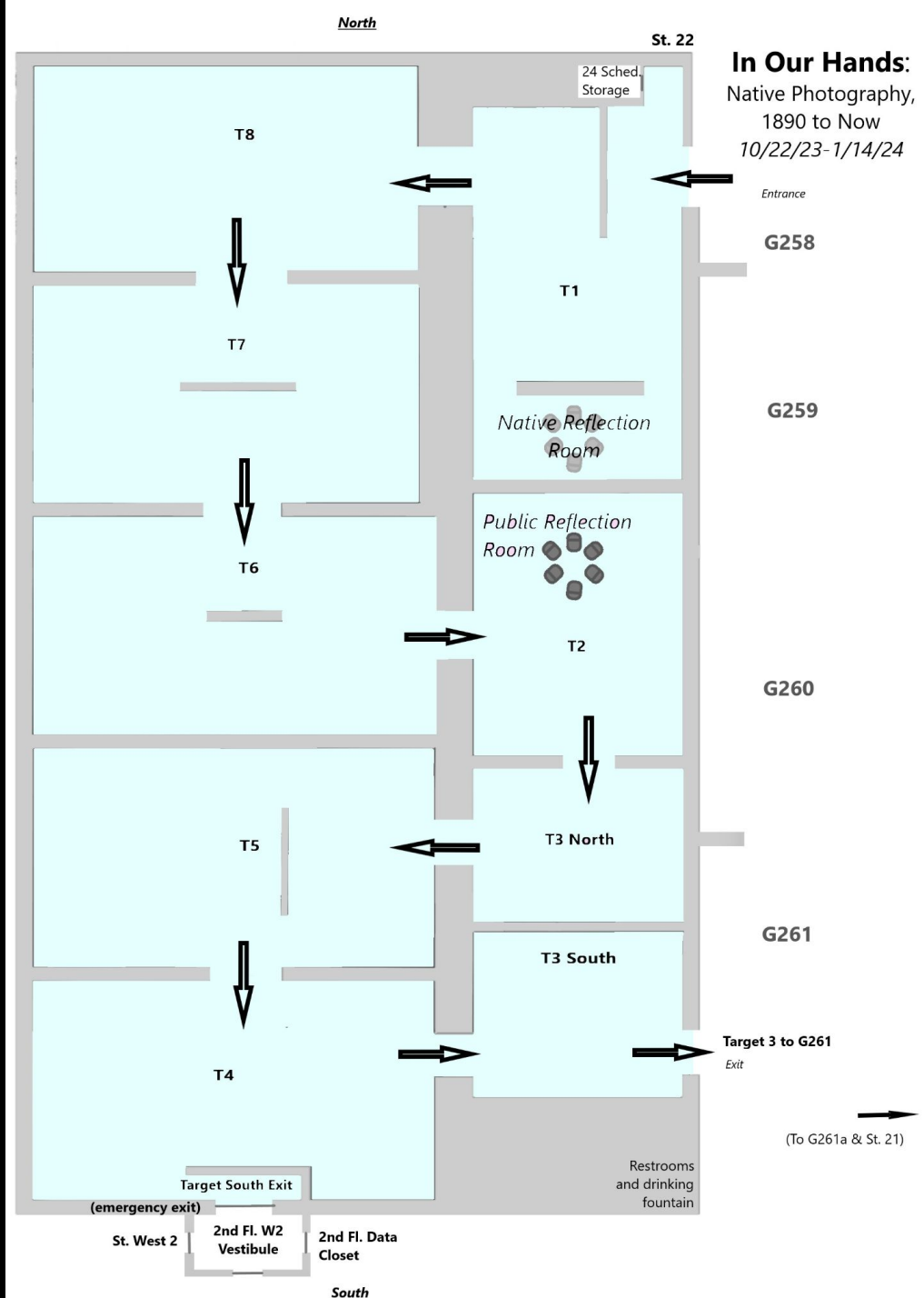


# Tour Logistics

- Public tours meet at the entrance to the exhibition. Public tours end on December 22.
- Private tours meet in the General Mills Lobby. Plan to be available for private tours the week of January 4-12.
- School tours meet in the Target Atrium. Could be scheduled January 4-12, based on requests.
- Private donor tours given by the curators - plan accordingly.

# Target Galleries map

With large groups (4 guides or more), 1-2 guides could enter through the end of the exhibition after checking in at the VE desk. VE needs to confirm the reservation.



For guide-organized tours, fill out the tour request form. Note in accommodation that you are leading your own group.

Times for guide-organized tours are Tuesday-Sunday, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30 PM, and Thursday evenings, 6:00 PM.

# Museum Logistics

- Reflection room is for Native visitors. Medicines for offerings will be available.
- Smudging (burning sage) will take place under the oak tree in Target Park.
- Brunch offered in the Mezzanine restaurant, Sundays: Nov 5, 2023 - Jan 14, 2024, 11am - 2pm

## Theme ideas:

- Rights of representation: How Native photographers reclaim the narrative and practice visual sovereignty.
- Fluidity of time: How past, present, and future intertwine.
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# Questions?



# Thank you!

Brian Adams (Iñupiaq, born 1985), Marie Rexford of Kaktovik, Alaska preparing Maktak for the Village's Thanksgiving Day feast (detail), 2015, from the series I am Inuit Chromogenic print. Courtesy the artist © Brian Adams

