

In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now

Enter into the vivid worlds of Native photography, as framed by generations of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Native American photographers themselves. Presenting over 150 photographs of, by, and for Indigenous people, “In Our Hands” welcomes all to see through the lens held by Native photographers.

Total length of audio guide: 36 minutes

Audio Guide transcript, all stops

STOP 1, Introduction to the Audio Guide

Jaida Grey Eagle and Josie Lampone

Jaida Grey Eagle:

Hello and welcome to the audio tour for *In Our Hands: Native Photography 1890 to Now*. My name is Jaida Grey Eagle. I'm an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe. I'm a photojournalist and a co-curator for this exhibition.

Josie Lampone:

My name is Josie Lampone. I'm an enrolled member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, and I'm the producer, director and editor for all of the complementary media in this exhibition, including the audio tour you are listening to right now.

Jaida Grey Eagle:

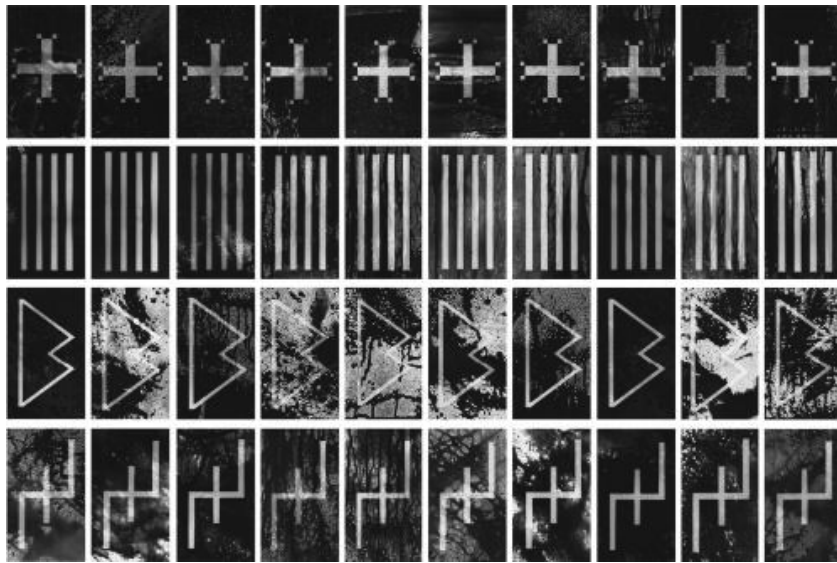
This exhibition was curated with a curatorial council of fourteen advisors, most of whom are Native and some of whom are artists that you will hear from in this tour. Curatorial Decisions were grounded in Indigenous practices and Native voices guided this project from the works chosen for the exhibition to its interpretive framework and to the research and writing of the exhibition catalog.

Josie Lampone:

Over the summer, Jaida and I, along with MIA's Interactive media team, traveled to meet and converse with 12 different artists, and it's from those conversations that you'll hear today. It was really important to us and the curators that as many artists as possible were able to lend their voice alongside their work, and that museum visitors would be able to hear them talk about their photography in their own way.

Jaida Grey Eagle:

Thank you for listening, and I hope you enjoy the audio tour for *In Our Hands*.



Dakota Mace, Diné (Navajo), born 1991, **So' (Stars)**, 2022, 40 Chemigrams, Courtesy of the Bruce Silverstein Gallery

STOP 2, So' (Stars)

Dakota Mace

My name is Dakota Mace. I am a Diné artist, originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, but currently reside in Madison, Wisconsin.

My work is titled *So'*, which translates to stars in Navajo. This work really was kind of looking at the importance of storytelling, especially Diné storytelling, the stories that I heard from my grandfather. That was something growing up, I was always surrounded by art, whether that was my grandfather making silver jewelry. My mom claims to not be an artist, but she would always draw. Same with my stepdad, he would always be drawing. There was something really beautiful about how their connection to art was always entwined with their identity, and there was never something separate.

This work was inspired by their stories and thinking about our creation and translate the same designs that my family created or my family were using for many, many years, and create this new interpretation of that history and that identity for myself.

As a photographer, thinking about what is tradition, what is authenticity? For myself growing up, it was an unfortunate allergy to silver jewelry, so I had to be well aware of what things I was handling. I decided to work with photography, which is a completely different format of silver.

The process is called a chemigram. This is an alternative photographic process in which it's very painterly in the darkroom. So a lot of people have always asked me, "What is the balance of chemicals?" I'm like, there really isn't. It's what happens in the darkroom is happening. I think the beauty of chemigrams is that it's so varied. It's all experimentation. I cannot create the same

exact print. I think that's really important with photography, in that we're so used to this instantaneous object that is presented in front of us. I think the chemigram goes back to this idea of why we love photography, what it is about the idea of a print, and, of course, the magic of light and shadow interacting with one another.



Will Wilson, Diné (Navajo), born 1969, *Insurgent Hopi Maiden, Melissa Pochoema, Citizen of the Hopi Tribe*, 2015, Archival pigment print from wet plate collodion scan, Collection of the artist

STOP 3, Insurgent Hopi Maiden

Will Wilson

My name's Will Wilson, and I'm a citizen of the Navajo Nation. I'm a photographer and an artist.

It's called *Insurgent Hopi Maiden*, and it's a collaboration with Melissa Pochoema, a Hopi artist and model. I had the opportunity to work for her for an exhibition that was about Indigenous hairstyles, and I had always thought of that in relation to Princess Leia and that narrative. I talked to Melissa later and I was like, "I would love to collaborate with you around this idea I've had for a long time."

So in that work, which is actually a *Talking Tintype*, Melissa does Princess Leia's speech to Obi-Wan Kenobi, except she does it from a Hopi perspective. So she's talking to Po'pay who led

the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. So we've sort of re-appropriated Lucas' appropriation of kind of Hopi cultural patrimony.

It's also shot in a historic photographic process called wet plate collodion. That was important, I think, in forming sort of the image of indigeneity and also maybe the American West or what has become the American West in the 19th century. It was invented in 1850 and sort of was the photographic process until about 1880.

So you think about that timeframe and what that means, particularly from the standpoint of an Indigenous person, colonization, what's happening from my perspective in the American West in particular. Then as a photographic practitioner, investigating that media to infer that history, I guess, is something that's important to that practice, which is ongoing, and I really love that process and practice.



Nadya Kwandibens, Animakee Wa Zhing #37 First Nation Anishinaabe, born 1978, **Tee Lyn Duke (née Copenace) Toronto, ON, March 2010**, From the series **Concrete Indians**, Inkjet print, Collection of the artist, courtesy Red Works Photography

STOP 4, Tee Lyn Duke (née Copenace) Toronto, ON, March 2010

Nadya Kwandibens

I'm just going to say it. You're not supposed to photograph in TTC Subways, but I did. Because this is, after all, Indigenous land, isn't it?

My name is Nadya Kwandibens. I'm a photographer, I run a photo company called Red Works Photography. I've been working for over 20 years now, all across Indian Country. I'm an

Anishinaabe Ojibwe from Northwestern Ontario, a small reserve called Animakee Wa Zhing 37 on Anishinaabe Aki Treaty 3 territory.

It's almost ghostly. There's a lot of spirit in it, and that's because I photograph it in a certain way, so that the background and everyone coming behind her on their way, rushing home from work or rushing wherever they need to be, it's just like they're all blurred. I photographed it, I think it was like a four second aperture or shutter open, and I told her Tee, you have to remain completely still, don't blink. And then the wind was coming in, with the subway coming and going. So you could see her, like some parts are blurred because the wind was coming in, so her feathers are ruffled. Some of her regalia sort of moves, but you can still see her and she's very much present in that space and time.

I wanted to show how present and very much alive our cultures are, and I think that for me, that's what it represents, but it could mean something else to someone else. Right? Art has a way of doing that.



Parker McKenzie, Kiowa, 1897–1999, *Nettie Odelty and Frances Ross*, c. 1915 (printed 2023), Inkjet print, Oklahoma Historical Society, Parker McKenzie Collection, 19650.102

STOP 5, Nettie Odelty and Frances Ross, c. 1915

Parker McKenzie, as told by Josie Lampone

Hello, my name is Josie Lampone. I'm Kiowa and Chickasaw. I was born and raised in Wisconsin and now live here in Minneapolis and before you is a picture of Netty, who is my great-grandmother, and her friend Frances, and the photographer is my great-grandfather, Parker MacKenzie.

This photo was taken before they had gotten married, and it wasn't until a few more years after that that my grandmother, Esther was born.

So I believe it was back in early 2020 that I first learned that my great-grandfather's photos were going to be a part of this exhibition. And my first thought was, "Wow, that's so cool. That's so exciting." I had met Parker when I was a child. He was still alive, and some of my earliest memories are of him speaking Kiowa when we went to visit him and my grandmother back in Oklahoma. But then my second thought was "What photos?"

Because Parker was such a larger than life figure in my family, he really was a giant. And I grew up with all these stories about him, and so it seemed odd that if he had been a photographer, that I wouldn't know about it. And so naturally the first thing I did upon learning this was I texted my mom. I said something about how Parker's photos were going to be in this exhibition, but I had never heard of any of these photos. Had she heard of these photos? And she was like, "I don't think so. Maybe ask one of your aunts." And so I proceeded to text a couple of my aunts who also responded with, "I don't know." And one of my aunts does live near my grandmother, and so she asked her and my grandmother couldn't really remember anything. So this really was a pleasant surprise for my family to discover that these photos existed.

While they are historical photos, and they capture a moment in time in a larger space of young Kiowa people in the 1910s. They are also family photos. That's kind of what they are at their core is my great-grandfather taking a picture of the woman he loves and her friend. That goes for every historical photo that you'll see in this exhibition, is that, that is someone's grandmother or great uncle, whether they're in front of the camera or behind the camera. We've been documenting our lives for ourselves and for future generations. And finding out about these photos is a wonderful example of that.



Cara Romero, Chemehuevi, born 1977, *Hermosa*, 2021, Archival HD pigment print on Canson Baryta Prestidge paper, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of funds from Eric and Celita Levinson, 2021.81

Stop 6, Hermosa

Cara Romero

My name is Cara Romero and I am a contemporary fine art photographer. I'm an enrolled citizen of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe of the Mojave Desert of California.

The image *Hermosa* is of my daughter, Crickett Tiger, at sunset on Hermosa Beach. The photograph was taken during the pandemic when I don't think many of us knew how we were going to make art, especially photographers that worked with other people. We also simultaneously had this opportunity to make work in Southern California, which is where I was born, and I moved my whole pod to the beach for three months.

I did a study with my daughter out during sunset. Each day we took thousands and thousands of photographs. As a photographer, technically I was interested in using my strobe lights, which were battery operated.

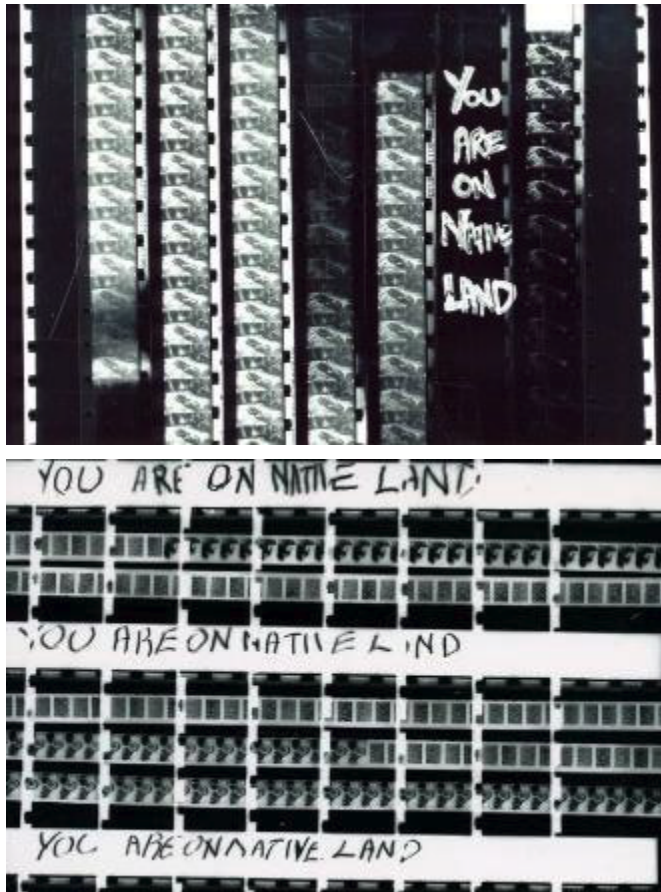
My son and my husband are holding the lights behind me and next to her. I was studying technically how to balance the strobe lights with the sunset in the back. Capturing emotion was something that I was really interested in.

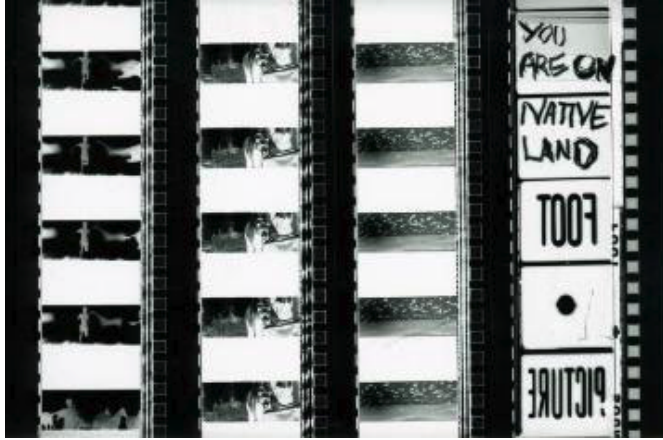
There's this adage of the harder you work, the luckier you get in photography. And we were there for weeks and this one moment where we had taken the photograph, a huge wave came up and splashed and surprised her. And I happened to hit the shutter at exactly the right time before she had even reacted to the splash. We're talking about 1/1000th of a second.

When I went back to look at the images, it was just otherworldly. It was just a spectacular image.

As a Chemehuevi person working in Southern California alongside the ocean, it was really important time for me to understand and talk story with the local Tongva people, to Southern California people from the desert, which were from about 250 miles inland from the coast. All of our creation stories, so many points of reverence in our spirituality still come from the ocean.

Even though our reservations in modern times are stuck out in the desert, we traveled and we made pilgrimage to the ocean. And our creation stories are about Great Ocean Woman. And so I think all of that spirit of Great Ocean Woman came through in that photograph. All of that spirit of reverence for the ocean, for California peoples came through in that photograph. And then maybe a little bit of magic happened just going out there day after day, and that huge wave that splashed up that I captured.





Eve-Lauryn LaFountain Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa/Jewish, born 1986 *You Are on Native Land: Niibidoon (Weave)*, 2020 *You Are on Native Land: Agindamaage (She Reads for People)*, 2020 *You Are on Native Land: Awesiinh (Wild Animals)*, 2020 From the series *You Are on Native Land* 16 mm and 35 mm film; taped, etched, and contact printed on double-weight Ilford multigrade pearl postcard paper Collection of the artist

Stop 7, You Are on Native Land

Eve LaFountain

The work that I have in the exhibition is a postcard series called *You Are On Native Land*. It was actually a commissioned project from some friends of mine who are also photographers and artists.

My name is Eve LaFountain and I'm Turtle Mountain Chippewa, and that's in North Dakota. That's where our reservation is. I'm a photographer and a filmmaker. I mostly work in lens-based media, but also mixed media installation work.

There's a series of three postcards that I created that are film-based, so each of them was created by weaving together, sewing together strips of film, and then I etched into the emulsion, "You Are on Native Land" on each of the pieces.

Each postcard series was sold online and the proceeds went to a charity or cause of our choice. My postcards were going toward the Black Hills Legal Defense Fund. Each recipient address who purchased the postcards, I would then research the Indigenous history of the land that that was being sent to, and write a little blurb about the Indigenous history of that piece of land.

The project originated in Los Angeles, a lot of the postcards were sent to Los Angeles. The Tongva people in Los Angeles, for instance, are still fighting for federal recognition, don't have their own reservation land, they don't have any land space for a lot of reasons, mostly because it's in the middle of a city, and that would be much harder to carve out.

So, a lot of the history of those postcards are written there, that the people whose land you're on aren't even really recognized and people don't really associate it. But also at the same time, Los Angeles has the largest Indigenous population of any city in this country, which people don't really know about.

The postcards that are on display at the museum were also created for that address as well. So I talk a little bit about the Minneapolis history of Indigenous people, then I also included Santa Fe where I live now, because that's where I was doing the research from by the time we got to creating those postcards here. So, there's cultural institutions for each space that are written about on the backs of these postcards.



Erica Lord, Athabascan/Iñupiat/Finnish/Swedish/Japanese, born 1978, *Untitled (I Tan to Look More Native)*, 2006 (printed 2023), From the series **The Tanning Project**, Inkjet print, Collection of the artist and Accola Griefen Fine Art

Stop 8, *Untitled (I Tan to Look More Native)*

Erica Lord

I'm Erica Lord. I'm an interdisciplinary artist, originally from Nenana, Alaska, which is Central Alaska, and I grew up between there and Upper Michigan. I'm Athabascan and Iñupiat. I'm also Finnish, Swedish, English, and Japanese: circumpolar.

The series that's in the exhibition is part of the *Tanning Series*, which is a series of four images where I literally tanned words onto my body and then shot photos of them, so they're part performance and part photos of a performative act.

I was at The Art Institute of Chicago at the time, which is where I went to grad school, and when I was there, there was a class about images of mixed race that was kind of struck on how skin color, eye color, hair color, and in Native communities, blood quantum, language or not-language, whether you're on res or not, really influenced if people felt like they could identify as Native or not. I thought if skin was the topic of contention and the issue at hand, then it made the most sense to use skin as the platform for which we should speak about this.

And so I had a boyfriend that worked at a vinyl graphics business at the time. I had him send me a whole bunch of phrases that I would then just put on my skin and then go to the tanning bed or something. And since I tan pretty quickly, words got on there and then just shot photos of that, starting with on my back: "I Tan to Look More Native." One of my arms said, "Indian Looking." The other one said, "Looking Indian." I wasn't sure which arm I was going to go with, and then my chest said, "Half Breed," and down my hip and thigh, it says, "Colonize Me."

Obviously, it's not my idea of who a Native looks like, but other people's idea of what Native looks like. A lot of this stuff is not only Native identity, and so race and ethnicity, but also sexuality, and so the target or assumptions that are made with Native women.

Growing up, I never had examples that I could look to of mixed-race Native people that I saw in media or in photo or film, and so I wanted to start creating those images that either challenged or provoked or made you think about those questions.

And then it took months to get those words off of me.



Leah Rose Kolakowski, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa, born 1989, *Bring Her Home*, 2018, Archival inkjet print, Collection of the artist

Stop 9, Bring Her Home

Leah Rose Kolakowski

When I went to my res and started reconnecting with my family and my community and started taking portraits of my people, that's when I was like, this is where my heart is. This is the work, my heartwork.

My name is Leah Rose. I'm a photographer, and I am part of the Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Nation.

The piece that's going to be in the exhibition is named *Bring Her Home*. It's a photograph of my friend Dezbah Evans. She's Yuchi, Navajo, and Anishinaabe. She's from these three different tribes that are kind of spread out, and the reason why I chose her was because she is multi-tribal and I wanted to raise awareness for the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous relatives. So I wanted to pick someone that symbolized that it affects all of us. It's not just one tribe and one people. It's something across the board.

You often see the color red associated with that movement. A lot of people do the hand print, so that's why I chose that deep, deep red. She is side profile. She is mostly in shadow, and she also has a headband that my husband made. She's wearing that, which is securing this eagle feather that was given to me by my uncle that I stayed with. So there's a lot of personal symbols in there, kind of like my protection of her.

And I wanted it to be kind of something that anybody could relate to and maybe see themselves in or see their relatives in. It was an idea that I had in the back of my mind for a long time. I didn't want it to just be any kind of picture. I wanted it to be a very powerful, thought-provoking portrait. It's very simple, but anytime I talk to people about it, they have so many questions. And that's good, because I feel like it's something that I want to bring awareness to and that more people need to know about, and it's a good conversation starter.



Jolene Rickard, Tuscarora Nation, Turtle Clan, born 1956, *Scorched Earth 1779: Gayogohó:nq' Return*, 2023, Inkjet print, Collection of the artist

Stop 10, Scorched Earth 1779: Gayogohó:nq' Return

Jolene Rickard

In my time in living in the Gayogohó:nq' territory, I feel it's like my obligation to surface or make visual their history.

My name is Jolene Rickard. And within the Skarù:rę' or Tuscarora language, we would say "čwé:'n ahskě:nę hę" It really is a greeting to ask you how your wellbeing is, which I think is a beautiful way to introduce ourselves to each other. My Skarù:rę' name is Ya chi ni ti. Had it for a long time, and got it from my clan mother years ago.

Throughout Indian country, there's a reclamation of the way in which we say our names in our language. Tuscarora is one way that we say it, but in our language we say Skarù:rę', right? For the Cayuga, they say "Cayuga." But then the way in which they define themselves as Gayogohó:nq'.

Gayogohó:nq' Return is like a triptych-like photograph, which has Photoshop intervention in it to communicate the landscape from the point of the impact of the Clinton-Sullivan campaign.

The Clinton-Sullivan campaign, I look at as a pivotal moment in the history of the United States. America had just finished its battle for its own identity with the British and the French. And they turned their sights then very specifically on the Haudenosaunee and moving Westward.

George Washington actually gave the orders for what today we would think of as a genocidal act, which was a scorched-earth campaign.

The Cayuga or the Gayogóhó:nq' were the first peoples that were impacted in the most dramatic way. And it was from that point onward, there were over seventeen villages that were burned, and thousands of bushels of corn that were burned as a starvation tactic. That's part of what a scorched-earth campaign is.

The photographs represent how the landscape is marked today, and trying to bring forward a sense of the landscape. But at the same time, with the photograph, marking it to disrupt it: so that we know that it's an unsettled, continuously colonial space.

In my work I've always tried to bring forward our strength while at the same time making clear what the odds have been for us.



Tom Jones, Ho-Chunk, born 1964, *Choka Watching Oprah*, 1998, From the series *The Ho-Chunk People*, Gelatin silver print, Collection of the artist

Stop 11, Choka Watching Oprah

Tom Jones

The photograph, *Choka Watching Oprah*, was taken in my grandfather's home. Choka in Ho-Chunk is grandfather.

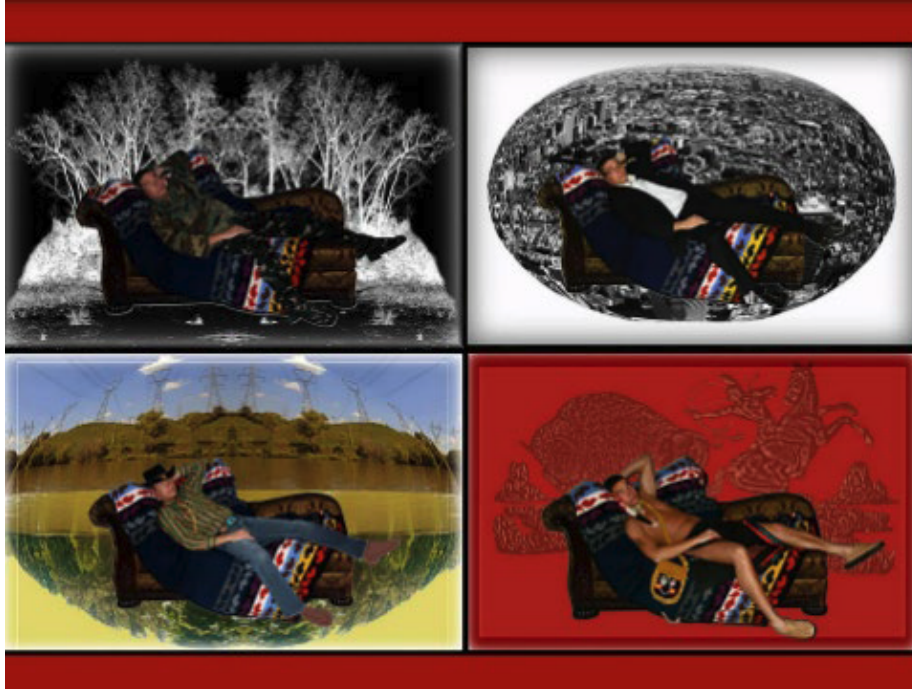
My name is Tom Jones. I come from the Ho-Chunk Nation and I'm a professor at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

I was setting up a 4 x 5 camera, and so it takes forever to set those things up and the lights. And he ended up laying down on the couch and was watching Oprah. So I said, "Okay, I'm ready to take your picture." And he sat up and I was like, "No, just stay like you were." And so that's what I find interesting too, is you probably wouldn't get that kind of shot if you're going in, I think, if you're an outsider.

The Ho-Chunk Nation is throughout Wisconsin. We don't have one central reservation like many tribes, and that's because during the removals, they removed us about seven, nine times. And the Ho-Chunks that live here are the ones that kept coming back. And there's a reservation for the Winnebago, which is our previous name in Nebraska. And so we're kind of living the way that we did before. We're in a lot of different communities from Green Bay, over to Black River, La Crosse, down to Madison. So there's a lot of different communities. And so I would travel to all those different places.

What I try to do within those photographs is to show the sense of community. And so on the back wall are all these family photographs of all my relatives, re photographing photographs. And again, it's to show that sense of community and family. And a lot of times, I'll throw in the television there, too. So that's where Oprah was in that photograph.

And the other thing that I'll try to get in there is their clan animal, maybe on their t-shirts or in the bead work that they're wearing that shows their sense of identity and who they are and what clan they come from. And so he was the head of the Bear Clan, and so there's a large tapestry that hangs on the right side of the photograph.



Shelley Niro, Bay of Quinte Mohawk, Six Nations Turtle clan, born 1954, *Four Directions of Warrior*, 2012, From the series *Sleeping Warrior*, Digital photograph, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of funds from Nancy and Rolf Engh, 2022.43.1

Stop 12, *Sleeping Warrior* series

Shelley Niro

The next piece is called the *Sleeping Warrior Series*, and it's a young man from the Reserve Six Nations, and I got him to pose in different outfits.

I am Shelley Niro, Mohawk, Turtle Clan from Six Nations of the Grand River. I am a painter, photographer, filmmaker and bead worker.

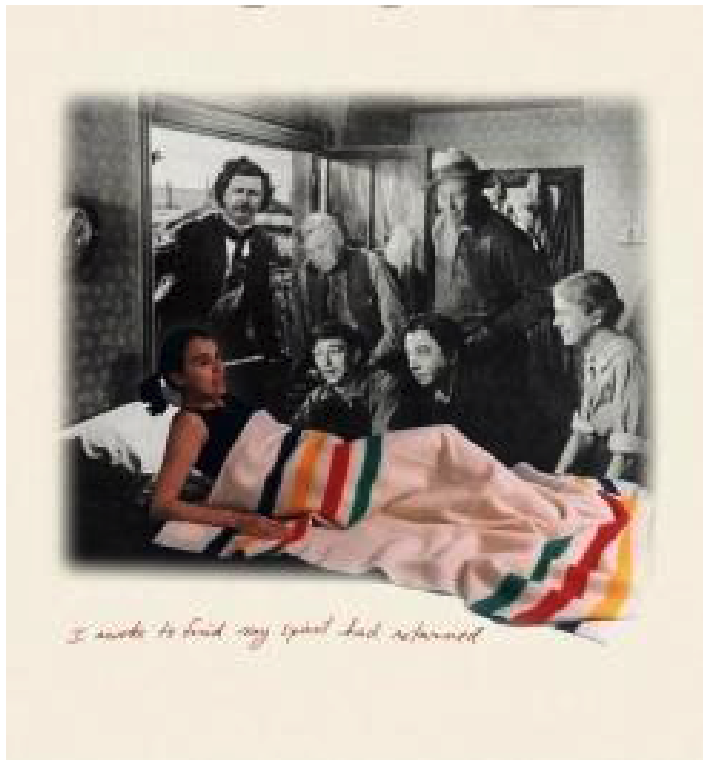
First one was a kind of a breechcloth with moccasins, and that work is called *Sleeping Warrior Dreams of Hunting*. And behind him is a copper etching of a buffalo. And so he's lying on his couch and this is the image that is going through his mind.

The next image is *Sleeping Warrior Dreams of Fighting No More*. And again, he's on the couch and he's in front of a forest, like a forest setting with trees, and it's what people have been fighting for, which is land and resources. But this warrior is just dreaming of not fighting anymore.

There's one called *Sleeping Warrior Dreams of Life in the Sky*, and he is on top of an image that was taken in Japan on top of this, I was up on the 60th floor and you could look out and you could see the whole of Tokyo around you. In this work, he's in a business suit and it's about

dreaming about loftier things, be it financial, successful, institutional. So I had all those kinds of thoughts going through that work.

And then the last one was *Sleeping Warrior Dreams of Power and Pastures*, and it's looking at a landscape with power towers, but underneath those power towers, I think it's a river. So it's trying to look at both, seeing how they balance out, seeing that they both take up that full plane behind the sleeping warrior. And then there's one *Dressing Sleeping Warrior*. So if you took the sleeping warrior and took all the outfits that he has on, and I made it sort of like he's a paper doll. So it was just me trying to have fun with this image of the sleeping warrior.



Rosalie Favell, Metis, born 1958, *I awoke to find my spirit had returned*, 1999, From the series **Plain(s) Warrior Artist**, Inkjet print, Collection of the artist

Stop 13, I awoke to find my spirit had returned from the series Plain(s) Warrior Artist

Rosalie Favell

My name is Rosalie Favell. I'm a Metis artist from Winnipeg.

I awoke to find my spirit had returned, that one was based on another passion, an earlier one, of *The Wizard of Oz*. And in that one, I become Dorothy, who had just returned from Oz, was back in Kansas on the prairies. I'm from Winnipeg and the prairies. And gathered around me is my

family and in the window is the local doctor, who in Oz was the Wizard. And, for me, being a Metis person, the hero of the Metis people was Louis Riel, who in the 1800s stood up for people of mixed descent and fought off the Canadian government. In the end, he was hung by the Canadian government.

And there is a quote attributed to him. "My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back." So, in my image, I called it, "I awoke to find my spirit had returned". And I'm waking up and there's Louis Riel behind me. I'm covered by a Hudson's Bay blanket. I also have a photo of Xena hanging above my bed, and I looked a little shocked to wake up back home. In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy's going along the yellow brick road trying to get home, and for me it's the red brick road. It was the red brick road that I was traveling along trying to find my way back home.

And, growing up, I didn't really know about my Metis-ness. I knew I had Indigenous blood in me, but the history of the Metis are such that we hid in plain sight, just the necessity of survival. So in my father's and my grandmother's generation, it was, you tried to pass in a sense. My generation was called "The Lost Generation", I found out, because I was lost and I was trying to figure out who I was. The red road for me was finding myself, and the road always goes home for me, always goes home to my family and to my ancestors.



Will Wilson, Diné (Navajo), born 1969, *Auto Immune Response no. 5*, 2005, Archival inkjet print, Collection of the artist

Stop 14, 1969 Auto Immune Response no. 5

Will Wilson

I tend to like to make large photographic objects. I think after you're pulled in to think about the story, trying to figure out what you've been drawn into.

My name is Will Wilson, and I'm a photographer and artist. I am a citizen of the Navajo Nation. I am Diné. Kinyaa'aanii is my clan.

Auto Immune Response no. 5, it's following the wanderings of a post-apocalyptic Diné man trying to figure out how to deal with this crazy new toxic reality. There's also a doubling in that image in particular, and that's specifically a reference to the Navajo creation story. There are these twins, these hero twins, who rid the world of monsters in order for this iteration of living beings to exist, and so born of water and monster slayer are imaged in the landscape, preparing to do battle, I guess, with some untitled monster that's in the universe.



Cara Romero, Chemehuevi, born 1977, *TV Indians*, 2017, Archival inkjet print, Collection of the artist

Stop 15, TV Indians

Cara Romero

Normally, we see Native people in a landscape devoid of modern context, but here we have them in front of these new ruins. My name is Cara Romero and I am a contemporary fine art photographer. I'm an enrolled citizen of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe of the Mojave Desert of California.

The idea of the TVs stacked up kept coming back to my mind's eye and I began to think about all of the ruins in the New Mexico landscape. Then I say, "Okay, we have this idea of these TVs and the landscape and I have to go get the TVs," while I'm thinking about, what is the rest of this photograph going to be? I thought I would just go to the thrift stores and get these TVs and I quickly found out that thrift stores don't take box TVs anymore because they're obsolete.

And so I found out that people have a specialized way of recycling them. I went down to the Albuquerque Recycling Center and I asked them if I could buy a pallet of their TVs and then I would return it to them after I was done with borrowing the pallet of TVs. It took some talking and persuading.

I had thought about this structure of the TVs and I knew it needed to be on a clifftop. That was where the idea of overlooking Galisteo Basin came from because I didn't want to have mountains back behind the TVs so that they would be a really strong structure in the horizon line.

I'd rented a couple generators so that we could turn the TVs on. Some of them had cords. Some of them didn't. We just went with it. There was this radio stacked in with the TVs, and I was like, "Okay, there's this old radio. We're going to put this in there also."

When I began to work with the photograph in post-production, it was very surreal. It was very much a dreamscape.

I realized that on the TVs I could photo illustrate multiple images of how we had been depicted in the media, and that was just an incredible pursuit and conversation around the household of all of the images that came up for us. And they're important images because they're nuanced, they're somewhat beloved, they're problematic. And I think when I unpack the images that are on the TVs, it became a little bit about sense of humor. There's a little bit of tragedy in there, but it's all we had when we grew up.

And I think the importance of the images is that they provide what the Native people look like in the foreground and then how we've been portrayed in the media and how absurd that contrast is.