

MATIKA WILBUR

PROJECT 562: CHANGING THE WAY WE SEE
NATIVE AMERICA

PHOTO: Josué Rivas/INDIGENA

MATIKA WILBUR'S

PROJECT 562

**"While holding true to my stahobes heritage and tradition, I aim to empower contemporary visions. I believe that my work is the answered prayers of my ancestors, as I walk the path they fought to pave."-
Matika Wilbur**

MATIKA WILBUR



Matika Wilbur (Swinomish and Tulalip) is one of the nation's leading photographers, based in the Pacific Northwest. She earned her BFA from Brooks Institute of Photography where she double majored in Advertising and Digital Imaging. Her most recent endeavor, Project 562, has brought Matika to over 300 tribal nations dispersed throughout 40 U.S. states where she has taken thousands of portraits, and collected hundreds of contemporary narratives from the breadth of Indian Country all in the pursuit of one goal: To Change The Way We See Native America.



CURATORIAL STATEMENT

PROJECT 562: CHANGING THE WAY WE SEE NATIVE AMERICA

This exhibit exists to shift the collective consciousness and to encourage the viewer to deeply question the false narratives, stereotypes and typical tropes that define their understanding of Indigenaety. Project 562: Changing the Way We See Native America, does just that.

Matika Wilbur, from the Swinomish and Tulalip people says, "there is a collective fire burning inside of the hearts of Indigenous people, and that fire wants the truth." Truth seeking is what fueled Matika to sell everything, and move into her RV, "The Big Girl". She would then spend ten years traversing the depths of Turtle Island, with the goal to visit 562 federally recognized Tribes in what is now known as The United States (there are currently 574, but as Matika would realize, 562 was merely a number. She would also go on to visit with state recognized Tribes, urban Natives, and Native folks in Canada, Mexico, and Aotearoa.) During her sojourn she talked story and made kin with hundreds of Tribal Nations, from the Mi'kmaq in Maine, to Yup'ik peoples in the arctic rim, and across the pacific to visit with Kānaka Maoli, in the illegally occupied kingdom of Hawai'i. She has currently visited over 750 Tribal communities, and what you see here is a special selection from that body of work.

Matika's unique way of being an artist in the contemporary world is presented in Project 562, which was mostly a grassroots effort, funded by two kickstarters and a large community of online supporters.

These portraits reflect Matika's consummate craftsmanship and her commitment to decolonizing fine art. Photo participants choose what to wear, what questions to answer and where to be photographed. This portraiture conveys a true sense of partnership between artist and sitter.

Students from Santa Monica College worked closely with Matika in crafting this exhibit; challenging the traditional gallery/museum space to be a provocative contemporary learning environment. This space has become a hub and lab for students to question systemic fictions and discover ways to build community and connection through artwork and oral histories. This has created a larger discourse and dialogue that extends well beyond the edges of the art world; pleading with academia to be a part of an equitable shift in the way we all relate to one another. We are reminded through Matika's lens, that we are all in relation, and the time is now.

Matika says, "Turtle Island and her original inhabitants are worth knowing. Get to know us as we know ourselves. Learn to call us by our names. Say it in our language. May you be so blessed to know these places and people as I have. May you love our people as I do."

VOCABULARY

Blood Quantum is the percentage of Native blood that a person possesses. Starting with the full blood ancestor, with each passing generation, it shifts to a subtractive identity when descendants have a nonnative parent. Lineage then becomes half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, to thirty-second. European settlers used this system to take away land from Indigenous people. Despite its colonial origins, many Tribes still use blood quantum as a requirement for tribal enrollment and to determine citizenship. It is a concept that does not have roots in science or biology.

Citation: Beyond Blood Quantum, All My Relations Podcast, Matika Wilbur, Desi Small-Rodriguez & Adriene Keene, S1, E10.

Indigenous refers to those peoples with pre-existing sovereignty who were living together as a community prior to contact with settler populations, most often – though not exclusively – Europeans. Indigenous is the most inclusive term, as there are Indigenous peoples on every continent throughout the world – such as the Sami in Sweden, the First Nations in Canada, Mayas in Mexico and Guatemala, and the Ainu in Japan – fighting to remain culturally intact on their land bases.

Citation: UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Native American and American Indian are terms used to refer to peoples living within what is now the United States prior to European contact. American Indian has a specific legal context because of the branch of law, Federal Indian Law, uses this terminology. American Indian is also used by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget through the U.S. Census Bureau. Whenever possible, it is best to use the name of an individual's particular Indigenous community or nation of people; for example, "Tongva," "Tataviam" and "Chumash" are the Indigenous Peoples of the Los Angeles area, and they are also "American Indian," "Native American," and "Indigenous."

Citation: UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Settler Colonialism The United States is a settler-colonialist state. It was founded based on the ideology of white supremacy, the widespread practice of African slavery, and a policy of genocide and land theft of Indigenous peoples.

Citation: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*, p. 11-12 8

Sovereignty is a type of political power, exercised through some form of government. Native American sovereignty is the ability of tribes to assert independent nationhood with the right to self-governance, including the ability to govern their territories and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. U.S. law recognizes that each federally recognized Tribal government's sovereignty is inherent, that it pre-dates the U.S. government, and it is not derived from an outside legal source, such as the U.S. government or earlier colonial government. Tribal nations' sovereignty existed prior to colonization by Europeans.

Citation: UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Two-Spirit is the English translation of an Ojibwe word (niizh manidoowag) which refers to an Indigenous person who embodies both the masculine and feminine spirit. Two spirit is a sexual orientation, a spiritual role and a societal role all at once. Two-Spirit people traditionally held revered positions in their Tribes. They were medicine makers, warriors, ceremonial leaders, artists, and political negotiators. They sometimes lived in same-sex relationships and sometimes took on the roles of both men and women. If someone does not belong to an Indigenous tribe, they cannot be Two-Spirit. Identifying as LGBTQ+ does not give someone liberty to identify as Two-Spirit.

Citation: Ryan Young (Ojibwe) and Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy Tribe)



INVESTIGATE

Where do you see American Indian images and names in your daily life?

Why do you think most U.S. Americans know so little about Indigenous peoples?

What was the first story about American Indians you learned?



How does the saying "The US is a nation of immigrants" erase Indigenous peoples' histories?

Natalie Martinez, PhD (Laguna Pueblo), University of New Mexico, Learning Guide to Indigenous Peoples History of the U.S.

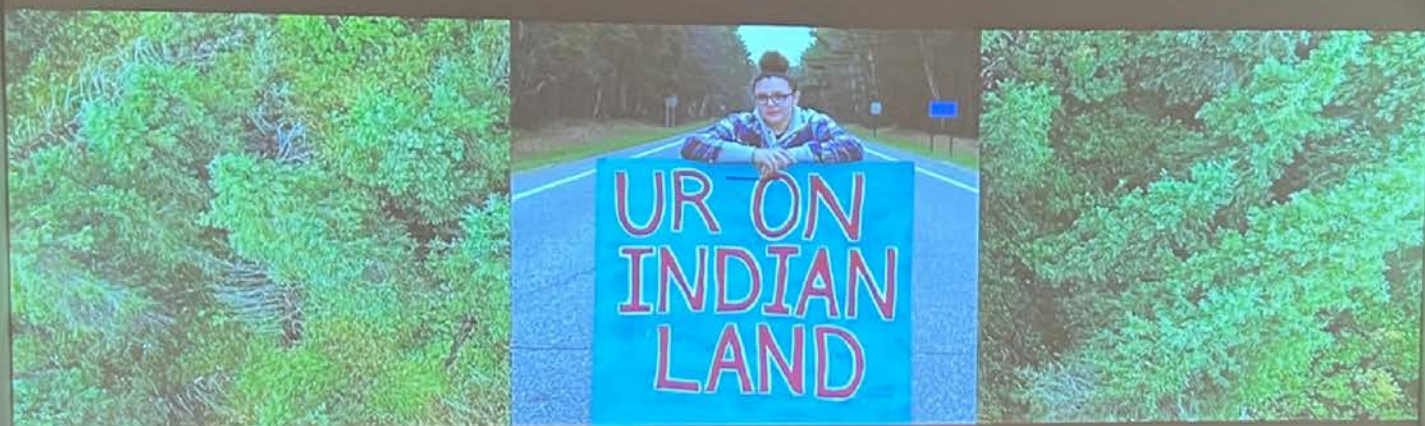


IMAGE: VIDEO STILL MATIKA WILBUR 2022





AREA OF INTEREST

ARTS, MEDIA, AND ENTERTAINMENT

BUSINESS

CULTURE, HISTORY, AND LANGUAGES

EDUCATION

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

STEM

ARTS, MEDIA, AND ENTERTAINMENT



Bobby Wilson (Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota) Ryan RedCorn (Osage), Sterlin Harjo (Seminole/Muskogee), Migizi Pensoneau (Ponca-Ojibwe) and Dallas Goldtooth (Mdewakanton Dakota/Diné, not pictured) are the comedy troupe called The 1491s. They use slapstick and satire in performances that unpack stereotypes, debunk racism, raid contemporary culture, and highlight crucial Native issues.

“We are a sketch comedy group based in the wooded ghettos of Minnesota and the buffalo grasses of Oklahoma. We are a gaggle of Indians chock-full of cynicism and splashed with a good dose of Indigenous satire. We coined the term “All My Relations” and are still waiting on the royalties. We were at Custer’s Last Stand. We mooned Chris Columbus when he landed. We invented bubble gum. We teach young women to be strong. And teach young men how to seduce these strong women.”

INVESTIGATION

What is the media’s and Hollywood’s responsibility in shaping how society views American Indians? How have Indigenous content creators challenged stereotypical representations?

How can inclusive cultural representation be achieved through the arts, media and entertainment industry?

ARTS, MEDIA, AND ENTERTAINMENT

EXPLORATION

#1: Watch a show/movie or listen to a song created by Native Americans.
How are American Indian cultures and identities portrayed in the content?

#2: Listen to the All My Relations podcast episode Native Fashion (5/8/2019).
How are Native fashion designers representing their communities through their art?

As Dr. Jessica Metcalfe (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) asks, **“What are the ways we can represent our identities through what we choose to wear?”**

#3: Read sections of the Native Appropriations blog by Adrienne Keene and listen to the All My Relations podcast episode Native Appropriations (4/17/2019). **What is “cultural appropriation?” How has cultural appropriation harmed Native American communities?**

Give examples of where this happened in the Media and Entertainment world (ex. Halloween costumes, Johnny Depp as “Tonto in the Lone Ranger movie.” **How can one take steps to not engage in Native cultural appropriation when creating art?**



ANYTHING THAT MATTERS

PHOTO BY MATIKA WOLBUR: GIRLS WELCOMING



Anything that matters is here. Anything that will continue to matter in the next several thousand years will continue to be here. Approaching in the distance is the child you were some years ago. See her laughing as she chases a white butterfly.

JOY HARJO

CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS FOR HOLY BEINGS

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



L Frank Manriquez is an author, artist and language activist who co-founded Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival. L is from the Tongva Nation, whose homelands are in what is now known as Los Angeles. At contact with colonizers, the Tongva had about thirty-five thousand people. Two centuries later they were pronounced extinct, and not until 1994 did California enact Senate Bill 1134 recognizing the Gabrielino-Tongva's existence; the federal government did not. L is one of seventeen hundred Gabrielino Tongva Tribal members, and much of her work has been dedicated to reawakening her culture. "The linguists call our languages dead languages, except I just call them sleeping. Wanting them back is enough to wake them up. And the harder we work, the more we have...When I got my chin tattoos, my whole life changed, it was the best thing I've ever done. I was already on a responsible path, but now there's no way I could ever neglect that mark of responsibility to Tribe, our peoples, all peoples really, to the planet....This is who I am. We're never going to assimilate. We look like we're assimilating, but that's been to stay alive. It's a survival tactic."

INVESTIGATION

How does language impact culture? How do clothes, tattoos and other body modifications function in relation to culture? How do we decolonize and re-Indigenize Turtle Island?

How can we educate society about the rich history, culture and languages of indigenous people, and use these traditions to shape our contemporary society?

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



Holly Mititquq Nordlum is an artist, activist, and practitioner of traditional Inupiaq tattooing, and part of the ongoing effort to revitalize the tradition of Inupiaq tattoos as the organizer of Tupik-Mi (Tattoo People.)

"I work with an archeologist. We were in Greenland. They found five well-preserved eight hundred-year-old mummies and we were able to look at them. Their skin was so perfectly preserved. You could see all the tattoos, and those are our people. Same language, same tattooing techniques, same tattooing history. My great-grandmother was the last in our family to have traditional tattoos. Within her lifetime they went from being normal to almost completely dying away. The Seward's Agreement decided which religious factions were going to run towns.

They just circled parts of Alaska and were getting rid of culture. The social pressure to conform and succeed in this new system is what I attribute the loss of not just tattoo culture, but language, dance, everything. They kept things that were palatable to them. In Greenland they still had throat-singing. But it was too sexual, so they just got rid of it completely. It really mattered who our colonizer was, how fast things disappeared, and in Alaska it was religion. It's still happening. They don't want people to tattoo in certain villages because it's again what the Bible says."

"Tavlujun [chin tattoos] mean something different to each woman who wears them; they are markers of her life and the celebration of her milestones. In today's context they are a symbol of strength and culture and rejection of Western ideals of beauty and societal norms. They challenge and represent the loss of so much of our traditions and the literal death of our people and strength of each woman wearing them! Every clan or area was different, but the first few lines you could assume were their coming-of-age

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



Elsa Armstrong

“Right now, I think it’s learning Ojibwemowih, my language, while being away from home and at this institution. I often feel frustrated that I’m not learning faster and that I’m not learning faster and that I can’t speak with all of the people around me here. I also think Dartmouth as a whole is a great challenge for me as an Indigenous person, constantly having to navigate spaces created for white men. I get my strength from my language. My friends. My family. Seeing little kids back home speaking Ojibwe, and from other Indigenous women being their badass selves.”

Elsa stands in front of Thorton Hall on Dartmouth’s campus. Thorton Hall was one of the Dartmouth, an institution that originally intended to offer higher education for Indigenous students. However, by the turn of the nineteenth century, the school had graduated only Native students.

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



Kānaka Maoli people have been fighting to stop the construction of the thirty-meter telescope (TMT) since 2009, and in the summer of 2019 a resistance camp was established at Pu‘u huluhulu. Kia‘i (protectors) slept in a parking lot over a lava field at the bottom of the access road to the summit of Mauna Kea for nearly a year to stop construction of what would be the largest telescope in the Northern Hemisphere.

For Kānaka Maoli, the Mauna is considered the most sacred, deeply honored in their creation story and time honored in traditions. It is also the primary water source that gives life to the island and all its inhabitants. Since 1970, the Mauna has been assaulted time and time with the construction of thirteen telescopes (most of which have been abandoned and are being decommissioned). In 2009 the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) was proposed. TMT would be about eighteen stories high, sixty six meters in total diameter with a five acre footprint. Kia‘i of the Mauna have been fighting the TMT since its proposal, using every avenue to defend the land and demand sovereignty for the illegally occupied nation of Hawai‘i.

To learn more about the illegally occupied state of Hawai‘i, check out @ainamamona, or listen to our All My Relations podcast “For The Love Of The Mauna” series. There, Matika dives into the history of the Hawaiian Kingdom, its illegal overthrow backed by the U.S. government, and the Kingdom’s resiliency in the face of colonialism.

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



Dr. David Keanu Sai is a scholar at the University of Hawaii and a founding member of the Hawaiian Society of Law & Politics. He's pictured here amongst the lava rock and trees on the road to the Mauna.

Dr. Sai was in the U.S. Army when he started looking at his lineage. His Tutu (Grandma) asked one thing of him before she passed on. "That you will know your genealogy. Because when you know your genealogy you will know who you are and what you need to do." When he started digging through records he found he was a descendent of High Chiefs in the Hawaiian Kingdom. But Dr. Sai had never heard of a Hawaiian Kingdom. It certainly wasn't part of the history lessons he was taught in school.

"What I was taught in class was the U.S. colonized Hawai'i, because we're uncivilized, in order to teach us to be better at governing."

When Dr. Sai learned of the prosperous Hawaiian Kingdom, it's overthrow and then illegal annexation, he honorably discharged from the U.S. Army and got to work defending his nation. Since then he's used his extensive scholarship of the past to defend Kanaka Maoli rights in the present. This includes protecting sacred sites like the Mauna.

"The way I see our future is through the past. When you would tell a Kānaka Maoli 'look to the future, or come to an idea, or make a decision', it's always thought proper to look to the past first."

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES



Heoli Osorio (left), Malia Osorio and baby Kaleiwohi stand near Ka'ena Point, January 2022. Ka'ena Point is sacred, its lava shoreline is where departing souls jump off into the spirit world and meet their ancestors. With her hands shaped like the mountain, Heoli tells us "We Are Mauna Kea".

Heoli is an artist, activist and scholar at the University of Hawai'i. Heoli met her wahine, Malia chained to a cattle guard on the Mauna, blocking TMT construction vehicles' access to the road. Heoli and Malia were among the first on the Mauna at the start of the 2019 standoff. Heoli remembers the call to action:

"We got this secret text message saying 'If you love Mauna Kea come meet us at this place on Kona. No other details to be given out until then, bring warm clothes.'"

While they blocked construction, Kūpuna formed their line at the bottom of the access road. Heoli remembers looking around her, bodies chained to the guard and Kūpuna under arrest:

"This is what it means to be a Hawaiian in 2019, that in order to be Hawaiian, I have to chain myself to this thing and lay here all day. That our Kūpuna sit out in the cold at three in the morning, in like freezing temperatures, to be Hawaiian."

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES

Watching police forcibly remove Kūpuna from their Mauna was traumatizing. Their removal was a continuation of the violent violation Kānaka Maoli have overcome since the illegal occupation of their Kingdom. Malia puts it beautifully:

"As Indigenous, we all remember. Our blood remembers. The blood flowing through our Kūpuna during all those times captured those emotions, that trauma... and it was passed down. But there's something incredible about the blood also containing resiliency and everything the word represents."

It took hours for the police to arrest the Kūpuna that day. They lifted their bodies off the Mauna and carried them away, pulling them from the Mauna in vans.

But when the Kūpuna stood on the front lines to guide and guard their Kānaka, in the face of violent violation, they returned the community to a traditional Kānaka Maoli way of life. Kūpuna leading their Kānaka. Heoli remembers her time on the Mauna as a time of deep reconnection:

"The Mauna gives us an opportunity to come back into our humanity as Kānaka Maoli, to love and live on 'āina in the way that our Kūpuna did and to love each other the way that we were always destined to love each other. It's that deep feeling of commitment to each other that we felt in those lines, to the point where it became very clear to me within seconds, that I wasn't just standing there to protect the mountain, but that I would give my life to protect any other women next to me, most of them, I didn't even know their names."

Heoli and Malia continue their fight for the Mauna in their new roles as mothers to precious Kaleiwohi. Their future is in their arms and she will inherit a life that her elders fought for. A life that is full of love for her land and people, a life that is Indigenous, a life that is Hawaiian.

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES

EXPLORATION

#1: Listen to some songs by Frank Waln, or other indigenous musicians.

How does music and other forms of cultural expression help enrich the traditions of indigenous people?

#2: Listen to the All My Relations podcast episode Can Our Ancestors Hear Us? (7/2/2019).

How does keeping indigenous languages alive help us relate to the history and culture of indigenous people?

As Dr. Adrienne Keene says: Language contains so much of the cultural knowledge and worldview."

#3: Read sections of the Native Appropriations blog by Adrienne Keene and listen to the All My Relations podcast episode Native Appropriations (4/17/2019). **What is "cultural appropriation?" How has cultural appropriation harmed Native American communities?**

Give examples of where this happened in the Media and Entertainment world (ex. Halloween costumes, Johnny Depp as "Tonto in the Lone Ranger movie."

How can one take steps to not engage in Native cultural appropriation when creating art?

#4 listen to our All My Relations podcast "For The Love Of The Mauna" series

After learning about the illegal annexation of Hawaii, and the ongoing efforts to stop overtourism and the destruction of Mauna Kea, do you think it is ethical to travel to Hawai'i?

#5 Listen to All My Relations Podcast, <https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/>, Episodes on Native Appropriations, Thanksgiving or Thankstaking? **What is the actual story of the First Thanksgiving in 1621? Why are children taught a different tale in grade school?**

CULTURE, HISTORY, and LANGUAGES

INVESTIGATION

How are body modification practices (dress, tattoo, hairstyles) linked to culture?

Why is tattooing important for some Native American people like Holly Mititquq Nordlum?

Why is indigenous language learning important for Native American sovereignty?

Do you feel like you fit in at your institution of learning? Why or why not?
How can you honor indigenous communities when you travel?

Citation: <https://www.afar.com/magazine/how-to-honor-indigenous-communities-when-you-travel>

How has history been written to support systems of white supremacy?

When did institutions start using Native Americans as mascots? What steps can institutions take to change this practice?

Citation: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/faq/did-you-know>

What is Indigenous People's Day?

Citation: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/informational/columbus-day-myths>



HEALTH & WELLNESS



Temryss Xeli'tia Lane (Lummi Nation) played soccer at Arizona State University, then professionally in Sweden. After retiring from her athletic career, Temryss went on to become a fitness model and sports broadcaster. She holds a master's degree in American Indian studies from UCLA and is a Nike N7 Ambassador.

"I got to cover the World Cup in Brazil telling the story of Chris Wondolowski (Kiowa), the first Native American to ever play for the U.S. It was a dream realized. But the hypersexualization I experienced throughout my career is part of the reason I am no longer in soccer broadcasting. A lot of my own personal experience and trauma have come around sex and sexuality, as a survivor of sexual assault and so many assaults in different ways. You learn one in three Native women experience sexual assault or rape in her lifetime. If only I would have had conversations where I didn't feel so much shame, didn't feel so alone, where I felt comfortable going to the doctor. How do we normalize conversations around sexual health? Coming-of-age ceremonies – how can we return to and adapt those in a way that still is culturally driven without the shame or constrictions of modern society about our bodies?"

"To become a mother has meant dissolving a lot of that ego, that pressure, and stepping into my feminine power more. That meant surrounding myself more with Native women and with sisterhood that has come from all walks of life. We all have such different experiences surrendering. I knew I had to surrender and release societal pressure or fear, and just go, "I'm going to be a mother."

HEALTH & WELLNESS



Anthony Thosh Collins (Onk Akimel O’odham) is a father, photographer, and advocate for re-Indigenization. Together with his wife, Chelsey Luger, he cofounded Well For Culture, which is part of the hybridized Indigenous wellness movement. Through their blog, Instagram, podcast, and community work, they demonstrate how ceremony, traditional food systems, and wellness can be revitalized.

“Re-Indigenizing food preparation and consumption is about restoring the spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional wellness of the people. Ancestral eating is a growing movement across Native Country as well as other parts of the world. Some recognize it as decolonizing diet, or Tribal food sovereignty. In short, following Indigenous food ways means eating wholesome, natural, organic Indigenous foods— just like our ancestors did for thousands of years.

Since time immemorial, food has been at the center of the Indigenous cultures of Turtle Island. Through hunting, gathering, and agriculture, meats and plants were hand-processed in several different ways. Harvest ceremonies were done, songs were sung, dances were danced, and words of giving thanks were recited in great depth to all the plants and animals who sacrificed their lives to nurture our existence.

Indigenous peoples were dependent on the natural cycles of Mother Earth and the Great Spirit. Being in alignment with those natural spiritual and physical forces was a way of life of our ancestors that has brought us this far as Nations.

Colonization led our people to believe that Western medicine, foods, and technology would improve our health. In fact, the overall health and well-being of the people was vastly superior prior to the introduction of Western toxins. Euro-American culture has furthermore influenced our people to devalue the spirituality of food, ultimately leading to the deterioration of our people’s health and our traditional social structures that were held intact by community and family agriculture, hunting, and gathering.”

Thosh recently published a book, “The Seven Circles: Indigenous Teachings for Living Well” with his wife Chelsey Luger.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

INVESTIGATION

**Who would I be in my body without settler colonialism?
How do Native Americans maintain their health?**

Citation: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2913884/>

What are Native American contributions to Public Health?

Citation: <https://www.cdc.gov/tribal/tribes-organizations-health/contributions/index.html>

What potential solutions could assist in reducing health disparities in Native American communities? How about in your own community?

Citation: National Indian Council on Aging <https://www.nicoa.org/elder-resources/health-disparities/>

More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3 percent) have experienced violence in their lifetime. What are some strategies for ending violence against Native women?

Citation: <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/violence-against-american-indian-and-alaska-native-women-and-men>

Citation: <https://indianlaw.org/issue/ending-violence-against-native-women>

HEALTH & WELLNESS

EXPLORATION

#1: Listen to All My Relations podcast episode Food Sovereignty a Growing Movement, 3/2/2019

Why is food sovereignty important to Native Americans?

Citation: <https://www.bia.gov/service/indigenous-tourism/why-food-sovereignty-matters>

#2: Listen to the All My Relations podcast episode Protecting Indigenous Women, 5/5/2021

More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3 percent) have experienced violence in their lifetime. What are some strategies for ending violence against Native women?

Citation: <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/violence-against-american-indian-and-alaska-native-women-and-men>

Citation: <https://indianlaw.org/issue/ending-violence-against-native-women>



BUSINESS



Sho Sho Esquiro is a celebrated contemporary Native American fashion designer from a village in the Yukon (Kaska Dena, Cree Tribes)

“Up there [in Yukon], we really have to produce quality work. That is where the couture came in for me, which is kind of a white man word; for us, it just means quality. My relatives taught me to be mindful of the intention that I am putting into the work. They told me to strive for perfection. If it isn’t sewn right, unpick it, do it over again. Because if you’re sewing something for somebody and it’s 30 to 40 degrees below zero outside and their clothes are defective, somebody could get hurt.

Everything comes organically. I find the fabric first. I figure out what to make from that. I can’t rush anything. I put a lot of prayer into my work. When I’m using animals, I’m giving thanks and prayers for that relationship. It’s an organic process.

I would tell our young people that any opportunity you’re given, you should try to do it. You never know what will come of it. Be respectful of people. Don’t burn your bridges. I love to tell people, ‘Go to school, go to college,’ but I’m a dropout. I still work hard at learning new skills. I feel like I’m in school in my own way. My advice would be to try to acquire all the knowledge you can in whatever way you can.”

BUSINESS



Josh passionately creates positive awareness and action to overcome the purposeful eradication of Hawaiian culture and damage of US occupation through his work as a farmer, as an advocate for healthy lifestyles, and as a teacher. He founded Iwikua, a nonprofit on the westside of Kaua'i, which now has a physical wellness center, a farm, and a cultural exchange programs for youth.

“We’re working to create an opportunity for wellness in our community. By owning and operating a wellness center— we wanted to create an enterprise that can be malleable to move with what the need of the community is and do something that ultimately the community owns. We have a lot of health problems— diabetes, obesity, like most Native or Indigenous or aboriginal populations, or just human populations right now. Educating and having a positive option is the way we’re gonna get out of it; let’s just look into the past and see how we were so healthy before and create opportunities for young people to lead us back into this way of being well and healthy. Unless you are okay with the current state of a really unhealthy society— mental and physical health problems and I guess a vacancy in spirit— then you really have to do something now, or you’re a part of the problem. Our land is really unhealthy, and as Hawaiians, you have kuleana. I got into it because that’s our kuleana, an inescapable obligation to take care of the land, and the land takes care of you.

With a traditionally rooted understanding, Josh uses the farm as a catalyst to teach the young people in his community about connection to land and their traditional foods, so that they may build upon the work and wisdom of their Kūpuna.

“My work is about wanting to take back the food system and really attack colonialism at the source. At our root source, our diet, which affects everything in our bodies— how we feel, how we think, how we love, how we procreate. Food, in my opinion, affects all of that. So we’re doing aquaponic farming, which is just taking a traditional model of a food system and just shrinking it down to modern technology. We take our traditional Native knowledge and integrate it with modern technology to make it more accessible in a smaller and smaller area— that’s what we’re doing with aquaponics.

We’re trying to create for young future farmers inspiration to how they can marry traditional knowledge, with technology into food production into the future. I think it’s going to be really important. Because Native culture isn’t static, it’s always moving. It was always changing and evolving, and that’s what Native people did so amazingly across the board is learn and observe and make adjustments when it was necessary for the people and that doesn’t have to stop.”

BUSINESS

INVESTIGATION

How can we imagine future economies and business models that will center environmental and social justice, community well-being, and a high standard of living?

Citation: <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/sustainable-business-practices>

How can companies promote racial equity in the workplace?

Citation: <https://hbr.org/2020/09/how-to-promote-racial-equity-in-the-workplace>

<https://www.brookings.edu/essay/from-commitments-to-action-how-ceos-can-advance-racial-equity-in-their-regional-economies/>

How can society collaborate with Native American entrepreneurship?

Native American entrepreneurship is not just about money, it is about history, tradition, culture and language embedded in time and traditional territory. It is the creation, management and development of entrepreneurial ventures by Native American peoples for the benefit of Native American peoples. With increased recognition of rights come increased opportunities for Native American entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ventures that focus on social, economic and environment value creation for and by Native American peoples. Native American ventures are more successful when the rights of Native American peoples are addressed and when these initiatives utilize nation-building approaches led by Native American communities. It is a means by which they can assert their rights to design, develop and maintain Native American-centric political, economic and social systems and institutions.

Citation: Rick Colbourne (2017) An understanding of Native American entrepreneurship, *Small Enterprise Research*, 24:1, 49-61, DOI: 10.1080/13215906.2017.1289856

How can western forms of entrepreneurship learn from Indigenous methodologies in business?

EXPLORATION

Read the article, Why Tribal Communities are being overlooked by investors.

Then, discuss the reasons why Tribes are ignored by investors and possible solutions to promoting Native Americans in business.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2022-11-03/how-to-stop-native-american-communities-from-being-overlooked-by-investors>

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY



For millennia before European arrival, Two Spirit people played special roles in many cultures of Turtle Island and were known to have gifts from the Creator. In some communities they were healers or mediators that were able to move between identities and worlds, and acted as caretakers for parentless Native children. In these special roles, they enjoyed their people’s blessings; but inconceivable stigma arrived with settler invasion. J. Miko Thomas, whose drag name is Landa Lakes, is a writer, performer and activist as well as one of the founders of the Bay American Indian Two-Spirit Pow Wow (BAAITS), an annual gathering that celebrates Two Spirit people and their Tribal relatives in Turtle Island.

“We started the Two-Spirit Pow Wow with this vision to be inclusive and welcoming. I grew up in Oklahoma. Sometimes when we went to the largest powwow, called Red Earth, when you’re on that gender variance scale, you don’t really feel as included or as wanted. So one of the things we wanted to do with the Two-Spirit Pow Wow was make a space that would be completely welcoming of all people. And that’s what we did. We want it to be a Two-Spirit Pow Wow, but we wanted the whole community to come out. And that’s really what they did from the very start. When we had our very first one at the LGBT center, we expected like maybe about 150 to 200 people; 500 people showed up! And ever since, it’s just grown and grown. It’s been amazing to watch. Scholars look into histories of Native Americans and say, “These are welcoming places.” But sometimes that’s not the reality for many Tribes, because Christianity has really moved in. Some people will say, “We’ve never had Two Spirits! Then you go into anthropology to find that, yes, there are records of Two Spirit people. Sometimes you have to back to the really old legends they don’t even tell anymore, because some Tribes prefer these more Disneyfied sort of stories of their own traditions, specifically with the Southeastern Tribes. One of the characters they have in there is called Long Nails. And Long Nails is sometimes by different Tribes just called Berdache, which was like the code word many anthropologists use to describe Two Spirit people.

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY



Dr. Desi Small Rodriguez is a Cheyenne Chicana with dual PhDs. She teaches at UCLA and runs the Data Warriors Lab, an Indigenous social science platform. "I'm a demographer and a social researcher, and my work is in part population studies. So blood quantum to me is the most disgusting and devastating effect of colonization that our people continue to perpetuate among each other. It only serves to laterally oppress one another; we've internalized the white man's poison - 'full-blood, half-blood' - and we use it against each other, against our babies. We see some sort of legitimacy in being more than one-fourth or more than one-half. There's some sick sense of claim, that people are owed more because they're more Cheyenne or people are supposed to be respected more. That entitlement mentality is really enhanced by the exclusionary powers of blood quantum. And I just, I want nothing to do with it. I identify as a Cheyenne woman, but I'm biracial; my father's Mexican. I'm just enough blood to be enrolled in my Tribe. As Cheyenne people, we're all mixed. That's a strength to me. It shows we've survived; we've been able to adapt; we've had to come together and intermarry but we're still here."

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

INVESTIGATION

How does cultural value reflect in how caretaking is accomplished in a culture?

Citation: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jan/03/original-caretakers-indigenous-groups-team-up-with-conservationists-to-protect-swaths-of-us>
Citation: <https://www.ihs.gov/mspi/bppinuse/cultural/>

What counts as being part of a culture or having an ethnic heritage?

EXPLORATION

#1: Listen to All My Relations Podcast, Indigiqueer, 4/3/2019

<https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/podcast/episode/47547617/ep-6-indigiqueer>

How does intersectionality relate to identity?

Citation: <https://www.intersectionaljustice.org/what-is-intersectionality>

#2: Listen to All My Relations Podcast, Beyond Blood Quantum, 10/8/2019

<https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/podcast/episode/49fcb76f/ep-10-beyond-blood-quantum>

Do people have the right to claim being be part of a culture if they have no connection other than through a blood line?

#3: Read Your DNA is not your Culture:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/09/your-dna-is-not-your-culture/571150/>

And responses: <https://www.theatlantic.com/letters/archive/2018/10/letters-does-your-ancestry-determine-your-culture/572305/>

STEM



Pepper-sprayed Protector, Sanding Rock Camp. Milk is poured in a Protector's eyes after he was pepper sprayed for fighting the DAPL.

In August 2016, Matika Wilbur traveled to the ancestral territory of the Hunkapapa Oceti, also known as the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota. She went to stand in solidarity in order to protect the Sioux Tribe's land, water, and lifeways from the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), which now carries oil twelve hundred miles from the Bakken oil fields to a distribution center in Illinois. The movement was started by One Mind Youth, a group of Native teenagers who work to prevent suicide among their Native peers.

Matika states, "In Dakota, the place known as 'Cannonball' is sacred. It is called *leninyanwakagapi*, which translates to 'sacred stone' - the place where the water whirls to create perfect circular sandstones. In the creation story, the first gift from the Creator is water, and the second gift is the grandfather stone. The idea of digging up our ancestors' bones for fossil fuel's dying industry is an utter, shameful disgrace. It's hard to describe how outrageous such desecration is to outside people who have lost connections to their ancient histories, or to those that don't feel the vitality, abundance, and wonder of the land. I met one of the remarkable Runners, Danny Grassrope, a twenty-four-year-old from Kul Wicasa Oyate (the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe). He ran from Lower Brule to Washington, DC, with One Mind Youth to plead with President Obama to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline. He explained his purpose:

'We come with peace and we want to teach the world, not just Natives, that we don't have to be violent. The reason we ran to Washinton DC, is to bring awareness to President Obama as well as to all the United States about how much the pipeline is affecting the people around the Missouri River. This isn't just a Native issue. It's time to unite. It's time to come together. We are one family. This is one world. We are one nation. We get it, we aren't the only ones occupying the United States, so it's time for us to unite as people, as one. No matter what color or race you are. We are one People. We're Native Americans, and we're not doing it just for us. We're doing it for all people. For the four-legged. For the winged. For all things that need water. And we all do. Water is life for everybody...*MiníWicóni*, we say, which means, 'Water is Life.'

STEM

INVESTIGATION

If the Dakota Access Pipeline or a similar pipeline was planned to go through your community, would you join a protest? Why or why not?

Citation: UC Berkeley Library Guide to Literature on Native American Perspectives of the Dakota Access Pipeline
<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/c.php?g=585158&p=4042470>

What is Native data sovereignty?

Citation: <https://nativeland.info/about/data-sovereignty/>

What can we learn from Native peoples about science, engineering, and land stewardship?

Citation: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00022-1>

Citation: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00029-2>

What would it mean to be a steward of the land that you are currently living on?

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Whether by conscious design or institutional neglect, communities of color in urban areas, in rural 'poverty pockets,' or on economically impoverished Native-American reservations face some of the worst environmental devastation in the nation." What is Environmental Justice?

STEM

EXPLORATION

#1: **Read** <https://www.science.org/content/article/covid-19-data-native-americans-national-disgrace-scientist-fighting-be-counted>

How has science been used as a tool to oppress Native peoples?

#2: **Watch:** Insights on PBS Hawai'i: Should the 30 meter telescope be built?

Then discuss: Why is there an Indigenous Hawaiian resistance movement against the Thirty Meter Telescope (TNT) on Mauna Kea? How might scientific organizations work with Indigenous populations when there is conflict over new technology and missions?

#3: **Read:** "If Indigenous Peoples Stand with the Sciences, Will Scientists Stand with Us?" By Megan Bang, Ananda Marin, Douglas Medin
https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00498

Discuss: How can the scientific field make space for Indigenous scientific inquiry? How can Indigenous scientific practices and concerns enhance the field of Science in general?

EDUCATION



Grace Romero Pacheco is part of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians and she lives right behind the Chumas Casino in the Santa Ynez Valley, northwest of Santa Barbara.

“I will be almost eighty this year. I never thought I would live that long. I was about six years old when they took us to Banning, California, to an Indian school. We were there for about eight years. I only went through eighth grade, I think, and my sister graduated. Then they sent us home. They just gave us an address and put us on the bus and sent us away. We did not know anything. We were not knowing anything about the outside world.

When we got home, I don't think my mother even recognized us because we were teenagers. We were with my mother for a few weeks. My mother needed help so she went to the welfare. They just took us and put us at the juvenile hall. Then we were put in a foster home. My two sisters ran away from the juvenile hall because they wanted to go back home with my mother. I stayed. That is when they separated us. They sent me to Santa Maria to a foster home. And then my sisters were sent up to Sonoma. We were mostly raised outside and away from our parents.”

EDUCATION

INVESTIGATION

What were Native American boarding schools?

Citation: <https://www.theindigenousfoundation.org/articles/us-residential-schools>

What does cultural safety look like in a school setting?

Citation: National Indian Child Welfare Association <https://www.nicwa.org/latest-news/5-significant-questions-for-educators-in-serving-indigenous-youth/>

How can we view culture, heritage and race as resources in education?

Citation: Deloria Jr., Vine and Daniel Wildcat. *Power and Place: Indian Education in America*, Fulcrum Publishing, 2001.

What does a culturally responsive classroom for Native American students look like?

Citation: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/student-support/american-indian-education/culturally-responsive-instructional-resources-teaching-american-indians>

What is Critical Race Theory and how should it be included in the curriculum?

Citation: <https://www.naacpldf.org/critical-race-theory-faq/>

EDUCATION

EXPLORATION

Activity #1: Listen to the *All My Relations* podcasts, *Celebrate Indigenous People's Day, Not Columbus* (October 14, 2019) and *Lies Your Teacher Told You, The Truth About Thanksgiving* (November 25, 2021)

Discuss: How can K-12 educators create culturally sensitive and inclusive curriculum that features Indigenous stories and challenges harmful stereotypes?

Activity #2: Watch the PBS special on Indian Boarding Schools, *Home from School: The Children of Carlisle* [ARTICLE](#)

Discuss: How do the people who were sent to these boarding schools want the U.S. government to make amends for what happened?



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Truth About Stories and The Inconvenient Indian

by Thomas King

God Is Red by Vine Deloria

An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States

by Roxanne Dunbar - Ortiz

Notable Native People

by Adrienne Keene

The Tao Of Raven by Ernestine Hayes

Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko

House Made of Dawn by Momaday

Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence

by Gregory Cajete

Decolonizing Wealth by Edgar Villanova

Native Presence and Sovereignty in College

by Amanda Tachine

Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies

Edited by Joanne Barker

Remembering our Intimacies: Mo'olelo, Aloha 'Aina and EA

by Jamaica Osorio

This Wound is a World by Billy-Ray Belcourt

Conflict Resolution by Joy Harjo

Feed by Tommy Pico

Jonny Appleseed by Joshua Whitehead

There There by Tommy Orange

The Firekeepers Daughter by Angeline Boulley

Louise Erdrich (Anything in her collection)

The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline

Power and Place: Indian Education in America by Vine Deloria and Daniel Wildcat

The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America

by Sarah Deer

The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Woman In American Culture

by Rayna Green

Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science

by Kim Tall Bear

Land-grab Universities by Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone

P

Project 562

All My Relations Podcast

Illuminatives.org

OUR BODIES, OUR STORIES.

URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE

URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE, 2018

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE, 2016.

ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT

OLIPHANT V. SUQUAMISH INDIAN TRIBE

435 U.S. 191 (1978)

criticalpolyamorist.com

Faculty Brainstorm

PROJECT IDEAS

Ideas for Matika Wilbur Show Assignments:

1. Assignment for faculty. Identify your positionality. Express your relationship to power and its connection to this artist and this exhibition. "I identify as....." Example: I am White, White-presenting (have to mention race). I am able-bodied, cis-gender, (mention class). I am sharing this as a student of Matika to amplify her work. Our school is in a White, wealthy location but are still on Tongva land. We have money and privilege that we need to use to lift up others. I don't want to do damage to people from a marginalized background. We all have a filter through which we are experiencing this show. As much as I can, I will acknowledge where I am coming from to avoid perpetuating damage against a marginalized people.
2. Podcast: Listen to one episode of podcast and use it to analyze one of the images in the show?
<https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/>
3. Think about the history of portraiture and how it is used to promote identity. How do Matika's photographs
4. Issues of gender – how has gender historically been constructed? How is gender discussed in Matika's art?
5. Words: sustainability. What if colonization hadn't happened? What would the Americas look like?
6. Listen to podcast in class. Drawing 1: How do you walk a viewer through an image? Drawing 2: Storytelling. Broaden the definition of portraiture.
7. bell hooks "Art on my Mind" - language of how we talk about depicting other people. "capturing" is a violent word. "Going Native" Abigail Solomon discussing 19th century French paintings.
8. Issues of power – who is being represented, how are they being represented, and why are they being represented that way?
9. Repatriate stolen museum objects. Museums are agents of colonization and violence. In contrast to Matika telling her own story and her community's story – self-representation.
10. What is it mean to be sovereign as one produces images and objects? Matika's show is a humanizing of Indigenous people because we are seeing them today.
11. Jewelry/art-making as a way to share history and community. Not focused on the capitalist outcome of final product. Found object assignment – find something in their residence/possession and turn it into jewelry piece. Materiality of things in your own environment.
12. Students come to gallery and draw. Matika gives agency to sitter and how gestures from cultures are evident in the poses.
13. Sculpture/ 3-D: Brian Jungen - Art 21 discusses masculinity in gay culture. Capitalism and consumerism and relating to found objects.
14. Relationship between graphic design and weaving. Indigenous patterns in computer design.
15. Discuss cultural appropriation and students take inspiration from pattern but give credit. "I made this based off of __X__ and I am paying homage to this culture/design."
16. Make a vessel that represents each person in your biological and chosen family inspired by a Matika photo. Create a vessel study of their family.
17. Students wear what they want, take photos of each other, then draw. Talk about self-representation.
18. Brad Kalhammer – mapping life. How does one use composition to map out their identity?
19. Cannupa Hanska Luger – sculpture artist.
20. Orientalism and the "Imperial gaze" by author. Ann Kaplan. How society sees Indigenous people and constructs an identity for them. How Matika's photographs challenge
21. Naming – How are places named? Colonial history of naming. How does Matika name and discuss the places in the photographs?
22. Put together a movie/tv show playlist related to Indigenous culture.