

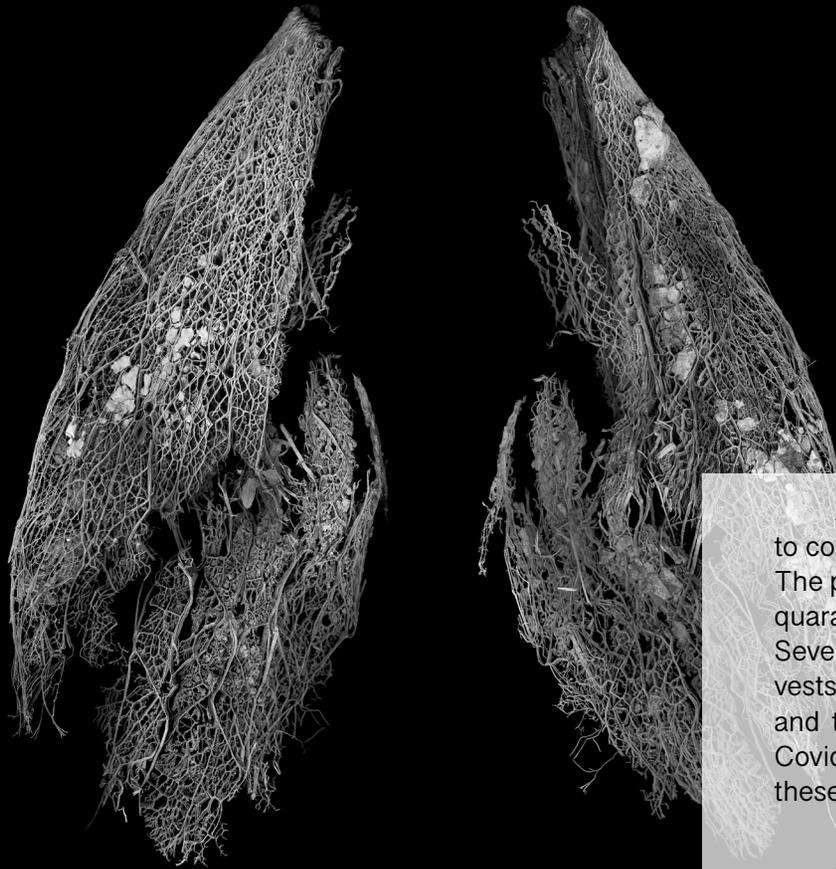


ARTISTS AS KNOWLEDGE CARRIERS

Exhibition & Education SPRING 2022 • 516arts.org



INTRODUCTION



A collective sense of lived experiences during the Covid-19 crisis has left many to contend with in their developing understandings of what is survival and what is safe. The pandemic affects many confronting personal vulnerabilities through the isolation of quarantine and a sense of mortality, including mental and physical health susceptibilities. Several works have various responses, such as the calmness of sleeping animals, life vests as survival metaphors, and floral paintings reinforcing a “fragile moment in time” and time’s impermanence. We are still in the pandemic, and the metamorphosis of Covid-19 is not limited to its multiple strains, but in our minds, hearts, bodies, and spirits, these are only a few of their responses.

Artists as Knowledge Carriers delves into the artistic production of mentors, whose practices reveal their exclusive visions, rigor, and dedication to their art and their vocation to teaching. As art professors in New Mexico from higher education, these artists guide emerging artists into the future. Their role is essential in cultivating critical and informed intellects in the realms of contemporary art and global culture. In the rapidly shifting era of the pandemic and social justice reckoning, these art professors’ commitment to their students remains strong. Their mentorship spans artistic methodologies, cultural discernment, and a variety of skills to navigate the art world and creative economy while fostering new voices.

— **Rachelle B. Pablo, Exhibition Curator**

EMPOWERMENT

THEMES

MENTORSHIP

“Mentorship is and has always been an integral part of the art world. The relationships and conversations between artists across generations has run a strong thread of connectivity throughout art history”

LESLIE MOODY CASTRO - ARTIST & EDUCATOR

IDENTITY

Identity is one of four main themes that derives its concepts from historical experiences from the politics of feminism and queer identities, cultural lived experiences of Black women, Japanese women, Mestiza feminism, Mexican, Ojibwe, and the Yaqui people. The sculptural works on the main floor explore gender resistance and empowerment. The mentors’ distinct reimaginings are expressed through their art training techniques and, in some cases, implement traditional knowledge creating a conceptualization of converging ideas. The mediums of textile, wood, silk, burlap, leaning sculptures, paintings of Yaqui women, and several interdisciplinary materials are expressions of empowerment and the reclamation of identity.

Shield for Queer Kin: Protection
Collaboration with Amanda Curreri & Welly Fletcher

ARTISTS INCLUDE:

Jamison Chās Banks (Seneca-Cayuga)
Stefan Jennings Batista
Craig Cully,
Marcella (Kwe) Ernest (Ojibwe)
Welly Fletcher
Motoko Furuhashi
Mayumi Nishida
Jazmin Novak (Diné)
Daisy Quezada Ureña
James Rivera (Yaqui)
Carissa Samaniego
Will Wilson (Diné)
Stephanie J. Woods

EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED:

New Mexico State University (NMSU)
University of New Mexico (UNM)
Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)
the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA)
Santa Fe Community College (SFCC)





EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING RESOURCES:

1. Online tools:

- _ Curatorial statement
- _ Discussion questions and project ideas for the classroom
- _ Prep questions before exhibition tours
- _ Educational videos featuring artist and curator voices

2. Exhibition tours

- _ Engaging with contemporary art is a great way to encourage students to connect with the world around them and helps develop creative and critical thinking skills. 516 ARTS offers tours for all ages, with a particular focus on students and learning communities.

3. Students engagement (Programming, Events & Activities)

- _ Artists' talks and workshops, to be determined based on artists availability and class needs
- _ Educator workshops
- _ Public programs
- _ Educator workshops
- _ Student Art-Making

Will Wilson is a Diné photographer working between traditional and nontraditional art forms, whose projects center around the continuation and transformation of Indigenous cultural practices. *Auto Immune Response* is an ongoing series that began in 2004. Wilson explains how the work is, “an allegorical investigation of the extraordinarily rapid transformation of Indigenous lifeways, the disease it has caused, and strategies of response that enable cultural survival.” The title *Auto Immune Response* references the numerous autoimmune diseases that disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples. In these images, a Diné (Navajo) man moves in a toxic yet beautiful environment, facing survival in a landscape affected by colonization, assimilation, and the extraction of natural resources. Wilson does not perpetuate the “vanishing Indian” trope, but rather, he engages in storytelling of a post-apocalyptic future.

Will Wilson teaches Photography and is Photography Program Head at Santa Fe Community College.

To know more

[PODCAST: Auto Immune Response: Will Wilson's Photographic Past, Present, and Future](#)

by Portland Art Museum

[VIDEO: Will Wilson - Contemporary Native Photographers and the Edward Curtis Legacy](#)
by Portland Art Museum

WILL WILSON (Diné)



From the series
Auto Immune Response:

Survey 1
2020
Digitype
(archival pigment print from original tintypes and digital captures)

Curatorial consultant Leslie Moody Castro says, “Craig Cully is a painter with a practice whose dedicated realism remarks on the absurdities, tensions, and satire of everyday life. From portraits of ‘perversions,’ roadkill, and traditional allegory, Cully renders his subjects with delicate care and precision. Currently developing a collaborative body of work with his wife Kelly Leslie, Cully has opened his practice beyond his own vocabulary of realism.” Cully and Leslie’s personal partnership of twenty-one years and the COVID-19 pandemic converge in The Continuous Edge project. According to the artists, “the

floral oil paintings are “designed to speak to our understanding that now, more than ever, our lives are palimpsests, only ever stable but for a brief moment in time.” They respond to life’s ephemeral fragility and embrace the delicateness of the pandemic crisis. Cully and Leslie explain that these works are, “an attempt to give iconic form to those things that once lived at the margins of our lives but now seem central to who we are and how we live.”

Craig Cully is an Associate Professor in the Department of Art at New Mexico State University.



CRAIG CULLY & KELLY LESLIE



To know more

PODCAST:

[Creative Citizen: Unexpected Artist Greig Cully](#)
by Alamosa Citizen

From *The Continuous Edge* series:

An Evening Reach

2021
oil on panel

Denied Abundance

2021
oil on panel

Welly Fletcher (She/Her, They/Them) is a sculptor who responds to present-day environmental, political, and social realities through sculpture. Fletcher explains, “in my work, I am treating the diagonal as a literal manifestation of queer politics: leaning material-bodies form a sculptural field of resistance to the straight, right angles of the normative world.” The impact of materials is at the heart of Fletcher’s creative practice and research, which they describe as “using visceral materials to communicate in body-based terms like weight, texture, temperature, scent and sound reflection.” Fletcher’s visual language is laden with symbolic queer resistance and invites the audience into the themes of human-animal kinship and “alternate forms of intelligence, grounded in materiality.”

Welly Fletcher is an Assistant Professor of Sculpture at the University of New Mexico

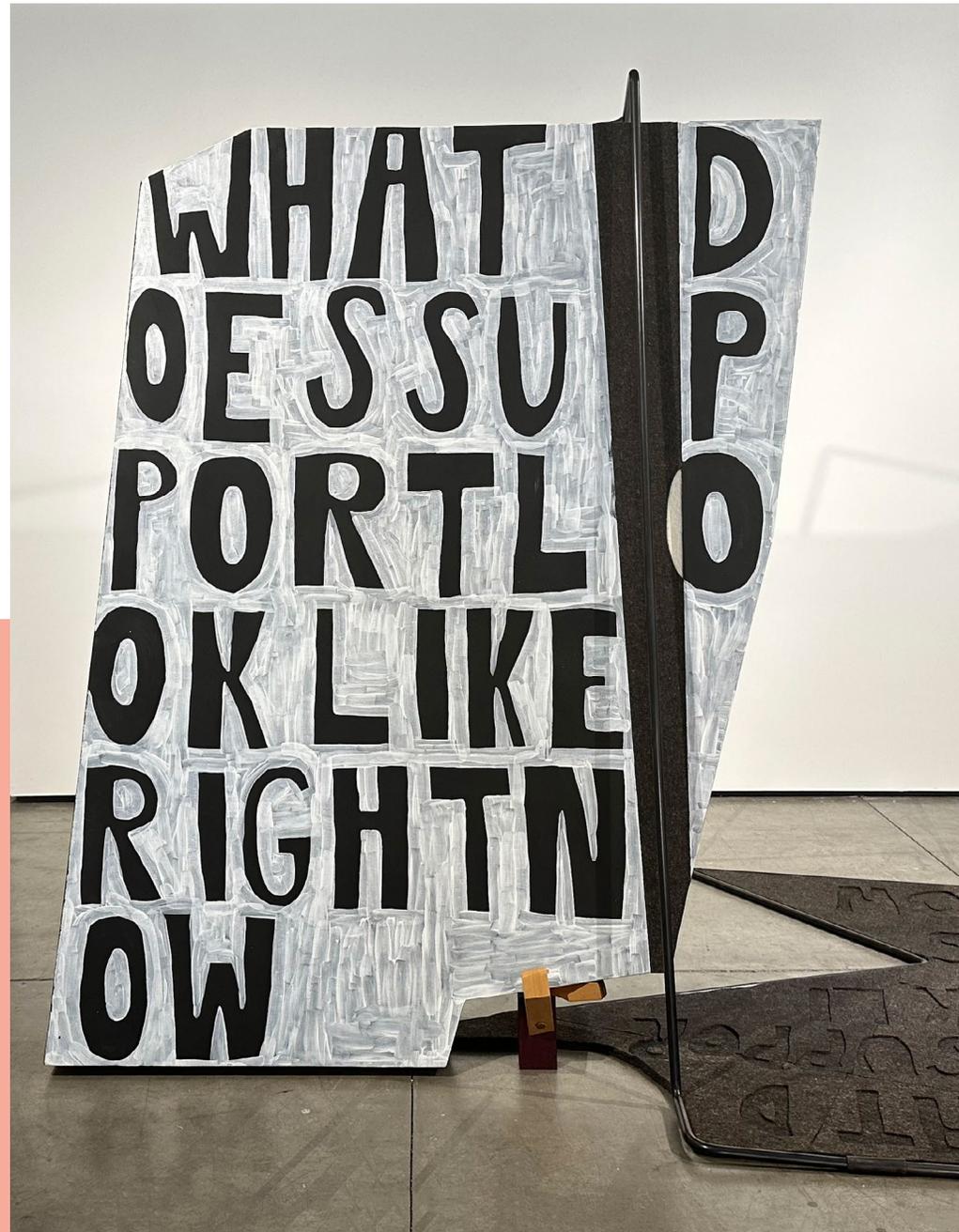
To know more

[ARTICLE: Welly Fletcher - 12 New Mexico Artists to Know 2022](#) by Southwest Contemporary

[VIDEO-TALK: Creatures: When Species Meet | Artist](#) by Cincinnati’s Contemporary Arts Center



WELLY FLETCHER



Elephant Shoe
2021
aluminum, felt, cottonwood, clay

What Does Support Look Like Right Now?
2018

Independent curator Leslie Moody Castro writes, “originally from Tokyo, Japan, Motoko Furuhashi reconciles the relationship between the body and the world around us through wearable objects and jewelry. Delicate objects that carry evidence of history and place adorn the body and carry evidence of the sites from which they are excavated. Often these sites are places of transition. Her brooches are made from the detritus and litter of a neighborhood, delicately commenting on socioeconomics and class structures. In these works, in particular, Furuhashi uses the symbols taken from construction sites combined with objects excavated from that site. The wearables become a nod to place, time, and transition.”

Motoko Furuhashi teaches Metals as an Associate Professor in the Department of Art at New Mexico State University.



Reveal
2019
necklace made of brass, road paint

Detour
2019
bracelet made of brass, road paint

U-turn
2019
brooch made of brass, road paint

To know more

[VIDEO TALK: Location Services: Artist Talk with Motoko Furuhashi by Craft](#)

Mayumi Nishida's artworks use installation and light to "open viewers' minds to their visual environments and tease them into a deeper awareness of their surroundings." Her Inverse Pyramid is a suspended installation composed of precisely 761 silk triangular modules. Her choice of silk as a material refers to early industrial practice in Japan that was made possible by the exploitation of the women workforce, and to the long history of commerce between Europe and Asia. The pyramid becomes a space to question the long history of hierarchical human societies and economical structures that originated in the castes of many ancient civilizations and are still driving forces today. By inverting the pyramid, Nishida asks viewers to consider a worldview "where depth of meaning is valued over social domination."

Mayumi Nishida teaches 3D Fundamentals as an Adjunct Instructor in the Studio Arts Department at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

To know more

[INTEVIEW: Artist Mayumi Nishida](#) by Miriam Sagan



Inverse Pyramid
2016
silk, metal



MAYUMI NISHIDA



Jazmin Novak is an emerging, multi-disciplinary, Diné artist. She says her work, “pulls the viewer “into shared experiences, the moments in each day that everyone experiences,” as the artist explains. Novak’s *Closed Eyes* installation is in response to the COVID-19 pandemic confronting the gradations of a fearful state of anxiety and depression. Novak’s resting animal figures echo the peace and calmness sought by her during this period of uncertainty.

Jazmin Novak is an Adjunct Instructor in the Studio Arts Department at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Sleep Overcomes
2021
bronze

In Dreams
2021
bronze

To know more

[VIDEO INTERVIEW](#)
with Jazmin Novak by IAIA



JAZMIN NOVAK



DAISY QUEZADA UREÑA

Daisy Quezada Ureña's cultural background from both Mexico and the United States informs her process of creating installations that speak to themes of identity and place in relation to social structures and imposed borders. *AQUI* was originally designed and installed on the Midtown site in Santa Fe, the former campus of the University of Art and Design. The artist states: "*AQUI* is inspired by the impact text can have when scaled up, and its monumental size is meant to support a presence at the site during a time of absence and isolation. The sculpture intends to welcome the community back to engage with one another and this place. The white letters provide a blank canvas inviting the community to imagine their own future experiences here and record a collective hope for the Midtown site."

Daisy Quezada Ureña is the Studio Arts Department Chair at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

To know more

[INTERVIEW Porcelain Bridges for Cement Borders: Artist Interview Daisy Quezada Ureña by Lena Astilli](#)

AQUI
2021
enamel paint on plywood

Marcella (Kwe) Ernest is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar whose multi-media installations are rooted in her ancestral Ojibwe knowledge. *Aki*, which means Earth, explores, “Ojibwe stories of creation linking the past to the future. The film uses photomicrography for footage of seeds, biological cells, and blood, with a soundscape generated by animal life acoustics, lake water, wild onions, pine, and other cultural elements that become conductors of sounds through electricity and heat. The film examines our creation and an ongoing relationship to EARTH on a microscopic and macro scale.”

Marcella Ernest is an Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of New Mexico.

Aki
2022
Stills from video, 5:10



MARCELLA
ERNEST (Ojibwe)



To know more

[PODCAST: Marcella Ernest on Native American Filmmaking and Podcasting by Ideas on Fire](#)

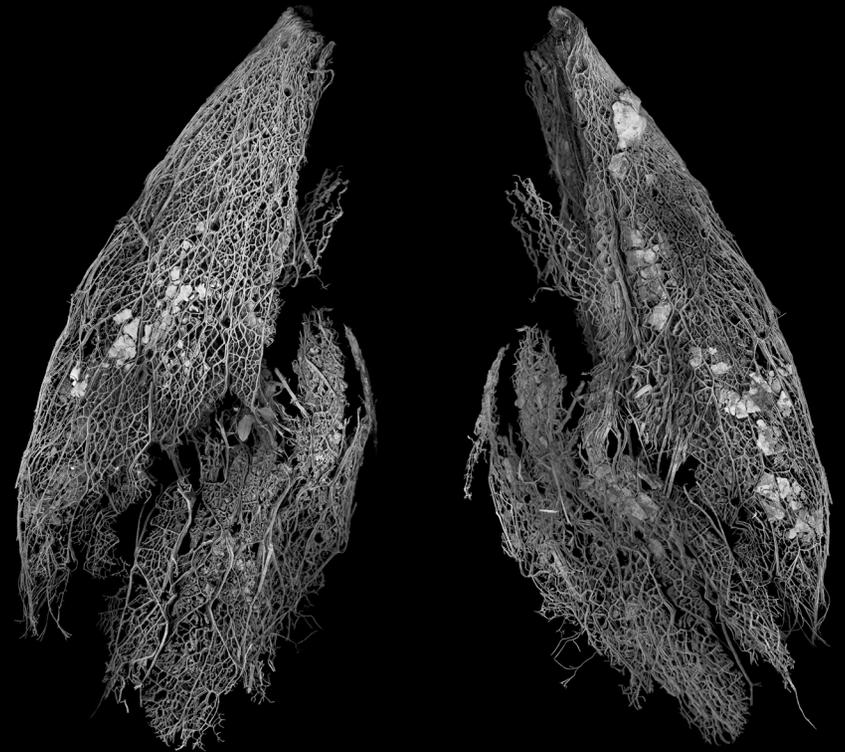
Stefan Jennings Batista is a visual artist, art educator, and designer whose photography explores place, memory, and an alternate understanding of how we view subjects. In *Google Beach: 3 x 5's*, he assembles 28 re-photographed screenshots of the coast of his home state of Florida from Google's Street View. He says, "Informed by issues of privacy, intimacy, and landscape representation, the *Google Beach* series questions the ever-evolving ways we experience our world and ourselves through technology. *Succulent Lungs* are part of the *Tiny Ocean* series that the artist says are made of "fragments: reconstructed observations, personal visions, and visual metaphors." He describes *Succulent Lungs* as "desiccated specimens that appear as dried cactus and early life forms." Batista's experimental vision offers entry points for connecting with nature.

Stefan Jennings Batista is an instructor of Photography at Central New Mexico Community College.



Google Beach: 3 x 5's
2021
inkjet prints

Succulent Lungs
2021
dried cactus, scanner photograph, inkjet prints



STEFAN JENNINGS BATISTA

To know more

[ARTICLE: Stefan Jennings Batista by aint-bad](#)

CARISSA SAMANIEGO



Carissa Samaniego is an interdisciplinary artist and educator working from a feminist, Mestiza perspective whose work focuses on the intersection of place and identity. Independent Curator Leslie Moody Castro writes, “Born of a long lineage from the borderland regions, specifically in the Las Cruces area, Samaniego pulls from family tradition and generational knowledge to speak to the complexity of the region.” The textiles in her ongoing Querencia Series integrate her diverse ancestral roots, bringing together Rio Grande weaving patterns and her matrilineal quilting patchwork to create “visual code-switchers or cultural ‘shapeshifters’.”

Carissa Samaniego is a visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at New Mexico State University.



Square Dance from *Querencia Series*
2021
cotton fabric and thread, voile, chiffon,
silver wire, fishing lures, lead sinkers,
maple board

Untitled (Americañ/na)
2021
neon, plywood

To know more

[ARTICLE: Southwest Contemporary / Carissa Samaniego](#) by Maggie Grimason



Stephanie J. Woods, originally from Charlotte, North Carolina, examines performative behavior, domestic spaces, and alternative realities that reference Black American culture and her experiences growing up in the American South. She describes a Radiant Revolution I, II, and III as “a love letter to Black women that travels through time and merges the past and the present.” This series reflects on the colonial past during which the 1786 Sumptuary laws were imposed upon Creole women (in positions of servitude) in New Orleans. They were required to wear a tignon, or head covering, which forbade adornments and facilitated social discrimination. The headwraps in the photographs at the center of each piece are inspired by T-shirts with graphics messages of empowerment that the artist found in predominantly Black neighborhoods in Richmond, Virginia. In reappropriating the headwrap, Woods reinforces collective identity and culture from the lived experience of Black women to create icons of resilience, power, and beauty.

Stephanie J. Woods is an Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at the University of New Mexico.

VIDEO INTERVIEW:
Stephanie J. Woods by The Gantt Center

A Radiant Revolution I, II, and III
2018
burlap dyed with sweet tea, woven brass
chains, t-shirt, textile
foil, polished furniture vinyl, red table-
cloth, gold rope, dresser
mirror frame, upholstered taffeta print

STEPHANIE J. WOODS

Jim Rivera (Yoeme/Pascua Yaqui), also known as Siikioso, is a multi-disciplinary artist who works with installations, found objects, and mixed media. His visual art explores ethnicity and race through figurative portraiture. He says, "I'm interested in making art that uses contemplation as a transformational approach." The Three Sisters the background shifts to the fore, reinforcing the kinship shared between humans and the earth.

Jim Rivera is an Assistant Professor of Painting in the Studio Arts Department at the Institute of American Indian Arts.



The Three Sisters
2022
acrylic on canvas

JIM RIVERA

JAMISON CHAS BANKS

For multi-disciplinary artist Jamison Chās Banks, “mentorship and teaching are ultimately about creating space. Mentors and students participate in an ongoing arrangement of cyclical forgetting (dying) and remembering (continued living). The lines of teaching and learning can and do blur.” In his piece *Any Port in a Storm*, Banks explains that the life preservers are a metaphor for “all of us who endured the catastrophic effects of the worldwide pandemic.” He sees the vests as tools for survival.

Jamison Chās Banks is a Visiting Professor at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

ARTICLE: First American Art

Any Port in a Storm,
2022,
serigraph on fabric

