



# All My Relations Arts, the Native American Community Development Institute and the American Swedish Institute announce the debut of *Okizi (To Heal)*

**Contact:**

**Angela Two Stars**

[atwostars@nacdi.org](mailto:atwostars@nacdi.org)

For immediate release:

**MINNEAPOLIS (Jan. 22, 2024)** All My Relations Arts and the Native American Community Development Institute are proud to present *Okizi (To Heal)*, a group exhibition featuring artwork cross-pollinating Indigenous cultures.

*Okizi (To Heal)* is a partner exhibition with the American Swedish Institute (ASI) in response to the traveling exhibition, *Arctic Highways: Unbound Indigenous People*. A common theme of these dual exhibitions is the healing impacts of cultural revitalization. While efforts were made to separate Native peoples from their spirituality, language, and cultural knowledge and traditions, *Okizi* highlights the revitalization efforts that reconnect this generation and future generations to our language, land, and culture as a means of healing from historical and generational trauma. *Okizi* sheds light on the connective pieces between Indigenous cultures and the importance of being at the forefront of our stories, of collective understanding, and of knowledge sharing. The exhibition will showcase a collection of screen and relief prints, mixed media, textiles, beadwork, digital collage, and glass sculpture from juried and invited Native American artists.



The work of healing acknowledges trauma and actively works on revitalizing the practices that we were separated from. Through language revitalization, Land Back movements, and returning to our traditional knowledge and traditions, we are working to heal historical and generational traumas both on an individual and collective level. Artwork selected for this exhibition highlights the ways in which we are becoming a healed people.

In collaboration with ASI, All My Relations Arts will host *Mygration*, an immersive, large-scale installation of drawings and prints by Sámi artist Tomas Colbengtson and Swedish artist Stina Folkebrant, alongside works by invited and juried American Indian artists. Additionally, Native American artwork and artists selected by All My Relations Arts will be showcased alongside featured artists from *Arctic Highways* at the American Swedish Institute.

“We are pleased to partner with the American Swedish Institute to share this exhibition and promote ASI’s *Arctic Highways* exhibition with our audiences. It is important to recognize the shared cultural connections we have and the way artists utilize identity, strength and resilience to communicate healing and revitalization of language, culture and pride in identity as Indigenous people.” - AMRA Arts Director Angela Two Stars.

### **About *Mygration*:**

In the *Mygration* installation, Tomas and Stina reflect on issues such as emigration, herd mentality, cycles, time and the forgotten stories. Animals know no nationality or national borders, they go where they want, they follow the pasture and instinct and people who work with herd animals follow the animals' cycle. The reindeer are a herd animal and being together provides stronger protection against dangers. The whole flock becomes a single organism with a thousand eyes that can detect dangers, one turns the other.

The inspiration for *Mygration* is the emigration of Sámi and reindeer around 1900 from the Nordic countries to Canada and Alaska. The Sámi were offered work to teach the Inuit reindeer husbandry. The big gold rush also meant that many people needed food and draft animals. Some Sámi returned home after a few years and others remained.

“It is the artists' task to show ways of healing and restoration to their own culture and, by extension, the right to our inherited lands and to become a healed people.” - Sámi artist Tomas Colbengtsson

**Okizi Featured Artists:** Tamara Aupaumut (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican, Oneida, Brothertown), Racquel Banaszak (Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe), Keith BraveHeart (Oglala Lakota), Kent Estey (White Earth), Karen Goulet (White Earth Ojibwe), Cynthia Hamilton (Rainy River First Nations), Gidinaty Hartman (Deg Xit'an Athabaskan), Josephine Hoffman



(Grand Portage), Adrienne Keene (Cherokee Nation), Courtney Leonard (Shinnecock Nation), Theresa McDowell (Rainy River First Nations), Ayanna Proctor (Piscataway Nation), Abby Sunde (Fond du Lac Ojibwe direct descendant), Delia Touché (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota and Assiniboine)

#### **Program Dates:**

On View: February 1 – April 13, 2024

Opening Reception: February 1, 2024, 6-8 pm

ASI First Look Reception: February 2nd, 2024

Artist Workshop: February 13, 2024

#### **About *Arctic Highways: Unbound Indigenous People*:**

This February, the American Swedish Institute will host a special traveling exhibition featuring the artwork and duodji handcrafts of 12 Indigenous artists from Sápmi and North America. *Arctic Highways* shares stories of Indigenous people who live on different continents yet regard themselves as kindred spirits. Each artist tells their own stories, through their own forms of expression, inviting opportunities to explore what it means to be unbounded—not just for Indigenous people, but for all of us.

Join ASI for First Look: *Arctic Highways*, a special exhibition preview event on Friday, February 2. First Look attendees will enjoy a special conversation about *Arctic Highways* and *Mygration* moderated by Angela Two Stars, Director of Arts at All My Relations Arts, and featuring exhibition artists Tomas Colbengtson, Stina Folkebrant, Courtney Leonard, and Karen Goulet. Following the conversation, attendees can embark upon an exhibition tour led by the artists.

**Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI)** Our work is founded on the belief that all American Indian people have a place, purpose and a future strengthened by sustainable community development. NACDI initiates projects that benefit the Native community, often in partnership with other Indigenous-led organizations. Our future is bright due to the resilience and vision of our ancestors. Founded in 2007, NACDI is approaching its second decade with a renewed commitment to the Indigenous values that helped our people persevere despite centuries of hardship. Learn more at <https://www.nacdi.org/>



**All My Relations Arts** (AMRA) operates the All My Relations Arts Gallery, Minnesota's premier American Indian owned and operated contemporary fine arts gallery. Located on Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, the gallery resides within the heart of the American Indian Cultural Corridor. AMRA presents fine art exhibits throughout the year, as well as hosting tours, presentations, and programs.

The focus of AMRA is to provide the people of the Twin Cities, greater Minnesota, and beyond consistently high-quality exposure to Native American fine arts. As an initiative of the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI), All My Relations Arts serves a very distinct role in NACDI's community development work, providing the public with education about American Indian history, culture, and contemporary experiences through the arts. Learn more about All My Relations Arts at [allmyrelationsarts.com](http://allmyrelationsarts.com)

**The American Swedish Institute** is a vibrant arts and cultural organization that engages locally and connects globally. With a campus including the historic Turnblad Mansion and the Nelson Cultural Center, ASI uses its resources to be a valuable community asset and integral partner. Learn more at [asimn.org/](http://asimn.org/)