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All My Relations Arts, the Native American Community Development Institute and Hennepin Theatre Trust announce Artist Cohort for the 2023-2024 season of *We Are Still Here*

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MINNEAPOLIS (Jan. 9, 2024) — All My Relations Arts (AMRA), the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI), and Hennepin Theatre Trust are pleased to announce and welcome the recipients of the ***We Are Still Here* artists cohort** for 2023-2024. This season's artist mentor is Courtney Cochran who will lead the artists cohort which includes Lorie Pearson (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska), Tamara Aupaumut (Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican, Oneida, Brothertown), Aiyana M Kline (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians), and Olivia Seone Stern (Mississippi band of Choctaw, and Carib Kalinago).

For the development of the ***We Are Still Here*** initiative, All My Relations Arts partnered with Hennepin Theatre Trust to co-develop and implement a nine-month learning cohort featuring four Native American artists. Under the mentorship of multimedia artist Courtney Cochran this cohort will focus on the process, practice and techniques which make up public/community art. Through implementing a practice based in community care, community listening and responsiveness, the medium of community art is characterized by dialogue with the community and often involving a



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professional artist collaborating with people who may not otherwise engage in the arts. The work of community artists is designed to inform, engage, provoke, inspire and reflect.

Evolving out of the idea of cultural democracy and a socially engaged practice, community art helps bring about an awareness and appreciation of art to as wide a section of society as possible; and to break down the boundaries to make art accessible to a wider audience. Rooted in engaging the community and listening to the community's needs, this style of art is deeply collaborative, and at its core cultural seeks to unite people, be a social response, and tell a story, often outside the realms of traditional art spaces – i.e. public spaces.

We Are Still Here amplifies the voices and presence of Native people of Minnesota in the life, culture, art, and activation of Hennepin Avenue & the American Indian Cultural Corridor highlighting Native visibility through uplifting Native voices, highlighting Native truth-telling, and changing the narrative of Minnesota Native Peoples. This program seeks to broaden and promote the awareness of Native people as active and relevant in contemporary times, as well as introduce and educate Native artists on the processes of creating public art, while establishing a sustainable framework for ongoing engagement in Hennepin Theatre Trust with the Native American community in Minnesota.

With sage advice, mentorship, and teaching by an experienced artist with an emphasis in community art, artists will gain tools, expand their learning, and implement their training through a series of projects. The program culminates in a final cohort capstone project reflecting the cohort's artistic progression and prepping them for the advancement of their careers in this medium.

Courtney Cochran, artist mentor, shares, "I am so honored to be selected as the mentor for the third *We Are Still Here* cohort. I am excited to share the knowledge and skills I've gained over the years of being an artist in community. Community has always been important to me and a huge factor in finding and developing myself as an artist, reconnecting to my culture and finding lots of chosen family. I admire each of the cohort members as individuals and artists and honored to learn from them as well. My goal is to be a good relative, to hold space for others, and to collectively build and strengthen reciprocal relationships that extend past any project timeline."



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We Are Still Here is a multiyear collaborative partnership between (NACDI) and Hennepin Theatre Trust to bring large-scale, high-profile public artworks to the Hennepin Theatre District and the American Indian Culture Corridor. This ongoing and evolving initiative seeks to match emerging Native artists with established Native arts mentors in an extending fellowship that creates a variety of public art works which promote Native and Indigenous storytelling in the community along Hennepin Avenue and throughout the greater Twin Cities metro area. The ***We Are Still Here*** program is a catalyst that weaves Native and Indigenous culture back into Hennepin Avenue, connecting the district's community to arts and cultural experience to its past in unexpected and profound ways.

"Hennepin Theatre Trust is immensely proud to partner with NACDI once again to uplift Native and Indigenous voices through our ***We Are Still Here*** initiative," said Todd Duesing, president and CEO of Hennepin Theatre Trust. "I look forward to seeing this year's cohort of artists grow their skills and express their experiences to a broader community. Now more than ever it is important to continue to weave Native and Indigenous culture back into the fabric of Hennepin Avenue, enabling public art and placemaking efforts that recognize our past and connect our arts and cultural experiences to their roots."

ABOUT THE MENTOR

Courtney Cochran is an Anishinaabe multidisciplinary artist, filmmaker, and community organizer based in Minneapolis. She is a passionate teaching artist and youth mentor, concentrating her efforts around knowledge and skill sharing as well as equitable and sustainable art access. Her approach to documentary filmmaking comes from a decolonized lens where she abandons the use of the camera as an authoring mechanism and works against any directorial or production hierarchies. Her practice consists of various mediums such as film editor, silkscreen and block printing, quillwork, jewelry maker, and painter, often incorporating mixed media elements into her designs. Her work often addresses social justice movements, connection to community and to culture, self-exploration, healing, and joy.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Tamara Aupaumut is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist and independent curator living on Mni Sota Makoce, also known as Minneapolis. She



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descends from the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians, the Oneida and Brothertown Indian Nations. With support from the Next Step Fund grant, she is currently working on a new body of work, "This Land Is My Body," which speaks to the healing connection between the land and our bodies.

Aiyana Kline is a non-binary Indigenous artist of Turtle Mountain and Black heritage, currently residing north of the Twin Cities. With a Bachelor of Fine Arts in illustration earned from the prestigious Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Aiyana is distinguished as an alum of the Native Youth Arts Collective. Aiyana's artistic journey is intricately woven with their cultural roots and an unbreakable connection to the natural world. Their preferred mediums, gouache and watercolor, serve as vessels for immersive illustrative storytelling, spotlighting the profound relationship between animals and nature.

Loriene Pearson is a Minnesota photographer and emerging artist whose embroidered work focuses on reciprocity. She is a feminist, urban Indian and a member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. In 2019, after retiring from a 35-year corporate career in Minneapolis, MN, she started drawing and hand embroidering patterns taken from her pow wow photographs. Her 2021 embroidery work, "MMIW: Break the Chain" was seen at the *Bring Her Home: Sacred Womxn of Resistance* exhibit in Minneapolis' All My Relations Arts Gallery. Her work "She Heals Me" was also on display during All My Relations Arts' exhibit, *Noojimo: She Heals* in the summer of 2022. In July of 2021, Loriene was awarded Best of Division - Emerging Artists at Native POP (People of the Plains) in Rapid City, SD. She was selected and completed the American Craft Council's three-month long Emerging Artist Cohort. Loriene's work was seen at the Sioux Indian Museum, located in the Journey Museum in Rapid City, South Dakota. Her solo exhibition *Contemporary Threads : Traditional Notions* ran from May 21 - August 29, 2022. This July, she was selected as one of the 2023 Ozhigin Artist Fellows and recently completed this Mni Sota Fund cohort.

Olivia Seone Stern is an Afro-Indigenous artist whose usage of bright pastels and dynamic camera angles pull from the action drama genres of animation such as DC comics and Sailor Moon. After graduating from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2023 with a major in animation and minor in Arts and Education, she developed an understanding of the importance in bridging the gaps between History, Art, Culture, Spirituality and Education. She carries a deep respect for cultural diversity and building systems of economics that reverse the effects of manmade climate change through modes of storytelling such as comics, animation and video games.



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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

Hennepin Theatre Trust drives cultural and economic vitality in Minnesota through leadership of the dynamic Hennepin Theatre District in downtown Minneapolis and educational programming that reaches every area of the state. Its historic theatres — Orpheum, State and Pantages — and event center at 900 Hennepin Avenue light up Hennepin Avenue with top-tier entertainment, including the best of Broadway and a wide variety of arts programming. Hennepin Theatre Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Learn more at HennepinTheatreTrust.org.



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