



All My Relations Arts and the Native American Community Development Institute present *Matrilineal Memory* by artist Mikaela Shafer

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For immediate release:

MINNEAPOLIS (August 25th, 2025) All My Relations Arts and the Native American Community Development Institute are pleased to present *Matrilineal Memory* by artist Mikaela Shafer.

Matrilineal Memory is a profound exploration of the realms of memory and emotion, and the vital acts of cultural preservation. A solo exhibition from multidisciplinary artist Mikaela Shafer (Hopi), this exhibition features a compelling collection of paintings, evocative poetry, and immersive installation. Through the use of collagraph, dyeing, sewing, and layering on paintings, she intertwines her practice with culture, drawing inspiration from her Hopi heritage. Shafer's unique approach incorporates unconventional tools, such as dried corn, to create intricate patterns and textures delicately printed on silk chiffon. Shafer's work becomes a conduit for and an exercise in emotional release, processing, grieving, and, ultimately, healing. Much like memories themselves, these artworks blur the boundaries between tangible reality and intangible impressions, inviting deep contemplation on the dynamic nature of recollection.

"Memories are powerful. A smell, a sound, or a flavor can send you spiraling down a rabbit hole of a moment you've long forgotten."
—Mikaela Shafer

Installation Statement:

This installation invites viewers to explore memory's vivid yet fragile nature and how it intertwines with our perception of the world. At the core of the exhibit lies an antique bed, symbolizing the realm of dreams and the subconscious where memories often linger. Sixteen chiffon silks, each adorned with various paintings, guide viewers through a journey of exploration within the ethereal realm of memory. These paintings, delicately printed on sheer silk chiffon, mirror the fragmented and fluid essence of memories. As visitors navigate through the veils of silk and paintings, they witness a bedroom scene that includes a metal bed, tumbleweeds, and

self-portraits printed on silk chiffon cascading from the ceiling, gracefully falling into the bed below. This integration of physical space and artistic representation embodies the interplay between memory, art, and personal introspection.

"Memory is Ephemeral" plays with the concept of how memories can resurface unexpectedly, triggered by a smell, taste, or sound, blurring the line between what is real and what is remembered. The installation invites contemplation on the impact of memory on our identities and how these ephemeral recollections continue to influence us in profound ways.

Statement About the Poetry:

In the *Matrilineal Memory* exhibition, poetry plays a crucial role. It weaves words that tell stories, describing the textures, colors, and emotions depicted in the paintings. Each painting is carefully paired with a poem, creating a harmonious blend of visual and literary art. As visitors move through the artworks, they encounter these poems, reshaping their understanding of the paintings, evoking personal memories, and initiating discussions on nostalgia and memory. The intertwining of poetry and paintings extends the significance of the artworks.

"Memories are powerful. A smell, a sound, or a flavor can send you spiraling down a rabbit hole of a moment you've long forgotten. I spent a lot of my life suppressing memories for my own self-preservation. But memories are stories, and stories are lineage, and I was cutting off its circulation."

In Hopi culture, women are the heads of families, the preservers, and the keepers of stories. Hopi people trace their family through their mothers, learn from them, and follow their lead. And so by suppressing these memories, my stories, I was not only depriving myself but also my daughters and granddaughters, now until time immemorial, of our culture and connection to each other. This exhibition is a practice of unlocking memories and facing them head-on— through processing, grieving, and healing. Each painting unearths a new memory; each poem helps to release it." – Mikaela Shafer



Program Dates:

Exhibition Run: October 16th-December 13th, 2025

Opening Reception: October 16th, 6-8pm at All My Relations Arts

Artist Talk: November 15th, 2025, 2-3:30pm

Additional programming can be found on our website at allmyrelationsarts.org

About the artist:

Mikaela Shafer is an artist, writer, and mother from Olympia, Washington. She is involved in the community as the co-chair of the Olympia Cultural Access Advisory Board. Mikaela is also the founder of Maqa Collective, which supports businesses and artists' marketing efforts through storytelling and community building. Mikaela's community-building efforts in Ogden, Utah, were recognized by Weber State University, naming her as one of 100 influential women in the region's history. She was also honored with the 2023-2024 Native Arts and Culture Fund LIFT award. Learn more at maqacollective.com/art.

About the presenters:

Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) was founded on the belief that all American Indian people have a place, purpose, and a future strengthened by sustainable asset-based community development. Since 2007, NACDI's work facilitates systems change through our integrated pathways of Community Engagement, Community Organizing, Community Development, and Indigenous Arts and Culture. Learn more at nacdi.org.

All My Relations Arts (AMRA) is 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. 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 NACDI, AMRA provides the public with education about American Indian history, culture, and contemporary experiences through the arts. Learn more at allmyrelationsarts.org.

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