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Sunrise and Flint

31 July 2026–5 September 2026

OPENING RECEPTION

31 July 2026, 5–7 p.m.



HOCK E AYE VI EDGAR HEAP OF BIRDS I (Detail) *Buffalo Stampede over Brass Army Horn*, 2025
18 monoprints, 18 ghost prints on paper, and army bugle, 30 x 22 in (76.2 x 55.9 cm) each
Photo by Brandon Snyder, courtesy the artist

(SANTA FE, NM) Inspired by Joy Harjo’s vision of renewal, *Sunrise and Flint* brings together eleven artists whose work reimagines history, land, and resilience through Indigenous perspectives as the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary.

Zane Bennett Contemporary Art is pleased to announce *Sunrise and Flint: Contemporary Native American Art* featuring artists Matthew Bahe (Diné), Amanda Raquel Dorval (Nuyoricano-Dominican), Chanelle Gallagher (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe), Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds (Cheyenne and Arapaho), Victoria Hubbard (Mescalero Apache), David Johns (Diné), Tom Jones (Ho-Chunk), Armond Lara (Diné), Warren Realrider (Pâri and Apsáalooke), Mikaela Shafer (Hopi), and Ryle Yazzie (Diné). **The exhibition opens on the ground floor of the gallery on 31 July 2026 from 5–7 p.m.**

The title, *Sunrise and Flint*, is from the last verse of the poem “The Everlasting” by Joy Harjo (Muscogee [Creek] Nation), the 23rd United States poet laureate (2019–2022) and the first Native American to hold that title. Harjo dedicated the poem to Ingrid Washinawatok, a celebrated human rights advocate and member of the Menominee Nation who was murdered by FARC rebels (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) in 1999. Harjo’s poem underscores the senseless, violent, and surreal nature of the event and details the conflict between Harjo’s understanding of the world as a living being, a witness to human atrocities, and the “new world,” whose economic survival is predicated on extractivism and violence. The poem ends stating that the sad broken world, the one responsible for killing Washinawatok and her fellow activists, can be put back together with sunrise and flint, seeming metaphors for an affirmation of life’s renewal and survival and resilience respectively.

The exhibition *Sunrise and Flint* parallels Harjo’s hopeful sentiment and looks to the artistic practice of contemporary Native American artists for guidance in reconceptualizing our planet as a collaborator, a living being that bears witness to all that humans do with and on it. The works in this exhibition—Armond Lara’s painting of flying blue buffalo that allude to the abducted Native American children, referred to by the Pueblo people as the “Lost Bluebirds;” Matthew Bahe’s textural installation of five large sheets of paper that capture the histories of his ancestors—vertical presences made with paper pulp and corn husk the artist regards as his relatives; Ryle Yazzie’s interrogation of the colonizing term ‘authenticity’ and Americana through his installation, *Native Genes*; Victoria Hubbard’s monumental panel of painted canvases stitched together to memorialize stolen and damaged lands—an “imagining of reparation and reclamation”; Chanelle Gallagher’s relational work of *waabigan* (clay) and *ishkode* (fire)—installed as turtle scutes across seven mounds that reference Anishinaabe constellation stories—embodies resistance to the erasure of Indigenous peoples, their culture, memories, narratives, and trajectories.

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"In talking about the past we lie with every breath we draw," wrote William Maxwell on the nature of memory. ***Sunrise and Flint* contemplates the stories that speak simply and unequivocally, dominant histories notwithstanding, to consider the Earth as the definitive, indisputable archivist of all history.** Tom Jones's luminous photographs of plant studies honor the memory of the many walks from his childhood with his grandfather who honored floras as living vessels of cure. Mikaela Shafer's silk scarves are printed with the visual poetry of her abstract assemblages that call to mind algae and landscape, water and sky. The paintings of Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds and David Johns pulsate with movement, imbuing the abstract with the organic. The color shapes of Heap of Birds's torn paper collages and small paintings blow upward from left to right, simulating the serrated silhouettes of juniper trees that thrive in Oklahoma and New Mexico.

To breathe truth about the past and the present, there is the "sacred rage" coined by Terry Tempest Williams, whose conservationist activism is guided by her collaborations with tribal elders and informed by Indigenous stewardship of Native lands. Amanda Raquel Dorval, an antiwar veteran, subverts military camouflage in her installation, *Our Grandmothers knew we would walk through the snow / Nuestras abuelas sabían que pasaremos por la nieve*—part of her larger *Guerra de Guabancex* narrative—by juxtaposing floral patterns against beaded camo mesh. Gallagher's self-portrait is a screen print of a photograph of her in what looks like battle gear—"what I wear to resist." The photo was taken from her participating in protests against ICE in Minneapolis. Heap of Birds's *Buffalo Stampede over Brass Army Horn* comprises 36 monoprints with hand-lettered text. The writing on the wall is historic code, indictment, and ode—"wall lyrics." Warren Realrider's sound art loops field recordings from downtown Omaha and by the Platte and Missouri rivers that capture the aural environment of a place from which all Pawnee presence has been forcibly removed. The sound piece crackles with signals from a Spanish-speaking radio station playing cumbias and ideological prattle from a rightwing radio station, picked up by his electromagnetic recorder when he placed it on a tree trunk. **These artists critique the destructive impact of U.S. imperialism on Indigenous communities at home and abroad. They speak to the reality of Indigenous experience since the beginning of colonization. They address the past in hopes of imagining an interconnected future of harmony for all beings. To open these conversations about the discrepancy between prevailing narratives and lived realities is poignant as the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary of independence. As Joy Harjo's poem ends, what "can be broken into the smallest chips of bone and tears...can be put back together with sunrise and flint."**

Zane Bennett thanks all the artists; Taylor Rose Payer (Turtle Mountain Anishinaabe) for her curation of *Be Held* at the Institute of American Indian Arts, from which a number of works are featured in *Sunrise and Flint*; **and Mario Caro**, director of the MFA Program at IAIA.

About the Artists

Matthew Bahe (Diné)

Matthew Bahe is a multidisciplinary Indigenous artist from the Diné Reservation. New Mexico is a key character in Bahe's life and work, as he was born there in Shiprock, lived much of his childhood in Hogback, and currently resides in Farmington with his wife and two dogs. His work is informed by elements of nature and Diné philosophy, designs, and storytelling practices. By interweaving his Diné roots with the contemporary art world, he draws on rich cultural history while building Indigenous futures. A trained craftsman, Bahe has developed a range of technical skills throughout his

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career that now serve in his pursuit to explore a breadth of artistic media. His practice is founded on a robust conceptual foundation rooted in the land and a deep engagement with embodied knowledges. He holds an MFA from the Institute of American Indian Art.

Amanda Raquel Dorval (Nuyorican-Dominican)

Amanda Raquel Dorval, originally from Queens, NY, is a Nuyorican-Dominican artist, library professional, and anti-war veteran who served seven years in the US Air Force as an Arabic linguist. In her art practice that combines photography, painting, craft, costume making, mask making, embroidery, beadwork, and photo collage, she seeks to reimagine Boricua and Nuyorican identity. Her practice also explores the legacy of Islam on Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, and Taíno visual culture. Her military background and ideas of nonviolence inform her reinterpretation of the aesthetics of violence with the aim of explicating the parameters of an alternative Future of Borikén/Puerto Rico that centers Indigenous and Black feminisms. Dorval holds a BA in art history from Barnard College of Columbia University, an MA in library and information science from Long Island University, an MA in near eastern studies from New York University, and an MFA in studio art from the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Chanelle Gallagher (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)

Chanelle Gallagher is an Anishinaabe artist based in Minneapolis, MN, and an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Working with *waabigan* (clay), she creates woodfired vessels and sculptural installations that explore relationships with land and water through practices of resistance and care. She sees her work as a counter-archive that holds ancestral memory and embodied presence while unsettling colonial histories that deny Anishinaabeg relationships to *waabigan*. Chanelle holds an MFA in studio arts from the Institute of American Indian Arts. She is a former First Peoples Fund Fellow and the 2024 Native American Artist in Residence at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds (Cheyenne and Arapaho)

Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds is a multidisciplinary artist and enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes. He is the Headsman of the Traditional Elk Scraper Cheyenne Warrior Society. Internationally recognized for his text-based conceptual practice, he works across public art, painting, printmaking, drawing, and monumental porcelain enamel on steel sculpture. His work challenges dominant historical narratives and foregrounds Indigenous perspectives, often transforming the language of public signage into powerful acts of remembrance, resistance, and cultural affirmation. He has taught at institutions including Yale University, the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and the University of Oklahoma. His work has been exhibited extensively in the United States, including at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and internationally, and he has received numerous honors, including fellowships, honorary doctorates, and election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Victoria Hubbard (Mescalero Apache)

Victoria Hubbard is a Mescalero Apache artist who primarily works in two-dimensional mediums, such as drawing and painting, but has begun experimenting with other mediums, including beadwork, sculpture, and sewing. She explores dark imagery and themes of Indigenous horror and the macabre to critique settler colonial ideals and portray the trauma that many Natives have suffered as a result of them. Hubbard holds a BFA in studio art from New Mexico State University and an MFA in studio art from the Institute of American Indian Arts. She lives and works in Alamogordo, New Mexico.

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David Johns (Diné)

David Johns is a painter from Seba Dalkai, Arizona. Johns spent his formative years with his grandmother, who instilled in him a respect for Navajo traditions and the land, plants, and animals that supported his ancestors. This early cultural education is a defining aspect of Johns's work, which combines his formal fine arts training with his Navajo heritage and way of life. Since 1976, Johns's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, with selected solo exhibitions at the Millicent Rogers Museum, Taos, New Mexico; Navajo Tribal Museum, Window Rock, Arizona; Palais de Nations, United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland; and others. He holds a BFA and an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Northern Arizona University. He is the Vice President of the Diné Hataalii Association, an organization of Navajo Medicine Men and Women.

Tom Jones (Ho-Chunk)

Tom Jones is a Ho-Chunk artist, curator, writer, and a professor of photography at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. A member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, Jones explores American Indian identity, experience, and representation through photography. His work examines how Indigenous cultures are portrayed in popular culture, challenging perceptions shaped by both Native and non-Native perspectives, while documenting the contemporary lives of Ho-Chunk people. Jones is co-author of *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879–1943* and co-curator and contributing author of *For a Love of His People: The Photography of Horace Poolaw* for the National Museum of the American Indian. His work is held in numerous public and private collections across the United States.

Armond Lara (Diné)

Armond Lara is a Diné and Mexican artist whose multidisciplinary practice spans painting, handmade paper, collage, sculpture, and carved wood marionettes. Born in Walsenburg, Colorado, he developed his artistic vision by observing the resourcefulness and craftsmanship of his family. His work explores Indigenous identity, memory, and resilience, often drawing on personal family history. He studied at the Colorado Institute of Art, Glendale College, and the University of Washington, and was mentored by artists including Helen Frankenthaler, Richard Diebenkorn, Pablo O'Higgins, and Paul Horiuchi. Lara has exhibited widely, collaborated with prominent Pueblo artists, and was instrumental in founding the Santa Fe Artists Emergency Medical Fund. His ongoing *Flying Blue Buffalo Project* combines sculpture and storytelling to trace his Navajo ancestry and illuminate the often-overlooked history of Native family separation, survival, and cultural continuity.

Warren Realrider (Pâri and Apsáalooke)

Warren Realrider is a Pâri and Apsáalooke multidisciplinary artist based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. His practice spans sound, performance, installation, and visual art. A 2024–2026 Tulsa Artist Fellow, he has also been selected as the Summer 2026 Sound Art + Experimental Music Artist-in-Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, Nebraska. While studying painting at the University of Oklahoma, Realrider expanded his practice to investigate sound, material, and site as interconnected artistic elements. In 2016, he founded the experimental noise performance project Tick-Suck, marking sound as a central component of his work. His performances and collaborations have been presented across the United States. In his projects such as *Four Kitapâtu* and *Unassigned Data*, Realrider explores the intersections of contemporary Plains Indigenous life, Pawnee cosmology, and experimental sound, creating immersive works that examine relationships between people, objects, place, and the unseen forces that connect them.

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Mikaela Shafer (Hopi)

Mikaela Shafer is an artist, mother, and community builder based in Olympia, Washington. Working across painting, sewing, weaving, beading, and poetry, she creates mixed media works that explore memory, grief, cultural reconnection, and collective healing. Her abstract expressionist practice combines natural pigments, found materials, and unconventional techniques to balance chaos and calm, inviting viewers to find their own narratives within each piece. Shafer's current body of work centers on matrilineal storytelling, drawing on her journey of cultural reconnection through sewn elements and plein air landscapes that honor the relationships between women, place, and generational resilience. Her work has been recognized with a Blue Ribbon from the Santa Fe Indian Market, the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation LIFT Award, and the Artist Trust Innovator Award. Beyond her studio practice, Shafer is lead storyteller for yáhaŋ Indigenous Creatives Collective and founder of Maqa Collective, advancing Indigenous storytelling and community-centered artistic practice.

Ryle Yazzie (Diné)

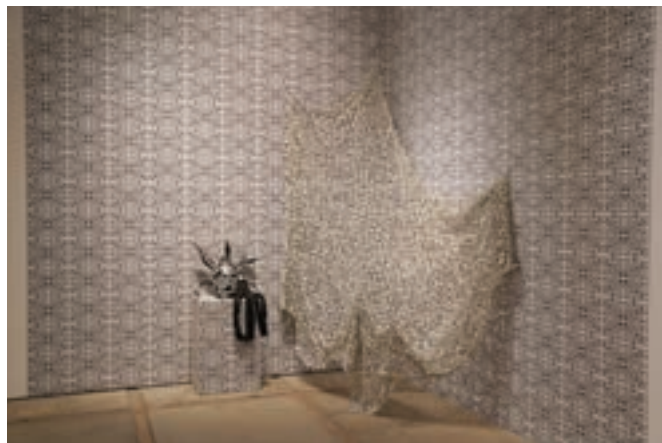
Ryle Yazzie is a Diné photographer based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, whose work explores contemporary Indigenous life through analog photography. An enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, he began working with medium-format film in 2012 while living in the Middle East, where he also launched his career in the film industry on the international production *Awaken*. Since returning to New Mexico, he has worked as both a set lighting technician and photographer, bringing a cinematic sensibility to his photographic practice. His images have been featured in *ABQ the Mag* and *New Mexico Magazine*. Committed to the enduring qualities of analog film, Yazzie creates photographs that serve as a visual archive of contemporary Indigenous culture, community, and everyday life. He holds a BFA in digital filmmaking from New Mexico State University and an MFA from the Institute of American Indian Art.

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MATTHEW BAHE | Installation view
Photo by Brandon Morgan, courtesy of IAIA



AMANDA RAQUEL DORVAL | *Our Grandmothers knew we would walk through the snow / Nuestras abuelas sabían que pasaremos por la nieve*, 2026. Camouflage mesh net embroidered with shell beads, seed beads, bugle beads, glass beads, wooden beads, acrylic beads, and rhinestones beads, with papier-mâché mask sculpted out of recycled paper and wheat paste—decorated with acrylic paint, puff paint, rhinestones, shell beads, and raw wool roving, over a custom-printed dazzle floral chiffon fabric, 120 x 120 in (304.8 x 304.8 cm). Photo by Brandon Morgan, courtesy of IAIA



CHANELLE GALLAGHER | *mikinaak's back: unmapping settler time*, 2026
Clay, wood-fired, pit-fired, and soda fired, soil
Seven mounds ranging from 16" x 16" x 6" to 44" x 36" x 12"
Photo by Brandon Morgan, courtesy of IAIA



HOCK E AYE VI EDGAR HEAP OF BIRDS | *How Bout Them Cowboys*, 2025
Suite of 4 serigraphs, 41 1/2 x 29 1/2 in (105.4 x 74.9 cm)
Photo courtesy of P.R.I.N.T. Press, University of North Texas © Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds

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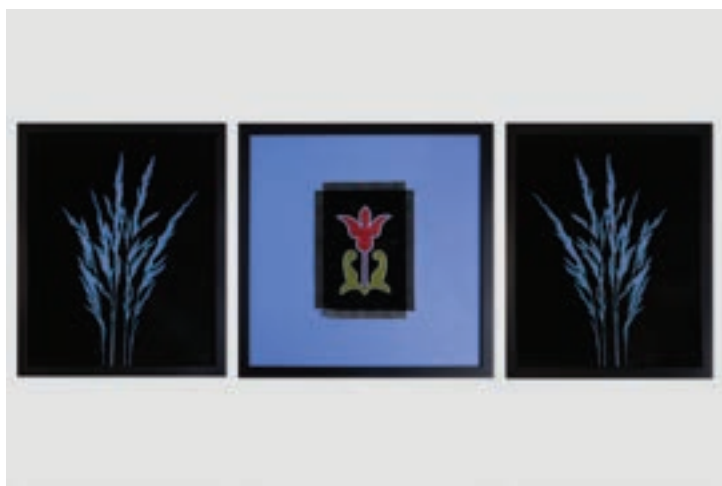
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DAVID JOHNS | *Couple-Plateau Sunset*, 2026
Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 30 in (61 x 76.2 cm)
Photo courtesy Zane Bennett Contemporary Art © David Johns



VICTORIA HUBBARD | *Picking at Old Wounds*, 2026
Acrylic paint, acrylic gel mediums, plastic beads, glass seed beads, cotton canvas, pigskin leather, wool roving, cotton and nylon threads, artificial sinew, and standard metal staples
106 x 119 x 1 1/2 in (269.2 x 302.3 x 3.8 cm)
Photo by Brandon Morgan, courtesy of IAIA



TOM JONES | *Ho-Chunk and Kyrgyzstan Plant Study #3*, 2025
Glass Beads, velvet, and acrylic on wood; archival digital photograph
26 x 26 x 1 1/8 in (66.04 x 66.04 x 1.125 cm)
Photo by Molly Wagoner © Tom Jones



ARMOND LARA | *Rafaela Valdez; Navajo - age 10 - year purchased 1862*, 2018
Cast resin, acrylic paint, wood, mixed media
12 x 21 x 14 in (30.5 x 53.3 x 35.6 cm)
Photo by Jonathan Meade © Armond Lara

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WARREN REALRIDER | *South to Heaven: Migrations Wave*, 2026
Field recording and photograph
Edit and Rebajada: 1 July 2026
Dedicated to Sonido la Ruidosa, S. Omaha, à Pâri' Akitâru
Photo courtesy Warren Realrider



MIKAELA SHAFER | Installation view of assorted works, 2024
Photo courtesy Mikaela Shafer



RYLE YAZZIE | *Native Genes 1*, 2026
Risograph
47 x 31 in (119.4 x 78.7 cm)
Photo courtesy of Ryle Yazzie

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