AND SO WE WALKED
DELANNA STUDI AND
THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Monday, October 12, 7:30 PM EDT
AND SO WE WALKED
DELANNA STUDI AND
THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Moderated by Mae Hey, assistant professor of
American Indian Studies, Virginia Tech

Produced by Octopus Theatricals
Mara Isaacs, executive/creative producer

Creator and Performer DeLanna Studi
Director Corey Madden

Excerpts from And So We Walked:

Andrew Jackson
Fort Cass
Stomp Dance

Presented in celebration of Indigenous People’s Day, in partnership with
the Virginia Tech American Indian and Indigenous Community Center
PLAYWRIGHT’S NOTE

This is a story about a journey.

Perhaps that is a statement of the obvious, since you are here to see a play about “An Artist’s Journey along the Trail of Tears.” But it is more than that.

It isn’t just my story about my journey. It is a Cherokee story, one that transcends my own personal identity and experiences. It belongs to the Cherokee people, past and present; to the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma and Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina; and to the dozens of people across the country who helped me complete this project.

The Cherokee have a word, gadugi (written in Cherokee as “ᏚᏯ”), which describes the tradition of coming together as a community to promote, support, and celebrate each other. Gadugi is a reflection of the tribal mentality and the awareness of our ancestors that we are stronger together. By helping one another, we help the collective.

While the word is often connected to communal work (such as barn raisings), it also has a more spiritual meaning. Benny Smith, a Cherokee elder from Oklahoma, once said that gadugi ensures that “no one is left alone to climb out of a life endeavor.”

The thought of standing alone on stage, performing a piece that has consumed so much of my heart and soul (not to mention my days and nights) is my current “life endeavor,” and if I am being completely honest, it is a bit intimidating.

What calms me is my knowledge that I am not really alone. I am joined by all the wonderful, beautiful, complicated characters who I will tell you about. I am joined in spirit by my ancestors, particularly my grannies, who have spoken to me so clearly throughout my life.

And I am joined by you, the audience.

This play is a testament to the spirit of gadugi. My dream of traveling the Trail of Tears with my father was a life endeavor of monumental proportions, and so many generous people helped along the way to make it possible. In particular, I could not have done this project without the support and love of my incredible family, Corey Madden, and the staff at the Kenan Institute for the Arts.
To all of them, and to all of you, I say “ GV, ” WaDo, thank you, for coming along with me on this journey.

— DeLanna Studi

DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Six years ago, at a celebratory dinner in Los Angeles following the opening of a play I directed at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, I asked Cherokee actress DeLanna Studi, “What is your dream project?” Without hesitating she replied, “To walk the Trail of Tears with my father and make a play about it.” I was impressed by her bold vision, but at that moment, had no idea how to realize it. Wishing her good luck, we went our separate ways.

Six months later, I accepted a position as executive director of the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts at UNC School of the Arts and moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Leaving L.A. wasn’t an easy decision, but the Kenan Institute for the Arts offered a great opportunity to serve the arts and my alma mater. New in town and pondering how to balance my artistic practice with my leadership role at a public university, I began exploring North Carolina and its diverse communities.

Driving to the mountains one weekend, I passed a sign for Cherokee and recalled my conversation with DeLanna. I realized DeLanna’s dream project might have a direct connection to the state, and if so, supporting it might be of real impact and value to the Kenan Institute’s mission. In addition, it might also help me integrate my artistic and leadership roles in a new place and context. As a first step, I invited DeLanna to visit Cherokee, North Carolina, to see if she could find out anything about her family’s history. What happened next became the source and inspiration for [the excerpts from] the play you will see tonight: And So We Walked: An Artist’s Journey Along the Trail of Tears.

Three years later, with the generous help of many individuals, more than a dozen partners and funders, and the entire staff of the Kenan Institute, DeLanna fulfilled one of her dreams, writing and performing in her own play about the contemporary Cherokee experience—a work that continued to grow and evolve with subsequent productions across the country, including April 2018 at Portland Center Stage in Oregon.

As the project’s director, I am so grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate with so many other talented artists, advisors and leaders, especially those associated with Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, UNC
School of the Arts, the Process Series at UNC Chapel Hill, Playmakers Repertory, and most recently Triad Stage, to enrich DeLanna’s words through dramaturgy, design, and staging. Working with these immensely talented individuals and organizations has deepened my bond with North Carolina’s rich and diverse creative community. I also want to thank Randy Reinholz and Jean Bruce Scott of Native Voices, as well as Robyn Hetrick of the Autry, and David Burton for their deep and abiding faith in this project.

I look forward to future collaborations in my artistic life, and to finding new ways for the Kenan Institute for the Arts to support the work of emerging artists and creative entrepreneurs in significant ways locally, regionally, and nationally.

—Corey Madden

A BRIEF HISTORY ON THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Migration from the original Cherokee Nation began in the early 1800s. Some Cherokees, wary of white encroachment, moved west on their own and settled in other areas of the country. The majority, however, would be forcibly expelled from their lands in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee to the newly created Indian Nation in present-day Oklahoma in the late 1830s.

White resentment of the Cherokee was not a new phenomenon. Thomas Jefferson, who often cited the Great Law of Peace of the Iroquois Confederacy as the model for the U.S. Constitution, supported Indian Removal as early as 1802. Animosity toward the Cherokee reached a pinnacle following the discovery of gold in northern Georgia, made just after the creation and passage of the original Cherokee Nation constitution. Possessed by “gold fever” and a thirst for expansion, many white communities turned on their Cherokee neighbors. The U.S. government ultimately intervened, “removing” the Cherokee people from their farms, land, and homes.

Despite the fact that Cherokee allies saved Andrew Jackson’s military command—and almost certainly his life—at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814, as president of the United States, he would authorize the Indian Removal Act of 1830. In 1832 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Cherokee sovereignty and affirmed their right to remain on their land; however, President Jackson arrogantly defied the decision and ordered the removal, an act that established the precedent for the future
expulsion of other Native Americans from their ancestral homelands.

In 1835 approximately 100 Cherokee signed the Treaty of New Echota, which relinquished Cherokee claim to all lands east of the Mississippi River in exchange for land in Indian Territory, along with the promise of money, livestock, provisions, tools, and other rewards. The majority of the Cherokee nation did not endorse this treaty, with opposition led by Chief John Ross, a mixed-blood of Scottish and one-eighth Cherokee descent.

The Treaty of New Echota led to bitter factionalism within the Cherokee Nation. Prior to the signing, the Cherokee Nation Council had passed a law calling for the death of anyone agreeing to give up tribal land. Many of the leaders of the pro-removal faction—known as the Treaty Party—would be killed upon the arrival of the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory.

The U.S. government used the Treaty of New Echota to justify the removal, and President Jackson ordered the U.S. Army to begin enforcing the Removal Act. The Cherokee were rounded up in the summer of 1838 and held in prison camps before being loaded onto boats that traveled the Tennessee, Ohio, Mississippi, and Arkansas Rivers into Indian Territory.

Nearly all of the 17,000 Cherokee people were forced from their southeastern homeland. An estimated 4,000 died from hunger, exposure, and disease during this journey, which became a cultural memory known as the “trail where they cried” for the Cherokees and other removed tribes. Today it is widely remembered by the general public as the “Trail of Tears.”
AND SO WE WALKED GLOSSARY

Tsalaqwa Wevti (zhuh•LAH•kuh WAY•uh•tee; GWO O•AH•I): the old homeplace
Yoneg (yo•NEH•guh; O•J•E): white person
WaDo (wah•DOH; G•V): thank you
Ageyutsa (ah•gay•HYUECH; D•F•G•G): girl
Kituwah (kih•TOO•wuh; Y•S•G): hometown of Cherokee people; the Cherokee people
Ulisi ageyutsa (ah•gah•LEE•see ah•gay•HYUECH; O•P•B•D•F•G•G): granddaughter
Qualla (KWAH•luh) Boundary: A land trust of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, purchased by the tribe in the 1870s and placed under federal protection. Not technically a reservation. Enrolled members can buy, own and sell land
Tahlequah (tah•lah•KWAH; W•D•I): Located in Cherokee County, Oklahoma, and established in 1839 following the Indian Removal. Tahlequah is the capitol city of two Cherokee Nations, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians and the Cherokee Nation. (also: tali eliquu [duh•LEE•kwa; W•P•R•P•W]: literally, “two is enough”)
Elyse (ay•LEE•see; O•P•B): grandmother
Gatiyo (gah•TEE•yo; S•1f): Stomp Dance
Hiwassee (hai•WAH•see): refers to a river that flows from Georgia north into North Carolina. American English word, which may be derived from the Cherokee word “Ayuhawsi”, which means meadow or savanna

The script of And So We Walked: An Artist’s Journey Along the Trail of Tears was developed in close collaboration with individuals and institutions within the Eastern Band of Cherokee and Cherokee Nation as well as with the support of Native Voices Theatre and the American Indian Center and Process Series at UNC-Chapel Hill. Major support was provided through the Arts and Society Initiative of the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts.
DELANNA STUDI

Originally from Liberty, Oklahoma, DeLanna Studi is a proud citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Studi’s theatre credits include the First National Broadway Tour of the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County*; off-Broadway’s *Informed Consent* at Duke Theater on 42nd Street; and regional theatre credits at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage at The Armory (Astoria: Part One and Two), Cornerstone Theater Company, Indiana Repertory Theater, and others.

Studi has originated roles in more than 18 world premieres, including 14 Native productions. She has done more than 800 performances of the Encompass “Compassion Play” *KICK*, a one-person show written by Peter Howard that explores the power of images, stereotypes, and Native American mascots. Her roles in the Hallmark/ABC mini-series *Dreamkeeper* and Chris Eyre’s *Edge of America* have won her numerous awards. She is an ensemble member of America’s only Equity Native American theatre company, Native Voices at the Autry.

Studi serves as chair of SAG-AFTRA’s National Native Committee, which has, under her leadership, produced an award-winning film about American Indians in the entertainment industry and created a “Business of Acting” workshop that tours Indian Country. Studi was the winner of the 2016 Butcher Scholar Award from the Autry Museum of the American West. She mentors for the Mentor Artist Playwright Program, Young Native Playwrights, and American Indian Film Institute’s Tribal Touring Program. Her artist-in-residencies include the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Wisconsin (where she co-taught Native American Oral Histories and Storytelling and American Indians in Film), and Brown University. *And So We Walked* is Studi’s first play.

MAE HEY, moderator

Mae Hey’s undergraduate education focused on geology and geography, human-Nature relationships. Hey’s two graduate degrees are in curriculum and instruction. Her Ph.D. research focused on the confluence of Indigenous worldview/knowledge and science education, a natural...
blending of traditional local knowledge and practices that support creative problem-solving, human empowerment, community capacity building, and a more sustainable future. Additionally, her dissertation work allowed her to explore strategies for effectively working with Native populations as well as maintaining the integrity of authentic Indigenous voice through the process of research and reporting.

Hey completed a two-year InclusiveVT postdoctoral fellowship under the Office of Inclusion and Diversity with the American Indian and Indigenous Alliance. In that position, she nurtured relationships with tribal communities in Virginia to aid in experiential learning and applied research programs at Virginia Tech. She also created bonds with Virginia tribes and continues to work with them on a number of grants for community viability projects related to Land-centered learning.

Hey is now an InclusiveVT faculty fellow for the Office for Inclusion and Diversity, assistant professor of American Indian Studies, faculty fellow for the Leadership and Social Change Residential College at Virginia Tech, and faculty fellow for the Virginia Tech Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation. She is a Sequoyah fellow and serves on the Curriculum Committee for the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. Hey is an active member of the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance’s Indigenous culinary mentorship program.

**OCTOPUS THEATRICALS**

Founded by creative producer Mara Isaacs, Octopus Theatricals collaborates with artists and organizations to foster an expansive range of compelling theatrical works for local, national, and international audiences. They eschew boundaries—aesthetic, geopolitical, institutional—and thrive on a nimble and rigorous practice. Current projects include *Hadestown* by Anaïs Mitchell (Broadway; eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical); *Iphigenia*, a new opera by Wayne Shorter and Esperanza Spalding; *Dreaming Zenzile* by Somi Kakoma; *An Iliad* by Denis O’Hare and Lisa Peterson; Theatre for One; and Project Springboard: Developing Dance Musicals. Octopus is also proud to work with Phantom Limb Company, Ripe Time, Lola Arias, Song of the Goat Theatre, and more. For more information, please visit octopustheatricals.com.
Engagement Events

Friday, October 9, 2020
VIRTUAL CLASS VISIT
Introduction to American Indian Studies
Material Culture and Public Humanities Theory
Undergraduate and graduate students met with DeLanna Studi virtually to discuss the development of And So We Walked and its connections to Cherokee history, identity, and culture.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020
VIRTUAL MEET-AND-GREET WITH NATIVE STUDENTS
DeLanna Studi joined Native Virginia Tech students for an informal gathering.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020
VIRTUAL CLASS VISIT
Global Feminisms
Language and Ethnicity in the U.S.
Introduction to Acting
Virginia Tech classes in Women’s and Gender Studies, English, and Theatre Arts met with DeLanna Studi to discuss Native narratives, communication, performance, and intergenerational traditions.

Special thanks to the American Indian and Indigenous Community Center, Native@VT, Katie Carmichael, Sam Cook, Danille Christensen, Michele Deramo, Melissa Faircloth, Carmen Gitre, Mae Hey, Jessica Taylor, Bonnie Zare, and Taylor Wood

Go Deeper

In this video interview, DeLanna Studi describes how, despite her misgivings, each successive draft of And So We Walked integrated more of her personal experience. What do the personal details in the play reveal about the enduring impact of the Trail of Tears? And, inversely, how does the epic scope of that period of mass displacement inform your understanding of Studi?
In the Galleries

We’re so pleased to welcome you back for another season of exciting and evocative exhibitions in the Moss Arts Center galleries!

JASON MIDDLEBROOK: ANOTHER WORLD
Through Sat., Nov. 21
Ruth C. Horton Gallery

American visual artist Jason Middlebrook envisions, creates, and then digitally renders a new 15-by-28-foot site-specific commissioned work of art inspired by the soaring architecture of the Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre. This panoramic work invites viewers into another place—a place of inspiration, visual complexity, and delight.

ART AND SOCIAL CONSCIENCE
Calling attention to sociopolitical issues and the need for change

FOUR FREEDOMS: HANK WILLIS THOMAS AND EMILY SHUR IN COLLABORATION WITH ERIC GOTTESMAN AND WYATT GALLERY OF FOR FREEDOM
Through Sat., Nov. 21
Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

In this photographic installation, Hank Willis Thomas and Emily Shur redress the absence of multiple peoples and cultural narratives in Norman Rockwell’s iconic paintings representing Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, while opening up, exploring, and encouraging deeper discussion of what freedom in the 21st century is and can be.

22 STEPS
Through Sat., Nov. 21
Grand Lobby Staircase

Rendered in text on the Moss Arts Center’s stairs is a pertinent statement by Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis (1940-2020) paying attention to and reflecting our country’s ongoing struggle for social justice.

For the most up to date gallery hours, please visit our website.
Online Resources

Join us for a special series of events featuring notable artists live from their homes and studios. Not another livestream or pre-recorded performance that’s widely available to everyone, our HomeStage series is exclusive to the Moss Arts Center and designed specifically to be presented online. For a full list of our online events and resources, please click here.

Reopening Updates

The health and wellness of our community is our top priority, and you can be assured that we are doing everything we can to keep you and our staff safe and healthy. Find more information about our re-opening plans here.

Box Office Hours
Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 PM

For more information, please call the box office at 540-231-5300 during these hours, or email us anytime at mossartscenter@vt.edu.

Land Acknowledgement

The Moss Center acknowledges the Tutelo and Monacan people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognizes their continuing connection to the land, water, and air that Virginia Tech consumes. We pay respect to the Tutelo and Monacan Nations, and to their elders past, present, and emerging.

We also acknowledge the university’s historical ties to the indentured and enslaved whose labors built this institution. We pay respect to these people for their contributions to Virginia Tech.

As you engage with one another and the arts we present, we invite you to reflect on the history of this space and its possibilities for reconciliation, truth, and humanity. In the spirit of Ut Prosim, let this acknowledgment be but a single step in the Moss Arts Center’s commitment to these values.
The Moss Arts Center presents **HOMESTAGE**

An exclusive series of online performances and conversations—live in the comfort of your own home.

Fri., Oct. 23, 7:30 PM EDT

*The Treasures of Fiddlers*

*Mark and Maggie O’Connor*

Thurs., Oct. 29, 7:30 PM EDT

*Behind the Scenes with*

*Choreographer Ephrat Asherie*

Fri., Nov. 6, 7 PM EST

*Javaad Alipoor*

*The Believers Are But Brothers*
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