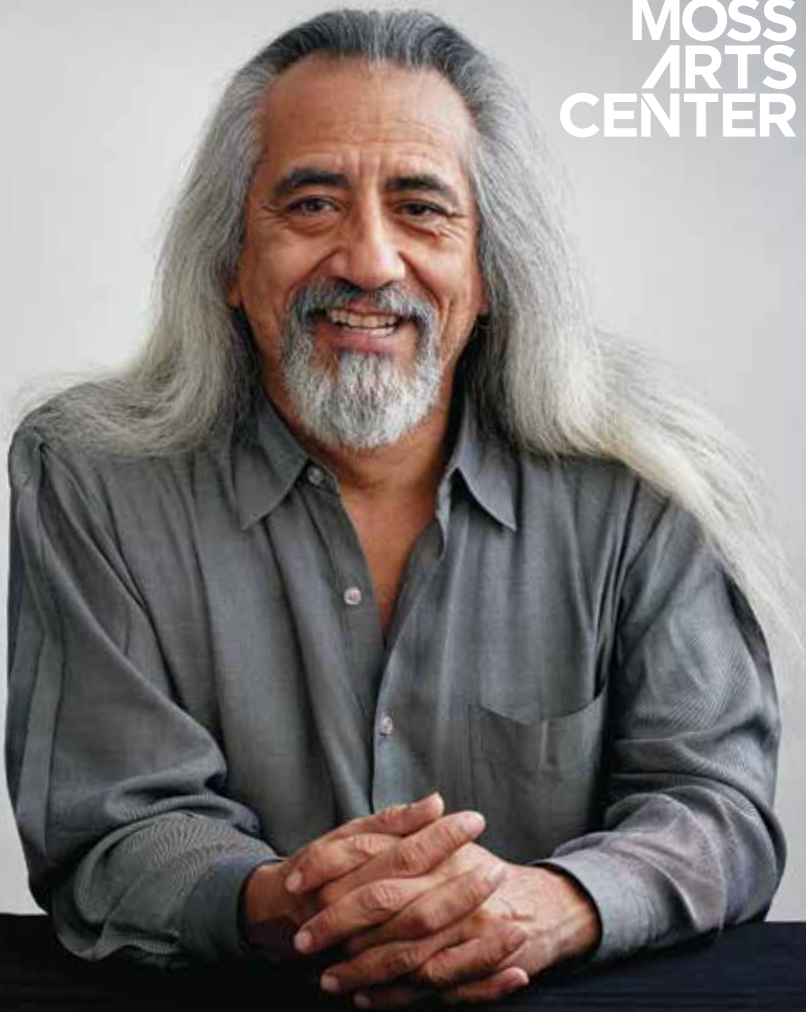


MOSS
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24/
25



george emilio sanchez
in the court of the conqueror

Thursday, April 24, and Friday, April 25, 2025, 7:30 PM

Cube

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in the court of the conqueror

written and performed by
george emilio sanchez
in collaboration with visual artist patty ortiz

Programmed by guest curator Andre Bouchard

Production Director: Lauren Parrish

Lighting Designer and Tech Assistant: Jorgen Skjaervold

Tour Representative:

Andre Bouchard, Indigenous Performance Productions

Performance Text Legal History Consultant:

N. Bruce Duthu,
Dartmouth College Native and Indigenous Studies Department,
and Lindsay Robertson-Indigenous Peoples' Law Program,
University of Oklahoma College of Law

Acknowledgements:

Abrons Arts Center Artist Commission, Dartmouth College
Native and Indigenous Studies Department Artist Residency,
the MacDowell Artist Residency,
Suquamish Tribal Chairman Leonard Forsman,
and the Suquamish Nation

This performance will last approximately 75 minutes with no intermission.

This performance contains mature language.



program notes

george emilio sanchez was first introduced to me by an old mutual friend. sanchez' work over the last 40 years seeks to tell the stories created by the laws of this country. *In the Court of the Conqueror* melds stories from a dozen Tribes, in addition to his own. As we seek to understand one another, as institutions like Virginia Tech seek to come to terms with the wealth they received at the cost of the first nations of this land, context such as what is presented by sanchez' storytelling must be a part of our journey.

— *Andre Bouchard, guest curator*

suggested readings

Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2015). *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Beacon Press. This book offers a history of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans have actively resisted expansion of the U.S. empire.

Duthu, N.B. (2008). *American Indians and the Law*. New York, N.Y. Penguin Group. This book addresses how Indian tribes are a sovereign entity in the U.S., and it explores landmark cases of Indian Law for the past 200 years. This book assisted in helping me to formulate a creative response to the Lyng and Oliphant cases, as well as further understanding of the implicit divestiture doctrine supplied by Associate Justice William H. Rehnquist in the landmark case, *Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe* (1978).

Robertson, L. (2005). *Conquest by Law: How the Discovery of America Dispossessed Indigenous Peoples of Their Lands*. New York, N.Y.. Oxford University Press. This book was invaluable in regards to the central case cited in my performance, *Johnson v. M'Intosh* (1823). This groundbreaking book reveals the complex and troubling history of how a land dispute became a legal doctrine that dispossessed all Indigenous people in the U.S. Most importantly, this book provided me with the map and location of the lands involved in the Johnson case, which is how I was able to film the video *dream letter* to Chief Justice John Marshall.

Wilkins, D. & Lomawaima, K.T. (2001). *Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law*. Norman, OK.: University of Oklahoma Press. This book examines seven foundational doctrines of Federal Indian Law, which includes Indigenous perspectives of Indian Law and Policy. This book was specifically critical for its content on the doctrines of plenary power and implicit divestiture.

biographies

george emilio sanchez

george emilio sanchez is a writer, performer, educator, and advocate for Indigenous rights and sovereignty and was a nominee for the 2025 United States Artist Fellowship. Currently, sanchez is touring the U.S. with his most recent collaborative performance, *In the Court of the Conqueror*, a collaborative performance work created with visual artist Patty Ortiz. This new work premiered at Abrons Arts Center in New York City and has since toured to six states between 2022 and 2025. This piece focuses on the 200-year-old history of Supreme Court rulings that have diminished, diluted, and rarely upheld the tribal sovereignty of the Native Nations of Indian Country, while also navigating the generational trauma of being raised in an Ecuadorian immigrant household in Orange County, California and the embedded bias towards Indigenous peoples. Subsequent to the premiere of this work in 2022, sanchez and Ortiz collaborated on two more performance projects. The first was an outdoor performance, *sitting on a park bench while unlocking the cages of captivity*, which was performed on Indigenous Peoples Day in Columbus Park in Brooklyn. The second is *only the imagination can unlock the cages of captivity*.

sanchez initiated the performance series *Performing the Constitution* with XIV, which premiered at Dixon Place in New York City in June 2019. This solo work revolved around an appellate court case, *Mendez v. Westminster* (1946), that involved five Mexican families who sued the local school district in Orange County, California for its segregation policy that did not accept Mexican students into public schools. This case took place eight years before *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). *Buried up to My Neck While Thinking Outside the Box* premiered at Dixon Place in 2009 and was remounted as a six-hour outdoor installation in 2015 produced by El Museo del Barrio. In 2002 sanchez wrote and performed in *Rosa*, which was commissioned by Dixon Place in a solo work that addressed the tragedy of the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. His first two solo performances, *Chief Half-Breed in the Land of Nepantla* and *LATINDIO*, were produced by and presented at Dance Theater Workshop (New York Live Arts) in 1992 and

1994. *Chief Half-Breed in the land of Nepantla* was also included in George C. Wolfe's Mo' Madness festival of solo works at the Public Theater in 1992. sanchez is the performance director of Emergenyc and has directed this program exploring the intersection of arts and activism for 15 years. He teaches at the City University of New York's College of Staten Island and sits on the Executive Council of the Professional Staff Congress, the union for faculty and staff for the City University of New York. During the Covid lockdown he completed a master's degree in legal studies in the Indigenous Peoples' Law program at the University of Oklahoma as part of his "artistic research" for *In the Court of the Conqueror*. He is the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship to Peru in 1994 and two New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowships (1993 and 1997). In 2021 sanchez was named the inaugural recipient of the Keith Haring Fellowship in Arts and Activism by the MacDowell.

patty ortiz

Patty Ortiz is a visual artist working between San Antonio, Texas and Brooklyn, New York. Ortiz works in all visual media, including drawing, installation, and video. Her 2D work has been exhibited throughout the United States and internationally, including in Mexico City, Chile, Amsterdam, and the Netherlands. Ortiz' social practice series, *Work Won't Kill You* (2015-2019) has been presented across the U.S. at Saltquarters Gallery in Syracuse, ArtProduce in San Diego, Luminaria Festival in San Antonio, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art in Boulder, and Emmanuel College in Boston. Ortiz has also accomplished several permanent public art commissions, including at the Jeppeson Corporation in Munich and the Denver International Airport in Denver.

This is sanchez' first performance at the Moss Arts Center.

tell us what you think!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Chucho Valdés and Irakere 50 on Saturday, May 10, 2025.

bit.ly/sanchez-feedback

Please note, survey responses are anonymous. If you would like a response to your feedback, please email mossartscenter@vt.edu.

go deeper

*In *The Court of the Conqueror* melds stories from multiple tribes in an effort to reexamine the past and present historical conflicts of Indigenous lands. As a land-grant institution, Virginia Tech benefited from the expropriation and sale of Indigenous lands located in Western states under the Morrill Act of 1862. How might our community examine and honor the stories of those tribes whose lands have benefited Virginia Tech and other land-grant colleges in the United States? How might we consider the layered past of the land we now call Virginia Tech in an expansive and inclusive way?*

engagement events

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT:

INTRO TO APPLIED COLLABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

Non-theatre majors explored Brazilian practitioner Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed methodology with writer, performance artist, and social justice advocate george emilio sanchez as their guide.

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT: HYBRID FORMS

Students discussed the business of the creative arts and the use of dramaturgy, cinematography, and personal narrative within *In the Court of the Conqueror* with sanchez and visual artist Patty Ortiz.

LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

sanchez spent time with Leadership and Social Change Residential College students in an informal conversation connected to the themes and content of *In the Court of the Conqueror*.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Sociology students examined the conflicting forces of economic, ethnic, and national interests at play within *In the Court of the Conqueror*.

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT: INTRO TO CREATIVE TECH

Visual arts students learned about the use of cinematography and the art of collaboration between sanchez and Ortiz in the creation of *In the Court of the Conqueror*.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, AND FRIDAY, APRIL 25

POST-PERFORMANCE Q&AS

Hear from sanchez in these open post-performance discussions.

Special thanks to the School of Performing Arts, School of Visual Arts, Beyond Boundaries Collaborative District, Department of English, Department of Sociology, and the Leadership and Social Change Residential College

PK-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

Each year, wildly enthusiastic students — from PK through 12th grade — fill our theatre for free matinee performances by artists from all over the world. They explore our visual arts galleries during school tours and create and learn during hands-on workshops with artists. For many students, visiting the Moss Arts Center is the first time they've ever been to a performing arts facility or gallery. Why do young people need access to the arts? Engaging in artistic activities offers a wide range of skills that they will use throughout their lives.

Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.

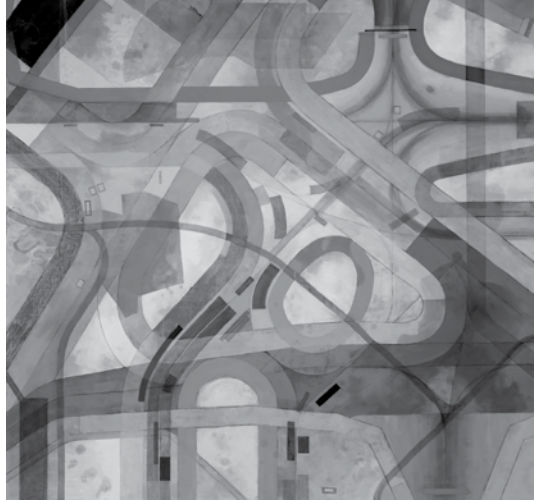
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands in California and other areas in the West.

LABOR RECOGNITION

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also owned hundreds of enslaved people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.

**MOSS
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CLOSING SOON

SOVA Faculty Triennial *Assembly*

Through Saturday, April 26

All galleries

The 2025 Faculty Triennial Exhibition showcases works by Virginia Tech's School of Visual Arts (SOVA) faculty members, and includes adjunct faculty. Titled *Assembly*, this exhibition celebrates the creativity of the School of Visual Arts and will include a wide range of media, from traditional to digital, as well as sculpture, video, drawing, and painting.

Betsy Bannan, Sam Blanchard, Michael Borowski, Dongsoo Choi, Meaghan Dee, Dustin Dennis, Meredith Drum, Les Duffield, Jennifer L. Hand, Travis Head, Wonjung Jung, Amanda Kelly, Nate King, Amanda Lechner, Alexandra Leonetti, Mitch Miller, Hiromi Okumura, Amelia Salisbury, Robin Scully, Eric Standley, Chelsea Thompto, Thomas Tucker, Rachel Lin Weaver, and Shuang Wu

Betsy Bannan; *Airside Choreography*; 2024; oil on panel; 36 x 36 inches

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MOSS
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**chucho
valdés and
irakere 50**

sat., may 10, 7:30 pm

VT VIRGINIA
TECH.

Grammy winner and world-famous pianist Chucho Valdés closes the season with a tribute to 50 years of Irakere, featuring a new iteration of the band that revolutionized Afro-Latin jazz.



SPECIAL EVENTS

CONTRA DANCE AT THE Y

Contra Dance is a traditional American dance in which couples dance in two long facing lines or in groups of four. No partner required!

Y COMMUNITY GALLERY

We are proud to announce that the YMCA at Virginia Tech is opening a brand-new community art gallery in The Y Center at 1000 N. Main St., Blacksburg. We are extremely grateful to eARTh (by Diane Relf) for sponsorship of this new space and for the generous support of Shelter Alternatives and Bell Electric.

Y BOOK FAIR

Among the many volumes of books that will be available in our annual Book Fair there will be a collection of books of local origin, authors and interest. We'll have literally thousands of books, comics, graphic novels, vinyl and vintage collectibles for you to peruse at the very best prices around so get ready!



YOUR GUIDE TO RECYCLING AT THE Y

WHAT

Textiles (gently used household items to include books, clothing, housewares, blankets, toys, etc.)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Please deliver to Thrift Shop dock during business hours.*

Electronics (working & non-working TV's (from Mont. County residents only)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Please deliver to Thrift Shop dock during business hours.*

Batteries (Rechargeable batteries only)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Bring inside to Recycling Station.
Each item will need to be individually bagged. Bags and tape will be provided.*

CFL's, Ink Jet cartridges, rechargeable batteries

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Bring inside to Recycling Table. Each item will need to be individually bagged. Bags and tape will be provided.*

We love to hear from you! Feel free to send us an email at ymca@vtymca.org and we will be in contact with you soon.

Y CENTER

Thrift Shop, Pottery Studio,
Event Room, and Conference Room
1000 North Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-552-2633

MAIN OFFICE

Lancaster House
403 Washington Street SW
Blacksburg, VA 24060
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