



**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**

**24/
25**



*voices from the urban
indigenous campfire*

Monday, October 14, 2024, 7:30 PM

Street and Davis Performance Hall, Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre



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*voices from the urban
indigenous campfire*

Programmed by guest curator
Andre Bouchard

Presented in celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day

This performance is supported in part by a gift from
Dr. Rosemary Blieszner and Dr. Stephen P. Gerus.



curator's note

Voices from the Urban Indigenous Campfire is a creation of the moment, a bespoke evening of storytelling curated to create a snapshot, a perspective for the Virginia Tech community. Native storytelling is having a moment. For the first time we now have a voice — on stage, on the big and little screens, in literature, and beyond. We are finally beginning to unravel decades of invisibility. Each of the three featured artists was introduced to me through their writing first. The voices from this show present a view from the soul of Native America — the poetry, the theatre, and nonfiction writing. Within these voices you will find the humor, reflection, and spirit that give our communities direction and purpose.

— Andre Bouchard, guest curator

biographies



rena priest

Rena Priest is an enrolled member of the Lhaq'temish (Lummi) Nation. Priest served as the sixth Washington State Poet Laureate (2021-2023) and was named the 2022 Maxine Cushing Gray Distinguished Writing Fellow. She is also the recipient of an Allied Arts Foundation Professional Poets Award, as well as fellowships from the Academy of American Poets, Indigenous Nations Poets, Nia Tero, and the Vadon Foundation.

Priest's debut collection, *Patriarchy Blues*, received an American Book Award. Her second collection, *Sublime Subliminal*, was published as the finalist for the Floating Bridge Press Chapbook Award. Her most recent book, *Northwest Know-How: Beaches*, includes poems, retellings of legends, and fun descriptions of 29 of the most beloved beaches in the Pacific Northwest. Her nonfiction has appeared in *High Country News*, *YES! Magazine*, *Seattle Met*, and elsewhere. Priest holds a master of fine arts from Sarah Lawrence College.



deborah taffa

Deborah Jackson Taffa's debut book, *Whiskey Tender*, (HarperCollins) has received praise from the *New Yorker*, *New York Times*, *Oprah Daily*, *ELLE*, *Esquire*, and other outlets. With fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in Prose, PEN America, A Public Space, MacDowell, and the New York State Summer Writer's Institute, Taffa received a master of fine arts in creative writing from the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa. A citizen of the Kwatsaan (Yuma) Nation and Laguna Pueblo, Taffa is the director of the Master of Fine Arts Creative Writing program at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the editor of *River Styx Magazine*.

biographies, cont.



rhiana yazzie

A playwright, director, and filmmaker, Rhiana Yazzie serves as the artistic director of New Native Theatre, which she started in 2009 as a response to the lack of connection and professional opportunities between Twin Cities theatres and the Native community. The organization offers a new way of looking at, thinking about, and staging Native American stories.

A Navajo Nation citizen (Ta'neezahnii bashishchiin dóó Táchii'nii dashinalí), Yazzie has seen her plays on stages from Alaska to Mexico, including in Carnegie Hall's collaboration with American Indian Community House and Eagle Project. She has a new co-commissioned play in the works with Long Wharf Theatre and Rattlestick Theater and is developing her play, *Nancy*, about Nancy Reagan and her intersection with Indian Country in the '80s, astrology, and her little-known Native heritage. Yazzie also wrote, directed, and starred in her first feature film, *A Winter Love*, which premiered in 2022.

She received the 2021 Lanford Wilson and 2020 Steinberg awards and is a 2018 Bush Foundation Leadership Fellow. Yazzie was recognized with a 2017 Sally Ordway Award for Vision and has been a Playwrights' Center fellow multiple times.

Priest first appeared at the Moss Arts Center in Indigenous Performance Production's Welcome to Indian Country in 2021. This is Taffa's and Yazzie's first performance at the 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 *An Evening with Ta-Nehisi Coates* on Friday, November 1, 2024.

bit.ly/voices-campfire-feedback

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

engagement events

Tonight's performance will be followed by a conversation with the audience.

While at Virginia Tech, the artists are participating in the following engagement activities:

**Reception and community conversation lunch with
Ati: Wa:oki Indigenous Community Center**

**Visits to Virginia Tech classes in Sociology, Poetry,
and American Indian Studies**

***Stories as Data: A Panel on Oral Traditions in Research
and the Arts***

Wednesday, October 16, 6 PM

Newman Library, Lury and Barbara Goodall Room
(Multipurpose Room)

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.



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Your gift to the Moss Arts Center helps to support access to the arts, student engagement, and cultural diversity.

Through gifts like yours, we have been able to expand opportunities for PK-12 students in our region, deepen relationships with academic partners, continue to offer \$10 tickets to performances for Virginia Tech students, and provide experiential learning opportunities for students.

Help us continue this work!



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MOSS ARTS CENTER

FALL 2024
EXHIBITION



Never Spoken Again: Rogue Stories of Science and Collections

Curated by David Ayala-Alfonso

Through Sat., Dec. 14, 2024

All galleries

Explore a traveling exhibition that reflects on the birth of modern collections, the art institutions that sustain them, and their contingent origin stories to reveal a universe of erasures, violence, and fortuity. Considering how institutional collections organize our lives, *Never Spoken Again* brings together artists whose works open up a critique of material culture, iconography, and political ecologies.

Free Related Events

Beyond the Frame

Gallery Tours

Nov. 14, and Dec. 12, 12 PM

Moss Arts Center Grand Lobby

Michael Rakowitz; *The invisible enemy should not exist – Seated Nude Male Figure, Wearing Belt Around Waist (IM77823) (Recovered, Missing, Stolen Series)*, 2018; Middle Eastern packaging and newspapers, glue, and cardboard; 37 4/5 in. x 28 3/4 x 28 3/4 inches; courtesy of the artist and Barbara Wien Gallery



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 kids 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.

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The Moss Arts Center extends its appreciation to those donors who have established endowments in support of the arts.

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NOVEMBER 6

7:00 PM

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JARRETT WILDCATT - PHIL JAMISON - GREEN GRASS CLOGGERS -
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JACOB WRIGHT - NEW BALLARD'S BRANCH BOGTROTTERS -
JUNIOR APPALACHIAN MUSICIANS - MIST ON THE MOUNTAIN
INTRODUCTION BY THE CROOKED ROAD DIRECTOR TYLER HUGHES



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Past Student Leaders of the YMCA



Past Student Leaders of the YMCA



Past Student Leaders of the YMCA

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