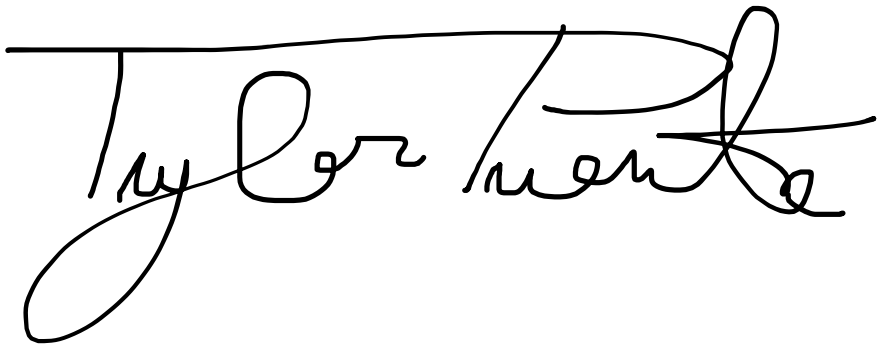
Horizons

An exhibition report presented in alignment of the requirements for the Master of Maori Visual Arts

Massey University, Palmerston North ‘Aotearoa’ New Zealand



2020

Index

Acknowledgements

There are so many individuals to thank but for starters I'd like to first thank my mother Edith and dad Tony for taking care of me. Thank you for sharing your humor and stories about your era (the 70's and 80's) and reminding me about the importance of Diné language and culture. To my older sisters Lisa and Melissa thank you for helping my mom and dad change my diapers. To my older brother Tony and little brother Jayson thank you for simply supporting me as I walk on this learning journey beyond North America. I can't wait to see you again after Covid settles away.

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Third. I like to thank former mentor, painter, and printmaker Linda Lomahoftewa for believing and supporting me on this educational journey that I began seven years ago this year. Thinking about your teachings when practicing art making is invaluable and has helped me better improve how I want a viewer to hear about Indigenous history through the arts. I hope to visit you again in the future.

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.

Lastly, I like to thank my maternal and paternal grandparents for their countless stories, comfort, love and humor from back home on Dinetah through my early years I was raised in northern Arizona, **figure 1** photo, circa 1999. I'm beyond grateful for your knowledges and still figuring out how I can translate your teachings to the next generation. Sometime in the future.

Figure 1

Introduction (Clan)

Yā'át'ééh shik'éí dóó shidine'é

(Hello, my relatives and my people.)

Tyler Puente yinishyé. (I'm called Tyler Puente.)

Táchii'nii dóone'é nishIį. (I am of the Red Running into Water clan, *Snow*, *Frost, Rainwater*)

Kinyaa'áanii báshishchíín. (I am born of the Towering House/Sky clan, *Bear Protector, White Shells.*)

Tsé nílíkiní dashicheii. (Honey Combed Rock/Bumblebee or Cliff Dwellers are my maternal grandfather's clan.)

Honágháahnii dashinálí. (The one who walks around are my paternal grandparent, *Cougar, Peoples Protector, Turquoise Stone.*)

Kót'áó Diné nishlí. (This is how I identify as Diné.)

Ké (Kinship)

Ya' teeh (Hello) is a salutatory greeting Diné people say to another Diné on the reservation, or while away from Diné nation. Salutatories is a moment profound for Diné to not only say hello, but also to introduce and exchange clans mutually. Clans are a part of a kinship based system that Dinés inherit from birth carried into adulthood. Originating from both maternal and paternal parents who received their clans from their parents and the previous generation going further back. Each clan is symbolically special that references an identification to belonging to either geographical places, ecologies, animals, insects, weather elements, and sometimes notable Diné ancestors. When Diné meet other Diné it is customary to shake hands to connect to see if either of our maternal, paternal, grand maternal or grand paternal clan's match. This is to identify if we are related to one another. To connect and see if we may be a cousin, an uncle, an auntie, a nephew, a niece, a grandson, a granddaughter, a grandma, a grandpa and vice versa. Only Diné and Indigenous persons can understand how these cross-connecting innuendos click. Laugh out loud. Let's proceed forward.

Ké (Connections to Place)

For each of the individual clans given to the next generation of Diné, clans are associated with either of the four sacred colors representing the four cardinal directions. The four colors representing for these sacred directions is the north represents (black obsidian stone), south (turquoise stone), east (white shells), and west (yellow - abalone shell). They have important connections to spiritual beliefs and identities. Each of these colors not only house the defining contexts for each clan but are actual mountain peaks located in separate geographical locations.

The *northern* mountain peak (black obsidian stone) represents a Diné deity, one of our first 'holy' women, who is regarded as the "Monster Slayer" defeated a dragon in one of the chapters about Diné emergence into the world. The Diné name for the northern mountain peak is Dibé Nitsaa. translates to the 'holy' Diné deities who created this particular mountain with a rainbow beam. The 'holy' Diné deities who forged this mountain with a rainbow beam decorated it with black and white feathers to symbolize self-awareness and protectors of night to guide Diné with their journeys to wherever in the world one might be. The English name for this northern mountain peak is called Hesperus Peak. In English it means evening star and it is located near Durango, Colorado.

The *southern* mountain peak (turquoise stone) pays homage to our mother earth draped with flint (arrows) by 'holy' Diné deities. Through oral story, the Diné name for southern mountain peak is Tsoodził. It was adorned with turquoise stones for health and positive learning and is considered a male living entity. The southern male mountain peak represents power and authority over the sky and moisture. Diné symbolization for this particular mountain peak is in regard to the season summer youthfulness, leadership and regaining strength. The English name for the southern mountain peak is called Mount Taylor and It is located near Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico.

The *western* mountain peak (abalone shell) in Diné is called Dook'o'oosłííd. 'Holy' Diné deities created this western mountain peak using a sunbeam. Dook'o'oosłííd was draped with yellow and white feathers and abalone shells to symbolize the season autumn also twilight, adulthood, and physical strength when Diné seek to be reenergized. The western mountain peak is considered a female living entity. The short-lived colonial Spanish era renamed this mountain,

the ‘San Francisco Peaks’, during their 1600’s conquest in the American southwest. It is located near Flagstaff, Arizona, near where I was raised on the reservation.

The *eastern* mountain peak (white shells) in Diné language is called Sisnaajiní. This eastern mountain was juxtaposed by ‘holy’ Diné deities who pay homage to Mother Earth and they used a lightning bolt to make the mountain peak rise. The eastern mountain is like a doorway with an opening to allow the morning sun to greet you each day. Sisnaajiní was adorned with white and black feathers for purity and gentleness and white shells for intelligence and positive thinking. Diné view the eastern mountain peak as a male living entity. Sisnaajiní represents dawn, the season spring, and the beginning of life. The Spanish named this peak ‘Sierra Blanca’. It is located near Alamosa, Colorado.

Introduction conclusion

As each sacred mountain was forming in the first, second, and third world during the early phases of earths geological development. The ‘holy’ Diné deities that dwelled in the earliest first, second, and third worlds traveled into the next world the fourth world. This new realm was considered partially habitable. The ‘holy’ Diné deities in this transitional period felt the new fourth world needed mountains so Diné can be spiritually be whole as one. Pieces of these sacred mountains were replanted into the fourth world meant for Diné to seek spiritual strength, seek understandings, encouragement, and endurance for the next generation of Diné. Animals that fly, crawl and swim were also brought into this world to give life. It is an oral story about Diné identity I remember elders of mine educating me years ago to help me understand where I’m from. My highlighting these sacred places as the introduction for this exhibition report describing

Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place), is imperative. This worldview helps me understand how to navigate the world today, to connect with fellow Diné and Indigenous relatives throughout North America. Turtle island is the fifth world we live in today.

In sharing this Diné grounding foundation I hope there's a sense of understanding now about how our world is spoken about and acknowledge. I'm sure there are more questions that you may have, but in my study throughout the 2020 academic year, I continue to elaborate more on defining the connections about Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) and how it influenced me as printmaker to think critically for the prints I produced.[1]

Tsé dizéígíí Naashch'aa' (A sand/clay sedimentary rock, picture, likeness, diagram or representation)

Tsé dizéígíí Naashch'aa' translate to English or sand/clay sedimentary rock, picture, likeness, diagram or representation. The translation is as best as I can interpretate how a petroglyph near Diné nation might be defined through Diné language. This example of rock art has collective marks on the sandstone that makes up a collage of messages with different stories, which at one time was of relevance but remains or relevant pathway to the way Indigenous stories are discussed through contemporary and traditional arts today.

When I first committed to the medium printmaking, I thought I was crazy do so because I instantly realized this medium is still fresh for Indigenous printmakers to attempt. Not many Diné practice printmaking today, unlike non-Indigenous printmakers who have their histories to them to support what they print for viewers to read. Where I remember first learning about the

[1] Puente, Tyler, "Horizons," Printmaking, November 2020, Te Manawa Museum, Palmerston North, New Zealand, Massey University College of Creative Arts, MMVA

history of printmaking, it seems that the medium is generally taught to all through a westernized context that avoids informing printmaking majors about the indigenous people's contributions to the medium. Printing resources are not well documented for Diné printmakers to reference back to support images once they're processed through the printing press. I had to determine which art source could be supportive to ground my art research project. I concluded petroglyphs near home might guide me throughout this entire process.

The way I view **Figure 2** is blessed by the unknown Diné ancestor's spirit who continues to protect the markings by his or her creative spirit that has fortunately prevailed against climatic challenges and American colonization.

Figure 2, Glairon.

In figure 2 above the archeological name is "newspaper rock." This visual rock art informs the viewers about who made their presence known in the area before the U.S became a country. The rock art is more than a petroglyph as it is narrated by an unknown ancestor. The time "newspaper rock" was marked the area was home to not just Diné but to other nearby tribes includeding Ute,

Apaches, Zuni, and Hopi. Through oral story, it is said that each of the tribes, including Diné, collectively descended from an earlier Indigenous civilization that inhabited the area known as the Anasazi. Anasazi means the 'ancient people.[2] A perception Diné have about the perished civilization is they felt the Anasazi were like an enemy to their own descendants who were growing separately into identifying their own groups. The Anasazi people disappeared after the descending tribes grew. It is still a mystery amongst Diné and other nearby tribes who question their disappearance. In "newspaper rock", there is what I see references that might indicate how that happened during that time. The markings are a reference to who occupied the region, who was present during the post transition period of the region and marks the transition from the previous civilization to the next occupants of Ute, Apache, Zuni, Hopi and Diné.

The documenter's illustration possibly composes 'holy' Diné deities, animal migrations, interactions between Diné and native animals via hunting, inter-tribal warfare, reactions to the changing seasons, mass migrating journeys, constellation studies and other spiritual encounters from other realms all marked onto a red sandstone wall located in southern Utah, near Diné nation. It is complex seeing all the actions taking place within the visual rock art spanning generations on a temporal. Traditional Indigenous historians today from home align their interpretations with mine as we create conversation about these histories as chapters from the region. This entire petroglyph intellectually marks place as my Diné home.

What the markings mean to me extends from customary visual world views to today, at the end of a timeline we live on. Now that there is self-aware campaign amongst my Diné generation learning more about colonialism and culture assimilation. It seems younger generations are learning to review and reflect times before colonial events by concentrating to search for the

[2] In an oral conversation with my maternal grandma via recollective memory, date not specified late 1990's

positives that's left to learn from and understand what markings really mean like **figure 2**. Where I happen to practice a newer form of art that is printmaking, it is merely coincidence. I notice there is a grey absent space. This coincides with a general worldwide printmaking encyclopedia. Nonindigenous printmakers have well-documented sources to reference and support their printed works. While I too practice printmaking, sources are scarce to find to assist in defining what I printed. **Figure 2** is my guide, a guide for Indigenous printmakers beyond Diné nation. It references local petroglyphs marked by ancestors who created a bold, compelling statement as a visual matrix. Examples like **figure 2** classifies our knowledge to anyone systems and binds, Diné as people who lived in this region before the advent of European invasion and expulsion.

Bá'ólta'í (Person who teaches)

There are more credible North American Indigenous printmakers with integral practices, methods, and influences that I include in this exhibition report. I've learned from exampled prints by Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa. Each make a unique choice in the matrix. They elect to print onto paper that speaks with intuitive undertones. The works that I interpret seem to connect back to their Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) from their respective Indigenous communities. Yazzie, Feddersen and Lomahoftewa have taught me to remain connected to my relations, to the place I was raised at and to keep cultural lessons a part of you and your practice. They instilled in me that I also teach those who view my works.

Melanie Yazzie (Diné)
Printmaker, Sculpture Artist

Left, **figure 3, Yazzie**
Right, **figure 4, Yazzie**

Figure 3 and **4**, both are monotypes printed by Yazzie's whose internal contexts define her lineage to Diné nation. Yazzie's prints speak about her personal journey in an expressive format that honors her Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place). Prior to becoming a full-time printmaker Yazzie's interest in art making began when she was a child.

> "Melanie was instructed by her grandmother that traditional Navajo imagery was inappropriate for use in commercial or secular artwork…" from a very early age there was an idea my artwork had to be created from a different place, and not what most people think a Diné artist would make. I'm not afraid to draw something that looks childlike...It's my own mark making. That's what makes it unique. For me, it contains everything real"[3]

[3] Yazzie, Melanie. "Memory Weaving: Works by Melanie Yazzie." Wheelwright Museum, artist discussion, Date unknown, https://wheelwright.org/exhibitions/memory-weaving/. Accessed November 2020.

It is common for Diné elders to remind younger Diné they may notice practicing arts at an early age, to not commercialize certain aspects of Diné culture into art for personal gain. I was reminded of this when I first began having an interest in the arts in my adolescent years. My paternal grandfather who practiced metal smithing (jewelry), was critical towards my interest. He cautioned me to be conscious with how much Diné culture you apply into an artistic translation. Grandpa George would say, "you'll devalue the intellect behind certain forms or imagery." Where now I think this aligns with what Yazzie's grandmother advised to her prior when becoming a printmaker. Advice such as this is challenging, but it reminds you to be fully mindful for which aspects from the culture you choose to transfer onto a matrix, or what will eventually be inked on paper and presented to viewers. Yazzie does have a similar form of inspiration in her work,

> …her prints take their inspiration from animals, plants, weaving designs and tools and maps. A number of published works are usually often in a silhouette format, representing Yazzie herself. The map component speaks about Diné nation land base and its loss from indigenous people… "it reminds people that we were here before, this was part of our existence and the land is part of who we are".[4]

Her statement resonates for both a traditional and contemporary Diné 'artists who are compelled to refer animals once sacred to Diné. These 'spirit animals' Yazzie references identify Diné connections to these guardians. Plants in floral designs that represent native species such as sunflowers, wild tulips, There are images that are recognizable as Diné artworks. Plant

[4] Yazzie, Melanie. "Memory Weaving: Works by Melanie Yazzie." Wheelwright Museum, artist discussion, Date unknown, https://wheelwright.org/exhibitions/memory-weaving/. Accessed November 2020.

references pertain to certain plants being collected by a traditional botanist, who commit to plant knowledge, not unlike a modern pharmacist. Plant references in art works are commonly replicated in traditional textile weaving designs and basketry. Traditional foods feature including Maize. Diné might consider Maize like the 'tree of life' and as represented under cosmologies. Yazzie thinks back to traditional tools of Dinê when they were instructed to reconfigure the 'holy' deities from traditional creation stories to more common usage to help make life a little easier. The maps Yazzie speaks of sounds more like a current report when she is informing her viewers about land loss due to impacts of American colonialism. I notice these thoughts after self-evaluating every revised print after print throughout my practice. My prints start to look similar to the kind of elements that appear in Yazzie's work, except we have separate practices defined by different experiences and interactions. Putting the cultural elements aside, there is another important statement Yazzie includes in her work. She struggles with Type II diabetes. Numbers appear in her designed works, referring to her daily blood sugar counts, because

> "there's a whole conversation in the numbers that I feel is really important, and when I travel to different places it seems to be a common illness within the Indigenous community and also in the wider community. It helps me connect with people".[5]

Despite reviewing more printed works by Yazzie on google search engine I do see the connection she explains in her works there. Yazzie highlights health all the disparities Indigenous people deal with, particularly Diné people who suffer high rates of diabetes. Diabetes

[5] Yazzie, Melanie. "Memory Weaving: Works by Melanie Yazzie." Wheelwright Museum, artist discussion, Date unknown, https://wheelwright.org/exhibitions/memory-weaving/. Accessed November 2020.

is common health issue beyond Diné nation, to other First nations in North American, which is caused by a number of reasons. The first factor that is social economic inequality. I dislike using the word statistic, but statically half of Diné nation don't have sustainable incomes that impacts on the types of foods to choose while on fixed incomes. Not having enough wages to afford healthy foods. Another cause to Diabetes on Diné nation is health programs tend to be at most time underfunded to support persons experiencing Diabetes. Sometimes Diné also need motivation to respond to health education and wellness for their communities. imited sovereignty in terms of self-management in the health sectors is another never-ending issue that requires considerable action to solve. Yazzie's point about her experience with Diabetes is true and resonates with some of my relatives who are going through the same predicament. Yazzie states,

> "I really believe in the power of making art to tell your story, to empower yourself, and to share and connect with other people".[6]

Presenting our aspect from your personal journey through the medium of printmaking can inform your viewer, your relations, new relations, or other relations about how you view the world. Monotype, a printmaking technique applied in Yazzie's work influenced me to continue experimenting with this and other techniques.

Joe Feddersen (Colville)
Printmaker, Illustrator, Sculptor Artist

Left, **Figure 5** *"Urban Indian Series,"* 2003, Monoprint, 37 x 20 in, Dobkins
Right, **Figure 6** *"Omak Lake 2,"* year unknown, Monoprint, dimension unknown, Feddersen.

[6] Yazzie, Melanie. "Memory Weaving: Works by Melanie Yazzie." Wheelwright Museum, artist discussion, Date unknown, https://wheelwright.org/exhibitions/memory-weaving/. Accessed November 2020.

Joe Feddersen holds a prolong practice that communicates an observance of environmental issues affecting his Indigenous community the Colville nation located in central Washington state. Fedderen relates his origins to the Colville nation via prints featured in **figures 5** & **6**. Via monoprint printing techniques he emphasizes Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) in the works. He does this via prints with geometrical shapes with monoprint techniques. They symbolize his connections to the landscape of his Colville nation. Triangular geometrical shapes reference his home on top of the plateaus that is located in central Washington. While a subliminal form it is also to the way he depicts his home as abused by corporate utility companies. They use tribal land to build dams that produce energy. They are built in slot like canyons situated between the plateaus on Feddersen's country. I still have a visual memory about what the geographical region looks like when I passed through this nation years ago. It is similar

to Diné nation that also is situated on top of a plateau. Feddersen is cautious in the way he interpretates his relations with the land, when using abstraction.

> "Feddersen is careful to not mimic specific designs but rendering them into two dimensional interpretations and refers to his process as working "in first person." He intentionally chooses designs with ambiguity and few directly representational elements and incorporates them into his own work." Dobkins, pg 24.

Figure 5 and **6** both highlight Feddersen's approach to the way he renders the concept of energy and power corporations damaging his local ecology on the Colville nation. It is evident powerlines are representational in this work especially as they look like electrical figures. Feddersen's work addresses how his Colville nation tribal land base cope with the reality, where Colville people and their lands are used to produce energy for everyone else. The impact of energy production has long lasting damaging effects to the ecology where natural fisheries cannot spawn to produce more fish. This prevents current generations from engaging in fishing practices of future Colville descendants from practicing traditional fishing methods in the or nearby rivers. Feddersen acknowledges today's reality.

> "Our landscape is dotted with these high voltage towers. They become part of our existence. Parking lots, everything, becomes part of our land today. I don't know if things become kind of romantic, you look at the landscape and ignore the high voltage towers and the parking lots, but this is where we live, and it is part of our life today." Dobkins, pg 26.

Fedderesen takes the concerns for his nation and country and methodical messages in his monotype prints. These are contemporary work of power that draw on traditional Indigenous work. Feddersen also regards civil engineering as destructive to Colville identity. He does say his work is “in first person” reminding me that practicing printmaking as an Diné person is okay to do, because Indigenous printmakers are like contemporary news informers for the general public. We must rightfully know what’s currently happening in our communities. When I first started printmaking, I struggled with the perception of how Indigenous printmakers might be perceived using this medium because contemporary visual artist today seems to be extra critical towards contemporary Indigenous visual artists who choose art mediums to communicate, from what I notice. Feddersen works connects to his Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place). He understands his creative intents with strong statements that affect. In **Figure 5** and **6** Feddersen message reflect what currently is happening on Diné nation. However, conversely its, Indigenous people’s “reservations,” tribal lands in North America that are used to power everyone else, where Indigenous people themselves don’t benefit much. They suffer ecological, spiritual and cultural identity damage.

Linda Lomahoftewa (Hopi/Choctaw)
Painter, Printmaker Artist

Figure 7, “*Remembering our ancestors.”* Year unknown, acrylic, monoprint, collage on canvas, dimensions unknown, Lomahoftewa.

Figure 7, Lomahoftewa.

Figure 7 "Remembering our ancestors" is complete with subtle references to Lomahoftewa's Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) to her Hopi and Choctaw peoples. I was fortunate to be one of the many pupils of Lomahoftewa's a few years ago. To listen to her many lectures, stories, and art demonstrations, she also generously taught me and my fellow piers how to translate your cultures into art consciously.

Figure 7's is Lomahoftewa's personal homage where she refers to her paternal Hopi lineage and her maternal Choctaw lineage in a multi-media fashion. Both photographic portraits on each side of the cavass is of her father to the left and her mother to the right. This was probably tinted in place with a UV burner. Her dad was a major influence in Lomahoftewa's life because he taught her about the Hopi heritage and language. Her mom too was a major influence that taught her about Choctaw heritage and language. I do recall a few times hearing stories how her life revolved around planting traditional heirloom maize crops on her Hopi nation in northern Arizona. Participating in ceremonial dances that commemorates crop harvestings and the equinoxes. One of the organic elements in **figure 7** is a painted green maize stock that looks like it's bowing below the morning sunrise in **figure 7**. In Lomahoftewa's Hopi culture the sun is of

importance to her people as the sun god provides the earth people with warmth with sunrays to grow and sun filled days to harvest food.

The sun in the work is depicted as rising over one of the many mesas where the Hopi nation currently lives upon. Hopi mesas are places of safe haven from neighboring tribes who engaged in inter-tribal warfare, similarly when the Diné and Spanish invaders fought overpower and land bases. Hopi built their Puebloan villages on top of these mesas. Hopi also believed they were closer to their creator. Lomahoftewa does imply this in **figure 7** where her connection to the element water is printed using a monotype technique to represent ancestral petroglyphic graphics. The white and yellow patterns is also a symbolic connection to her Hopi people. They have a sacred and spiritual connection to the one of the only water springs that flows near one of the villages. This water sustains life for their seasonal Maize crops and for all lives to live well.

Figure 7 contains the cultured intellect of her people. Lomahoftewa, shares her heritage within this multi-medium work that is about the identity and what it means individually and collectively. **Figure 7** supports how I want to print a piece of my story for a viewer who may want to learn about Diné culture. I'm thinking back to Yazzie and Feddersen earlier who both implied that we need to be conscious when deciding which elements, we use when using certain cultural imagery and symbolism when printmaking.

Conclusion

There are *similar* marked elements in each **figure 3, 4, 5, 6** & **7** printed with the same monotype technique applied by Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa to their individual works. **Figure 3**, **4**, **6**, and **7** visibly makes it known each have a corresponding message that possibly is influenced by the nearest petroglyphs marked by their early ancestors closest to each printmaker's home.

Prints printed today respond to issues that recently or is currently taking place in Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa's Indigenous community. Yazzie's Petroglyphic element in her prints reports about the health and wellness in her Diné communities. Feddersen's Petroglyphic element in his prints reports about the ecological damage caused by power and utility companies effecting his Colville nation. Lomahoftewa's Petroglyphic element in her prints presents a connection to her lineage, her identity, and the element water that gives her Hopi community life. Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa are referring to Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) in **figure 3**, **4**, **6**, and **7**.

The lesson from each of the printmakers is to always be mindful not to replicate certain patterns or symbols that may be considered culturally restricted. Now with their visual printmaking in mind I can interpret their medium without stepping on or trampling protocol can continue to respect older art forms of Indigenous expression.

The final press prints, not "digital prints"

Devising this part of the printing process was based on a growing self-assurance I could have in my approaches printed another concept but based on the feedback provided to me throughout the last two years, from the original ideas I first had in mind to a fresher more grounded idea. The feedback provided to me by a few peers and professors is what brought the print images. I used multiple printing techniques creating a range of matrixes. Using Perspex, MDF, Lineo, and maize husk to print a story about who I am as a Diné. Defining this notion is a delicate concept. I figured why not reference what Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa printed with their artistic articulations? But I had to be bold and define my own printed articulation about place in Diné culture according to my experience and overview of my work.

Materials

Italian tie polo paper, akua ink, speedball soft rubber rollers, Perspex's, MDF boards, lineo, and Maize husk.

I test printed with various types of high and low volumes of GSM papers and felt satisfied with the Italian tie polo paper. It proved to be most satisfying. I'm not Italian but the paper is quality! The tie polo has a GSM at 290 that is sturdy enough to withstand the multiple press punches. Lower GSM paper proved to be unsuccessful that either tore or produced poor image quality, after rolling the paper through the press. Searching for the right ink to roll onto the matrix was tedious. To print good quality prints, I found Akua ink. This solved the ink issue I had gone through earlier with Schmidts german ink. I find that product would dry quickly during the printing trial. I find speed ball soft rubber brayer's, grasp the ink well enough to evenly coat a matrix to produce clear print images. Compared to the other hard brayers I practiced with earlier in the process, they ended up smearing ink in areas I didn't intend to do that printed uneven sections. There was plenty of scrap Perspex, MDF and Lineo I decided to put to use too. The Maize husk was mailed to me from home.

Figure 8, *"Horizons,"* 2020, Printmaking, monotype, ink on Lineo, MDF, Perspex (dry point), 840 mm (L) x 470 mm (W)
Figure 9, *"Hozhó,"* 2020, Printmaking, ink on MDF, 840 mm (L) x 470 mm (W)
Figure 10, *"Maternal warmth,"* 2020, Printmaking, monotype, ink on maize husk, lineo, Perspex (dry point), MDF, 840 mm (L) x 470 mm (W)
Figure 11, *"Summer,"* 2020, Printmaking, monotype, ink on maize husk, Perspex (dry point), MDF, 840 mm (L) x 470 mm (W)

Figure 8

Figure 8 Some viewers, or critics might perceive the print as romanticizing the past, printing a cliché about a North American indigenous people. I felt that it was best to compose the three applications together that is MDF for the sun, Perspex for the Diné woman carrying her infant in a cradleboard backpack, followed by her children and a horse that was at the time the only form of transportation to get from point a to point b. I pressed printed lineo blocks to depict a horizon line on Diné nation in northern Arizona. It is a personal homage to my maternal and paternal grandparents who had to endure and adapt to colonialism in the American southwest. Diné elder's usually share their perspectives with younger Diné generations. My elders I remember would share their experiences from their era. This is considered like an oral story treasure that is meant to influence children to learn to make amends with the different times. Hence, elders usually know what younger persons will go through in life before we know it ourselves. Sharing subliminal advice is to prepare the next generation for the challenge of life that lie ahead in time.

Oral stories amongst Diné peoples and Indigenous peoples I notice today are ever evolving usually vasiations are edited by the next generation who adds contextual value, in order to understand new or the broader pictures. It is that reference about oral story I intentionally made

to look like for the Lineo Horizon striped lined application. I under layered the Perspex plate with the Diné mother and children. In **figure 8**. The intention for this juxtaposition was supposed to coincide as if the Diné ancestors are walking forward on their journeys. Carrying nonmaterialist items, they carry Diné knowledge walking on their own imaginary timeline, waiting patiently to pass intellect cultural knowledge to the generation. At the time I depicted my Diné ancestors was challenging compared to my experiences today. I thought about every phase my great great grandparents lived through. Their knowledge and spirits for tomorrow kept them sane, unlike today where we live in a sophisticated technological age that is supposed to make life easier. I believe it was easier then compared to the challenges of over materialistic consumption today.

Figure 8, *"Horizon"* is the final revised multi-matrix print that is a reflection upon a time I never lived in. I like newer generations sought education to learn the histories from the past. Thanks to cultural academics who record and devote their entire life servicing and educating all. I empathize more and more when I have to read about my Diné culture in readings or visual arts. The thought of reflecting on how my great grandparents had to go through prior to colonization. I think it is their unnamed generation before the boomer generation who had difficulties witnessing their children being removed by church and american authorities to be assimilated into boarding schools. The challenge now with my printmaking practice is to not take Diné language for granted. My Indigenous generation is probably the last with access to fluent speakers, who have survived every form of colonialism and are hanging by a thread. Of my cousins and extended relatives of neighboring tribes don't realize our own power of self-determination, we shall be lost. The *"Horizon"* print speaks to and beyond my reasons for printing this, as it is meant to provoke a viewer with whoever they are. Indigenous or non-

Indigenous must self-question our places today and be open to continuing a dialogue to build our own bridge in any way, shape or form. The arts is a critical vehicle to achieve these bridges.

Figure 9

Before I moved here to Palmerston North to be a part of this academic program I was briefly interned as a social worker on Diné nation during my gap years from 2017 to 2018 after concluding undergrad. I placed myself in a social worker's position to grasp a clear sense of who my people are and how they perceive the world and to understand my place in the world. The energy I committed, clocking in my time sheets and wearing down my health a little was worth being in service for my people. Social work made me aware of the levels of Indigenous privilege that exist throughout all Indigenous communities. I began to understand clearly the causes are social economic inequalities, whether health inequalities; Education inequalities, of U.S government relations with Diné nation. During this time, I took a step back to work and opted to work with adolescent youth. I noticed that adolescent youth seemed to be overlooked when it came to health and wellness. Visits with my relatives (I don't want say patients because it makes them feel like they are someone else) was to make sure their needs were being met. I made sure they had access to eating sufficient meals, made sure they were attending school, and encouraged my young relatives to think what they want to do or be in life. I noticed that Diné philosophy, Hozhó was absent in their life. I made sure my young relatives knew where they came from. I appealed to them to know their history and understand the meaning Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place). I don't think I'll ever rate my work ethic because I don't believe in statistics, but I do hope my commitment then made a little difference when emphasizing Hozhó for Diné adolescents.

What does *"Hozhó"* mean in Diné language? The 'English' translation means peace, balance, beauty and harmony. It is a saying, a philosophy usually taught to the youngest Diné to live by these core concepts as young people navigate life. **Figure 9** is what this means. A philosophical concept crucial for Diné, particularly my generation to learn to live by this teaching. Diné

millennials today, seem to be taking advantage of certain life teachings taught to us when we were younger raised partly by elders of ours. I notice half of my cousins tend to not want to be interested in cultural teachings. Sometimes it is aggravating to hear their denial about the teachings our grandparents would story to each of us when we talk every now and then about memories with them. Fast forward time now they are much older and no longer kids. I notice the last time I saw cousins of mine together. They seemed to have more of an interest in Diné culture than before. Probably because they are realizing the realities of what American history has done to colonize our people. Personally, I lived through a phase like this years ago during my adolescent years, where I was denying my culture until one day I thought back to my grandparents 'Hozhó' teaching. I was going through a tough time. I lost friends who died at a young age. I didn't really know what to do next. Felt helpless. What personally got me to reconcile through those tough times was carrying forward the meaning peace, balance, beauty and harmony for the remainder of life. Hozhó's not associated with a 'western religion' period. That saying kept myself together to walk with balance. Today there are plenty of young Indigenous peoples beyond my Diné nation experiencing tough times. For reasons we ourselves might not understand. It does irk me when somebody young goes through these phases and I know there are solutions to solving mental health. It starts with accepting your own Hozhó, however one might define the meaning.

Now that you have an understanding what the concept Hozhó is for. I gestured the meaning and into my concept for Hozhó into print form for **figure 9**. It has special meaning to me to share with you using printmaking methods to express extra details within the print. I craved for numerous Diné figures with their detailed expressions of uncertainty as they walk through a

winding path from one horizon point to another horizon. The impression I marked on the MDF matrix is meant to give a sense of movement when you gaze into the print.

The figures wearing textile robes in **figure 9** have no symbolic meaning. I carved the textile robes as an abstract expression to prevent the MDF matrix from looking too flat. I do however commemorate elderly Diné woman who practice textile weaving where they apply symbolic meanings that reference the oral creation and emergence stories. They in a way are visually indicating traditional practices. My maternal grandmother like many Diné textile weavers, wove oral stories her mother passed on to her by reapplying details from those stories into visual works. I only have memories when I witnessed my grandmother sitting in front of her loom weaving each strand of organic dyed wool to expandi her woven image. That detail of the textile robes worn by the Diné figures is my interpretation in **Figure 9**. Textile robes, blankets, are usually given as gifts that are meant to hung in your home to give the new owners a sense of Hozhó, as embedded with the gifted textile.

Figure 10

Prior to printing figure 10's "*Maternal warmth,*" there was an idea where I wanted to provoke a certain categoric viewer to self-determine who carried them before emerging into the world. **Figure 10** is directed to the guys from my generation. There I said it. I intended to print a depiction of a ghostly miraged Diné mother standing there in the center of the print gazing towards the sun while carrying her infant child, in a traditional cradleboard backpack. The dialogue that I'm learning towards is explaining that **figure 10** is discussing stereotypes Indigenous woman face that I've come to learn since the start of my life. For starters I would

always hear the younger woman in my family weirdly comment the guys 'have it easier in life' in our own conversation. I never understood what they meant then compared to thinking back to their statements. Fast forwarding the time to now. Statements like those from the younger woman in my family is a reminder of their realities that clarifies they as Diné woman don't possess certain privileges like what the guys have.

Diné woman like all Indigenous woman are born into the world to be judge because of the way western culture has portrayed my grandmothers, mother, sisters, cousins and nieces to be viewed a certain way. Due to film, music, and cowboy culture romanticization Diné and Indigenous culture at large. To the side, I became aware of these stigmas Diné woman deal with being viewed as single mother's, having children at a young age, hearing discrimination stories they encounter off the reservation, experiencing high rates of domestic violence, etc. These types of stigmas shouldn't be normalized where it can shape their identities without knowing it. Personally, I'm protective over the woman in my family. I always make sure to check on their whereabouts and safety's even if I'm far away. Because I benefit from their "*Maternal warmth*.".

Figure 10's undertone can be a brief reminder for the Indigenous fellas to look after the woman in their families. Diné nation is known to be a matriarchal society. Much different to American society. Woman are valued more than man because in the culture they are carriers for the next generation of Diné. If you re-examine **figure 10,** you'll notice another detail aspect where the Diné woman is carrying her infant in a cradleboard. These cradleboards are like the mainstream baby carriers that are used today. An oral story I remember both my maternal and paternal grandfathers would tell us guys about parenthood from back in the day that if a Diné couple were expecting a child. The father to be would be instructed to travel to the nearest forest near their

home to search for pine timber to build a cradleboard to prepare for the child's arrival. They would also say to build arched panel over the infant's head to give the child protection. The arched panel is a reference to a rainbow. My grandpa George or Enrique would say to pick the tallest pine tree you can find. So, the child can stand tall and quickly construct your cradleboard carrier while the pine is still fresh. Otherwise, if the pine timber dries faster before you complete making the cradleboard, you'll age faster. A taboo joke they would say. I thought about this story as I was marking the Perspex matrix. I do miss my grandfather's humor.

I want to write more so bear with me. The Maize husk application is a gesture to spiritual wellbeing. Heirloom Maize is one of the last few traditional foods still grown today and it is usually consumed for celebratory purposes that is served as a soup, a dumpling, bread or a sweetened cake. The husk in **figure 10** is meant to resemble a wrap signifying comfort for Diné woman and her infant with safety and nourishment. The Diné word for Maize is *naadáá'*.

The Diné woman standing centered in **figure 10** is my depiction of her gazing towards the sun while her infant stares back to the viewer. The juxtaposition for both the mother and infant backs against each other is my saying they're looking out of each other during the course of their lives. In the print as the mother is walking forward to her unknown destination. The child is her second set of eyes looking the opposite direction.

The darker application layered under the figure's is a stylization I carved with lineo to look like the landscape. You can see the application's position is printed below the sun. Where I want to give the viewer a sense of a feeling like there standing there with mother. The landscape application has no direct connection to a textile or pattern. The carved lineo is based on the many memories I remember spending at my maternal grandparent's family ranch. Their home is

surrounded by multiple 300-meter stone butte formations. When I was child. Several cousins and I would ride our horses together roaming the open plains to find which of these buttes is ridable the top with our horses. When my cousins and I would reach the buttes high platform. We would always be in awe with the 360-degree views. My favorite time to go on trek's like these is on a summer evening to watch the sunset fall below the mountain to the west near the Grand Canyon. It's my personal reflection spot to heal. My safe haven. This is a part of my definition for the landscape application that is also in the background in **figure 1** at the start of this exhibition report. To give you a visual about the place where I was partly raised at. Located east of Flagstaff, Arizona on the western side on Diné nation.

Figure 11

Printing **figure 11** titled *"Sumner"* is a reference back to the concept of Ké (Clans, Kinship, Connection to place) I wrote of earlier in this exhibition report. In **figure 11** Ké is spoken in the form of the Diné figures who are shown in the image walking forward on the same path towards the suns Horizon. The figures are embarking on a pilgrimage search of places to settle.

For **figure 11** also references a real place in the United States known as Fort Sumner located in New Mexico. This place was a dark chapter that contributed to American colonialism but not readily mentioned in history textbooks today. Fort Sumner was a concentration camp that held thousands of not just Diné but Apaches too. During the mid 1800's Diné ancestors at the time were rounded up like cattle and forcibly removed from their homelands in northern Arizona by the American army. They were forced to walk hundreds of miles across New Mexico to a Fort outpost near Texas. Learning about this time is disheartening. But from my understanding this

was a conflicting era for Diné's who were experiencing colonial expansion as it was progressing moving from the east to the west coast of the united states. Because Diné knew nowhere else was home other than the current place at the time where they lived. The American government ordered the Diné nation to move to the fort because from their view they said there was no treaty ratified or any other documented stating the area belong to Diné ancestors at the time. There was no interpreter who could explain to Diné leadership at the time to speak on behalf of the people to clearly say what was going on during the removal process.

The long walk to Fort Sumner killed hundreds of Diné due to snow blizzards, exposed to diseases army soldiers brought, and starvation. Elderly were the unfortunate ones. After the remaining number of Diné that made it to camp. They were held against their will there for nearly five years. From 1863 to 1868. During this time. Diné lived in unsanitary conditions. The arid soil was harsh to grow traditional foods they were used to eating. So, their diets changed drastically and had to adjust to eating what the army soldiers ate. Which was refined processed foods. A food commodity army soldiers gave to Diné captives was white flour. This food substance was a completely foreign to Diné's where they weren't sure how to cook the highly processed flour. This wasn't the only food commodity introduced to Diné. Alcohol, unhealthy oil, canned processed meat, etc is in theory, the start of health disparities amongst Diné and Indigenous communities today. Eaten as frybread. Consuming
canned processed meats, oil starchy foods.

Towards the final year of living at Fort Sumner, the Diné nation had no choice but to sign the treaty of 1868 on June 1st of that year. In signing that treaty, Diné agreed to cease war against the U.S and its colonies who had moved westward through New Mexico towards California.

Agreements for the treaty between Diné nation and the U.S government started a more consolidated colonial era. The first article is the Diné had to agree to, was to send their children to boarding schools to be educated. This was the start of children having their culture and identity systematically removed while at these boarding school institutions. The second article required Diné who didn't hunt on occupied treaty land on their territories to give their hunting rights up to hunters of their colonies, which still pains Diné today. The articles of the treaty also suggested Diné to agree to construction of future railroads to transport goods and people. They were asked not to attack settlers traveling in wagons belonging to the people of the United States. Kappler, pg. 1016. I recall learning about these treaty articles that defines the treaty of 1868 from my high school Diné studies teacher Delores Gishey, I still can recite it ten years later via memory.

Diné Chief Manuelito was one of signees who was forced to agree with President Andrew Johnson to the terms. He marked his signature in the form of an X. If Chief Manuelito didn't sign the treaty, all Diné would have died. Once this was done the U.S government granted Diné and Apache peoples a permanent home restoring their rights to their lands. This is the underlying meaning of my work *"Sumner,"* narrating what Diné people from within the United States had to endure. When the remaining Diné were set free, they walked a far distance back to Dinétah. The figures in **figure 11** are of Diné wearing their cloaked textiles walking westward towards the Horizon line guided by the sun, which directed/ them back home to Dinétah. It is a story that both my great maternal and paternal grandparents had to live through as children, amongst their parents and relatives. It is an intergenerational family story that impact on my world today.

When I think about my place as a Diné descendant, I feel as if I'm standing behind everyone else when I look into **figure 11**. I want the viewer to look and understand the print and understand what Indigenous place means today for contemporary generations of Diné. There are so many similarities with the Māori colonialization experience, and this my visual response to my Diné experience.

Figure 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (Yazzie, Feddersen & Lomahoftewa) vs. Figure 8, 9, 10 & 11 (Puente)

Now that I completed the printing project, I feel there is still plenty left to do. I have improved certain techniques to my press prints, but I don't see my works as comparable to the works of other printmaking luminaries like Yazzie, Feddersen and Lomahoftewa. I have thought about their journeys as Indigenous printmakers. The more I read about who they are and where they are from and what they stand for, I find their stories are no different to mine. Each of our communities have dealt with the same issues that affect our homelands and our peoples. My experience in the United States and my time in Aotearoa has helped break learning barriers and created bonds through shared cross Indigenous visual arts. In this way the artist who upholds a level of ingenuity provokes another student to reach their level of ingenuity. Printmakers need to start from somewhere. I admire the many reasons why Yazzie, Feddersen and Lomahoftewa committed to the medium. It made me understand their messages, their meanings and intents to finished prints. Each provoked a reaction in me to respond to their visual representations not only as a viewer but as an emerging Diné artist. A printmaker.

The difference between what I printed supported from the art references I selected is that the matrixes are similar but not the same. I opted to combine multiple matrixes to print and present them as the final works for the exhibition. While the three printmaking art sources I referenced

are known for their forte in monotype. I also note that they made decisive choices when applying layers over another layer as evident in **figures 8, 9, 10** & **11**. The selection of ink, it's transparency or opaqueness also reflects how each of them defined their objects to be, as in life. I'm sure the printmakers I cited go through similar trial and errors when developing their prints too. I started getting into the groove with my printing practice to create prints, through a process trial and error. After countless revisions, after revisions I slowly began to shape my image layer upon layer.

Despite not having a printmaking mentor near me to provide me with advice, I found I had to learn on my own to improve techniques I already made. The outcome of what I pressed demonstrate the improvements I made with the limited resources I had. Printmaking is not like other mediums where you paint over what you already painted. Or re-shoot a photograph to how you want your photo to look like. Printmaking is a complex medium. If you don't design, plan or decide which materials are right to print with, then the paper, ink or matrixes won't print well. You must have a plan, proceed forward. An unplanned printing project will otherwise, be difficult. I find that researching more about which materials you may work with is crucial in order to determine the best print outcome. Otherwise, you'll create more unintended errors that may not align with your matrix design. This happened to me plenty of times as mentioned, the whole printmaking process is about trial and error and learning. Pre-planning a printing plan that can guide when printing a work. This is key to a successful practice. The process made me think about why my art sources Yazzie, Feddersen, and Lomahoftewa choose simple monotype techniques to print with. Unlike my multi-matrix techniques. I know I combined them as best I could to create a single print, I was then happy with.

Indigenous printmaking beyond today

For future Indigenous art students who favor printmaking, I want to say it's okay to give this medium a try and to welcome it as a major learning and improvement process. Printmaking, backed by Indigenous knowledge and experience shared in this report makes your mind think of ways to better articulate connections to your home, to your people, and how to story your place in the world. The one petroglyph I briefly wrote earlier is just one example that helped me understand how my ancestors marked their stories and their hopes, theoretically, spiritually and visually. My time throughout the study brought to attention how Indigenous nations in the United States might possess limited 'rock art' sources to support a printmakers journey. However, if you feel like there's not much to cite, say and do otherwise. Continue to enrich the palette with your Indigenous intelligence, your creative potential to continue printing more stories for your people to last another millennium.

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