To the First White Woman Here: Performance Intervention in Settler Colonial Narrative & Speculative Modes of Repair

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TO THE FIRST WHITE WOMAN HERE: PERFORMANCE INTERVENTION
IN SETTLER COLONIAL NARRATIVE & SPECULATIVE
MODES OF REPAIR

By

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B.A. Vassar College, 2001

A THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Fine Arts
(in Intermedia)

The Graduate School
The University of Maine
August 2022

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With this paper, I map a proposal for performance as a practice of recognition and repair, specifically following an inquiry toward “performance as rematriative practice” from within settler colonial perspective. Rematriation is a term emphasized by many Indigenous communities as a set of practices that focus on long-term repair of relationships between people and places, and specifically on restoring access to stewardship roles for Indigenous people in care relationships with their ancestral territories. How might settler performance support and uphold these efforts by intervening in settler colonial narratives? I center my inquiry to follow the leadership of Indigenous thinkers and makers, placing my own performance practice in conversation with the works of Native artists who are addressing Indigenous sovereignty, cultural continuance, healing, and futurities through performance. Positioning my thesis performance work, *To The First White Woman Here*, as an offering in dialogue with the works of Rebecca Belmore, Ursula Johnson, and Emily Johnson, I hope to complicate the gaze of the settler artist-scholar in witnessing, and writing about, Indigenous performance art.
As I consider performance-based interventions in settler story, I foreground the narrative element of cultural origins and their particular employment in the world-making myths of the colonial project in New England. I ground this consideration in Jean O’Brien’s articulations of “firsting”, in which settlers construct histories that reinforce our desires to replace Indigenous people within the places we colonize. Looking at performances of white settler womanhood as they manifest in public spaces, I investigate “pioneer mother monuments” as a site of intervention in settler colonial narrative. I seek to disrupt internalized ideas about white settler women’s identities as “brave”, “strong”, “pure and loving” “bearers of civilization”, while acknowledging the very real implications of these romanticized depictions.

I close with an orientation toward futurities, again following Indigenous thinkers and makers, now into practices of speculation. Asking how the works I make might function as reparative acts requires a commitment to the idea that other worlds, and specifically decolonial worlds, are possible. Kyle Whyte reminds me that the world we currently share is a manifestation of the speculative future world dreaming of my colonial ancestors. I am called to consider the consequences of dreaming from settler perspective and my personal responsibilities in thought, action, and speech. Part of my responsibility must be to center Indigenous guidance within practices of performance intervention and speculations of futureworld visioning.
DEDICATION

To the Wabanaki places that have held me since my birth, to the Wabanaki people who have guided me through lands, waters, and worldviews. To the more-than-human beings who share space and place with me across generations and time, to my family and my ancestors. To Susan and Polly and Frances and Dora, to Janie Prudence and her mothers, to my mother. To Judith. To my father and to Edna, to my children. To the places of my own ancestral memory: to the moors, the granite, the salt water and the sacred wells, to Kernow and Ériu and Sachsen.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this thesis is located in learning relationships with teachers, collaborators, and co-creators. I extend my gratitude to *many* Wabanaki places, to punawóhpskewtakʷ, and to my thesis committee: Susan Smith, Darren Ranco, and Libby Bischof. In overlapping gratitudes, a particular thank you to Darren for the many ways you have robustly supported my creative practice and my academic journey with humor, clarity, and grace. For all the ways our learning together in cross-cultural creative collaboration has shaped this thesis work and the evolution of my practice, my gratitude to the In Kinship Collaborative: Cory Tamler, Lilah Akins, Tyler Rai, Devon Kelley-Yurdin, Emilia Dahlin, and Darren Ranco. For consistent aesthetic and intellectual support, and for creating this hybridized academic space of creative production and scholarship, I thank Intermedia faculty Owen Smith, Susan Smith, and Sheridan Adams. For your rigorous teaching in the context of friendship: Sherri Mitchell, René Goddess Johnson, Jennifer Neptune, James Eric Francis, Sr., and John Bear Mitchell. For sharing open creative dialogue and for driving all the way to Portland to document my thesis performance, thank you, Siobhan Landry! For your continuous and unwavering support of my creative efforts and intellectual pursuits and for your love, thank you to my family: Wade, Simon, Teddy, my mother and my father. And for making the idea of a modular faux-granite pedestal possible, thank you to my brother Michael Hahn and to Marco Bonometti.

Thank you. Wliwin. Meur ras.
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When embodied, a relationship to land is a relationship that moves into knowledge and felt understanding of what stories, histories, bones, blood, roots, toxins, and nourishment that land holds - often rapturous. It is our position that to bypass this process of pain and acknowledgement only leads to the kind of “taking from” or extractive form of relations to land that has become prevalent and disastrous.¹

panawahpskewtaq” (Penobscot River)²

In 2015 I set a creative intention to get to know the Penobscot River, with a curiosity toward understanding the many stories that the river carries, as well as the relationships of mutual care and dependence that sustain both the Penobscot ecosystem and the humans that live within it. I entered this intention as a civic performance artist, with a practice of building cross-sector partnerships that utilize performance-based paradigms to communicate community perspectives both within and outside of community: to tell stories. I had experience working cross-culturally in these contexts and had focused my independently produced community-based theater projects on human relationships to place. Prior to 2015, I had worked most consistently with agriculture and farming communities in Maine.

I am a white-identifying settler colonizer with fourteen generations of ancestral entanglement in the colonial stories of Wabanaki territory. My experience of relationship with place is rooted in the continuous and ongoing occupation of two Wabanaki watersheds by members of both sides of my family from 1640 and 1740 respectively. Mythologies of origin both permeate and predetermine my modes of attachment, which are defined by frameworks of claim and supremacy. However, the construct of colonialism is not impermeable. Some

¹ Recollet and Johnson, “Kin-Dling and Other Radical Relationalities,” 22.
² “Penobscot Dictionary | Penobscot-Dictionary.”
recognition of reciprocity in relationship with place planted itself early in my consciousness: in my stories of myself, this has always been true. This is a truth I carry despite predominantly knowing the warped and corrupted care mechanisms of colonial patriarchy with which to express my love for environment.

The truth is too: all of my family know and practice love for this place. I have been taught love of place and a practical, not theoretical, commitment to community by my parents, my grandparents, my aunt, her grandmothers, and my no-longer-living ancestors. To obscure this aspect of my experience would be to claim an individualism and difference from family and my origins that I do not wish to claim. I name this not as a justification, nor out of a need for recognition, but because the heart of my inquiry needs to see the complexities of how we show up, particularly as settlers, in efforts toward better relational care, and in cross-cultural reciprocities. The fact of my meaningful attachments with living family and my gratitudes for the ways they have taught me to know the rivers, marshes, granite ledges, salt bays, and mountains of Wabanaki territory is intimately entwined with my effort to look critically at my colonial stories while seeking greater connection with the ancestors we’ve lost track of and the places we once knew as ourselves. The question emerges: what is this “love” that we feel for place, and what does it enact? Among the enactments of our love, certainly, are a continuation of territorial theft, expressions of care that serve primarily ourselves, and perceived entitlements to recreation and leisure activities within places of cultural and subsistence import to Indigenous people.

To introduce myself, and to name the ways in which I am situated in Wabanaki territory, in artistic practice, and in the project of this paper, I orient toward the Penobscot River, panawáhpskwetokw, and the intention that I set to seek collaboration with this river in 2015. The questions that I began to ask, and the people I began to know at that time led me to a profound
shift in understanding Wabanaki territories and my relationship with them. They also distinctly shifted the form of my creative practice, and they represent one beginning, one experiential structure underpinning my inquiry into colonial narratives and public performance practice. I spent a year visiting with the river every few weeks, holding the question of how to practically consider the river a partner in the work I wanted to make. I would sit in silence, listen, and observe. I began to create a calligraphy, a gestural and visual vocabulary with which to converse with the river. From this foundation of partnership development, this river led me toward the relationships I needed to find, and the voices I needed to follow, in order to crack open my settler colonial assumptions and begin to practice being with river and place in ways that center Wabanaki stewardship and sovereignty.

In beginning to learn about the Penobscot River Watershed and how I am situated in relationship with this waterway, I encountered for the first time the languages of *repair* and *restoration*. Learning from Penobscot community leaders and from fisheries biologists the need for a restoration of ecological and human relationships on many levels, I was eager to move into collaborations that could actively manifest forms of repair. I will clarify that by “repair” I do not mean that I expect to “fix” the problem of settler colonialism and my centuries of implication within it. I do not mean “make okay”. I refer to complex processes of healing that center Indigenous people and more-than-human beings; Donna Haraway offers the language: “recuperation”. Yet in settler colonial contexts, repair of any kind is not possible without recognition. A commitment to seeing the extent of harms caused by ongoing colonization, understanding the simple fact that colonization is an ongoing process, and recognizing how we (settlers) benefit and what we lose through our continued investment in colonial processes, are

prerequisites to meaningful repair efforts. The body of performance-as-research that I have called *First White Woman* is oriented to enact interruptions in the colonial narratives that obscure and prevent recognition.

For many settler people and within settler-led organizations and political processes, recognition, if there is any at all, is generally both profoundly inadequate and re-inscriptive of colonial power dynamics. Glen Coulthard, in dialogue with the works of Frantz Fanon, powerfully critiques liberal settler politics of recognition that employ a “conciliatory set of discourses and institutional practices” in the maintenance of settler-state domination and the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous land and sovereignty. These practices replace more explicit forms of state genocide that have relied on exclusion and assimilation policies.⁴ Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argue for a refusal of settler state politics of recognition in which Indigenous people, and their rights, are defined by settler people and policies and by colonial power. Simpson positions an effective resistance to the many colonial forces that attempt to enact Indigenous disappearance in practices of cultural resurgence that are led from within Indigenous communities.⁵ In this re-positioning, use of the word “recognition” reclaims and mobilizes the cultural practices and worldviews of Indigenous people, reorienting toward reciprocal relationships and authentic mutual understanding among people and places. In my own use of the word “recognition”, I am caught between: I use the word in pursuit of a more truthful way of seeing, a reckoning from settler perspective. Yet in practicing recognition from settler positioning, I activate settler agency and so am caught up in a perpetual turning toward my own legitimacy. I posit that settler recognitions must be situated in dynamic, ongoing

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processes of relationship with people, places, and self. I seek to practice forms of settler recognition that follow Indigenous leadership and respect Indigenous sovereignty; these are practices of listening, questioning, and struggling to see that never resolve, never settle. I seek practices of recognition that deflate and delegitimize my living and erroneous claim to Native places, a recognition that refuses to fortify the settler-colonial justification apparatus.

Wabanaki Guidance

As I contextualize my thesis performance work inside frameworks of Indigenous guidance, I begin by recognizing Wabanaki artists and scholars. These are the teachers whose works in the world have most directly shaped my approaches, through personal relationship development and mutual investment, through practical experiences, commitments to ongoing dialogue, and repetition of encounter. They are stewards of the places I am in deepest relationship with; they bolster and further the central commitments of my practice.

Positioning myself within frameworks of Wabanaki guiding in both embodied and conceptual ways is a practice that is rooted directly in collaboration and learning with Darren Ranco, Ph.D (Penobscot). Darren brought the framework of Wabanaki guiding to my practice as an organizing principle in the context of collaborative work with the Penobscot River Watershed and the project In Kinship. In the context of this project, we have articulated guiding as “a point of contact and exchange; Native guiding in particular is an exchange between Indigenous and settler colonial peoples, simultaneously cultural and economic. Records of such guided trips (such as, famously, Henry David Thoreau's trips guided by Joseph Polis and other Wabanaki guides as recorded in The Maine Woods) are rich and complicated historical documents that
record Indigenous histories alongside settler colonial histories.” 6 We read these archival materials both with and against the grain while following and enacting embodied guiding practices with Wabanaki guides and the Penobscot River.

The Wabanaki tradition of guiding settler people through Indigenous landscapes, waterways, and cultural knowledges is both an ongoing practice and a framework for cross-cultural relationship that is regularly enacted and contextualized for settler audiences by James Eric Francis, Sr. and the Penobscot Nation Cultural & Historic Preservation Department. James intricately weaves historical and contemporary experiences of guiding practice with Penobscot place-names, navigation practices, and story to reframe settler misconceptions of Wabanaki presence, and expand our understanding of Penobscot cultural and environmental knowledges7. The framework of guiding engenders a non-negotiable centering of Wabanaki worldview in cross-cultural collaboration. It also facilitates an orientation of settler understanding toward practices of relation, contingent on Wabanaki knowledges, that have existed throughout the colonial history of Wabanaki/Maine. In the co-creative methodologies of In Kinship, a guiding framework facilitates conditions of collaboration that reposition the power dynamics of settler colonialism, grounding collaborative practices in the understanding that decolonization is not settler-led work, but that settlers must be part of that work. In this cross-cultural exchange, what gets translated, to the extent that translation is possible, is co-determined through mutual inquiry but with safeguards and parameters set by Wabanaki guides.

6. In Kinship Collective, “We Are Situated.”
Darren’s robust support of my creative practice, through collaborative partnership and teaching, ongoing encouragement, humor and sharp observation, has profoundly influenced the evolution of my inquiry and the ways that I endeavor to participate in the care of place and community. Darren has guided many aspects of my practice, particularly in the realms of language, cross-cultural translation, and conceptual framing. Much of the language I employ to describe my practice and my intentions has origins in ongoing dialogue with Darren: the language of speaking from within one’s own situated perspective, of understanding place as archive (repository of knowledge), of scaling Indigenous-led dialogues with land-based organizations, of returning to sites of collective memory, of carving pathways of story … all act
as waypoints on a map of conceptual geography as I move through a deconstruction of settler narrative and venture to build reciprocal practice.

The first time I spoke with Jennifer Neptune (Penobscot), she told a story about stars. She told me this story as I was just beginning to understand what guiding in Wabanaki cultural contexts means, when I understood it primarily as a metaphor for any kind of teaching, when I had not yet stepped into a canoe to paddle pənaw̓úhpskewtəkʷ. The first time I paddled with the Penobscot, Jennifer was my guide. She offered me tobacco that I might make an offering to the river, showed me how to pull my paddle toward the canoe to shift direction, pointed to ripples in the water that indicated submerged granite. Jennifer named the flowers on the bank, told me the stories of the islands we passed, told me the story of Penobscot people and Black Ash (wikəpi). Jennifer’s practice as an artist, guide, teacher, and herbalist has offered me language and affirmation for nascent impulses toward a more integrated and curious way of knowing the places I inhabit and occupy. Her teaching is woven into her basketry and beadwork, her public speaking, her curation of the Penobscot Nation Museum, her organizing and advocacy for the Maine Indian Basketmaker’s Alliance. When we have sought to reciprocate, to offer gratitude for all that Jennifer has taught us, we have made baskets of paper, songs of place-naming, booklets filled with drawings of the plant beings who live along the Penobscot shores.

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I entered the big house at Nibezun, a Wabanaki-led space designed to facilitate collective healing, with little idea of what to expect. I was uncomfortable and I didn’t know anyone. I made my way to the crowded living room to find a seat. Four and a half hours later, a disparate group of humans, including many awkward settlers and a group of Penobscot artists, educators, and elders, had started to become something of a community. This was the first planning meeting for Healing Turtle Island, a four-day, Indigenous-led healing ceremony with a 21-year cycle that is open to all people. Healing Turtle Island is the vision of Sherri Mitchell (Penobscot), an Indigenous land rights attorney, author, and educator. Where I and other settler volunteers might have expected a two-hour meeting filled with timelines and agendas and an assignment of roles, we found ourselves instead listening to stories. This was one of many

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encounters in the preparations for Healing Turtle Island that invited settler volunteers to notice our colonial assumptions, to show up in process together within Indigenous cultural frameworks, and to follow Indigenous protocols through modeled practices. Over the years, Sherri has taught me which way to walk round the fire, how to hold intentions with pristine clarity, and how to accept my ancestors into processes of recognition and repair. Her power and clarity of speech, as she profoundly contextualizes colonial histories and current relationships while enacting a visionary leadership toward reparative futures, has been a significant and steadfast influence on my ways of being in both community and creative practice. In a wide web of Wabanaki guidance, I am additionally grateful to Lilah Akins, James Eric Francis, Sr., Gayle Phillips, Bonnie Newsom, John Bear Mitchell, Eric Greenan, Ryan Kelley, John Neptune, and Chris Sockalexis for the many ways they each have supported and furthered my efforts to learn reciprocal relationality through creative practice in Wabanaki territory.

Fig. 3 In Kinship Fellowship On-River Intensive (2019) In Kinship Collaborative. In Kinship Collaborative members paddle with the Penobscot River, guided by Penobscot Nation Cultural & Historic Preservation Department guides: Jennifer Neptune, James Eric Francis, Sr., Ryan Kelley, and Chris Sockalexis. Photo by Devon Kelley-Yurdin.
brys (intention)

With this paper, I map a proposal for performance as a practice of recognition and repair, specifically following an inquiry toward “performance as rematriative practice” from within settler colonial perspective. Rematriation is a term emphasized by many Indigenous communities as a set of practices that focus on long-term repair of relationships between people and places, and specifically on restoring access to stewardship roles for Indigenous people in care relationships with their ancestral territories. Steven Newcomb articulates: “By ‘rematriation’ I mean ‘to restore a living culture to its rightful place on Mother Earth,’ or ‘to restore a people to a spiritual way of life, in sacred relationship with their ancestral lands, without external interference.’”

How might settler performance support and uphold these efforts by intervening in settler colonial narratives? I center my inquiry to follow the leadership of Indigenous thinkers and makers, placing my own performance practice in conversation with the works of Native artists who are addressing Indigenous sovereignty, cultural continuance, healing, and futurities through performance. Positioning my thesis work, To The First White Woman Here, as an offering in dialogue with the works of Rebecca Belmore, Ursula Johnson, and Emily Johnson, I hope to complicate the gaze of the settler artist-scholar in witnessing, and writing about, Indigenous performance art. I am thinking with Zoe Todd’s call for citational reciprocity, asking how I might nudge my reading of these works to be more reciprocal than extractive. I endeavor to

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10. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
11. This definition is co-written with In Kinship Collective members and follows definitions that were offered by Darren Ranco and Lokotah Sanborn in a discussion held on September 11, 2021.
13. Todd, “An Indigenous Feminist’s Take On The Ontological Turn,” 19. The concept and practice of citational reciprocity is additionally discussed by Max Liboiron citing Eve Tuck, Zoe Todd, and others in the blog and Twitter series #Collabrary.
consider the ways in which I consume the works and words of these artists, and how I am positioned in this project with relation to Ursula Johnson’s articulation: “I’m trying to break down the stereotype of the Indian demonstrating knowledge”.14

As I consider performance-based interventions in white settler story, I foreground the narrative element of cultural origins and their particular employment in the world-making myths of the colonial project in New England. I ground this consideration in Jean O’Brien’s articulations of “firsting”, in which settlers construct histories that reinforce their desires to replace Indigenous people, to “become indigenous” to the territories we colonize.15 I argue that an emphasis on imagined cultural origins within colonial space feeds individual identity formations that serve colonial projects of domination and uphold supremacist hierarchies of race and gender. I look at performances of white settler womanhood as they manifest in public spaces, most specifically through an analysis of the “pioneer mother monuments” placed in communities across the United States in the 1920s-30s.16 Investigating the monuments as a site of intervention in settler colonial narrative, I seek to disrupt internalized ideas about white settler women’s identities as “brave”, “strong”, “pure and loving” “bearers of civilization”, while acknowledging the very real implications of these romanticized depictions.

I close with an orientation toward futurities, again following Indigenous thinkers and makers, now into practices of speculation. Asking how the works I make might function as reparative acts requires a commitment to the idea that other worlds, and specifically decolonial worlds, are possible.17 Kyle Whyte reminds me that the world we currently share, this world of

17. I follow as well the leadership of artists and scholars who are mobilizing speculative fiction
pervasive settler colonial claims to power in which climate change and environmental destruction are perceived by settler environmentalists as apocalyptic, is the result of the speculative future world dreaming of my colonial ancestors. I am called to consider my personal responsibilities, inherent in dreaming and speaking worlds into being. I am reminded of Ursula Johnson’s orientation of her performance practice in relation to her identity as L’nu (Mi’kmaw): “everything I think, I feel, that comes off my tongue, I’m responsible for.” Though I am not Mi’kmaw, I have my own responsibilities to meet in thought, dream, action, and speech. Part of my responsibility in dreaming must be to center Indigenous guidance within practices of speculation and futureworld visioning.

Throughout this writing, I employ two key metaphors for thinking and making. First, I am navigating Indigenous territory. This is true very literally, as I endeavor to create performance works that practice repairing relations between and among humans and more-than-humans within Wabanaki places. However, I am also navigating Indigenous territory when I apply frameworks of reciprocity, responsibility, and rematriation to my inquiry and my arguments. As with embodied movement through Wabanaki geographies, this navigation requires the guidance of Indigenous people, and it requires acknowledgement that my current worldview lacks the necessary knowledge for full understanding. It necessitates a willingness to

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in creative practice, theory, and social justice movement from a variety of situated perspectives within racialized and gender-based power dynamics. adrienne maree brown writes about collective ideation for liberatory future world making: “At this point, we have all of the information we need to create a change; it isn’t a matter of facts. It’s a matter of longing, having the will to imagine and implement something else.” Brown, Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds, 21.

face my own ignorance, and it requires that I learn and practice protocols that are new to me, that
I be willing to “learn in public”\(^2\)

Secondly, I am thinking through this writing in metaphors of translation and language. I
consider the prospect of untranslatability, noting that cross-cultural dialogue is not equivalent to
shared perspective, and that some aspects of experience manifest in the spaces _between_
languages, without reference. I recognize a discomfiting conversation between processes of
translation in cross-cultural Indigenous/settler dialogues and the colonial desire to understand
Other,\(^2\)

With this writing, I am thinking through the central role of translation in the precarious work of repairing colonial and supremacist harms from a position of settler colonial privilege. I am also following practices of Native guides into
an inquiry surrounding my own relationship to the colonial language of English as it intersects
with knowledge of place(s). In the practice of learning and actively using Wabanaki place names,
and in beginning to build a relationship with the Celtic languages of my ancestry, I am led by my
learning with Indigenous artists and scholars to wonder if the labor of reclaiming ancestral

\(^2\) Keene and Wilbur, “Ep #1.”
\(^2\) “Most non-Indians I meet who do research in Indian Country are not anthropologists—a
discipline, for many good reasons, that has lost favor in Indian communities. Many of them are
teaching or getting PhDs in departments of sociology, religion, education, history, folklore, and
English literature. When talking to them as a Native person, I usually find they started their
research to understand and experience something “Other” than themselves and are thus
reinscribing the same anthropological desire for the Other, although without the negative label
that anthropology has in some Native communities. I contend that this search for the Other is at
its base a colonial desire with which we, as Native and non-Native researchers, must contend.”
Ranco, “Toward a Native Anthropology,” 62.
\(^2\) “When people go to a festival or to a museum or something, they see the Indian there
demonstrating their knowledge, their history. People come in, and they consume that
information, they’re entertained by it, they have been enlightened in some way and then they
leave. But what I’m doing is I’m processing that tree down to nothing, I’m not making anything,
I’m sacrificing this tree in the space. So people come in and they’re like ‘what are you making?’
and I say ‘I’m making conversation’.” Johnson, Interview with performance/installation artist &
callresponse artist Ursula A. Johnson.
tongues might be a future speculative task for settler colonizers and Indigenous peoples to enact in our own culturally specific ways.

As a practice in this enactment, I title many of the sections of this paper with Cornish/Kernewek language headings. This choice represents a fledgling endeavor to learn one language of my ancestral past. It is an effort to deplete the power of the English language in my relationships with place and in creative practice. The colonization histories of Celtic Britain and Europe are long and complex, and Anglo-Saxon language-based worldviews are not the only ancestral presences we might summon. Speaking and translating with Kernewek is a speculative gesture, an embodied nod toward methods of manifesting story that defy my settler-colonial origin attachments and reconnect my spirit in deep time with the place-based knowledges of my ancestors. Similarly employed in elements of the thesis performance *To The First White Woman Here*, this dance with Kernewek is a fragmented and aspirational practice that proposes experimental speculative renderings in conversation with audience and reader.

**PORTFOLIO: IN KINSHIP**

I have produced the project *In Kinship* since 2015, and I co-created the *In Kinship Fellowship* with Cory Tamler and Darren Ranco beginning in early 2018. In 2019, we welcomed four creative fellows into what was originally intended to be a one-year learning and creation process that followed the tradition of Wabanaki guiding, connecting Native and non-Native people to place through experience, language, and story. Due partly to the COVID-19 pandemic and partly to the organic collaborative process of the group, our one-year commitment has evolved into an ongoing collective process. The In Kinship Collective produced its first public performance gathering for an invited audience on September 11, 2021.
Defining social repair and environmental care as public, creative acts, In
Kinship Collective activities have been led by Penobscot Nation partners, and our group
learning situated to center Indigenous knowledge and experience. We are now collaborating to
create new interdisciplinary works in conversation and relationship with Wabanaki guides and
watersheds. The In Kinship Performance Gathering was a full-day outdoor performance & arts
event held on September 11, 2021. It took place alongside and with the Penobscot river, from
sunrise to sunset, and featured a series of performances, collective activities, and offerings meant
to deepen human and more-than-human relationships in service to the watershed.
The dialogue, learning, and creative collaboration that lives at the heart of In Kinship processes is deeply entangled with the inquiry and creative production I have been pursuing in my individual practice. Understanding colonially inscribed histories and presents, telling stories that consider and reflect individual situatedness in relationships with place, collective visioning toward more liberatory futures, and sharing learning about ancestral ties to culture and generational knowledge are all live and vibrant realms of creative discourse within the In Kinship Collective. Increasingly, the work of the In Kinship Collective is oriented around the concept and practice of rematriation. Together, we are asking how our cross-cultural and collaborative creative processes might be rematriative in practice, supporting Wabanaki-led
efforts to scale the discourse surrounding stewardship access and sovereignty within white settler-led conservation groups.\textsuperscript{23}

**PORTFOLIO: SCORE FOR CELEBRATION WITH A RIVER #1**

*Score for Celebration with a River #1* practices reciprocal relationality with place within celebratory modes, asking what role joy and celebration play in establishing and maintaining healthy connections between places and people. I began this piece with the question: “how might celebration act as a framework for mutual care between people and places?” and wrote three performance scores “to celebrate with a river”. This piece performs, documents, and invites participation with the first score:

1) *Make a gift of yourself. Receive your self as a gift.*

![Image of a person kneeling on a grassy area with water in the background]

**Fig. 6, Fig. 7** *Score for Celebration with a River #1* (2019) Jennie Hahn. Digital photographs. Performance photo self-portrait series: 12 photographs printed on linen paper and transparency, hand stitched with text and bound with waxed cotton thread and marsh grasses. Photographs published online in digital book format.

\textsuperscript{23} The video *Restoration of Land Stewardship* produced by Sunlight Media Collective offers an instructive framing for the importance of stewardship return by profiling one recent example within Wabanaki territory.
Minty Donald works with performance scores to bring audience/participants into specific forms of inquiry, cultivating an awareness of human intimacy with water and bodies of water. In *Guddling About* she is specifically probing the paradoxes of performance with and by more-than-human actors, considering human subjectivities, corporeality, and value systems. This is deeply related to the ways I am thinking about engaging both myself and audiences in site-specific ways with environments, providing frameworks and entry points for increased environmental care. I seek to co-develop commitments that leave room for agency on the part of both human and more-than-human participants.

![Image](image.jpg)


*Score for Celebration with a River #1* is here performed along the banks of the “Libby River”, embedded in Owascoag, the place of good grass, possibly “sweetgrass gathering place”, a part of the Scarborough Marsh system. This is a place with which I have been in limited personal relationship despite holding a deep familial and ancestral, settler colonial connection with this wetland. I arrived with a camera and a tripod, wearing clothing passed down

to me by my parents, unsure of how I would perform the score. This was an early experiment in self-documenting, performing an action captured with still photography using a timed shutter release. I sat with the water, removed several strands of my hair from my head and braided them into the planted marsh grasses. I then removed a few strands of grass from the marsh, braided them into my hair, and returned to sit and listen with the water.

Fig. 9 Score for Celebration with a River #1 (2019) Jennie Hahn. Digital photograph, self-portrait. Detail of hand-bound book: ink-jet print on linen resumé paper, waxed cotton thread. 4” X 6”.

The resulting images were inkjet printed in various formats on both linen resumé paper and on sheets of plastic transparency. A book of twelve 4”X6” images was bound, alternating paper with transparency pages such that in some parts of the book, one image can be seen through the other, combining multiple representations of my person in the same image. The piece evokes a layered and non-linear experience of time, playing with concepts of iteration and re-iteration. It questions inherited notions of the self, entwined with generational rootedness in
place, while simultaneously affirming the impact and meaning of those generational place-based connections. The words “make”, “gift”, “of”, and “self” are stitched with waxed cotton thread into four of the pages, dispersed throughout the book. The book is bound with waxed cotton thread, with the marsh grasses that had once been braided into my hair woven into the thread binding.

![Image of Jennie Hahn working on a book]

**Fig. 10 Score for Celebration with a River #1 (2019) Jennie Hahn. Digital photograph, self-portrait. Detail of hand-bound book: ink-jet print on transparency and linen resumé paper, waxed cotton thread. 4” X 6”.

**ewna (repair)**

As I consider and follow Indigenous artists into the terrain of performance interventions that interrupt settler story, uphold Indigenous sovereignty, manifest healing, and emphasize Indigenous futurity, I attend to the signals of what is made. I note the language that is used to

26. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
contextualize art practice within and among human and more-than human worlds. I am following both practice and theory, aware of the spaces between translations, mis-translations, and untranslatability. I wonder what is visible and what is not, what I am looking for and what I am not able to see, what I fabricate in my seeing, and what emerges like a mirage I have difficulty trusting.

I apply the language of “rematriation” in relationship to my inquiry and creative practice as a speculative act. Most of the artists I follow in this discussion do not use the word “rematriation” to describe or contextualize their art practices. They do talk about sovereignty, healing, futurity, and responsibility. I choose to look for the pathways of rematriation inside of Indigenous North American art practices because in my understanding, rematriation as practice sits at the intersections of repair, relationships, and place. When I seek for my own performance practice to be “reparative”, when I say that my work is grounded in relationship to place, I am stepping behind and adjacent to the work of Indigenous-led rematriation. Thinking and visualizing pathways of story that are reparative in deep caring for place, I see my own work in relation to that of Native artists through frameworks that mirror Wabanaki conceptions of territory: overlapping, fluid, but distinct, with each our own responsibilities of stewardship and diplomacy. This is especially true when I visit, when I move into conceptual territories that lie beyond the existing boundaries of my settler colonial worldview. I hope that to formulate my practice in this way is to follow protocols that recognize and respect Indigenous relationality and stewardship responsibility. I also hope that within the cross-cultural relationships I currently practice, I will find my way onto a more appropriate path if this is in error. Thinking through this writing, my purpose is to locate, generate, and make an offering: to reciprocate. This in itself is

articulated in learning relationship with Indigenous people: those I am in direct relationship with here in Wabanaki territory, and those of other territories whose work I witness from a distance.

I recognize that performance interruptions in settler narrative cannot act alone in support of Indigenous-led rematriation and decolonization work. The active redistribution of settler time, labor, skills, and wealth toward Native organizing in resistance to colonization and Indigenous projects of cultural continuance must be paired with efforts to re-frame settler story. Cross-cultural collaboration, when it centers Native leadership and respects Indigenous sovereignty, is an important settler contribution. Direct transfer of land, and investment in political processes that return practical stewardship access to Native communities should accompany various forms of settler reckoning and perspective shift. I discuss my thesis work as one element of a broader practice that aims to enact multiple modes of recognition and repair.

**sit with Rebecca Belmore**

"The longer you sit with Belmore’s work, the more layers and connections you feel."

for decades
I have been working
as the artist amongst my people
calling to the past
witnessing the present
standing forward
facing the monumental

-Rebecca Belmore

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I first encountered the performance works of Rebecca Belmore (Anishinaabe) in 2019, when I was looking to understand the landscape of art activisms surrounding the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People in North America. At that point, Belmore had been creating a continuous and prolific body of sculptural, photographic, and performance works for more than three decades. I watched video documentation of the 2002 performance *Vigil*, sited in the Downtown Eastside neighborhood of Vancouver, a place that was and still is an epicenter of violence against Indigenous women. In 2002, at least sixty women in ten years had disappeared from the streets of the Downtown Eastside$^{30}$ and the issue was receiving little attention from investigative police or the press. Twenty years later, a continuous and growing movement rooted in communities across Turtle Island is bringing greater public attention to the reality that the disappearance and murder of Indigenous women and girls constitutes an ongoing genocide.$^{31}$

![Fig. 11, Fig. 12 Vigil (2002) Rebecca Belmore. Talking Stick Festival, Full Circle: First Nations Performance, Vancouver, BC. Still from video documentation by Paul Wong. Retrieved from “Rebecca Belmore.”](image)

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31. “MMIWG2S Program — Native Justice Coalition.”
Rebecca Belmore arrives in the alley with two buckets of water. She scrubs the concrete. She sets out candles on the ground. I can’t know this from watching the documentation, but apparently the alley where we are standing smells very badly of urine and vomit. There are a mixed group of Indigenous and white settler witnesses present, some from the “art world”; this performance was created as part of the Talking Stick Festival of Indigenous theatre. There are also neighborhood witnesses, and people come and go; at one particularly profound moment, as Belmore shouts the names of missing women written in black ink on her arms, voices from around the neighborhood begin to respond, to answer the call. “I really remember the street yell[ing] back … nobody had been really talking about the murdered and missing women in the Downtown Eastside, really. So, I remember saying to my friend afterwards, how it felt, like the land was yelling back … about how these ghosts or these spirits, or these energies were calling back, answering.”32 After she calls out each name, Rebecca Belmore pulls a rose, with thorns intact, through her teeth, slowly stripping it of leaves. She puts on a long red dress. She begins to nail the dress, with herself still in it, to a telephone pole. Over and over again she nails the dress to the telephone pole. And then she begins to pull herself free. She pulls and she pulls until she is free. She repeats the action, nailing what is left of the dress to the telephone pole and ripping herself free again, and again. Eventually the dress is stripped from her body; its remains hang in tatters from the pole.

32. Peter Morin quoted in Hill, “Vigil’s Audience,” 60.
I am reading Rebecca Belmore discuss her relationship to performance with Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg). Belmore is speaking about the first time that she presented her work abroad, at IV Bienal de la Habana, in the courtyard of the Castillo de la Real Fuerza in Havana, Cuba, in 1991. She created a performance titled *Creation or Death: We Will Win*. With hands and feet bound, gagged with a red string in her mouth, she pushes and carries piles of sand on her hands and knees up three flights of stairs, drawing a line of sand up the center of the stairway. In discussion with Simpson, Belmore says that because she was abroad and performing for an international audience, she realized that she didn’t need to speak to the audience before the performance. The conversation continues:

“I could use my body to speak and speak without a language. That was really a turning point. I was bound with my hands and ankles moving towards the sky and freedom, which I think really changed, for me, the way I saw myself working in the future. That was a pivotal moment.”

I ask how.

“Just realizing that I can use my body to speak.”
I think I know exactly what she means and to confirm, I ask: “When you were speaking, you were explaining to white people. In Havana, you stopped centering whiteness.”

“Absolutely.”

I want to hold this recognition of the ways in which a body can be an instrument of speech, one that enables utterances otherwise silenced in spoken language. Particularly within the power-laden utterances and silences that can litter the discursive field between an Indigenous artist and a majority white settler audience in colonial space, when not contextualized with spoken English, the body might speak more truthfully to that which is obscured. I want to hold this recognition alongside another of Belmore’s statements about how she came to make performance work, in which she traces the origins of her practice. Beginning to work as an artist at a time when discussions of cultural appropriation and authenticity filled much of the discourse surrounding art practice in Canada, Belmore says “I found my way using my body as … it is autonomous. It is an authority. It is authentic”. Simpson echoes this sentiment when she says, in writing about Belmore: “She is sovereign. She is home. We are here, working, making things on our land, as we have always done. No apologies. No compromises. No explanations. Make the work, release it into the world and then make more.”

Even through the mediating eye of the video camera, when I experience them in documentation and am therefore separated from place, space, time, and bodies, Rebecca Belmore’s performance works are haunting. Vigil is known now as an “iconic” work, yet most who know it have witnessed it through the video documentation of Paul Wong, often presented

33. Simpson, “I Am the Artist Amongst My People.”
34. Lesley MFA, Art Talk.
35. Simpson, “I Am the Artist Amongst My People.”
in galleries on a screen lit with 50 embedded lightbulbs and titled *The Named and the Unnamed*. Thus, I am grateful for Richard William Hill’s written documentation experiment, in which he gathered memories and reflections from people who were physically present for the performance of *Vigil* in the Downtown Eastside in 2002. Everyone seems to agree that viewing the video document is vastly different from experiencing the living performance, and that the video cannot capture the sheer intensity of the original event. Witnesses describe being overwhelmed by the piece and its context, having “no idea what was happening”, and viscerally fearing for the physical safety of both Belmore and themselves. “I thought she was going to hurt herself. And the roses through the teeth, I thought she was going to rip her mouth apart. The intensity with which she did it and just the depth of the emotionality, and the visceral feeling when she’s pounding the nails into the light pole. I thought there was going to be a medical emergency … it was just really violent.”

![Fig. 14 Facing the Monumental (2012) Rebecca Belmore. House of Wayward Spirits, Queen’s Park, Toronto, ON. Still from video documentation by Alex Williams. Retrieved from “Rebecca Belmore.”](image)

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37. “Rebecca Belmore.”
38. “The context around the performance was 2002; it was cold fear in the women’s communities … it was super intense.” Kate Barry quoted in Hill, “Vigil’s Audience,” 58.
Wanda Nanibush (Anishinaabe) describes Belmore’s 2012 performance *Facing the Monumental* in similar terms of deep emotionality. Created on Canada Day in Queen’s Park, Toronto, Belmore began by choosing a 150-year-old red oak tree that is indigenous to the region. With the help of three assistants, she wrapped water-saturated brown craft paper around the tree, then placed one of her assistants at the base of the tree and continued wrapping the assistant’s body against the tree until she appeared to be part of it. The assistant’s black wig was turned around backwards so that her face was not visible. Twenty-one gunshots, pre-recorded and amplified through the park, rang out at the completion of the wrapping:

I was struck by the Indigenous woman becoming ‘one with the tree’ because it prompted me to reflect on the Earth as female. I couldn’t help but think that how we treat women in society is mirrored in how we treat the Earth … the weight of a history of violence against our women hit me hard when I heard the sound of guns (most people were emotional at this point in the performance) … Belmore, in a brilliant ironic reversal, critiques the use of militaristic nationalism on Canada Day in Queen’s Park. Instead, the salute is to our survival of the very assault that allowed Canada to become a nation, the monumental that we were all facing in what felt like a collective mourning, while all around us the city celebrated that very founding violence.40

**listen with Ursula Johnson**

I am listening to Ursula Johnson (Mi’kmaw) in conversation with Sarah Fillmore, chief curator of Art Gallery Nova Scotia. This conversation was presented as part of an interview series produced by the museum and conducted online in 2020. Ursula Johnson is speaking about language, about the power of speech as it manifests in responsibility, and about what it means to be a Mi’kmaw person for whom Mi’kmaw is the first language. She explains the difference between the word “Mi’kmaw”, a political identity, and “L’nú”, a word of self-identification within Mi’kmaw language. She describes the centrality of responsibility as an ethos within

Mi’kmaq culture: when each person in a community holds responsibility for their thoughts, words, and actions as a primary way of describing and knowing themselves, the resulting culture is both cooperative and sustainable. “For us, ourselves, we are L’nú. It comes from ninnu,⁴¹ ‘my tongue’. What it means is: everything I think, I feel, that comes off my tongue - I’m responsible for. And nobody else.”⁴²

**Fig. 15** Mi’kwite’tmn (Do You Remember) (2014) Ursula Johnson. Solo exhibition with sculpture, craft, interactive media and performance, collection of the artist. Photo credit Chris Smith. Retrieved from “Atlantic - Ursula Johnson | CBC Radio.”

Ursula Johnson returns threads of discussion back to this central orientation: it is a grounding in self, culture, and practice that shapes both what is made and how the work is presented in the world. Johnson’s practice is a generous model to follow when looking at the relationship between individual art practice and community care, and when investigating the

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⁴¹ In transcribing this word from the original video source, I have consulted the “Mi’gmaq Mi’kmaq Micmac Online Talking Dictionary”. This spelling may not match the artist’s usage.
potential of an artist’s positioning at the intersection of intervention, interruption, and dialogue. She discusses, for instance, her approach to maintaining her own personal safety when performing for non-Native audiences through the lens of responsibility: the responsibility of knowing what she is saying, how she is saying it, and who she is speaking to. The integration of a responsibility framework is present as well in Johnson’s inclusion of facilitated community dialogue as an element of performance works that seek to intervene in colonial narratives, processes, and cultural frameworks. Discussing the multi-year installation project *Mi’kwite’umt* (*Do You Remember*), Johnson describes her approach to intervention in colonial cultural institution settings, like museums and libraries, as a “trickster” way of working. Framed as an exhibition of Native American baskets, the artwork is comprised of empty display cases. Each is engraved with sandblasted diagrams of Mi’kmaw baskets and language labels that instruct Mi’kmaw speakers in how to make the basket. Simultaneously, Johnson performs in the gallery, processing ash logs for several hours at a time into basketmaking material that is never actually used to make baskets. “I’m trying to break down the stereotype of the Indian demonstrating knowledge”. When confronted with disappointed, unmet expectations within the framework of conditioned cultural behaviors (that the exhibition contain basket-objects, that Johnson be making “something beautiful” and “demonstrating knowledge”), settler visitors to the exhibition experience feelings of confusion, discomfort, frustration, and anger. This is entirely intentional and aligned with Johnson’s articulation of responsibility to know what she is saying, and how,

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43. “One thing that was very important to me, to look at the idea of intervention. Because there’s things that you can do that’s like a call to action for somebody, and you encourage them to look at something, to learn about it. But then there’s something you can do where it’s like a direct intervention.” ArtGalleryNovaScotia, *In Conversation with Ursula Johnson.*
44. Johnson, Interview with performance/installation artist & #callresponse artist Ursula A. Johnson.
and to whom. However, she also sees a responsibility to support the people who experience the piece in processing those feelings, through dialogue that contextualizes the work and opens discussion around cooperative ways forward. She offers “not a talking circle, but a sharing circle … It’s time to peel up the rug and talk about what’s been buried underneath. It’s something that’s very important as artists, not to just throw the idea out there, to instigate things and then to leave it. I think it’s very important to talk about what’s happened afterwards.”

Fig. 16 L’nuwelti’k (2014) Ursula Johnson. Cooperative Based Durational Performance with Black Ash Splints, collection of the artist. Photo credit Mathieu Léger. Retrieved from “Atlantic - Ursula Johnson | CBC Radio.”

I am listening to Ursula Johnson weave a conversation with Ginger Dunnill in an interview that forms one episode of the podcast Broken Boxes. I am musing on relationship, on

45. Johnson, Interview with performance/installation artist & #callresponse artist Ursula A. Johnson.
reciprocal dialogue, thinking through the ways I might enact and practice relationship with an artist I’ve never met and a body of work I’ve never witnessed in person. I move around the room, to engage my body in the practice of listening. I am grateful to be hearing her voice, noticing the transmission of information through vocal vibration, despite the interference of technology and time. When I feel anxious about the length of the conversation and a pressure to think and write quickly, when I feel an impulse to skip ahead, I choose instead to slow down. I listen to the whole thing. I remember Zoe Todd and her call to recognize extractive scholarship.\textsuperscript{46} I am thinking with Ursula Johnson in relation to the consumption of Indigenous knowledges by settler-colonizers. There is irreconcilable tension here; I notice it, sit with it, write with it.

Ursula Johnson is talking about archives. She has created an archives room as part of \textit{Mi’kwite’tmn (Do You Remember)} that exposes the fallacies of colonial memory and its institutions in concept and experience. Maintaining her intention to disrupt settler visitor expectations of their museum visit, Johnson has created a collection of “mutant basket-type objects from the series O’pltek (It is Not Right)”\textsuperscript{47}. These she displays on shelves akin to a museum’s archival storage facilities, alongside computer monitors with gloves and bar code scanners. A visitor may put on the gloves, pick up one of the basket-type objects, scan its label, and read its digitized archival records, much as an archivist would. The records that appear on the monitor provide descriptions of the object and its cultural use. The records are both fabricated and ostensibly believable to anyone who arrives with no contextual knowledge and who suspends all critical inquiry to invest in the authority of the institution. Her example is a small basket-type object with a foot that is labeled “used to scrape the baby’s head”. She says:

\textsuperscript{46} Todd, “An Indigenous Feminist’s Take On The Ontological Turn,” 18.  
\textsuperscript{47} “Mi’kwite’tmn.”
“all of these objects in this room are a constructed history but because it’s presented in the format of this all-knowing, knowledge holding museum, people don’t question it”.48

**Fig. 17 Nocturne/Prismatic Performance Elmiet (2010)** Ursula Johnson. Photo credit Krista Comeau. Retrieved from “Ursula Johnson: Weaving History.”

In conversation with Ursula Johnson’s work, a question emerges about how historical specificity grounds open dialogue and how narrative precision weaves and feeds a capacity for conversation, for “figuring things out”.49 The choice to root a project in particular federal Indian policies and treaty histories is intimately connected to the culturally anchored intention to be responsible for what one says, and for what one speaks into being. I consider *Elmiet*, a performance piece from 2010 in which Johnson walked through the streets of Halifax wearing an ash woven basket on her head. She was accompanied by parkour practitioners and made her way

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to Grand Parade Square, where she asked a volunteer to symbolically enact the “last Mi’kmaw scalping” by removing the basket from her head. In witnessing the piece, audience members learned that a 1756 British bounty proclamation for the scalps of Mi’kmaw men, women, and children is still on the books in Nova Scotia, despite subsequent treaties and an “apology” made in 2000 by the Canadian government. The fact that lives at the heart of this performance, that their government had never rescinded the legalized murder and financially incentivized scalping of Mi’kmaw people, was likely unknown to many settler audience members. Yet it contains entire modes of relationship between colonial governments and sovereign Indigenous nations, and by extension, the relationships between settler colonial and Indigenous peoples. Johnson’s performance actions are sharply defined, clearly executed provocations that utilize particular examples of violence and ongoing oppression to open a broader discourse surrounding Indigenous sovereignty.

**move with Emily Johnson**

A group of people stand in brightly colored robes at the edge of the waters of the East River in Lenapehoking and one by one they hold the microphone. They speak their names. They speak the names of the places from which they came. They speak the names of the places they now live within. One by one they speak their future truths, and as they speak in the present tense, the future is now.

“I’m a mom. All the prisons are closed. I don’t know if you remember, back when they were open? All the land is ours again, too. When I first moved here to Lenapehoking, ages ago, I was in love. I was in love. I would walk around back when that city was so busy, and I couldn’t find peace though I felt peaceful, and I

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couldn’t find spirit though I felt spirit. I know now, back when that city was so busy, we were all trying to remember: names, places, purpose.”

In The Ways We Love and The Ways We Love Better, Monumental Movement Toward Being Future Being(s), Emily Johnson and her ensemble give a gift of black flint corn to the people assembled, and she explains that this corn must be cared for through the winter, then planted, tended, and planted again. Some of this corn will be sent to Wisconsin, Oklahoma, and Canada for the communities it belongs to, communities of Lenape people who have been forcibly removed from their homelands. This corn will help to call Lenape people home.

She tells a story, a story of her great-great-great-grandmother birthing a world from a kayak in the Bering Sea. She tells this story with her own voice, a voice that moves across ocean and time and across this small circle of people until it is spoken by other voices. Within this small circle, a world of shared narrative. She invites the people who are gathered here to go for a walk, and she asks that someone please take care of the tobacco plants that have been placed along the shore. The invitations are broad, expansive, and grounded, rooted in relationship with Lenape people, in her own cultural traditions, in her understanding and practice of the protocols of visiting, gifting, and kinship. They are a little bit risky. These invitations require action and commitment on the part of participants, and though they are simple they are not necessarily comfortable. Emily steps into the role of a guide for those gathered. Perhaps those who carry corn home with them will never plant it. What if no one holds the tobacco? Naming the care of these plants as a need, the reciprocity toward place of growing the corn that can support a return to homeland for Lenape people as a responsibility, Emily brings the gathering into a practice of

51. Emily Johnson quoted in The Ways We Love and The Ways We Love Better, Monumental Movement Toward Being Future Being(s). Knight and Barrio, Emily Johnson’s Collaboration with Jeffrey Gibson at Socrates.
relationship and mutual care that enacts “land acknowledgements as an embodied praxis”\textsuperscript{52} and re-centers Indigenous worldviews. As it turns out, the children want to carry the tobacco.

A group of dancers ascends the sculpture created by Jeffrey Gibson. It is enormous like a monument, pyramidal and adorned with wheat-pasted posters that reference the geometric designs of the Serpent Mound and other monuments of Indigenous Mississippian cultures, as well as the language “the future is present” and “respect Indigenous land”.\textsuperscript{53} Dancers of many cultural backgrounds who come from many places stomp, and swing, and circle the tiers of the monument as Emily Johnson dances and speaks: “Do you remember back when we were at the river and we gave you the corn seeds? I want you to promise me to plant the corn. And I want you to promise me to close the prisons. And I want you to promise me to return our land.”\textsuperscript{54}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{gather_here.png}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{52} Recollet and Johnson, “Kin-dling and Other Radical Relationalities,” 19.
\textsuperscript{53} “Jeffrey Gibson.”
\textsuperscript{54} Knight and Barrio, Emily Johnson’s Collaboration with Jeffrey Gibson at Socrates.
SITE 2: SETTLER COLONIAL NARRATIVE

In the face of unrelenting historically specific surplus suffering in companion species knottings, I am not interested in reconciliation or restoration, but I am deeply committed to the more modest possibilities of partial recuperation and getting on together. Call that staying with the trouble.  

*tarosvan (ghost)*

Considering the precarious nature of settler efforts toward unraveling colonial ways of being, I place my work in context, too, with white settler artists and scholars who practice interventions in colonial space(s). I am looking for the struggles, the empty open places, the conflicts of intention and practice, the self-reflection and the uncertainty, the effectual and the reparative in experiences of making “beyond unsettling” in the practices of white settler artists and scholars. In their introduction to the co-edited collection “beyond unsettling: methodologies for decolonizing futures”, Issue 64 of the Tkaronto/Toronto-based journal PUBLIC, Leah Decter (white settler) and Carla Taunton (white settler) make a case for “bringing the work of a diverse range of Black, Indigenous, POC and white settler cultural producers and scholars into conversation”, arguing that “while Indigenous artists and scholars who have been developing and circulating theories and methodologies rooted in specific Indigenous cultural worldviews, teachings, knowledges, and sovereignties do not focus on non-Indigenous practices, many do call for BPOC and white settler decolonial activation and collaboration.”

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56. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
How we do this is an inquiry of both this thesis and the artist-scholars represented in “beyond unsettling”. As Decter and Taunton point out, there are some shared themes and similarities of approach that include: building ongoing and reciprocal, sovereignty-centering relationships with Indigenous peoples of the territories we occupy; practicing attentiveness and mutuality in relationship with places and the more-than-human world; processes of settler reckoning; collaboration; emphasis on modalities of care. Lois Klassen (white settler), in her piece “A Letter to Agnes McCausland Richardson Etherington (1880-1954)” returns repeatedly to settler reckoning experiences of haunting, reminding me to visit again with Eve Tuck and C. Ree’s “A Glossary of Haunting” in which they state: “Haunting, by contrast, is the relentless remembering and reminding that will not be appeased by settler society’s assurances of

innocence and reconciliation.” As I re-read these words I remember the appearances and disappearances of ghosts and specters in the body of work that includes my thesis performance To The First White Woman Here. In energetic purpose and in the experience of embodying her, First White Woman is thoroughly a haunting, a haunting I both experience and effect, she is a calling of my haunting(s) into flesh. Meanwhile, the futurepast speculations that inhabit the companion work daughter-her-mother: a futurepasts archive are populated with numerous ghosts: the narrative is woven across a weft of specter speculation in the form of the character Lydiawraith, a fog mist vapor who wanders perpetually upon the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, between. They seep out of embodied recall, these hauntings.

Rob Jackson (white settler) approaches “conspiracy” modes of “breathing alongside Indigenous people, the lands and waters, and the more-than-human communities that nurture life” through the poems60 of Chinese Canadian and white settler poets Rita Wong, Fred Wah, and Christine Stewart. He writes: “For all three of these non-indigenous poets, poetry breathes life into their relational obligations and animates their struggles against State sanctioned narratives of dispossession and reconciliation that work to settle the ongoing antagonism of settler colonial domination.”61 Jackson makes a case for poetry, not as a replacement for political, or other forms of direct action that resist and/or dismantle colonialism and white supremacy, but as a practice of “confronting the limits” of political language, tracing silence, and moving toward what might be possible, toward futurities.

There is something here in the discourse between Jackson and Klassen. It is a marking of the pull between settler orientations toward reciprocity, gratitude, and responsibility (in response

to Indigenous leadership, worldviews, and guidance) and a constant re-positioning within neoliberal guilt and “reconciliation” efforts. The settler condition seems always to drift back toward the proposition of reconciliation and the desire for absolution, for “moves toward innocence”. Jackson refers to this as the “gravitational force of white supremacy”. We are forever moving between, toward innocence and back again. Internalized supremacy exerts force on our bodies even as we consistently re-orient toward the relationships that make responsibility and reciprocity possible from within settler positioning. Klassen extends this observation to complicate settler practices of recognition. Acknowledging the limitations of institutional land acknowledgements for instance, she highlights a relationship between recognition and atonement: “I am wondering, is lending more audibility to settler dreams of impossible atonement really needed, Agnes? Do personal desires for atonement, oftentimes masked in rote territorial acknowledgments, risk reproducing colonialism through round after round of liberalist recognitions?” I appreciate this critique as I stand in a position of aspirational intervention, calling for greater recognition among settler communities and understanding that disruption efforts cannot stop there.

These are the conditions from which I write and create and build co-creative relationships with Wabanaki and settler people in Wabanaki places. This is the space from which I seek to intervene, through performance and with my body, in settler story. This is some part of the context, from settler perspective, of attempting a potentially incommensurate contribution to shifting the relations of settler colonialism and the part I play within them.

Origin Myths: Firsting

Several years ago I encountered a rift, a chasm in the landscape of my story. This was the threshold upon which I stood to realize that rooting my sense of self in a perceived longevity of ancestral presence in Wabanaki/Maine is an appropriative and deeply entrenched mechanism of the colonial myth-making process.65

I often describe reading Siobhan Senier’s introduction to *Dawnland Voices* in 2015 as a “lightbulb moment”, a threshold of evolving consciousness in the process of unraveling internalized settler colonial and white supremacist narratives. Until I read this introduction, I had no concept of replacement mechanisms in settler orientations to place. Senier writes:

The myth of the “vanishing Indian” is very old, and by no means peculiar to New England: it has permeated American culture from *The Last of the Mohicans* to *Dances with Wolves*. But the myth exercises special force east of the Mississippi, where colonization happened earliest; and it takes a particular shape in New England, where European settlers have, from the beginning, been keen to install themselves as the “first” Americans.66

The shock of this truth settling into my body was profound, as I could clearly see for the first time the depth of my personal attachment to a claim of ancestral “firstness”, resulting in a preposterous entitlement to a sense of belonging in Maine. The impact was beyond disorienting, as so much of my understanding of self, family, and culture were caught up in the effectiveness of this narrative mechanism. I’ve been digging at the roots of this story ever since, holding an inquiry concerning the usefulness of performing a personal and collective narrative unraveling in public: might it be useful to others, to see this story roll and spin like a loosened ball of yarn? How might I achieve that? The inquiry has led me into multiple adjacent realms of deepening

understanding and new threads of questioning: early colonial histories in New England from Wabanaki perspectives, the roles of settler women in the early years of the settler colonial project in New England, the cultural lineages and practices of my ancestors and where they came from. Yet this attachment to “firsting” maintains its grip on my story even as I seek its dissolution: my inquiry and my approach to re-framing colonial narrative has continued to revolve around this particular intersection of time, culture, place, and perceived identity.

_In Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England_, Jean O’Brien walks us through the methodological process of “firsting” in the prolific local histories of New England towns. These are the records and narrative histories that consistently emphasize lists of settler colonial “firsts”: first settlement, first birth, first death, first church, first marriage, etc. “Although these histories of small places likely are intended for local and limited audiences, the project in which they participated was grand and helped produce grave consequences for Indian peoples whose places they claimed as their own.”67 O’Brien details the ways in which Indigenous people in New England are included and omitted in these histories: included to establish settler claims through “legitimate” land transfer or to justify settler violences, omitted from any depiction of ongoing social or cultural life to reinforce myths of Native absence. O’Brien also situates “firsting” in direct relation to European settler ideologies and aspirations toward “modernity”:

The master narrative of New England, based on the minute evidence of local narration, involved the replacement of “uncivilized” peoples whose histories and cultures they interpreted as illogically rooted in nature, tradition, and superstition, whereas New Englanders symbolized the “civilized” order of culture, science, and reason.68

68. O’Brien, _Firsting and Lasting_, 3.
I connect this settler emphasis on ideas of modernity to the experience of settler cultural amnesia, both as it acts to forget the true human and ecological costs of benefitting from settler colonialism in blood and profit, and as it functions to sever ties to the cultural and spiritual traditions that might have tethered settlers to more care-centered relationships with our ancestral places. This quotation very neatly summarizes my pervasive personal experience of internalized “firstness”: “In this new order, lineage trumped hierarchy in determining one’s place in the social order. New Englanders expended tremendous energy, not in arguing for the precise ranking of individuals in a divinely mandated hierarchy, but in anxiously demonstrating the depth of their lineages in New England.” And, it might be acknowledged, we still do. Settler attachments to building a new social order, leaving behind the feudal hierarchies of Europe and instead establishing primacy according to lineage, led settlers to imagine ourselves always looking forward from this place of arrival and beginning. It is quite literally, and destructively, the beginning of the story.

\textit{koll kov} \textit{(a brief thinking with amnesia)}

Memory is a warped and weaponized construction in settler colonial cultures. Directly embedded in the practices and the performances that maintain hierarchies of power and control, colonial memory erases anything that does not support the continuance of colonialism. As Leah Decter writes, “a settler state and society know what not to know”. As I consider practices of memory and forgetting, both within settler colonial experience and as a space of performance-based critique, I am looking at the ways in which forgetting, or “not knowing”, moves in

\begin{itemize}
  \item 69. O’Brien, \textit{Firsting and Lasting}, 52.
  \item 70. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
  \item 71. Decter, “Moving Unsettlement,” 40.
\end{itemize}
multiple directions and across many planes of cultural experience. Rob Jackson quotes Christine Stewart referring to Canada: “A country that is a purposeful creation of forgetting, oblivious, obliterating; not a place of limitless potential, but a nation that demands a baseline of deprivation and suffering”\textsuperscript{72}. It is my understanding that significant struggle is required within Indigenous communities to maintain cultural continuance, to revitalize language, to remember ceremony and song in the face of persistent colonial violence, genocidal practice, and forced assimilation.

Amnesia in the context of settler colonial perspective is not this experience of resistance, rather it is an active practice of forgetting that works to silence the ghosts, to quiet the haunting. It is a forgetting that enables continued participation in settler colonial paradigms, yet it wipes out too the ancient memories of our own cultural rootedness, memories we will need in any project of imagining ways of being otherwise.

I contend that the amnesia which obscures complicity in settler colonial violences obscures something else as well: our own spiritually rooted ancestral traditions and ways of being connected to people and places. The privileges we wear, carry, and spend cost us something dear, and it is an amnesia to forget the costs. These acts of amnesia exert force upon one another, they exist in mutually sustaining tension. Recognizing a disconnection from more truthful memories of self and culture does not absolve settler people and cultures from the willful forgetting of colonial harm. My interest in reclaiming pre-colonial memories of places and cultures is an aspirational one toward more responsible situatedness. We must extend our stories beyond “firsting” if we are to know ourselves differently in relation to the places we occupy. What capacities for responsibility are we severed from when we don’t know ourselves? What

\textsuperscript{72} Jackson, “Towards a Poetics of Conspiracy,” 83.
would it cost the colonial project, and how might we collectively deflate its dominance, if we all remembered beyond its boundaries?

“One of the challenges of rematriation work is to establish the understanding in settler-colonial contexts that shifting perspective and practice requires carving out pathways of story as much as action…”, This thought was offered by Darren Ranco in conversation with the In Kinship Collective. I re-orient toward these words regularly. As I consider the mechanisms of “firsting” and myths of origins embedded in settler colonial stories, I continue to propose that one resistance, one way of being differently inside settler situatedness, sits with finding ways to start in a different place; to begin elsewhere.

PORTFOLIO: FIRST WHITE WOMAN

The body of performance-as-research that is First White Woman has been an iterative performance development process that utilizes a growing vocabulary of gestures, formats, and placements within site. Included in this portfolio are four iterations of First White Woman in performance that supported the creation of the thesis work To The First White Woman Here.

Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance (2019)

Another important objective is to discover new ways of relating to our own bodies. Firstly, decolonizing them, then re-politicizing them as sites for activism and embodied theory, for memory and reinvention, for pleasure and penance.73

In response to a class assignment that asked me to follow the creative practice of a chosen artist, the development of *Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance* focused on Guillermo Gómez Peña’s concept and practice of “Photo-Performance”. My preparatory work looked specifically at discussions of the theory surrounding photo-performances, how they are made, and the emergence and evolution of photo-performance within Gomez-Peña’s multi-decade interdisciplinary practice as a whole. Gómez-Peña's highly specified personal interest in relationships between photographic images and live performance, particularly as contributions to conversations of cultural theory and radical pedagogy, cross-cultural dynamics, and politics of
language and the body, offer a unique look at visual translation in conceptual performance, accumulated and sculpted over many years of ongoing practice.


In creating Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance, I was specifically utilizing the theoretical and practical structure of Gomez-Peña’s photo-performance applied through my own situated lens of culture and identity. In Gomez-Peña’s work, the camera acts as audience
and the photograph is the performance. Ceasing to function as a detached document or inert artifact, the photo-performance is not meant to fix or counter the perceived ephemerality of live performance. Gomez-Peña’s inquiry begins by asking if, given this re-framing, a photograph might effectively capture the spirit of performance.74

Fig. 22 #libbywomen: occupation housewife (2019) Jennie Hahn. Digital photograph from the series Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance.

Fig. 23 #libbywomen: the settlerwife’s tourinativism (2019) Jennie Hahn. Digital photograph from the series Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance.

With Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance, I was interested in the way that stereotypical iconographies in Gomez-Peña’s work blend with ideas and indicators of authenticity, as well as the ways in which this blending calls iconographic usage into question. Following stylistic and thematic prompts from Gómez-Peña’s photo-performance work, I developed content and

meaning from my own body of creative inquiry. Several feminized and regionally specific pastoral characters emerge: the “Pioneer Woman”, the devout Puritan (my ancestors were Anglican, not Puritan, but we define ourselves according to an imagined “Puritan Ethic” anyway), the coastal Fisherwife in foul weather gear with clam hod, the Fifties Housewife accumulating family heirlooms of silver and crystal glassware, all rolling into the contemporary “settlerwife’s tourinativism” in which nothing much has changed. Continuing an excavation of family history, cultural origin, and an iconographic exploration of “authentic” identity, I built these photos in response the question “how do I present and introduce myself?”

When I created the images for Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance, I found that a new space had opened in my conversation with First White Woman. Playing with stereotyped iconography removed the character entirely from realms of narrative subtlety, illuminating instead her role as a mythological archetype, her language of sentimentality and violence, her contradiction, her surrealism. I began to experiment with allowing my body to do the storytelling. I am learning a vocabulary, a language. I am making notes, scores, repeating the language, beginning to speak with it.

First (White) Woman (2019)

I have been working with the character of First (White) Woman for several years, teasing her out of my system, out of stories remembered and forgotten, out of histories read and dwelled

75. I include the word “White” in parenthesis here to mark an evolution in the naming of this character and corresponding titles for the work. Originally referred to as “First Woman”, the character was re-named “First White Woman” during the development process for the thesis performance, a change that is intended to illuminate her/my racialized positioning and the cultural critiques embedded in the work.
upon. I found and created her name in the winter of 2018, along with the description “The First Woman (on Virgin Land) produces no sound, though she makes many attempts to communicate with us” and a list of gestures: “vomit, wash the face, cling to child”. Her title is satirical, she is an archetypical and yet deeply personal reference to settler colonial worldview and the origin narratives that are grafted to my own experience of identity formation. I want to interrogate the ongoing processes of domination embedded in the colonial histories that led me to believe for so much of my life that my story (cultural, ancestral) begins in 1636 in Maine/Wabanaki while simultaneously erasing ancestral feminine knowledge from my spoken and embodied vocabulary.

**Fig. 24 First (White) Woman (2019) Jennie Hahn.** Solo scripted performance with audience facilitation, duration approximately 18 minutes. Still photograph from documentation video by Arturo Camacho, 0°1’20”. Performed and facilitated by Jennie Hahn with members of the Fall IMD 570 Critique class in the APPE at the University of Maine IMRC, 2019.
In this iteration of *First (White) Woman*, I combined fledgling choreographic experiments with a recreation of *libbywomen: the settler's wife* from *Origin Myths: A Photo-Performance*. This was the first time that I performed this character live. The audience entered the performance space to find the character seated at her butter churn inside a circle of light, wearing a garish “pioneer” dress that references the settler colonial imaginary of pioneer narratives and evoking 1850s westward expansion attire, despite the character’s actual origins in the early colonial period of the seventeenth century. The character has a variety of baby dolls wrapped in clothesline and gaff-taped around her midriff. She has difficulty breathing. The audience is given no instructions but gathers uncertainly around the pool of light. The performance begins with labored breathing, silent gestures. It continues as a choreographed gesture sequence with only grunts and gasps for sound. Slowly the audience becomes aware that the character is trying to speak. Eventually she breaks free of her silence, not without difficulty. She speaks of mosses and pines, of sunlight and ghosts. At the close of this performance, I facilitated a brief moment of connection among audience members, in which participants weave around a circle, pausing to make eye contact with each person in the group. The piece was conceived as an element that might be incorporated into a longer performance, with the potential to be presented in a variety of settings and contexts.
Fig. 25 First (White) Woman (2019) Jennie Hahn. Scripted performance with audience facilitation. Still from documentation video by Arturo Camacho. 0°4’13”.

Fig. 26 First (White) Woman (2019) Jennie Hahn. Scripted performance with audience facilitation. Still from documentation video by Arturo Camacho. 0°17’17”.

_in situ_

*n.* In its site or position; in its original or proper location; in place; in the place which it occupied at the time it was formed or (in speaking of artificial constructions) built.

With *First (White) Woman: In Situ* I was working with a desire to understand deep time, engaging with concepts of repetition and trace. My intention was to investigate through performance the ways in which we repeat ourselves through generations and to search for traces of my/our past iterations. How do our ancestors live within us? How do we perform and re-perform them and ourselves?

*Fig. 27* First (White) Woman (in situ) (2019) Jennie Hahn. Solo durational performance with projection, charcoal, newsprint. Documentation photo by Jennie Hahn. Solo durational performance, lasting approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes. Projection video performed, filmed, and edited by Jennie Hahn. Performed in the conference room of the IMRC, University of Maine.
Having performed First White Woman in photographs and in a black box theater space, I had a deep desire to place her in landscape, and to perform her outdoors in a place that has ancestral meaning in the context of my personal colonial narratives. I filmed myself performing the character with the marshes of the “Libby River” in Owascoag/Scarborough. The video is overexposed, creating an ethereal image. In editing, I cut and spliced footage of the marsh with and without First White Woman present so that she appears and disappears within the timeline of the video. She is not fully present. This video was then projected upon a wall, and I began to practice performing a contemporary version of my “self” with her, an archetype of my pasts.

![Fig. 28 First (White) Woman (in situ) (2019) Jennie Hahn. Solo durational performance with projection, charcoal, newsprint. Documentation photo by Jeonguk Choi.](image)

This is the only live performance iteration of First White Woman that has not involved direct audience engagement and participation. My primary discoveries in this piece centered on the narrative and discursive potential of performing with a life-sized video projection of the
First White Woman character. Experimenting with tracing the projection, mimicking and following her gestures, and creating shadows that triplicate the repetitions of ancestral “self” present in the piece added depth to the performance-as-research practice.

**First (White) Woman: in circle (2020)**

An iteration of the *First White Woman* performance series exploring colonial myths of origin, their impacts on formations of identity, and their role in perpetuating systems of oppression. The body of performance-as-research that is “First White Woman” is a fugue-like exploration of one seminal character from my own ancestral memory and her entanglement within colonial narrative. This piece seeks to understand how embodied memories are accessed, how erasure is resisted, and how a conversation with a liberatory past might facilitate more liberatory futures.

*Fig. 29 First (White) Woman: in circle (2019)* Jennie Hahn. Solo scripted performance with projection and audience facilitation, duration approximately 15 minutes. Documentation photo by Jim Winters. Performed and facilitated by Jennie Hahn with members of the IMFA community in the APPE at the University of Maine IMRC, 2020.
*First White Woman (in circle)* combines a live performance of gesture and text with the projection of a video performance built from similar gestural material. The piece closed with a participatory portion in which audience members are invited into a brief collective naming of places loved and remembered. Utilizing solo performance to ground an invitational experience, the piece starts with my personal ancestral fragments and ends with a collective present. This was a constructive experiment in developing and repurposing a performance vocabulary for the *First White Woman* series. Pieces of text, collections of gestures, and participation prompts for the audience may be shifted and remixed for use in different contexts. This iteration allowed me to add to the vocabulary I had previously developed and to build fluency in working with the growing assemblage of *First White Woman* performance elements. While *First (White) Woman: (in circle)* felt a bit disjointed and under-realized as a standalone piece, it offered useful information for future iterations of the work.

**Fig. 30** *First (White) Woman: in circle* (2019) Jennie Hahn. Scripted performance with projection and audience facilitation. Documentation photo by Jim Winters.
Diana Taylor discusses “performance” as both an object or process (ontology) and methodological lens, a way of knowing (epistemology). An event might be a performance; events might also be viewed as performance. Delineating performance as epistemology she writes: “Civic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnicity, and sexual identity, for example, are rehearsed and performed daily in the public sphere … Embodied practice, along with and bound up with other cultural practices, offers a way of knowing.”

I entered the process of creating To The First White Woman Here with a curiosity toward the performance of white settler womanhood. A fair amount has been written about performances of race and of gender, but I am unaware of performance analyses that look at the intersection of performed identity in the character of “white”, “settler”, “woman”. I am interested in ontological performances of this character, as in living history museums and nostalgic pioneer plays. I am even more curious about epistemological performances of white settler womanhood, or their “performativity” as framed by Judith Butler: socialized identity produced through regulating practices that resist identification because of the ways in which they are culturally normalized.

I seek to understand ongoing performances of white settler womanhood that are rendered invisible to me even as I perform them, because of the centering of white settler story in the formation of nationalist narratives, and the privileging of white experience in the hierarchies of white supremacy. Put another way, as my thesis committee member Libby Bischof asked in one committee meeting: “What are the stories white women tell about them/ourselves?” How do we perform our attachments to white settler identity?

76. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
77. Taylor, Archive & Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas, 3.
78. Taylor, Archive & Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas, 5.
I hadn’t stepped far into this inquiry before encountering, via the “captivity narrative” of Hannah Dustin, images of multiple “pioneer mother monuments” strewn about the territories of Turtle Island, most particularly in the Midwest and western states, and along the “Oregon Trail”.


**Fig. 31** Monument to Hannah Dustin/Duston in Haverill, MA. Photograph: North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo. Retrieved from Fiorellini, “Statue of White Woman Holding Hatchet and Scalps Sparks Backlash in New England.”

**interstitial haunting: Hannah Dustin**

There is an entry in “A Glossary of Haunting” that reads:

- **Mother**
  - Somewhere between monsters and mutual implication.

This is placed on the page directly between the entries “Monsters” and “Mutual Implication”, the definitions for which read, in part: “What is a monster? (A monster is one who has been wronged and seeks justice.) Why do monsters interrupt? (Monsters interrupt when the injustice is nearly forgotten.), “Mutual implication, or nos-otras, is a way of describing how the colonized and the colonizer ‘‘leak’ into each other’s lives” after centuries of settlement.”

I’ll take a cue from Lois Klassen on this one. Personal correspondence does seem an apt strategy when it comes to coping with a fully-fledged haunting.

Dear Hannah D.,

I’ve noticed the way you’ve tried to escape my notice, how you tell only what we want to hear, how you suggest that I just skip right over the whole thing and write about someone else. I would certainly rather write about something else! Maybe I could recite a bit of theory as to why all of those generic pioneer women carved in granite and cast in bronze wear sunbonnets. Perhaps I could remind us all that they had complexions to protect, very pale complexions. They had babies to defend. They had all of civilization to carry into the heathen wilderness, for heaven’s sake. I could theorize in all earnestness or with a fair bit of irony, I’m not really sure it matters either way. Or maybe I could just get a bit more vague. Something something something about a baby and a tree, about babies and hatchets, aboutscalps and profit, about revenge! It was revenge! Something something. See I don’t think you really want to look at all of those babies, not your own and certainly not the OTHERS, any more than I do, Hannah. You were protecting yourself, what choice did you have? They killed your baby, what else could you do? This is what it means to have fortitude, and strength. This is what it means to be brave. If I turn myself to look at you, really look at you, Hannah, I have to remember that … I’d rather write about something else.

Isn’t this a beautiful place where we live, here in New England? Aren’t we fortunate, aren’t we lucky to live here? We certainly are blessed. I don’t really believe in your God - I assume you have a God - but I’ve been told that because God blessed us, we get to live here! Lucky us, lucky me. I don’t believe in your God but I see your point. What are we if not blessed? By God, obviously.

When my friend told me your story, it was the first time I had heard it, and I said: “I don’t know of any captivity narratives in my family.” Ha! My point is, that was the first thing I thought and the first thing I said. I said, effectively: “Not me!” I said, “Show me proof!” Absurd. But but but captivity narratives … settler women killing entire Native families … those stories are pretty rare, right? It has nothing to do with me. You’re a hot mess, but you’re also an anomaly, right Hannah?

Have you looked at it, the monster? Are you the monster, or am I? Are you the mother? Those babies are the monster, Hannah. Our mother Earth is the monster. My mother’s grandmother could be a monster, Hannah, you were a monster. I am the monster Hannah. How long shall I haunt you?

Yours evermore,

Jennie H.
In the 1920s and 30s, a series of monuments were erected in public spaces throughout the United States that commemorate the “pioneer woman”. Through symbolic objects, attire, and figurative gesture, the monuments enshrine an ideology of gender and race that settler descendants, often groups of settler women, wished to inscribe within public memory. They also champion the collective role of white settler women in the conquest and settlement of Indigenous people and places. Two figurative monuments of Hannah Dustin are unique in their emphasis on a specific settler woman and the explicitness of the gendered and racist violence they glorify: Hannah Dustin killed and scalped for profit ten Abenaki people during the 1690s conflicts between the English and the French in Wabanaki territory.

**Fig. 32** Madonna of the Trail monument by August Leimbach, Springfield, Ohio, 1928. Erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Photo by Cynthia Prescott. Retrieved from “Pioneer Monuments in the American West – Explore Statues Honoring Early Settlers in the Old West.”

**Fig. 33** Memorial to Pioneer Women in Ellis, KS, 1933. Artist unknown. Photo by Cynthia Prescott. Retrieved from “Pioneer Monuments in the American West – Explore Statues Honoring Early Settlers in the Old West.”

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81. “Gerlyver Kernewek.”
While pioneer mother monuments were predominantly conceived, debated, and physically placed in the Midwest and western regions of the United States, there are a few that are located in the northeast. I have never seen one of these monuments in person, but I recognize the figures that they elevate implicitly. My interest in responding to them with performance, conceived as an interruption of settler colonial narrative in public space, is rooted in the pervasiveness and ready presence of the ideas they project. How do these images of settler women, physically occupying public space, and also reflected in a multitude of other forms of material culture, contribute to the ongoing performance of white settler womanhood? How has my body learned its gestures, and how to navigate public space, through the narratives that are reinforced and committed to collective consciousness by way of the pioneer mother monument?

In this work, I follow an interest toward the explicitly anti-colonial and anti-racist efforts of artists and activists to remove, deface, and otherwise disempower figurative monuments that uphold legacies of slavery and genocide in public space. Cynthia Prescott writes that in the 1920s and 30s, “accepted pioneer motherhood imagery became a popular and powerful way to inscribe racial hierarchy onto western lands.” At a time when these inscriptions are being actively debated and rewritten, not just in the western United States but across Turtle Island, public monuments are understood by many artists and activists to be potent sites and meaningful material for the deconstruction of colonial presumption and to reframe amnesiac settler stories toward more liberatory futures. At the very least, such interventions might create a rupture within which deeper forms of recognition might be possible. Leah Decter makes a strong argument for the task of “drawing on, interfering with, and redeploying the social histories and contemporary connotations” of visual and material culture and the everyday symbols and images that mobilize

and circulate “foundational nationalist narratives.” Decter argues that the very commonplaceness of these images, as profound influences on “dominant mythologies of national identity”, makes them especially useful to subvert. Interrupting their habitual acceptance in public consciousness can prompt a viewer to self-reflect and to reassess their most entrenched beliefs. In responding to colonial monuments with performance art interventions, this work is in conversation with the works of Rebecca Belmore, Ursula Johnson, Emily Johnson, Leah Decter, and Hadley Howes, among many.

**THESIS PERFORMANCE: TO THE FIRST WHITE WOMAN HERE (2022)**

The site is Machegony, Caskoak, in colonial naming Falmouth and then Portland. In Wabanaki presences this is a place where “people of all ages participated in symbolic and material exchange, celebrating inter-community marriages, relaying deep-time stories, sharing artistic and practical knowledge, and negotiating rights and responsibilities among contiguous communities, thus enabling social and ecological sustainability.” Since 1890 the site has functioned as city-owned public space known as the Eastern Promenade. There are a great many colonial monuments placed throughout the park, including the “Obelisk Memorial to George Cleeves” which sits at the top of the hill overlooking Casco Bay, with engraved commemoration to the “original settlers” of Machigone Neck and their families.

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The performance piece *To The First White Woman Here* began on April 30, 2022 at approximately 10 am, when I arrived at Machegony with my family and a rickety trailer containing a disassembled faux-granite pedestal. I began by gathering my small group of assistant-supporters and with them I acknowledged the place and how I understand myself to be situated in relationship with it/them. I sang a song in English and Kernewek (an ancestral language of mine) as an offering to the place. I explained to the group that I make this offering as a non-Indigenous person in an effort to practice more reciprocal relationship with place while observing boundaries of cultural practice that do not belong to me. The question I practice is how to be in more reciprocal relationship *from my own place of positioning* in Wabanaki territory and
colonial constructs. This is an effort I make from within relationships of guidance with Wabanaki people, and yet it remains a contested and precarious practice. Asking this site to hold the performance I was about to perform, one that resurrects and re-animates ongoing hauntings of colonial violences, was a significant ask that seemed to me to require reciprocation. I chose a song situated in my own cultural lineage as one mode of offering.

![Image of pedestal plaque](image.jpg)

**Fig. 35** To The First White Woman Here (2019) Jennie Hahn. Solo scored/improvisational performance with pedestal. Detail image of pedestal plaque, created by Jennie Hahn: plywood, epoxy putty, PLA filament, paint. Photo by Jim Winters.

I began to build the pedestal, with help from my family. This is constructed of plywood panels surfaced with faux-granite Formica laminate. The panels slide together with snapping interior hardware at the corners. Once assembled, the pedestal stands 3’X3’X4’. There is a faux-bronze plaque on one panel that reads:

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TO THE
FIRST WHITE WOMAN
HERE BRAVELY SHE CAME
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WHO WITH NOBLE SPIRIT
DOES IN BLOOD & PROFIT
COLONIZE THIS TERRITORY AND
FORGET HER STORIES HER SONGS

The plaque follows the linguistic style of engravings on actual pioneer mother monuments. It mimics the language, meaning, and layout of memorial engravings like the example below, admittedly lengthier than most, which is located on the campus of Texas Women’s University in Denton, Texas:

Marking a trail in a pathless wilderness pressing forward with unswerving courage she met each untried situation with a resourcefulness equal to the need. With a glad heart she brought to her frontier family her homelands cultural heritage. With delicate spiritual sensitiveness she illuminated the dullness of routine and the loneliness of isolation with beauty and with life abundant and with all she lived with casual unawareness of her value to civilization. Such was the pioneer woman. The unsung saint of the nations immortals.86

I replace the common titles of the monuments I model, typically “Pioneer Mother” or “Pioneer Woman”, with the title “First White Woman” to call in the language of “firsting”, pointing to colonial myths of origin and settler attempts to claim indigeneity in the places we colonize. The title also explicitly names the racial hierarchy implied and inscribed by monuments to pioneer women. The plaque both reiterates settler tropes of identity and attempts to resist them, naming the costs of participation in ongoing colonization and the truth of settler women’s violence, in contradiction and opposition to ideas of our “bravery” and “noble spirit”. The plaque is meant to contextualize, through somewhat coded language yet utilizing the terms and techniques of the work’s reference material, a performance that relies far more on expressions of the body than on the spoken word or written language.

86. “Pioneer Woman (Friedlander).”
Once the pedestal is built, I begin to “prepare the body”, as written in the score that I prepared for the piece. As I developed this piece, I struggled with how much to script, or devise, in advance. I had a strong instinct to let my body make the work, improvisationally, onsite. This was daunting, because I feel very responsible for how I am presenting my questions, my critiques, and my situatedness in public space. To trust myself to represent the complexities of the project intentions without preparation, to rely on the foundation of relationship and learning with Wabanaki and non-Native people that supports my experimentation in this work, was an intimidating concept. Yet all of my instincts kept leading me back to the simplicity of this intention: to stand on a pedestal in a public park, with a vocabulary of physical gestures at my
disposal, and make an improvised performance work. I balanced the tensions of my preparation process by generating a structure for the performance in the form of a score that contained several distinct sections rooted in action: “arrival/greeting”, “build the pedestal”, “prepare the body”, “climb the pedestal”, and so on.

In front of the still gathering audience, I remove a pioneer woman’s dress from a bright blue IKEA bag. The dress is garish in blues and reds. A friend helps me button all of the buttons. I stand at the pedestal, using its surface as a table, and remove a mirror and makeup from the bag. I apply a thick layer of white makeup to my entire face. I add eyeliner with drips of black “teardrops” running down my face and pooling near my jawbone. I paint on bright red lipstick that also drips and pools from the corners of my mouth, a bit like blood. Finished with the makeup, I pull a pink-clad “white” baby doll, an oversized faux-book (Bible), and a plastic hatchet from the bag and place them on top of the pedestal. I hand the blue IKEA bag to an assistant/audience member and begin to circle the pedestal.

![Image of performance](image-url)

**Fig. 37, Fig. 38** *To The First White Woman Here* (2019) Jennie Hahn. “The Shape of Self”. Solo scored/improvisational performance with pedestal. University of Maine, wıəłıpskek mənəhən, Wabanaki/Maine. Photos by Jim Winters.
There is one set of gestures that mimic those of the pioneer mother monuments. One of these represents the Hannah Dustin monument in Haverhill, MA, another the seventeen foot “Pioneer Woman” sculpture of Ponca City, OK, another the “Madonna of the Trail” monuments, twelve of which were placed in different states along trail routes of the “westward expansion” chapter of colonization in the U.S.\(^7\) Placing these figures in my body, I noticed a few things about the monuments and the images they project. First, the positions of the figures among the statues are very similar. It requires only a slight shift, in most cases, to move from one figure to another. The exception to this is Hannah Dustin. She stands out from the other monuments both in her representation of a specific person and in the explicit violence of her story and the colonial conquest it celebrates. A vast majority of the allegorical pioneer mother monuments (allegorical in their emphasis on unifying national identity rather than telling specific colonial stories) carry one or more of three objects: a baby (sometimes a young child), a weapon (either a shotgun or a hatchet), and/or a bible. Finally, the poses of these sculptures, including the Haverhill Hannah Dustin, are uncannily familiar in my body. Placing my hand on my hip and staring at the horizon with a hopeful and determined gaze comes more naturally to me than even I expected, despite having worked with many of these tropes and images of this kind in my past work.

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\(^7\) Prescott, *Pioneer Mother Monuments*, 66.
There is a sequence that consists of only two actions: slashing the plastic hatchet through the air and jumping with both feet off the ground. This is the “reckon” section of the score. The sequence escalates rhythmically until First White Woman is exhausted and she drops the hatchet to the ground. She then begins to access a set of gestures that I developed in previous iterations of First White Woman: “vomit”, “wash the face”, “cling to child”. At this point there are three sections of the score left: “tell”, “topple”, and “dance”. I am not entirely sure how I will move through them, what order they will come in, or how I will get myself from one action to another. This is fitting; even when I am not creating a performance piece in public, I am rarely sure how I will tell the truth about my situatedness, topple myself as a monument to colonialism should be toppled, or find the joy that I will need to dance. This piece was performed twice as part of my
thesis work. First in Machegony and then, in somewhat abbreviated form, on the campus of the University of Maine in Orono, on Marsh Island within panawâhpōskewtēkʷ. Performing at two different sites with two very different audiences taught me that navigating the piece can shift dramatically in form and feeling within different performance contexts. This is both unsurprising (always true!) and partially intentional as I work very much in response to space; the performance in Orono began and ended in a markedly different manner from the iteration in Machegony.


The piece ends with a reading, a song, and a dance. I explain my interest in learning the dances of my cultural ancestries, and I invite audience members to join me in a Cornish social
dance I recently taught myself by watching videos online. My toppling in each instance was rather undramatic. I simply leave the pedestal. This too is a choice we can make! As we dance, the pedestal becomes the center of one future speculative possibility: shifting from individual narrative to collective movement. In Machegony, I then explained the concept of rematriation as I understand it and again talked about a practice of offering to place from within settler colonial perspective. I explained that I would be making a donation to the Eastern Woodlands Rematriation Collective, and offered to ensure that any cash donations placed in the faux-bible on the pedestal, which is also a box, would be directed to EMW after the performance. The pedestal was then repurposed as a site of reparative action. This action was small and primarily financial, yet it was meant to bring the energies of reciprocity and direct action, particularly among a majority settler assembly, into the performance milieu.

**sitting with Rebecca Belmore**

As I sit with Rebecca Belmore’s expansive body of work and as I hold *To The First White Woman Here* in conversation with works like *Vigil, Creation or Death: We Will Win*, and *Facing the Monumental*, I return repeatedly to Belmore’s powerful use of her body in public space. Belmore enacts deep dialogue surrounding a practice of resistance to and interruption of colonial processes through performance. As I have grappled with my responsibilities in performing First White Woman, balancing an instinct to “speak with my body” against a desire to prepare the piece with enough specificity to support the work’s intent, I think of the way that Rebecca Belmore describes her process of creating performance:

88. “Support The Eastern Woodlands Rematriation Collective.”
It doesn’t bother me if there’s nobody there or if there’s very few people. For me it’s really about occupying space, a little bit of room to make something. Thinking about what it is I want to explore or say. It’s unplanned, but there’s a general idea, a general plan. I have a loose plan. I often show up with all my material and get to work. I have different objects and gestures that I like to push. For example I love pails of water, I love the hammer, I love nails. So I carry them forward and find new ways to use them.  

While I am approaching a performance intervention from a very different situated perspective, this description is both familiar and catalyzing. Sitting with Belmore’s practice over three decades, I can see the repetitions of material and process that she names here, and I can see their effectiveness, how the body of work becomes a dialogue not just with place and settler colonial institutions and her own community but with itself over time. Her practice looks both backward and forward and creates a cadence of imagery and action that generates a vital kind of rhythm. Belmore’s performance work is remarkable for many reasons, among them the fact that her physical presence appears to defy boundaries: boundaries of time, of physical space, of the document. Her energy and purpose are palpable in a photograph. The work stings with resonance twenty years after its completion. And as her body moves with crystal clear intention through space, she seems to speak to geographies far beyond wherever she happens to be standing. When she’s working in expansive geographies, her work and her presence fill them with ease. I watched an interview with Meryl Streep once, where she described her job as an actor and said “I move molecules” … in a theater, or a room. Rebecca Belmore moves molecules on the other side of the continent.

Above all, when I place First White Woman in conversation with Rebecca Belmore’s performance work, I feel a deep affinity of process, creative impulse and development.

89. Lesley MFA, Art Talk.
90. See Belmore’s work Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mother, 1991. “Rebecca Belmore.”
frameworks. I also feel urged to go farther, much farther. To be more specific with what I creatively respond to, to take greater risk, to trust my body more, to show up with the materials and get to work. To The First White Woman Here utilizes a vocabulary that I have developed in pieces over several years, the work has always been iterative. As I think specifically about the future of this piece, I wonder how I can place her more strategically, what action-based tasks, what sites and what “loose plans” I might develop to grow her utility and her impact. If I can exchange a creative offering with Rebecca Belmore, I offer Speaker For The Dead.

**PORTFOLIO: SPEAKER FOR THE DEAD**

Inspired by Donna Haraway’s use of the concepts “Speaker for the Dead” and “companion species”, I explore my emerging understanding of relationality with ghost pipe (monotropa uniflora), russula fungi, pine trees, and pileated woodpecker. These four species are themselves connected in a web of relations, as the russula fungi and pine trees exchange nutrients through mycorrhizal networks, the ghost pipe syphons carbon from the pines by accessing the exchange between pine and fungi, and the pine provides both home and sustenance to the woodpecker. This project is ultimately an exploration in developing a character, Speaker for the Dead, who represents, stands for, and provides visibility for these four species to human witnesses. She attempts to translate communications from the four species, inviting human witnesses to increase their awareness of this intricate web of relations, and demanding that they consider their own histories in relationship with these species and the broader more-than-human world.

91. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 164.
The video approach to this work is inspired in part by music videos, and by performers who have created abstract, highly theatrical characters to perform their songs: artists like Taylor Mac and Annie Lennox. I am inspired in the direction of this piece by the interdisciplinary performance work of Wabanaki artist Firefly the Hybrid. I am interested in spectacle, in overt theatricality as an entry point for disrupted complacency, a device that supports audience capacities to view the worlds around them in novel ways.

I imagined Speaker for the Dead adorned with a headpiece of giant ghost pipe that emerges from a forest floor. I pictured the Speaker whispering and singing at the

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92. “FIREFLY THE HYBRID.”
audience, appearing as a talking head. I built a headpiece of found, organic materials mixed with constructed, synthetic materials: shaping ghost pipe and russula fungi with upholstery foam, wire, and batting, then surrounding them with organic pine needles, leaves and moss. I captured video of myself in three different formats that are interwoven over an audio track developed from my own vocalizations and recited text. Incorporating non-verbal sounds such as breathing and guttural noise, non-verbal melodies, and text that is both spoken and sung, the audio is layered beneath edited imagery. Images and vocal tracks are intentionally misaligned throughout the majority of the video, with the exception of one or two moments when we see the Speaker speak what we are hearing.

Fig. 42 Speaker for the Dead (2020) Jennie Hahn. Video performance: duration 0°3’57”. Still frame 0°2’23”.
listening with Ursula Johnson

I have been thinking about Ursula Johnson lately. I find myself referencing her in conversation, considering my words as I speak them, remembering an orientation toward responsibility that is integrated into identity. I think about her practice of knowing not just what she is saying, but to whom, and how. I think about how this permeates not only the work that Johnson makes but how she contextualizes it for audiences. Mobilized to shift my attention in small and frequent, everyday ways, I am called in conversation with Johnson’s work to clarify my intentions.

In particular I think about Johnson’s description of “sharing circles” for Mi’kwite’tmn (Do You Remember), about her unambiguous intention to create discomfort for audience members, to disrupt their expectations in ways that would make them feel foolish, confused, and awkward. I remember how this intention was matched with an equally clear intention to create a space for processing those feelings, and Johnson’s commitment to not just put a work that is disruptive out there, but to “talk about it afterwards”. Though I am generally practiced in facilitating discussion and participation as part of performance work, I did not create that space after To The First White Woman Here, in either iteration. Following the model set by Ursula Johnson, I intend to consider more carefully who I am speaking to and what I am saying and how. As I iterate performing situated story in public, I will need to also rethink my responsibilities in supporting interpretation and reflection processes for audience members.

Ursula Johnson’s use of archives as an organizing framework in Mi’kwite’tmn (Do You Remember) offers constructive guidance as well. The exhibition is exhaustive in its engagement with the colonial archiving processes of collection, cataloguing, interpretation, and display. Each aspect of the process is flipped in intention and/or procedure so as to disable the mechanism and
create a rupture in the expected throughline of experience, conceivably from the perspective of
settler visitor, curator, researcher, or archivist alike. The portion of my thesis work that employs
the archive as a construct for considering and manipulating colonial memory is more poetic than
clever, but it is also not nearly as thoroughly considered as the experience of encountering
Mi’kwite’tmn (Do You Remember). Again there is the provocation to go farther, to think deeper,
to clarify: what am I saying, and to whom, and how?

Listening with Ursula Johnson, I offer daughter-her-mother: a futurepasts archive.

PORTFOLIO: DAUGHTER-HER-MOTHER, A FUTUREPASTS ARCHIVE (2020-2022)

The digital archive Daughter-Her-Mother: A Futurepasts Archive began as an
experiment in nonlinear storytelling that might also act in resistance to colonial knowledge
preservation systems and hierarchies. This online archive holds, reveals, and interweaves
fragments of my own futurepasts\(^{93}\) while establishing a site of collective performance.
The archive invites familial and decolonial investigations from and with the viewer, leaving
spaces for the insertion of multitudinous narratives. This experiment intentionally nestles itself
within the organizational conventions of a colonially conceived digital archiving tool, with the
express purpose of learning to resist the structural assumptions and the hierarchy of ideas
embedded in its format.

\(^{93}\) A constructed word I use to acknowledge and employ the intimacy of relationship between
future and past, orienting toward a conception of time that is non-linear.
Collection: Stitching with the Dead (2020)

The first collection, *Stitching with the Dead*, was conceived as a conversation with specifically maternal/female ancestors through the “women’s work” creative practices of embroidery and piecework. Objects of family relevance were stitched upon, this stitching understood as a mode of embodied discourse with those ancestors and family members who had previously stitched, held, sat, and eaten with the object. The stitched-upon objects were then entered into the digital archive with entries for fields like “object description” and “subject” appearing unrelated to the objects, though they are in fact fragments of shared stories. “Subjects" are performance scores, prompts that encourage the viewer to perform their own relationships with ancestral fragments and futurepasts.

**Fig. 43** Embroidered Knowledges: *Stitching with the Dead* (2020) Jennie Hahn. Screenshot of a page from the digital archive site: originexcavations.omeka.net. Digital archive collection: text, embroidery floss on paper, thread, fragments of found papers and chemistry labs, family quilt squares and embroidery work. Assembled as a digital archive and hosted on omeka.net. Written, created, and compiled by Jennie Hahn in collaboration with living family members and deceased ancestors.
In one example, I stitched upon a quilt square created in pink and white silk by my great-grandmother Dora Shaw. Remembering a conversation with my aunt Susan about Dora in which Susan said to me “she was not a very frivolous person”, I stitched the quotation into the square. I conceive of this piece as a conversation with Dora, and with Susan, who was living at the time, and as a record of memory and oral family history. In my stitching conversation, I am practicing an attention and a discourse that functions through overlays of time, memory, language, and the embodied knowledge of my fingers pushing needle through silk. In another example, I created a conversation with my paternal grandmother, whom I never met, by piecing together a quilt square from fragments of her high school chemistry notes in relation to mine. Our notebooks were created seventy-two years apart and contain similar careful drawings of apparatuses and descriptions of procedures. Cutting the original lab papers into pieces and then stitching them together created an intimacy in my efforts to know this grandmother, and to connect with her across time.

Fig. 44 Embroidered Knowledges: Stitching with the Dead (2020) Jennie Hahn. Detail of one collection item: embroidery floss on silk piecework. Quilt square pieced by my great-grandmother Dora Shaw, with the words “She was not a very frivolous person”, a quote from my aunt Susan in remembering Dora.
The embroidered objects in this piece provided an anchor for the process of beginning to explore digital archives as a publishing and performance location for fragmented and tangled, woven and unwoven stories. Simultaneously, building an archival collection around the display and preservation of physical objects raised significant conceptual questions of intention and purpose within the Daughter-Her-Mother project. The organization of knowledge around collections of disempowered objects is inherent to and entrenched within colonial worldview. Grappling with my relationship to the object as it functions to dominate my perception of the world, and how that grappling appears in my futurepast renderings of fragmented ancestral relations, is a crucial conceptual project within the work.

**Collection: A Fog Mist Vapor Can Bleed Crimson**

A second collection, *A Fog Mist Vapor Can Bleed Crimson*, contains a set of audio recordings that bring the viewer into the speculative world of Lydiawraith and Pippa, two characters I created in an experiment with speculative fiction writing in the summer of 2020. The choice to ground this collection with audio recordings as objects is partially inspired by the Fawkes/Passamaquoddy phonograph recordings currently housed in the collections of the Passamaquoddy Peoples’ Digital Archive. As the wax recordings offer a chance for living Passamaquoddy people to hear the voices of their ancestors, contributing as well to community language revitalization and cultural continuance projects, so this collection imagines ancestral voices heard by future generations.

Within this collection, the character of Lydiawraith is conceived as an ancestral specter caught between worlds. Pippa represents a current/future generation that bears responsibility for

94. “Passamaquoddy People.”
repairing the harms of the capitalist-colonial-patriarchal eras and practices ancestral re-
connection through a process called “reach”. The recordings in this collection are Pippa’s log of
the connections she forms with Lydiawraith, and of the ways in which she encounters
Lydiawraith’s voice(s) across spacetime. The audio recordings are meant to be technically
imperfect, ethereal in their lack of visual component and yet grounded in the vibration of vocal
tenor, of sound.

As the archive currently manifests, *A Fog Mist Vapor Can Bleed Crimson* is the
collection most directed toward future speculative renderings of personal and collective
futurepasts. This collection was built almost entirely from my speculative fiction writings which
are fragmentary and disjointed and largely unedited, but which when taken together do contain a
narrative arc and some world-making coherence. Their presentation in the archive works against
that limited coherence, separating descriptions of the fictional world from abstract poetry from
concrete narrative and mashing them back together again. Fragmentation is a fundamental
element of white settler colonial experience when it comes to knowing our stories and
establishing connections with ancestors. The experience of narrative fragmentation, and the
choice to attempt storytelling from within that experience, grounds a creative and conceptual
resistance to concrete, linear, logical, absolute, and *predestined* mythologies of belonging to
place that formulate and perpetuate the settler-colonial project.

**Collection: To The First White Woman Here**

The third collection in Daughter-Her-Mother centers my effort to reframe colonial origin
stories, built with video documentation of *To The First White Woman Here* in
Mechegony/Portland on April 30, 2022. The collection utilizes text from the printed pamphlet
that was provided during the performance as “description” content and shifts invitational performance scores to the “source” field. If the Stitching With the Dead collection centers my personal relationships with ancestors within living memory and A Fog Mist Vapor Can Bleed Crimson dives into deep time speculative fictions of past and future, To The First White Woman Here provides the link between, speculating and contending with the source of the colonial origin narratives that have shaped my personal and familial relationships within Wabanaki territory for four hundred years.

Fig. 45 Embroidered Knowledges: Stitching with the Dead (2020) Jennie Hahn. Detail of one collection item: pgs. 52 & 53 of the book Old Prouts Neck (1924) with the words “of the first nothing is known” stitched upon them in white embroidery floss.

a brief history of the 17th century pamphlet

In an effort to further contextualize To The First White Woman Here for audience members, I wrote, designed, and printed a pamphlet that was available at both performances. This was designed to follow the formatting, and loosely the purpose, of pamphlets that would have been widely circulated in 17th Century England and New England. While I did not conduct a
thorough exploration of this form of material culture, I did follow it as a conceptually integrated format with which to provide audience members with additional information about the piece. I designed and hand-cut a PVC printing block with an image of a pioneer mother monument. I then found a 17th Century Fell typeface font online, originally designed by John Fell and digitized in an open-source format by Igino Marini. I used this font in the layout and design of the pamphlet.

**Fig 46** Front page/cover of “A Visitation” pamphlet accompanying the thesis performance To The First White Woman Here. Hand cut PVC block print, Fell Type, printed on cardstock.

95. *The Fell Types are digitally reproduced by Igino Marini. www.iginomarini.com*
I was drawn to the pamphlet as a material mode with which to deliver context to audience members for two reasons. First, pamphlets play an important role in the history of women in print. In 17th Century England, debates about gender roles were vociferously debated through pamphlet culture, and it was one mode via which women, and especially middle class women, entered the publishing field. Pamphlets appear to have functioned in public discourse something like a hybrid of Twitter with the longer-form blogs of the early 2000s, with rapid responses, open retorts, lengthy threads of debate, and publicly performed chastisement, support, and policing of behavior. This would have been one significant mode of public debate at the time when the character I explore in the piece, First White Woman, would have lived.

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Fig. 47 Title page of a 1773 printing of the captivity narrative of Mary Rowlandson. Retrieved from “Mary Rowlandson Captivity Narrative.”

Fig. 48 1696 printing of “An Essay In Defence of the Female Sex”. Retrieved from “Rare Book Highlights.”

Additionally, though the 17th century captivity narratives of Hannah Dustin and others would have been printed in longer-form, novella-length books, their imagery and layout designs were very similar to those of the shorter pamphlets. Captivity narratives form one significant body of material culture that have influenced the ideologies and performances of white settler womanhood in public, and as such, there is a visual and material reference to the original printings and circulation of those stories in the pamphlet I’ve designed. The text is meant, like that of a pamphlet, to express my thoughts and to declare my perspective. In some ways it complicates the form by refusing the rules of persuasive argument. On the other hand, it fits well within the 17th Century pamphlet genre, which appears to have been freeform and experimental, as in the case of the pamphlet “An Essay In Defence of the Female Sex”, which utilizes a format of personal correspondence combined with a theatrical “cast of characters” to take down the author’s detractors.

98. Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity, Sufferings, and Removes, of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*.
SITE 3: FUTURITIES

They glyphed futures—doorways. Through art they found the portals . . . glitches into the slipstream to keep them safe. Within each precious layer of coded-colour they placed the remembrance of people who have been eliminated from this spatial realm. The ancestors folded these remembrances into the colours as a medium of time travel, as loving layers so that they too might jump scale across cartographies and teleport from the time of the Great Damage.100

portal (portal)101

The performance work To the First White Woman Here establishes, points to, and examines some of the shapes white settler women have held over the past four hundred years. It does this in conversation with the prospect of seeking shapes that may enact less harmful paradigms. It marks a speculative step toward releasing and discarding colonial forms, beginning to imagine potential roads to follow toward other ways of being, through glimpses and glimmers, through fragments. This performance piece practices locating those fragments and imagining into them. The primary purpose of this work is to publicly reckon, to appear in current and aspirational dissolution of settler colonial self. It is important to recognize that the illusion is but partially discarded. Shifting shapes is not graceful, it’s not pretty. It is uncomfortable and stupidly slow. It often looks like I’m doing literally nothing. What are the conditions necessary for metamorphosis? Why am I so hung up on my own metamorphosis? Because worlds live within us? Because we and the world evolve together?

Thinking with speculation and toward future being I am profoundly influenced by the future world visioning of Black and Indigenous writers such as adrienne maree brown, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Karyn Recollet, Octavia Butler, N.K. Jemisin, Nnedi Okorafor, and Grace

101. “Gerlyver Kernewek”
Dillon. Karyn Recollet (Cree) writes that “Indigifuturist ideas of land-ing and flight are situated in close proximity to Black radical feminist futurist maps.”\textsuperscript{102} adrienne maree brown argues for the necessity of imagination and collective future world visioning as an act of mutual and environmental care, asking “what are the ideas that will liberate all of us?”\textsuperscript{103} Writing from within white settler perspective, I recognize that radical imaginaries and visionary future world manifestations are prolifically generated within the realms of Indigifuturism and Afrofuturism, many grafted to specific situated experiences of ongoing colonization and white supremacy. Indigenous and Black futureworld dreamers are undoubtedly best positioned to lead collective humanity toward liberatory ways of being.

From white settler perspective, Donna Haraway thinks deeply about collective futures, speculating in collaboration with artists and scholars of many cultural and disciplinary backgrounds. Her experimental speculative fiction writing in “The Camille Stories” makes a case for the practice of narrative speculation as a commitment to creating and inhabiting the possibilities of our entangled futures. She argues for speculative storytelling as a path toward “cultivating the capacity to reimagine wealth, learn practical healing rather than wholeness” and practice “intentional kin making across deep damage and significant difference”\textsuperscript{104}. Recognizing that efforts toward “making kin” in multi-species recuperation is no innocent project, that the prospect is riddled with crippling power dynamics, that storytelling as world building is long

\textsuperscript{95.} Recollet, “Choreographies of the Fall: Futurity Bundles & Land-Ing When Future Falls Are Immanent,” 90.
\textsuperscript{103.} “It is so important that we fight for the future, get into the game, get dirty, get experimental. How do we create and proliferate a compelling vision of economies and ecologies that center humans and the natural world over the accumulation of material? We embody. We learn. We release the idea of failure, because it’s all data. But first we imagine.” Brown, \textit{Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds}, 18.
\textsuperscript{104.} Haraway, \textit{Staying with the Trouble}, 136, 138.
practiced in many Indigenous communities, and that “it is critical not to once again raid situated indigenous stories as resources for the woes of colonizing projects and peoples,105” in “risky co-making”, Haraway proposes collective storytelling toward future worlds as one way to practice a commitment to messy, yet more responsible, relationality.

I participate in this effort, of telling stories for future entanglements, as a thinking alongside and within Indigenous guidance, as a dreaming with my ancestors and future generations, as a being together and apart in webs of care. It might be an act of reciprocity; it might be a reach toward repair. It is once more an effort toward relational dialogue and practice. This is yet more precarity: as Kyle Whyte makes clear, we are living in a world of settler colonial dreaming. This is the future of fantasies my many ancestors have made, complete with the privileges of power and property that were designed to benefit white settler descendants106. This sets me up to ask: what are my responsibilities toward future world speculations? What are the consequences of dreaming? Whyte writes “We are always in dialogue with our ancestors as dystopianists and fantasizers.”107 As such, I do not have the choice not to dream. I sit in entangled relation as a settler descendant and future settler ancestor, what responsibility do I carry? How I dream in relationship and entanglement then becomes my practice: a practice that is always evolving, in which I am still learning and fumbling toward more effective understanding, building capacities to fulfill my situated responsibilities in Wabanaki territory and beyond.

105. Haraway, Staying with the Trouble, 87. 
106. Whyte, “Indigenous Science (Fiction) for the Anthropocene,” 237. This point is echoed by adrienne maree brown who writes: “We are living in the ancestral imagination of others, with their longing for safety and abundance, a longing that didn’t include us, or included us as enemy, fright, other.” Brown, Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds, 21. 
fawi (The River Fowey)

Speaking of speculating futures and dreaming toward repair, there’s a river I’d like to meet. Fawi (River Fowey) runs through Kernow (Cornwall), from a spring within Bosvena (Bodmin Moor) to Mor Kernow (the Cornish Sea, the English Channel). The estuary of this river is sometimes called Usell, “the howling place”. Fawi passes near the village of Lannlyvri where, quite likely, my ancestor Judith married John Libby in 1635, before she crossed the Atlantic to Owascoag, before she became The First White Woman Here. I would like to meet this river, a river who might remember my ancestors, who might remember Judith. Judith who carries the weight of my family’s feverish firsting, who has spent centuries unnamed, who haunts and is haunted.

As I map this proposal for performance as a practice of recognition and repair, from the places and the people who have taught and challenged me in Wabanaki territory, through a narrative unraveling of identity tightly bound to settler myths of origin, toward a release of white settler privileges and a return of Wabanaki homelands to Wabanaki people, I look to this river Fawi as a potential partner and friend in speculative enactments of repair. As panawáhpskewtəkw has taught me here, what might I learn and generate in co-creative partnership with Fawi?

Holding in my dreaming this river of my futures, this river of my pasts, I move through portals of metamorphosis, of change, winding through territories in which I am interlocutor, occupier, guest, memory, and friend. I propose that performance practices, through embodied storytelling and public narrative intervention, play a vital role in re-framing settler narratives that uphold colonial policies and paradigms. Intervening in settler narrative as one mode of recognition and repair requires positioning settler reckoning within multi-modal action and the guidance of Indigenous artists, scholars, and community leaders. I follow among others the performance
practices of Rebecca Belmore, Ursula Johnson, and Emily Johnson. I propose that settler dreaming within Indigenous guidance must move in multiple directions, to face the hauntings that seep through colonial amnesia and to re-connect us in deep time beyond the boundaries of settler story. I dream beyond these boundaries in living, breathing, awkward manifestations of learning in public, to cross thresholds of conditioned limitation and to bust a way through repetitious settler shapes of being, to topple the monument, to imagine other ways.

moving with Emily Johnson

I follow Emily Johnson and her community-driven methodology. Johnson’s invitations to audience members, particularly in cross-cultural contexts with non-Native audiences, bring those audiences into both speculative and concrete practices of reciprocity and self-reflection toward situatedness. This is evident when a piece begins with gathering by the water, when each of her collaborators name themselves and where they come from, when she asks each person present to plant and care for corn. I am motivated by the clarity of her invitations and the real commitments that they represent. As with the performance art interventions of Ursula Johnson and Rebecca Belmore, I am called by these aspects of Emily Johnson’s practice to step further, to be clearer, to practice unapologetic truth-telling from within a deepening understanding of my own positioning, to demand more of myself and others for our collective futures and for Indigenous rematriation. I follow and think with Johnson toward futurities that center Indigenous stewardship and continuance.

In Being Future Being,108 Emily Johnson and each of her collaborators speak to us from the future. Together, when they speak, we are standing beside the East River, sharing a

108. Knight and Barrio, Emily Johnson’s Collaboration with Jeffrey Gibson at Socrates.
collectively practiced entanglement of situated stories. This ensemble models “being future being”\textsuperscript{109} for the assembled audience and they call us into that practice with them. Emily tells a story, a future speculative story. She speaks this story aloud, and it is witnessed and heard, and so it makes a world. I receive this story as an offering and an act of Yup’ik guidance, through the channels of YouTube from a chair by a window in the city of South Portland near Cascoak, and also in Lenapehoking. To Emily Johnson, I offer an excerpt of speculative storytelling toward repair.

**crested (to see through time)\textsuperscript{110}**

Somewhere in my futures I have dreamed a person named Pippa. Pippa walks along a path of gravel through a low, dry grass. Along the ridge of a tall bluff, beside tucked-in-cozy beaches and thunderous salt spray. Pippa is a Connector, to use the crude English. Pippa wouldn’t, though I am not able to see or hear far enough to translate the word Pippa would use. “Kelmys” comes close. “Kelmys” is “knotted” or “related” in Kernewek, one of Pippa’s ancestral languages\textsuperscript{111}, also my own. Pippa is kelmys, and infi.

Here first to orient you, here where we are here and now here, people practice moving through time. Many people do not have only one time, these people are multitemporal, known as infi. Some people do stay rooted in the here and now, these some we call ona. We do not have she or he, no one is gendered. In the here and now we refer to each other according to how we show up in time.

\textsuperscript{109} “BEING FUTURE BEING —.”
\textsuperscript{110} “Infi Glossary · Daughter-Her-Mother, a Futurepasts Archive.”
\textsuperscript{111} “Gerlyver Kernewek”
As kelmys, Pippa performs the role of repairing connections between and among species and environments throughout timespace. Over the many centuries known as The Epochs of Domination, a great many vital connections in lifeweb were broken. Nearly severed. Restoring health and vitality to the planet depends on restoring these relationships. The dominator descendants of this world here and now were led back into this understanding by all of the original people of all the living places. When the lands and the waters were given back, at the close of the Domination days, many of the dominators and their children learned the skills they needed to meet their responsibilities in the old communities. Some traveled back to the places their ancestors would have cared for, some remained to learn the ways of being in the places they occupied. Some fought and took life and held tight to domination and became Walkers. Those who are kelmys knotted, related come from all ancestral backgrounds here and now. The pathweavings of each person’s ancestors through the Epochs of Domination determine which responsibilities they hold as kelmys here and now. Pippa is kelmys, and also a descendent of dominators.

Pippa is walking toward a sunrise, some kind of glow on the horizon, a shift in time. “Shift” is not quite accurate, because Pippa as infi, as kelmys, is conscious of the layering of time around infi even as infi moves through place the grasses, the spray. Time is thick around infi like leys mud, slime. If time had a smell, of course time has a smell, it would be like clam flats. I know best the clam flats of Wawenock territory and so I will speak, as an approximation, the Penobscot words “ásosko” mud and “ess” clam.  

112. “Gerlyver Kernewek”
Pippa and the sunrise. I am ending this story with a beginning. I close with an open portal, a transition into something … other. *This English is useless!* A transition into, perhaps, “aral”, an tu aral, the flip side. Pippa knows where to walk with feet that remember. This path, these paths. Pippa seeks the place of cresting, *a place to sit and see through time*. It will be granite.

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114. “Gerlyver Kernewek”
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APPENDIX:

“A VISITATION” THESIS PERFORMANCE PAMPHLET

Fig. 49 Front/cover page of the performance pamphlet “A Visitation of the Maligned & Malignant First White Woman Pioneer Mother of Maine yessabygod”. Hand cut PVC block print, digitally reproduced Fell Type, printed on cardstock.
Dear Friend Dear Future,

Where do you begin a story? What marks a beginning? Which beginning will you choose and how does the choice shape your narrative?

This story begins with mud. It is the smell of the flats at low tide. There’s the smell of mud and a wrapping in fog, the feeling of being cold but not afraid. This is the beginning. I think.

I would like to tell you the story of why I am here, standing on a pedestal in this public park with a painted-white face and a plastic hatchet.

Will you take a moment to breathe with me? Will you hold your pores open to invite in the light, help me to photosynthesize and be fluid?

I wrote a piece once, a performance piece, in college. I stood in the center of a classroom with a baking dish full of water and salt packets I had swiped from the dining hall. I emptied the salt packets into the water. I pulled soft weathered stones and periwinkle shells from my pockets, from my hair. And then I talked about “blue blood”, about a “blue blood of belonging”.

Part of the story is to change in the telling. Reaching through the era- sures, standing in the void. Keep moving toward the tender places. I love you.

In 1636 an ancestor arrives in Wabanaki territory. He is an indentured servant from Cornwall and he goes to work for three years as a fisherman at Richmond Island, off the coast of
Cape Elizabeth. Four years later, he moves to the mainland, in Owascoag/Black Point/Scarborough. He rents a parcel granted in a land grab effort of the British crown to Thomas Cam-mock. The ancestor begins to build a farm. He sends for his wife and child.

Years ago, I might have told the story like this:

“We have been here, we were here THE LONGEST. We have been here since 1636. How many generations? Fourteen. Fourteen generations. For fourteen generations I have BELONGED HERE. That ancestor is PROOF.”

Clams suck and spit and cough saline through mucus membranes That shake and tremor Identical to first frost We are well beyond first frost out here The sparkle will shuck you Violent consumption, we are all stomach

Several years ago I encountered a rift, a chasm in the landscape of my story. This was the threshold upon which I stood to realize that rooting my sense of self in a perceived longevity of ancestral presence in Wabanaki/Maine is an appropriative, deeply entrenched mechanism of the colonial myth-making process. Let’s take a break to find a smile, recall a loved one, share a joke.

I began to retell the story. I began to build relationships with Wabanaki people and to shift my understanding of Wabanaki places. I found a line in the first page of my ancestors’ family history that I could not let go of, and I tumbled into the mucky crossroads of gender-based oppressions as they intersect with ongoing colonial, racialized, supremacist harms with- in my body, within my ancestral memory, within my future co-creations.

“That ______ had two wives is certain. Of the first, NOTHING IS KNOWN, except that she was the mother of all his sons ...”
I became obsessed with finding the first wife, the FIRST WHITE WOMAN here. Nearly one year ago I learned that in my story, the FIRST WHITE WOMAN has the name Judith, and she was married in the village of Lanlivery, Kernow, in 1635.

Lately, I am hearing stories from fellow humans of all backgrounds about the fragments of ancestral memory they are uncovering. I am learning about the joy these shreds of recovered memory bring, to collectively resist the annihilation of our humanities, our stories, and our songs. Each time, it feels like someone has taken a hammer and a chisel and rendered one small crack in the systems of domination that impact us all unequally. Someone has busted an elbow closer to a new old futurepast and we are changing shape, reaching and hoping toward liberatory future world being.

**PERFORMANCE PAMPHLET TEXT: BACK COVER**

The body of performance-as-research that is First White Woman is a fugue-like exploration of one seminal character from my ancestral memory and her entanglement within colonial narrative. The title of the series responds to the phenomena of “firsting”, in which settler colonizers justify our thefts of Native lands, waters, and livelihoods by orienting our stories to establish cultural origins within the territories we colonize. (see Jean O’Brien) Narratively and behaviorally, we claim “firstness”: indigeneity to the place. All of the works in the First White Woman series seek to reframe these colonial myths of origin, examining their impacts upon contemporary formations of identity and their/our roles in perpetuating systems of oppression.
In the 1920s and 30s, a series of monuments were erected in public spaces throughout the United States that commemorate the “pioneer woman”. Through symbolic objects, attire, and figurative gesture, the monuments enshrine an ideology of gender and race that settler descendants, often women, wished to inscribe within public memory. They also champion the collective role of white settler women in the conquest and settlement of Indigenous people and places. Two figurative monuments of Hannah Dustin are unique in their emphasis on a specific settler woman and the explicitness of the violence they glorify: Hannah Dustin killed, and scalped for profit, ten Abenaki people during the 1690s conflicts between the English and the French in Wabanaki territory.

I encounter these monuments as an invitation to look more honestly at the violences within my own stories, while recognizing the presence of the ideals expressed by these figures within my imaginings of my female ancestors. I revisit the “beginning” of a story that has profound implications for my connections with place and knowledge of self, culture, and people. I also examine the ways in which ideas about identity and their employment within (and resistance of) projects of domination appear and persist in public consciousness: through the 20th century monument, the 17th century pamphlet, and the contemporary digital archive.

PERFORMANCE PAMPHLET TEXT: INSERT SIDE A

I AM STANDING IN THE DARK, we are standing in the dark, you are standing in the dark on our own. We are alone not alone. Darkness solidifies, and though your feet remember the glacial fen beneath them, we are not sure where I am. The smells are familiar. The place is recognizable. Once upon a time you knew it well. At dusk, as the fog grows taller, mists rising
thick among the fingertips of all that shrubbery, we stand confident of our loss. Might as well sit down.

I imagine myself dancing in the company of faeries. You would call them pobel vean, the little people. This is a dangerous thing because all it ever takes is this one moment of imagine. WE IMAGINE AND IT IS SO. I think, therefore we are. You dream therefore I am. Dancing in the company of faeries. There are stories about this of course, lots of them. Volumes, treasuries, compendiums of stories. If we dance with faeries you are likely to be born burning, wrapped in the nursery blanket blaze of a centuries-old funeral pyre, though who is grieving and for whom remains unclear. If I dance with faeries we will never hear the fucking end of it, better to retreat with ourselves into spinsterhood and pretend we’re utterly miserable.

Instead (I hear you, I get it) we grow small and hard and vicious. We turn ourselves to stone. There are stories about that, too. We stand in circles of megalithic kinship and through the waves of ages, we murmur ancient evocations with hearts of quartz and mica. No one hears them, of course. We remain silent, still. I THINK WE’VE LOST OUR WAY. The path has gone, and we cannot tell me how to journey, how to map a new track through this story. So, I make my way back to the twinkling, to find the pobel vean. The lights are a trickery, glimmers in the damp. They are here but not here, only there when you blink. How do I explain the fever they set to burning, the desire gently planted in the compressed carbon of our soul?

I AM STANDING IN THE DARK, IMAGINING. We are wandering circles on the moors. I will follow that light until you lose it. Let them turn me back, let us lose the way. We will follow yourself backward through each secret, hush and whisper, day by day.
SOME IMPORTANT CITATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & GRATITUDES

The development of this piece is located in learning relationships with teachers, collaborators, and co-creators. MY GRATITUDE TO *many* Wabanaki places, Darren Ranco, Libby Bischof, Susan Smith, Owen Smith, Sherri Mitchell, René Goddess Johnson, Cory Tamler, Lilah Akins, Tyler Rai, Devon Kelley-Yurdin, Emilia Dahlin, Jennifer Neptune, James Eric Francis, Sr., and Siobhan Landry among many! *Penobscot place-name/language citations: Penobscot Nation Cultural & Historic Preservation Department *Kernewek language citations: gerlyver kernewek / cornish- dictionary.com

I deeply appreciate the design & construction support of Michael Hahn and Marco Bonometti, who made a modular faux-granite pedestal possible. A very incomplete list of WRITTEN WORKS which have transformed my thinking and being in this process:

Lisa Brooks, Our Beloved Kin
Jean O’Brien, Firsting and Lasting
Siobhan Senier, ed., Dawnland Voices
Zoe Todd, “Fish, Kin and Hope” and others
Sherri Mitchell, Sacred Instructions
Kyle Whyte, “Indigenous science (fiction) for the Anthropocene”
ssipsis & Georgia Mitchell, Molly Molasses & Me
To view DAUGHTER-HER-MOTHER, A FUTUREPASTS ARCHIVE, focus the camera of your phone on the QR code below, then follow the link that appears on your screen:
AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Jennie Hahn (she/her) is an interdisciplinary civic performance artist and writer committed to social repair and environmental care in Wabanaki/Maine, a place with which she is in multi-generational, settler colonial relationship. She founded and currently co-creates Open Waters, a civic arts collective.

Jennie works within both collaborative and solo processes to create participatory storytelling events that practice equitable relations between and among humans and the more-than-human world. As a producer of community-based theater and performance, Jennie has developed multi-year and multi-partner performance projects with Maine farmers (Farms & Fables, 2011), municipal/state agencies (Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, 2014), and fisheries biologists (In Kinship, 2016). She is co-creator of the In Kinship Collective (ongoing), a cross-cultural learning and creation process that follows the tradition of Wabanaki guiding.

Jennie’s relationship-driven methodologies are rooted in early training with Cornerstone Theater Company (Los Angeles). Her work has been further shaped by participation in The Catalyst Initiative (Center for Performance and Civic Practice, USA) and the Urban Bush Women Summer Leadership Institute (New York). Jennie’s collaborative work has been supported by the MAP Fund, New England Foundation for the Arts, the Kindling Fund, Maine Arts Commission, and the Maine Humanities Council, among others.

Jennie is a candidate for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Intermedia from The University of Maine in August 2022.