Recasting Commodity and Spectacle in the Indigenous Americas

London UK
22-23 November 2012

This symposium investigates how Indigenous performance in the Americas engages with and contests the commodification of indigeneity, examining the local and global circulation of diverse expressive practices.

Location:
Senate House, Malet Street,
London WC1E 7HU

Symposium Programme and Abstracts

Indigeneity in the Contemporary World:
Performance, Politics, Belonging
www.indigeneity.net

Centre for International Theatre and Performance Research

Royal Holloway
University of London

European Research Council

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAS

This event is organised in partnership with the Institute for the Study of the Americas.
Thursday 22 November – Subject to Change

9:15 am   Registration

9:45 am   Welcome by Professor Linda Newson, Director of the Institute for the Study of the Americas, Dr Charlotte Gleghorn and Professor Helen Gilbert, Director of the Indigeneity in the Contemporary World Project

10:00 am  Session 1: Agency and Authenticity

Joy Porter

Yvette Nolan
What We Talk About When We Talk About Indian

James Butterworth
Indigenous Pop and Indigenous Entrepreneurs: The Case of Commercial Huayno Music in Peru

Chair: Dylan Robinson

11:30 am  Morning Tea

12:00 am  Session 2: Spectacle and Indigeneity

Peter Kulchyski
Dancing the Spectacle: Troubling the Commodified Gaze in the Pores of Indigenous Performance

Genner Llanes-Ortiz
Everyday Work as Spectacle: Celebrating Maya Embodied Culture in Belize (Maya Day 2012)

Chair: Lynette Russell

1:00 pm   Lunch

1:45 pm   Session 3: Interrogating Commodity I

Sarah Anne Stolte
Tourists and Indians: Theatrics, Gesture, and Pose in American Indian Postcards from Wisconsin Dells

Martin Padget
Hopi Film, the Indigenous Aesthetic and Environmental Justice: Victor Masayesva, Jr.’s Paatuaqatsi – Water, Land and Life

Chair: Padraig Kirwan

2:45 pm   Tea Break

3:00 pm   Session 4: Interrogating Commodity II

Ivone Barriga
Interrogating the Commodification of Performances of Indigeneity in Pukllay Community-based Theatre

Andrew Roth
P’urhépecha New Year and P’urhéecherio: Spectacle and Discourse of De-commoditization in the Construction of Subaltern Public Spheres

Chair: TBC

4:00 pm   Tea Break

4:30 pm   Keynote: Michelle H. Raheja

Redfacing Redux: The Afterlife of Native American Images

Chair: Helen Gilbert

5:45 pm   Drinks Reception

7:00 pm   Close of Day 1
Friday 23 November – Subject to Change

9:30 am Preliminaries and Coffee or Tea

10:00 am Session 5: Cultural Heritage and Performance

Ximena Córdova
Indigeneity in the Oruro Carnival: Official Memory, Collective Memories, and the Politics of Recognition

Michael J. Gonzales
Indigenous Cultures and National Identity in Centennial Celebrations of Independence in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina, 1910-1924

Anne Ebert
Decolonial Encounters with the Cultural Patrimony in Bolivia

Chair: Henry Stobart

11:30 am Morning Tea

12:00 pm Keynote: Gabriela Zamorano Villarreal

The Politics of Distribution: Building Audiences for Bolivian Indigenous Films

Chair: Charlotte Gleghorn

1:15 pm Lunch

2:15 pm Session 6: Platforms of Exhibition

Andrea Zittlau
Always Becoming. Enacting Indigenous Identity on a Museum Stage

Thea Pitman
Performing Digital Indigeneity Online

Chair: David Stirrup

3:15 pm Tea Break

3:30 pm Session 7: Performing Belonging and Exclusion

Sergio Miguel Huarcaya
Performing indigeneity and mestizaje through the Fiesta del Coraza in Otavalo, Ecuador

Selena Couture
Contention through Performance at Klahowya Village, Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC/Xwúxw, Unceded Coast Salish Territory

Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez
Performing Indigeneity, Property and the Awas Tingni Case

Chair: Paula Barrantes-Reynolds

5:00 pm Tea Break

5:30 pm Film and Director Discussion with Carlos Gómez: Ñanz (Cineminga Collective, 2011)

Chair: Charlotte Gleghorn

6:30 pm Close of Symposium
Performing Indigeneity, Property and the Awas Tingni Case

The legal battle of the Mayagna community of Awas Tingni versus Nicaragua culminated when the Inter-American Court of Human Rights decided in favour of the community and stated that proof of traditional land use and occupancy was sufficient for Indigenous communities lacking legal land titles to obtain recognition of their property. With its decision, the Inter-American Court took an important step in solidifying the rights of indigenous peoples for the use and enjoyment of their ancestral land and natural resources as a human right to be honoured and protected. This outcome has been a legal and moral victory for the Mayagna no doubt; however, some questions remain about the role of mapping in representing an ‘intelligible’ understanding of indigeneity before the law. Understanding law as performance, this paper explores some of the implications of universalizing the legal cartographic strategy to advance the legal recognition of Indigenous land rights and of articulating indigeneity as ‘attachment to the land’. This paper invites discussion across disciplines and combines articulation and post-colonial theory with a political economy approach to understand the performative dimension of indigeneity and the relationship between rights, the environment and the ways in which Indigenous places are reconfigured through ‘intelligible’ performances of indigeneity. This paper argues that under neo-liberalism indigeneity is embodied in notions of the ‘noble savage’ yet embedded in notions of entrepreneurialism, the self and the economy. This paper shows the tensions, negotiations, and contradictions that result from articulating indigeneity as ‘attachment to the land’.

Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez is an Indigenous Zapotec from Oaxaca, Mexico. She holds a joint appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta. Recently, she has been awarded a KIAS-University of Alberta Cluster Grant to start the first phase of the ‘Indigenous women’s knowledge and stewardship of water’ project. Her research interests include comparative Indigenous politics, Indigenous feminism, indigeneity and gender, and the neo-liberalization of nature. She teaches, among other courses, Indigenous peoples and Globalization, Women and Nationalism, Aboriginal Women and Politics and Aboriginal Peoples and Natural Resources.

Interrogating the Commodification of Performances of Indigeneity in Puckllay Community-based Theatre

My paper discusses performances of urban indigeneity that Puckllay community-based theatre (CBT) produces and circulates throughout the diverse spacialities that make this CBT a viable and sustainable project in the face of an absent state. Performances such as theatre productions, embodied encounters, and social practices give meaning to the relationship between theatre practitioners and community members of Lomas de Carabayllo, a shantytown located in North Lima. I focus on the idealized Andean space that Puckllay staged in Adventures in the Magic Andes at a high upper-class theatre venue in Lima, in 2007. I argue that in this theatre project children both perform and trick the script of ‘authentic indigeneity’ that the media currently portrays as ‘racial cool’ to add cultural capital to such performances. Such a characterization transforms the play into a stable version of indigeneity, which temporarily alleviates anxieties between performers on stage and mestizo and ‘white’/criollo members in the audience in regards to racial, class, and ethnic differences. I argue that Puckllay’s commodification of the theatre play is a complex strategy that permits this CBT to navigate racialized spaces in the city in ways that activate multiple agencies, expectations, and power relations, according to everyone’s subject position – whether regular theatre goers, theatre practitioners, or community members. While trans-local spaces commodify local processes, they also offer the opportunity for community members to perform a new identity, more attuned to capitalism’s tendency to dissolve all forms of solidarity and difference.

Ivone Barriga is a PhD candidate in the Theatre Historiography program at the University of Minnesota -Twin Cities. Her doctoral thesis is titled ‘Performing Indigeneity: The Performative Dimension of Racial Formations in Puckllay’, and offers an ethnographic investigation of the racial formations that emerge from social interactions between members of an Indigenous migrant community and mestizo theatre practitioners who are involved in Puckllay community-based theatre. Ivone has carried out fieldwork in Lima between 2010 and 2011 as part of her doctoral project and has been awarded a Five College Dissertation Fellowship at Amherst College. She is also a theatre director and performer who has studied and worked in both Peru and Brazil.
James Butterworth

Indigenous Pop and Indigenous Entrepreneurs: The Case of Commercial Huayno Music in Peru

By focussing on the commercial huayno music industry and huayno music performance in Peru, this paper aims to problematize the idea that ‘capitalist networks of circulation’ and ‘spectacle’ are at odds with indigenous authorship and agency. The Call for Papers points to recent critiques of neoliberalism that have ‘highlighted the pitfalls of culture being co-opted for capital’s benefit’. I argue that there is an implicit assumption, which – although perhaps grounded in a general reality – casts capital as non-indigenous. What are we to think, therefore, when commodified, spectacularized and massified musical forms (like huayno) rely on the capitalist endeavours of indigenous entrepreneurs and the complicity of indigenous audiences? How can we respect, give voice to, and even promote indigenous difference whilst not denying indigenous actors the chance to participate in and take advantage of the potential rewards of a capitalist system? How can we make sense of indigenously authored cultural products and their ‘spectacular’ delivery to indigenous consumers when the musical form in question is driven primarily by capitalist logic?

James Butterworth holds a BA in Music from Cambridge University and a MMus in Advanced Musical Studies from Royal Holloway. James is currently a PhD candidate in the Music Department at Royal Holloway and has recently completed 10 months of fieldwork in Peru where he has been researching huayno music, its numerous female pop icons, and issues of migration, gender, love, stardom and neoliberalism. His thesis is provisionally titled ‘Andean Divas: Love, Fame, and the Evolution of Huayno Music in Peru’.

Ximena Córdova

Indigeneity in the Oruro Carnival: Official Memory, Collective Memories, and the Politics of Recognition

This paper aims to contribute to a contemporary line of research which critically examines the concept of indigeneity as a cultural category within a changing global framework of political and conceptual models, with a focus on contemporary Bolivian society. The paper will explore how the cultural and political reach of ‘indigeneity’ is negotiated in the Oruro Carnival, as a celebration with an important discursive role in the building of Bolivian national imaginaries of the past. The Oruro Carnival is officially promoted all over the world as an accurate representation of Bolivia’s cultural heritage and national folklore. Following Hall (2006), I take cultural heritage to be a discursive practice around ideas of transmissions of cultural memory. In the bid to UNESCO for recognition as a World Intangible Heritage ‘site’, presented by Oruro’s cultural authorities, the Oruro Carnival articulates connections between past and present that project particular ideas of locality and the national that include certain elements of indigenous culture but are ultimately centred on Catholicism and the mestizo ideology of Nationalist Populism. Using ethnographic data collected primarily through ‘participant experience’ (Potter 2008) in festive practices in Oruro, I examine the participation of key actors in the celebration in response to both elite systems of national representation, and the exclusion of contemporary indigenous actors from prominent ideas of the national. I also consider the political responses that have emerged from the agency of Carnival actors excluded from processes of national representation to gain self-recognition and counteract discrimination through engaging with the possibilities of performance and the politics of recognition.

Ximena Córdova completed an AHRC-sponsored doctoral programme in Latin American and Hispanic Studies at Newcastle University on the relationship between processes of transmission of cultural memory and festive practices in the Andes. Previously, Ximena worked in the audio-visual industry, in development, production and training, which has now translated into the practice of Visual Anthropology for academic purposes. Currently, Ximena’s research examines the crossings between popular culture, performative practices, and identity constructions, with a particular focus on twentieth-century Latin American history and politics, and Andean anthropology.

Selena Couture

Contention through Performance at Klahowya Village, Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC/Xwáýxway, Unceded Coast Salish Territory

Since its European resettlement as a city in 1886, Vancouver has been a site of contention between settlers and the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Skwxwú7mesh peoples. Indigenous groups have consistently used cultural performance to
establish their persistence and political legitimacy in the face of settler efforts to both dispossess them of land and control a romantic narrative of indigenous peoples through cultural homogenization. One of the more recent examples of such performances is the Klahowya Village, which has been run by the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia since 2010 in Stanley Park near the former Skwxwú7mesh village of Xwáýxway. I examine how the presence of working visual and performance artists exerts visual sovereignty based on my experiences of hosting an exchange group of Northern Dene and East Vancouver youth who interacted with the site, as well as on repeated visits, and interviews with key organizers, artisans and performers. There has been significant media attention paid to the participation of the Four Host First Nations in the organizing and presentation of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. However, there has not yet been an investigation of the concurrent organizing and presentation of live indigenous performances in Stanley Park, particularly with regard to the latter’s challenges to settler conceptions of nature, property and indigeneity. I conclude that the design of the Klahowya Village, which encourages personal interactions between visitors and working artists, helps to complicate the generic spectacle of West Coast indigenous culture that is so often available for tourist consumption.

Selena Couture is currently a second year PhD student in Theatre Studies at the University of British Columbia. Her Master’s thesis was an investigation of the creative and community work of Cree/Saulteaux artist Margo Kane, her Vancouver-based company, Full Circle First Nations Performance Company and its annual Talking Stick Festival. She has been a teacher in alternative schools in the Vancouver area since 1992 and is on the Board of Directors for Arts in Action, responsible for the Purple Thistle Centre, a youth arts and activism collective resource centre located in East Vancouver.

Anne Ebert

Decolonial Encounters with the Cultural Patrimony in Bolivia

My presentation analyses the use of cultural patrimony in Bolivia by different actors, and how this patrimony is employed to claim cultural identities and mediate relations with the state. The aim is to shed light on how new actors – especially rural and urban indigenous groups – bring in new interpretations, and how these become important for actual enactments of indigeneity and the recognition of indigenous and particularly urban indigenous identity positions. As an example I examine the pre-Incaican ruins of Tiwanaku/Bolivia. Tiwanaku has long been discursively and symbolically charged as a critical place for the formulation of Bolivian national identities. Whereas throughout the 20th century this principally involved the ruling elites, since the 1980s (and even more so since Bolivia’s new constitution in 2009) new actors have participated in identity politics. In 2002, the local indigenous population took over the administration of the UNESCO-world heritage site Tiwanaku, leading to further shifts in the participation in identity debates, and generating more diverse positions. Focusing on the Indigenous New Year on June 21, I seek to show how in the interrelatedness of the archaeological site itself and its cultural performances, new symbolic representations and ideas of indigeneity during the past decades are created and popularized. Thus, I also probe the changing terms by which the participating rural and urban indigenous populations claim distinct cultural identities to obtain particular political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Anne Ebert is PhD-candidate in cultural anthropology at the Institute for Latin American Studies, Free University of Berlin. In her PhD project she analyses processes of indigenization in Bolivia from the 1970s to present with a special focus on the performative negotiation and dissemination of cultural meanings and spaces. Her research interests include ethnicity and indigenous movements in the Andes as well as performance studies, spatial and postcolonial approaches.

Helen Gilbert - Convenor

Helen Gilbert is Professor of Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London, and principal investigator for ‘Indigeneity in the Contemporary World: Performance, Politics, Belonging’, an interdisciplinary project funded by the European Research Council from 2009 to 2014. Her major books include Performance and Cosmopolitics: Cross-Cultural Transactions in Australasia (coauthored with Jacqualine Lo, 2007), Sightlines: Race, Gender and Nation in Contemporary Australian Theatre (1998) and Postcolonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics (coauthored with Joanne Tompkins, 1996). She has also published essays in postcolonial literatures and cultural studies and recently completed a coauthored book on orangutans, race and the species boundary.
Charlotte Gleichorn - Convenor

Charlotte Gleichorn completed her PhD in Hispanic Studies at the University of Liverpool in 2009, and holds an MA in World Cinemas from the University of Leeds. Her research interests lie in the field of Latin American film studies, with a particular emphasis on the political work of cinema and its relationship to processes of memory. As a member of the ‘Indigeneity in the Contemporary World’ team at Royal Holloway, her research explores the configurations of authorship, authority and cultural memory in relation to Indigenous film and video production in Latin America. This project considers the political and aesthetic contributions of documentary and fiction films that are produced by, or in some cases in collaboration with, Indigenous filmmakers and communities.

Carlos Gómez

Nasa Dreams: An Experience in Transcultural Collaborative Filmmaking

Cineminga is a filmmaking collective comprised of professional filmmakers (USA, Japan), cultural activists and indigenous community members. We explore indigenous narratives through a collaborative process that includes the mentorship of young indigenous filmmakers, and capacity building in local communities for the use of new media. Between 2007 and 2011, we worked closely with Nasa communities in Tierradentro, Colombia, producing several films that have been screened in festivals internationally and circulated locally, and are currently being used in indigenous schools in the region. Through this process we have found that the intended or imagined audience for an ‘indigenous film’ is at the heart of key decisions made during the filmmaking process; both in the mise-en-scene and during editing, collective authorship develops in part as a function of the markets in which the film will be ostensibly deployed. Given the diverse composition of the team, Cineminga has been a process of negotiation in which the need to address local communities interacts with an awareness of politics and media discourse at the national level, and the goal of reaching a wider ‘global’ audience. Examining Cineminga’s film Ñanz (2012) and the process behind its creation, we can observe various issues at play. These include: re-imagining genre and production structures in an indigenous context; sustainability and financing through state funds, community support and independent fundraising; formal and informal ‘copyright’ at the local, national, and international levels; and developing independent outreach and distribution channels.

Carlos Gómez is co-founder of Cineminga, a media collective organized to produce films, teach filmmaking in indigenous communities, and disseminate indigenous-produced films. Carlos also works as a bilingual Spanish/English interpreter, including work in New York for the United Nation’s Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and for numerous Native American Film + Video Festivals and other screening events at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. He has also worked as a translator of film scripts and subtitler of indigenous video works. His interest in education and community media began in Chicago, where he taught video and photography to inner city youth while attending film school.

Michael J. Gonzales

Indigenous Cultures and National Identity in Centennial Celebrations of Independence in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina, 1910-1924

This paper will discuss the staging of indigenous cultures by organizers of centennial celebrations of political independence in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina from 1910 to 1924. Mexican and Peruvian elites and public intellectuals celebrated the historical significance of Pre-Columbian cultures, such as the Aztecs and the Inca, in re-enactments of historical events (e.g., Cortés’s entry into Mexico City), statues of indigenous leaders, museums featuring Pre-Columbian art, and visits to Pre-Columbian cities, notably Teotihuacan. The Argentines, on the other hand, viewed indigenous cultures as pre-modern societies that had been superseded by modernizing Europeans. In each country, organizers attempted to disassociate Pre-Columbian from contemporary indigenous cultures. Elites wanted their audience to view ancient cultures as exotic and historically significant, while hiding or ignoring contemporary indigenous peoples, who were generally the poorest and least educated among them. This official attitude changed in Mexico following the revolution of 1910-17, as public intellectuals celebrated contemporary indigenous cultures in the centennial celebration of 1921. Displays of indigenous food, art, dance, and music drew the largest crowds, and subsequently publically funded murals celebrated ancient and contemporary indigenous culture. The indigenous produced the culture, which was consumed by the audience and served as inspiration for modern art. Indigenous artisans sometimes profited from the publicity and demand for their art.
**Michael J. Gonzales** is Distinguished Research Professor of History and Director of the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies at Northern Illinois University. His numerous books and articles include *Plantation Agriculture and Social Control in Northern Peru, 1875-1933*, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, and ‘Imagining Mexico in 1921’, in *Mexican Studies* (Summer 2009). He is currently finishing a book on contested views of national identity and modernity in Mexico, Peru, and Argentina in the early twentieth century, which includes an analysis of the presentation of indigenous cultures by political elites, artists and outsiders in spectacles, art, and museum installations.

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**Sergio Miguel Huarcaya**

**Performing indigeneity and mestizoje through the Fiesta del Coraza in Otavalo, Ecuador**

In the mid-1980s, indigenous communities in Otavalo, Ecuador, stopped the celebration of the Fiesta del Coraza, a festivity in which the sponsor wears spectacular costume and represents majestic and beneficent authority. Finding new opportunities outside their communities, younger indigenous individuals were unwilling to bear the cost of sponsoring the fiesta. In addition, many indigenous families in the area converted to Protestantism and renounced celebrations altogether. However, since the emergence of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, from the 1990s, indigenous communities have been reviving the festivity. More so, through its increasing reproduction, the Coraza has become a symbol of a renovated indigeneity, representing indigenous culture as something of worth. The festivity has also been revived in the town in which the tradition started, San Rafael de la Laguna. Yet this celebration is staged by mestizos who dress up as indigenous persons. According to the initiator of this revival, the mestizos’ intention is to rescue the traditions of the town, and it would not make sense to celebrate the festivity without wearing indigenous attire. On the other hand, indigenous activists criticize this celebration as inauthentic and as buffoonery, arguing that mestizos are not practitioners of indigenous culture. In this paper, I study comparatively the indigenous and mestizo performances of the Fiesta del Coraza. Analysing the workings, motivations, and audiences of the festivities, I focus on the ways in which those cultural performances construct notions of belonging and exclusion, on how the actors negotiate issues of representational sovereignty, and on how these performances have different capacities for political intervention.

**Sergio Miguel Huarcaya** completed his PhD in Anthropology and History at the University of Michigan, USA, in 2010. He has a BA in Audiovisual Production and an MA in Latin American Studies. From 1998 to 2001, he collaborated with the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) as a video producer/instructor. His current research focuses on the ways in which indigenous performance has become explicitly political, subverting hegemonic formations of identity and alterity, and constituting not only indigenous selves but also non-indigenous others. He has published *And be not drunk... drunken sprees, identity, and evangelical conversion in Cacha, Ecuador* (2003), a book about indigenous cultural identity and religion conversion.

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**Peter Kulchyski**

**Dancing the Spectacle: Troubling the Commodified Gaze in the Pores of Indigenous Performance**

Drawing on a variety of stories from lengthy experience travelling in northern indigenous communities, this paper will look at spectacle logic in a colonial context as enacting a gaze that cuts. It will contrast that with forms of indigenous performance where the body and community maintain priority over the gaze. While attending a pow wow in Curve Lake First Nation, Ontario, in 1997, the author witnessed an event he calls ‘dancing the spectacle’, in which the ethical asymmetries of the colonial gaze were enacted. In contrast to this, he will show a video from a Dene hand games event in Fort Simpson, NWT, in 2009, in which a remarkable, alternative performance of masculinity was embodied. This paper seeks to show how commodification increases the spectacle-logic elements of indigenous performance, on the one hand, while on the other offering examples of how indigenous performances of, for example, masculinity, sometimes offer striking resources for thinking through alternative practices that deploy dramatically different logics. The notion of ‘embodied deconstruction’ is elaborated as one modality for thinking through these critical, potentially transformative, indigenous alternatives.

**Peter Kulchyski** is full Professor of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba and has authored and edited six books and numerous scholarly and popular articles. He is an activist with the defenders of the land and the Winnipeg indigenous peoples solidarity network and is engaged in research with Begade Shuhtagetine in the NWT, Pangnirtung Inuit in Nunavut, and a variety of Inwewin (Cree), Dene and Anishnabwe communities in northern Manitoba.
Genner Llanes-Ortiz

Everyday Work as Spectacle: Celebrating Maya Embodied Culture in Belize (Maya Day 2012)

Since 2004, new identity performance strategies have been deployed among different Maya groups and villages in southern Belize where they meet annually to celebrate Maya Day. This festival condenses different forms of representing the dynamic and strong identities that the Maya people (often ignored and relegated) maintain as part of Belizian society. Maya Day is organised by Tumul K’in Center of Learning, an autonomous intercultural education project based in the Maya village of Blue Creek. The school provides secondary level education to Maya and non-Maya teenagers from different villages of the southern district of Toledo and beyond. The Maya Day festival includes traditional dances, marimba and harp music, old and new songs and musical genres, and rituals. However, one of the main attractions that the festival offers to Maya and non-Maya attendants is the different competitions where Maya villagers engage in the performing of everyday tasks, such as wood splitting, corn shelling and grinding, and conch blowing. Public competitions of this kind are not common, but express widely accepted notions of Mayan-ness, such as physical strength and resilience, resourcefulness in the face of adversity, extended and nuclear family cooperation, among others. In this presentation I will explore and discuss why these competitions have become so important for the Maya actors involved in the organisation of Maya Day, and what happens when daily, embodied practices become spectacle. I will be calling attention also to the significance of this festival in relation to the demands that Maya peoples express for political recognition and social inclusion.

Genner Llanes-Ortiz is a Mayan anthropologist from the Yucatan, Mexico. He obtained his first degree at the University of Yucatan, and completed his doctorate in Social Anthropology at the University of Sussex, in 2010. He was awarded an International Fellowship Programme scholarship by the Ford Foundation, and has also received funding from the Mexican Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT). As a member of the Indigeneity team, his post-doctoral research investigates the strategic transformation of ritual and performance in the political mobilization of Maya heritage for greater social justice and recognition. He is interested in exploring how these renewed performances of indigeneity are affecting how people think about their own identities and cultures. He also keeps a multi-lingual blog on Mayan voices and interculturality at: http://tsikbaloob.blogspot.com.

Yvette Nolan

What We Talk About When We Talk About Indian

In a 2008 review of Native Earth Performing Arts’ adaptation of Julius Caesar, Death of a Chief, Toronto Star reviewer Richard Ouzounian stated ‘There are many Shakespearean plays I could see in a native setting, from A Midsummer Night’s Dream to Coriolanus, but Julius Caesar isn’t one of them.’ Ouzounian’s pronouncement raises a number of questions about how Indigenous creators are mediated, and by whom, and how the arbiter shapes the idea of Indigenous. Intercultural theatre scholar Ric Knowles asks ‘Why is it that white people want so badly for there to be a Native Shakespeare?’ (Pursued by a Ghost: Aboriginal Adaptations of Shakespeare). How does this desire contribute to Indigenous artists choosing to do or adapt Shakespeare? Shakespeare’s Globe declines Native Earth’s Death of a Chief for inclusion in the 2012 Cultural Olympiad because it was ‘mainly in English’ while Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre ‘is proud to announce our invitation by Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre to translate Shakespeare’s sonnets into Noongar and present them on the Globe stage’. Meanwhile, back in Canada, the National Arts Centre is preparing its King Lear featuring an all-Aboriginal cast, under director Peter Hinton, dramaturg Paula Danckert, and ‘company historian’ David Dean. What could be more spectacular than Indians doing Shakespeare?! Are we as Indigenous artists complicit in our own demise? Do we have to renounce Shakespeare in order to maintain agency? How do the gatekeepers’ visions of Indigenous shape the whitestream’s appetite for the in/authentic?

Yvette Nolan is a playwright, director and dramaturg. Her plays include BLADE, Job’s Wife, Video, Child, Annie Mae’s Movement, Scattering Jake, Two Old Women, the dance-text from thine eyes, the libretto Hilda Blake and the radio play Owen. She is the editor of Beyond the Pale: Dramatic Writing from First Nations Writers and Writers of Colour. In 2007, she received the Maggie Bassett Award and in 2011, the George Luscombe Award. From 2003-2011, she served as Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts. She is the Writer In Residence at the Saskatoon Public Library, where she is working on a book on Native theatre in Canada.
Hopi Film, the Indigenous Aesthetic and Environmental Justice: Victor Masayesva, Jr.’s Paatuwaqatsi – Water, Land and Life

Since the early 1980s, the Hopi filmmaker and photographer Victor Masayesva, Jr. has played an influential role in Native American multimedia production in the United States. This paper examines Masayesva’s most recent film, Paatuwaqatsi: Water, Land and Life (2007), which documents a 1,650-mile run made by Hopis from their home villages in Northern Arizona to Mexico City in early 2006. This run celebrated the closure of a controversial coal slurry pipeline that had fuelled the Mohave Generating Station and which had required for its operation the pumping of 1.2 billion gallons of pristine water annually from the Navajo Aquifer, which lies under the homelands of the Hopi and Navajo people. I will begin by briefly reviewing Masayesva’s filmmaking career and consider his core idea of the indigenous aesthetic, a set of principles that has guided the practical decisions and artistic choices he has made in the course of over thirty years working as an independent media producer. I will then discuss the ways in which Masayesva conveys Hopi understandings of water, running and place-centred cultural identity in Paatuwaqatsi. The paper will conclude by noting, first, how Masayesva is not afraid to allude to internal divisions within Hopi society over issues of economic development and, second, how his film should be regarded within the larger context of ongoing drought and climate change in the Southwest. In keeping with the symposium’s thematic, I will explain how Masayesva’s film documents Hopi resistance to the commodification of precious water resources and communicates the ways in which Hopis’ affective relationship with place is put into action through the acts of running, prayer and personal sacrifice.

Martin Padget is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University. His primary research interests are in the literary and cultural history of the United States, the history of photography and Indigenous studies. His publications include Indian Country: Travels in the American Southwest, 1840-1935 (University of New Mexico Press, 2004), Photographers of the Western Isles (John Donald, 2010) and the co-authored Beginning Ethnic American Literatures (Manchester University Press, 2001). He is currently researching a Leverhulme-funded critical biography of the American photographer Paul Strand.

Performing Digital Indigeneity Online

From the very early days of the existence of the internet, working alongside the ‘frontiersman’ rhetoric (cf. Rheingold 1993), there have circulated discourses of digital nativity and virtual ethnicity, of online communities cast as villages and as tribes (cf. Poster 1998, Prensky 2001, Marotta 2011). All of this amounts to a colonisation of the discourse of indigeneity that has assumed that cyberspace is the place where typically white, educated, affluent, urban people can have their chance to experiment with being indigenous. And it assumes that people with a socially recognised offline claim to indigeneity are not online to disturb that appropriation of the discourse. This paper examines how a group of indigenous peoples in the North-East of Brazil, working in conjunction with a local (non-indigenous-led) NGO (Thydêwá), have defined their online presence as a form of ‘digital indigeneity’. The paper examines in detail their performance of this ‘digital indigeneity’ with reference to a short, self-reflexive film made for circulation via the website Indios Online and titled Indigenas Digitais (2010, http://www.indigenas_digitais.org/). Although debates concerning the use of networked digital technologies by indigenous people have typically revolved around the dangers of essentialisation in allowing one’s culture to circulate freely in this medium, as well as the loss of ownership over one’s cultural patrimony and the loss of connection to physical location, this paper considers the ways in which the group’s self-presentation may take advantage of the aforementioned discourses of digital nativity and virtual ethnicity to enhance their visibility at an international level, and how a conceptualisation of ‘digital indigeneity’ may successfully negotiate the pitfalls of online indigenous presence outlined above. Indeed, ‘digital indigeneity’ may be seen to offer an excellent example of the ‘cyborg skills required for survival under techno-human conditions’ that Chela Sandoval has argued are commonly found among the ‘colonized peoples of the Americas’ (Sandoval 1999: 248).

Thea Pitman is Senior Lecturer in Latin American Studies at the University of Leeds. Her research interests lie in the fields of online cultural production and travel writing. She is author of Mexican Travel Writing (Lang 2008) and co-editor of Latin American Cyberculture and Cyberliterature (Liverpool University Press 2007). She has a forthcoming co-authored monograph on the subject of discourses of Latin American identity in online cultural production (Routledge, Spring 2013).
Joy Porter


This paper argues that post-contact North American Indian art can only be understood alongside the unlovely historical realities of contact and the linguistic and conceptual baggage that accompanies the idea of ‘art’ in Indian and non-Indian contexts. It argues that the search for ‘authenticity’ in Indian art is inseparable from the growth of a commoditized art market and to late capitalist malaise. Paradoxically, because ‘there is no outside of institutionality’ as Yudice explained in The Expediency of Culture (2003, p. 317), the art market craves what it precludes, art free from institutional control. This paper suggests that a way out of this double bind is to follow Arnold Krupat’s recommendation given in the context of Indian literature and film that we should look for and recognize what he calls both/and modalities of thought that incorporate what is Indian and what is not, what is Indian by adoption and what is not, as opposed to what we may be more used to—Aristotelian, analytic, either/or modes of thought. Such an approach moves us away from a sterile discussion of degrees of ‘Indianness’ and toward a more mature recognition that assimilation to non-Indian artistic does not wholly preclude resistance to non-Indian ways. This paper investigates this idea in the indigenous artistic context by looking at the work of the Luiseño Nation installation and performance artist James Luna, Gordon First Nation artist Edward Poitras, Iroquois artist John Fadden and work by the Tuscarora photographer and painter Rick Hill. It argues that if anything can be said to link the bulk of Indian art it is a sense of powerfully culturally specific dissent, a dissent unique to the indigenous experience but representative of a consciousness often shared in different forms by artists worldwide.

Joy Porter is Professor of Indigenous History at Hull University from October 2012. She is the author of Land & Spirit in Native America (Praeger, 2012); Native American Indian Freemasonry: Performance and Associationism in America (Nebraska, 2011) and editor of Place & Native American Indian History & Culture (Peter Lang, 2007). Previously, she was Reader & Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities at Swansea University. She is currently a British Academy Mid-Career Fellow working on a new book, The American Presidency and Tribal Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century.

Michelle H. Raheja - Keynote

Redfacing Redux: The Afterlife of Native American Images

For better or worse, Native American images have deeply influenced settler colonial visual culture since at least 1492. From engravings depicting the putative cannibalism and savagery of Indigenous peoples in the sixteenth through seventeenth centuries, to silent cinema and Western films in the twentieth century, to contemporary historical revisionist movies in the first decade of the twenty-first century, Native Americans have been central to European American colonial and nationalist fantasies. Indigenous peoples have also represented settler colonialism since invasion/contact as evidenced by the matachine dances and more recently in contemporary films by Native Americans that critique and re-present the distorted point of view offered up by most mainstream films. In particular, work by filmmakers such as Klee Benally, Marcelina Cárdenas, the Chiapas Media Project, Thirza Cuthand, Chris Eyre, Sterlin Harjo, Igloolik Isuma, Terry Jones, Shelley Niro, Sandra Sunrising Osawa, and many, many others has challenged entrenched stereotypes about Indigenous peoples and offered original, engaging, and insightful self-representations of historical and contemporary communities.

This keynote interrogates what kind of impact, if any, this growing body of important work has had on the general public in the United States and what kind of burden we place on Indigenous filmmakers by expecting them to undo the racist imagery that has been in circulation for the past 500+ years. As I detail briefly in Reservation Reelism (2010), one week after I submitted the revisions of the manuscript to the press editor, I intimately became aware of the persistent, sometimes violent afterlife of mainstream images of Native Americans, despite the resurgence in Indigenous filmmaking during the past twenty years. In November 2008, my daughter’s public elementary school reenacted a Thanksgiving spectacle with children dressing in phantasmic redface costumes and representing Pilgrims as friendly, harmless neighbours. When I queried her school about why this practice would persist in comparison with the much less offensive methods employed to teach histories of other marginalized peoples, the ensuing uproar instigated local and national news coverage; threats of violence against my family; and various forms of electronic harassment that persisted for over a year. Although I employ a very local and personal anecdote to frame my discussion of the afterlife of images of Native Americans, I use it to open up a conversation about the mode of production of Indigenous film, its distribution, and the mass public’s recalcitrant refusal to reconsider Indigenous history through a different lens.
Michelle H. Raheja is Associate Professor in the Department of English and Director of the California Center for Native Nations at the University of California, Riverside. Her work has been published in American Quarterly; American Indian Culture and Research Journal; Talking Back, Moving Forward: Native American/Indigenous Perspectives on Film; and Visualities: Perspectives on Contemporary American Indian Film and Art. Her book, Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film was recently published by the University of Nebraska Press. Raheja is of Seneca descent and her research and teaching focus is on early American literature and Native American cultural studies and theory. Last spring she was awarded a Fulbright fellowship to research Sami visual culture in northern Norway and is currently working on two projects: a study of a turn of the twentieth century queer Native American circus performer and a monograph on images of Native Americans and cannibalism in contemporary post-apocalyptic American cinema.

Andrew Roth-Seneff

P’urhépecha New Year and P’urhéecherio: Spectacle and Discourse of Decommoditization in the Construction of Subaltern Public Spheres

The annual cultural celebration of P’urhépecha revitalization, symbolized by the lighting of a new fire, began in 1983 when leaders and promoters of P’urhépecha culture met at the ruins of a prehispanic site in the town of Ihuatzio and marched to the yacatas (pyramids) above Tzintzuntzan, the ancient center of the Tarascan Empire. Now after thirty years, this preparation and organization of the P’urhépecha New Year celebration has evolved through the appropriation of traditional spheres of ritual exchange associated with the organization and preparation for town celebrations honouring patron saints. The celebration has become a forum in which P’urhépecha cosmology and Mesoamerican practices are used to recast commercial (specifically touristic) commoditization of traditions and customs in the P’urhépecha heartland in the State of Michoacán in Central Western Mexico. A selective tradition has evolved: the eve of February 2 (Candle Mass) marks the start of each P’urhépecha New Year with a celebration which consecrates the symbols of P’urhépecha ethnicity, but, most importantly, recasts a post colonial civil-religious system through which a modern P’urhépecha public sphere is beginning to emerge. This incipient subaltern public sphere is situated in a region called p’urhéecherio that is evoked by a spatial organization in which the New Year celebration rotates between the host towns in its four sub-regions. This space, in its ceremonial evocation, serves to de-commoditize P’urhépecha performance and craft as symbols of ethnic revitalization.

Andrew Roth-Seneff is Professor at the Centro de Estudios Antropológicos in the Colegio de Michoacán. His research is focused on P’urhépecha popular culture and its ethnographic and historical referents, a focus which has led to the creation of an archive for P’urhépecha oral narrative. He has edited five books concerned with analyzing and interpreting the relation between the organization of regional culture and historical changes in discourse, El Verbo Oficial: política moderna en dos campos periféricos del Estado mexicano (co-editor, José Lameiras) (1994), Recursos contenciosos. Ruralidad y reformas liberales en México (2004), and Caras y mascaras del México Étnico. La participación indígena en las formaciones del Estado mexicano (2 volumes, 2010 and 2011).

Sarah Anne Stolte

Tourists and Indians: Theatrics, Gesture, and Pose in American Indian Postcards from Wisconsin Dells

Early twenty century postcards in the U.S. were informed by marketing schemes that appropriated Native American cultures in specific ideologies of race. In turn, American Indians strategically re-appropriated these restrictive Euro-American constructs of Indian identity. My research examines the poses and gestures of American Indians in postcards and photographs from Wisconsin Dells dating approximately 1900 to 1975 as manifestations of the Hollywood film industry. In particular, I am interested in tracing the development of a pan-Indian identity that ignores cultural specificity. In the Wisconsin Dells, Ho-Chunk performers contributed to the marketing of their own traditions through deliberate interaction with tourists that actively engaged cinematic constructs of Indian identity. A source of this visual evidence of their adaptation to a cash economy is documented in the Yeffe Kimball photo collection housed by the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. To cite one example, Roger Little Eagle Tallmadge (Sioux) is aware of his role-playing. His wife, Bernadine Miner (Ho-Chunk), recalled that he used to joke about ‘playing the part of postcard Indians’. This rhetoric clearly reflects roles akin to actors playing in movies and evidences the ways in which American Indians actively engaged in the marketing of performative images appealing to the sensibilities of tourists, exercising agency in how they would adapt to a cash economy, and strategically, often humorously, producing images of themselves as viable economic commodities.
Sarah Anne Stolte is a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She assisted with the exhibition and symposium ‘Epicentro: Retracing the Plains’ presented during the vernissage of the Venice Biennale from June 1-4, 2011, and was the Paul Dyck Plains Indian Museum Collections intern at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, during the summer of 2011. From September 2009 until July 2010 she worked as the McDermott Graduate Curatorial Intern at the Dallas Museum of Art. Her upcoming exhibition, ‘Ancestral Visions: Contemporary Voices,’ opens at Edgewood College in Madison, WI, in May of 2013.

Gabriela Zamorano Villarreal - Keynote

**Politics of Distribution: Building Audiences for Bolivian Indigenous Films**

In this paper I analyse film distribution strategies undertaken by the most important indigenous media initiative of Bolivia, the National Plan of Indigenous Audiovisual Communication (Plan Nacional Indígena Originario de Comunicación Audiovisual). Through ethnographic case studies, I explain how the Plan Nacional reaches rural, urban, national and international audiences while building or reinforcing political alliances with activists, migrants and other indigenous communities and organizations. In these locations, I look at the technological possibilities of video for presenting what Benjamin (1968) would explain as ‘simultaneous collective experiences’, as well as the different economic and political contexts and conditions for video distribution. I also discuss the tensions involved in the distribution process, such as the prevention of piracy, unresolved attempts to distribute economic benefits, commitment to expectations of funding providers, and the election of technological and narrative elements to meet specific industry standards that in many ways ‘discipline’ the production and distribution processes. An analysis of these issues is useful for understanding how filmmakers’ attempts to challenge established markets of audiovisual production and to prevent their films from circulating as commodities are often limited by their inevitable immersion in a global capitalist system. Finally, I analyse how in such distribution processes, indigenous media makers interact with actors as varied as regional leaders, international activists, film industry people and official authorities; and how, in doing so, they develop mechanisms to make themselves visible by simultaneously emphasizing their national belonging to Bolivia and their difference as indigenous filmmakers.

Gabriela Zamorano Villarreal is researcher and professor at the Centro de Estudios Antropológicos at the Colegio de Michoacán and visiting professor on the MA in Visual Anthropology at FLACSO-Ecuador. Gabriela was born and raised in Mexico City and studied social communication as well as journalism, video and ethnographic photography. In 1993, she began communications projects at a prison, and later worked with Indigenous communities in Chiapas and Oaxaca. In 2009, she received her Ph.D from the City University of New York (CUNY) for a thesis on Indigenous Bolivian video, and during her time in New York she also worked at the Film and Video Center of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. She conducted postdoctoral research at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris in 2009, and has published widely on visual anthropology, film and photography. Gabriela’s academic work is enriched by her practice as curator of photographic projects and director of personal photographic and video documentary productions.

Andrea Zittlau

**Always Becoming. Enacting Indigenous Identity on a Museum Stage**

In 2007, the Pueblo artist Nora Naranjo-Morse created her sculpture *Always Becoming* on the outside grounds of the National Museum of the American Indian. The figures Father, Mother, Little One, Moon Woman and Mountain Bird entirely consist of natural materials like dirt, sand and clay and are meant to slowly dissolve with the seasons. Not the sculpture as such, but the creation process had been at the center of attention and the grounds (highly praised for their environmental link to indigenous cultures) became the stage. Naranjo-Morse was watched by museum visitors and staff, by tourists and locals, and continuously invited spectators to participate in the creation process. The sculpture then is the result of a performance art project that was recorded on film and continues to be shown in the indoor performance space – the theater – of the museum. My paper will discuss *Always Becoming* as performance art within a context of contemporary museum performances that engage critically with indigenous identities and yet they continue to be haunted by the anthropological staging of other cultures. My approach will be guided by responses to the art work by Vine Deloria, Jr., Dax Thomas and the artist herself.

Andrea Zittlau is a research assistant and lecturer at the department of North American Studies at the University of Rostock, Germany. Additionally she coordinates the Graduate School ‘Cultural Encounters and Discourses of Scholarship’, also at the University of Rostock. She has recently finished her PhD thesis about the representation of cultures inside museums (‘Packaging Culture. How Ethnographic Museums Challenge Their Past, Present, and Future’). Her research interests include ethnographic museums, photography, collective memory, trauma theory, dark tourism and souvenirs.