

*Sing Me Your Story, Dance Me Home:
ART AND POETRY FROM NATIVE CALIFORNIA*



The Community Connections Project
Perspectives & Tools for Museum Professionals

This publication was developed by the California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA) and funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). CERA provides traveling exhibitions and professional services to museums throughout California. Our mission is to build new perspectives among Californians, create innovative exhibitions and solutions, and advance institutions in service of their communities. The IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. Its mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas.



California
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Edited by Lexie Smith Kliebe
Design by Nancy Carroll



Baskets | DEBORAH MIRANDA

When Chihuly saw you, he thought
curve, slump, weight.
He felt the smooth sweep
of glass blown into gravity.
When I see you, I open
from an empty round place
dark as stems of maidenhair fern
or the fingers of women
who twined your strength
with reeds and tule, grass and cedar bark.

Labels gleam clean as catalogued prayers.
Twana Skokomish #157 stretches
with a belly-shaped need to hold.
Klickitat #105 rises to receive
camas root and blackberries.
Yakima Sally #24 unfolds toward water,
salmon stitched with purpose.

Indians evolve like everyone else.
I understand safety pins on regalia,
plastic pony beads,
synthetic sinew.
Times change. We grow into
what comes next.

But when I see you, baskets—
locked in cabinets,
behind glass,
preserved in shadows—
I tear wide with want
for the press of my palm
against rushes, willow, redbud;
for bear grass lips frayed and soft
against my cheek. At the edge of the room
old mouths whisper *weave, braid, fill.*
I take the coiled voices of women
into the walls of this hollow vessel.



Baskets by Linda Aguilar (Chumash) and Deborah McConnell (Yurok/Quinalt/Hoopa Tribe) on exhibit at the Maidu Museum.

The Community Connections Project

Every so often, we are fortunate enough to be involved in a project that is personally rewarding, benefits the community, and expands our understanding of the world around us. The **Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project** has had a meaningful impact on all those who have been involved and we are pleased to share with you this tool kit for museum professionals who seek to deepen their relationships with Native communities.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) asserts that a more knowledgeable and skilled workforce will help improve the value that museums have in their communities. To support this, the IMLS initiated the 21st Century Museum Professionals grant program to fund professional development projects around the nation. The California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA) was honored with one of these grants in 2006 and we have worked for the last several years on a model project.

The Community Connections Project (CCP) connects museum professionals working at host sites for the CERA traveling exhibition, *Sing Me Your Story, Dance Me Home: Art and Poetry from Native California* with Native people. These connections were meant to begin and deepen the relationships that museums have with local tribes and culture bearers, thus strengthening the museums' abilities to serve and respond to Native communities.

Sing Me Your Story, Dance Me Home brings together California Indian contemporary artists and poets in an extraordinary traveling exhibition that will be hosted by fifteen museums throughout California from 2007 through 2011. Approximately 75,000 people are estimated to visit this unique art exhibition with hundreds attending dozens of public programs during the exhibition tour. *Sing Me Your Story* was developed in concert with Heyday Books and made possible by generous grants from The James Irvine Foundation, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Columbia Foundation, LEF Foundation, the Fleishhacker Foundation, and The Clorox Company Foundation.

Our sincerest gratitude to all of the artists, poets, and lenders who made such rich contributions to this exhibition. Additionally, we want to thank Margaret Kadoyama for shepherding the CCP over the last several years, our friends at Heyday Books—especially Margaret Dubin and Malcolm Margolin—and the following people who helped shape the exhibition and the CCP:



Exhibition Team

Theresa Harlan, *Exhibition Curator*
Joan Jasper, *Project Manager*
Lexie Smith Kliebe, *Project Manager*
Lisa Eriksen, *Former CERA Executive Director*
Nancy Carroll, *Exhibition Designer*

CCP Advisory Committee

Paula Allen (Karuk)
Gerald Clarke (Cahuilla)
Judith Lowry (Mountain Maidu/Hamawi Pit River)
Linda Noel (Konkow Maidu)
Sherrie Smith-Ferri (Dry Creek Pomo Bodega Bay Miwok)

I hope you will find this inspiring and helpful!

—ADRIENNE MCGRAW
CERA Executive Director

Chawewut, Mike Rodriguez
(Luiseño), n.d., Spray paint, enamel

The Curator's Perspective

Theresa Harlan (Santo Domingo Pueblo and Jemez Pueblo) has over 20 years of curatorial experience, specializing in contemporary Native American art and photography, and has published widely on this topic. For seven years she was Director/Curator of the Carl Gorman Museum, UC Davis, and is a member of Heyday Institute's Board of Directors.

The intent of *Sing Me Your Story, Dance Me Home: Art & Poetry from Native California* and the Community Connections Project was to recognize the cultural heritage and individual accomplishments of artists and poets, honor their respective Native communities, and foster an understanding of California as Native California—an indigenous homeland. To truly ground a project like this with the Native perspective, it needs more than one person's viewpoint; it needs a community.

As a Native curator, pulling together an advisory committee is a part of my process to ensure a broad and inclusive experience for the artists, museum staff, and audience. For *Sing Me Your Story* I wanted to ensure that the committee was diverse by gender, geography, professional expertise, and artistic discipline. I saw the role of these advisors as liaisons. Through the work of the advisory committee we had a great opportunity get to know each other and to develop our own micro-community around this exhibition. In fact, these relationships are now naturally evolving into new projects for the future.

"We can never have too many Native voices out there."

As a former exhibitions director at the San Francisco-based American Indian Contemporary Arts (AICA) gallery, I still remember the way that Malcolm Margolin (Heyday Books publisher) established a relationship with AICA. He became a constant attendee at our events and eventually became a long-time friend. Malcolm approached us and told us he thought our work was wonderful and wanted to know more about us as an organization. As he became a familiar face, our exchange of information increased and we discovered we shared a wide California Native network. He didn't approach us with an agenda or immediate need.

This example illustrates that in order for museums to form and nurture long lasting, trusting relationships with any person or community, one-on-one personal interactions are necessary. Emails and phone calls can only take relationship building so far. I find that some museum staff are apprehensive about working with Native people, but by engaging a member of the community, it provides opportunity for mutual understanding and the realization of a successful project. We are all human beings and respond to honest messages about facing challenges or finding joy. These messages are present in *Sing Me Your Story* through the voices and visions of the artists and poets.

—THERESA HARLAN

Sing Me Your Story Exhibition Curator and Community Connections Project Advisor

Lessons Learned: Wordsmithing *Be aware of your use of language with writing text to describe, explain, or represent any community. The words that you use are very important, and it is especially important to ask advisors about the nuances and different meanings of words. The team grappled with these issues when finalizing the exhibition wall text. Keep in mind:*

- *The use of dated references, ethnocentric terminology, or even phrasing can carry pejorative and negative meaning for some Native people.*
- *There often seems to be a bit of a prejudice against cultures that rely on the oral tradition (as opposed to a written one). Tribal creation stories should not be referred to as myths or legends, but recognized as relevant as any world religious beliefs.*

A Native Advisor's Perspective

Paula Allen (Karuk/Yurok) is the Traditional Resource Specialist for United Indian Health Services, Inc. and serves as the curator for the Potawot Health Village Arts Gallery. She is a traditional singer, dancer and mentor for Karuk Women's Camp.

To represent a Native perspective for a non-Native audience is a big responsibility. I think it is really important for young Native people who are coming up in this field to find their voice; be strong in representing the history, hurt,

"Your role is to serve as a bridge person... You have to step out of your comfort zone if you want to share the Native perspective, so that non-Native folks can appreciate it and gain a better understanding of who we are today as Native peoples."

and emotions; and be willing to share some of those perspectives with your colleagues and peers who are curating exhibits from any culture that is not their own. You don't have to share everything, but it is an opportunity to be truthful, to be creative, and to find the common value that you may share—all in an effort to bring the most

authentic voice forward in a way that benefits your community and the audience. Engaging and working with people outside your cultural comfort zone can help foster positive relationships that you can then build in other realms—positive relationships in art can lead to better relationships in health, community development, economic, and political realms.

Those people who are most successful at navigating cross-cultural relationships are willing to be honest about their feelings and tend to focus, not on the blame game, but look for those learning opportunities that can increase knowledge and awareness about issues. I know there is a lot of hurt out there so sometimes that doesn't happen, or in some cases, can't happen. But art and culture are areas where you can make an emotional connection with people who can, in turn, help them to better understand, or at least be more empathetic and respectful to the many complex issues that face the Native community both historically and currently. Art and culture can clear the path for future deeper and more meaningful interactions.

Having integrity, being honest, and always being respectful goes a long way in encouraging these kinds of relationships. That road goes both ways. As an advisor, I felt like the entire process with the Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project was done in a mutually respectful way, which also encouraged me to represent a viewpoint in the most honest way that I could. This was one of the best communication processes I have seen in this kind of group. The Native advisors were respected, proactively engaged, and were provided compensation for our time, energy, and efforts. This was appreciated and it solidified the responsibility I felt to follow through and do my best to provide honest, heartfelt, and practical advice representing my community and culture in this process.

—PAULA ALLEN

Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project Advisor

Lessons Learned: Express thanks *When you connect person-to-person with a community member, remember to thank that person for the time they have given you, for the gift of their perspective and knowledge, and for their assistance. Always express your appreciation sincerely and from the heart. In addition, if you can offer some financial help for gas money, honoraria, meals, etc., that is also appreciated.*

The Project Coordinator's Perspective

Margaret Kadoyama has extensive experience in developing and implementing community involvement strategies, and creating education and audience development programs and strategic plans. She is the “Museums and Communities” instructor for the Museum Studies Department, John F. Kennedy University.

What's it like being a white woman asked to serve as a consultant for the Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project? Most of all, it is affirming. I knew that my role was to be a coach as well as a cheerleader for the staff of the exhibition host museums. These are my colleagues, people who work at small museums who are trying to do the best they can with limited resources. As a practitioner, I knew what their challenges were. As a teacher, I knew what we were striving for—we hoped for these museum staff members to learn and apply effective ways to engage their local Native communities, and to create strong relationships with community members.

What did I do that seemed to work? Communicate often! Every month for three years I wrote about effective ways to be together and engage Native communities. When I heard a story about community engagement gone right or wrong, I thought, “What can we learn from this? How can this help our practice?” When I heard about a situation that needed input from the advisors, I contacted them by email and phone, and we worked through how to best handle the situation. Some of these stories became part of the monthly Lessons Learned, and when I did that, I always sent the draft notes to the advisors to get their feedback before I sent it out for broader distribution. We contacted each host museum before, during, and after the run of the exhibition to check in and see what they needed.

What new insights did I gain? Most of them were really not new at all—they were affirmations of what I believe are important.

Theresa Harlan's and Paula Allen's

contributions to this tool kit say it well—focus on integrity, respect, and honesty. One of the most important messages I can convey is how much of an honor and pleasure it was to work with the advisors.

“As social media becomes more and more predominant, I want to reiterate curator Theresa Harlan's thoughts—that creating and nurturing long-lasting trusting relationships relies on one-on-one personal interactions. That is really the beauty of this work.”

–MARGARET KADOYAMA

Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project Consultant

Lesson Learned: Follow up *Continue to keep in touch with the people you have connected with through your engagement process. Add them to your regular publicity lists, invite them to your receptions/programs, and send them your newsletters. Also, ask them to add you to their distribution lists so that you stay informed of what is going on at their organizations. Follow this up by attending public events. Pick up the phone and call that person when you have a question or just to say hello. Your sincere interest will go a long way for a continued relationship.*



The *Sing Me Your Story* exhibition at the San Francisco Public Library.

An Artist's Perspective



Gerald Clarke (Cahuilla) currently teaches art at Idyllwild Arts Academy. In 1997, he was selected to participate in the Heard Museum's 7th Native American Fine Art Invitational and was awarded an Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Art in 2007. He currently serves as Vice Chairman for his tribe and is a traditional Cahuilla Bird Singer.

One of the hardest aspects of being a Native artist today is getting your work shown in areas where your own people can see it. There seems to be this accepted notion that the goal for America's artists is having a retrospective at the Whitney or MOMA. If that were to happen for me, how many Cahuilla people do you think would get to see it? That said, I have yet to come across a tribally-owned, alternative arts space here in California.

The fact is, even with the rise of the Indian gaming industry here in California, most tribes in California still struggle with numerous social and economic issues that keep them from investing in programs that support the arts. There has been a rise in tribally-owned museums that have taken the role of historic preservation and they have been a blessing. What about the contemporary Native artist that works in a non-traditional art form that affirms traditional values? Where can he/she engage his/her community?

This has been the blessing of the Sing Me Your Story Community

Connections Project. This exhibition has traveled throughout the state and has given the opportunity for tribal communities to engage the work of "our" artists and writers. The numerous venues that hosted *Sing Me Your Story Dance Me Home* created a "shotgun" approach to engaging the 108 federally-recognized tribes in the state, and the numerous unrecognized tribes and displaced Native people from other states. And guess what? IT WORKED!

For me, this happened when I heard from a young tribal member that our local Noli Indian School took the students to see the exhibit at the Museum of History and Art in Ontario, CA. I discussed with this young person what I created, why I did it, and some of the other works in the show that I liked. It was a casual conversation and for me, full of meaning—certainly a high point in my art career. It's not the Whitney, but that's fine by me.

—GERALD CLARKE

Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project Advisor

"Non-Native people are hungry for authentic Native experience and expression."

Cahuilla Sounds, Cahuilla Lives, Gerald Clarke (Cahuilla), 1997, Baseball bat and painted gourd with audio

Lesson Learned: Native Art *Some people tend to look down upon any Native object that has evidence of the modern world in it—as though it has been contaminated and is not truly "Native." It should be stressed that the modern Native perspective is still Native. These modern references are part of the world we inhabit and thus become part of our work.*

Deepening Relationships

The Maidu Interpretive Center in Roseville, CA was the inaugural venue for *Sing Me Your Story* in 2007 and, because of its original success and positive visitor outcomes, hosted the exhibit again three years later for the grand opening of the new Maidu Museum.

We see the exhibition as a watershed event for the Maidu Interpretive Center (MIC), fulfilling Native community involvement and strategic plan goals and helping us to evolve into the permanent new Maidu Museum with many Native advisors. Initial community engagement activities included hosting free cultural programs, marketing to regional rancherias and other Native organizations, and establishing many new partnerships and contacts that evolved by asking for feedback on exhibits, for participation in decision-making, and whether MIC was being responsive to community members' needs.

Building on our initial success in generating connections, we established and continue to work with an Exhibit Planning and Development Committee composed of local Native artists, scholars, and other community members. This assisted us in forming personal relationships with several local poets represented in the exhibition and various cultural and educational organizations.

The Museum sought to promote accessibility to Native American community members by welcoming Native visitors for free into the museum, featuring a regular Cultural Heritage Speaker Series with Native presenters, welcoming and including elders in museum programs, and providing free lunches at special events.

“This project strengthened our relationships with local and statewide Native artists and, in turn, the friends, colleagues, and family members they bring to the museum.”

the project has moved us closer to our vision of being a learning center where Maidu and other California Indians and communities can share family traditions and tribal culture with museum visitors, both young and old, with other Native people, and present artistic, literary, land-management, and other contemporary Native achievements in an accurate and authentic way.

—KRIS STEVENS

Former Senior Supervisor, Maidu Museum & Historic Site



The *Sing Me Your Story* exhibition at the Maidu Museum.

Lessons Learned: Relationships *Relationship-building should involve the museum's leadership—the Executive Director, CEO and/or Board President. Check in with your Board members to find out who already has connections with tribal leaders. Leader-to-leader connections are important and they build internal support for welcoming community voices.*

Establishing Relationships

The San Joaquin County Historical Museum (SJCHM), located in Lodi, promotes community pride, continued learning, and an appreciation of regional history among county residents and visitors. In 2009, the Museum hosted *Sing Me Your Story* and sought to establish relationships with local native communities.

Hosting the traveling exhibition was the culmination of a two-year effort to showcase the traditional cultures of the many of vibrant ethnic/cultural groups and communities throughout the county.

The Native population of what is now San Joaquin County was, like many others, severely impacted by introduced European diseases, inland punishment and “recruiting” expeditions from the missions, and the mass immigration of the Gold Rush. Stockton and San Joaquin County were the gateway to the “Southern Mines” and at “ground zero” of Gold Rush impacts. Shortly after the Gold Rush the agricultural potential of the county was recognized

“Although we have a small staff, this process has really solidified our relationship with a core advisor. She has become a conduit for the museum, and this has helped us address the museum’s deficiencies and plan for a major update to our permanent exhibition.”

and rapidly developed, significantly and irrevocably altering the natural environment upon which Native peoples had relied.

Thus there is limited cultural continuity from prehistoric to contemporary Native peoples in the county. Although SJCHM had always interpreted the material culture of the Yokuts and Miwok peoples, the museum had no ongoing relationships with Native representatives.

with two Native artists who had worked with SJCHM on a prior exhibition, *Precious Cargo: California Indian Cradle Baskets and Childbirth Traditions*. CERA’s CCP advisors and a mini-grant from the James Irvine Foundation gave us the tools we needed to succeed.

The Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project provided the impetus for us to re-establish relationships

The gallery programs presented by the Native artists in the exhibit, Sylvia Ross (Chukchansi) and Kathy Wallace (Karuk/Yurok/Member Hoopa Tribe), with whom we re-connected, were well attended and received. We have established new, trusting relationships with both of these culture bearers and they have become true resources for us as we address SJCHM’s limitations in interpreting Native cultures. We intend to draw upon these relationships to improve our exhibition about the Yokuts and Miwok peoples, as well as related educational programs and services.

–DAVID STUART

Executive Director/CEO, San Joaquin County Historical Society & Museum

Lesson Learned: See the opportunities *Persevere in your attempts to contact and get to know local Native community members. A personal connection from an unanticipated direction can open the doors to new and unique partnerships. If your initial attempts did not result in a connection, consider other opportunities and a variety of ways to meet people.*

*Traditional Dance Beads, Kathy Wallace
(Karuk/Yurok/Member Hoopa Tribe),
2006, Pine nut necklace*





Sylvia Ross (Chukchansi) and Kathy Wallace (Karuk/Yurok/Member Hoopa Tribe) giving a presentation at a CCP event at the San Joaquin County Historical Museum.

Some organizations that host museums connected with through the Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project included:

- Tribal Councils (Work with the tribes as much as possible.)
- Tribal Elders (It is critical that they support projects.)
- Regional tribal groups
- Indian health clinics
- California Indian Storytelling Association
- California Indian Basketweavers Association
- California Indian Conference
- California Tribal Museums Partnership Summit
- Native Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- American Association of Museums' Native Americans and Museums Collaboration Professional Interest Committee
- Heyday Books, publisher of *The Dirt is Red Here* and *News from Native California*
- Directors of Activities at local rancherias
- Native American Studies faculty/teachers/students at local elementary/high schools, colleges, and universities
- Native ethnobotanists/Native plant nurseries/clubs



St. Francis of Assisi with Blue Birds, Harry Fonseca (Nisenan Maidu), 1996, Mixed media on canvas

Reciprocal Relationships

The Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House, located in Ukiah, CA, is an interdisciplinary museum focusing on Western American art, California Indian cultures (particularly Pomo Indian cultures), histories of North Coast region, and contemporary regional artists. It has a strong history of community engagement, something that cannot be done successfully without an institutional commitment to building lasting and reciprocal relationships.

"I think that if we can help Native people feel at home in our institutions—even for a moment—we will have been successful in building real and lasting community connections."

Our relationships with Native communities have been built over a long period of time, and their growth is a continuing process for all involved. One of the key elements on which they are constructed is the acknowledgement that Native people are contributing something of real value to the museum, and in turn, the museum needs to contribute something back—be it access to collections for dance regalia makers, copy prints of historic photos of family

members from earlier generations, special tours for tribal education programs, the opportunity for youth internships, a space for meetings, etc. Another is the acknowledgement that there are, and have been, many perspectives, points of view, and individual experiences in Native-White relations. Our good relationships with many local Native communities depend on our recognizing and expressing that truth.



The *Sing Me Your Story* exhibition at the Grace Hudson Museum.

The *Sing Me Your Story* exhibition and Community Connections Project helped us expand previous relationships and establish new ones, particularly with teenagers and young adults, in their local Native community. Hosting the exhibition was important because the strong and evocative work of the exhibition artists, and other California Indian artists, has never fit neatly into conventional art genres and has gone largely unrecognized by the general



Woodpecker, Brian Tripp (Karuk), 2004, 3-D mixed media

public and greater art world. But the work in the *Sing Me Your Story* exhibition expresses a shared experience and world-view common to many, many contemporary California Indian people that is important to share. It exposes some viewers to a different, and new, cultural reality, while others will find their world-view confirmed. My favorite comment about this exhibit in our visitors' log came from a young California Indian man who wrote, "It is so indescribably awe inspiring—beautiful—to find a spot of home, where my soul feels among family, even for a moment."

Some artists in the exhibition hailed from the Ukiah area, so the Grace Hudson Museum enhanced the traveling exhibit by including additional artworks, poems and audio stops by these local individuals. We also emphasized local Native artists' participation in public programs and our school class tours. By working with Heyday Books to promote the exhibition through the use of *News From Native California's* mailing list, we expanded our audience and learned of several additional local Native artists. Some California Indian people sent me a special thank you for the invitation, some sent me new poems and artwork. It was an unexpected pleasure, for me to learn about newly emerging California Indian artists and for them to begin to learn about the Grace Hudson Museum.

Thanks in part with this successful experience, the Grace Hudson Museum and Sun House has embarked on two new collaborative projects; one an exhibition with California State Parks titled *American Masterpieces: The Artistic Legacy of California Indian Basketry*. Second, we developed another California Indian related exhibit on traditional foods which is based on another Heyday Books publication titled *Seaweed, Salmon, and Manzanita Cider: A California Indian Feast*. This exhibit will travel through the CERA network as well.

—SHERRIE SMITH-FERRI

Grace Hudson Museum Director and

Sing Me Your Story Community Connections Project Advisor

Lessons Learned: Focus on "in-reach" *A museum needs to be "healthy" from within before it can begin to reach out to communities in a constructive way. This means focusing on the museum's internal community—the museum staff, board, and volunteers—to let all know what the exhibition is and what it can mean for the museum. It also means having a very honest discussion about fears or apprehensions some may have about working with Native communities. Ask Native people to comment or attend a meeting. These conversations will help bring out staff concerns and you can address those together.*

Community Engagement Resources

- American Association of Museums. *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (Washington, D.C., 2002).
- John Falk, "A Framework for Diversifying Museum Audiences," *Museum News* (Sept./Oct. 1998): 36–39, 61.
- International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience: Models and Practical Tools
<http://www.sitesofconscience.org/index.php/resources/programs/en/>
- Japanese American National Museum. (August 2009). *The Cultural Museum 2.0: Engaging Diverse Audiences in America*. <http://www.janm.org/projects/innovation/>
- Margaret Kadoyama, "The Hard Work of True Listening," *Civic Discourse: Let's Talk*. Museums & Social Issues, Vol. 2, No. 2, Fall 2007: 201–206.
- Margaret Kadoyama, "The Spot Where It Flows: Practicing Civic Engagement," an American Association of Museums Web Exclusive, July 2007, <http://www.aam-us.org/pubs/webexclusive/civic.cfm>
- John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993): 109–119.
- Elizabeth Scott and Edward M. Luby, "Maintaining Relationships with Native Communities: The Role of Museum Management and Governance," *Museum Management and Curatorship*, Vol. 22, No. 3, September 2007: 265–285.
- Jennifer Amdur Spitz and Margaret Thom, eds., *Urban Network: Museums Embracing Communities* (Chicago: Field Museum, 2003). <http://amdurspitz.com/about-us/resources/>
- The Wing Luke Asian Museum Community Process Model, 2006.
<http://wingluke.org/pages/process/introduction.html>

Credits

Front Cover

Left: *He Likes to Fight*, Brian Tripp (Karuk), 2000, 3-D mixed media, courtesy of Frank LaPena; Center: *Remaking Our World*, Lyn Risling (Karuk/Yurok/Member Hoopa Tribe), 2005, acrylic on paper; Right: Lyn Risling and her *Asiktavanthækirar Tu' 'pak*, *Tattoo Woman Returns*, 2003 in background

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"Baskets" by Deborah Miranda, *Indian Cartography*, Greenfield Review Press, 1999. Also a limited-edition, letterpress broadside printed by May Day Press. Baskets by Linda Aguilar (Chumash): *Tools*, 2006, horse hair, wax thread, buffalo bone, 4" diameter; *Horse Feather Basket*, 2006, horse hair and wax thread, 3" diameter; *Offering Basket*, 2005, horse hair, wax thread, beads, Bingo chips; and baskets by Deborah McConnell (Yurok/Quinalt/Hoopa Tribe): *Seaweed Basket*, n.d., 42.5" diameter, 12" depth; *Tobacco Pouch*, n.d., 3-D Basket, 4.5" depth, 13" diameter, on exhibit at the Maidu Museum. Photo by Chris Dustman at River City Imagery.

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Sing Me Your Story exhibition at the Maidu Museum. Photo by Chris Dustman at River City Imagery.



Apparitions I, James Luna (Luiseño), 2007,
Mixed-media photograph and light box

I spent this past weekend with two of my grandchildren. My grandchildren were sad because their fathers have not been in their lives. In the Sing Me Your Story, Dance Me Home exhibit there's a poem that touched our hearts, about a funeral and passing into the spirit world. I read it to my grandchildren and I told them that the words, the message, and the fact that neither of us have a Father to guide us, [meant] that a spirit guided us to see your exhibit and read the poem, because we miss our fathers. The big smiles and family hugs brought us back down to earth. I had never seen a full-blown exhibit about Native California artists and poets. My grandchildren read every poem and the book you had at the door about the artists and poems (artists' and poets' biographies). KUDOS, KUDOS TO YOU AND THE NATIVE CALIFORNIA CULTURE.

–MESSAGE TO THERESA HARLAN, Exhibition Curator,
from a San Francisco Public Library exhibition visitor,
Father's Day 2008
