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The Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba

710 Rosser Avenue, Unit 2, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada R7A 0K9
Telephone: 204 727 1036 • Fax: 204 726 8139 • Email: info@agsm.ca • www.agsm.ca

“Do Not Park Bicycles!”

America Meredith

Dylan Miner

Tania Willard

Terri Saul

Yatika Fields

May 3 - June 9, 2007

Curated by Jenny Western



**Art Gallery
of Southwestern Manitoba**

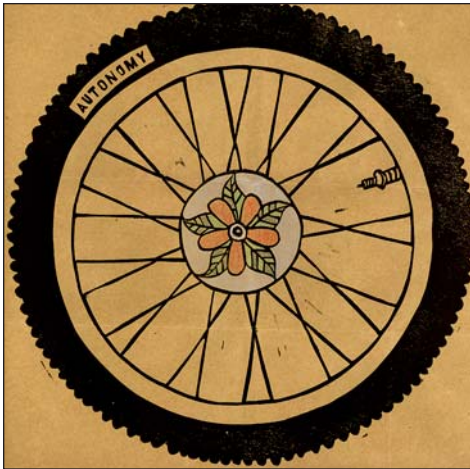


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Dylan Miner, *Bicycle Wheel #1*



America Meredith, *Hia kla ganvnawa yig (this is not a pipe)*



Terri Saul, *Northwestern Piano Mover*

“Do Not Park Bicycles!”

by Jenny Western

Coming from the curator of an exhibition on bicycle culture, it might sound strange to hear that most mornings I make my way to work on foot. The pace is slow but it gives me time to notice some of Brandon's urban monuments along the way - the old church on Lorne and 11th, the AKSOE graffiti scrawled on various public surfaces, the steel and concrete skeleton of the new building going up behind the Credit Union, the clock on the MacKenzie Seeds tower, the ghost whisper of 10th street. There is also a sign in the parking lot attached to the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba that ranks among my personal parade of mythic city symbols. Tucked in the corridor between a tiny bike rack and the heaving bulk of the car park, the sign simply but firmly commands, “Do Not Park Bicycles!”. It is composed of red stenciled letters with a black exclamation mark on a white board underlined by a long, double-headed arrow meant to negate this space for bikes and bike riders.

The sign is in a parkade that provides one of the few places to park a car for free in the core area of our city. I'm told that this is good because parking and paying for parking in downtown Brandon is a major obstacle towards the 'revitalization of our urban centre.' But something about this mindset does not sit well with me. Although the car may be privileged in this city (and in this parking lot) there are still many Brandonites who opt for an alternative form of transportation. People here are choosing not to use cars because of ethical, environmental, and financial concerns. Sometimes the choice is optional and sometimes it isn't. Either way, by stepping out of a motorized vehicle it

becomes easier to notice that a portion of Brandon's population is getting around by some means other than a car.

The bicycle is one such form of transportation, an efficient machine that can change our perspective of the world in so many ways. The “Do Not Park Bicycles!” sign in the parkade may be crudely fashioned, easily overlooked by motorists, and flecked with pigeon poo, but it is a small reminder of the vital need to reframe the car's stranglehold on our city as the main means of transportation here. The “Do Not Park Bicycles!” exhibition is meant as a response to the sign. This group show will explore the ways in which artists encounter the culture of the bicycle as a means of transporting people and ideas from one point to another while opening up new modes of examining how we move in our society. The exhibition will also offer a reflection on the artists' own identities as bike enthusiasts who are from First Nations or Métis backgrounds.

But why a bike show on Aboriginal identity? For some folks out there, Aboriginal identity and bicycle culture may seem as incongruous as parking a bicycle in a car parkade. The general sentiment is best summed up with a joke that people (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) have been telling me since I began planning for “Do Not Park Bicycles!” a few months back: “What do you call an Indian on a bicycle? A thief.” Supposedly bikes and Indigenous identity do not equate unless it relates back to some form of criminal activity. Again, this does not sit well and I feel the need to respond. But if challenging this misconception is not enough of a reason to examine Aboriginal identity and

bicycle culture through an exhibition, I'll share my own story. While growing up in downtown Winnipeg, I was afraid of having my bike stolen. I never left it lying in the yard or forgot to lock it up. Truth be known, I would probably have blamed "Those Natives" if my bike had gone missing. But I wouldn't have articulated this stereotype because I realized that it was unfair and unkind. What I wouldn't have realized was why I was giving any credence to the stereotype in the first place. For me it was likely a way of distancing myself from an inability to accept my lineage to the Oneida Nation, an ancestral detail that I have kept well internalized for its seeming incongruity with my external appearance.

As I've gotten older, I have been able to acknowledge that my ancestors were both European and Aboriginal. I am a product of colonialism and my Aboriginal lineage should not be denied. Nonetheless, it is a tricky identity to handle as it doesn't seem to fit within the prescribed boundaries of what being Aboriginal is. In a similar way it may be surprising for some that there are First Nations and Métis people who are really into bicycles, bike maintenance, working as bike messengers, competing in alley-cat races, and even making artwork about their love for bikes. As Dylan Miner touches on in his essay, bicycles play a symbolic role in our systems of modernity and colonialism. The stereotype of the Aboriginal as bike thief may be true, but I wouldn't know. I haven't had my bike stolen by anyone just yet, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal alike. But I see the stereotype persist, more than likely held in place by a mainstream anxiety about a marginalized culture exerting its potential power. Hard to

imagine? Picture the road rage incurred by motorists when passing a bike rider who is no longer satisfied with being relegated to the side of the street and decides to take up space in traffic. This has less to do with safety and more to do with fear of having to give up ownership of the road by letting someone in. Those yellow and white lines could be repositioned to acknowledge that bicyclists have a right to the street as a different kind of commuter. But the lanes aren't accommodating bicyclists because bikes are generally not seen as a viable mode of transportation, just as a passion for biking is generally not seen as a viable aspect of Aboriginal identity. "Do Not Park Bicycles!" is here to redirect our ideas away from the supposed norms of culture and towards its margins in order to reexamine what we think we know about the nature of bicycle culture and Aboriginal identity in Brandon and on the larger scene. Five artists will help get us there: America Meredith, Dylan Miner, Tania Willard, Terri Saul, and Yatika Fields.

The artwork of America Meredith provides an excellent starting point for an examination of Aboriginal identity and bicycle culture. Her project, *Cherokee Spokespeople*, addresses the survival of Indigenous language through the cooperation of international cyclists and keepers of the Cherokee language in northeastern Oklahoma. Here in Manitoba there is a concerted effort by organizations such as Aboriginal Languages of Manitoba to maintain our legacy through the propagation of languages such as Cree, Dene, Ojibwe, Oji-Cree, Inuktituq, Dakota, and Michif. Meredith's project is similar in its approach to the role of the Cherokee language in the

maintenance of the distinct identity of the Cherokee people. States Meredith, "According to Cherokee Nation tribal leadership, our current generation, the fourteenth generation since European contact with the Cherokees, is said to be the generation that decides whether the language grows or dies."¹ As a means of combating the loss of language, Meredith looks to the cultural practices of her own generation including bike messenger culture. The artist has created laminated cards to be placed in the spokes of a bike's wheel much like the spoke cards used as racer numbers or souvenirs in alley-cats or bike messenger races.² With these cards, Meredith has hit on a positive means of circulating the Cherokee language to people all over the world. Just as bike messengers carry important information from location to location, the spokescards have been traded with couriers from eighty cities and twelve countries. In exchange for documentation of the card in the recipient's city and on the recipient's bicycle, the participating bike messengers select new words and phrases to be translated. Meredith works with native speakers of the Cherokee language to create words, sometimes employing Cherokee methods of description in situations where a direct translation is not possible. Words and images developed by Meredith, the couriers, and the translators include "gravy," "Doctor Who," "monkey and fez," "Democrat," and "hearse." For the word "Swedish," Meredith and her collaborators invented *Aniuganasta* to mean "they are sweet," while *uwonidi tsisqua* symbolizes a chatty, outspoken bird or "magpie." Although the written form of the Cherokee language was developed in the

nineteenth century, Meredith uses today's modified form in syllabary on the cards along with Roman letters and the images of the signified word. These spoke cards play with the relationship of text and images in our understanding of language and culture, even recalling Rene Magritte's *La Trahison des Images* in Meredith's piece *Hia kla ganvnawa yiga* with its translation of "This is not a pipe" into Cherokee. Using humour and the familiar symbols of art history and the bicycle, Meredith's spokescards demonstrate how adaptive Indigenous language and culture truly are to a contemporary identity.

Dylan Miner's identity as a "diasporic Métis" has led him to adapt to a life on the move. Miner is an artist, historian and critic from Michigan as well as being a member of the Woodland Métis Tribe of Ontario who currently finds himself in Albuquerque teaching at the University of New Mexico. As an academic, Miner's research is concerned with issues of anarchist, socialist and working-class struggles. He has also focused on the study of contemporary Indigenous, Chicano, and Latin American culture. These sources are evidenced in his artistic practice as a printmaker and mixed media sculptor, as well as with his enthusiasm for bikes. In *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* Miner contributes three hand-coloured block prints of bicycle wheels. Drawing from his past print work on subjects such as Zapatistas and Russian theorists, these pieces suggest Miner's view of the bicycle as a tool of activism and political change on a grass roots level. He has also explored the imagery of Western Canadian founding fathers Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont. Both men were Métis heroes who took a stand against

¹ America Meredith artist statement

² "Subject: Spoke Cards" *Fixed Gear Gallery*. <http://www.fixedgeargallery.com/spokecards.htm>

authority. As part of a mixed media sculpture, Miner revisits Dumont as a subject with *When Gabriel Dumont and Marcel Duchamp Met in Paris* (Métis Readymade). States Miner who began work on the piece last year, “Seeing that 2006 is the anniversary of the passing into the spirit world of Métis elder Gabriel Dumont, I have decided to evoke him in an object which also pays homage to the amazing work of Dada artist Marcel Duchamp's 1919 Ready-made Bicycle Wheel.”³ One of Duchamp's first Ready-mades, the original piece was a bicycle wheel installed fork down on top of a wooden kitchen stool. Miner works with a similar concept, adding his own Métis identity to the mix through flags and other embellishments. This is an encounter of two things coming together (bike and stool, Duchamp and Dumont, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) creating a sense of revolutionary movement through the juxtaposition of unexpected forms. Miner's prints, the Métis readymade, as well as the fabulous *Another Hybrid Object (Michif Lowrider)* apply the symbols of a Métis heritage to the triumphant form of the bicycle in a wonderful cultural mash up.

Like Dylan Miner, Tania Willard also looks to the elders, artists, and revolutionaries of the past to inspire her work. “As an artist, activist and educator, I am inspired by my ancestors and all the people who fought for their rights and their place in the world,”⁴ explains Willard of her current art practice. With *White Buffalo Bike* Willard integrates Pablo Picasso's found art sculpture *Bull's Head (or Tete de Toro)* with an archival scene of a Methodist missionary introducing a bike to a group of Kiowa children. Willard has taken a set of

motorcycle handlebars and a child's bicycle seat to create a buffalo head much like Picasso's bull head piece. Adding white beads and a fringed hide, the photograph is projected onto the bicycle's saddle. States Willard, “In the photograph I find an interesting juxtaposition of the missionary posing with the bicycle in front of the Kiowa. He is presenting it like it represents the genius of colonizer country as if to say, 'Leave behind your old ways for the wonder of European culture and their god.’”⁵ But Willard is reclaiming the bicycle as a symbol of the buffalo, as a sacred image much in the same way that Picasso imbued the original sculpture with a sense of strength in the face of his own adverse experience. While living in Nazi occupied Paris in 1943, Picasso created his sculpture from the simple materials of an abandoned bicycle that he noticed while out walking one day. Producing the bull's head from the bike's saddle and handlebars, this became what Picasso scholar Lael Wertenbaker deemed, “one of his most ingenious and widely known metamorphoses.”⁶ Willard is striving for metamorphoses as well by exchanging the colonizing tone of the photograph through its repositioning upon the bike seat. The result is what she calls “a savage bike lovin' holy urban Indian buffalo skull.”⁷

Artist and bike enthusiast Terri Saul's series of paintings about bicycles and bicyclists appear at first glance to be straight forward paintings of bikes, bikers, and bike love. But upon closer inspection, a few things begin to stand out. Some of the bike riders appear to be holding feathers while others are wearing what look to be traditional headdresses.

Saul explains that the riding gear and dress are not symbolic of any particular tradition, tribe or practice. Rather, these images are more of a fanciful riff on the perfect bike ride. Saul points to the influence of her grandfather Chief Terry Saul, a Choctaw painter, illustrator, and peyotist. Perhaps because of her respect for her grandfather's role and many gifts, Saul's childhood daydreams revolved around becoming a fancy dancer on the Pow Wow circuit and racing in the Tour de France, two masculine symbols of accomplishment. As a child, these roles did not seem out of the realm of possibility for her. States Saul, “Fantasies are not altered by growing pains, distractions, accidents, gender roles, or historical truth, but rather follow a shaman's spirit.” The sentiment behind these goals reappears in her bicyclist series:

On a broader level, the series attempts to challenge conceptions of normality by juxtaposing two alien traditions that come together and even fuse at unexpected points of contact: the colourful regalia of the performers, stoicism and feats of athleticism leading to transcendence, ritual movement within the context of the natural landscape, the individual's realization of a “dream” that becomes truth by way of communal performance.⁹

While Saul is working with issues of identity by incorporating seemingly disparate forms and questioning the complexity of “nature, nurture and existential chaos,”¹⁰ she also allows her viewer to share in her pure enjoyment of bicycles. *Northwestern Piano Mover* may be the best illustrated example of the love that exists between a bike and its owner.

Bike love can exist on the level of bike enthusiasts but is also present for those who make a living on two wheels. Painter Yatika Fields works as a bicycle messenger in New York City. His name means “Interpreter” and like Terri Saul, Fields is also addressing his dreams and love for his bike through his artwork. Employing a style influenced by the Surrealists, Fields' paintings are colourful, creative, and recall the human form, as well as the bicycle's composition, in unusual ways. He explains, “I like to paint images that evoke mystery and leave the viewer wondering: Why is that? Or how is that possible?”¹¹ His artwork and his bicycle have become the means by which Fields lives, both in a day to day basis and as a philosophy. When his bike was stolen a few years ago and he was unable to work as a messenger, Fields reflected, “I think it's bad to stay in one place, it's bad for the head and it's bad for you spiritually; it damages something in you. So I'm borrowing friends' bikes...I have some art shows that are coming up, and people have bought things, so hopefully with that money I can get a new bike, get back with the program and work...It's looking up. I've just got to keep a clear head.”¹² On the receiving end of bike thievery, Fields acknowledged the need to stay active physically, mentally, and spiritually. This sense of independent drive is very much related to a bicycle culture where riders are responsible for getting themselves from point A to point B with the strength of their own legs and their own will power.

Bicycles offer a sense of empowerment to the people who ride them and are thus the apparatuses of revolutionary movement. You could call it the 'Movement Revolution.'

³ Email correspondence from Dylan Miner (October 15, 2006)

⁴ “Profile: Tania Willard, Secwepemc Nation.” *Awaken100.net*.
http://www.awaken100.net/tania_willard.htm

⁵ Tania Willard artist statement

⁶ Lael Wertenbaker, *The World of Picasso: 1881-1973*, Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Library of Art, 1967, p130

⁷ Tania Willard artist statement

⁸ Terri Saul artist statement

⁹ Terri Saul artist statement

¹⁰ Victoria Everman. “Terri Saul: Widely Inspired Artist” *Boheme Verite*. Volume 1, Issue 1,
<http://www.bvmagazine.com/Archived%20Pages/Issue%201/Terri%20Saul%20-%20Widely-inspired%20painter.htm>

¹¹ Yatika Fields artist statement

¹² David Varno, “Bike Messengers: Beta Still Rules on the Street” *The Brooklyn Rail* (November 2005)

In this kind of revolution, bikes will push us forward in our pursuit of physical activity, in our quest for political activism, and in an active search to break away the things that hold us back. For Brandon this could mean the creation of better bike paths downtown and the establishment of more places to park bicycles around the city. It could also mean considering other means of moving about, like riding the train or walking. All that it would take is to begin questioning the ways in which we approach transportation. Like the contemporary First Nations and Métis

identities of artists and bike lovers America Meredith, Dylan Miner, Tania Willard, Terri Saul, and Yatika Fields, the Movement Revolution will not be hemmed in by outdated concepts and stereotypical mindsets. In the end, we all need to move and at some point we all need to park our method of transportation somewhere. The “Do Not Park Bicycles!” sign places a negative message into our community that the “*Do Not Park Bicycles!*” exhibition would like to respond to with this suggestion: “Do Not Park Bicycles! Ride them.”



Dylan Miner, *Michif Lowrider*



Tania Willard, *White Buffalo Bike*



Tania Willard, *White Buffalo Bike*



Terri Saul, *Herbes de Provence*



Tania Willard, *White Buffalo Bike*



Dylan Miner, *Métis Readymade*



Terri Saul, *Okla Chick Saw Paw*

Red (Pedal) Power

by Dylan A.T. Miner

To properly appreciate this exhibition, it must be recognized that the bicycle, as a sign and metaphor, is intimately *entwined* with the systems of both modernity and colonialism. In many regards, the bicycle is an archetypal signifier of modernity, temporal change, and the maintenance of tradition, historically as well as contemporarily. While Indigenous people are not generally recognized as a significant cycling constituency, many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have spent countless hours riding the modern-day descendent of the velocipede. I, for one, have expended significant time in the saddle and squandered far too many loonies on bicycle parts and accoutrement.

Think about your own childhood, be it on the reserve or in Saint-Laurent; Brandon or Winnipeg; Toronto or Vancouver; New York or New Brunswick; Mexico City or Juárez; Calcutta or Algiers. How many hours did you spend traveling to and fro just enjoying the freedom that the bicycle brought? In contemporary times, nearly every child learns to ride a bicycle as an important youthful activity. To this day, I still reminisce upon the libration and elative sensations I experienced when riding over the cracked and weathered sidewalk in front of my childhood home or through the Jack Pine woodlands near my Grandparent's residence. Yet sometime thereafter, like most North Americans, I was taught to forget the autonomy of the bicycle and embrace the so-called emancipatory potential of the automobile.

In fact, most citizens of Western cultures distinguish themselves from Eastern and Indigenous societies in that upon entering adulthood they decide to exchange bicycles

for automobiles, the true marker of modernity and industrialization. In many regards, this decision is marked as a move away from sustainable, human-powered transportation and toward travel based on combustible engines that run on consumable fuels. One of the myths actively circulating in contemporary society is that the automobile is intricately tied to freedom. Accordingly, as the legend continues, without the car and the access it allows, we would not be able to easily travel from one place to another. It is based on this erroneous rationale that the George W. Bush regime, backed by a motley crew of international neo-colonial state apparatus, continues to mount an unjust and inhumane war for oil couched beneath the label of a 'War on Terrorism.'

Nonetheless, although most Western societies envision self-propelled, two-wheel travel as an obsolete and archaic device, its use by many global citizens becomes an intentional act of civil disobedience. A brief history of the bike reveals that while developed in Europe during the mid-nineteenth century, the bicycle was exported to the far reaches of the earth in tandem with expanding capitalist markets, as well as by missionaries in the Christianization of 'primitive' societies. Even so, colonized societies did not remain passive and promptly began to include the bicycle within traditional and postcolonial Indigenous practices. To this day, the bicycle demonstrates the ever-changing status of the contemporary world and the manner in which societies have integrated an array of cultural practices within their localized epistemologies.

For the artists in this exhibition, the

¹In her curatorial statement, Jenny Western demonstrates the common misconception that Natives do not ride bikes, but instead only steal them. So before you read this essay, let me pose a brief question: How many aboriginal people do you know that ride a bike? While the answer is definitely illusive, I hope that after today you will be able to name at least five more (six including the curator).

decision to become involved in cycling culture was not primarily based on a desire for physical fitness, but instead developed in response to continued colonial exploitation and capitalist market fragmentation. In other words, while the bike initially served as a component of European colonization, its sustained use within many Indigenous societies functions as a sign of resistance to über-industrialization and hyper-modernization. While most North Americans choose to mount a bicycle based on health-conscious or political motivations, a trip to the 'Third World' quickly demonstrates that the majority of the world's population travel using their own energies not simply as resistance to the exchange of wages for fossil fuels. In fact, outside of Canada, millions continue to use the bicycle as the premier form of affordable transportation, while simultaneously countering the ecological and economic destruction wrought by the automobile.

Connecting the bicycle with modernity, modernization, and modern art, although seemingly strange bedfellows, is an easy task and *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* does so seamlessly. Indeed, many of the artworks included in this exhibition concurrently address the history of modern art, the pertinence of bicycles in modern society, and the maintenance of Indigenous identities. The complex system of signification does not end here, but rather uses contemporary art as the forum to produce new philosophical vantage points and challenge traditional forms of knowledge. For instance, Tania Willard's sculpture *White Buffalo Bike* references Pablo Picasso's 1943 *Tête de Toro (Bull's Head)*, a bronze figure that metaphorically evoked a bull's head and

horns with a bicycle seat and handlebars. As an anarchist and fervent anti-imperialist, the bull was a common theme within Picasso's larger body of work, chiefly in his renowned and admired painting *Güernica*.

Willard, a Vancouver-based artist and citizen of the Secwepemc Nation, returns to Picasso's *Tête de Toro* for many reasons. As an Aboriginal and anti-authoritarian activist, Willard demonstrates solidarity with the overall anti-capitalist theme of Picasso's work. Moreover, Willard inflects the original work of Picasso with further anti-colonial metaphors by making her form replicate the Buffalo, an important animal for many Aboriginal peoples, particularly on the Prairies. By simultaneously acknowledging the influence of pioneering modernist artists such as Picasso, while evoking a political statement with the inclusion of the Buffalo iconography, Willard brings the complications of contemporary art to the fore.

In my installation *When Marcel Duchamp and Gabriel Dumont Meet in Paris*, I unambiguously reference Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel*, in an attempt to demonstrate that all art is about other art. Trained as an Aboriginal and Latina/o art historian, my work commonly invokes the objects of other artists in an effort to generate discourse and dialogue across time, space, and cultures. This is done in opposition to the common misconception that while all 'Western art' is about previous art, Aboriginal art only responds to other Aboriginal art. As the exhibition, *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"*, clearly demonstrates, this is simply not the case: Native artists regularly explore a complex matrix of issues, including art history, popular

culture, politics, society, even issues as benign as the bicycle.

As Diné art critic Shanna Ketchum makes abundantly clear, "Native American artists embody a space that is neither 'inside' nor 'outside', metaphorically speaking or not, but which allows for an engagement with modernism by virtue of a periphery that has actually functioned as the true centre all along."² What Ketchum demonstrates is that the space where Native artists produce and exhibit artworks is not simply marginal, as others presume, but has always existed in dialogue and exchange with the practices of the mainstream. By responding to modernist artistic practices, as well as to the bicycle and other forms of popular and (neo)colonial culture, the artists of *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* are operating in a space that is simultaneously the centre, as well as the periphery. That is to say, those involved in the exhibition operate as contemporary artists and at the same time critically assess the role of art in North American and Indigenous societies. Collectively, the artists in *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* address concerns that in many regards are universal (the bicycle), but do so by expressing their individual and communal partisanship.

The work of America Meredith, a Tsalagi (Cherokee) artist from San Francisco, dialogically addresses these complex and dissimilar issues, while reciprocally attending to the contemporary role of Indigenous cultural maintenance. In *Cherokee Spokespeople*, Meredith uses language as the basis for her tongue-in-cheek double signification. The spokesperson of the title alludes to both individuals serving as mouthpieces, as

well as to the physical location where these objects will be placed—within the spokes of a bicycle. Amongst the bicycle courier community, of which Meredith is involved, spoke cards are laminated objects placed in a bicycle's wheel and serve as a souvenir for a particular bicycle race or courier event. Meredith maintains the customary use of this device, but modifies its function to serve as an Aboriginal pedagogical apparatus. According to Meredith, "To survive, Cherokee cannot be relegated to the past or isolated in one geographical area. *Cherokee Spokespeople* is a small step towards introducing new people to the language and recontextualizing the language in an international, urban setting to show that our language is capable of survival and revitalization in our modern world."³ Like the other objects in the exhibition, *Cherokee Spokespeople* functions, not to replicate stereotypes about Aboriginal art and culture, but as a tool in the perpetual maintenance of Indigenous identity in an ever changing and expanding social order.

Like Meredith, Yatika Fields is also a bicycle messenger, although one based on the Atlantic, not Pacific seaboard. Working from his studio in New York City, Fields (Cherokee, Creek, and Osage) uses both popular culture and contemporary idioms as his reference in producing complex work that denies easy categorization. In fact, Fields' objects included in *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* draw from multiple sources and influences. On the one hand, his oil on canvas painting *Osage Messenger* anthropomorphically merges the elements of the human form with those of the bicycle into what could be interpreted as a landscape. Since Fields studied landscape

²Shanna Ketchum. 'Native American Cosmopolitan Modernism(s): A Re-articulation of Presence through Time and Space.' *Third Text* 19:4 (July 2005), 364.

³America Meredith. Artist's Statement

painting in Italy in 2000, the work's allusion to European landscape traditions is evident, while integrating it within Fields' larger intuitive and painterly concerns.

Fields' painting *Team Shirt* uses the Natural American Spirits cigarette logo as source material, but replaces the stereotypical and passive 'peace-pipe' smoking, 'headdress' wearing Plains Native with an active Aboriginal cyclist. Not only has Fields altered the passivity of the figure to one of active agency, he also paints representations of spoke cards in the bike's wheels. This small maneuver firmly places Fields within the bicycle subculture, not merely as an 'Indian outsider,' but as an insider speaking from within the community. As Ketchum reveals, within works such as this the centre and margin merge in what becomes a complex and nuanced visual art.

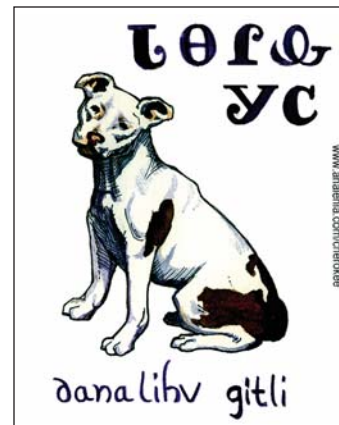
Finally, the inclusion of Terri Saul demonstrates a supplementary tendency for Native artists/cyclists. According to Saul, *The Bicyclist Series* unites her ostensibly disparate childhood desires to be a Fancy Dancer on the Powwow circuit and a racer in the prestigious Tour de France road race.⁴ Like the other works in this exhibition, these paradoxical fantasies are not so contradictory, but are the manifestation of complex social identities in which Indigenous people attempt to reconcile what is expected of them culturally with their contemporary existence in North America.

Similar to Fields, who uses a head-dressed figure on a bicycle as a trope, Saul combines a variety of tribal traditions with images from cycling history in a manner that disavows the idea that her paintings can be

isolated to one particular time, place, or culture. This intertribal evocation, as well as a diachronic historical intimation, presents the work in a manner that transcends any particular time or place, but uses the bicycle as a metaphor that enables the continuity of Indigenous social structures and cultural systems. For Saul, the bike serves as a symbol of resistance, affirmation, and cultural maintenance.

In addition to the presence of the bicycle as a unifying element within all the works in *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"*, each of the artists involved evokes the bike as metaphor for decolonization and communal, as well as individual, autonomy: Saul's combination of Guston-esque aesthetics with intertribal cultural traditions and cycling history; Willard's cultural evocation of Pablo Picasso; my own integration of a Métis lowrider bike with a Duchampian readymade; Field's abstract paintings; and finally Meredith's determination to maintain the Cherokee language in an urban setting. Each one of these artists and their respective work uses the idiom of contemporary art to justify and articulate the needs and desires of the contemporary world, particularly those held dear to each individual artist. Ultimately, *"Do Not Park Bicycles!"* presents a body of work that does not serve to reify what it means to be an Indigenous artist (or an artist of Aboriginal descent), but instead presents an interesting and engaging corpus of works that use the bicycle as the site of epistemological, political, and economic autonomy.

(Pedal) Power to the People!



America Meredith, *DanaliᎩᏍᏔᏅ ᎩᏞᎩ (Pitbull)*



Yatika Fields, *Team Shirt*

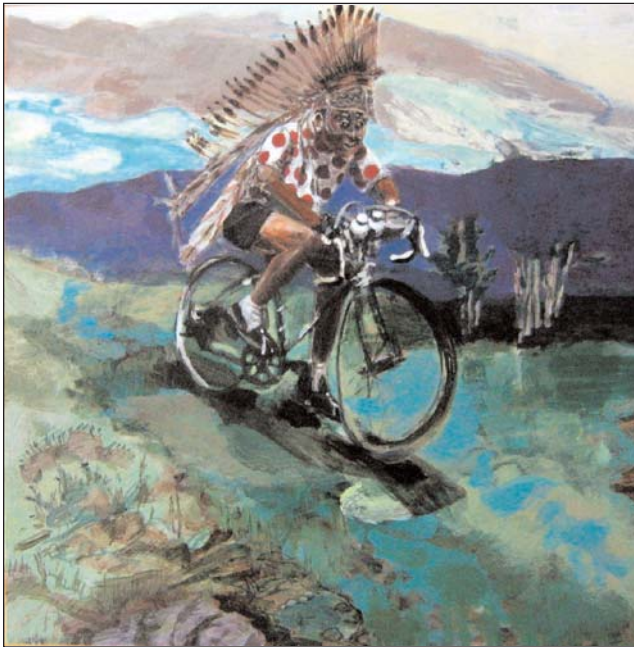


Terri Saul, *Wounded Feather Rides Again*

⁴Terri Saul. Artist's Statement



Yatika Fields, *Osage Messenger*



Terri Saul, *King of the Mountain*



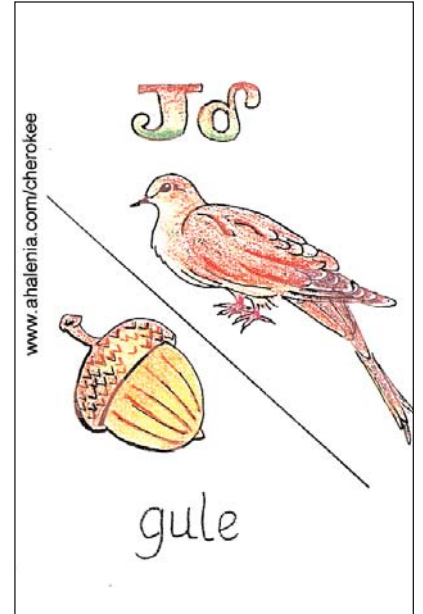
Terri Saul, *Mountain Climber (detail)*



Terri Saul, *Sleeping Giant*



America Meredith, *Hia kla ganvna'wv yig (this is not a pipe)*



America Meredith, *Gule (dove/acorn)*



Terri Saul, *Mask of the Pacific Northwest*



Yatika Fields, *Two Frogs*



Dylan Miner, *Michif Lowrider (detail)*

Artists' Biographies

America Meredith is a Swedish-Cherokee artist who blends traditional styles from Native America and Europe with pop imagery of her childhood. Her influences range from the Bacone school of painting, the Arts and Crafts movement, 60s cartoons, to Moundbuilder shell engravings. She is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation and a hereditary member of Aniwodli, the Red Paint Clan. The Cherokee language and syllabary figure prominently in her work, as it is the strongest visual imagery unique to her tribe. She has shown throughout the United States and in Europe for the last twelve years and has won awards at the Heard, SWAIA's Indian Market, as well as at numerous competitive shows. She was voted SF Weekly's Painter of the Year in 2006.

Dylan Miner is trained as an artist, art historian, and cultural critic. His printmaking references antiquated forms of printed matter by way of the relief print. His crudely constructed prints counter the hyper-slick qualities of capitalist cultural production and have been exhibited in the United States, Canada, México, and are scheduled for the UK, Greece, Australia, and South Africa. He is a member of the Woodland Métis Tribe of Ontario and the Industrial Workers of the World. He presently teaches at The University of New Mexico, but is looking for a job.

Tania Willard has worked with the aboriginal youth community in media arts for over 6 years. A practicing artist Tania works with story and the power of expression to give voice to marginalized communities. Using art to empower, to express and to cope with the struggles of aboriginal peoples. Tania graduated with an Honors degree from the University of Victoria in Fine Arts. She has been involved in community radio, curating and exhibiting emerging and young First Nations artists, advocacy and a national Aboriginal youth magazine Redwire. Tania currently runs a freelance business in design and illustration. Her work is inspired by Louis Riel's statement that, "Our People will sleep for a hundred years and when they awaken it will be the artists who give

them back their spirit." She is a member of the Secwepemc Nation.

Terri Saul was born in Glendale, CA in 1971. She now resides in Berkeley, CA with her daughter, Lydia. She is the granddaughter of Chief Terry Saul, a Choctaw painter, illustrator, and peyotist. Her main influences begin with her early exposure to photography. Her father Bill Saul worked as a news photographer for the Associated Press and also studied art photography with Edmund Teske. Complementing Bill, her mother Sue gave her studio space, a portable radio, and the abstract expressionists. Many other things contributed to her artistic development. Years spent traveling with her brother's Greco Roman wrestling team distracted her from the ongoing threat of nuclear war. Free xerox art, street art, comic books, and zines were scattered throughout Los Angeles on the counters of espresso bars. Shows of expressive paintings by such greats as Philip Guston, James Ensor, Emil Nolde, Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, Stanley Spencer, Frida Kahlo, Kathe Kollwitz, Louise Bourgeois, Georg Baselitz, and various Pacific Northwest, Inuit, Native American, Mexican and Latin American artists were all sources of inspiration.

Yatika Fields was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is of the Cherokee, Creek and Osage tribes, and is a member of the Bear Clan. His Creek name "Yvtekv" means Interpreter and he was given his Osage name, "Ho-moie," (Among the heavenly bodies) during an Osage Native American Church meeting on his first birthday. Yatika has been the recipient of many awards for his artwork and was selected to represent Native American youth artists at the Asian Pacific Economic Council (APEC) Young Artists' Exhibition during the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan. He currently is living in Brooklyn, NY, where he continues to paint and experience the creative energies and inspirations of urban life.

List of Works

America Meredith

Cherokee Spokespeople Project, 2004-2007

Adawadvisdi Tasdi (Umbrella Drink), Watercolor, pen
Adayonedi (Bigamy), Pen, prismacolor, watercolor, gouache
Adolanvsvdi (Praying Mantis / Walking Cane), Pen, watercolor
Atseluhisdi (Saxophone), Pen, watercolor, gouache
Danalibv Gitlv (Pitbull), Watercolor, pen
Galuyidobi (Chopper), Watercolor, pen, gouache
Ganulv (Weed, Grass), Watercolor, pen
Hlvwaligi Uquatliga (Maple Leaf), Watercolor, pen
Jiyu (Helicopter), Pen, gouache, watercolor
Nuhlsidi Gvnisdigyi (Microwave), Watercolor, pen
Sagei Gili Adv (Skinny Puppy), Watercolor, pen
Tsanela Diganvsvdgeni (Octopus), Watercolor, pen
Tsaquolade (Eastern Bluebird), Watercolor, pen
Tsiyu Ganohilidobi (Airplane), Gouache, pen on paper
Tsulunubi (Feathers), Pen, prismacolor, gouache
Tsumitlygi Digalvdodi (Ambulance), Acrylic, pen, prismacolor
Tsuuytlv Anehi Yvwi (Inuit person), Pen, watercolor, gouache
Udliada (She Is Wearing an Earring), Watercolor, pen
Uganasisgi (Addict), Pen, prismacolor, gouache
Uyohusv Galvdy (Hearse), Pen, prismacolor, gouache

Dylan Miner

Bicycle Wheel #1, Relief print on paper, 2007
Bicycle Wheel #2, Relief print on paper, 2007
Bicycle Wheel #3, Relief print on paper, 2007
Michif Lowrider, Sculpture, 2007
Métis Readymade, Installation (mixed media), 2006

Tania Willard

White Buffalo Bike, Motorcycle handlebars, bicycle seat, hide, beading, projected image, 2007

Terri Saul

Tunes With Wrenches, Acrylic on Cradleboard Panel, 2006
Sleeping Giant, Acrylic on Cradleboard Panel, 2006
Mountain Climber, Acrylic on Cradleboard Panel, 2006
King of the Mountain, Acrylic on Cradleboard Panel, 2005
Bicycle Race, Acrylic on Cradleboard Panel, 2005
Chrome Eater Healer of Scabbed Knees, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Holds Loosely the Thunder Tired Award, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Spark Low, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Mask of the Pacific Northwest, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Herbes de Provenance, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Wounded Feather Rides Again, Ink and Goache on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Okla Chick Saw Paw, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Hard and Ordained, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006
Northwestern Piano Mover, Ink on Fabriano Hot Press, 2006

Yatika Fields

Osage Messenger, Oil, 2006
Two Frogs, Acrylic, 2006
Urban Warrior, 2005