



Thunderbird

*Aboriginal Arts, Culture
and Entrepreneur Centre*

Thunderbird

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RED RUNNERS

"The new objectification of Native art and identity"

Curated by: Jason Jenkins and Luke Parnell



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Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Entrepreneur Centre

RED RUNNERS

presented by Thunderbird
Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Entrepreneur Centre

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Thunderbird is a Miziwe Biik Development Corporation (MBDC) program

Miziwe Biik Development Corporation
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As ceremonial lead-in to the formal opening of the exhibit *Paris/Ojibwa*, by Robert Houle, and in homage to the Ojibwa of 1845, artist, curator and dancer Barry Ace performed a series of pow wow dances beginning at the Louvre, winding through the Tuileries Gardens, on to Cleopatra's Needle, and down the Champs-Élysées with his final dance in front of the installation. Like the Ojibwa of 1845 he too endured the pain of dancing on concrete, cobble stone, pebbles and marble in moccasins designed for contact only with the earth. (*Description by Deb Chansonneuve*)

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Curated by: **Jason Jenkins and Luke Parnell**

June 22 to July 2, 2010
Well and Good Gallery
52 McCaul Street, Toronto ON

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Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Entrepreneur Centre

RED RUNNERS Miziwe Biik Development Corporation –Thunderbird



It is my honour and pleasure to provide these few words of introduction for the Red Runners exhibition.

Miziwe Biik Development Corporation (MBDC) has been promoting Aboriginal artists with programming since 2008, starting with the practitioner forum Aboriginal Artist as Entrepreneur. MBDC believes that Aboriginal arts and culture and the people who make their living in this field are key to contributing to the creative economy Toronto aspires to develop.

With this in mind MBDC launched Thunderbird, its Aboriginal arts and culture brand, which is producing Red Runners among other ventures. Key to the efforts of MBDC and Thunderbird is the development of capacity in arts management within the Aboriginal community, and we have been most fortunate to have renown Aboriginal artists Robert Houle and Bonnie Devine, members of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, acting as mentors to curatorial interns Luke J. Parnell and Jason Jenkins.

The end result of Luke and Jason's intern program is Red Runners, their challenge to fellow Aboriginal artists to re-imagine the most common of objects—a pair of plain white running shoes. The interpretations vary widely (and so they should) but their common root is the Aboriginal viewpoint, where art is not something set aside in a gallery, but an active part of everyday existence, as simple as breathing...or walking ■

NANCY MARTIN, President

Miziwe Biik Development Corporation (MBDC) –THUNDERBIRD

RED RUNNERS Project Mentor

ROBERT HOULE

misko makisinun/red runners

One of the most comfortable footwear worn globally is runners. They are ubiquitous and quotidian. Everywhere, everybody is wearing them everyday. Popular and affordable, metaphorically they represent egalitarianism in an otherwise large, expensive consumer market dominated by capital. As a cultural icon of daily life, runners also represent an interface between history and identity.

Runners or sneakers have a similar structure found in the moccasin, coming from the Algonquin word, makisin, or makisinun for a pair. Moccasin is described in the Oxford dictionary as a type of soft leather slipper or shoe with combined sole and heel, as originally worn by North American Indians.

People indigenous to the various regions of Turtle Island have produced an incredible variety of styles and types of footwear as signatures of technique and vision and that production has become an inspirational source of pride and identity.

Moccasins, worn in the house, at ceremonies and rituals and particularly at the powwow, the sole and heel movement of the feet on the grass while dancing combined with the sound of the drum and the warmth of the earth uplifts the spirit.

Red Runners, misko maisinun, worn in the home, at track and field, or on the street doing hip-hop, these shoes are engineered to maximize the power of the human foot. As icons of objectification, runners are an excellent choice to challenge artists to work outside the white box, the art gallery, and to express themselves inside the community that nourishes their sense of self.

Both Jason Jenkins and Luke Parnell, the curatorial interns behind the group exhibition, "Red Runners" deserve laurels for an innovative approach to curating exhibitions for our community and bravo to the participating artists who answered the call and submitted beauty and history through their interventions, deconstructions and re-assembling of a mass culture symbol often overlooked by a hermetic contemporary art world ■

As a cultural icon of daily life, runners also represent an interface between history and identity.

ROBERT HOULE, Project Mentor

Artist, Critic, Educator and member of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective

RED RUNNERS Project Mentor

BONNIE DEVINE

Jason Jenkins and Luke Parnell, the curators of this exhibition responded to a challenge from their community. They were asked to find a way to exhibit the creativity of Aboriginal artists in a manner that would not intimidate viewers but welcome them into the gallery. The resulting exhibition Red Runners sprang like a gust of fresh air in a place where the spirit had begun to run thin.

The Runners in question are shoes of course- those canvas sneakers that are so familiar and personal. We've all had them, worn them and tossed them away when, broken down and abject, they no longer serve. Yet Jenkins' and Parnell's exhibition brings another kind of runners to mind.

When I think of Red Runners, I imagine a file of warriors, moving strong as the wind along the paths of the city. I see their feet sheathed in tough skin shoes, as their soles pound silently on the ground of the city. They move strong as the wind.

When I think of Red Runners, I remember the rivers that once ran here and the great banners of geese that flew overhead on their path to the south. Their calls rang out and we turned our eyes upward to watch them pass. They flew strong as the wind.

Strong and inspired by their strength the Red Runners in this exhibition can lead us with their laughter. Their insouciance and confidence can lead us. Their vision, strong as the wind, can lead us. For this is what Art does. It drags us from safe places and perceptions, makes us challenge our ideas and examine our ways. And when it is true and brave it makes us ask, strong as the wind, "Are we on the right path?" ■

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BONNIE DEVINE, Project Mentor

Artist, Critic, Educator and member of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective

RED RUNNERS **Curator**

LUKE PARNELL

Accessibility is the word that defines the creation of this project. We wanted to create a show that would be accessible to First Nations artists from anywhere in North America. The show also needed to bridge the gap between “traditional” and “contemporary” Native art and it needed to be accessible to the average First Nations person. It’s a lot to ask in one group show, but I think we have been successful in finding this balance using just a pair of plain canvas runners.

The concept of this show came through careful deliberation and a lot of brainstorming—my laptop’s recycle bin is full of cast aside ideas that tried to be accessible but failed miserably. And though it took so much time to come up with a concept for the show, the title for it came purely by chance. The team (Jason Jenkins, Robert Houle, Bonnie Devine and me) were returning from a trip to the National Museum in Ottawa, when Jason and I explained our concept for the show to Robert and Bonnie. Robert said jokingly “Its like the saying, you should walk a mile in my moccasins, maybe you should call the show road runners” I thought he said red runners, and I thought that’s brilliant. After all, this show is about Native peoples journeys in foreign countries situated on Native land, so the name stuck.

The original seedling for the show concept started with a trip to the Bata shoe museum and their exhibition; Beauty, Identity Pride: Native North American Footwear. This exhibition consisted of ninety pairs of shoes, boots and moccasins. It showcased the regional differences in craftsmanship and decoration. It was a unique exhibition and the Bata shoe museum is a unique place. What I took from the museum, not only the Native footwear exhibition but the regular exhibits as well, is that footwear can tell a lot about culture, the traditional as well as the contemporary. With our exhibition we are looking at contemporary First Nations culture. Over the last twenty years contemporary First Nations culture has become urban culture, from language to music to clothing and lately urban culture has also become reservation culture. Much like First Nations culture is a marriage of traditional and urban, so this project is also a marriage of traditional and urban— this is contemporary First Nations culture.

We can’t be afraid to use new materials, especially if we want to explore new ideas, especially when dealing with issues around identity. Robert Davidson (Haida master carver) speaks



Over the last twenty years contemporary First Nations culture has become urban culture...

of the evolution of his work in the exhibition catalogue, *The Abstract Edge*:

“I’m at a crossroads right now where I’ve recycled the ideas of my teachers, of the old pieces, of the old examples I’ve been studying. My challenge is to go beyond those recycled ideas and create a new vocabulary for myself...”

I feel that every artist reaches a point in their creative lifetime where they want to have their own story, their own signature.”

Davidson is speaking of his own evolution as an artist but I feel he is in a way speaking to all First Nations artists. At some point we have to tell our own stories, describe the world we know and not be afraid of breaking tradition if we are still respectful of that tradition. Our identity and our culture are defined by where we are now, as Tahltan master carver Dempsey Bob is fond of saying “everything was contemporary at one time.”

We chose our artists carefully. We wanted to explore regional identity and craftsmanship as well as contemporary and traditional First Nations art. We have managed to draw to this project video artists, installation artists, artists with a more painterly flare and bead workers as well as carvers. I feel that trying to expand on the regionalism of this project was important rather than just finding artists locally or from around Ontario. We went out of our way to find artists from all over Canada, but because we used the internet (other organizations email lists and online artists forums) we got submissions from all over the world. We decided to keep it within North America. The reason we wanted so much regionalism comes back to identity, Carol Podedworny wrote in her essay for the exhibition “Landmark,” with Robert Houle and John Abrams:

“That Houle feels this sense of attachment and grounding to a particular body of land seems both poignant and perfectly reasonable. After all, most of Houle’s artwork over the past two decades has been thoroughly involved in the notion that the land is the key element in understanding one’s past history and future path.”

I think if we really want to explore First Nations identity we need to see it from more than one or two Nations perspective. We will get to see that while this large piece of land holds us together, its diversity encourages *our* diversity ■

We wanted to explore regional identity and craftsmanship as well as contemporary and traditional First Nations art.

LUKE PARNELL, Curator

Red Runners: The new objectification of Native art and identity –Thunderbird 2010

photo by: Nadya Kwandibens © MBDC 2010

RED RUNNERS **Curator**

JASON JENKINS

When asked about your identity can you really just check off one box? Are you really just Black or White, German or Turkish, Aboriginal or Non-Aboriginal? For a lot of people, especially urban Aboriginal people, you'll more than likely be checking off more than one box. So who are you?

In a world where technology is literally in the palm of your hand, where there's an app for everything, the pressure for self-identity is even more important, urgent. Social network sites like Facebook, Twitter and MySpace have made it easy to find a group that defines not just you, but the plurality that is 'you'; your ethnicity, your sexuality, your music, your politics, your cause, and if it doesn't exist you can start one and invite people to join in. Identity can be now summed up in 140 characters and changes by the second.

Technology also allows you to fully create an entire world in virtual reality—Second Life anyone? Avatars created in cyberspace let you recreate yourself with any identity you want. People spend all day as stone-cold killers, gods or furry creatures, sometimes just re-work the mundane via Farmville, the avatar connected to life support via PS3 remote or computer mouse.

Status is measured by how many views your video has played or how many followers you have on Twitter. We live in a reality where Ashton Kutcher (!) alone has over one million followers—power by the numbers. For business the numbers mean its intelligence, better to understand key demographics. They know what we like and dislike and are constantly trying to improve upon new and exciting products. Coca Cola for instance has vending machines that track and record every single detail of your decision-making when it comes to making your favourite drink. If you want cherry\grape\vanilla flavoured coke it will make it for you. Coke understands they are more than just a product; they need to be a part of your identity.

Today's youth have a bigger platform for their voices and views. Make a video and let it go viral on YouTube. In an instant millions of people can watch and discuss your video and continue to share the experience. You can stream on-line 24/7 from the comfort of your own house—bedroom, bathroom, living/dining room. The entire world can watch you eat, sleep, go to and from work. Reality TV packages the content up into a half hour episode once a week; the Internet and TV need each other, a snake swallowing its tail.



In a world where technology is literally in the palm of your hand, ... the pressure for self-identity is even more important, urgent.

A new form of criminal has emerged in the form of the cyber thief; computer hackers on the hunt for their prey, your identity. Spying on every key stroke you do, infecting your system with viruses that track websites, passwords and usernames, everything that makes you, you, online at least. Credit cards and bank cards are cloned and hacked, accounts drained. Your identity can be stolen or traded away and no one believes who you are anymore.

Even religion isn't safe. The Press Association.com reported that Belgium's lower house of parliament voted for a law that would ban women from wearing the full Islamic burka in public - but the measure will face a challenge in the Senate. Christian Democrats and Liberals in the Senate have questioned the phrasing of the law, which says no one can appear in public "with the face fully or partly covered so as to render them no longer recognizable."

The same is happening in the U.S. Arizona police can stop and question anyone they reasonably suspect to be an illegal immigrant. If the person cannot prove their status, they can be arrested. In a state of fewer than seven million people, nearly half a million are thought to be illegal.

We are changing the face of evolution. Multiracial Canadians in 2006 totaled 1.5% of the population, that's up 1.2% in 2001. The mixed population grew 2.5% since the previous census, of these the most frequent combinations were visible minorities, another 1.2% of Canadians are Métis. The numbers speak for themselves and the story of identity is even more important than ever before. Mixed heritage people show the history of the past; it tells the story of interaction of the world, and also where it's going.

History has a timeline and so does your identity. Red Runners is telling that story of history through a pair of shoes ■

Mixed heritage people show the history of the past; it tells the story of interaction...

JASON JENKINS, Curator

Red Runners: The new objectification of Native art and identity –Thunderbird 2010

photo by: Nadya Kwandibens © MBDC 2010

RED RUNNERS | ARTIST BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

Jason Baerg

Completing Graduate Studies in New Digital Media (2000) opened doors to grooming interactive architecture skills in Manhattan. Upon Jason's return to Canada, he secured an Aboriginal CFTPA internship with prolific Debbie Nightingale, the Founding Executive Director of Hot Docs. 2010 is equally as exciting as Baerg curates the Métis Ten for VANOC as well as React2010.com. As a Visual Artist, Baerg has presented at such international art events as the Luminato Festival, the Toronto International Art Fair, and Art Basel Miami.

Jason Baerg has given formal artist talks at such institutions as the University of British Columbia (Okanagan), New York City's Parsons School of Design and the University of Toronto. Dedicated to community development, Jason Baerg continues to contribute to such national organizations as a board member for the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, The National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition and is the Vice President of the Independent Media Arts Alliance.

Jordan Bennett

Jordan Bennett is a Newfoundland based Mi'kmaq multi-disciplinary artist. His art deals with a combination of popular culture, mixed with traditional Mi'kmaq and contemporary means of life to portray how each plays a part on his every day. When choosing materials, he uses an array of mediums such as sound, traditional beadwork, skateboards, moose antler, animal hide and various other natural and manufactured objects, anything that will give voice directly to the subject matter to portray the intended message. Through his work he plays with pushing boundaries and with the idea of traditional Aboriginal craft and ceremony, along with the idea of the artifact in our contemporary society. By creating objects and imagery that do this, he attempts to provoke the viewer to question and interpret the authenticity of these "Indian Artworks/Artifacts" and what it is to be "Indian" in contemporary North American society.

Emilie Corbiere

Emilie Corbiere is an Ojibwe from Walpole Island First Nation. Emilie has followed in her mother's footsteps, creating traditional beadwork since the age of five. She has continued to thrive in the arts sector with the writing of two Aboriginal children's books and storytelling in elementary schools. In 2010, Emilie will publish two more Aboriginal books under her company name Red Road Publishing. A percentage of every book sold will be donated to a charity that delivers medical supplies, food, clothing and books to northern Aboriginal fly-in communities.

Mike Dangeli

Mike is of the Nisga'a, Tlingit, and Tsimshian Nations. His Traditional name is: "Goothl Ts'imilx" which means: "The Heart of the Beaver Lodge". He belongs to the Beaver Clan. The traditional territory of the Nisga'a is the Nass River Valley area of British Columbia, which is approximately 500 miles north from Vancouver.

Mike began learning his people's ways at an early age by attending traditional feasts, ceremonies and gathering and preparing traditional foods with his mother "Mak hli t'aa" Arlene Roberts, and performing with their family dance group.

Always striving to understand and appreciate his people's rich art form, he took the opportunity to study North West Coast Art through courses offered in his high school in Metlakatla, Alaska. After graduating in 1991, he went on to major in Alaska Native History at the University of Alaska Southeast.

RED RUNNERS | ARTIST BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

Mike Dangeli (continued)

Mike held two major apprenticeships under Master Carvers: Randy Adams (Nisga'a), Prince Rupert, BC and David Boxley (Tsimshian), Kingston, Washington. Mike regularly returns home to Northern BC and Alaska where he continues to learn oral histories, songs, dances, and protocols from his Nisga'a, Tsimshian, and Tlingit elders.

Mike currently lives in Vancouver, BC where he founded the House of Culture: Art and Carving Studio. The programs that he organized in the House of Culture sought a holistic approach to teaching Northwest Coast art to urban First Nations children, youth, and adults through classes, workshops and seminars. Working as primarily a commissioned based artist, the House of Culture also functions as Mike's studio where he creates his art for his commissions, galleries, and ceremonial pieces for his community. Mike's works include masks, drums, regalia, paintings, and limited edition silk-screened prints. In 2007, Mike completed his tenth totem pole and a thirty-foot ocean going canoe. Mike is currently carving six totem poles for Luma Native Housing Children's Village in Vancouver, BC.

Morgan Green

Morgan Green is a successfully self-employed Tsimshian artist from Prince Rupert, BC. Born March 24, 1984, she has become accomplished in a wide variety of mediums, including wood sculpture, clothing, regalia, painting and northwest coast formline design. She loves researching cultural history, learning and sharing knowledge.

Morgan recently attended The Crucible in Oakland, California for bronze casting and clay sculpting, and plans to continue her artistic development. She believes that through her art she can create change in her home community in northern British Columbia, instilling cultural pride and community healing through traditional and contemporary Tsimshian art.

Green has taught ages from 4 to 56 years old through projects such as the Spirits Rising Missing Women's Memorial Totem pole, Wetsuweten Band Council youth regalia course, School District 52 Role Model Program, and Prince Rupert Pregnancy outreach.

Morgan has worked with many First Nations Artists; including Henry Green, Alano Edzerza, Jordan Seward, Richard Adkins, and Dave Jack.

Artistic Highlights include:

- YVR Grant recipient in 2005 and 2009.
- Featured on CBC, APTN, CTV First Story
- Documentary "A look at the life of Morgan Green" by Kelvin Redvers
- Costume Designer for independent Tschilcotin film "The Cave" by Helen Haig-Brown.

Lisa Myers

Lisa Myers was born in Oakville, Ontario, and has now made her home in Port Severn, near the shores of Georgian Bay and close to her Grandfather's First Nation. After graduating from the Ontario College of Art in 1992, Lisa spent most of the '90s making art, playing guitar in bands, and cooking. Her passion for cooking led her to satisfy hungry stomachs as the cook at Enahtig Healing Lodge and Learning Centre, after which, she attended Stratford Chefs School, and now has a Red Seal certification.

In 2008, Lisa completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Ontario College of Art and Design. Currently, as she works towards an MFA in criticism and curatorial practice at OCAD, Lisa can often be found

Lisa Myers (continued)

around the snack tables at art openings pondering ideas around the intersection of food and art. She takes this time to imagine ways to convey cooking, eating and culinary form in an exhibition setting; all the while considering the dichotomy between the politics of food and the nurturing side of feeding.

Tannis Nielsen

Tannis is Cree, Soto, Dene, Danish and Metis, born in Red Deer Alberta and has lived in over thirty locations across Canada. However in early 1990 with the birth of her daughter Brittany, Tannis chose to settle in Toronto, where she later obtained her Masters of Visual studies degree, (equivalent to an M.F.A.) from the University of Toronto in (2006). During her time spent within the academy, Tannis was inspired by her panel of advisors, and is forever grateful to Lisa Steele, Daniel Justice, James Luna, George Hawkin, Lee Maracle and Simon Ortiz (to name a few,) as they influenced her greatly in all aspects of learning.

After graduating, Tannis continued to practice as a professional visual artist and educator. Her most recently held position is as an instructor at the Ontario College of Art and Design, where for the past three years she has taught a course, of her own design, that utilizes postcolonial, decolonization methodologies, as a means to examine / contextualize Indigenous art. The design of this curriculum was inspired by Simon Ortiz, Daniel Justice and Marie Battiste whose text, Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Visions is utilized as one of the main components of class learning.

Tannis' latest arts exhibition was held during the summer of 2008, at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, as part of the Honoring Traditions show, which included such esteemed artists as; Jane Ash Poitras, Gerald Tailfeathers, Judy Chartrand, Allen Sapp, Bob Boyer, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Robert Houle, Alex Janvier and Roger Crait. Tannis exhibited her piece titled nimin o ayan translated meaning is I have recovered - which was also curated by Ryan Rice, in a previous exhibition titled Red Eye currently on tour.

Chris Pappan

Chris writes:

I am an American Indian.

I am of Osage, Kaw, Cheyenne River Sioux, and mixed European heritage.

I don't walk in beauty, I just try not to step in dog shit.

I don't listen to the wind, I listen to people's cell phone conversations.

I go to Pow Wows to celebrate a pan-Indian culture.

I don't walk the Red Road, I walk down Kedzie Boulevard.

I live 20 feet above the earth.

I listen to Norwegian Black Metal and 70's Prog Rock.

I need to learn the language of my people.

I make paintings to bring awareness that Indians are still here

I distort images because people perceive a distorted image of Native Americans in the collective conscience.

I prefer the term Indian over Native American, but I use both.

I wonder why many people want to know what "percentage" Indian I am.

I am blessed in that I don't know anyone who is currently

addicted to drugs, been a victim of domestic violence or

committed suicide. I am blessed in that I have a loving wife and beautiful daughter.

I am an American Indian living in the 21st century.

RED RUNNERS | ARTIST BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

Duke Redbird

Born on the Saugeen First Nation, Duke began his career as an actor and poet during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Since then he has been Vice-President of the Native Council of Canada in the 1970s and the President of the Ontario Metis and Non-Status Indian Association in the 1980s. As a scholar, Duke has an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies earned at York University and in 2002 was made a Fellow of MacLaughlin College and a Senior Associate of the York Centre for Applied Sustainability.

Duke is also active in television having worked for TVOntario as the writer/director for 'He Who Looks Upside Down—a Question of Justice', which won the Silver Plaque Award, Educational Category, at the Chicago International Film Festival. As a writer/performer he was featured in the documentary film, 'Chief Dan George Reciting Duke Redbird's Poetry' and for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation he was writer/co-director for 'Canoe for the making'. Duke is also a frequent contributor on Aboriginal affairs for City TV News. About the work he has submitted for Red Runners, Duke writes:

"Four directions and the medicine circle... According to Ojibway tradition, life is like the medicine circle, we enter with the sun from the East (yellow) and we watch, then we travel to the North (white) and listen, then we travel to the West (black) and remember, then we travel to the South (red) and share. The colours of the runners represent this journey. The drum with the four colours is the hub or heartbeat of this journey, and the runners radiate out from the hub. On the drum is a painting of the Turtle representing both Turtle Island (the North American Continent) and Mother Earth. The runners are striking out in all directions. Watching, listening, remembering and sharing."

Mervi Salo

A writer, musician, educator, and multidisciplinary artist, Mervi explores the contemporary experience, history, myths, and oral traditions of the arctic Sámi peoples, through the lens of her own contemporary mixed and diasporic identity. She has been a sessional instructor for York U. and the University of Toronto. She was also the Education Officer for the Arts, for the Ontario Ministry of Education. She has been consultant on arts related matters for the Toronto DSB, and provincial organizations (e.g., AGO, OAC, RCM, EDU). This includes current work on a large provincial arts video/webcast project for Curriculum Services Canada. She has curated and participated in several exhibitions in 2010, including a recent show at the University of Toronto Art Centre. Mervi has been an invited keynote and plenary speaker at National and International conferences, including a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Conference in Korea. She is currently writing a series of Visual Arts textbooks, chapters in upcoming books of creative non-fiction, and a video work for UBC. She is writing and illustrating an Aboriginal graphic novel series, a video essay of a trip to the Arctic, and what may be the first English language dictionary of an endangered Arctic Indigenous language.

Rosary Spence

A Cree from Fort Albany First Nation, Rosary is a young entrepreneur with a passion for fashion and the arts; she radiates evident determination and ambition. As an Aboriginal artist, Spence is accomplished in the areas of traditional indigenous beadwork and fashion design. Spence is a self taught designer, influenced by her indigenous roots; she integrates both traditional and contemporary motifs in her beadwork and fashion designs. Not limiting herself to a specific design concept, Spence delivers work ranging from traditional indigenous regalia with intricate Aboriginal ribbon and beadwork to contemporary infant carriers and apparel to jewellery. Spence is also accomplished as a performance artist, as well as a vocalist and dancer.

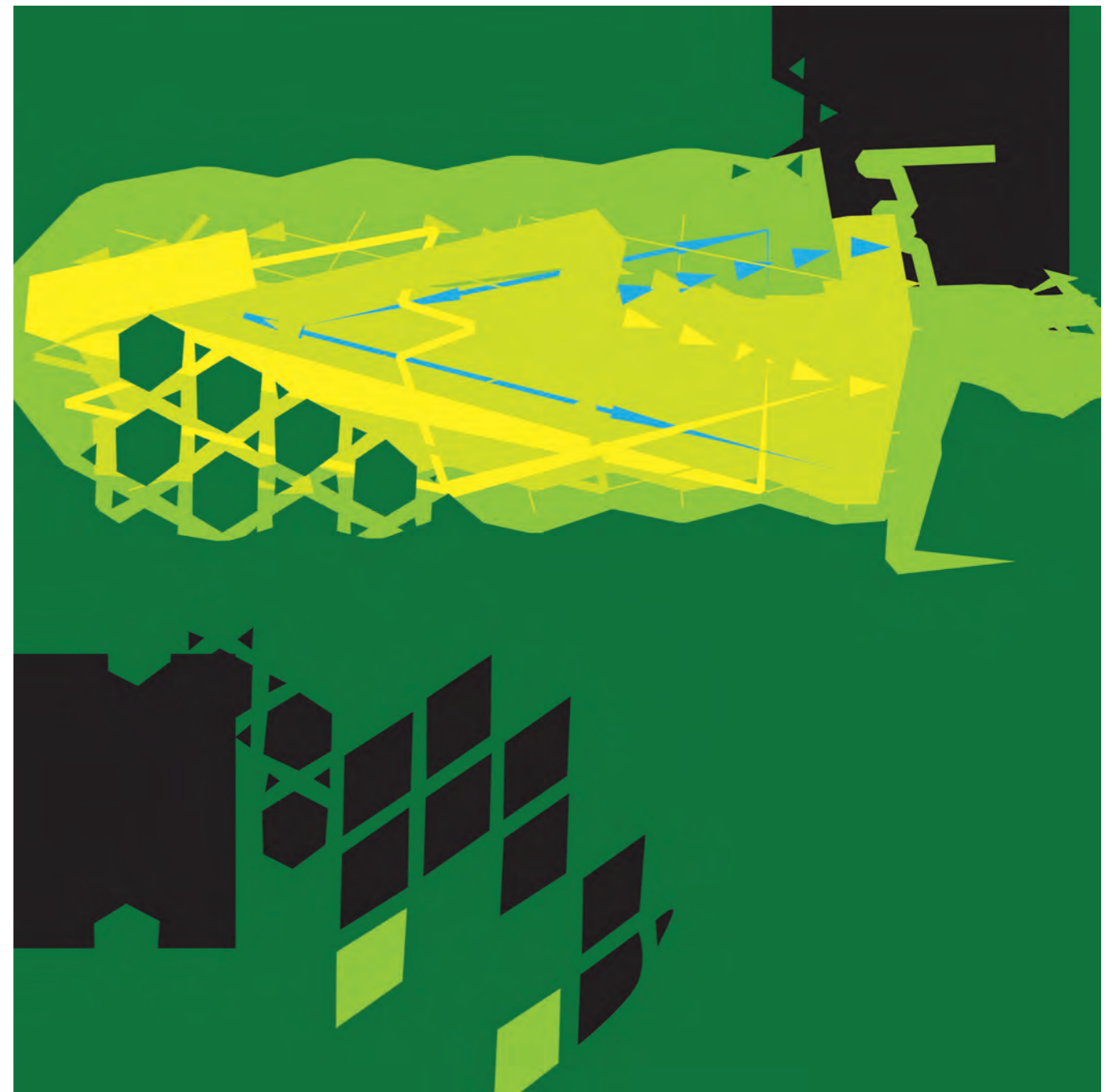
Ehren 'Bear Witness' Thomas

An Ottawa-based media artist who has been producing short experimental videos for over seven years, Bear was recently awarded the Aboriginal International Residency Exchange in Australia by the Canada Council for the Arts. During his residency at Parramatta Artists Studios he had a solo exhibition as part of the 2010 Sydney Festival, titled, "The Only Good NDN".

Bear's video The Story of Apinachie and her Redheaded Warrior was selected for the 2009 Berlin International Film Festival, as part of the Culture Shock program. The Culture Shock program first screened at the 2008 ImagiNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival which was commissioned by ImagiNATIVE in partnership with the Goethe Institute and the National Gallery of Canada.

In 2008 his video "BrokeDickDog" was included in the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography exhibition Stealing the Gaze: Portraits of Aboriginal Artists curated by Andrea Kunard and Steven Loft and hosted by the National Gallery of Canada. Bear also exhibited two videos as part of Drive By: A Road Trip with Jeff Thomas at The University of Toronto Art Centre.

Recently, working with his father, visual artist and curator Jeff Thomas, Bear produced a new video, "STRANGE.HOME.LAND" exhibited as part of Home Land and Security at Render Gallery in Waterloo. Most recently, Thomas collaborated with the NFB on a video project to remix films from the NFB archive. Bear's other work includes producing live audio-visual performances that incorporate both his video and DJ skills. Recently, Bear co-founded A Tribe Called Red, a Native DJ collective that hosts a monthly event, Electric Pow Wow ■



"Footprint" A Series of light boxes with runner treads/footprints
image provided by artist

RED RUNNERS | JORDAN BENNETT

RED RUNNERS | EMILIE CORBIERE



Origin: Eastern Mi'kmaq - runners with suede, animal hide and double-curve seed-bead
photo by Jason Jenkins

Painted and beaded flowers on runners
photo by Jason Jenkins

RED RUNNERS | MIKE DANGELI

RED RUNNERS | MORGAN GREEN



"Eastside Blues" Painted and dyed runners
photo by Jason Jenkins

Tsimtsian carver and fashion designer uses a traditional design on leather
photo by Jason Jenkins

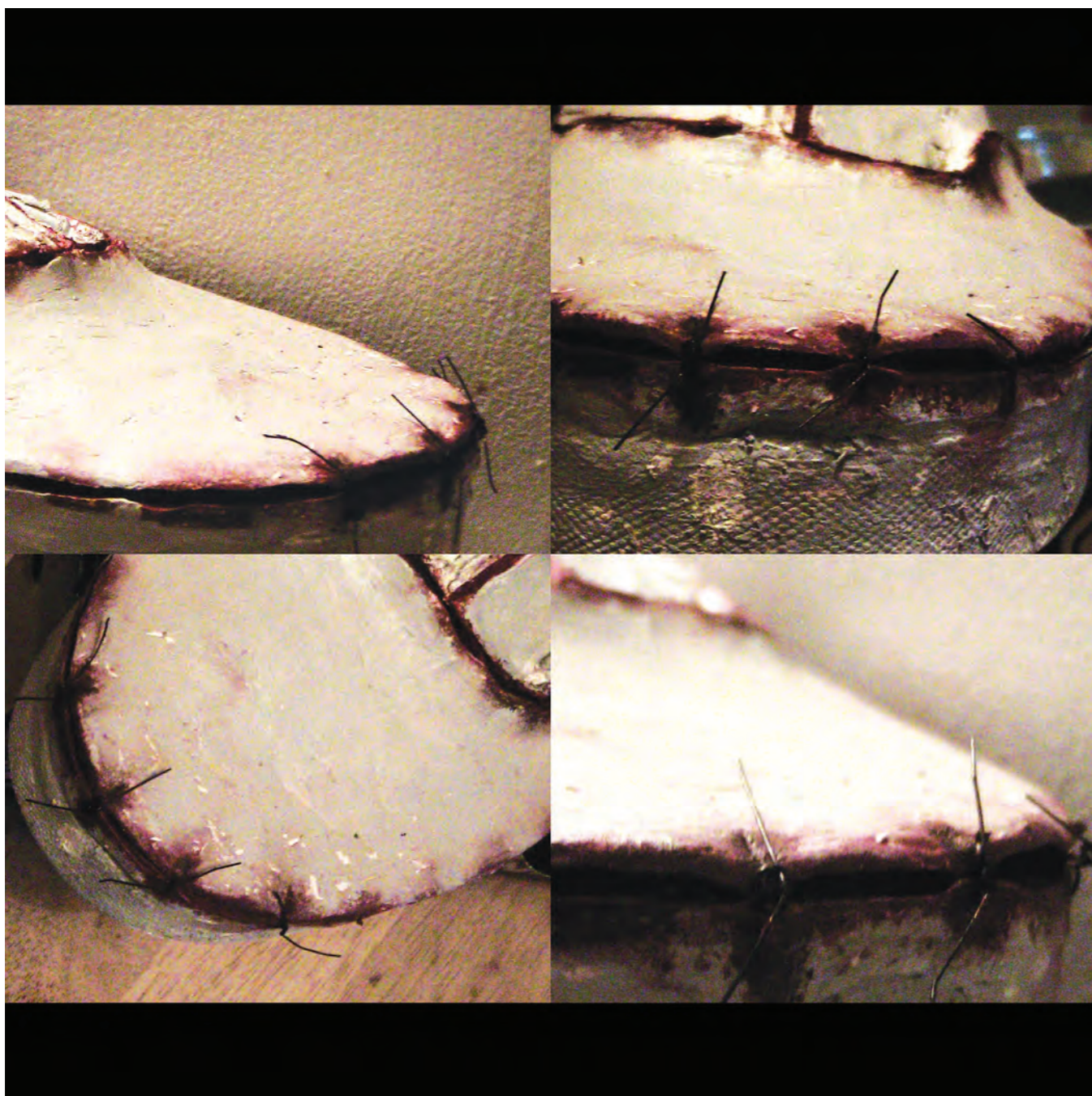


"Blueberry Sole" Shoes deconstructed into 2 pairs of moccasins
photo by Jason Jenkins

"Blueberry Sole" Shoes deconstructed into 2 pairs of moccasins
photo by Jason Jenkins

RED RUNNERS | TANNIS NIELSEN

RED RUNNERS | CHRIS PAPPAN



Tannis, deconstructed, reconstructed and reimagined Vans collage of photos from the artist

Chris, painted father god prayer running shoe photo by Jason Jenkins

RED RUNNERS | DUKE REDBIRD

RED RUNNERS | ROSARY SPENCE



Installation, walking in four directions
photo by Jason Jenkins

Fabulously brilliant beaded Vans
photo by Jason Jenkins



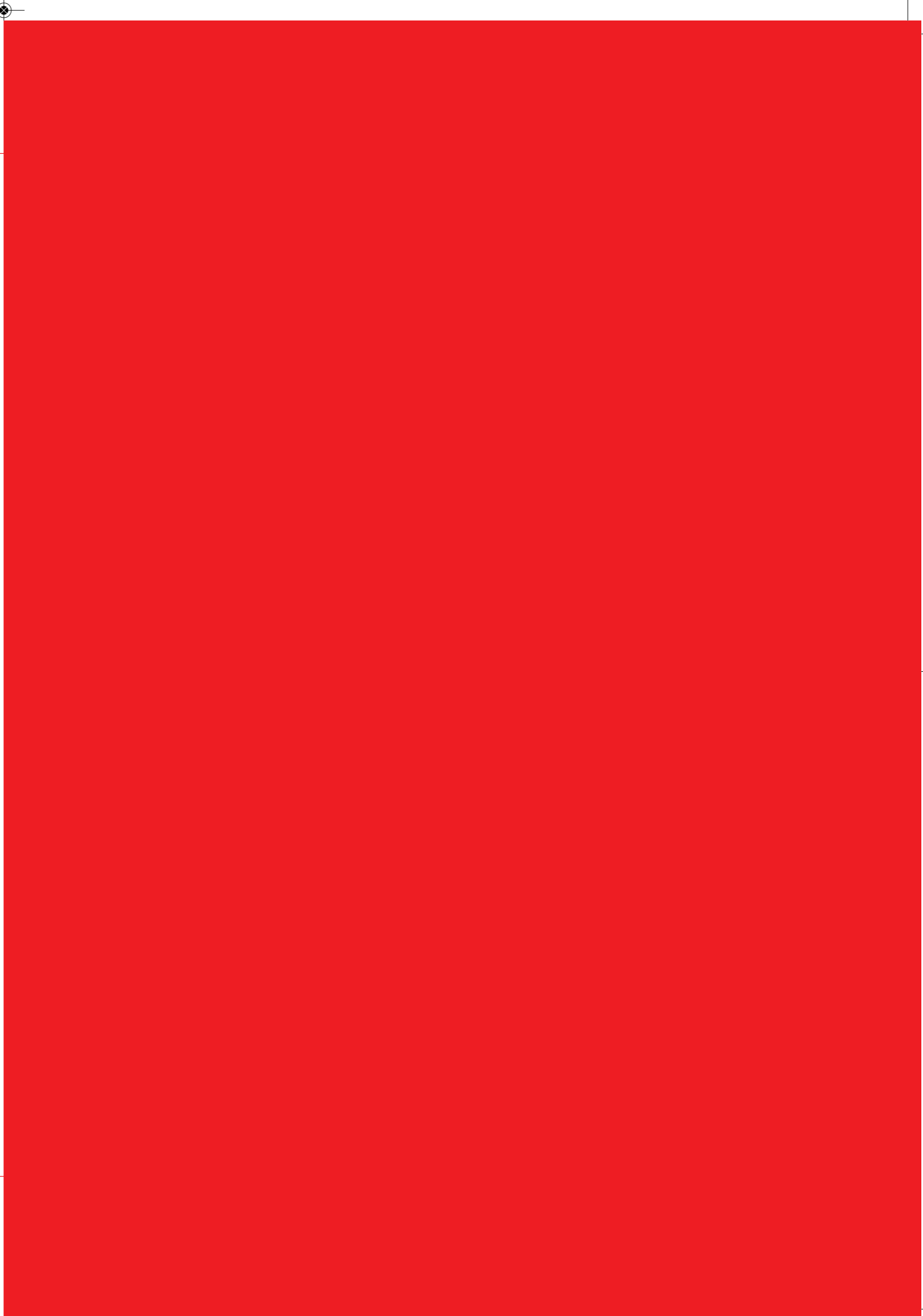
“Running with Reindeer” Deconstructed and reconstructed runners and video projections
collage of images provided by the artist

“Running with Reindeer” Deconstructed and reconstructed runners and video projections
photo by Jason Jenkins

RED RUNNERS | EHREN "BEAR WITNESS" THOMAS



Still image from Bear Witness's video
image provided by artist



RED RUNNERS | ROBERT HOULE



Inspired by the exhibition proposal of curators Jason Jenkins and Luke Parnell, Mentor Robert Houle completed a pair of shoes which he presented to Jason and Luke.
photo by Jason Jenkins

RED RUNNERS

“The new objectification of Native art and identity”

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