

## Event Transcript

May 28, 2020 - *Places of Isolation and Healing*: Edgar Heap of Birds and Douglas Miles in Conversation

Sara Reisman: ... The conversation is between artists Edgar Heap of Birds, who is Cheyenne and Arapaho, and Douglas Miles, San Carlos Apache-Akimel O'odham, reflecting on Native experience during the pandemic. Centered on the two artists' recent projects, Heap of Birds' latest monoprint series *Places of Healing* and Miles' collaborative films produced by Isolation Studios, the discussion will address some of the challenges faced by indigenous communities in the U.S. Thinking about the role of art and artists and responding to the pandemic. Also asking in a time of separation or isolation due to both social distancing and geography, what are some of the ways we can be mutually supportive?

So a quick introduction for those who are joining us for the first time, and I see that there are many, which is great. My name is Sara Reisman, I'm the Executive and Artistic Director of the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation. Up until a few months ago, this type of event would have been held at The 8th Floor, the events and program space where most of our public facing work takes place in New York City.

Last week, we hosted our first virtual public program titled *On Art and Friendship*, which is part of our newly launched series *Performance-in-Place*, which will feature new performances and revisit past works by artists, choreographers and writers, including Latasha N. Nevada Diggs, Alice Sheppard, Aliza Shvarts, Eileen Myles, Maria Hupfield, Baseera Khan and others. Every three weeks on Tuesdays we'll host a performance by one of these artists, which will be shared on our website and via social media channels for further distribution.

In addition to *Performance-in-Place*, the Rubin Foundation is hosting monthly talks like today's conversation, which is the first of these conversations. Next month, we'll host artist and activist Carmen Papalia for a conversation about accessibility and disability rights, specifically in the virtual realm, due to the pandemic. Please visit The 8th Floor website, [www.the8thfloor.org](http://www.the8thfloor.org), for updated information on events.

So our conversation today will follow a fairly straightforward line. Edgar Heap of Birds and Douglas Miles will each make short presentations of their recent work. Then we'll have a conversation, which we'll open up to your questions a little bit after 7:00, probably around 7:10. At that point, we'd love your input. Just in terms of protocol, what would be great is when the discussion is opened up to questions, we ask that you send questions using the chat function at the bottom of your Zoom window. I'll

take questions, and I can either read the question or prompt you to ask it. You can let me know what you prefer. Before I introduce the artists, we'll start with the land recognition, which I think is coming from Edgar.

Edgar Heap of B...: From me? No [crosstalk]

Sara Reisman: Oh, I thought you said you were doing it.

Edgar Heap of B...: No. No, no.

Sara Reisman: Okay, no. Okay. Well, I'm actually going to just say this anecdotally. I mentioned that we have a program coming up with Carmen Papalia, who is an activist, an artist, an educator based in Vancouver. And one of the questions he was asking to think about land in relation to this moment of collapsed geography was, how do we think about land recognition in the context of an event like this? What land are we [inaudible 00:03:08]. Whoever's not muted. Anyway... Yeah.

Douglas Miles: That's a good point. And I want to interject and say that I am broadcasting live from the land of the San Carlos Apache Nation. And though I am not there physically, what you see and where I'm from at remotely, I am on the land of the San Carlos Apache Nation, if I may say that. Thank you.

Sara Reisman: Thank you. Edgar, do you want to add anything?

Edgar Heap of B...: Well, I'm Cheyenne Arapaho Territory. I'm very, very near the reservation, about 20 miles east [crosstalk] reservation and...

Douglas Miles: Right on.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah. Yeah. I've been here since the 80s or whatever, I've been here a long time, and we will remain here. Yeah. Okay.

Douglas Miles: That's what's up.

Edgar Heap of B...: Boom.

Douglas Miles: Boom.

Sara Reisman: So maybe we can unpack that later, what is the meaning of the recognition for organizations like ours, let's say, and we'll put a pin on that for later. So now, I'm going to introduce our esteemed artists. Hock E Aye Edgar Heap of Birds is a multi-disciplinary artist. Heap of Birds studied at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Royal College of Art in London and the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. He's an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts and Letters degrees that have been awarded by Massachusetts College of

Art and Design in Boston in 2008, Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver 2017, CalArts, Valencia, California, 2018. He was a USA Ford Fellow in 2012 and a Distinguished Alumni, University of Kansas in 2014.

Heap of Birds has exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Cheyenne and Arapaho Nations Reservation, Oklahoma; The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia; Documenta in Kassel, Germany; SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Hong Kong Art Center, China; Grand Palais, Paris, France; and the Venice Biennale, Italy, among other institutions and galleries. As an educator, he's lectured internationally, having taught at Yale, Rhode Island School of Design, in addition to the University of Oklahoma, where he is now Professor Emeritus after 30 years of teaching.

Edgar's public art and studio projects have received grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, 2012; Andy Warhol Foundation, 2004; Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, 2002; Pew Charitable Trust, 2000; AT&T, 1999; Lila Wallace Foundation, 94; Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, 89; and Rockefeller Foundation, 87. His artistic creations and efforts as an advocate for indigenous communities worldwide are focused first upon social justice, and then the personal freedom to live within the tribal circle as an expressive individual. Heap of Birds was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2020. So please join me in welcoming Edgar Heap of Birds. And I guess we do this. Thank you.

Now, I'd like to introduce Douglas... Oh, some snaps. I'm going to introduce Douglas Miles, who's from the San Carlos Apache Nation in Arizona. His multi-disciplinary work uses street art forms as he creates art that simultaneously deconstructs stereotypes and emboldens native people in 21st century community. His creative renegade work creates a new iconography in art, photos and film for Native people. His work changes and challenges the white gaze narrative about Native people in an effort to [inaudible] voices.

Miles' work has been exhibited at Princeton University, Columbia University, de Young Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Native Art in Santa Fe. His new short film series focuses on collaborative art made in isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic while living on the Apache Reservation. An artist, designer, photographer, filmmaker, muralist, public speaker, he's also the founder of Apache Skateboards, a fully functioning skateboard organization with a 15 year history. His work encourages reflection on how art can foster community building and

promote pride and wellbeing, especially among young people. And his website, if you'd like to know more, is [www.douglasmiles.com](http://www.douglasmiles.com).

So we're going to start with a presentation from Edgar. Welcome to both artists while we pull up Edgar's presentation. Wait, let's welcome, Douglas. I got a little distracted with the sound. Thank you.

Douglas Miles: Thank you. Thank you everyone.

Edgar Heap of B...: I can get at the PowerPoint. Okay, we up now with the image?

Sara Reisman: Yup, that's perfect.

Edgar Heap of B...: I'm really very, very happy to be with Doug, and Sara, and William and everybody. And Doug, I have a major respect for his practice and [inaudible] his lifestyle supporting the Apache Nation. So it's great to get started on collaborating with Doug.

Before I start my presentation, I wanted to add four things to my introduction. I'm sorry, but kind of pompous, I guess. I don't know. My career is kind of out there, but what I want to say is that I have a parallel, maybe higher, goal and that is to have ceremonial learning. And so, I have four instructors, four grandfathers in a conceptual sensibility, and they are Paul [Picart 00:09:02], like a rising up heart, Roy Dean Bullcoming, Vernon Bullcoming and Jasper [Washea 00:09:11]. So those four men have instructed me over the last 30 years or so. And that's how I get to where I am or that's my priority is to carry that knowledge and transmit it to other tribal members in the Cheyenne world. Now I'm an instructor for a young man, so that's really great, but that's my other resume, I guess.

I want to just talk about this print process. It's called monoprinting, viscosity printing. And so, I've got an image there of a plate, and it's a half sheet plate. So it's actually twice that size now with most of the work. And it's just plexiglass with ink on it, where they resist the oil. Let's see, does that advance that. No. Can we advance that William or, I don't know...

William: Sure. Edgar, I'm just going to close. So you just stop screen sharing, and then I'm going to start screen sharing the presentation, I'll do the presentation.

Edgar Heap of B...: I couldn't get it to move ahead, so...

William: That's okay. Yeah. Okay. One second. Okay, everyone. Thank you.

Edgar Heap of B...: So this is monoprinting, viscosity printing. And I print in Santa Fe normally, that's my favorite place to be as far as the shop. And can we go to the next slide please, William. Was there another one before that?

William: This one?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, that one. Yeah, that one. I'm sorry. Yeah. So that's Michael McCabe, who's a Navajo master printer, Fourth Dimension Studio. So what I'm doing is that I'm working with a resist on a plate. And then, so I'm writing backwards on a plate, and then creating the image as the white paper is saved on the platform there. And then you see it's in an accurate perspective, right side up, I guess. Okay, next. The next one, please.

And that is a piece of paper, a piece of newsprint. So I'm drawing on newsprint with marker, and then we're going to put the plate on top of that, and then we're going to trace it with oil. So that's kind of the process. And I have little, small drawings too. That's what this is, [inaudible] see that. That's the initial drawing, and then I make these larger full scale drawings. Okay. Next, please.

The piece I'm going to talk about today is a fairly new one, it's called *Places of Healing*. And I chronicle maybe about 30 different Native ceremonial sites across the hemisphere, Hawaii, also Alaska, but all across North America. And the priority there is what I just mentioned earlier about my four instructors, that that takes place at a site called Concho. And so, that's a place, a ceremonial place, and actually it's one of the words on the drawings, on the prints. So there are a series of these locations, certainly there's thousands of them across the hemisphere, or maybe more than a thousand. And so, the tribes have been using these sites as a homage to honor the place and to heal themselves. They're not just places of acknowledgement or idols, they're actually functioning places for healing. And so, you go there because maybe you're sick, or you're hurting, or you're sad, or you have death or you go there all the time. You don't have to have a pandemic to go there, you go there all the time. And we've always gone there for thousands of years. And so, these are a series of sites.

So on the left of your screen are the primary prints. There's about five different reds. And then on the right are the ghost prints. And so, the ghost prints are an idea I started doing about a year ago where I felt like Native Americans are really overlooked, certainly, and marginalized. And so, they're like ghosts in America. And so, I do a faint second pull of the print and show it with the first primary pull. Okay. Next, please.

Can we go to the next one? So this is the primary set, and you'll see that it's more deeper red or orange. And then the next slide, please, William.

And then this is the ghost. So it exists as the reality and kind of a joking way, but maybe more serious as well. I find that this is even too dark or too outspoken for a Native world. The Native world is more faint than this, as far as what the republic sees. Okay. Next, please.

And so, I want to go through, there're 24 prints, and often there's three or six sets of words. And some of them have one site, and some have more than one indicated. So I list them on there, and these are just logging in the sites that I've been aware of. I've visited many across the world. And I find a great, great respect and happiness that they're used by tribal people, that people come there to heal themselves, and they need to be protected also.

So I'll show you all 24 prints. I won't show the ghost prints, but you'll know that each one of these that I show you has a ghost companion. So this is the first print. And I'll just talk about one site per print. Noavose. Noavose is the mountain in South Dakota, and that's where the Cheyenne go. We have people going there right now to pray, to get ready for our summer ceremonial time, and to pray for what's happening to everyone in the world. So it's very important place. It's near Sturgis, South Dakota. And they would call that Bear Butte. Okay, next.

This is another print, a primary print, and so it has a ghost. And I want to talk about Ribbon Falls. Ribbon Falls is a Zuni origin site in Colorado. So it's a site where the tribe began near the Grand Canyon. Okay, next.

Head of the Earth is actually Navajo Mountain. And that is really a major site. The Navajo people, Dine people, have a very strong perception of the Earth being a body. So there's lungs, heart, head, and they're all mountains, all these body parts, organs, are mountains. And so, my wife is from Navajo Mountain, and so I've been there many times. I've slept there outside. And that's the head of the nation, is this ancient mountain in Utah, Southern Utah. Okay, next.

Here's another print. And again, there's a ghost that matches this one. And I want to talk about Betatakin, at the very bottom. Betatakin is a very, very ancient like prehistory, Anasazi has links back, can go forward to Hopi, I believe, and some Navajo. And it's a cliff dwelling site, a hike down a canyon. And I think it's a national monument now, but it's near a place called Kayenta. And it's pre-Navajo, so Betatakin. Okay, next.

Another print, another monoprint that goes in the series *Places of Healing*. Spiro has a major site of works. And they're called mounds, but I choose to attack that phrase and replace it with pyramid. Pyramids are respected by Anglo culture, mounds aren't, mounds are just discredited. So the pyramid at Spiro, there's a series of pyramids. Mississippian culture and

their winter solstice pyramids on the Arkansas River in Eastern Oklahoma. So Spiro. Okay. Next, please.

Another monoprint here. And I want to look at... Which one here. I think we look at the second one, and that's all in Tongva language. And this particular piece is actually, it's pretty interesting. The second word, and that is Long Beach. So all the places you have in the world, rivers, mountains, even parts of cities, in a sense, have Native names. No one knows that, but they're all named. So that's Long Beach in Southern California. Okay. Next, please.

Another monoprint. And this one, another Tongva site, Chenooeh, and at the second from the last bottom there. And a Tongva site, and that's the Hondo River, which goes through LA. So the Tongva people have named all the sacred sites throughout the LA Basin and given them Tongva names. So it's a tribal place. Okay. Next, please. So many of these sites can be rivers, can be mountains, can be petroglyph fields. All these places have different attributes to be used for healing.

Another monoprint. And Smoking Place, Bitterroot Mountains, this is Idaho, Nez Perce ceremonial site. So the whole bottom part of this print, Smoking Place, Bitterroot Mountains, is one location. And for smoking with the pipe and praying, literally. And Crater Lake is in Oregon. Okay. Next, please.

Okay. Ocmulgee, at the very bottom, with Big Horn Medicine Wheel and Kilauea, Hawaii. But Ocmulgee, a very amazing site in Southern Georgia, near Macon, Georgia. And there are a series of pyramids there as well. I worked there, I've been there, smoked pipe, prayed there. And so, this is going back to the Creek Yuchi world and Ocmulgee. And they have Ocmulgee in Oklahoma as well, because they had the Trail of Tears and moved the tribe, in a very violent way, to Oklahoma from Ocmulgee. Okay. Next, please.

The next piece here would be, of course, Pipestone, Cahokia pyramid, but Pipestone, Minnesota, maybe one of the most important sites in the whole hemisphere, continent. So the prayers are released or ascend through your pipe, the stone pipe with a wooden stem, and that this instrument facilitates the prayers. And as far as I know, I mean, there's probably other places, but there's one primary spot on this part of the planet where pipestone comes from, and it's in Minnesota at this site, Pipestone, Minnesota. So even the pipe I have came from Pipestone. It's a quarry, and you have to break it out of the Earth, it's the Earth and you take a pipestone out. Okay. Next, please.

Moon House, Black Elk Peak and Hovenweep. Black Elk Peak was renamed from Harney Peak, which is in South Dakota, the Black Hills. The medicine man Black Elk is known to have received teachings from this mountain. And he's an oracle, he's a very important visionary, certainly, for Dakota people, Sioux people. And they've named that mountain after Black Elk now, they've renamed it. Okay. Next, please.

Concho. And I mentioned that earlier. We had a meeting there in a teepee three days ago, and we have people that are ready to start to renew the Earth. We're gifted in a way, and also troubled, but all these ceremonial places can have some contentious behavior. And so, we have three different Earth renewal ceremonies on our reservation. And they're not out of like, they dislike each other, but they can make three separate ones and they get along in that manner. So Concho is one place. And so, that's where I'll be with my dancer, Concho, Oklahoma, about 40 miles west of Oklahoma City, starting up in about a month. Okay. Next, please.

Puako. This is on the center of the piece here. These are...

Edgar Heap of B...: This is the center of the piece here. These are petroglyph fields in the Big Island of Hawaii, which I visited and I really do a lot of work in Hawaii as well with native people. And I did a big project about Mauna Kea and the tribes there as well. Okay, next please. Dreamer's rock and the bottom white sands in the middle there. This is at Northern Huron Lake, Ojibwe, so all across from, you go to Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, Florida, all these sites are spread across the country. Okay, next please. Bears Ears, really wonderful spot. It's a dual Mesa. It looks like two ears, or Buttes, I guess, sacred to the Ute tribe and Zuni and Hopi in Utah. So Bears Ears is a very important location for again, renewal and prayer. Okay, next please.

Etowah Pyramid, and I'm very fond of all the activities going on in Georgia. I guess maybe the Trail of Tears brought them to Oklahoma. I know a lot of Georgian Indian people that have been transplanted here through the ages, but this particular one is Etowah and there's a wonderful fishing weir, it's North of Atlanta, about an hour, hour and a half. And there's actually that weir with rocks that actually catch fish for hundreds of years. You can go to that creek today and the fishing weir is active there and there's pyramids there. A really wonderful spot on this river in Northern Georgia. Okay, next please.

No, the next slide. Is that... Okay, here we go. Oh, you got it. No. Okay.

Speaker 1: Okay?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, yeah. Medicine Tree. I want to talk about Medicine Tree at the bottom. This is really amazing spot, which is location, which is in



Montana, Bitter Root Valley. It's a healing Salish site, Salish nation, but it's a teaching tree. It's an ancient tree that's been struck by lightning, been in forest fires. A big pine tree that still stands and people go there to renew themselves and to learn at the base of that tree, but it's more like a trunk of a tree about maybe 15 feet tall, call it Medicine Tree in Montana. Okay, next please.

Aztalan, a pyramid in Wisconsin. So there's pyramids in Wisconsin as well like there are in Georgia, all across the river valleys, particularly which connects back into Mexico. And the Azteca, the Mayan traditions have been linked together to North America. People have trouble accepting that, but really this was one big place, shared understanding. Okay, next please. Chauga, this is South Carolina. Etowah culture, a pyramid there, so again, even in South Carolina, there are pyramids and mounds, villages. Tougaloo river is where that's located. Okay, next. And I won't really to talk about what people do there. I mean, that's something maybe you can research or you can go visit people. I just want to make mention of where these places exist and then what happens there is up to the tribe to reveal or share, basically. I can reveal some things with the Cheyenne people, but that's about all I can do.

This is Northern Georgia. This is a really wonderful site. It's North of Etowah And there are rings that chart the sun's passage of the winter solstice all along the smoky mountains and they're called Fort rings, but they're not really forts. And they're the same kind of... Just the passage from East to West of the sun and it goes across the horizon and they're built out a stone, so they're called a Fort Mountain rings. So this is a Northern Georgia, really amazing. Okay, next please. Rainbow Bridge, a really amazing site. Again, location, one of the largest open land bridges made of sandstone. A Navajo sacred site on the edge of Lake Powell near Navajo mountain, near the head of the world and it's all made of sandstone. It's a big kind of arching shape, maybe about 80 feet tall made a sandstone, naturally made. And it's about maybe a day's hike or two days hike from my wife's homeland, Navajo Mountain, so Rainbow Bridge.

And then let's see, so we have a... The next slide, please. Head Smashed In, also just a tremendous, powerful location outside of Lethbridge Alberta. And there is a tremendous site of Buffalo Jump. Plane's native tribal Buffalo Jump, which they would use to have a really intense prayers and women to charm the buffalo over the cliffs and that's how they ate for a year or more by what the buffaloes did as they fell. They became food for the tribe and it was a traditional spot and it is, just West of Lethbridge. And it's called Head Smashed In and you can feel it there, it's really strong spirit, Buffalo Jump. Okay, next. And so people wouldn't go to these sites. They are remarkable, they're historical, but you would go to return to

those places to make your prayers, to heal yourself, to make your ceremony because of the history in those places.

And so it's not a church, it's not a built up site per se. There's some pyramids, but they're very natural, so it's not a place you'd go and be a gatekeeper of and someone has to be allowed to go into it. It's there all the time, every day, all night long, all day long, snow, ice, rain and very different to have that earth bound linkage. These sites are all Chumash and I've worked a lot in California with the tribes in LA area, Pitzer, The Basin. And Limuw, Santa Cruz Island is the origin island, the fourth word down. So all these are the channel islands, so those are seen as origin spots for the Chumash people. All those islands, Catalina. They all have names, Catalina, Santa Rosa, all these names of contemporary islands, but they're really ancient sites of the Chumash people.

Okay, the last one of that series. These are all Cayuga nation villages and they go back to 1670 in time. So they're ancient and some are modern and they're around the Finger Lakes of New York. So these are all ancient villages, cities in New York for the Cayuga people. Okay, the next slide please. This final slide I have, and that was the places of healing and so I honor all those sites. I honor all the nations that worship there and carry on and continue their offerings there. And they go to help people certainly, and we need the help today for many reasons across the world, but I've also worked certainly on health before. This isn't a new thing and I didn't make these pieces for the COVID. I made all those prints I showed you back in February, sometime. So they weren't made for the COVID at all. I'm working on health a lot.

And so this is the last slide I have. This is the piece we should at PS1 and it's called, "The Health of the People Is the Highest Law." And for my own family, health, diabetes, dialysis, all these issues the native people have for many, many reasons from the colonized life they had, the brutality, the violence, the bad food that was given to them by the cavalry and made to eat, the restrictions on hunting, the restrictions on moving across different parts of country. So we have suffered from that and the medical system, the Indian health service is horrible. So if you live through that, you're going to be very lucky. So this piece was made about three years ago, and this series of observations about native health and how we've struggled through that, even psychological health itself. So, that's my presentation, so thanks.

Sara Reisman:

Thanks, Edgar. I'm just going to say a few things before we turn it over to Douglas, but what I want to say is, it's kind of a dazzling overview of this country. I guess North America, like these different points of healing and history that... It makes me think, and maybe this is a kind of Western

perspective, but would you ever make a book of this, like a book of these prints for people to kind of go deeper thinking about each site?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah. Well, I think that can be more research too.

Sara Reisman: Okay.

Edgar Heap of B...: I've done that a lot with my projects, so it's sort of a puncture.

Sara Reisman: Right.

Edgar Heap of B...: And then other scholars can create... I'm in a lot of books now, even a Mogi book came out last week. I'm in a Mogi book, but that's because I made that, but then it just kind of deepens their research and makes it more available to people. Yeah.

Sara Reisman: And can I ask-

Edgar Heap of B...: [crosstalk] when it does that. Yeah.

Sara Reisman: And can I ask a question? You spoke about ghosting. The number seems to be important, 24 prints together. Did you explain why?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah. I work always in fours.

Sara Reisman: Okay.

Edgar Heap of B...: And so I have a series of paintings called the Neuf series, which is four, the Cheyenne number four, so I make four paintings and I do always 16 prints or 24 prints and so on. So there's 48 all together with the ghosts themselves. And so the instructors, I have, four instructors, as I just outlines. So they give you that renewal number of the balance of the world and they reiterate it with the song sung four times and 16 times it's sung throughout the series. And so we live in the balance of the four directions. Not of the Cardinal directions, but the extremes of the sun.

Sara Reisman: Right.

Edgar Heap of B...: So, the Summer Solstice from Northeast to Northwest, and then from the Winter Solstice Southeast to Southwest. So those kinds of corners of the world are the four and so we always kind of pay homage to those corners. The streams of the sun or how we survive. If the sun didn't move the way it did, if the sun doesn't want to move, then we're going to freeze, so it's very important to honor that movement. So the tribe is very aware of that.

Sara Reisman: Thank you for that. I'll save my other questions for after Doug presents. So maybe we can switch gears and unshare. Have we unshared the presentation?

William Furio: I did unshare, Sara. I'm going to share again right now for Doug's.

Sara Reisman: Thank you.

William Furio: Of course. Doug, are you ready?

Douglas Miles: Yeah.

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

William Furio: Doug, I'm screen sharing your presentation right now.

Douglas Miles: So I'm ready to go then, right?

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: We're going to talk?

Sara Reisman: Yes.

Douglas Miles: So for those of you that tuned in, I want to first of all, say thank you to Sara and the Rubin Foundation, and of course Edgar Heap of Birds. They have been very generous in inviting me to be a part of this conversation. It's an amazing piece that Edgar has done, which must've taken him months and months to put together those 24 pieces, plus the ghost script, which is an amazing tribute to important Native American places of healing. So I want to just say much respect to Edgar because Edgar kind of stands alone, actually.

Pretty much in the art world, he's kind of a standalone. He's a seminal figure in art world. He's one of the few native people that kind of can speak to native power and that's not an easy [inaudible 00:13:47]. So in the work Edgar, [inaudible] the way all of the romanticism and any embellishment in Ghost talks about the power of native people. And by stripping it down even more and using the text form and using them, he takes the classical text symbols to still translate native American power and slate. So thank you Edgar for sharing that. The works are amazing and in my mind too, I was thinking like, "How can I get my hands on one of those?" But, yeah. We'll talk about that later.

Edgar Heap of B...: [inaudible 00:37:24].

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: Yeah, because I got a couple of my favorites on there. The Bears Ears is a good one. I liked the one about, did you say it was Santa Monica or Long Beach?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, Long Beach.

Douglas Miles: Okay. I love that piece, it's such a tribute to the Chumash people. So I was just really looking at some of my favorites in there and then the printing of the text itself, how it has this kind of like a wash on it and I was like, "Wow, I wonder how they got that." It's red and then white. I was just like, "Wow," amazing job.

Edgar Heap of B...: Thanks, thanks.

Sara Reisman: So Doug, tell us about Isolation Studios.

Douglas Miles: So Isolation Studios, actually it came about through a couple of conversations, really. And we're going to show two short films. One of the first conversations I remember having was with an artist, musician friend of mine named LivA'ndrea Knoki and so LivA'ndrea and I, we started to talk on the phone and text and fairly quick, I found out and I saw that she's a classically trained pianist. But of course myself, I'm an artist as well, but when I saw and I heard what she could do, I knew immediately what I wanted to do with her artistry.

I thought it would be great to combine her music with the skateboarding and the art that we're doing here. So the more she and I would talk about the artistry around music and around the work and the energy and the spirit of creativity, we started to come up with some ideas. We threw some ideas around, but mind you, this is really all through text because she lived far away. She lives about four hours from here in Flagstaff, and I'm four hours away. And Edgar knows where Flagstaff is because LivA'ndrea is from the Navajo nation. So what happened is we started to kind of like process these ideas and then the COVID hit, the coronavirus hit and then towns and cities started to shut down.

But we still had these ideas, so, I called up LivA'ndrea and we started to talk some more. I said, "Look," I said, "I got an idea." I said, "Let's work around the COVID and let's work through the COVID issue and let's do everything remote. We'll do everything at a distance. I could come see you, but I can't because you're far away one, but two, they're asking people to stay at home." So here's what I told her, I said, "Can you feel yourself playing piano with your cell phone for 15 seconds and then text it to me," because I figured it takes forever for a large image to send through text, so

I thought with 15 seconds it would come through right away. And so she said, "I got it." There were already a couple of films that she and I had done, and this is a picture actually of LivA'ndrea right here.

So if you can hold that photo right here, I'm going to talk a little bit about her in this photo. So if this is a grand piano in Flagstaff, Arizona at NAU. And so this was one of the first friends I had met, was LivA'ndrea and she said, "I'm going to play something for you and we went into NAU and they would not let her play that piano." The people in charge of that room, in charge that piano. She sat down, she had brought sheet music and they said, "You can't use that." And we said, "Why?" And they said, "You need to sign a waiver because this piano costs a half a million dollars."

Hi, that's Liz. That's Liz, she just said hi. We were disappointed. I was disappointed. And I was almost going to say like, "Wow, that's kind of racist," but I was calm and we found another place. So I took some quick photos of LivA'ndrea, what you're seeing here, but because of the artistry that she kind of had in her head, I wanted to combine classical music and skateboarding and street art because I felt like it kind of really hadn't been done and I kind of also felt like it would elevate my body of work and the work that I was doing because most people look up at the work I'm doing as like, "Oh, it's street art or it's graffiti or it's kind of grungy or it has this street aesthetic."

But by putting classical music, a classically trained musician at work, and by the way LivA'ndrea has been playing since probably since she was five. She's not an amateur. It elevated the work that we were already doing. So for the film that we put together, we did three or four with LivA'ndrea, but the third one was in the heart of COVID and so I told LivA'ndrea, "Play the heaviest darkest song you can think of and send it. You pick it out and it." And it ended up being a Beethoven piece. She sent it, I don't know, it was like late at night and I saw it in the morning, I was like, "Wow, this is great." And I just basically directed her to text through the cell phone. I sent her the directions and I texted her. I said, "Hey, can you make it [inaudible] where this kind of wardrobe and just do the 15 second pieces and work on the angle. Just focus on your hands."

So, for us, I think it was fun, but it was stressful too, because the COVID crisis is stressful for everyone. We don't have the mobility. We don't have the ability to get together the way we want. We don't have the ability to drive and see each other because our towns are kind of closed down and there's curfews now, but one thing I think that happens when you're working with artists at this level or artists at the level of, like an Edgar Heap of Birds or LivA'ndrea, what happens is, they don't really need that much direction because you're already talking at and working at a level and at a language that you already understand because when you put in a

certain amount of years of work as an artist, you're able to communicate with another artist and I think that's what happened throughout history. That's why artists kind of gravitate towards each other and hang out with each other because they understand the dedication, the commitment and the time it takes to become creative. I'm sorry. You can show the next photo.

Sara Reisman: Okay.

Douglas Miles: So we had done... The second film we're going to show is called "Midnight World Fun." And "Midnight World Fun" was actually a skate video. So I had got an email twice from Sebastian Robertson, who is the son of Robbie Robertson, who is in the Rock and Roll Hall of fame for his work with The Band. The Band is actually called The Band for those of you that don't know. Some do, some don't. But Sebastian and his dad worked closely and I know they scored films with Martin Scorsese, but when Sebastian wrote to me the second time, he said, "Hey, I've got music. I want to score a skate video with you." So I called my son, Doug Jr. and you'll see Doug in the video as we show it too. And I said, "Doug, Sebastian has music. He wants to score a skate video with us."

And in my mind I'm thinking like, it's kind of that proverbial offer I can't refuse it. I couldn't say no to Sebastian Robertson, I couldn't. And so when he sent the tracks, I listened to them. They were so good. They were all so melodic and some of them were more hip hop, some were more electronic, but immediately I went with the piece that I felt with skateboarding we could sort of... Most people make a film and let the music sort of accent the film. But in this case, I wanted our film to really show off the music because I could really feel something, the same way I could feel what LivA'ndrea was playing. I can feel what Sebastian was saying. So I told Doug Jr., who's the skater, sponsored by REAL Skate Boards and sponsored by others, I said, "Doug, let's make the video. I'll pick out the location. Bring the camera and let's meet and let's get the crew in there." He said, "All right." We ended up going to Phoenix or Tempe, and it was the first weekend of COVID in Phoenix, and a lot of places had shut down. And it was weird. It felt strange to go to the city, because it felt like the world was kind of coming to a standstill. And so I titled the film Midnight World Fun, because in spite of the standstill, the Corona era, we were still having fun. A lot of people were still out, but other places were very empty, and it was just a strange feeling like it is even now. Like I'm sure it's strange for you to walk out into New York City in the morning and see the streets empty versus full of people.

So keeping all these things in mind, the Corona era, actually, I feel kind of made some of us better artists in a sense, and it's actually drawn some of us closer together. Like I rarely see Doug Jr, even though that's my son,

and I rarely see [LivA'ndrea 00:47:00], even though we're close collaborators now. But at the same time, we're in constant contact through things like Zoom, through things like Instagram, through things like Facebook and social media and texting. So it's interesting, and it's kind of bittersweet in a way, but it still works well because I think this process of being isolated and being distant, I feel it forces you to think and concentrate even more on the work that you're making.

Is there another photo?

William: Yes. There's about 13.

Douglas Miles: Yeah. These are behind the scenes. This is a behind the scene photo of LivA'ndrea and I in one of the few behind the scenes meetings that we had in Flagstaff, Arizona. And this was one of the first weekends that there was a curfew, and so I took her some art supplies and some things, and I said, "Hey, I can't stay long, there's a curfew, they closed the town." And I just thought we'd say hi and we'd talk about the project, and I was literally there for half an hour. But it was fun though. We talked about a lot of important things in that short period of time.

Next photo?

This is Sebastian Robertson, of course. Of course, he has collaborators. He looks like he's obviously in the studio. I wanted him to get on Zoom, but I know he's probably super busy today. And I know he works closely with his dad, Robbie. And I know the most recent film that Robbie Robertson, his dad, recorded was the Irishman for Martin Scorsese, which is now on Netflix. So you can see what Robbie has done for Martin.

Next photo?

This here, when we show the film, these are the two actor artists that worked on the short film called Isolation Curve. So when we had the LivA'ndrea piece, we plugged it in, I brought in two artists actors and I said, "Okay, look, we have this music, we have this piece. I want you to kind of just talk about the frustration of what it's like", because it's also frustrating. Yes, it's nice. Yes, we can reach out to each other this way, through tech, through phones, but there's also a certain kind of frustration and angst that come along with the Corona era, because we can't be as connected as we want to be. We can't go to someone's house. Can't even visit your family the way you want to. You can't see your grandma or your aunt or your cousin.

LivA'ndrea is from the Navajo Nation, and I remember her telling me, "I've been going back to the reservation like every other weekend and



seeing my family. Now I can't go." So it becomes frustrating for us, and so when you see the film, that's what I wanted to kind of show also, some of the angst and frustration.

That's [Rebekah] Miles, and that's Jennifer [Antonio 00:03:56]. Rebekah is an artist as well, Jennifer is also an artist, and they also both work on film. They also have done film work previously, on set and in front of the camera and behind the camera.

Next photo?

And that's another outtake of *Midnight World Fun*. Of course that's my grandson, Ira Miles. And Ira is named after Ira Hayes. I think he's... Ira? I'm sorry, Ira's three, but he's a great little performer. And that's Doug Jr. And so it was a quick outtake when we were shooting at ASU.

Next photo.

And then of course this is a self-portrait of me in the Corona times, Corona era, doing my thing, shopping for groceries with a mask, which seems kind of normal, but...

Sara Reisman: But not. Yeah.

Douglas Miles: Yes, it's not normal.

Getting art supplies. Of course, I do murals, so also with mask and gloves here in Phoenix. And yeah, it's a strange time we live in.

Is there any more photos?

William: There's about four more, I think. Or five.

Douglas Miles: Yeah. Go ahead.

Next photo.

So we're going to show some of the works and some of the art I do which is a combination of working on Twitter and then also combining the Twitter writings that I do on Twitter with art and photography. So this one says, "Native museums will be the last to decolonize because they (& we) think they're doing us a favor." So you got to read between the lines on that, but there are so many museums that say that they are promoting and preserving Native American art, but it's always from the white gaze or a white curator point of view. So as long as those museums are run by white curators and white gaze curators, Native artists like myself, or even artists

like Edgar, will never really have those last, or the foremost words. And in this age of decolonization of museums, it'll be the Native museums that will be last because they think they're doing us a favor.

Next.

I can hear Edgar laughing back there.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, yeah.

Douglas Miles: Oh, this one says, "I don't need comics or super heroes because I'm Native and my super power is 500 years of survival."

So what does that mean? It's just a funny way to tell people like, I like science fiction, and I like Star Wars, and I like all these Marvel superhero things. I like it too, but in reality, after 500 years of survival and battling colonization, I am my own superhero. Edgar is my superhero. LivA'ndrea is my superhero. Doug Miles Jr. is my superhero. And if you're Native and you're working and you're doing fun things in this era, you're my hero.

Next.

"Every morning I wake to punch historical trauma in the face." So it's pretty self-explanatory.

Sara Reisman: I think so.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: Every morning, that's what I do. So yeah, historical trauma is real. Yes, Native pain is real. And yes, these things are real.

Sara Reisman: Here we are.

Douglas Miles: Oh, okay, this one. And the last one is... I don't know if it's the last one. This is, "If you're going to do all these land acknowledgements, you might as well give some back while you're at it."

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: So land acknowledgement is the new thing, right? And I think it's great, especially when Native people do the land acknowledgement. I love to hear Native people talk about where they're from. Like I can listen to Edgar all day, because he knows where he's from, he's coming from a purely Native perspective. So listening to him is not just listening to him about how he makes the work, it's really listening to him and how he feels

about being Native in a non-Native world, so to speak. So that's fascinating. With me, I felt like if you're going to do all these land acknowledgements, white people...

What happened? Did your screen go dark?

Sara Reisman: We're going to show the video.

Douglas Miles: Oh. [inaudible] or give me some of it back. Because if you know it's our land but you're standing on it, and you're renting on it, and you're building businesses on it, but they're telling us we can't have it back, but it's our land, it doesn't make any sense to me.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah.

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: It's like irony on irony on irony. Come on. Don't tell me this is your land but I can't have it. But tongue firmly planted in cheek, of course.

Sara Reisman: Yeah, we have some comments on the side. "True words", says one person.

Douglas Miles: Thank you, Monica.

Sara Reisman: Monica [Buckle 00:00:55:08]. And [Aviva Rahmani 00:09:09] says, "Love that one about your rent is overdue."

Douglas Miles: Thank you.

Sara Reisman: So let's play the videos, and then we'll talk further.

So William's going to put that on for us.

Video 1: And then the only thing I can do is keep moving forward because I know I don't have any control over anything and I just have to accept my current position because it's only temporary. But I just find it still so hard to want to move forward sometimes.

(singing)

William: One second.

(silence)

Video 2: (singing)

[inaudible 00:59:46].

(singing)

Speaker 2: Yay, that was great.

Douglas Miles: Thank you.

Edgar Heap of B...: Great.

Sara Reisman: So I think we're sort of a little later than planned, so I'd like to jump into conversation with Edgar and Doug. And then also if you guys have questions, you can write them in so the conversation can be interspersed with your questions and comments.

I feel like you guys actually really touched on a lot of the questions that I put forward before we got together today, so I think that there was one list of resources that Edgar put forward to us and we'll share with you in terms of mutual aid and different resources that are out there. But I wanted to just maybe pose the question what are some of the challenges indigenous communities in the US are facing that are maybe different than non-indigenous communities?

Edgar Heap of B...: Well, when I brought that up a bit with the health of the people is the highest law, and I mentioned the Indian Health Service, which we were promised healthcare back in the 1800s by losing our territory, our land. And we've gotten marginal healthcare. There's no ICU units usually anywhere near a reservation. So this crisis has been very hard on the Navajo Nation because there's no ICU, I don't think, anywhere on the reservation so they have to medevac you somewhere, Flagstaff, Phoenix. So it's been very hard, and so tribes have been suffering.

Even to go to diabetes, and there's even a drug, a shot you can take that almost corrects most of the diabetic problems, and nobody gets that shot. They get other medicines that are marginal medicines, and then they lose their legs and arms and hands and feet and all that. So just a simple thing like that, but they keep brutalizing the Native people. So that's a big challenge to not even be able to get your drugs you need or your medical assistance to have you survive.

Sara Reisman: Doug, would you have anything to add to that? Is he here?

Douglas Miles: I think one of the challenges, in particular especially on places like the Navajo Nation, is the challenge of there's a lack of infrastructure and they're kind of being very, very challenged to deal with the COVID crisis because of the lack of infrastructure. And my thing is this, hey, the Navajo

Nation, the Navajo Code Talkers, they practically won World War II, but then all they got was this crummy American COVID crisis in response. So my thing is where is the support and the health that the Navajo Nation deserves and is long overdue?

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, within the nation we talk about COVID of course, we talk about washing your hands for 20 minutes or two minutes or whatever the time limit is.

Sara Reisman: 20 seconds. 30 seconds.

Edgar Heap of B...: 20 seconds. And so there's no running water on most of the nation. And there's a huge lake called Lake Powell where everyone's jet skiing and have big giant houseboats just about 10 miles away, 20 miles away, and none of it goes up into Navajo Mountain where the Code Talkers live with no water. They haul their water. So of course then when you try to get clean and cleanliness, you have to haul water to wash your hands, you know? So the irony is just giant, it's tragic.

Sara Reisman: I guess what I want to ask is, are there specific efforts that you would point us to in terms of being allies, being supportive to counter this crisis within the Native community? And we'll send the list to everyone as well, but if there's kind of an example you would give, Edgar, or Doug.

Edgar Heap of B...: You know something, Doug?

Douglas Miles: I think right now there are a host of different organizations, different online websites. Navajo Nation has their own website, you can go to their website. And they will direct to where you can possibly donate, and I think just do a good search online, it will help you to find Navajo Nation COVID relief. I just looked at it.

Sara Reisman: Okay.

We have a few questions coming through, so I'm going to pose some questions, and Edgar and Doug, if you guys want to also ask each other, that's fine. But the first one is for Doug coming from Aviva Rahmani. Aviva, do you want to ask the question or should I just read it?

Aviva Rahmani: Sure, I can ask the question.

Sara Reisman: Yeah, go ahead.

Aviva Rahmani: I was really fascinated by the rhythm of your images and sound, and the mystic dreamlike quality to it, and I just wondered whether you could

speaking a little bit to that, whether that's conscious and deliberate or whether it's just the way you work.

Douglas Miles: It's very conscious, and it's very deliberate, and it is the way I work. And thank you for saying that, thank you for noticing, because the whole idea for me is by putting... We're artists, we're painters. I'm the photographer and I also do murals, but to me, for me to work in film, it's super fun because then I can take the images in my mind and then move them around, so to speak. I can watch them move.

And then when I'm listening to music, like LivA'ndrea's [Pinocchio] for example, when I'm listening to what she's playing, I can sort of see the imagery in my mind. And it's the same, when I heard the music from Sebastian, I could see the imagery in my mind, like okay, this mix, this is causing me to see certain things. And so as I listen to it, or the rhythm, I'm trying to and I'm hoping to try to be able to tell a story with no dialogue, so to speak, with no words, but I want the movement and the characters and their faces to tell the story with the music.

Aviva Rahmani: Thank you. Can I ask a related question?

Sara Reisman: Yep.

Aviva Rahmani: There was a special rhythm and tempo to what I was watching, and it made me think about horses. When the kids were on their skateboards, they looked to me like they were riding horses. Do you have any comments about that?

Douglas Miles: You know, the kids, the musicians, all of them, they bring their own energy and their own rhythm to what they're doing, and it's going to end up being reminiscent of different things. It may seem like these things don't fit, but whatever you're feeling is the energy that they're putting out.

Aviva Rahmani: Thank you.

Douglas Miles: You're welcome.

Sara Reisman: So another question, one for Edgar, which is about process from Sato Yamamoto. She asked, what kind of ink are you using in your printmaking? She'd like to know a little bit more.

Edgar Heap of B...: I don't know the brand or something. It's an oil-based ink, it's a nontoxic ink, and we clean up with baby oil and stuff, so we're a real clean shop. But it's oil-based. I guess like a [inaudible] etching ink, maybe? But yeah.

Sara Reisman: Maybe I'll throw in a question just about the fact that the two of you have not met in person, from what I understand, and when Edgar and I started talking about a month ago, he suggested we get in touch with Doug Miles. And I just maybe wanted to ask the question of what drew you to Doug's work? I mean, we've heard a bit from Doug about what he thinks about your work, Edgar. Yeah.

Edgar Heap of B...: Well, I've always been very interested in what he was doing and more and more interested. It's edgy. It has a political standpoint. My favorite part is he native women with guns. I like that a lot. So that when native women ... I'm in Oklahoma, the Apache women. I'm in Oklahoma where Geronimo was in prison. So I've been to his jail cell. I've been to his cell in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. It's the largest military base for [inaudible] in the world. I've been in that space years ago, and so my grandfather was a prisoner of war in Florida too. The first Heap of Birds. Chief Heap of Birds.

So I have an affinity with POWs that are native Apache, Cheyenne. And then, to see him bring that forward, because they had the picture that posted [inaudible] every hippy had was Geronimo with his gun. But they didn't look closely, he had a ball and chain on his leg. So he was incarcerated and they gave him a gun to look fearful.

So, Doug uses that gun but turns it back around and puts it in the hands of Apache youth or women or adults. You know, they're defending their right to exist. So, that struck me as very, very profound. Particularly, which I guess we can talk about it later too, but right now as well is just that I think it's so important that we speak from our homes of the reservation territory and we make our inroads and our strides as artists from home, from here. I've always been here. People say, "Do you live in Brooklyn?" I've never lived in Brooklyn. You might see me once in a while in Brooklyn but I don't live there. I've always been here. I can get on a plane and go or something.

So, Doug is home. I'm telling you, there's very few people out there working like this where Doug is and on kind of a rural or isolated tribal kind of status and giving back to the community and of course being with the community. So that was also a very profound statement. So for me, I can just say that certainly you want to present that to the youth, and to all the young would-be artists that are in Brooklyn, that are native and elsewhere in LA and all that.

I know a lot of them. But they're in the wrong place. I wish they were home. I wish wherever home is, I wish they were learning from their elders. Sometimes when we challenge young native artists, they say, "Well, I didn't know anything about it." Well you better go find out. Why don't you know about it?

It's not easy. It takes decades. But you need to go find out and you need to be a leader within your own tribal community. You need to go back and lead. You're educated so you need to lead. So I see Doug doing that with his family and it's Junior and the grandsons and the women. All the mentors that are around there. I can feel it, so I really have a lot of respect for that.

Sara Reisman: Let's see. I mean, there's still a few more questions. But I will say a couple of the questions are focused on artists to watch, native artists to watch. Up and coming artists. So, there are a couple of listings that people have put in the chat section. But here's a question that's more specific to the two of you. Do you ever feel pressure to monetize your art more in order to survive? And how do you reconcile that with the kind of spiritual underpinnings?

I'm editorializing a question from Jennifer [Kreisberg]. Thank you, Jennifer. I can read it again. Do you feel pressured to monetize your artwork?

Edgar Heap of B...: Monetize?

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Edgar Heap of B...: You mean, like, to sell out or something or-

Sara Reisman: Well, I think it's, well, Jennifer can comment. I'm not sure where she is in the group. But yeah, I think it's a question of just commercial pressure. She says yes, exactly, sell out.

Edgar Heap of B...: Well, I don't know, it's a pretty kind of touchy question right now for me. I've had a really horrible experience with a gallery right now. Worst I've had in my life. Commercial and just dishonest, bullying. I don't really deal with that too much but I look forward to having a better one. I hope to find better, honest commercial enterprises.

But I focus more on communication. That's what we're doing today and that's what I'm all about is communicating and transmitting ideas, whether they're to people on the reservation or elsewhere. You know, I think you got transmit. If you transmit it, you're impotent. It doesn't matter how much money you got. If you sell something and they lock it up somewhere, what good is that if they lock it up and don't ever show it? So I think having an ability to transmit work, which is in exhibitions or publishing, I do a lot of publishing projects with people, with institutions, so that's good too. I think the transmission and the movement of ideas is really very key.



Sara Reisman: Doug, do you feel any of these pressures?

Douglas Miles: Yeah. I mean, the pressure to sell out is I guess it's there. I'm not ... I don't know. It's a good question but it's actually something I don't really think about that much. Like tomorrow, if Gucci calls me tomorrow and say, "Hey, Doug Miles, we want you to design a purse," I would not see that as selling out. I would see that as them buying in. Because I'm not going to change what I do for nobody. But whatever I do for people, they better pay me. That's where I'm coming from. Whether it's Gucci or Louis Vuitton or Fendi or Chanel, or however you say it right.

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: However you say it, they're going to pay me, you know. They're going to pay me what they know I'm worth and what I know I'm worth. I don't see it so much as a struggle between selling out. I find it more of a struggle to work with these institutions that are selling out our culture. These institutions have basically, for lack of a better word, and Edgar will know what I mean, they've hogtied the native artists and kept them placated and shows them that this is why your work is important, because you're part of our institution. Your work is not important when it's in an institution. Your work is important when your people know who you are.

Sara Reisman: Right.

Douglas Miles: Because I know Edgar knows his community and they know him. So that's what makes him important. He's earned so many accolades, but what really makes Edgar important is what he's doing right now. He reached out to me, kind of like a, Sara, you didn't even know who I was until Edgar invited me to your world. Here's Edgar, reached out to me and saying, "I'm going to invite you to know some people."

Sara Reisman: Right.

Douglas Miles: You know, but that's important. That's more important than money.

Sara Reisman: So there's a really good question from George [Ciscle]. Maybe he can ask it directly. George, are you-

Edgar Heap of B...: I know George.

Sara Reisman: Yeah. George has a question, or is asking a kind of positive question in light of this discussion about institutions. I think what you're saying is appropriating and using native culture and art. So, George, do you want to pose the question or should I? Okay. Maybe he's muted, I'm not sure.

He's asking what museums and art organizations do you see as honoring the intentions of your artwork?

Edgar Heap of B...: Well, I've had fairly positive experiences with museums and I think it's all about audience. Audience. We suffer in the native art world, as small as it is, from the audience not being very adept at art in general. So, they have an agenda of tourism and kind of pleasure and folkloric kind of experiences. So if you don't fit into that, then you're probably excluded. So a lot of times, someone like Doug's work will be excluded immediately. It's not a happy day, not a happy festival day of Indian life or whatever, you know? And neither is mine.

But I don't know. I'm really happy with the native community, but I'm not happy with the non-native-run art community things about native life. But of course, like Juan Sanchez is here on the talk today and Juan Sanchez and I, we go way back. We make [inaudible] art and I've been at Hunter College and critiquing his graduate students. Actually, I got some of your prints, Juan, from Brandywine. I traded Brandywine some work for your work. I don't know if you know that or not. But so I've got Juan's work up in my dining room right now.

So, those institutions are great. I've been at [MICA] a lot where George taught and I know Maren Hassinger, who's a great sculptor who had me in as visiting artist for a whole year.

So all those places are great, you know. They're great because they're about art. They're not about marginalized politics and tourism. They're about art and expression. So, I'm very comfortable there. [inaudible] looking back to New York City, in a way. I miss it in a sense. But at the Jazz Standard downstairs, listen to the jazz music. There's great musicians in New York City, so I'm very happy listening to their music. I go to it every night. So that kind of thing, I'm happy to be in the art mix, so it works out well.

Sara Reisman: When we were getting ready for this event, we talked a little bit about regionalism within and around native communities, and across the US. I guess I just wanted to touch on that because I think in this moment, especially in thinking about isolation films that Doug is doing, there's the kind of, we're fragmented. Even if we can do something like this and connect, there's still a level of fragmentation that's quite substantial. But I think you guys were pointing to something else in the context of native culture. Do you want to comment on that? Not really?

Edgar Heap of B...: Doug has something to say.

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: So when you're talking about regionalism, what are you referring to, if you don't mind?

Sara Reisman: I mean, in my experience, there's regionalism in terms of in the US, in non-native art world, there are regions where certain kind of art practices are revered or not relevant. So, there are different practices that become specific to place and I think [crosstalk] but I think that there's something to this question of the regions in terms of native identity as well. It's an ambiguous question but we were talking about it [crosstalk]. Go ahead. You go ahead.

Douglas Miles: So, the way I look at regionalism is, like I live in the southwest, I live in Arizona, but to be honest with you, the way I look at regionalism is I kind of don't really look at it. Because of the way I'm making the work that I make, and because I'm hoping, as Edgar says, to communicate an idea, Edgar lives in Oklahoma but he saw my work and my work speaks to Edgar. So whatever the regionalism between Edgar and I that exists, it's totally eradicated because the message is sound. The messaging is clear. The symbology is on point. This is why Edgar and I are friends.

So for me, regionalism is not as much of a problem as it is some of these institutions not understanding what it is I'm trying to say.

Sara Reisman: Right.

Douglas Miles: Edgar understands it, but the institutions don't understand because they don't know what it's like to live out here. They don't know what it's like to come from where we're coming from. It's like being in the South Bronx in the '80s. Nobody knew what those kids were going through until they went downtown or somebody from downtown went uptown.

So, until somebody brought it back downtown, nobody knew. They thought they were all hoodlums and gangsters and all this stuff. They didn't know that some of the greatest art ever invented.

So, you could say the same thing about me. Edgar found me, so to speak, just living and making art and making work that needs to be shared more and more. But regionalism is a reality. I think it's real, I'm not saying it's not. But I feel like if your message is sound and your methods are clear, that your work, whether you're a poet, a filmmaker, photographer, painter, it will transcend any barriers, real or imagined.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah, I would pick up on that, Sara, and say certainly we're kind of like tribal communities, and so the tribal community I guess, you could say it's regional, but it's like at the epicenter of the middle of the whole earth, universe. I mean, you can't be, if you're Apache or you're Kiowa,

Comanche or you're Cayuga, whatever nation you are, Cheyenne Arapaho, you can't be anywhere else. There's nowhere else to go. You got to be here. You got to be where all the priests are, all the elders are, all the drums, all the songs, all the plants. You got to be where it is.

So, you're at the top of the, like you're at The Met here. This is the MoMA. This is the place where it all needs to happen. I think that's something that people don't really look at very deeply. And it's all separate. It's different nations, but they're all on a parallel track. So everyone needs to be where they're supposed to be and learn that way. So I think it's very important.

Sara Reisman: I think what we were, I thought we were talking about yesterday, was this question of sheltering in place and what that means in terms of being in your region. Obviously, we have this connection, but there's the kind of local culture that starts to matter in a whole new way in order to survive, and that's across the board, native or not.

I wanted to just mention, there is one last question from the audience that I'm going to put forward and then I wanted you two to just talk about your show at EFA Project Space.

So, first a question from David Samuels. How do we change people's minds? So many people in my experience still want their appreciation of native art to work as some kind of redemption, reconciliation for historical trauma. Redemption or reconciliation. I don't know. I can't answer that but I think we just present the art and people can eventually become moved by that. It's not just about redemption or reconciliation, but it's deeper than that. It's aesthetic [crosstalk].

Edgar Heap of B...: I think where you live, I think you've got to be enriched by the history and the spiritual guidance and it's there to help you if you're available, rather than it's a topic you come to and you make a spin on something. You know, like you're compelled to say something and it should help. If you're compelled, if you really have to say something, but it's from where you sleep every night or who you see, the elders you meet with. It's not like a topic. It's not like a theme. I guess that's where it falls apart, when it's a theme, you know.

Sara Reisman: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I would agree with that.

Douglas Miles: I kind of want to add something to what David said. David asked the question right? How do we change people's point of view, right?

Sara Reisman: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Douglas Miles: Because they feel like when they buy native art that part of it is this process of redemption and reconciliation. That's what he said, right?

Sara Reisman: Yep.

Douglas Miles: But what he left out was he should've put in the sentence how do we get white people to stop buying [inaudible] and collecting native art from a point of reconciling and redemption? Because not everybody feels that way, but I think there's a certain percentage of white people that do feel that way. And I don't know what to say about that, because I'm not looking for redemption in my art. Maybe I'm just redeeming myself, but that's an everyday process.

Maybe I'm looking to reconcile myself on a daily process too. But my point is, if he's referring to white people that I can't help you with that because-

Sara Reisman: Yeah.

Douglas Miles: I don't know what to tell you. I want to. I really want to. But I don't know what to say about that at this point. Because, you know, hopefully people like the work. Hopefully they feel it's worth collecting and all that other good stuff that comes with it. Increased value and whatever, saleability and whatnot. But that's not what I'm looking at either. I'm looking at what can I say that I haven't said before.

Sara Reisman: With the work. Yeah. Yeah. So, as a closing question, can you tell us about your exhibition that you have together? You have a two-person show from what I understand at the Elizabeth Foundation EFA Project Space in midtown Manhattan.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yep. It's coming up in January. And it's still kind of open but I feel like with my contributions I want to work toward a public art kind of stance. So I have a lot of work I've done around the world and with public art, with signed pieces and banners. So I'm interested in showing a lot of that work. Actually, right now we're doing some collaborative printmaking with a print shop there at EFA. So I'm making up some new serigraphs. Combining some of my public art pieces, the native host series, with some of the print panning things going on. So we're doing some new prints. That should be available when the show comes up too.

They're talking about getting us some venues in the city for public art for Doug and I to collaborate. I really like all his work he does, Doug does, with his layouts. The things he showed earlier, like the lamp recognition piece with the young lady. For me, I have this vision of hopefully being able to support making those things, like 10 feet tall. They work on a

camera, on a computer, but I see them as these big, big mural pieces or something.

Sara Reisman: You should put them in Time Square.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah.

Sara Reisman: I mean, with Time Square art.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah. Yeah.

Sara Reisman: Doug, do you know what you're going to show?

Douglas Miles: Yeah, I have an idea. I also have some pieces that are based on the [inaudible] that I have behind me, which are kind of based on more like a Chicano style graffiti. But then of combining it with photographic imagery and then my own art.

But I love Edgar's ideas of making them 10 feet tall, 20 feet tall. Right now, I have a mural up at Hunt's Point in the Bronx right now. It's probably 100 feet long and 20 feet tall. It's there right now. It's been there for five years. So I'm looking forward. I'm so super hyped and super doped to work with Edgar in the coming year and doing a show in New York. Of course, I'm super hyped when he asked me to be a part of something like that.

Here again, like I said, it was a proverbial offer I couldn't refuse. You can't say no to the don on the daughter's wedding day. So.

Sara Reisman: Thank you so much. So I think we're going to end here, and I want to thank everybody for showing up and being with us today. I hope to see you again but just maybe some gestures of applause and appreciation. Yeah.

Edgar Heap of B...: Thank you, everyone.

Sara Reisman: We'll be sharing the recording. William can mention what's happening with that.

William: Sure. Absolutely. So we'll share the recording Monday. Also, this chat was very active, so I'm going to save that. I'm also going to share the chat with everybody who RSVP'd because there [crosstalk].

Sara Reisman: And the list of resources too.

William: Absolutely. And the list of resources that Edgar suggested.

Sara Reisman: Yeah. [crosstalk].

William: Of course, yeah.

Speaker 3: Thank you, Sara. Thank you, Edgar.

Edgar Heap of B...: Yeah [crosstalk] help the Navajo nation please.

Douglas Miles: That's right, that's right. Thank you everyone for tuning in. Thank you.