Sacred Breath: Indigenous Writing and Storytelling Series

The Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Washington hosts an annual literary and storytelling series. Sacred Breath features Indigenous writers and storytellers at wałabʔaltxʷ - Intellectual House, on the University of Washington Seattle campus. Storytelling offers a spiritual connection, a sharing of sacred breath. Literature, similarly, preserves human experience and ideals. Both forms are durable and transmit power that teaches us how to live. Both storytelling and reading aloud can impact audiences through the power of presence, allowing for the experience of the transfer of sacred breath as audiences are immersed in the experience of being inside stories and works of literature.

Join us for our first Virtual Sacred Breath - May 7th 2020!

This event features writer and poet Sara Marie Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo) and Gene Tagaban (Cherokee, Tlingit, Filipino).


We couldn't miss this event, even while we're all at home. So we're bringing the event straight to your home! Join us for our first Virtual Sacred Breath event. We'll still feature an indigenous author and storyteller and then have a moderated Q&A session where you can comment or write in your questions for the artists.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS
Sara Marie Ortiz is an Acoma Pueblo poet, a performing artist, a filmmaker, and an indigenous peoples activist. She earned a BFA at the Institute of American Indian Arts and an MFA from Antioch University Los Angeles. Her poems have been published in journals such as Ploughshares, the Kenyon Review, New Poets of the American West, and the anthology Sing: Indigenous Poetry of the Americas (2011). She is the author of the collection of poems Red Milk (volume 1, 2013). Ortiz has received a Truman Capote literary fellowship, a Brigham Young Morning Star Creative Writing Award, and an American Indian Graduate Center Fellowship. The daughter of poet Simon J. Ortiz, she is currently working on a documentary about her father’s life and legacy. She works as an education administrator in Burien, Washington.

Gene Tagaban/Guy Yaau (Cherokee, Tlingit, Filipino). Over the last 30 years Gene has worked nationally and internationally creating a world in which we want to belong. Gene’s passion is mentoring, speaking, performing, facilitation and healing. Gene is a board member and trainer with the Native Wellness Institute. A trainer for ANDVSA, facilitating COMPASS: Choose Respect, a male engagement and mentorship program to end Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Hurt and Harm. Gene has also been featured at storytelling festivals nationally and internationally and is a specialty instructor and honorary uncle with the Wilderness Awareness School. Gene performs with Khu‘eeex, a Native Funk band based out of Seattle. Gene is always open to share stories, spirit and inspiration with people of all ages. In the words of one participant, “Gene has the ability to make the audience feel safe while holding our hearts in his hands.”

*Note: Zoom meeting link and details will be emailed out to all registrants the day before the event. We are able to host the first 300 guests (individual computers logging in, not counting family or people who are watching together in person using the same device). If you are not able to attend on the day of the event or if tickets are sold out, we will be recording and making the video available on our Facebook page once the event is completed.

Read about Sacred Breath in the A&S Perspectives newsletter.

These events are free and open to the public, but registration is required, as space is limited. wałabʔaltxʷ – Intellectual House is located at 4249 Whitman Court, Seattle, WA.

Sacred Breath is sponsored by the Department of American Indian Studies, the Intellectual House Academic Programming Committee, the Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, the UW Diversity Seed Grant, the Banks Center for Educational Justice, and the Squaxin Island Tribe.