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 wǝɫǝʔaltxʷ - 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.

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. wǝɫǝʔaltxʷ - Intellectual House is located at 4249 Whitman Court, Seattle, WA. Register for our May 1st event at: https://eventactions.com/eareg.aspx?ea=Rsvp

Sacred Breath is sponsored by the Department of American Indian Studies, the Intellectual House Academic Programming Committee, the Simpson Center for the Humanities, the Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, and the Banks Center for Educational Justice.

MAY 1, 2019 – 6:30 P.M.

Elissa Washuta is a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and a writer of personal essays and memoir. She is the author of two books, Starvation Mode and My Body Is a Book of Rules, named a finalist for the Washington State Book Award. With Theresa Warburton, she is co-editor of the anthology Shapes of Native Nonfiction, forthcoming from University of Washington Press. She has received fellowships and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Artist Trust, 4Culture, Potlatch Fund, and Hugo House. Elissa is an assistant professor of English at the Ohio State University.

Sondra Segundo is an artist and singer of the Haida language. She is an educator and has worked with youth in schools and programs throughout the Northwest, teaching art and sharing her Indigenous children's books and songs. Everything Sondra does tells a story. Her composed Haida songs tell a story. Her illustrations in her books tell a story. Her movements while she dances, tell a story. Although she is individually accomplished in each of these facets of her life, they are all intertwined by her passion—storytelling. Recently, Sondra has been recruited by tribal-funk band Khu.eex’ as lead female vocalist and has performed at venues such as The Paramount Theater & Upstream Music Fest. She released her first personal music album “Dïi Gudangáay uu Síigaay-I Can Feel the Ocean” on 8-8-18.
Payton Bordley is a member of the Skokomish Tribe, and a recent graduate of the Creative Writing program at the University of Washington. Payton currently lives in Seattle, and also works as the Racial Equity Liaison at the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture.

Roger Fernandes is a Native American artist, storyteller and educator whose work focuses on the traditional arts, legends, and teachings of the Coast Salish tribes of the Puget Sound region of Western Washington. He is a member of the Lower Elwha S’Klallam Tribe and has a degree in Native American Studies from the Evergreen State College and a Masters Degree in Whole Systems Design from Antioch University. He also studied graphic design at the University of Washington and has focused on learning, creating and teaching Coast Salish art for the past 20 years.

Sasha LaPointe is a member of the Nooksack Indian Tribe. Her work has appeared in Indian Country Today, Luna Luna Magazine, The Yellow Medicine Review, The Portland Review, AS/Us Journal, THE Magazine, and Aborted Society Online Zine. Sasha lives in Seattle where she is currently pursuing her MFA through The Institute of American Indian Arts with a focus on nonfiction and poetry.

Ernestine Hayes belongs to the Tlingit Nation, Wolf House, Kaagwaantaan clan. Her first book, Blonde Indian, an Alaska Native Memoir, was published in 2006, and her most recent book, The Tao of Raven, was published in October 2016. Her work has appeared in Studies in American Indian Literature, Yellow Medicine Review, Huffington Post, Alaska Quarterly Review, Tipton Review, and other forums, including selection of her poem “The Spoken Forest” for permanent installation at Totem Bight State Park. Great-grandmother of three and Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Southeast, she makes her home in Juneau.

Raven E. Heavy Runner (Ampska-Pii-Pikuni - aka Blackfeet) was a BIA boarding school youth, Seattle street kid, U.S. Army veteran, stage actor, Two-Spirit leader, Native Activist, college graduate, social worker, and storyteller. He was partly raised on the Blackfeet Reservation with his grandparents. Since his grandparents did not have a TV, his grandfather would entertain the kids with stories of Napi and the dog days (prior to horses). Oral history and storytelling permeated Raven's childhood. In his story his grandfather and his people live on. As said by Chief Dan George, “If the legends fall silent, who will teach the children of our ways.”

Elissa Washuta is a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and a writer of personal essays and memoir. She is the author of two books, Starvation Mode and My Body Is a Book of Rules, named a finalist for the Washington State Book Award. Her work has appeared in Salon, The Chronicle of Higher Education, BuzzFeed, and elsewhere. Elissa holds an MFA from The University of Washington and currently serves as the undergraduate adviser for the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Washington and a nonfiction faculty member in the MFA program at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Trevino L. Brings Plenty is a poet, musician, and multi-media video artist who lives, works, and writes in Portland, OR. In 2015, he was The C. Hamilton Bailey Fellowship recipient. Trevino is an American and Native American; a Lakota Indian born on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, South Dakota, USA. His books include Wakpá Wanáŋi, Ghost River (2015); Real Indian Junk Jewelry(2012); and Shedding Skins: Four Sioux Poets (2008).

Barbara Lawrence-Piecuch is a Suquamish Tribal Member, a Suquamish Elder, and a Storyteller. She serves on the Suquamish Tribal Higher Education Board, and the Suquamish Tribal Elders Council as the Chairwoman of the Elders Council. She holds a BA from The Evergreen State College and an MBA in Sustainable Business from Bainbridge Graduate Institute / Pinchot University, (now Presidio Graduate School). Barbara uses traditional storytelling as a form of teaching with all ages from preschoolers to adults. She was raised on the Suquamish Port Madison Indian Reservation, where she continues to live and work.

Cedar Sigo was raised on the Suquamish Reservation in the Pacific Northwest and studied at the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at the Naropa Institute. He is the author of eight books and pamphlets of poetry including Language Arts (Wave Books, 2014) Stranger in Town (City Lights, 2010), Expensive Magic (House Press, 2008) and two editions of Selected Writings (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2003 and 2005). He
has taught poetry at St. Mary's College, Naropa University, Institute of American Indian Arts and University Press Books. His new collection *Royals* is forthcoming from Wave books in Fall 2017. He lives in San Francisco.

**Status of Research:** Ongoing  
**Research Type:** Projects  
**Related Fields:** English, Nonfiction Prose, Novel/Prose Fiction, Storytelling

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