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This is *Lenapehoking*, the Lenape homeland and gathering place for many Indigenous nations and beings. When the unceded earth breaths again, there will be Indigenous lives here, as there are now and have always been. It will still be *Lenapehoking*. We learn from the bedrock and commit to uplifting, honoring, and listening to those who are seen and unseen, present and future.

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Speculations on the Infrared

January 30, 2021-March 6, 2021

Demian DinéYazhi'

Nicholas Galanin

Kite and Devin Ronneberg

Alan Michelson

New Red Order

Unicorn Riot

Lyle Wilson

Curated by **Christopher Green**

Virtual Opening: Saturday, February 6, 2021, 7-9:00 PM EST, with a curatorial walkthrough, a live discussion with representatives of **the Warriors of the Sunrise**, and a DJ set by **Aerial (Devin Ronneberg)** and DJ **bb buffalo (Suzanne Kite)**. [Register via Zoom](#). For the full schedule of public events, please visit: efaproject.space/speculations-on-the-infrared



Lyle Wilson (Haisla), *Untitled #1*, 1986. Silkscreen and lithograph, 15 x 19 in. Image courtesy the artist and Inuit Gallery of Vancouver. Image description: The figure of a stylized bird in a metallic shade on a black backdrop, with a blood-red fragmented figure of the bird overlaying the first one, two colors dot the image like faraway lights and bloodstains.

EFA Project Space is thrilled to present *Speculations on the Infrared*, curated by Christopher Green, with artists **Demian DinéYazhi'**, **Nicholas Galanin**, **Kite** and **Devin Ronneberg**, **Alan Michelson**, **New Red Order**, **Unicorn Riot**, and **Lyle Wilson**. Virtual public events will focus on current sites and struggles for Indigenous self-determination in North America. The exhibition launches Project Space's 2021 programming season on the theme of [Bright Futures](#).

Speculations on the Infrared explores tactics of speculative Indigenous futurism that foreground and redeploy the subsumed and repressive nature of the settler state's relationship to colonized peoples as a potential tool of sovereignty. Considering *infra-* as "below," as in the spectrum below visible light, but also that which is "further on," the works in this exhibition speculate on how latent desires

for Indigeneity and the subaltern Indigenous DNA of the settler national mythos might be aestheticized to imagine new sovereign structures.

The exhibition asks, “what decolonial futures are imaginable when the elements of national narratives subsumed by the colonial process are harnessed in the service of Indigenous sovereignty? How can robust futurist tactics exploit the realities of the appropriation, consumption, and desire for Indigenous culture?” *Speculations on the Infrared* explores such tactics of speculative Indigenous futurism that are less fantastical or science fictional than they are confrontational of the subsumed and repressive natures of the settler colonial state’s relationship to colonized peoples, foregrounding these natures as potential tools of sovereignty.

This exhibition proposes that while Indigenous futurism has many manifestations, those which recognize Indigenous people to already be living in a post-apocalyptic landscape of despoiled treaty relations and rampant extraction are best suited to envisioning new sovereign structures. By working from the premise that Indigeneity underpins the colonial nation state’s identity formation and its basest cultural desires, the work in *Speculations on the Infrared* suggests that there is a strategic decolonial position to be gained from that subaltern power. The artists in this exhibition are accordingly wary of the visibility and consumption that mere recognition and inclusion brings, opting for strategies of misdirection, inundation, refusal, and obfuscation.

In late 2019, the media collective **Unicorn Riot** released police surveillance footage of the 2016-17 #NoDAPL protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline. The greyscale footage is redolent of U.S. military drone strikes in the Middle East, yet here tipis, tented dwellings, and other silhouetted signifiers identify the sites as the Sacred Stone and *Očhéthi Šakówiŋ* camps near the Standing Rock Reservation, and the moving bodies as Indigenous Water Protectors. The infrared footage surveils the Water Protectors, relaying their movements to the militarized police and militia forces below. Yet the infrared feed is often obfuscated by cookfire smoke, teargas, a roaming herd of bison, and the freezing water that law enforcement sprayed on protesters, masking their body temperatures from the thermographic technology. The water thus cloaks the protestors from the colonial police state’s surveillance. The footage is paired with a 1986 print by Haisla artist **Lyle Wilson**, *Untitled #1*, which visualizes the often violent relationship between Indigenous and settler colonial political orders. Red and grey images of Wee-git, the Haisla name for the famed trickster figure Raven, are superimposed and depicted in the Northwest Coast Native style known as formline. Here, Raven has become a target and his red formline is shattered, bloodlike drips lithographed below. Wilson’s print visualizes the tensions between settler and Indigenous communities that resulted in conflicts such as the Oka

Crisis and Gustafsen Lake standoff only a few years later. The blockade and land occupation tactics used by Indigenous activists during these conflicts, as in recent front line activism, are resurgent political actions that render the asymmetrical relationship with the settler state obsolete. Likewise, the asymmetries of Wilson's print layer contemporary and historic aesthetic orders, only partially relegating Raven's wholeness to the background where he waits to emerge with the light of the sun and the stars still held in his beak.

The artworks throughout the exhibition offer materially and aesthetically distinct futurist speculations. The **New Red Order** (NRO), a public secret society of rotating membership, including core contributors Adam Khalil (Ojibway), Zack Khalil (Ojibway), and Jackson Polys (Tlingit), collaborates with self-described "informants" to create video and performance works that question and re-channel the desire for Indigeneity. Through their in-gallery recruitment station, NRO seeks to enlist candidates to promote Indigenous futures and collect on colonial debts. The background of their expanding society, based on the still-extant Improved Order of the Red Men, an organization founded for white members to "play Indian," is charted through a mural filled with promotional materials and IORM paraphernalia. The NRO seeks to speculate on the shame and the desire for Indigeneity that undergirds American society in order to create a site of acknowledgment that can promote solidarity and shift obstructions to Indigenous growth.

Nicholas Galanin (Tlingit/Unangax̂) asks the audience to imagine the future lives of Indigenous cultural heritage and communities that are often sold for profit in the cycle of cultural consumption. His photograph and audio installation *Fair Warning: A Sacred Place* (2019) depicts empty display cases from the Northwest Coast Hall at the American Museum of Natural History. Faint discolored silhouettes are all that remain of the belongings that filled the gallery. The audio recording consists of auctioneers collecting bids at sales of Indigenous art and material culture, issuing a "fair warning" before the hammer drops to close the sale. The pairing of hollow displays and auction transactions speaks to the theft of ancestral belongings from Indigenous communities by museums and private collectors alike. Yet the striking images of the empty museum hall also propose another potential future in which museum storage rooms are emptied and the collections returned to Indigenous communities. It is those source communities, as Galanin writes of the piece, who today maintain "the capacity to see without being seen, and the desire to exist without being fed upon."

Speculation on the Infrared debuts new work by **Alan Michelson**, **Demian DinéYazhi'**, and **Kite and Devin Ronneberg**. A new multimedia installation by **Alan Michelson** (Mohawk), titled *Pebin Hanska ktepi* (*They killed Long Hair*), consists of edited archival video projected onto an antique wool

trade blanket. The footage depicts Indigenous veterans of the Battle of the Greasy Grass (1876), known colloquially as Custer's Last Stand, who on occasion of the battle's fiftieth anniversary in 1926 returned to the site near Little Bighorn River to commemorate the Lakota, Dakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho victory with a mounted parade. Michelson has looped the remarkable film footage into a continuous procession of riding warriors that references the Winter Count, the pictographic calendar form used by Plains tribes to document memorable events, typically painted onto buffalo hides (and later fabrics like muslin) in spirals or horizontal rows. The work is titled after the Lakota name for 1876 in the Winter Count, and the blanket replaces the hide as a substrate for the figures of the mounted veterans. The looped, gridded format evokes cyclical conceptions of time and the enduring power of Indigenous *survivance*, or active presence and resistance, as it manifests across generations.

“Detach yourself from the settler fascist colonizer imaginary,” reads a new text-based installation by **Demian DinéYazhi'** (Diné), “remember the technologies of survival that your ancestors passed on to your sacred body.” DinéYazhi's visual and poetic practice, often produced in collaboration with R.I.S.E. (Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment), communicates a survivant future that places queer Indigenous resurgence in solidarity with cosmic and natural forces. New worlds emerge from their iridescent lettering, which urges the disruption of colonial simulations through community care, love, and solidarity with nature. Simulation is generative when redeployed by **Kite and Devin Ronneberg** (Oglala Lakota and Kanaka Maoli/Okinawan descent) in their new interactive multimedia installation *Fever Dream* (2021). In response to the audience's proximity, a CRT TV flips between channels tuned in to settler conspiracies rooted in the denial of Indigenous agency and futurity—such as the idea of “ancient aliens” being responsible for the building of Indigenous monuments. Footage of UFO sightings, space cults, and military-science Youtube theorists intermingle with press briefings on the oppression of “illegal aliens” (the dismissal of migrant rights at the border), uranium mining on Indigenous territory, and nuclear fears. GPT-2 generated text, built from a curated library, serves as subtitles that draw the viewer in, describing that to break through colonial biases one must first break into the conspiracies and mythologies deep in the settler psyche.

The land acknowledgement printed as an epigraph on this press release signals a commitment to reframing decolonial practice as embedded and significant. This land acknowledgement is not a symbol of redemption, but a starting point, a commitment and a call for action, that will lead and inform Project Space's season exploring and activating *Bright Futures* in the year ahead.

EVENTS

Virtual Opening: Saturday, February 6, 2021, 7-9:00 PM EST, with a curatorial walkthrough, a live discussion with representatives of [Warriors of the Sunrise](#), and a DJ set by **Aerial (Devin Ronneberg)** and **DJ bb buffalo (Suzanne Kite)**. [Register Via Zoom](#).

Reading: Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 7:30-8:30 PM EST, with **Demian DinéYazhi'** and guest. This event is presented in collaboration with [apexart](#).

For the full schedule of public events, please see: efaproject.space/speculations-on-the-infrared

CURATOR BIO

Christopher Green is a writer and art historian based in New York. His research and writing focus on modern and contemporary Indigenous art and primitivisms of the historic and the neo-avant-garde. His criticism, essays, and reviews have appeared in *Aperture*, *Art in America*, *Frieze*, and the *Brooklyn Rail*, among other publications, and he has contributed catalog essays to the Heard Museum, New Museum, Artists Space, the James Gallery. His scholarly research has been published in *ARTMargins*, *Winterthur Portfolio*, *ab-Original*, and *BC Studies*, and in 2019 he co-edited issue 11 of *SHIFT: Graduate Journal of Visual and Material Culture* "BLOOD AND EARTH AND SOIL." His research has been supported by the Dedalus Foundation, the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Museum of the American Indian, the International Council for Canadian Studies, the Sealaska Heritage Institute, Lost & Found: The CUNY Poetics Document Initiative, and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. He holds a PhD from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and currently serves as Visiting Assistant Professor of art history at the University of North Texas.

ARTIST BIOS

Demian DinéYazhi' (born 1983) is a Portland-based Diné transdisciplinary artist, poet, and curator born to the clans Naasht'ézhí Tábaqáhá (Zuni Clan Water's Edge) & Tódich'í'nií (Bitter Water). Their practice is a regurgitation of purported Decolonial praxis informed by the over accumulative, exploitative, and supremacist nature of hetero cisgender communities post colonization. They are a survivor of attempted european genocide, forced assimilation, manipulation, sexual and gender violence, capitalist sabotage, and hypermarginalization in a colonized country that refuses to center its politics and philosophies around the Indigenous Peoples whose Land they occupies and refuses

to rightfully give back. They live and work in a post-post-apocalyptic world unafraid to fail.

@heterogeneoushomosexual

Nicholas Galanin (b. 1979) Tlingit/Unangax̄/Multi-Disciplinary Artist Nicholas Galanin's work engages contemporary culture from his perspective rooted in connection to land. He embeds incisive observation into his work, investigating intersections of culture and concept in form, image and sound. Galanin's works embody critical thought as vessels of knowledge, culture and technology - inherently political, generous, unflinching, and poetic. Galanin engages past, present and future to expose intentionally obscured collective memory and barriers to the acquisition of knowledge. His works critique commodification of culture, while contributing to the continuum of Tlingit art. Galanin employs materials and processes that expand dialogue on Indigenous artistic production, and how culture can be carried. His work is in numerous public and private collections and exhibited worldwide. Galanin apprenticed with master carvers, earned his BFA at London Guildhall University, and his MFA at Massey University, he lives and works with his family in Sitka, Alaska.

Kite aka Suzanne Kite is an Oglala Lakota performance artist, visual artist, and composer raised in Southern California, with an MFA from Bard College's Milton Avery Graduate School, and is a PhD candidate at Concordia University, Research Assistant for the Initiative for Indigenous Futures, and a 2019 Trudeau Scholar. Her research is concerned with contemporary Lakota ontologies through research-creation, computational media, and performance practice. Recently, Kite has been developing a body interface for movement performances, carbon fiber sculptures, immersive video & sound installations. **Devin Ronneberg** is a multidisciplinary artist born, raised, and living in Los Angeles, working primarily in sculpture, sound, image-making, networking, engineering, and computational media, his work is currently focused on the unseen implications of emergent technologies and artificial intelligence, information control and collection, and the radiation of invisible forces. Ronneberg's work has most recently exhibited at MoCNA, The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and *Imaginative 2019*. Ronneberg co-founded the Los Angeles underground imprint Private Selection Records, and produces, djs, and performs live under the Aerial moniker. He holds a BFA in music technology from California Institute of the Arts and is an experimental aircraft designer / builder at Berkut Engineering.

New Red Order (NRO) is a public secret society with a rotating and expanding cast, facilitated by core contributors Adam Khalil, Zack Khalil, and Jackson Polys. Working with an interdisciplinary network of Informants, the NRO co-produces video, performance, and installation works that confront desires for Indigeneity and obstacles to Indigenous growth and agency. New Red Order

has exhibited work at the Whitney Biennial 2019; Toronto Biennial 2019; Artists Space; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; and Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; among other institutions.

Alan Michelson is an internationally recognized New York-based artist, curator, writer, lecturer and Mohawk member of the Six Nations of the Grand River. For over thirty years, he has been a leading practitioner of a socially engaged, critically aware, site-specific art grounded in local context and informed by the retrieval of repressed histories. Recent exhibitions include *Wolf Nation*, Whitney Museum of American Art, Volume 0, *Zuecca Projects*, Venice, and *Citizenship: A Practice of Society*, MCA Denver. His work is in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the National Gallery of Canada, the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, and the Art Gallery of Ontario. His essays have recently appeared in *Frieze* and *October*. Public art is also part of his diverse practice, and *Mantle*, his large-scale monument honoring Virginia's Indian nations was dedicated at the capitol in Richmond in 2018. Michelson is co-founder and co-curator, with the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School, of the groundbreaking *Indigenous New York* series.

Unicorn Riot is a decentralized, educational 501(c)(3) non-profit media organization of artists and journalists. Their work is dedicated to exposing root causes of dynamic social and environmental issues through amplifying stories and exploring sustainable alternatives in today's globalized world. Born from the Internet in 2015, their commercial-free platform operates non-hierarchically, independent of corporate or government control. Unicorn Riot spans across multiple cities including Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Durban, South Africa.

Haisla artist **Lyle Wilson** was born in 1955 in the community of Kitamaat Village. The name Kitamaat means "People of the Snow," and Lyle's exposure to his cultural roots nurtured a conscious appreciation of Haisla art and its importance in his cultural traditions. He attended the University of British Columbia and Emily Carr College of Art and Design, from which he graduated with a diploma in printmaking in 1986. Lyle's graphic works have since been exhibited broadly in Canada and the United States. In 1987, Lyle collaborated with the UBC Museum of Anthropology's graphic designer, Bill McLennan, on the image-recovery project *The Transforming Image*. He was subsequently involved in the Native Longhouse Project, for which six longhouses, representing six different tribal groups and designed to respect historical architectural forms, were installed in the Grand Hall of the Canadian Museum of History (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization). In the decades since then, Lyle has continued to create stunning works of art inspired by his cultural heritage. He has since expanded his repertoire to include wood carvings and jewelry. Lyle also

became the first Northwest Coast artist to have his work collected by the Canada Council Art Bank Collection in Ottawa, Ontario. Today Lyle's work can be found in prominent public, corporate, and private collections in Canada, Europe, and Asia.

ABOUT BRIGHT FUTURES

Project Space's 2021 programming season is dedicated to [*Bright Futures*](#), envisioning a radical push for transparency, equality, and justice through exhibitions and artist projects that grapple with key political and social issues including racial capitalism, digital surveillance, mobility and access, gender, toxic masculinity, transition, multi-species repair, and ecological crisis. After a year of forced reckoning with America's broken healthcare systems, the plague of systemic racism and violence, and deep class and gender divides, Bright Futures will connect the work of artists and communities that are united in sparking action and dialogue for changemaking. Taking a prompt from the conceptual frameworks of artist (and Project Space advisor) Lukaza Branfman-Verissimo, Bright Futures counters the current mood of political, social, and ecological despair. Expanding outward from Project Space's renewed mission, the 2021 season will spotlight art that is community-based and future-looking, revealing contemporary practices that engage with technology and society, politics and poetics, and fuse belief and praxis in the promise of a better world.

PRESS INQUIRIES

Judy Giera, Program Manager
EFA Project Space Program
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EFA Project Space, launched in September 2008 as a program of **The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts**, is a collaborative, cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it, the communities that arise because of it, and to everyday life; and that by providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501(c)(3) public charity. Through its three core programs, **EFA Studios**, **EFA Project Space**, and **EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop**, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. EFA is a catalyst for cultural growth, stimulating new interactions between artists, creative communities, and the public. www.efanyc.org

EFA Project Space has received public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lower

Manhattan Cultural Council, as well as from generous individuals in our community. EFA Project Space's SHIFT: A Residency for Arts Workers is supported by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF).

ACCESS INFORMATION AND COVID-19

Online reservations are required at least 24 hours in advance of your visit, via efaproject.space/reservations. Reservation slots of 30 minutes each can be made for parties of up to 3 people at a time. *Note that masks are required to view the exhibition and must be worn at all times.*

EFA Project Space is located on the second floor of 323 West 39th Street. It is accessible via an elevator (whose door width is 32" and car width is 65") or two flights of stairs. At the building's ground-level front desk, you will be asked to sign in with your name but not to provide ID.

The exhibition is free. Chairs with backs are available to guests upon request by speaking to a gallery attendant. There are two non-gender-segregated bathrooms on the building's third floor, accessible via the elevators, outside the Project Space. The bathrooms are cleaned twice daily. One bathroom is wide and long enough to accommodate a wheelchair; the other cannot. Neither bathroom has grab bars. Though we cannot guarantee a scent-free space, we ask that all guests, who are able, to attend the exhibition fragrance-free, out of consideration for guests with chemical sensitivities. Fragrance-free soap is available in the restrooms on the third floor.

For the health and safety of our staff and the general public, the exhibition is only open by appointment. You can schedule an appointment to visit [here](#), where you will learn more about EFA's Covid-19 safety measures.

Key material and financial support for *Speculations on the Infrared* provided by Peter Blum Gallery, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.



A Program of The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
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