

# MELISSA MELERO-MOOSE

**MELISSA MELERO-MOOSE** (Fallon Paiute-Modoc) is a mixed-media visual artist, curator, writer, mother, and founder of the art collective Great Basin Native Artists (GBNA) in Reno, Nevada. She resides in Hungry Valley, Nevada, on the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. Melero-Moose has a BFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts and a bachelor of science from Portland State University in Oregon, with artist fellowships from the School for Advanced Research, SWAIA, and the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian.

Melero-Moose's artwork integrates organic materials found in her home of the Great Basin high desert (such as willows, pinenuts, and cattails) and her interpretation of the Paiute and Modoc cultures and landscape. Her goals for the GBNA collective is to generate awareness of Native arts in the Nevada and California regions, create opportunities for Native artists in the region with exhibits and workshops for the business of art, and develop a useful directory to connect artists with their community and the public.



Melissa Melero-Moose. Photo: Garret Vreeland.



Maidu Museum and Historic Site, Roseville, California. All images courtesy of the author.

**ABOVE.** Just outside of Sacramento, California, the **Maidu Museum and Historic Site** is a key venue that has been exhibiting California Native arts for the past seven years. The historic site is located in the suburban sprawl of Roseville on 35 acres that were once Nisenan Maidu tribal lands. The museum offers tours of numerous petroglyphs on sandstone boulders, hundreds of bedrock mortar holes, as well as plentiful indigenous flora and fauna. The upper level of the museum building, inspired by round houses, is the Indigenous Art Gallery, where changing exhibits have included notable Native artists like Jean LaMarr (Paiute-Achomawi), Frank LaPena (Nomtipom Maidu-Wintu), Judith Lowry (Maidu-Hammawi-Washoe),

and Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie (Navajo-Seminole-Muscogee), all of whom are either from or reside in California.

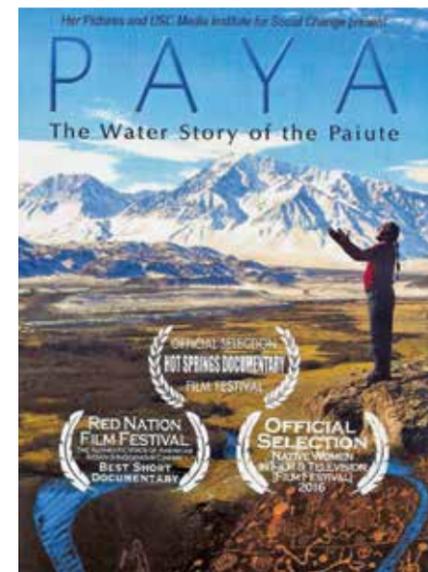
**BELOW.** Did you ever wonder how a city as big as Los Angeles gets their fresh water? The story of one of America's oldest water wars is told in the documentary *Paya: The Water Story of the Paiute*. The film reveals the previously untold story of the water disputes between the Owens Valley Paiute and the city of Los Angeles. Produced and directed by Jenna Cavelle with interviews by Harry Williams, Alan Bacock, Teri Red Owl, and Kathy Bancroft (all Paiute). payathemovie.com

Visual artist, organizer, and activist **Fawn Douglas** (Las Vegas Paiute) is a constant force in southern Nevada. She advocates for the need to change Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day, "Change the Mascot" campaign, the "We Stand with Standing Rock Rally," and she was pivotal in the recent National Monument status of the sacred site of Gold Butte. fawnart.org

**Alicia Maria Siu** (Pipil) painter and muralist, is currently partnering with the 13 bands of the Kumeyaay

Tribes and their Native youth programs to paint murals on the new cultural center in San Diego, CA. aliciasiu.com

**CENTER.** The **C. N. Gorman Museum** on the University of California, Davis, campus is exhibiting the *Great Basin Native Artists: Contemporary Indigenous Women Painters* featuring Karma Henry (Fort Independence Paiute), Topaz



*Paya: The Water Story of the Paiute*, a documentary directed by Jenna Cavelle.

Jones (Shoshone-Lummi-Kalapuya-Molalla), and Jaune Quick-To-See Smith (Sqelix'u-Métis-Shoshone), and myself. The exhibit will run through June 16, 2017. Girl Power! gormanmuseum.ucdavis.edu

**NORTH.** The film, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, based on Kent Nerburn's 1994 novel of the same name, opened in select theaters this past February. Directed by Steven Lewis Simpson and starring David Bald Eagle (Cheyenne River Lakota, 1919–2006), Richard Ray Whitman (Yuchi-Muscogee), and Zahn McClarnon (Standing Rock Sioux), the film will have limited showings throughout the country, but you can lobby for it to be in your area. facebook.com/neitherwolfnordog

**EAST. Crossroads: Art + Native Feminisms**, hosted by The Feminist Art Project (TFAP), was a day of discussions at the College Art Association annual conference in February at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City. Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (visual artist) and symposium chairs Maria Hupfield (Wasauksing Ojibwe performance artist) and Kat Griefen (lecturer at Rutgers University and art dealer) worked for more than a year to host all-Native, woman artist panels for the event. Panelists included Carly Feddersen (Okanagan-Sinixt), Ryan Elizabeth Feddersen (Okanagan-Sinixt), Grace Rosario Perkins (Navajo-Akimel O'odham) of the Black Salt Collective, Charlene Teters (Spokane), Gloria and Muriel Miguel (both Guna-Rappahonack) of Spiderwoman Theater, and Quick-to-See Smith, who was the keynote speaker. feministartproject.rutgers.edu

**SOUTH.** The 59th annual **Heard Indian Fair & Market** took place in Phoenix in March, with great weather and a reunion of hundreds of Native artists exhibiting their wares. Besides having a blast passing out copies of FAAM at our booth this year, my highlights were the Friday night fashion show where Acoma fashion



Loren Aragon, *Broken Ground Collection*, 2016, custom printed silk charmeuse, silk taffeta, silk organza, cotton sateen.

designer **Loren Aragon** showcased his flair for contemporary fashion and jewelry design (aconav.com). **Heidi BigKnife** (Shawnee) of BigKnife Designs, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, had a booth showing silver jewelry with a unique twist (bigknifedesigns.com).

**Leah Mata** (Chumash) displayed her exquisite Indigenous Californian jewelry with abalone and pine nuts and her Chumash regalia (leahmata.com).

**WEST.** The Bay Area's **Black Salt Collective** is an all-women of color art group consisting of Sarah Biscara-Dilley (Chumash-Chicana), Grace Rosario Perkins (Navajo-Akimel O'odham), Anna Luisa Petrisko, and Adee Roberson. An Art Matters grantee, Black Salt Collective has exhibited their collaborative work in six countries and recently curated *Visions into Infinite Archives*, an exhibit with more than 30 artists at SOMArts in San Francisco.

Biscara-Dilley says, "Our work as a collective highlights collaboration, shared experience, but also the ways that our experiences as black, brown, and Indigenous women are distinct; varying but bound up in each other by ongoing colonial processes and, beyond that, the ways our communities have always been connected through travel, shared narrative, art, prayer." Look for their forthcoming book to be published by E. M. Wolfman this summer! blacksaltcollective.tumblr.com



**Black Salt Collective**, San Francisco, California. LEFT to RIGHT: Sarah Biscara-Dilley (Chumash-Chicana), Adee Roberson, Grace Rosario Perkins (Navajo-Akimel O'odham), and Anna Luisa Petrisko. Photo: Texas Isaiah Horatio-Valenzuela.