

These Bodies Belong

Highlights

- Indigenous women's bodies and their connection to the landscape
- Mobile and Outdoors
- Awareness to Murdered and Missing Indigenous women

Exploring how **Indigenous women's bodies** connect to their **landscapes**, These Bodies Belong, will feature large scale public art in order to **reclaim a safe space** for Indigenous women.

The exhibition starting in Colorado Springs and traveling to each **artist's home town** will reach a wide audience across the Southwest bringing attention to the current epidemic of **murdered and missing Indigenous women**.

Viewers are encouraged to visit the exhibition at **night** when the sculptures will be illuminated and the mural will be projected.

THEME

Reading

“Aesthetics of Survivance”
- Gerald Vizenor

The exhibition focuses on art that represents Indigenous women’s bodies and how those bodies connect to their landscapes.

- The art placed in public spaces is symbolic of Indigenous women reclaiming their space.
- Viewers should acknowledge the value of Indigenous women’s lives.
- Walk away understanding the current epidemic but also see the joy and power in Indigenous women’s lives.

ARTISTS



Melanie Yazzie

Gregg Deal



Roxanne Swentzell

Ana Mendieta





Grandmother



Take Back the Power



Anima (Alma/Soul)



Mud Woman Rolls On

Collaboration/Approach

- ❑ All worked on the Curatorial Plan
- ❑ Divided up the remaining assignments
- ❑ Met on zoom to discuss our vision for each element

Challenges

- ★ Multiple artists to choose from
- ★ Landing on a theme: broad vs. specific
- ★ Not being involved in every step fully

Benefits

- ❖ Having a variety of perspectives
- ❖ Not being stuck on one path
- ❖ Different skill sets

CLARA MARTINEZ DUNBAR

MAGDALENA DVOŘÁKOVÁ

ADDI SCHWIETERMAN

SYLVIA CUMMINGS

SOFIE MILLER

***INDIGENOUS ARTISTS OF
THE SOUTHWEST
&
THE REPRESENTATION OF
INDIGENOUS WOMEN***

10x higher than

**A human
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84%

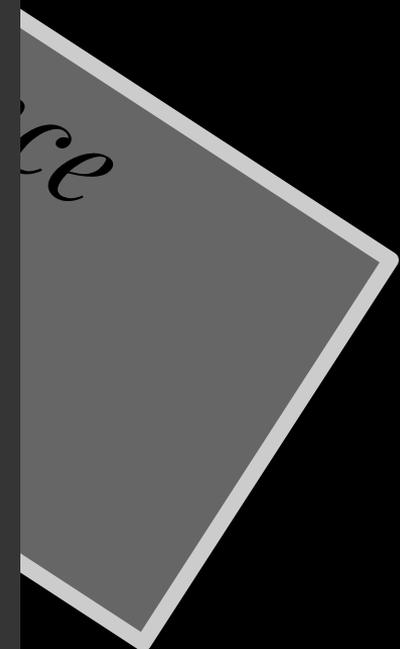
OF
**NATIVE
WOMEN**

**have experienced violence in
their lifetime.**

SOURCE: National Institute of Justice

#NotInvisible

murdered at rate



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ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

These Bodies Belong aims to explore the connection Indigenous women have to their landscapes, and how that has been represented through art. Through these pieces, These Bodies Belong, reclaims public space for Indigenous women.

Starting in Colorado Springs, then traveling to each artist's hometown, this exhibition will reach a wide audience across the Southwest in order to bring attention to the current epidemic of murdered and missing Indigenous women. Featuring large scale public work ensures the exhibition is accessible to all and will be seen by many.

As the show moves across each hometown the mural is projected and only become visible at night. We encourage viewers to visit the exhibition at night in order to see the full collection of works.

ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

INSPIRED AND INSPIRING

“SO I REMEMBER, YOU KNOW, BEING A LITTLE GIRL, AND I'D GET SOME OF MY MOTHER'S CLAY, AND I'D BE FRUSTRATED BECAUSE I COULDN'T GET THEM TO UNDERSTAND WHAT I WAS SAYING. AND I'D QUICKLY MAKE A FIGURE THAT WAS REPRESENTING ME. BUT IT WOULD SHOW WHAT I WAS FEELING OR WHAT I WAS SEEING OR WHATEVER IT WAS. AND THEN I'D GIVE IT TO HER. AND THAT WAS HOW I BEGAN.” - **Roxanne Swentzell**



“I HAVE BEEN CARRYING ON A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE LANDSCAPE AND THE FEMALE BODY (BASED ON MY OWN SILHOUETTE) I AM OVERWHELMED BY THE FEELING OF HAVING BEEN CAST FROM THE WOMB (NATURE). THROUGH MY EARTH/BODY SCULPTURES I BECOME ONE WITH THE EARTH I BECOME AN EXTENSION OF NATURE AND NATURE BECOMES AN EXTENSION OF MY BODY.”

- **Ana Mendieta**

“I THINK IT IS ABOUT SEIZING MOMENTS AND SORT OF BEING BOLD AND UNAPOLOGETIC ABOUT THINGS. I'M AN ARTIST WHO JUST HAPPENS TO BE NATIVE. MY WORK ISN'T FORMED BY MY IDENTITY BUT RATHER BY HOW I GREW UP AND THE COMMUNITY THAT I BELONG TO.”

- **Gregg Deal**



Melanie Yazzie-
Grandmother

This sculpture inserts itself unapologetically into space, making room for conversation around indigenous women through Yazzie's background and the fluid, flowing forms which hint towards a feminine silhouette.



Gregg Deal-
Take Back the Power

Deal's 77 foot mural is located in Colorado Springs that calls attention to the multitude of missing and murdered Indigenous women. This mural was inspired by his daughter, the model, in the t-shirt of her favorite band and a red handprint over her mouth, silencing her.



Ana Mendieta-
Anima (Alma/Soul)

These works were comprised of a set of wood structures that resembled the outline of Mendieta's figure. These structures were set on fire in a clearing in Oaxaca, Mexico and photographed at dusk.

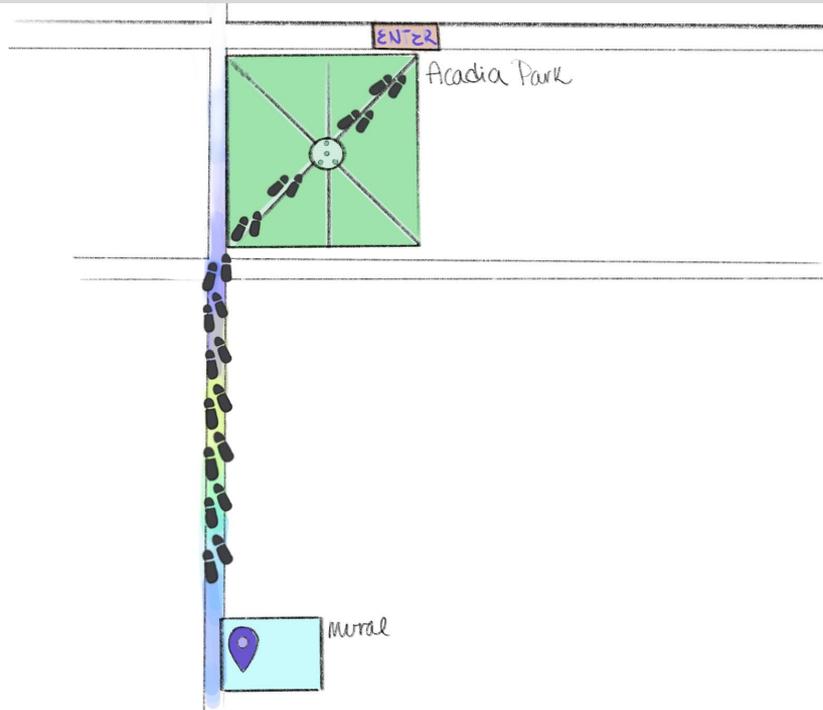


Roxanne Swentzell-
Mud Woman Rolls On

This sculpture depicts a larger mother figure holding smaller figures (her children). She relates this form the Pueblo storyteller and the practice of passing down knowledge through stories. The mud part is also important as it brings it back to the idea of origin, of Mother Earth.

Where will the Exhibit be?

What will it look like?



Where? Arcadia Park in downtown Colorado Springs. We came to this decision because it is a public and accessible space.

We are also planning on making this a mobile exhibit, taking it to each of the artists hometowns. Deal's Mural will be transported via projection. However, for this exhibition layout we all decided it would be easier to visualize if it was in a place we all were familiar with.

Why? This placement gives the viewers in person access to Gregg Deal's mural and a great public area to showcase the other sculptures.

In the pictures you can see that the sidewalks are colorful, this path leads the visitors through the exhibit in Arcadia Park and to Gregg Deal's Mural.

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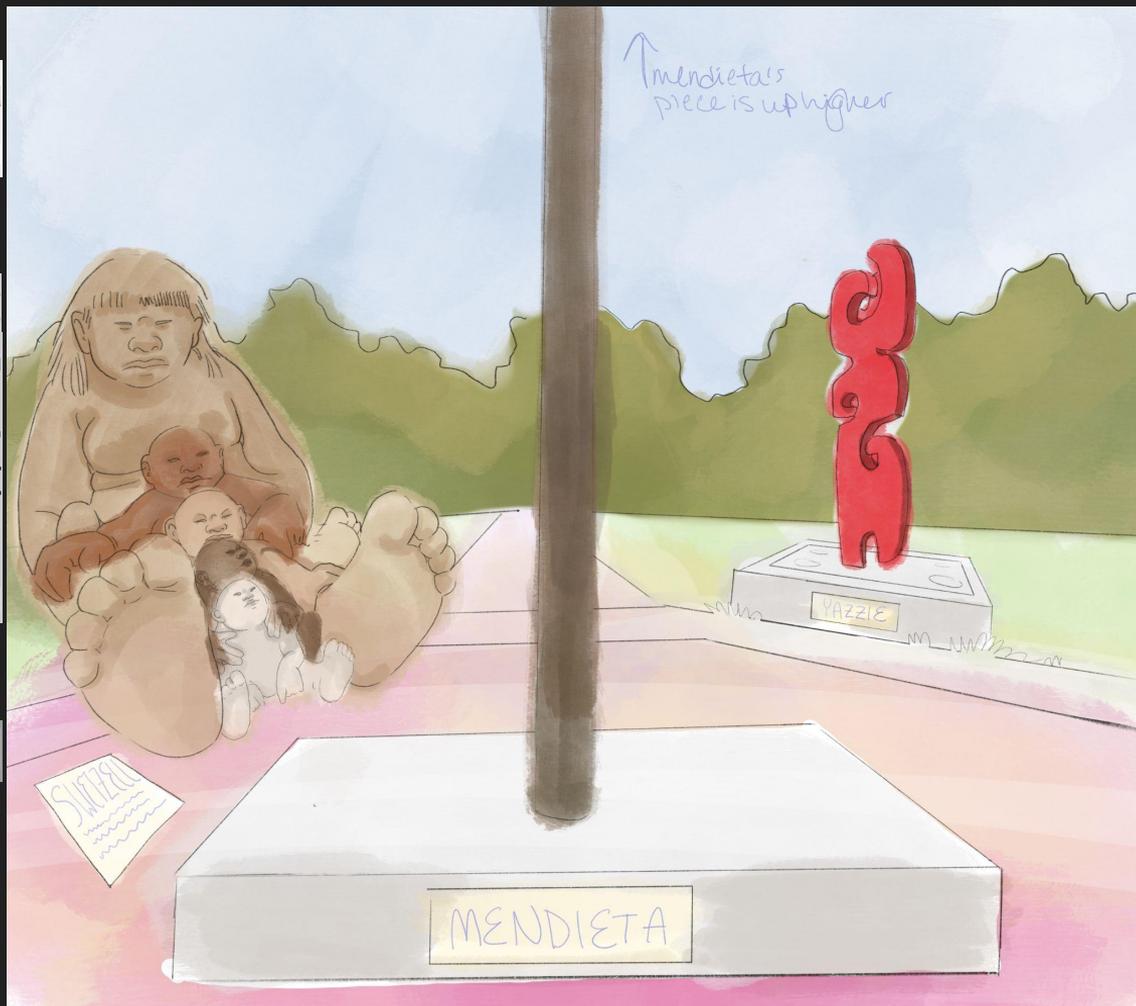


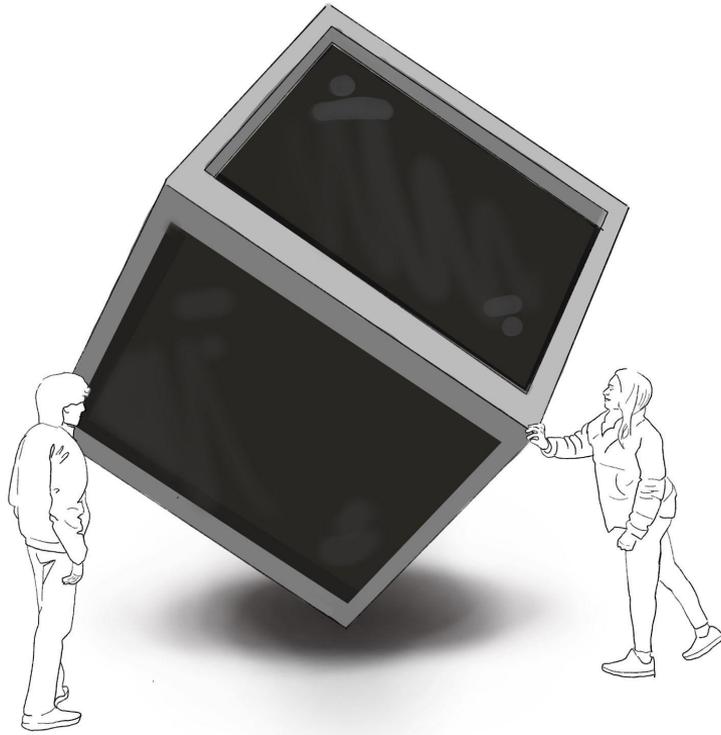
The sculptures will be placed in a staggered circle in the middle of Arcadia Park (seen in last slide).

We all agreed that these pieces did not have to be viewed in a particular order, so we did not want to create a hierarchy. When you enter the park we thought it would be helpful to have an informational panel for the exhibit with our publication available for people to take.

Each piece will have a brief label placed near it as well.

VISUALS!





We had to adjust Mendieta's piece last minute due to ethical concerns in recreating her art. Our idea is to show her work on a cube with each of its four sides installed with large tv screen-like technology. Since Mendieta's work is only preserved in photographs this would be a weather proof way to effectively show her sculptures as a large scale. Below the photographs we will include in this installation. We also decided to include a photo of Mendieta as there are only five documented photos of this art piece and we thought it would be a nice tribute to her. This was the biggest challenge we came across in figuring out how to display the artwork.



Melanie Yazzie

American, Diné (Navajo) (b. 1966)

Grandmother

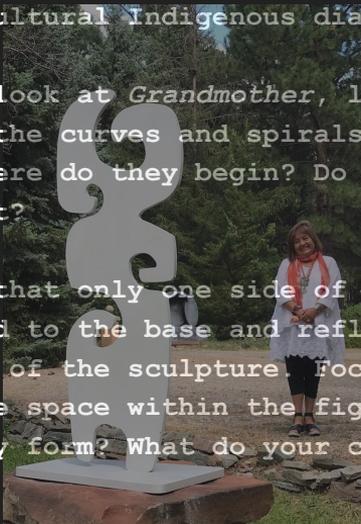
2018

Aluminum sculpture

Melanie Yazzie is a sculptor, painter, and printmaker who centers her Diné (Navajo) heritage in her work. Yazzie references Indigenous matrilineal systems and emphasizes storytelling in her multi-media, multi-layered art. Yazzie seeks to assert contemporary Indigenous presence and promote cross-cultural Indigenous dialogue.

As you look at *Grandmother*, let your eyes follow the curves and spirals. Where do they end? Where do they begin? Do you see movement?

Notice that only one side of the sculpture is anchored to the base and reflect upon the balance of the sculpture. Focus on the negative space within the figure. Do you see a bodily form? What do your companions see?



Gregg Deal

American, Pyramid Lake Paiute (b. 1975)

Take Back the Power

2020

Spray paint on brick

Gregg Deal is a performance artist and activist whose paintings, murals, films, photography and installation art confront and dismantle Indigenous stereotypes, erasure, and cultural appropriation.

Take Back the Power stands at 77 feet in downtown Colorado Springs and is easily visible from blocks around as Deal aims to raise awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit. The red handprint references this silent epidemic.

Sage, Gregg Deal's daughter and an up-and-coming artist, served as the model for this mural. Deal portrays Indigenous divinity and emphasizes the contemporary presence of Indigenous peoples. Notice the model's t-shirt which references a ska punk band. Find the lightning bolt and take note of the subject's earring. What do you see in her expression?



Roxanne Swentzell

American, Santa Clara Pueblo (b. 1962)

Mud Woman Rolls On

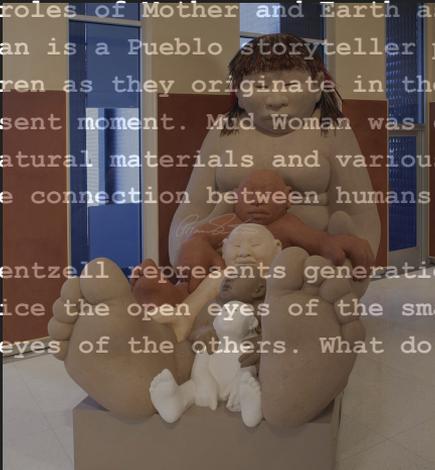
2011

Unfired and fired clay, plant fiber

Roxanne Swentzell is a sculptor who predominantly creates full-length clay and bronze figures which aim to reconnect viewers to their environments, each other, and their own emotions. Swentzell comes from a family of potters and sculptors, and her work is firmly grounded in her Pueblo identity.

As in much of her work, Swentzell celebrates the female body in *Mud Woman Rolls On*. Swentzell explores the interconnected roles of Mother and Earth as nurturing forces. Mud Woman is a Pueblo storyteller portrayed here with four children as they originate in the Earth and live in our present moment. Mud Woman was created entirely from natural materials and various colors of mud to emphasize the connection between humans and the Earth.

Consider how Swentzell represents generations and motherhood. Notice the open eyes of the smallest figure and the closed eyes of the others. What do their postures say to you?



Ana Mendieta

Cuban-American (b. 1948-1985)

Anima (Alma/Soul)

1976

Chromogenic print

Ana Mendieta was a Cuban-born sculptor and performance artist who worked in film, photography, sculpture, and drawing to portray abstract feminine forms as bodily traces on the environment. *Anima* is part of Mendieta's *Siluetas* series which centers around the female body, the impermanence of bodies, and their connections to nature.

Anima (Alma/Soul) was created in Oaxaca, Mexico using fireworks to ignite wooden effigies modelled after Mendieta's body. The flames assert feminine presence and power in the night and are frozen in photographs even as the figure burned to ash in creation.

Notice the movement created by wind and fire. Consider the posture of the figure with her arms raised and legs together. What does the figure's posture convey to you?



CURATORIAL

E A M



Sylvia Cummings



Clara Martinez Dunbar

Addi Schwieterman



Magdalena Dvořáková



Sofie Miller

Citations

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Ana Mendieta:

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