

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART AND INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES AT UCSC TO PRESENT *SKY HOPINKA: SEEING AND SEEN*
OPENING NOVEMBER 4, 2022



For Immediate Release

San José, California (October 26, 2022) — The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) and Institute of Arts and Sciences at UC Santa Cruz (IAS) present the works of Sky Hopinka, a 2022 MacArthur fellow and member of the Ho-Chunk Nation and descendant of the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians. *Seeing and Seen* brings together existing artworks and a new video commission exploring the relationships between the histories of incarceration and settler colonialism in the United States—as well as the ongoing resistance of Indigenous communities. *Seeing and Seen* opens at SJMA on November 4 and be on view through June 9, 2023. The exhibition opens January 16 at the new Institute of the Arts and Sciences galleries, located in the city of Santa Cruz and will be on view through March 26.

In the newly commissioned video *Sunflower Siege Engine*, on view at SJMA, Hopinka combines experimental filmmaking techniques and documentary footage in an intimate meditation on land, self, and freedom. Poetic, kaleidoscopic visuals of rugged forests and coastline are punctuated by footage from the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz, a 19-month-long protest during which a group of Native Americans and their supporters reclaimed the San Francisco Bay island and former federal penitentiary. Describing similarities between the prison and an Indian reservation, protest leader Richard Oakes calls out the transformative potential in recognizing Alcatraz as “Indian Land” instead of as a carceral landscape. Oakes’ words combine with Hopinka’s colorful and vibrant imagery to embody the liberatory potential of an indigenous worldview—always present though not always recognized—amid the ongoing and restless struggle towards freedom.

“Art impacts us in a way that is different from didactics and statistics. Hopinka’s visually striking and linguistically rich work embodies an indigenous worldview that isn’t defined by settler colonial history. It shows us a different present,” shared Lauren Schell Dickens, senior curator, SJMA. “We are thrilled to partner with the Institute of the Arts and Sciences to bring this visionary new commission by Hopinka to the Bay Area.”

Cloudless Blue Egress of Summer, 2019, will be one highlight of the exhibition at UC Santa Cruz. This video focuses on the fraught history of Fort Marion in Florida. Fort Marion served as a prison for Native peoples in the 1800s. It also is where Captain Richard Pratt developed his plan for native residential schools, along with his racist philosophy: "Kill the Indian in him, and save the man." Also on view will be *Dislocation Blues*, 2017—a video poetically documenting the Dakota Access Pipeline protests in 2016–17 and the photographic series “Breathings.”

“This multi-sited exhibition of Hopinka’s work is one of a series of exhibitions we are organizing with SJMA to raise awareness about issues of incarceration and to highlight the creative approaches artists take to offer alternatives,” said Rachel Nelson, director of IAS. “Hopinka’s work provides important critiques of US carceral history, and we hope the exhibition will create a platform for a broader discussion about the incarceration of Indigenous people in the United States.”

Sky Hopinka: Seeing and Seen is organized by Lauren Schell Dickens, Rachel Nelson, and Gina Dent as part of Visualizing Abolition, an art initiative of the Institute of the Arts and Sciences at University of California, Santa Cruz and San José Museum of Art. *Seeing and Seen* is the first in a series of commissions that will follow the group exhibition *Barring Freedom*, co-organized with Institute of the Arts and Sciences at UC Santa Cruz and on view at SJMA from October 30, 2020–April 25, 2021.

SKY HOPINKA

Sky Hopinka (Ho-Chunk Nation/Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians) was born and raised in Ferndale, Washington and spent a number of years in Palm Springs and Riverside, California; Portland, Oregon; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In Portland he studied and taught Chinuk Wawa, a language indigenous to the Lower Columbia River Basin. His video, photo, and text work centers around personal positions of Indigenous homeland and landscape, designs of language as containers of culture expressed through personal, documentary, and non-fiction forms of media.

His work has played at various festivals including Sundance, Toronto International Film Festival, Ann Arbor, Courtisane Festival, Punto de Vista, and the New York Film Festival. His work was a part of the 2017 Whitney Biennial, the 2018 FRONT Triennial and Prospect.5. He was a guest curator at the 2019 Whitney Biennial and participated in *Cosmopolis #2* at the Centre Pompidou. He had a solo exhibition at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, in 2020 and at LUMA Arles in Arles, France in 2022. He was awarded the Tom Berman Award for Most Promising Filmmaker at the 54th Ann Arbor Film Festival, and the New Cinema Award at the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival. He was a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University in 2018–19, a Sundance Art of Nonfiction Fellow for 2019, an Art Matters Fellow in 2019, a recipient

of a 2020 Alpert Award for Film/Video, a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow, and was a 2021 Forge Project Fellow.

SUPPORT

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

Located in the city of Santa Cruz, the Institute of the Arts and Sciences Galleries are a vital new arts hub for the region. As the keystone public galleries at UC Santa Cruz, the Institute of the Arts and Sciences presents a unique vision for the arts at the forefront of social transformation. Drawing on the resources of a leading research university, the world-class exhibitions at the IAS engage the most critical issues of our time, catalyzing meaningful encounters with the arts and ideas.

The Institute of the Arts and Sciences Galleries are located at 100 Panetta Avenue, in the westside of Santa Cruz. Opening January 16, 2023, the galleries will be free to the public and open Tuesday–Sunday 12pm–5pm.

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is a modern and contemporary art museum dedicated to inclusivity, new thinking, and visionary ideas. Founded in 1969 by artists and community leaders, its dynamic exhibitions, collection, and programs resonate with defining characteristics of San José and the Silicon Valley—from its rich diversity to its hallmark innovative ethos. The Museum offers lifelong learning for school children and their educators, multigenerational families, creative adults, university students and faculty, and community groups. SJMA is committed to being a borderless museum, essential to creative life throughout the diverse communities of San José and beyond.

SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California. The Museum is open Thursday 4–9pm; Friday 11am–9pm; and Saturday–Sunday 11am–6pm. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and free to members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and school teachers (with valid ID). Admission is free from 6–9pm on the first Friday of every month. For up-to-date information, call 408.271.6840 or visit SanJoseMuseumofArt.org.

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Image Credit:

Sky Hopinka, *Sunflower Siege Engine* (video still), 2022. Image courtesy of the artist.