Antikoni in a Settler Classroom on Kumeyaay Land: Storytelling "in the Meantime" to Imagine "Beyond" It

Julie Burelle with an epilogue by Beth Piatote

HAEMON
I see. Someday, with their full array, they might receive their rest.
And in the meantime?

KREON
My son, it is all meantime. We've been living in the meantime for 500 years.
In the meantime we do our best by the living.
—Beth Piatote, *Antikoni*

Beyond reflects decolonial possibilities through Indigenous relationality, land pedagogy, and accountability to place and Native Peoples. Land acknowledgments are not the end; they are a beginning and should lead to greater institutional responsibility.
—Theresa Stewart-Ambo and K. Wayne Yang, "Beyond Land Acknowledgment in Settler Institutions"

Prologue

Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson explains that relationality and relational accountability form the core of Indigenous processes (2008, 7) and that they can be put in practice by all and at all research stages (2021).[1] I thus begin this article by naming the artists/scholars with whom I have been in relation in this research process: Beth Piatote (Nez Perce), Theresa Stewart-Ambo (Luiseño/Tongva), K. Wayne Yang, as well as Dylan Robinson (Stó:lō), Shawn Wilson, Jill Carter (Ashkenazi-Anishinabe), Jade Power-Sotomayor, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Anishinabe). I am privileged to know some personally and I have encountered others (some of whom I name later) through their work alone. I am grateful to all. This article humbly enters in relation with the vital questions they pose respectively and collectively. It attempts to respond to their urgent invitation to relate otherwise, to go deeper than statements such as land acknowledgments (though they are critically important), and to tangibly participate in setting the stage for "beyond [the] settler present, beyond colonial sovereignty, and beyond the human" (Stewart-Ambo and Yang 2021, 27). To do so, these artists/scholars collectively request that we, visitors on Indigenous lands, whether settlers or "arrivants" (Byrd 2011, xix), develop ways of listening that are not extractive or driven by the

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insatiable, at times carnivorous, hunger that characterizes settler colonialism (Piatote 2022; Robinson 2020).[2] Importantly, they ask that we first situate ourselves in our own stories (Carter 2019, 186) and that we truly contend with the past and the present and confront the "white ignorance" (Mills 2007, 17) behind which some of us have had the luxury to hide for too long. They ask that we do so before we think of presenting ourselves as believable interlocutors and trustworthy co-conspirators in the radical reimagining of the structures that organize our living together.

Stewart-Ambo and Yang write: "Being a guest" on Indigenous lands "requires research and reflection. It means entering a relationship of reciprocity" (2021, 34). Without this sustained engagement, one is merely an "uninvited visitor" (34). I am currently such a visitor, living on the unceded territory of the Kumeyaay people and teaching at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), an institution with a fraught relationship with the Kumeyaay and with the other Indigenous communities for whom the region is home (Burelle 2015, 2019; Mitchell and Burelle 2016; Stewart-Ambo and Yang 2021). As a settler teacher, mindful of Stewart-Ambo and Yang's call for engagement, and because I am invested in participating in the *beyond* they name in their work, I see my classes as spaces where we must unwaveringly engage settler colonial history—our collective and ongoing history; what Kreon in the epigraph drawn from Beth Piatote's play *Antikoni*, calls "the meantime" (Piatote 2022, 19)—so that it might lead to reckonings. According to Jill Carter, such reckonings are necessary to usher in "a relational shift"; that is, a radically different form of relationality between visitors and Indigenous peoples (Carter 2019, 186).

This article documents an attempt at a small reckoning through the mobilization of a ten-week undergraduate course entitled Indigenous Theatre and Performance as a possible way to listen to, reflect on, and begin to respond to Indigenous voices invested in thinking *beyond*. I taught the course in 2021 (remotely on Zoom) and in 2023 (in person), and this article focuses on the sustained collaboration between the students, myself, and author Beth Piatote, whose play *Antikoni*, an adaptation of Sophocles's *Antigone* from a Nez Perce perspective, was central to the course's two iterations.[3] This article meditates in particular on the research and reflection that led these two groups of students as well as me into a deeper and more reciprocal embodied relationship—the beginning, perhaps, of a reckoning and relational turn—with *Antikoni* and its author, but also with UCSD and its history on Kumeyaay land. This article reflects on being entrusted with a story as a way to activate settler accountability. It documents how the students and I chose to reciprocate this gift by preparing and performing two staged readings (on Zoom in 2021 and in person in 2023). Producing this staged reading in a classroom composed of mostly non-Indigenous actors raised important questions and led to complex conversations about appropriation and casting. These frank and vulnerable exchanges provided some tentative ethical guidelines about the specific contexts in which it may be possible to amplify without appropriating a story intended for Indigenous actors. Finally, this article meditates on whether this experience can extend beyond the classroom and the heightened emotional rewards of performance to participate in lasting transformative work among the campus community.

Building Relationality and Reciprocity

Before I dive into an analysis of the two staged readings, I provide here, in consultation with Beth Piatote (who also pens an epilogue to this article), a summary of how this project came to be. In 2018, a group of colleagues and I hosted "Sensory Encounters: A Conversation with Drs. Beth Piatote and Dylan Robinson" in the Department of Theatre and Dance's Arthur Wagner Theatre,

where the staged reading of *Antikoni* would, in a lovely circular return, take place five years later.[4] There, Piatote and Robinson spoke about the formal experimentations included in their respective book projects and how these worked to unsettle Western ways of doing scholarship. Robinson explained, for instance, why a portion of the introduction to his book *Hungry Listening* would be for Indigenous eyes only, following Stó:lō protocols about the conditions through which knowledge is transmitted. For her part, Beth Piatote spoke of her then-upcoming book *The Beadworkers: Stories* (2019), in which short stories would act (as they always have, she reminded us) as sites and modes of theorization. One of the stories, titled *Antikoni*, would, for instance, challenge readers to reflect on the repatriation of ancestors and the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) through the prism of a Nez Perce adaptation of Sophocles's *Antigone*.[5] As a dramaturg and performance studies scholar, I was immediately intrigued. Over dinner that day, Beth (we moved to first names) and I talked about a possible staged reading of *Antikoni* at her institution, UC Berkeley, situated on unceded Ohlone territory and infamous for its own dealing with NAGPRA regarding the university's extensive inventory of captive ancestors. Beth was still thinking through various options: What if the staged reading took place in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum, acting as a form of land acknowledgment, a reclaiming gesture at the epicentre of this violent accumulation? How might it be received by those in attendance (and by those who would choose not to come)? Would it add to the trauma felt by Indigenous communities on and around the campus? And/or, what healing effect might the play have on the attendees, but also on the museum's silent but certainly not inert residents—the ancestors—and on the land and structures that hold them? What comfort might it bring them to know that they are not forgotten?

At Beth's invitation, I attended the staged reading at UC Berkeley directed in 2018 by Jennif(f)er Tamayo and embodied by a splendid cast of many Indigenous actors.[6] In the end, as Beth will later explain, the reading was held in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum amid artifacts that felt un-silenced in the process. The evening began with drumming that gave the play its heartbeat. The actors delivered an *Antikoni* full of classic stories from Nez Perce literature in which humans and other-than-humans ushered in the cycle of the Sun and the Moon or were overtaken by carnivorous desires that served as a warning to those hungry for power. As Kreon and Antikoni clashed about the ethical choices forced upon them by living in the settler colonial meantime, a chorus of strong matriarchs, the Aunties, told us, with palpable delight, of "Pissing Boy" and "Coyote," who faced similar choices in the time before the humans arrived. The staged reading revealed where the text was deeply resonant and where it needed further attention. Importantly, it made clear that *Antikoni*, the story as a living entity, required care and embodiment to fully unfold.

I continued to think about *Antikoni* long after my trip to Berkeley and, in 2021, knowing that Beth had submitted the play to various outlets for further development, I approached her with the idea of having students enrolled in my upcoming class on Indigenous theatre and performance read the play's newest draft in conversation with writings and performance pieces about NAGPRA.[7] Upon reaching out, I learned that Beth had momentarily set the play aside after several workshops and rounds of dramaturgical notes that led to a major overhaul. After consulting with my students, I asked Beth if a staged reading might be useful at this point: could our class serve as a low-stakes lab where Beth could perhaps reconnect with the original inspiration that led her to write this text? Could we lend our voices to the play (whichever version Beth chose), speak the characters' words aloud and in doing so, allow her, perhaps, to hear her work anew? What if we then held space for a discussion where Beth could react, ask questions, and test ideas? This felt like a tangible and hopefully useful way to reciprocate, to offer something in return for the gift of her play. It also felt

like a way for students to begin the research process that Stewart-Ambo and Yang describe as a prerequisite for all visitors on Indigenous lands. Beth was generously enthusiastic and shared the play's most recent iteration, which was indeed quite different in form while still attending to the same themes and elements from the version I had witnessed at the Hearst Museum. She indicated that hearing the play out loud would be useful in calibrating the heightened language that remained from the original adaptation with the new contemporary form developed through various workshops.

We agreed that the staged reading would be our class's final project, directed remotely (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) by Desmond Hassing (Choctaw), a then doctoral candidate in our department with many years of theatre experience. Beth would meet students over Zoom during the quarter to chat about her process and about the play's structure and themes, and we would communicate questions and share discoveries and student writings about the play along the way. The first staged reading took place on Zoom in June of 2021 with attendees from our department and campus as well as from various locations across Turtle Island who offered questions and feedback. Artfully stage-managed by Emmajo Spencer and Madeline Woch, two undergraduate students who mastered the Zoom platform to spotlight each actor with impressive timing, the online performance acted, as storytelling often does, as a gathering, a much-needed space of togetherness amid the pandemic. Students wrote about their experience after the performance, highlighting what they had learned and what they hoped to continue to explore, and I shared a summary of their responses with Beth. I will return to their comments later, but overall, the staged reading generated new ideas that Beth then integrated in subsequent drafts of her play. Beth shared: "I had been stuck in the revision process, but the openness of the students and their generosity in interpreting the text and asking questions gave the work a much-needed boost. I also picked up on their ideas for staging, even within the confines of Zoom, they were inventive" (Piatote 2023). For example, the students suggested that, given the Aunties' stories warning Kreon against cannibalism, it might be fitting to have the play begin around a tense family meal where Kreon and Antikoni's differing "hunger" for justice might come through.

When I was preparing to teach the class in 2023, in person this time, Beth was working on new revisions and felt that another staged reading could be useful. We adopted a similar approach with a few notable differences. First, the staged reading would be in person, with actors, playwright, and audience sharing space. Second, with forty students enrolled (instead of twenty-one in 2021), the project would have to grow in scope. Working with Cambria Herrera (Xicanx), a then MFA candidate in our directing program with a strong collective approach, and with Padra Crisafulli, an MFA student in sound design, this second staged reading featured a live soundscape and recorded sonic exploration, masks and props, and two casts of actors who each performed half of the play. The staged reading was followed by the audience experiencing Crisafulli's sonic exploration, which took place in the sound design lab one floor below the Arthur Wagner Theatre. Spectators were then invited into a conversation with Beth to conclude the event. Having provided this background, I now turn to *Antikoni*'s resonant story, which I examine, following many Indigenous scholars' invitation, as a method for theorizing the world.

Antikoni: The Meantime, the Eternal, and the Beyond

During the exchange with Haemon about the meantime included in this article's epigraph, Kreon, the Nez Perce director of an "American museum," is moving a crate containing sensitive and

contentious cargo that he has just "acquired" at great cost (Piatote 2022, 19). It is "a collection most rare: the remains and full catalogue of the Cayuse brothers, who, long ago, were caught in the maelstrom of war" (19). Under the cover of darkness, his young protege Haemon is helping him move the ancestors inside the museum where Kreon plans to "make a home for them. For now" (19). Haemon is uncomfortable with this acquisition and notes the perversity of having to "buy the bones of our ancestors" (19). For the older Kreon, however, there are no clean victories in what he calls "the meantime," that is within ongoing settler time, and he estimates that it is better for the ancestors to be under his care than in the collection of "a bone-grinding archeologist" or "a black-market trader" (19–20).

As in the original play by Sophocles, Kreon encounters resistance in Haemon, but his most obstinate opponent is his niece, Antikoni (who is also Haemon's betrothed), for whom repatriation can only mean returning these distant ancestors to the earth. She is not interested in tolerating this meantime, or by playing by the rules of the oppressors. Through her actions—"stealing" the ancestors from Kreon's museum and giving them a proper burial—she is pushing for something beyond this meantime that Kreon seems to have accepted. Apprehended by the Museum Guards, she remains undeterred. One guard, serving as the emissary to Kreon, provides comedic relief at first, hiding behind union jargon and servile manners to denounce the theft. His rapidly switching stance when Antikoni is identified as the "thief," servility replaced by thinly veiled contempt, illuminates Kreon's vulnerability as he navigates the meantime. Despite being a museum director, he is, as the Guard makes clear, an Indigenous subject first.

Kreon (John John Soto) and the Guard (Michael Kendrick) discuss the fate of Antikoni (Delaney Plecha). Photo credit: David Baillot.

Antikoni takes place in a time Piatote describes as "Near Future/Eternal," a moment in the meantime that echoes previous times. A drum played by Auntie 1 is listed as part of the cast as "a speaker," a living being whose presence and activation sounds the pulse of this echoing time. The play begins in a temporally vague yet intimately familiar context in which the United States is governed by "the Nationalist Party," an extreme faction hungry for a mythology that legitimizes their rule. Ever the strategist, Kreon plans to use the warring brothers' ancient tragic tale and their newly repatriated remains as "a shield," a story to appease this new batch of nationalists by letting them feel that they have (then and now) "won the war" (Piatote 2022, 12). Indeed, long ago, the two brothers that Kreon repatriated were from the Cayuse Nation, but one was taken as a child by the Crow people. As the story goes, when the Crow Nation later sided with the US Army—the "Blue Coats"—the stolen boy, now a man, unknowingly fought his own brother on the battlefield of a war where there was no winning side for Indigenous people. Now, "given the extreme pressures" imposed by the Nationalist Party on Indigenous nations, Kreon feels that "the dead must save the living" (11). "Let us trade on our tragedy, that we may be seen in our humanity" (13), he argues before an auntie who reminds him of what stories powerfully contain and enact:

> AUNTIE 1
> Nephew, you are trading in death. In pity. I fear for you.
> For one so great a storyteller, I fear you haven't listened to what our stories have to tell.
>
> KREON
> Bah! For those old stories I have no use. We are in a new time.
>
> AUNTIE 1
> Our stories are for all time. There is no time without stories as the two were born together. (12)

The chorus of aunties is wise, full of humour, and throughout the play, they refuse to let Kreon off the hook, modelling the form of accountability that good relations require. And so is Antikoni, who insistently reminds her uncle that this so-called new moment calls for the eternal teachings contained in stories. The injustice of this meantime, sanctioned by the foreign laws of settlers, is, as Antikoni tells her sister Ismene, intolerable. Antikoni lovingly berates Ismene for studying settler law (Ismene sees it as a way to better serve her people), but she proves merciless when it comes to her uncle's museum work, referring to him as "the Head of the Dead," or "the Collector-in-Chief, the Chief Collector, the collector of Chiefs" (Piatote 2022, 8). For the uncompromising Antikoni, Kreon contorts and betrays the *tamalwit*, or the Nez Perce teachings and laws, in order to strike an irksome bargain—survivance in the meantime. To hold ancestors hostage in a museum, Antikoni argues, is to violently deprive them of their final rest and participate in further dehumanizing Indigenous people. There is no justification for it.

Antikoni (Pari Meghdadi) confronts Kreon (Ulises Aguirre) in the presence of Ismene (Wesley Preis). Photo Credit: David Baillot.

Indeed, Antikoni feels what Glen Coulthard (Dene) theorizes as "righteous resentment" in a text students read in tandem with the play. Antikoni is unwilling, as an ethical resistant posture, to reconcile herself, as her uncle seemingly does, "with a structural and symbolic violence that is still very much present" (Coulthard 2014, 126). Throughout the play, Antikoni turns to the *tamalwit* encoded in the Nez Perce stories told onstage by the Aunties to imagine what living beyond the meantime might be and to enact her responsibilities toward the fallen Cayuse brothers, her distant but eternal kin. Antikoni asks, if faced with the "cruel inventory . . . that makes our families into *things,*" she should, as Ismene argues, "be patient" and trust that repatriation will eventually happen "through the law," by which she means, NAGPRA (Piatote 2022, 29)? Or should she take matters into her own hands, "break their law . . . that makes us less than human" and follow eternal laws, "our *tamalwit"* (29)?

Antikoni, fiery and revolutionary, can be unbending and she suffers from tunnel vision at times. Kreon for his part knows too well the cost of radical acts, and experience has made him weary, and at times rigid, but still deeply committed to his people. His actions may not take down the system (as Antikoni desires), but they nevertheless carve spaces of respite and Indigenous sovereignty within a larger oppressive settler colonial structure. As Beth explained to us, Kreon and Antikoni are both right and both wrong and they are both driven by a desire to do good for their people. This is the powerful story, artful in its telling and complex in its Nez Perce teaching and theorizing of the world, that Beth entrusted to the two distinct cohorts enrolled in my class.

Listening to the Aunties: Stories as Sites of Theorization and Interpellation

As Auntie 1 reminds us, we (and I understand this to include all non-Indigenous visitors on Indigenous lands), like Kreon, "haven't listened to what [Indigenous] stories have to tell" (Piatote 2022, 12). Turning to storytelling then, to the act of listening and entering in a deep relation with stories, is one way to begin the work of researching and reflecting that Stewart-Ambo and Yang urgently invite us to do. This is especially true when the story is, as is the case with *Antikoni*, intended, at least in part, as a direct address to non-Indigenous visitors, urging them to return to their own stories for teachings that might unsettle the notion of "settler permanence" as a given, an inevitable fact of life (L. B. Simpson 2014, 8). Indeed, in an interview for the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, Beth Piatote explains that she wrote *Antikoni* because she "wondered why it was that people could understand things like Greek tragedy and *Antigone* but couldn't understand why Native people, or anybody, cared about their ancestors. Doesn't this literature" she asks, "form the universal values that we're all supposed to know and understand?" Piatote adds: "I also wanted to put two classic literatures together—Nez Perce and Greek—because when I looked at those Greek stories, I saw that they're just like our stories. They're full of these unpredictable journeys and grotesque and gruesome and wild things" (Piatote in Levin 2020) Piatote, then, is asking us to return to the "eternal" stories that form the basis of Western (and settler) thought and culture, asking us, like Auntie 1 with Kreon, to consider how the theories and teachings they contain might serve today. This invitation served as a starting point for us in a settler classroom.

As the Auntie tells Kreon, "stories are for all time" (Piatote 2022, 12) and Piatote's play proved deeply resonant and acted as a conduit for our class to situate itself on Kumeyaay territory and respond to Stewart-Ambo and Yang's call to be better visitors. This took the form of readings and invitations to go for walks in 2021 when we were all remote and spread across the world. Student J (2021) notes the resulting increased awareness here: "There is a trail by my house that has a bulletin board with Kumeyaay teachings about the river. I read it for the first time recently. The first time?!" In 2023, then MFA candidate Cambria Herrera took students for a walk around campus during the first week, leading them through exercises that required listening to and engaging with the land under their feet.

As students read *Antikoni*, they also learned about NAGPRA and the land around them and the parallels were striking. Indeed, many Kumeyaay ancestors are buried where UCSD is located and around La Jolla, near the bluff, sandy beaches, and caves that make this rich enclave famous today. Many other ancestors have been disturbed, excavated from this territory, and kept, like the Cayuse brothers, in the collections of private and public institutions. Though it is not a well-known fact to most students, UCSD holds its own "cruel inventory" of ancestors that it has only recently made fully public in compliance with NAGPRA.[8] This is thanks in large part to the efforts of Eva Trujillo (Iipay-Kumeyaay) who has been the campus NAGPRA repatriation coordinator since 2021. A member of the now permanent NAGPRA advisory committee that works with Trujillo graciously attended our staged reading.

Repatriation, which is a slow process for many reasons—it requires care, consultation, and collaboration in contexts where harm was perpetrated and where trust has historically been absent—has currently only happened for a small fraction of UCSD's inventory. In some cases, the reasons behind a halted repatriation mirror the seemingly irreconcilable stances at the heart of *Antikoni*. Indeed, until 2016, that is before the creation of the NAGPRA committee on campus, UCSD was

embroiled in a long contentious legal battle concerning the repatriation of two ancestors aged more than 9,300 years old that were removed from under the chancellor's house in the 1970s by a team of researchers and then circulated among several institutions with UCSD remaining their official owner. The repatriation efforts led by the Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee, which began in 2006, were fiercely opposed by a group of UC faculty who tried to prevent the repatriation before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals finally ruled against them and repatriation quietly moved forward in 2016.[9] Students read about this legal battle and reflected on how it laid bare the stories that solidify or challenge the meantime. Indeed, repatriation under NAGPRA not only renders visible the history of extraction and accumulation of Indigenous ancestors by institutions and individuals but it also calls our attention to the narratives that continue to solidify a *status quo* that legitimizes settler colonial presence and futurity. In this context, how do we, as faculty and students at UCSD, learn to view ourselves as visitors, unsettling our understanding of our relation to this land and its inhabitants? How do we then begin to develop better practices as visitors with the understanding that the process takes time and care? How do we move toward greater relationality and reciprocity as Stewart-Ambo and Yang urge us to do?

I took this to heart in thinking of what kind of scaffolding might help us answer this call. Many of our students have been taught a narrow definition of what art, in general, and stories, in particular, can do, whether told, written, sung, or performed. For many, stories are the stuff of fiction, and they exist on a separate plane from political and legal orders. They are not the site of theorization. But, as Dylan Robinson reminds us, "Indigenous art holds functions beyond its existence as art." He adds, "Indigenous art, cultural expressions, and artistic practices, including song and dance, have important roles as primary historical documentation (the equivalent to a book) of a family or community, as medicine, or as a legal order. Additionally, such art forms are sometimes considered by Indigenous people as having life—as ancestors, as beings, and life that is not comparable to human life" (Robinson in Belcourt, Igloliorte, and Robinson 2021, 5). *Antikoni*, then, asked for a different kind of engagement and care, for a shift in perspective and ways of listening.

To begin to instigate this shift, we engaged in class with a constellation of Indigenous scholars and activists that helped situate and illuminate *Antikoni* as well as the other plays and performances on the syllabus as "aesthetic actions." Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin describe "aesthetic actions" as operating through "a range of sensory stimuli—image, sounds, movement—that have social and political effects through our affective engagement with them" (2016, 2). As much as possible and with appropriate compensation, I also invited Indigenous artists to visit the class to speak about their work and the protocols they follow which inevitably challenge institutional ways of doing, thinking about, and categorizing their interventions. Many students remarked that they craved more opportunities for such direct conversations.

Students were invited to think throughout the quarter about what stories do in the world—what they enact, transmit, usher in—but also about what stories ask of us, that is, the engagement they invite in those who tell and witness them. To do so, our first reading of the quarter was Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's "Theorizing Resurgence from within Nishnaabeg Thought" from *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*. Simpson writes here for and about her Nishnaabeg community but as a class, we wondered how we might think alongside her reflection. Storytelling, she writes "is an important process for visioning, imagining, critiquing the social space around us, and ultimately challenging the colonial norms fraught in our daily lives" (2011, 34–35). Telling Antikoni's story thus became a way to contend with our different relationships to settler colonialism. For Indigenous students such as

Student S (2023): "Taking that time to do the work is the anticolonial process of trying to find what my journey is, what my family has forgotten, what my dislocated communities have forgotten, and what I'm trying to bring alive." For non-Indigenous students and for me, contending with our relationship to settler colonialism meant reflecting on how we might or might not collectively participate in tacitly reproducing its norms. Why is it, for instance, that Antigone's plight is generally presented as heroic, legitimate, and warranted when applied to certain ancestors (white, Euro-descendants, settlers) but that Antikoni exercising burial rites according to the *tamalwit* is perceived as illegitimate, anti-science, criminal even, when it comes to Indigenous ancestors?

As noted above, Indigenous and non-Indigenous students of many origins participated in this class as students and as part of the instructional team. This required particular care and exposed the limitations of a ten-week intensive course bound by lectures and section hours. In both 2021 and 2023, students attended lectures together as a larger group (on Zoom or in person) that was then split in smaller sections one day a week. These more intimate formations allowed for more flexibility and to hold space for Indigenous students and their needs. Over Zoom, Desmond and I held individual virtual "office hours" where we checked in with students. Desmond brought his own expertise as a Choctaw scholar-artist to the way he organized the rehearsal process. In 2023, with students sharing physical space, Cambria's expertise proved equally central in modelling forms of coming together that decentred Western, Eurocentric practices and foregrounded relationality and reciprocity.

Cambria Herrera addresses the class before the staged reading. Photo Credit: David Baillot.

A lot of that critical engagement and relational practices took place during table work, while students took turns reading the play out loud, listening and acting as spectators for one another and stopping to reflect on what they were hearing and feeling. For the second staged reading in 2023, partly for practical reasons (we had a larger group), we opted for splitting the play and having each half performed by a distinct cast. This solution had benefits beyond the question of logistics. Simpson highlights the deeply relational nature of oral storytelling, reminding us that "the relationship between those present becomes dynamic, with the storyteller adjusting their 'performance' based on the reactions and presence of the audience" (L. B. Simpson 2011, 34). This was certainly the case in each section and when students shared their half of the play with each other during our last week of rehearsal. More than once, students came to a deeper understanding of Beth's text, or of one of the other theory texts we engaged with in class through the process of listening to one another. This deep multidirectional listening, according to Jade Power-Sotomayor, who theorizes it in the sounding practice of bomba, allowed students to "learn from and about one another"[10] (2020, 52):

> My first day of section I sat next to Cambria and when it was time to discuss the scene in the play where Antikoni and Haemon tell the story of the Sun and the Moon, Cambria turned to me, looked me right in the eye and asked, "What do you think this means?" And so I told her my thoughts and shared it with the class. And as we shared our ideas and connections it felt like a real conversation. It was like we were all a part of something big. (Student B [2023])
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> One of my favorite days was when we read the scene where Haemon and Antikoni recite the story of how the sun and the moon came to be. After hearing the actors read it, Cambria invited all of us to interpret the story. Who was the sun? Who was the moon? Who was coyote? I loved hearing the different ideas brought up and the reasons behind them. That was the day I felt best exemplified the process. We read, then we discussed and discovered as a group. (Student Q [2023])
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> We are so used to performing things a certain way that we forget that there might be so many more interpretations that are just as valid as the ones we have to offer. (Student U [2023])

I recall here one particularly salient instance of this deep listening. Though students had read Patrick Wolfe (2006) and Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson (2016) and thus had come across the concept of settler colonialism as a structure rather than an event, it is really through Kreon's exchange with Haemon, which serves as an epigraph for this article, that this concept fully landed for many. He says: "My son, it is all meantime. We've been living in the meantime for 500 years. In the meantime we do our best by the living" (Piatote 2022, 19–20). After hearing it spoken out loud by a colleague, one student tentatively asked if what Kreon was describing as the meantime was this concept of settler colonialism as structure? Others reacted, switched on by their colleague's remark. The first quote below comes from aforementioned student S, who is Indigenous, and the other from a non-Indigenous student.

> The meantime. . . . It reminds me of my mom and her intersection with colonialism. It makes me think of my history. . . . If our ancestors fought through these atrocities—what do I do with that? How do I hold it? Am I not deserving of rest? Of just wanting to work a simple job, coming [home] to a family, and repeat? I sometimes just want that—to be ignorant towards the systems around us but in the

> end—how can I? Colonialism has dominated every aspect of my life. (Student S [2023])
>
> The idea that the past 500 years have been the meantime, that we cannot escape the meantime, is so important. It is a reminder to white settlers in this country that we have done nothing to repair. [In the play], when we are forced to wait, sometimes we need to make the move that's best for us. Sometimes that move is working with the people who stole your land while you wait to get it back. But sometimes the waiting is too much. . . . We can no longer be in this frozen state of time. We need to make moves to get us out." (Student C [2023])

This became a practice: listening to *Antikoni* as theory-making, connecting the voices of the characters with those of scholars and artists we read in class. Students listened to Ismene's and Antikoni's chosen resistance tactics as embodied theorizations of what Gerald Vizenor (2008) calls "survivance" and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2011) calls "resurgence." In other words, in entering in relation with the play and its characters, students engaged in deep listening and in a form of embodied theorization, allowing concepts to find ways through their bodies and finding deeper meaning in how they resonated with their classmates.

> Being able to entrench myself within this conflict, I felt as though it has helped me to see our unfolding discussion on relationality and sovereignty in a new light, arguably, incorporating a more experiential perspective. While we may share a factual, academic definition of sovereignty, I am sure that Antikoni and Kreon have vastly different interpretations of the word. For any audience watching, it should quickly become apparent that the Nez-Perce, as they are represented in this play, do not think and act as a monolith. Although this is fictionalized, we see real tensions and struggles precipitated by a settler-colonial influence and occupation. (Student A [2021])

For Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, storytelling in a Nishnaabeg context also serves the purpose of moving beyond the meantime. She writes, "The 'performance,' whether a song, a dance or a spoken word story, becomes then an individual and collective experience, with the goal of lifting the burden of colonialism by visioning new realities" (2011, 35). In our case, the idea was, for the majority of the class, not to lift the burden of colonialism but to carry it, sit with it—not in a flagellating way—but as a necessary though uncomfortable step toward thinking beyond settler colonialism in relation to the visioning that emerges from Indigenous communities and spaces. This is necessary work as Indigenous people should not be tasked, or should not be tasked alone, with solving settler colonialism. To that effect, Student A (2021) writes about the mobilization effect of the play: "Part of the power of this piece comes from once the drama is done, and we are left (as settlers) to ponder how colonialism has and continues to encroach on Indigenous sovereignty."

Relatedly, during the early stages of table work in 2021 and 2023, many students, though they had been excited with the staged reading when it was discussed as an idea, encountered (and justly so) discomfort and an ethical obstacle when lending their voices to the play's characters. Some questioned whether they should be the ones telling Nez Perce creation stories or portraying Antikoni's resistant stance. Was this appropriate? Shouldn't Indigenous characters be played by Indigenous actors? While all agreed with this principle, some pointed out that it might have the unintended side effect of further absenting Indigenous plays from theatre departments where there

are, at the moment, rarely enough Indigenous students to cast an entire production. This in turn sends a signal to Indigenous students that their presence and stories are not wanted or valued. And to be fair, others pointed out, it is not enough to simply admit Indigenous students and put on Indigenous plays if the curriculum and landscape remain Eurocentric. But how, they asked, do we get out of this bind? Where to start? This conversation, though well intentioned, felt often one-sided, and risked ending with expressions of discomfort instead of using these questions as potentially generative starting points for the work ahead.

With relationality at the core of our process, I encouraged students to discuss their specific concern about *Antikoni* with Beth who, after all, had accepted our invitation knowing that the class would not be entirely composed of Indigenous students. Students brought it up when she joined us on Zoom and her generous answer opened yet another line of critical inquiry for the class. She explained to students that their concerns were indeed warranted: in a professional setting or in the case of a full production, the play should indeed feature an Indigenous cast and creative team. Her response aligned with the voices of Lindsay Lachance (2018), Jill Carter (2021), Kim Sənklip Harvey (2019), and Yolanda Bonnell (2020), whom we read and who outline the changes they deem necessary for the professional theatre world to become safer for Indigenous artists. However, given the parameters of this staged reading, its taking place in a non-professional classroom setting, its intended role as a laboratory for students to engage in critical thinking in support of the playwright, Beth suggested that this felt like a different exercise.

Student M (2023) expressed the following:

> I suppose the more interesting concept to consider in my requests for my role in this project would be my concerns regarding whether it was proper for non-Indigenous actors to be playing these roles. While I do agree with the reasoning behind the position ultimately taken by our class and the concurring opinion of Beth Piatote, I nonetheless still had reservations when I was requesting roles to play. A part of me wanted to play Kreon, but another, larger part thought that it could be reckless for me to do so. . . . I've been considering those reservations I had, and I'm still unsure of what to make of them. I think it was appropriate to have them, but to hold on to them even after agreeing with the position that they were not an issue in the context of our class and staged reading was and still is, curious to me.

To be clear, as Student M's response suggests, Beth's response was in no way giving a blanket permission for non-Indigenous folks to appropriate her play, nor was it allowing students to eschew the responsibilities of their choices. It was rather a frank and transparent context-driven invitation to relationality and accountability sustained by a careful reflection and personal investment. Student M's reflection shows that they responded to this invitation through an ongoing reflection.

In her response, Beth echoed the words of Leanne Betasamosake Simpson who, in *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*, writes about how Nishnaabeg stories engage with those who witness them by asking them to insert themselves in the narrative. "By inserting ourselves into these stories" she writes, "we assume responsibilities—responsibilities that are not necessarily bestowed upon us by the collective, but that we take on according to our own gifts, abilities, and affiliations. Nishnaabeg theory has to be learned in the context of our own personal lives, in an emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual way" (2011, 41). Again, while we were aware that Simpson was not writing about us, we took this

insight to heart. How could we, as a group, come to this story with our own gifts, abilities, and affiliations? How might we insert ourselves in the story of Antikoni not in an extractive way but in order to assume our responsibilities toward *Antikoni* (the story), Beth, and toward ourselves as visitors? How might this act of storytelling serve to educate ourselves, to take ownership of our roles and various levels of complicity in the settler colonial meantime—and participate in creating the conditions for the beyond?

In terms of assuming our responsibilities to the play and its characters, I report here one particularly generative invitation Beth issued during the preparations to the first staged reading. To students asking whether or not it was appropriate for them to play an auntie because of their age, gender identity, or because of their lack of knowledge of Nez Perce cosmology and language, Beth responded that *auntie* was not a noun or a gendered role but that it was instead a verb, "auntie-ing," and a state of being that involved, among other things, a capacity for care, teaching with humour and compassion, and a no-nonsense approach to lovingly calling members of a community to task. She encouraged them to find out what the practice of being an auntie might mean to each of them or, to echo Simpson, to take on the role according to their own gifts, abilities, or affiliations, without assuming sameness or flattening differences.

Ismene (Rumi Petersen), Kreon (John John Soto), Antikoni (Delaney Plecha) and Ismene (Ashley Shilts) in the final moment of the play. Photo Credit: David Baillot.

As a result, our first chorus of aunties featured some actors who identified as gender-queer and who brought queer worldviews to their retelling of Nez Perce creation stories. These stories, bawdy and poetic, anticipate the arrival of humans and tell stories that eschew rigid binaries, embrace fluidity and shape-shifting, and speak of forms of relationality, love, and community that predate imposed

heteronormativity. They are Indigenous stories, in other words, that contain queer worldviews. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Kent Monkman, and many others have explored in their work how Two-Spirit individuals were valued and assigned important roles in many Indigenous cultures prior to colonization. They have also attested to the ways in which Two-Spirit people are specifically targeted by settler colonial violence and to their crucial role in Indigenous resurgence. Decolonization then, is also deeply tied to unsettling and dismantling heteronormativity and patriarchal structures. Here, listening to these stories, became what Power-Sotomayor calls a "simultaneously temporal and spatial practice" (2020, 53). We extended our listening to hear a time before settler colonialism as a way to imagine what moving beyond it might require. What do the Aunties' stories tell us about before but also beyond settler colonial time? Students took on these questions and embodied the Aunties with a fierce and vulnerable energy, carrying their stories as manifestos for the future: stories that expressed care for humans, other-than-humans, for those made ill by carnivorous desires for power and for those who outsmarted them and found ways to love and thrive—complex stories that often ended with an auntie saying "that's all," a seemingly anticlimactic ending. But, as student BM (2021) notes, "every time the phrase 'that is all' would come up in Antikoni, I would smile. It is something that is so simple, and yet wherever the phrase is scattered in the play, it changes meaning every time."

Auntie 2 (Hannah Littler) is joined by Brother (Safa Suhail), Sister (Wesley Preis) and Grizzly Bear (Claire McNerney) to retell the story of Grizzly Bear. Photo Credit: David Baillot.

Listening to the play deeply also led us, for the second staged reading, to investigate how we could respond sonically to *Antikoni*. We began with doing research about Nez Perce language, looking for guides on how to properly pronounce the words included in the play. Students produced a glossary and a pronunciation guide and, while creating it, reflected on the way that these words encoded

relationality and structures of care: "*Né;ne* a woman's older sister, *'áyi* a woman's younger sister, *qé:qe'* a mother's sister," etc.[11] In terms of the heartbeat of the play, none of our students were drummers and students felt that the kind of drumming the play intimated—the drum is after all a living being, the sounder of time—was beyond what they felt capable of providing. They learned and respected that protocols exist around drumming among the Nez Perce and many other Indigenous nations. We thus switched gears and concentrated on what the sound team felt they could bring in. Padra Crisafulli, an MFA candidate in sound design, supported them as they decided to use found objects manipulated to create sound live during the staged reading as well as some prerecorded cues to provide a soundscape for the reading. With simple objects and manipulations, water dripping into a glass, shaking branches, the team created the sounds of Pissing Boy or the Willow who saved mother and child from the carnivorous man.

Padra Crisafulli and Cambria Herrera convening with the sound team (Steve Llamas, Brandon Lopez at the back table, Mathew Durazo, Damon Pun, and Kai Uchiyama at the front table) before the reading. Photo credit: David Baillot.

Padra and Cambria also collaborated on a sound installation, using wave field synthesis (WFS), "a spatial audio rendering technique that places virtual sound sources in real places" and that, in short, allows the creation of "sound holograms" with equipment designed by my colleague Bobby McElver, the first sound designer to use overhead WFS in a theatre context.[12] I had experienced Bobby's sound holograms before we embarked on the second staged reading, and I was struck by how it allowed me to feel sound spatially. Sound moved around me, shifted as I did, and it reminded me of what playwright and director Yves Sioui Durand (Huron Wendat) once told me about theatre as a space where one could be alongside the ancestors. I wondered if Bobby's technique might allow us to sonically flesh out Antikoni's relation to her ancestors and the final moment of the play.

Contrary to Sophocles's heroine, Beth's Antikoni does not die at the end of the play. This is partly a strategic counternarrative to depictions of dying Indigenous characters that saturate stages and screens but it also aligns with Antikoni's desire to see her people live. Instead of dying, Antikoni, as Ismene laments,

> has left us, though we know not where,
> Whether she remains in our lands or moves to the Shadows
> She is beyond our reach, beyond all touch,
> Though perhaps she always was. (Piatote 2022, 58)

The stage directions in the play indicate that the image of Antikoni "appears on a large screen" as the drum stops. This image then multiplies on stage screens, forming a three-by-three grid of images. Antikoni's image proliferates spectators' cell phones before it is replaced by an avatar, and then by Antikoni again. Meanwhile, addressing us from this virtual space, she says:

> ANTIKONI
> And here I shall remain, along with the dead
> My life as theirs suspended, just as that of my kin
> Who find no comfort in grief, whose grief can never begin And thus will never end.
> In this world in-between, my voice and visage live on
> To those not-yet-human what human laws may do
> to interrupt time, to stop the Earth
> From turning and turning around itself, how such laws disturb
> The Order of the world. For this cause I sacrifice
> The warmth of flesh on mine, the company of human voice
> My sister's laugh, my lover's touch
> I retreat to this living tomb, this landless home, to
> This place that is both nowhere and everywhere at once.
> Here I will not age, nor bear
> Children for the next generation. I shall live
> Though it cannot be called *living*, a human being alone. (58)

Antikoni does not die but she retreats to a suspended virtual space as her loved ones beg her to return in an overlapping crescendo accompanied by the beating of the drum. Stage directions then tell us that Antikoni "lights a sage bundle" and looks at us, the audience (58). She is fiery, resolute. The play ends.

This open ending raised many questions not only in terms of meaning (Where is Antikoni? What does it mean?) but also in terms of how we could make this "world-in-between" where Antikoni is "with the dead," but will not age, legible to audiences. Created by Padra Crisafulli and Cambria Herrera, the installation required audiences to split into smaller groups and move to a sound lab a floor below the Wagner Theatre after the staged reading. There, the groups re-experienced the very last moment of the play when Antikoni retreats to a world beyond reach after burying the ancestors, a virtual world as the play suggests where she belongs to all time. Specifically, Padra and Cambria recorded the play's overlapping crescendo as well as Antikoni's final monologue and, with the help of WFS, created a sense for the audience of being surrounded by Antikoni and her loved ones. The sound holograms—travelling around, over, under, and through us—made her presence both elusive and enveloping. Antikoni was everywhere and nowhere, disembodied yet audible, in a space beyond,

in the making. Antikoni dares us, per her final look at the audience, to begin imagining this space in concrete terms.

Reciprocity

While the process was incredibly rich for the students, its original intent was to be useful to Beth as well. I turn here to her for a response, not wanting to speak in her name. She graciously provided the following epilogue.

Epilogue

Beth Piatote: The creation of a play is a collective act, and thus one that lends itself to collective political action. As Julie Burelle has documented here, it is possible and necessary to make real material commitments that advance well-being and justice for Indigenous people through collaborative work in theatre and performing arts. It is a beautiful response to the call for institutions to go beyond land acknowledgments and offer forms of reparation.

My play, *Antíkoni*, has been a fortunate recipient of Julie's guidance, support, and collaboration over a number of years. When I first met Julie in spring 2018, I had just begun conversations with my colleague, Mark Griffith, now professor emeritus of classics and theater, dance, and performance studies (TDPS), about holding a staged reading of the play at Berkeley. In truth, as I was writing the play, I never imagined a life for it on the stage; I thought that it would simply live on the page along with the other stories in my mixed-genre collection, *The Beadworkers: Stories*. Julie's insight about the power of holding the staged reading in the Hearst Museum—which to this day is the second-largest holder of ancestral remains in the United States—helped to clarify and imagine that possibility. As Julie notes, I worked with our team, especially the graduate students in TDPS who served as director, dramaturg, and stage manager, to provide a smudging station and other forms of care for the performers and audience members to enter that space safely. As production members we came to think of the ancestors as our primary audience, as the play itself operating as both care and advocacy for them. Having the audience seated in the gallery allowed the space to perform its own work in implicating everyone in the ethical and spiritual questions at the heart of the play.

Over the three performances, the chancellor and other key members of the university and museum administration were in attendance, as well as community members and many students from classics, TDPS, Native American studies, and elsewhere. The message of the play moved through various constituencies at once. The ethical demands of the play, including the persistent beat of the drum, reached administrators and ultimately played a role in moving repatriation processes forward. It also changed the space of the museum by shifting vibrational energies and reversing the power dynamics between audience and "object." That is, the play challenged the audience to turn their gaze inward rather than outward and to consider their own implication in an intertwined and ongoing history of colonialism and collection. These are some of the ways that site-specific performances work to unsettle colonial institutional practices at small and large scales.

Moving the play from its Greek form to one that would be marketable to contemporary audiences was the next phase of play development, and again Julie and her students were a huge part of that process. Julie connected me with Native Voices at the Autry in Los Angeles, where the play was selected for a Zoom workshop in summer 2020. Through this and subsequent workshops, I had to

radically rethink the shape of the play, including plot and diction. I had to completely take it apart, which is a normal part of the process, but I felt that I was losing some of the things that mattered to me most about it. Although I wasn't going to give up on the play, I was pretty discouraged at that time. Julie offered her class as a lab where I could experiment with fitting the pieces back together. The open-hearted creativity and support that I received from her class got me through that impasse and the play began to cohere into its new form. Despite the constraints of Zoom, the students took seriously the complexity of the characters and offered insight and creative ideas for props, staging, and interpretation. For example, one student commented that an early family dinner scene set up the motifs of cannibalism that followed; this observation spurred me to elaborate the dinner scene and thread eating more explicitly through the play. The 2023 staging, which included the mind-expanding sound installation, great acting (again), and clever props, provided me with new ideas for how to make the presence of ancestral spirits a texture through the play.

In closing, I would again express my gratitude to Julie for the collaboration over these past years and reiterate the specific ways in which the collective work of theatre and performance was channelled toward the goals of reparation and justice.[13] First, site-specific approaches to staging and teaching the play disrupted the colonial occupation of space within the institution and brought critical attention to issues of justice for Indigenous people. The performances brought participants into an intimate relationship with the moral concerns of the play and shifted the energy of the space. Second, the offering of material and creative resources—not only time and meeting space, but the offering of bodies to speak, act, and embody the work—was a true gesture of reparation. People literally carried the story. These acts made meaningful what can otherwise be dismissed as "only words" of land acknowledgments. Third, the collaboration provided critical structural and emotional support to me in the difficult task of revision. In the simplest terms, Julie and her students took up the play when it was at its messiest point of revision. That support was a real thing, and it had real effects. Finally, the collaboration supported the play through multiple developmental stages and represented a true investment in the future of the work. Many creative works get stuck in the pipeline and collaborations such as the one Julie has modelled here have tremendous potential to move theatre and performance works toward production, thus providing employment opportunities for Indigenous actors, directors, dramaturgs, and other theatre professionals. It also yields a richer world of theatre for audiences and greater representation of Indigenous arts, artists, and ideas.

Playwright Beth Piatote receiving applause at the end of the staged reading. Photo Credit: David Baillot.

Conclusion: A Continued Activation of the Beyond

As a performance studies scholar, I am deeply interested in what Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin call "aesthetic actions," that is, of politically driven performances. These actions operate through "a range of sensory stimuli—image, sounds, movement—that have social and political effects through our affective engagement with them" (2016, 2). With this idea in mind and with Antikoni's final, daring look, an exhortation to end the meantime and move to a beyond, I asked students, at the end of class, to speak about what engagement they might make beyond this class, in their everyday life, to continue imagining beyond settler colonialism. Their answers varied greatly with some expressing trepidations, others hope, some making big pledges and others speaking at a more intimate level. Some echoed Ismene and Kreon, others Antikoni, in their call for change—incremental or radical. Others, like Student J (2023), reflected on what engaging with Indigenous stories might ask the Western commercial theatre world to change:

> If theatre is necessary, if theatre is empowering, if theatre is medicine—then how do we address the people who could never engage with our institutions because of a multiplicity of barriers? Theatre as it stands seems built on insularity, and I think this entire process has taught me to reconsider how to make theatre that is expansive both in the micro (rehearsal rooms, processes, ticket prices, etc.), and in the macro (How do we let as many people as possible tell their stories to as many people as possible?) (Student J [2023])

> If I do this incorrectly I will end up causing more harm than help. I have a starting point of what I can do. With my knowledge I can educate my peers about how Indigenous communities are still facing hate. I can tell them about Nagpra and what I have learned and I can refer them to the plays we have read in class. (Student K [2023])

> I would like to take that lack of knowledge and use it as fuel/motivation to figure things out. (Student T [2021])

> In order to give back after experiencing this class, I feel as though it is important to stay "plugged in" (even if that means being "unplugged," like Yvette Nolan may suggest) and conscious of the struggle for Indigenous sovereignty and definition. (Student A [2021])

Being entrusted with the gift of *Antikoni,* students responded to the call for relationality and reciprocity each with their own histories, gifts, and abilities. They enacted care and responsibility. Aesthetic actions such as these two staged readings and processes are one among many interventions needed to effect change. They may not return land to Indigenous people, but they do something that merits theorization and attention. They remind us that "the body is a resonant chamber" (Robinson and Martin 2016, 1), one that feels, holds on to, is moved, and can spring into action. They can also, if theorized with care, alert us to how feeling (empathy, horror, care, discomfort) is only a starting point to structural changes, not a destination.

Notes

1. Wilson (2021) has spoken of "Indigenist" processes, acknowledging that such methods can, with the right approach and without appropriation and extraction, be adopted by non-Indigenous researchers. He argued that Indigenous theories and methodologies are inherently capacious and thus can help frame a broad array of research questions within and beyond Indigenous communities.

2. *Arrivants* is the term proposed by Jodi A. Byrd to "signify those people forced into the Americas through the violence of European and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe" (2011, xix). Not settlers, they nevertheless live as visitors on and in relation to Indigenous lands and peoples.

3. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the students enrolled in the class in 2021 and 2023 who lent their creativity and reflectivity to the process. Not all the students wanted their responses to be identified so I elected, for the sake of uniformity, to anonymize all comments contained in this article. I also want to thank colleagues Jade Power-Sotomayor, Rishika Mehrishi, Ross Frank, Bobby McElver, Michael Francis and Laura Manning. My heartfelt gratitude goes to David Baillot, who photographed the staged reading in 2023.

4. This UCHRI-funded research group called Transnational and Indigenous Politics and Aesthetics Working Group included Drs. Kathryn Walkiewicz (Cherokee), Gloria Chacon, Roshanak Keshti, myself, and Kirstie Dorr.

5. The Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was passed in 1990 and provides a process for federal agencies and museums that receive federal funds to repatriate or transfer from their collections certain Native American cultural items—human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony—to lineal descendants, and to Indigenous tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian organizations. https://www.blm.gov/programs/cultural-heritage-and-paleontology/archaeology/archaeology-in-blm/nagpra.

6. Fantasia Painter (Antikoni), Sky Chayame Fierro (Ismene), Philip Cash Cash (Kreon), Benjamin Arsenault (Guard), Inés Hernández-Avila (Auntie 1), Angel Sobotta (Auntie 2), Anna Marie Sharpe (Auntie 3), Joel Sedano (Auntie 4), Shia Yu Shih (Auntie 5), Kara poon (Tairaisias), Thomas Tallerico (Haemon), Illan Halpern (Messenger), Rose Escolano (Understudy), Carolyn Smith, Rose Escolano, Christian Nagler (Prologue), Keevin Hesuse and Josh Perez (Drummers).

7. *Antikoni* has since been supported by Native Voices at the Autry, the New York Classical Theatre, and the Indigenous Writers Collaborative at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as well as by other individuals and institutions that Beth Piatote later names in her epilogue. It has yet to be given a full production.

8. Some ancestors are related to the Kumeyaay, others are from further away and found their way to the region through the work of researchers affiliated at some point in their career with UCSD. Information about UCSD's inventory is available at https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/03/10/2023-04896/notice-of-inventory-completion-university-of-california-san-diego-san-diego-ca.

9. See Dr. Ross Frank's archive on the UCSD repatriation case here: https://pages.ucsd.edu/~rfrank/NAGPRAdocs.html. See also Burelle (2015.)

10. Power-Sotomayor writes: "The danced sounding practice of Afro Puerto Rican *bomba*" is "the oldest extant music and dance form from the archipelago. This centuries-old practice that both celebrates the sacred and registers the quotidian comprises improvised drumming, dancing and singing that takes place in the *batey*—the Taíno word used to denote ball courts as well as the ceremonial space of the *areito* and today commonly used in Puerto Rico to refer to a space that is communal nonetheless separated from the outside world" (2020, 43).

11. See https://www.nimipuutimt.org/.

12. See https://bobbymcelver.com/wave-field-synthesis.

13. I wish to note that in addition to Julie and her students, *Antikoni* has received generous support from colleagues such as Mark Griffith and others at UC Berkeley; Jill Stauffer, Haverford College; Randy Reinholz, San Diego State University and Native Voices; DeLanna Studi, Native Voices; Sailakshmi Ramgopal, Columbia University; Matt Chapman, New York Classical Theatre; Courtney Mohler, Boston University; Matt Kizer, Native Writers Theater; Katja Sarkowski, Augsburg University; Patrizia Zanella, University of Geneva; Kaori Hatsumi, Seinan Gakuin University; Evangelia Keindinger, Humboldt University-Berlin; and others who have taught the work and invited conversations.

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