Holding fast to the path of peace: Storytelling and painting inspired by Hopi prophecy

Vicky Feather Sherman
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Holding Fast to the Path of Peace

Storytelling and Painting Inspired by Hopi Prophecy

by

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B.S., Towson University, Towson, Maryland, 1970

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts, Integrated Arts and Education
The University of Montana
2003

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1-6-04
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Holding Fast to the Path of Peace: Storytelling and Painting Inspired by Hopi Prophecy

ABSTRACT

Holding Fast to the Path of Peace: Storytelling and Paintings Inspired by Hopi Prophecy is a project about the life and teachings of Grandfather David Monongye, Hopi spiritual Elder. I developed a close, personal relationship with Grandfather David from 1977 through 1988, the time of his passing at one hundred four years old.

Personal memories, sketches, journal entries from that time period and research gathered over the next fifteen years from published works of Grandfather David and other traditional Elders were the basis for the creation of artwork and stories about Hopi prophecy and wisdom.

The purpose of the project was to share what I learned through a dramatic presentation, to inform, inspire and generate contemplative thought about world peace and living in balance with the earth. The challenge was to crystallize an enormous amount of information into the most important elements that are critically relevant to the current world situation and the very survival of life on the planet.

The dramatization was enhanced by the expertise of a professional technical director, who created striking effects with lighting, staging and special effects. A huge multi-media projection across the back of the stage incorporated the Prophecy Rock painting overlaid by video images of the fulfilled prophecies. A rare audio recording of Grandfather David was heard while a sacred altar space was created. Stories were told as the glowing paintings emerged from space, as if characters in the drama. The performance culminated with voluntary audience participation in a spiral circle meditation and prayers for world peace.

Feedback after the performance indicated that the purpose of the project was fulfilled. Continuing performances and workshops were requested to teach how to incorporate Hopi philosophy into contemporary life. Three preliminary public performances evolved into a public television production and invitations to present at two high schools and the Jeanette Rankin Peace Center, in Missoula, Montana. Dramatic storytelling and visual art skills were honed to improve teaching and artistic abilities in the classroom. The greatest realization was that trusting the Spirit and always coming from the heart will accomplish miracles in art/teaching/life.
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Project Intent

One of the blessings of my life has been the incredible opportunity to spend eleven years visiting with and helping Grandfather David Monongye, Hopi Spiritual Elder. The wisdom I have learned from Grandfather and other traditional Elders has been one of the most profound and transformative experiences in my life. The intent of my project is to share what I have learned from Grandfather and my process through a presentation of mixed media paintings and storytelling about Grandfather's life, Hopi prophecy and how it relates to our present world and the future of the planet. The wisdom of the Elders and the accuracy of over one hundred prophecies are astounding in their scope and relevancy to the choices we must make if we are to survive. The traditional Hopis believe that Hotevilla is a microcosm and that what happens there will be reflected in the world. I would like to quote from the Elders' traditional newsletter, Techqua Ikachi, published on September 30, 1994, as it was included in Hotevilla: Hopi Shrine of the Covenant, Microcosm of the World.

"Employing the microcosm principle, we can expect record droughts are already underway in some parts of the world. Extreme food and water shortages will soon exist in many places. Internal divisions will intensify and spread. Human energies will diminish. Environmental groups will face whole new challenges in financing and promoting their programs. Immigration problems will multiply, and the burden of meeting third world needs will mount until the demand exceeds the willingness to supply it. The downturn toward the closing of the age is underway, and its signs will become clearer and clearer. So look for opportunities to join with those who are working to affect its timing and severity." (Mails, 1995, 573)

I have always considered myself to be an artist and have loved expressing myself through the medium of painting since I painted my first "mural" on the garage wall as a five-year-old. I began going to Saturday art classes at the Maryland Institute of Art in
Baltimore, when I was six. I attended the Schuler School of Fine Arts after high school and learned the style and techniques of the European masters, especially Jacques Maroger. I have continued with my passion for studying, making and teaching art since then. My work has also evolved as a vehicle to express my love and concern for the natural world.

In 1990, I took “Advanced Painting” and “Native American Women” at the University of Montana. As part of the course work, I wrote and performed a play with two other women entitled, “Kit Carson in a Three-Piece-Suit”. It was about the relocation of the Hopi and Dineh (Navaho), based on my experience as a volunteer supporting the Elders resisting forced relocation in Arizona. I also painted, “Katherine’s S.O. S.”, which was designed to stand alone, or to be used as part of a stage set (Appendix A). It has now been used in five dramatic presentations, including one in October 2000, performed in the lobby of the Masquer Theater for the opening of the “Weavers in Resistance” exhibit of traditional Dineh rugs. Jason Gutzmer, Penelope Cruz and myself created a multi-media piece with dance, drama and ceremony using “Katherine’s S.O.S.” as the altar’s centerpiece. We were very honored that Roberta Blackgoat, one of the most respected and internationally known weavers in resistance was there for the opening and loved our performance. I chose to incorporate this painting in “Holding Fast to the Path of Peace” to help tell the Hopi story and emphasize the bond between the traditional Hopi and Dineh.

One of the paintings I created for the presentation is based on the Hopi Prophecy Rock, or Road Plan, which Grandfather took me to and explained the meaning of it’s symbols. The Elders say that it would take seven to nine days to fully explain the
symbols on the Prophecy Rock and the other sacred tablets of the Hopi. My challenge as an artist and teacher was to crystallize this incredibly complex knowledge so the most important concepts could be understood and generate a desire for more knowledge. I was excited by the prospect of creating a body of visual artwork to integrate with storytelling, producing a synergy of greater impact through the interweaving of the two art forms.

During our class, “The Narrative Intelligence: The Use of Story in Teaching and Learning”, Dr. Kriley told us that 70% of learning takes place through storytelling. The richly complex oral histories of the Hopi have been passed down accurately for millennium. The use of symbolism in the ancient form of pictographs is a brilliant way to call up vast amounts of complex information. Could the viewers be moved to contemplative reflection and a desire to learn more about this ancient wisdom as a guiding light in a troubled world? My hope was that the answer would be, “Yes.”

One of the Hopi prophecies warned that a “gourd of ashes” would be invented, which if dropped from the sky would boil the oceans and burn the land causing nothing to grow for many years. After the “gourd of ashes” was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Hopi Elders knew it was time to take their message of peace to the world. Grandfather David implored in a speech he gave in 1976, “If you have a way to spread the truth, through the newspapers, radio, books, through meeting with powerful people, tell the truth! ....May the Great Spirit guide you safely home and give you something important to do in this great work which lies ahead of us all.” (Mails, 1995, 354)
Chronology

In the summer of 2001, I began reading over my journals and selecting the most significant entries about my time with Grandfather David and the other Elders I worked with. I began reading and researching other sources of Hopi prophecy and chose the ones that resonated most closely with my own experience to study in depth. The books that were most useful were: *From the Beginning of Life to the Day of Purification, Hotevilla: Hopi Shrine of the Covenant, Microcosm of the World, The Hopi Survival Kit, and The Second Long Walk*. The authors of these books interviewed Elders and accurately recorded their testimony without interjecting their own ideas. By the summer of 2002, I had begun preliminary work on the portraits of three Elders. I worked from memory, my own photographs and a variety of other resource materials. I also studied *Alla Prima; Everything I Know about Painting*, by Richard Schmid to improve my painting in the areas of value, edges and composition.

I love to tell stories and have been known to be in the “Hairy Dog” category, that is, long-winded and extremely detailed. Through some excellent constructive criticism I received during the first year of Creative Pulse, I was encouraged to condense and crystallize my stories. I have worked very hard on this and have been commended for my progress. It is an essential skill in the classroom and I continue to practice succinctness in class and in my storytelling.

“People tend to rearrange their memories,” says a dear friend, author, and linguist, Jodey Bateman. As I researched in depth the best sources I could find on Hopi prophecy, I discovered some discrepancies in the information I had recorded in my journals and the
information I was reading. I thought perhaps I had unintentionally rearranged my memory or I had not been able to recall with accuracy everything Grandfather had told me. I decided to research as much first-hand information written and published by the Elders themselves. I also contacted a former coworker to locate an original recording of Grandfather David singing and speaking. By winter, I received the rare cassette tape and was thrilled to hear his voice and laughter again. I played it over and over while I painted and worked on the stories. I decided to incorporate part of this recording of Grandfather telling his own story into the presentation.

My advisors had suggested I read *The Reenchantment of Art* by Suzi Gablik. I found it very empowering to see how many other artists are passionate about “reenchanting” the world through their art.

“Art may not change anything,” Bergman states, “but the ideas we have about ourselves we project into the world… Negative images have a way of coming alive just as positive images have. If we project images of beauty, hope, healing, courage, survival, cooperation, interrelatedness, serenity, imagination and harmony, this will have a positive effect. Imagine what artists could do if they became committed to the long-term good of the planet. The possibilities are beyond imagination. If all artists would ever pull together for the survival of humankind, it would be a power such as the world has never known.” (Gablik, 155)

Reading this book confirmed my desire to begin the presentation with a purification ceremony that Grandfather taught me and to end with a voluntary group participation in a prayer circle.

As winter progressed, a serious health crisis in my immediate family consumed my time and energy. When the threat of grave consequences had subsided, my counselor advised me to begin to paint again “with the Elders’ Spirits sitting on my shoulders.” I gained renewed spiritual strength, solace, and balance through painting. I reflected on
how difficult it must be for my students to keep their focus on learning when faced with
daunting personal challenges. I decided to incorporate some art lessons that would give
them more opportunity to “tell their stories” and access their personal wisdom.

In March, I was ready to begin work on the large painting of the Prophecy Rock. I
needed to have the space to experiment with a layering of texture. I wanted to be able
to throw and splatter paint, sand and medium on the canvas, but my little kitchen/studio
space was too small. On March 14th, my husband noticed an invitation in the paper for a
“Gathering of Artists for Peace” in Caras Park, from noon to five. It was the day before
George McGovern was to be the keynote speaker there for a peace rally that made the
front page of the New York Times. I decided to pack up my paints and canvas and set up
in the park to work.

In our personal performances, Dr. Randy Bolton had encouraged us “to take an
artistic action in public to evidence who and what you are and how that works.” It
seemed like a perfect opportunity and it was even warm enough that I didn’t have to paint
with gloves on. Two very amazing things happened during the hours while I was
painting in this public setting. A young man had been sent by his father to the event to
speak with people about why they were for peace and against military action in Iraq. He
had just come back from two years of military service in Afghanistan and was clearly
struggling to make sense of his experience. We had a very heartfelt conversation with
him. Although he was not at liberty to give any details, he did tell us that the horror of
what was going on in Afghanistan was not being reported in the media.

As I continued to work on the painting in this public setting, I was given the
opportunity “to evidence who and what I am and how that works.” Nan Cohen, the
producer of a show for public television called “Light TV,” walked up to me and asked if she could interview my husband, Rick, and myself about our visions for peace and Hopi Prophecy for her television show. My painting at that point, included layered textures of the Prophecy Rock with sand from the Clark Fork River added in and the entire image of the petroglyphs of the Road Plan.

Rick and I agreed to being interviewed for Nan’s show, so she set up her equipment and we began. I shared a dream/vision I had when I was only five-years-old that clearly revealed our spiritual oneness with all life, that we are one world family created by the same Great Spirit. All we have to do is treat everyone on the planet as our brothers and sisters and we will end needless suffering and achieve world peace. This vision has guided my life and resonates with the traditional Hopi philosophy. I then explained my painting of the Prophecy Rock. Rick spoke of his vision for peace in Iraq. This was a huge step for him to speak publicly for broadcasting on TV.

The program aired the next month on Missoula Cable Access Television (MCAT) and Nan sent us a tape of the show. Several people approached me after the show aired and thanked me for sharing the Hopi message of peace. One viewer, Ruth Guthrie, also came to the presentation. She offered great feedback and wanted to learn more about how to lead a spiritual life according to Hopi tradition and more stories of my experience with the Hopis.

I continued working on my painting of the Prophecy Rock, layering photographic images of Grandfather David into the rock surface and filled the sky with collaged images and messages from current newspapers that correlate directly to fulfillment of the ancient prophesies. Mike Birnbaum, Flagship coordinator for Hellgate High School,
invited me to put on a presentation about the peace movement for Diversity Week on April 18th. I accepted the invitation and invited Bryany Schwann from "Women’s Voices for the Earth" and my husband, Rick, to join me. We each spoke for ten minutes and then opened it up for questions and answers. Bryany spoke about patriotism in a global community, Rick explored diversity of information in mainstream media and alternative news sources, and I spoke about Hopi prophecy and global survival, using the painting as a visual.

Since we had such a short time, it was challenging to choose a few important points and hope it would spark the students’ interest. We presented twice in the school auditorium to hundreds of students. The students asked many excellent questions, but there was not enough time to answer them all. One student asked about the meaning of a symbol that I was unsure of. I realized I had more research to do!

We had good feedback, including a young woman, Morgan, who was Hopi and still went back to Second Mesa every summer to stay with her grandparents. She thanked me for speaking about the Hopi traditional viewpoint and its relevance in the contemporary world. Two students said they liked the variety of having three speakers with related topics. One student said it was the most interesting presentation he had seen and he was amazed that the Hopis had prophesized World War I and World War II.

I was glad that I would have more time for my final presentation and also began thinking of ways I could present the information that would incorporate a greater variety of media. I envisioned using contemporary visual images showing the fulfillment of the prophecies projected on my painting of the Prophecy Rock, although I wondered if the images would be large enough to be clearly visible to the audience. In late spring, I
spoke with Dorothy Morrison, my committee chairman, about the progress of my project and she asked if I would like to present during the afternoon session of the Creative Pulse class of "Thinking in Symbol Systems: The Interaction of Biology and Culture." She felt that my presentation would fit in well with the exploration and creative interpretation of symbol systems. I was honored and excited to have the opportunity to share my project during class time.
Planning the Performance

In May, I began meeting with Jason Gutzmer, a very talented 1997 fine arts graduate of the University of Montana, whom I had performed with in 2000. He has been touring for six years in Central and South America with “La Caravana”, an international non-profit theater group, who’s mission is to bring grassroots ecological awareness and education to the Americas. Jason offered to help me with the staging, lighting, and the multi-media effect I had envisioned.

While we were brainstorming, I told Jason about my experience of being invited into the kiva for the all-night purification ceremony of Pa-Mu-Ya, or the Bean Dance Ceremony. I described the profound feeling of being inside the womb of Mother Earth and the powerful prayers of the Kachinas singing, dancing and drumming. “Kachinas” are intermediaries between the spiritual deities and the Hopis, serving as messengers and bearers of blessings. I could feel the power of the ceremony creating a spiritual vortex with the prayers rising to the Great Spirit and descending into the center of Mother Earth. Jason was inspired to help create a stage set that would artistically simulate the sacred space of the kiva.

I initially was considering including the story of being inside the kiva. I thought about actually building a kiva ladder so an actor in a Kachina mask could descend to the stage, dance and drum. But, on an ethical and cultural level, I was concerned about the possible inappropriateness of representing parts of the ceremony. I consulted with Dorothy Morrison and a trusted friend in New Mexico who had worked closely with me on the Hopi and Dineh Reservations. I carefully considered their opinions and my own
intuition and chose not to include this part. I decided to keep the focus on the actual teachings of the Elders and their own published wisdom, which they fervently wish to be understood by humankind.

“Often we are sad and discouraged that our voices are not being heard, we try not to grieve, instead we gather strength from the teaching we learned; that we must neither lose sight of our prayers or the Divine Laws of our Creator, Laws which never change or break down, that often bring miracles when one meets obstacles which seem impossible to pass. For better or worse we must struggle until our prophecies are fulfilled.

The wisdom accumulated by anyone who is willing to stand up and be counted is respected. Anyone with a strong spirit and strength who is unafraid of reaching our goal of destiny, which is good for the earth and all life, can understand the tasks involved, and can count on support from others. There is a saying, ‘If one or two be strong, three or four will be greater under the banner of the Great Creator.”’ (Mails, 1997, 368)

The next challenge was to figure out how to technically create the multimedia effect I had envisioned images of the fulfilled prophecies flashing on the Prophecy Rock. In order to make the images large enough for the whole audience to see, Jason suggested that I take a slide of the painting and project it on the largest screen or surface we could rig up and then project video images on that. He had produced a similar effect in a production in the jungles of South America with a giant sheet of plastic for a screen. He also knew of a simple yet ingenious way to make the images seem to ethereally emerge and recede into the Prophecy Rock.

He taught me how to use two VCRs and a television set to fabricate a video of short clips collaged together for projecting on the Prophecy Rock image. We used excellent videos, “Koyannisquatsi” and “Baraka.” These videos have no words and are a series of images of the natural and manmade world. The title of the first one is a Hopi word meaning “life out of balance” and was created in collaboration with Hopi traditionalists.
Jason and I planned the stage lighting to be very dark, moving the spotlighting from the altar space to the storyteller's position and each of the paintings as the stories progressed. We wanted the paintings to slowly emerge out of the darkness and appear to glow and float in space. The paintings would be actual characters in the dramatization.
The Performance

As July 11th approached, last minute details were worked out. Jason and I successfully weathered numerous challenges, such as: double-booked rehearsal schedules, concern about the length and clarity of the audiocassette recording of Grandfather David, and the decision to use the largest projection screen available at the University instead of the humongous plastic sheet we had suspended across the back of the stage which unfortunately reduced the projected images to unrecognizable blobs. I was grateful for Jason’s optimistic confidence and dogged determination. He gave me insightful constructive feedback about not reading specific quotes from other sources that I had planned to include. In the short time we had for rehearsal directly before the performance, I had struggled to read the quotes in the subdued lighting. Jason confirmed what I was feeling; it detracted from the personal connection with the audience and was an unnecessary addition. Jason’s Columbian wife, Penelope, calmed my jitters by reminding me that all I had to do was trust in the Spirit and speak from my heart. At last it was time to present the Hopi message of world peace and harmony with Mother Earth.

As friends, family, colleagues and faculty gathered in the lobby, one of my oil paintings, a portrait of the Dineh Elder, Ruth Benally, greeted them by the entrance to the Masquer Theater. Traditional Hopi music playing inside the theater invited the audience to enter. I felt very exhilarated and centered. All the research, practice, passion and three summers of Creative Pulse gave me the skills and confidence to present “Holding Fast to the Path of Peace” to the best of my ability. The audience settled in and Grandfather David’s voice began to sing as the spotlight on his painting slowly illuminated his image

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before the Prophecy Rock. I purposely included about twenty minutes of Grandfather singing and telling stories. I wanted the audience to experience what it is like to patiently listen to a traditional Elder speak. There were times at traditional gatherings I have attended, when the Elders would literally speak for days before anyone else was allowed to speak.

While Grandfather’s voice sang and told stories of his life and the prophecies, I set up the altar slowly in the center of the stage, sprinkling sacred blue cornmeal to the four directions, Mother Earth and Father Sky. I smudged the altar space and focused on sending the purifying smoke to all of the audience, especially two of my closest friends who had just been diagnosed with cancer. I was delighted that they were sitting in the second row.

When the altar was complete, I sat down on a pile of sheepskins and began to gradually roll a long meandering strand of yarn into a ball. I placed it on the altar as a symbol of the earth and our oneness. As Grandfather finished his story, I began to speak of our first meeting in 1977 and the profound impact he had on my life. This narrative flowed into the interpretation of the Hopi Prophecy Rock, as Grandfather’s portrait slowly faded and “The Hopi Prophecy Rock” became illuminated. About halfway through the explanation of the petroglyphs in the Road Plan, the huge projected image of the painting emerged from the center back stage wall. The translucent video images began to dance across, under and over the surface. One of the last prophecies involved the Dineh and their struggle against relocation from their homeland. As I told the story of my relationship with the Dineh medicine woman, Katherine Smith, her portrait began to glow as if it was multi-dimensional.
The presentation culminated in an invitation to the audience to come up on stage and form a circle around the altar. There were so many of us we had to make a spiral circle. We then centered our thoughts on world peace and beginning in the center, each of us had the opportunity to offer a positive thought or prayer for peace as we went around the circle. I began the circle with Grandfather David’s simple prayer, “May all the children everywhere drink the sweet milk of the Mother Earth!” When we had gone all around the circle, I had planned to read a longer Hopi prayer, but I was wrapped up in the middle of the spiral and the written prayer was stage left. Someone asked if Batya could lead us in a beautiful prayer/song that she had taught us, “Isn’t It Holy Just To Be Here?” It was the perfect spontaneous conclusion to acknowledge and honor the Spirit in us all. We then enjoyed some good Hopi food—organic cantaloupe and blue corn chips.

We also had a group discussion following the sharing of food. Several people were curious about how the special lighting effects were achieved. I also explained why I included such a long excerpt from the audiotape of Grandfather speaking. Several students said the presentation was well done and meaningful, another said that the Hopi message was profound. One of my friends, who had helped with the “Weavers in Resistance” Dineh rug show, spoke of the importance of continuing to support the traditional Elders and educating the public about the Relocation.
Classroom Connections

There are continuing connections both direct and indirect between my master’s project and my students in the classroom. In the fall, as I was working on my portraits at home, I began a special project with my middle school classes illustrating a calendar for the Montana State Food Bank. The money raised from the sales of the three thousand calendars went to support the Food Bank. We worked with proportion, shading and capturing emotion in their portraits. I brought in my painting of Ruth Benally for an example of showing emotion in facial expression and creating art as a means of increasing awareness of important issues. They drew beautiful, haunting pencil portraits of Montana children and families facing hunger. They were proud of their contributions and several students helped sell calendars (Appendix F).

As winter progressed, I had the additional stress of a major health crisis with an immediate family member. At first, it was all I could do to keep up with my teaching, but as the threat of grave consequences subsided, my counselor advised me to continue painting with “the Elders’ Spirits sitting on my shoulders.” I found increased inner strength and solace in my painting. I realized that focusing on the process of making art was very therapeutic for me and helped me to be more grounded, centered and able to cope with the stress and be more effective in promoting healing. Several of my students were suffering from homelessness, separation and even death in their families. I empathized with how difficult it must also be for them to keep their focus on learning when faced with daunting personal challenges. I decided to incorporate some art lessons that would give them more opportunity to “tell their stories” and access their own
personal strength.

My eighth grade students created three-dimensional Joseph Cornell boxes incorporating personal themes and mementos from their lives into their artwork. Joseph Cornell (1903-1973) was a constructivist artist with his beginnings in surrealism. He spent most of his sheltered life in Queens, New York with his mother and crippled brother. He scavenged junk shops and antique stores for relics that he combined with keepsakes of his life into fascinating, compartmentalized boxes. The students’ boxes took on a feeling of shrines, secret gardens, and fantasy castles. Some of them honored family members, special relationships and fond memories. When they wrote their artist statements, several of them noticed that their boxes had unexpectedly evoked deeper personal meanings than they had originally intended (Appendix G).

The sixth graders did a project in which they created their own abstract symbols for their family members and arranged them in a composition. Their personal explanations of their work demonstrated their appreciation of their families’ support and their place within it. Several of them included family members who had passed on.

I was excited to also have the opportunity to share my project with Hellgate High School during Diversity Week, actually creating the Prophecy Rock painting at a public “Artists for Peace” event and have this documented and produced in a public television program (for details, see Chronology, p.6).

In the fall of 2003, I used two of my paintings to help introduce a unit on petroglyphs and cave paintings. I told my classes some stories about the Hopis and Grandfather David. I also taught them how to say a few words in the Hopi language,
which they thoroughly enjoyed. My students created dynamic cave art paintings that integrated with their social studies unit on prehistoric man.

I designed a lesson during the Creative Pulse class, “Creative-Critical Thinking and Qualitative Inquiry”, that combines creating impressionistic monoprints with poetry. The project begins with making a monoprint from a finger-painting of a tree, then responding to the artwork by creating a poem incorporating the five senses. My seventh grade students did a great job with this project. One of my students, Laura Sterner, made an unusual print that looked like the silhouette of a woman. The image spontaneously brought forth feelings about her process of mourning the death of a friend.

My Tree

It’s raining, so the colors disappear
This is a tree that has colors like a rainbow
Leaves dance to the music
Tastes like vanilla ice cream
Has the beat of a drum
Feels like fire
This looks like a portrait of a friend
Who was killed by a drunk driver
She fades away
Because her memory is slowly fading away
By Laura Sterner

I was invited to present an art lesson that would promote literacy at the “Five Valleys Reading Council,” on September 20, 2003, at the University of Montana. I chose this lesson, entitling it “Prints and Poems”, using my student’s examples to introduce it. The teachers were very responsive and seemed to enjoy the freedom of finger-painting as much as my students. One of the teachers wrote this note on his evaluation form, “It is great to see your enthusiasm for the arts. You should check into being an instructor for Lesley University in Boston. They have a Masters Program in creative arts. You would be great as an instructor.” He spoke with me further to explain that their instructors
facilitate weekend workshops for teachers all over the country. I am intrigued by this possible avenue of inspiring other teachers and definitely plan on following up on it!

One concept that has been reinforced through my process with my final project is the importance of giving students the freedom to create art about topics they feel passionately about. It is immaterial whether their favorite subject is endangered animals, sports or popular music, if it is important to them, they will be excited and motivated to express themselves through their art.
Artistic Connections

I started taking Saturday art classes from the Maryland Institute when I was six and spent two years after high school attending the Schuler School of Fine Arts, studying under Ann Didusch Schuler. Ann was a great influence on me, personally and artistically. At the Maryland Institute, Ann was the teaching assistant of Jacques Maroger, who had been the technical director of the Louvre, in Paris before he came to America in 1939. Maroger devoted his life to researching the old masters' painting techniques, pigments and their transparency on canvas. He was best known for the rediscovery of the mediums of Jan Van Eyck and other Renaissance painters. Ann and her husband, Hans, established the Schuler School of Fine Arts in 1959. I loved the morning ritual of preparing our palettes by mixing powdered European pigments with linseed oil on a marble slab. We were taught to stretch and prime our own canvases with a concoction of rabbit skin glue. We studied anatomy, worked from live models and were taught how to layer transparencies of paint using Maroger medium to create depth and luminosity in our paintings. Ann’s ability to capture the inner light and vibrancy of the models in her portraits was amazing.

Throughout the process of envisioning, developing and actualizing “Holding Fast to the Path of Peace”, I feel I have grown tremendously, as a person and as an artist. It has taken an amazing amount of dedication, time and energy to complete this project to the best of my ability. I chose the medium of painting to create a visual body of work in conjunction with the stories to express my respect for the traditional elders, their wisdom and steadfast commitment to world peace. I have always loved painting and although I
have studied many styles and artists, I continue to come back to a primarily traditional, Western European style. Although the intent of my artwork is to honor Grandfather David and the other indigenous elders, I am not Hopi by blood. I do not feel it would be appropriate or respectful to try to imitate the Hopi style of artistic expression. I see my purpose more as a bridge for greater understanding between cultures. I hope that my work can speak to a diverse, multicultural audience, including traditional indigenous people.

This project also facilitated contact with several other artists. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Jason Gutzmer on the lighting and staging. I learned so much from him technically, but more important was the example he set with his positive, confident attitude that we would accomplish the theatrical effect we had envisioned. I also spoke with Nancy Erickson about my work while attending a panel discussion about her artwork and current exhibit at the Missoula Art Museum, “Nancy Erickson: Recent Works”. Some of the common themes in our artwork are respecting all life, living in balance with Mother Earth and respect for indigenous wisdom. Nancy said she would be very interested in seeing my paintings and hearing the Hopi stories.

A third serendipitous connection was with a photographer, Marcia Keegan. I had wanted to include a photograph of the Dalai Lama and the Hopi Elders in the appendix, but I needed to first ask permission from the publishers of Ocean of Wisdom: Guidelines of Living. When I called, the woman who answered told me she was the one who had taken that photograph in 1979 and that she was a friend of Grandfather David's. We found that we had many friends in common and she gave me permission to include her
photograph. She also asked if I could send her a copy of the manuscript when it was
finished.

It is very encouraging that other artists are interested in my work. I am eager to
continue developing this theme and exploring other ecofeminist concepts.
Reflections and Assessment

"Holding Fast to the Path of Peace" was presented on July 11, 2003 in the Masquer Theater of the University of Montana for my fellow Creative Pulse students, faculty, friends and family. In the summer of 2001, I submitted a proposal for my field project that would be presented in 2002. I wanted to create a dramatic presentation that included visual artwork and storytelling focusing on the sharing of spiritually significant events and teachings in my life that hold great meaning to me. I listed ten areas of interest, six of which were incorporated in the final product. As I began work on it, I realized that I needed more time and requested that this proposal be for my final project. An amazing process was set in motion with many serendipitous events increasing the risk, rigor and irrevocability of my efforts. I found that balancing a demanding teaching schedule, family commitments (with four active children still at home) and a major health crisis with one of my children, required a level of discipline and organization that was quite challenging.

The process has flowed with an organic momentum, shaped by the events and opportunities in my life. I believe that it really began when I had the powerful dream/vision of world peace when I was a child. This vision has guided my life and inspired me to explore various peace paradigms that resonate with my spiritual beliefs. Throughout my life, I have been actively involved in promoting civil rights, indigenous rights, respect for the environment, conflict resolution, spiritual freedom and world peace. I also have considered myself to be an artist as long as I can remember, so it is natural that I have expressed my beliefs through this form. As a parent and teacher, I am
concerned for the future and have endeavored to teach by example and inspire through my artwork.

I began living in northern New Mexico after the first Rainbow Gathering in 1972. I first visited Grandfather David in 1977 and Katherine Smith in 1982. For eleven years, I spent as much time as I could, working with both Hopi and Dineh traditionalists, helping with chores, herding sheep and volunteering at the Big Mountain Legal Defense Office in Flagstaff, Arizona, as the international outreach coordinator. Although I moved to Montana in 1988, I have continued to be an active supporter, traveling to the reservations for survival gatherings and ceremonies. I was also a guest speaker for ten years on the Navaho/Hopi Relocation for Mary Birch’s Social Work 101 Class, at the University of Montana. I painted “Katherine’s S.O.S” while I was taking the classes, “Native American Women” and “Advanced Painting” in 1990 at the University of Montana. I envisioned that painting as the beginning of a body of work to honor indigenous wisdom and inform the public about the relocation of the Hopi and Dineh. It has taken thirteen years to fully accomplish this goal and I am grateful for the impetus of the “Creative Pulse” to bring this project to fruition. One of my most beloved art professors from the University of Montana, Don Bunse, used to say, “Art isn’t hard to do, it’s just the easiest thing in the world to put off.”

The presentation of “Holding Fast to the Path of Peace” was a pinnacle in the process and it was an unexpected honor to be asked to present in three different venues in the near future. I see my final project as a continually evolving work of art, shaped by what the future brings. I feel proud of what I have achieved so far and eager to continue to improve on the presentation and keep painting. I did expect to have a successful
presentation, but I feel Jason’s expertise in lighting and staging enhanced the dramatic effect.

I did feel improvements could be made and welcomed feedback from the audience. I chose to include Grandfather’s songs and stories in his own voice to give the audience a feeling for the slow, unhurried pace of indigenous storytelling. Although I had a valid reason to include this long recording, I agree with the constructive criticism from Susan and Ruth (Appendix F). It was difficult to hear because of the quality of the recording and the length of the excerpt was too much for an unprepared audience. I will definitely shorten the excerpt and see if there is a way to clarify the recording. I will also shorten the historical portion and include more Hopi philosophy and suggestions for leading a more spiritual life. The next time I present, I will conclude with the beautiful Hopi prayer that I had intended to share at the end of the prayer circle.

I designed the paintings to work with the stories, although I do believe the three portraits could stand on their own. The “Hopi Prophecy Rock” would really need a written explanation next to it and formally speaking, it is the weakest in regards to the elements of art and composition. I feel the Elders’ portraits express their courage and wisdom. The triangular compositions emphasize their powerful connection to the Mother Earth. This connection enables them to live peacefully, in balance with their spirit, mind and body. Our contemporary society can learn much from their humble example.

The project is very significant to me on many levels. On a spiritual level, I have been able to share Grandfather’s vision of world peace and spiritual knowledge that could guide our journey towards acknowledging our oneness and working in harmony with each other and the Earth. Personally, it has helped me to become more organized,
focused and able to multi-task more effectively. On a professional level, the process of producing the final project and my participation in the entire program of the “Creative Pulse” has been fascinating and useful to me as an artist and a teacher. I have been able to heed Don Bunse’s advice and follow through on my creative ideas. In the classroom, I am much more able to recognize and seize teaching opportunities. I have increased my “can-do” approach to potential projects that the students would like to do and more readily facilitate problem solving of any perceived limitations. As a teacher, I have confirmed my belief that the most important purpose of education is to teach children how to move creatively from one moment to the next. Through my participation in the “Creative Pulse” and the process of my final project, I have become a better listener. I do much more collaborating with my students about what they want to learn and let them chose subjects they are excited about. They brainstorm together for ideas and often come up with much better ideas and solutions to problems than I could. They feel more empowered, capable and have real ownership of their process and product. I am also incorporating a lot more group work in my curriculum to give them more opportunity to practice cooperative communication skills and respectful teamwork.

I am continuing to improve and share what I have learned with my students and others. The purpose of “Holding Fast to the Path of Peace” is to inspire and affirm our potential for creating world peace together. I encourage my students to use their creativity to benefit the world and search out more opportunities for them to use their artistic skills for community service projects. For example, my seventh graders just completed a month long project for the Missoula County Health Department, creating giant paper mache sculptures of an ear, nose and mouth to be used as props in a puppet
show performed by nursing students. The show teaches children in day cares and schools about infectious diseases and how to stay healthy. A performance is scheduled at our school, DeSmet, on Tuesday, November 25, 2003. We will have media coverage and the seventh grade artists will be publicly recognized for their contribution to health care education in our community.

As an artist, I have a lot more confidence in my ability to produce professional quality work as a painter and storyteller. I feel much more willing to take risks, assess the results of my choices and continue to progress. I am able to accept constructive criticism more easily, without taking it personally, recognizing it as an invaluable tool for growth. I have increased my ability to work through “creative blocks” and keep moving forward. I have learned that other people see value in my work and appreciate my sharing it with them. I have given higher priority to the essential need to express myself through art and gained a deeper understanding of its’ therapeutic value, for my students and myself.

I will continue my journey of storytelling and expression through visual art as an artist, teacher and peace activist. My husband and I are both working on writing children’s stories and illustrating them. Even my ninety-year-old father has encouraged me to write my autobiography, which I would love to do. My grandmother had a major art exhibit when she was ninety-six and lived to be almost one hundred years old. Her motto was, “I just try to learn something new everyday.” Heeding her advice and that of Grandfather David’s when he told me to “Open the door at the top of your head!” will help me to live each moment to the fullest, as I am guided by the Great Spirit.
Works Consulted

Cheshire, Katherine. “Touch the Earth Foundation”

Cornell, Joseph. “Habitat for a Shooting Gallery” (1943)

Dorman, Robert. Big Mountain Relocation Background

Foxhall Gallery. “Jacques Maroger (1884-1962) and His Legacy”

Fricke, Ron. Baraka. Magidson Films, Inc. (video) 1992


Keegan, Marcia. His Holiness Receiving the Hopi Elders. Los Angeles, 1979 (photograph published in Ocean of Wisdom; Guidelines for Living)


Monongye, David. Audiotape recording of traditional Hopi songs and stories, unpublished, undated


Appendix A
The Paintings and Their Stories
“Grandfather David Monongye at the Prophecy Rock”
“Grandfather David Monongye at the Prophecy Rock”
(Detail)
This portrait is three and a half feet by five feet, done in acrylic paint on canvas. I created it from the memory of Grandfather David taking me to the Prophecy Rock in 1982 and explaining the meaning of the symbols. I painted the full figure of Grandfather in front of the Prophecy Rock. I wanted to portray him as if he was emerging from the Prophecy Rock and rooted to the Earth. I used deep, earthy colors with ambiguous edges blending into the shadows. The focus of the portrait is his twinkling eyes and strong, steady gaze.

When I first met Grandfather David, he was riding horseback into the 1977 World Peace Rainbow Gathering of the Tribes in New Mexico. He was ninety-two years old at the time and almost completely blind. He spent three days living in the main tipi circle. Each day, he would speak to us for hours, telling us his life story, the history and migrations of the Hopi people and about their simple, peaceful way of life. He explained Hopi philosophy, prophecies, warnings and sacred instructions given to them by the Great Creator Spirit through Maasaw, the Guardian Spirit of the Earth. Thousands of us listened respectfully as he spoke with humbleness, humor and wisdom. He told us, “It’s no coincidence that Hopi and ‘hippy’ sound so much alike, they both mean peaceful people.”

We were honored to have him share this ancient wisdom that related not only to the Hopi, but to all of the human family and the very survival of the Earth. He told us
that the Hopi had lived on this land during their migrations and that we could live here, too, if we cared for the land.

We were gathered in a very remote area, eighty miles from the closest town, adjacent to the Gila Wilderness. I had walked the site with archeologists before the Gathering and they had showed me two very distinctly Hopi petroglyphs painted on the rocks. One was a Hopi maiden harvesting sunflower seeds beside a multi-headed wild sunflower plant and the other depicted three concentric circles, which refers to one of the cycles of Hopi migration.

For the next eleven years, I visited Grandfather David and his wife, Nora, who was deaf, as often as I could. They lived in Hotevilla Village on Third Mesa in northern Arizona. The Hopi Villages are the oldest, continuously inhabited communities in North America. The Hopis have lived there for approximately one thousand years. I would stay for several days at a time and help in any way I could. I helped prepare food, write letters, mend clothes, and take Grandfather to meetings and to the kiva. The kiva is the subterranean ceremonial chamber where most of the preparation for the ceremonies and rituals take place. There are six kivas at Hotevilla, one in each neighborhood. I was privileged to witness several kachina dances and ceremonies. I also hauled water from the sacred spring below David’s house. The spring is located at the base of a cliff, beneath a low rock ledge. Hotevilla means,” scrape back” and is named for this spring.

Grandfather David dedicated his life to world peace and people from all over the world came to his doorstep. Even the Dalai Lama had a meeting with him and the other Elders, which fulfilled both Hopi and Tibetan prophecies (Appendix B). Once Grandfather greeted me with this prayer, “May all the children everywhere drink the
sweet milk of the Mother Earth!” He also loved to remind me, “Open the door at the top of your head!” as he gave me a pat on my head, reminding me to always be open to direct guidance from the Great Creator Spirit.

Grandfather had nicknames for lots of his friends, often quite humorous, such as Bob Boiling-Coffee and Robert Coca-Cola. He called me Homasa, which is the Hopi word for “feather”. I brought him Zuni salt from the sacred Zuni Salt Lake, turtle shells and parrot feathers that were used for ceremonial dress and rituals. In 1982, I went to central Mexico to an indigenous gathering with a group of Rainbow friends, where I was chosen to bring a special gift from the Aztec Nation back to Grandfather David and the Hopis.

It was such a joy to be with Grandfather David, Grandmother Nora, their family and the gracious people of Hotevilla. I will always cherish the time I spent with them and all that I learned about living in balance with the earth and in peace with all beings.
Photograph of Hopi Prophecy Rock
*From The Beginning Of Life To The Day Of Purification*

Painting of the "Hopi Prophecy Rock"
“Hopi Prophecy Rock”

(Detail)
“The Hopi Prophecy Rock”

This painting is five feet by three and a half feet on canvas. It is a mixed media piece, done in acrylic paint mixed with sand from the Clark Fork River and is collaged with images and text from photos and current newspapers correlating with the fulfillment of Hopi prophecies. Photographs of Grandfather David from different times in his life are embedded into the surface of the rock. The photograph in the upper left is one that I took of him at the Mount Taylor Indigenous Uranium Forum Gathering in 1979. The purpose of the images and text in the sky is to graphically demonstrate the accuracy of these ancient prophecies as they are being fulfilled right before our eyes. The location indicator, “We Are Here,” refers to where we are on the time line. We are precariously positioned just before what the Hopi call the Third Great Earth Shaking Event.

There are over one hundred prophecies, which have all come to pass except for a few, that may be fulfilled in the very near future. Some of the prophecies represented in the painting are; the Three Great Earth Shaking Events, which are World War I, II and the third event yet to come, political greed and corruption, increased wars, extreme and erratic weather events, such as the severity and increase in tornados and hurricanes, environmental degradation including, global warming, oil spills, species extinction, drought and flooding, leading to famine and great suffering. The fulfillment of these prophecies function as a warning to the human race to seriously look at the cause and effect of our actions and choose to be committed to living in balance with the Mother Earth before its too late.
In the fall of 1982, Grandfather David took me to the Prophecy Rock or *Road Plan*, as it is also referred to. It is a large sandstone rock inscribed with pictographs, a short distance from the highway on Second Mesa (Appendix D). The traditionalists state that about A.D. 1100, Maasaw, the Guardian Spirit of the Earth taught the Hopis how to achieve a life style that would blend with the land and celebrate life. This teaching came through Maasaw directly from the Great Creator Spirit. It was drawn on this rock wall in symbols and the traditional Elders have consulted it regularly since that time. Grandfather David explained the meaning of each symbol to me. It is a time line of the Fourth World, that we are living in now, which is swiftly drawing to a close. The Hopis believe that there have been three previous worlds or civilizations before this one. The Great Spirit destroyed each human civilization, because the people forgot that they were all part of the same Great Creator Spirit. They became greedy, selfish and so attached to material wealth that they turned against one another. The previous worlds were destroyed first by fire, then by ice and thirdly by flood.

The figure in the lower left is Maasaw, holding his torch in his right hand. His left hand is holding the reed through which the Hopi emerged onto the surface of the Earth, possibly twenty thousand years ago. The circle to the right represents the Fourth Cycle. The diamond shaped rectangle is the *Si-pa-pu*, which is the sacred place in the bottom of the Grand Canyon, through which the emergence was completed and the opening through which communication is maintained by all generations. The upper straight line emerging from the *Si-pa-pu* is the greedy, materialistic path, which becomes the *Zigzag Path of Annihilation*. The figures above this line are the two-hearted, or the ones whose heads are not connected to their hearts. Grandfather explained that in the
original pictograph, the heads were separate from the bodies, but someone scratched necks on them. I have represented these figures as they were originally. I had quoted Grandfather in my journal as saying, “They represent those who go against the Plan of the Great Spirit and do not respect the Land or the teachings of the Elders (BIA, etc.)” (Appendix D).

The lower straight line is the path the Hopi are instructed to follow. It is the path of peace, simplicity, sharing and balance with the Earth and all living creatures. This traditional path ends up in a cornfield with a stooped figure holding a planting stick, representing the peace and prosperity awaiting those who remain faithful. Along this line, are three circles symbolizing the Three Great Earth-Shaking Events, World War I, World War II and the third event yet to come, which will finalize the Great Purification. Between the second and third circle, is a vertical line, which represents the Time of Going To and Fro, or great confusion, when many will abandon the traditional way, give in to temptation and go against the instructions of the Great Creator Spirit. Some will also cross over from the materialistic way and follow the traditional path, such as the “Hippies”.

Grandfather explained to me that there are three ways in which the Great Purification will take place. In the first way, humans would realize we had become out of balance with the natural world and would choose to live in peace and voluntarily adopt ecologically sustainable practices. Unfortunately, we have passed the time when this process could have happened. In the second way, the Mother Earth would try to communicate how severely she is being injured. It would involve major environmental disruptions causing great suffering. At this point, enough people would realize that our
survival depends on living peacefully with respect for the Mother Earth. These humans would significantly change the way they live, providing an example for the others to follow. I believe there is still time for this second way of purifying the Earth to happen, although the window of opportunity is swiftly closing. The third and final way could involve the complete destruction of life on Earth, possibly through nuclear holocaust and/or environmental collapse. But somehow, perhaps through extra-terrestrial intervention, there would be just one or two peaceful people left to become the seed for the Fifth World. The description of this third devastating way is very similar to Revelations in the New Testament.

“They final stage, called ‘The Great Day of Purification’ has been described as a ‘Mystery Egg’ in which the forces of the swastika and the Sun, plus a third force symbolized by the color ‘red,’ culminate either in total rebirth or total annihilation. We don’t know which of these it will be. But we do know that the choice will be mankind’s and that war and natural catastrophe may be involved. The degree of violence will be determined by the degree of inequity caused among the people of the world, and by the balance of nature that is preserved. In this crisis, rich and poor will be forced to struggle as equals in order to survive.” (Mails, 519, 1995)

Once the Gourd of Ashes, or atomic bomb was dropped, the Hopis knew it was time to share their prophecies with the rest of the world in hopes of averting global disaster. The traditional Hopis have tried to address the United Nations four different times, as instructed by their prophecy about the House of Mica, built on the eastern shore of Turtle Island (North America). After four attempts without success, they were to throw their case behind them. This fourth and final time happened in 1987. Grandfather David was really despondent about the U.N. refusing to let them address the leaders of the world. He put on the cloud mask a few months after this, on April 4, 1988, at the age of one hundred and four.

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I found out this past spring that the Prophecy Rock has been all but destroyed by vandals. The pictographs have been obliterated beyond recognition, as if someone deliberately pulverized the surface of the rock with a sledgehammer. Although, at times, it seems very difficult to remain optimistic, it is my fervent prayer that we still have a chance to consciously and spiritually evolve together, living peacefully as one human family with respect for all life. I feel very fortunate to have been taught by Grandfather David and I am committed to sharing this knowledge with anyone who is interested.

The most comprehensive account of the prophecies, instructions and warnings revealed by the Hopi Elders is presented by Thomas Mails in *The Hopi Survival Kit*. He has compiled most of the information directly from the traditional newsletters, *Techqua Ikachi, Land and Life*, written by the Elders between 1975 and 1986, when they felt they had to go public with their views.

“While Tribal Council police and members sought without success over this eleven year period to locate their meeting place, 44 issues plus one special bulletin were hammered out and published. Dan did not say where they were printed. David Monongye served as the editor, and they are an exceptionally rich kind of information that is not otherwise available in Hopi literature, since they tell us firsthand what the unyielding Traditional Hopi themselves have felt, thought, and done as this momentous last century has passed by.” (Mails, 27, 1995)
"Katherine's S.O.S."
“Katherine’s S.O.S.”

This painting is four by four feet on canvas, done in acrylics. I actually painted it in 1990, although I added a few finishing touches in the summer of 2003. I painted this portrait of Katherine to honor her courage and wisdom. In 1984, Katherine walked into a Relocation Commission meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona and sat down, wearing her U.S. flag like a shawl over her shoulders. Because she speaks very little English, she had help to paint the following statements on each white stripe; “U.S. out of Big Mountain, Apartheid in Arizona, Relocation is Genocide and Repeal P.L. 93-531.” The flag was upside down to symbolize a country in distress. This was her way to peacefully protest the horrible injustice being forced on her people. The commissioners didn’t have the nerve to say one word to her, but, next meeting’s agenda had this statement typed on the bottom, “No one wearing a flag will be permitted into this meeting.” I knew I had to paint Katherine wearing her flag, but I chose to have her standing in front of the Window Rock instead of in a building. The Window Rock is sacred to the traditional Dineh, but is now the backdrop for the tribal government complex, built at the base of it.

I believe this is my best painting and it is my personal favorite.

Katherine Smith is a friend of Grandfather David’s and a Dineh medicine woman who lives at Big Mountain, near the Hopi Reservation. I met her in 1980, when I went out to her hogan in the middle of winter to help transport a volunteer who had been helping her. Although she speaks only Dineh, she was able to teach me how to make fry
bread by balling back up each of my attempts until I had mastered the technique to her satisfaction.

Katherine knows the herbs and medicine of Big Mountain and is able to concoct cures for various ailments. Once, a young mother with a five-month-old baby had come to the reservation to help out. Her baby came down with a severe case of chickenpox and a high fever. Katherine immediately went out and collected herbs to make a tea for the baby to drink and to bathe her in. Within twenty-four hours, the baby’s temperature was normal and the lesions were healing.

Both the traditional Dineh and Hopis have been staunchly resisting relocation from their sacred land at the hands of the U.S. government and multinational corporations, Peabody Coal being the main one. In 1974, Public Law 93-531, or the Relocation Act, was passed through Congress. This law has forced over ten thousand traditional people from their homeland in northern Arizona to open the land for the mining of coal and uranium. Very few citizens are aware of what is happening, primarily because of a deliberate campaign of misinformation and the unwillingness of mainstream media to publish the truth. *The Second Long Walk,* by Jerry Kammer, is one of the best documentary books that truthfully chronicles the history, complexities and horrendous, continuing effect of the Relocation on the Hopi, Dineh and the Mother Earth.
“Ruth Benally-
No Matter How Small I Am, I Will Fight With My Fists If I Have To,
But I Will Never Leave Big Mountain”
“Ruth Benally

“No Matter How Small I Am, I Will Fight With My Fists If I Have To,
But I Will Never Leave Big Mountain”

This portrait is twenty-four by twenty inches, done in oil and acrylics on canvas. I was inspired to paint Ruth because she embodies the traditional Dineh’s determination to live in a humble way, close to the Mother Earth, respecting the Creator’s Laws above artificial man-made laws. The title of the painting is a statement that Ruth made to the government fencing crew as she physically blocked them from erecting a barbed-wire partition fence near her ceremonial hogan.

Ruth Benally is also a Dineh medicine woman. She is a sacred pipe carrier and her family has helped host the sacred Sundance Ceremony at Big Mountain for twenty years. She is probably about ninety pounds, soaking wet, and is tough as nails. She was arrested two summers ago in 2001, when tribal police tried to stop the Sundance Ceremony. Ruth is determined to protect their sacred land and continue to follow the instructions the Great Spirit gave her people. One of the Creator’s laws for the Dineh is to always live within the four sacred mountains and to protect the land. Therefore, it would go against their religious instructions to relocate and would also open up the land to further mineral exploitation by the multinational corporations. Her children and grandchildren are following in her traditional footsteps and have worked very hard to educate the public about the Relocation.
Appendix B
Photograph of Hopi Elders with the Dalai Lama

Photograph by Marcia Keegan, 1979
Appendix C
Journal Entry
Drawing of the Prophesy Rock
As Grandfather David explained it to us on Nov. 20, 1982 at the Prophecy Rock - the figure in the lower left is the Great Spirit showing the People the Way on the Good Red Road, the diamond shape represents the 4 directions. The circles are the World Wars. The figure above are the ones whose heads are not attached to their bodies. They represent those who go against the Plan of the Great Spirit & do not respect the Land or the teachings of the Elders (BIA etc). The path is the path they try to lead the People on but it leads to annihilation. On the other path is a stooped figure with a cone (David?) leading the People on the Path of Peace. The line goes off the piece of the prophecy, but there is a missing which footnote of the Prophecy. The Hopis believe that this piece will be returned to them when it is time for that part of the Prophecy to be fulfilled.
HOLDING FAST
TO THE PATH OF PEACE

THE TEACHINGS OF
HOPI PROPHECY THROUGH
GRANDFATHER DAVID MONONGYE

FINAL CREATIVE PULSE PROJECT BY
FEATHER SHERMAN
TOGETHER WITH ALL NATIONS
WE PROTECT BOTH LAND AND LIFE
AND HOLD THE WORLD IN BALANCE.

SOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOPI
AND DINEH TRADITIONAL ELDERS:

BOOKS

HOTEVILLA - HOPI SHRINE OF THE COVENENT
MICROCOSM OF THE WORLD
BY THOMAS E. MAILS & DAN EVEHEMA 1995

THE HOPI SURVIVAL KIT - THE PROPHEISIES, INSTRUCTIONS, & WARNINGS REVEALED BY
LAST ELDERS 1997

THE SECOND LONG WALK - THE NAVAJO - HOPI LAND DISPUTE
JERRY KAMMER
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS 1980

FILMS @ THE CRYSTAL
KOYANNISQUATSI
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TECHOQUIA IKACHI-LAND&LIFE THE TRADITIONAL
HOPI'S NEWSLETTERS

*****SPECIAL THANKS TO JASON GUTZMER FOR EXPERTISE & INSPIRATION

"MAY ALL THE CHILDREN EVERYWHERE
DRINK THE SWEET MILK OF THE MOTHER EARTH"
GRANDFATHER DAVID
Appendix E
Lighting and Staging

Lighting and staging summary for Masquer Theatre performance by Feather Sherman.
Artistic Direction: Jason Gutzmer

We used three ETC specials focused and shuttered in on the three paintings with a warm gel to make the work slowly appear and float in space. We wanted the artworks to act like characters in the performance and have no other visual distractions. We also used a red glowing pool in the center of the stage created by a PAR 64 and a red/orange gel. This space created the altar and set the tone for the purification before the storytelling. In the actor’s position downstage right, we used another ETC special, shuttered in with a warm gel and a gobo breakup to cast the light in a shadowy pool. This was also augmented by a small amount of cool light by another special, when the actor rose to speak about the painting behind her seat. In total, the design consisted of only six lighting instruments. The original lighting was inspired by the stories of Feather Sherman’s experiences within the Kiva with the Hopi.

The video and photo projection was done from the booth with both slide and video projection done simultaneously on a large 14 foot screen and the entire back drop for the acting space was framed by a 25x20 foot scrim of plastic sheeting and four black bi-fold flats. The audio was done from back stage. Two techs. operated the audio and visual/lighting effects.

Written by Jason Gutzmer
Appendix F:
Student portraits for the Montana State Food Bank Network Calendar

by Alicia Owens, 7th grade 2002

by Nikkiah Ketron, 7th grade 2002
Appendix G
Joseph Cornell Box and Student Cornell Box

“Habitat for a Shooting Gallery” by Joseph Cornell, 1943

“Fairies in a Gloom Sort of Place” by Ashley McCann, 8th grade 2002
Appendix H
Feedback After the Presentation
Letters from Ruth Guthrie and Susan Flanagin

Rick Sherman

From: "ruth guthrie" <mojogger@hotmail.com>
To: <lovehorses@blackfoot.net>
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2003 12:23 PM
Subject: Re: hello, you fabulous people

Feather, I can think of two things that may have improved your presentation. The first is that, despite my undivided attention, I could understand very little of what Grandfather was saying in the recording. Maybe if you have the time (ya, right) you could use subtitles, with all due respect to Grandfather.

Also, I left feeling like I wanted to learn more. More about how to lead a spiritual life according to the Hopi tradition. More about how these great people view the world. Tell us more stories, Feather about your experiences with the Hopi people. They're so fascinating.

Good luck with your thesis. I know it's painful. I worked on a paper for a year after I got my undergraduate degree— it was a subject I really care about and I wanted it to be a worthwhile project. I didn't know when I'd get back to school, etc. so I asked my professor for a bigger assignment than the one she gave in class. I got what I asked for. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done. But it was so worth it. I learned a lot, and now, when things get frustrating for me in life all I have to do is say to myself, "well, at least I'm done with my paper", and all other problems sort of pale in comparison.

Peace,
Ruth
Hi Feather,

I was glad I could come to your presentation. My friend, Helen Louisa DuPuis, left because she does not hear well, and the taped part went on too long for her. Perhaps that could be shortened, but only if others mention length. I appreciated hearing the interview. I liked how you had ceremony during that part, liked the smudging and the slow rolling up of the string. I appreciated hearing about the prophecy wall, and liked the effect of your presentation on the screen. The only part I felt weak was the ending. I think something more specific should have been done in terms of prayer or unifying comments. The song you asked that woman to sing was a good idea. I couldn’t help but think of the way Unity Church ends their Sunday morning. The congregation is holding hands in a circle around the sanctuary, they sing the peace song, the speaker says a few words, then people say, “Have fun!” and squeeze hands. I would have liked a similar feeling to end things.

Love,

Susan
Note from Denise Guilliani

June 13, 2015

Dear Feather,

Congratulations on your final performance in the Puls. It was such a heartfelt and meaningful presentation.

Your artwork was worthy of your very serious subject. I think your old uncle was very proud. The painting seemed to grow with an inner light in fact so did you!

The large screen was interesting to watch as you spoke. I'm curious how you got that effect of overlay and movement.

Nice conclusion as well with the group prayer. I think your message will reverberate in the minds and hearts of all present.

Again, congratulations and best wishes for a smooth completion of the paper requirement and your degree. You are almost there!

Blessings,
Denise