Nah Sihks! Hello Friends! Nayka nim Steph Littlebird Fogel, Guest Curator of "This IS Kalapuyan Land" and I’m taking over the museum IG account this week! Over the next few days, I will share some of my favorite artists with you, as well as some of my own artwork. Wednesday, we'll collaborate on a creative project that everyone can do at home! Saturday, we'll share what everyone created during my LIVE IG Q&A session.

A bit about me: I am a registered member of the Grand Ronde Confederated Tribes, grew up in rural NW Oregon, and currently work out of Portland.

When I'm not painting, I write full time and currently serve as the 2020 AICAD-NOAA National Artist Fellow.

This summer I will be working on a public art project with NOAA Fisheries in Northern California, to educate citizens about fish reintroduction and the impending extinction of their winter run Chinook Salmon. One of my passions is making art that informs individuals about ecological, social, and political issues.

Did you know that the Five Oaks Museum has fully digitized "This IS Kalapuyan Land"? The T.I.K.L. exhibition will never close and remains available on their website in perpetuity to honor the Original People of the Willamette Valley. Visit their website today and learn about the hidden histories of Oregon. Thanks for reading and following along!
Greetings my friends! Today I thought it would be fun to share some of the work I did during my unique role as curator for "This IS Kalapuyan Land." Normally, a curator is responsible for things like recruiting artists and designing the layout of an exhibition. My role as curator for T.I.K.L. also included a critical review of the museum's preexisting exhibition on my ancestors, the Kalapuyan people (Originally titled "This Kalapuyan Land").

The preexisting exhibition, created over 15 years ago (by non-Native experts at the museum) was riddled with errors, erasures, stereotypes, and misinformation. In my first task as curator, I reviewed each panel for errors and collaborated with our own tribal scholar and Grand Ronde member, Dr. David Lewis.

With his help, I marked and changed each museum panel, recontextualizing language, reframing photographs, highlighting inaccurate scientific narratives, and timelines.

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Through this process, I began to reveal the underlying biases and inaccuracies present throughout the original exhibition panels, exposing how important language and perspective is when remembering historical atrocities. These corrections - like a teacher's red pen on a first draft - call out to the audience for more attention ... "Check your sources." The edits might also make you wonder how many inaccuracies exist in your own local museums...

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These edits are an act of reclamation of my own family history, and our history as First Peoples. The corrections reflect many generations of state-sanctioned trauma, erasure, and systemic injustices which have continued to infect the way Indigenous people are remembered and regarded within broader American culture today.

This "editing" process is also a component of the creative prompt I will share tomorrow, so I hope this will inspire some ideas in advance! Feel free to ask questions about my process in the comments!

Thank you! Hayu Masi!
June 24, 2020

Today, I want to share a creative project that everyone can do at home. This exercise engages your critical thinking skills and will also give you a sense of ownership over history and the way we recall it.

Yesterday I talked to you about how I edited a preexisting museum exhibition to create T.I.K.L. Today, I used a historical document as my canvas to illustrate how narratives can shift over time. This document is the first page of what is known as "The Dawes Act" and most Indigenous people are aware of it because of the impact it has had, and continues to have on our culture today.

How to play:

2. Get some editing tools (sharpies, highlighters, white out, whatever)

3. Make changes, update problematic language, provide historical context, add sarcastic quips.

4. Admire how your once seemingly "authoritative" document has been unmasked and deconstructed, think about how problematic other "authoritative" sources might be...

5. Post your project and DM us a picture/explanation so we can share the results during Saturday’s LIVE Q&A session.

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Wanna know more about the Dawes Act?

The Dawes Act of 1887 authorized the federal government to break up tribal lands by partitioning them into individual plots. The objective of the Dawes Act was to assimilate Native American Indians into mainstream US society by annihilating their cultural and social traditions. When the allotment process began in 1887, the total land held by American Indian tribes on reservations equaled 138,000,000 acres. By the end of the allotment period landholdings had been reduced to 48,000,000 acres. Since 1934 the landholdings have slowly increased to 56,000,000 acres. The General Allotment Act (the Dawes Act) also incorporated boarding schools into the Act, forcing many Indian children to these state-sanctioned factories of assimilation.

During the late nineteenth century, boarding schools were promoted as a solution to what was called the "Indian problem." But whether the schools were under sectarian or federal control, little regard was given to traditional Indian values or teaching methods.
June 25, 2020

Today I wanted to share some people and books that have inspired my work and shaped the way I see my role as an Indigenous creative.

One of the artists I’ll always name as a “favorite” is @steadmanart - most known for his collaborative work with #gonzo political journalist #huntersthompson. Their combination of written/visual political critiques continue to guide my ideas on what is possible for my life and art. #RalphSteadman taught me to take risks and that making pretty pictures is NOT the pinnacle of artistry. Even more so, his work showed me I could use my skillset to help/educate others! ♥

I am inspired by my indigenous activist predecessors like @freeleonardpeltier and #johntrudell, Buffy Saint Marie and #joyharjo. Without their work as visible Indigenous voices I would not know how to model that behavior. All honor to them 🙏.

Books that are centered on Indigenous knowledge and decolonization are also important, the writers of these books are like mentors who have encouraged me to grow and free myself from harmful colonial programming.

No idea is 100% original, as creatives we have an incredible intergenerational inheritance that makes standing tall, just a bit easier.
June 26, 2020

Nah Sihks! Hello friends!
Today I thought it would be fun to share some of my art with you! All week I've talked about those who inspire me as a curator and artist and now you can see how I translate those ideas!

#Painting is my favorite medium but I also work in digital and printmaking ♥ The first slide includes some of my recent faves.

Slide two includes a project I completed for NOAA in 2015 called #keepsalmonoffdrugs . I am so grateful to be working again with them this summer on another Salmon project in Northern California ♥.

The last slide includes documentation from my BFA thesis work, which addressed topics like intergenerational trauma and police brutality as part of a larger critique of “manifest destiny” and democracy.

As a theme my work is generally concerned with the retention of Indigenous traditions and also the safe-keeping of our environment and its nonhuman inhabitants ♥️.